

## Hotels

Foreign tourist arrivals in March 2003 were 2.2 lakh, marginally higher than in March 2002. Arrivals during October–March 2002–03 were 13.2 per cent higher than during the same period of 2001–02. They had fallen by 18 per cent during October–March 2001–02. Arrivals rose by a mere 0.5 per cent in 2002–03, reflecting the sharp drop in tourist arrivals during the first half of the year.

The outlook for the new year does not look promising at the moment, given the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome in several countries around the world. Although India is relatively less affected by the syndrome compared to other countries in the region such as China, Hong Kong, Korea and Singapore, there have been a few SARS cases reported in parts of west India too. This is expected to deter foreign travel to India. Confidence would rise only when the spread of the disease is contained.

Southern India has attracted several hotel companies to set up budget hotels. In April, the Residency group opened its second budget hotel in Chennai. The group now operates four budget hotels, two in Chennai and one each in Bangalore and Coimbatore. The group also plans to open hotels in Madurai and Hyderabad. Indian Hotels has finalised sites to set up budget hotels in Bangalore and Tirupati.

Foreign Tourist Arrivals  
Apr–Mar

Total	Nos	% chg.
2001–02	2428383	-9.87
2002–03	2439299	0.45



Foreign Tourist Arrivals

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
<b>Total</b>												
2000–01	188132	139575	161613	212949	186843	180070	226531	290201	313342	283760	262306	248965
2001–02	185338	151098	176716	224432	196517	162326	181605	209685	254544	228150	241133	216839
2002–03	155378	132988	143100	186482	161477	151721	212191	243566	281102	278298	272688	220308