

## Now 'set-jetting' in Britain, Bollywood style

We all know of 'jet-setting', but what on earth is 'set-jetting'?

That is the latest jargon of the travel and tourism industry and, in simple words, means tourists travelling to the sets and locations of popular Bollywood and Hollywood films in Britain.

'Set-jetting is a great way of marketing a destination and Britain's popularity as a location for many of the biggest films has helped VisitBritain to lead the way in capitalising on this 'screen magic',' Tom Wright, chief executive of VisitBritain, the national tourism agency that has a dedicated office in Mumbai.

'If the right film is chosen, it acts as free advertising for a destination, location or attraction; shown to millions of people around the world and whenever they watch the DVD.

'Showcasing destinations through film helps maintain the enduring popularity of our beautiful landscapes and countryside, centuries of history, iconic characters, actors and actresses and literary greats.'

On any given day, several Bollywood films are shot in Britain. The importance of the overseas market has grown exponentially in recent years, with several films raking in as much as 50 percent of their profits from the British and US markets alone.

Diaspora themes strumming the heart strings of millions of Indians living abroad are woven into films that go on to become blockbusters, such as 'Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge' (1995) and 'Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Ghum' (2001).

The sector has grown so much in recent years that Britain's tourism officials have come up with a 'Bollywood map' of Britain, depicting the locations where prominent Indian films were shot.

Now British officials have launched a film tourism campaign coinciding with the release of Indian director Shekhar Kapur's 'The Golden Age', starring Cate Blanchett, Geoffrey Rush and Clive Owen.

The sequel to Kapur's earlier film 'Elizabeth', the film on the life of Queen Elizabeth I features a wealth of English locations. Tourism officials expect it to draw international and British visitors to iconic and heritage attractions throughout Britain.

A dedicated website, [www.visitbritain.com/goldenage](http://www.visitbritain.com/goldenage), features a downloadable map of locations, film synopsis and link to the trailer, six different touring itineraries, a picture gallery and inspirational information on Britain's 'golden age of now' for contemporary art and culture.

Potential visitors will also be able to buy merchandise and book tickets to attractions associated with Elizabethan times. Eleven film locations on the map include Brean Down in Somerset, Berkshire's Dorney Court, St John's College Cambridge, and Ely, Wells, Westminster and Winchester Cathedrals.

A further 15 Tudor locations and three royal destinations are also featured where international tourists can save money with VisitBritain's Great British Heritage Pass. The Pass allows

international visitors free entry at around 600 attractions throughout England, Scotland and Wales and is a key element of the campaign.

Officials say that film tourism - or set-jetting - is an increasingly popular holiday option. With 40 percent of potential visitors 'very likely' to visit places from films or TV, VisitBritain expects the appearance of British locations in the film to help encourage many more visitors.

'The Golden Age' campaign will have particular appeal in America where visits have fallen by five percent so far this year and Britain's castles and historic properties, pomp and ceremony have a strong appeal.

Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of potential international and British visitors would be very likely to visit castles and stately homes on a visit to Britain.

Besides India, the campaign runs in Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the US and Britain. VisitBritain has pioneered film tourism's huge potential.

*Prasun Sonwalkar ( © IANS / India eNews)*