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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **BEACON HOLIDAYS' MASALA TRAILS PROGRAM: A CULINARY JOURNEY TO THE UNIQUE CUISINE CAPITALS OF INDIA**

**MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA: December 8, 2011** --- Boutique travel specialist, **Beacon Holidays** has launched its 2011 **Masala Trails** programs; two unique itineraries that take the food aficionado on a culinary journey to the dazzling cuisine capitals of India.

Set against a backdrop of bustling cities, palaces, lakes, desert forts and architectural marvels, the **Masala Trails** programs will showcase the splendid culinary heritage of India through one of the richest, aromatic condiments that has contributed to the world's gastronomic taste sensations – Indian spices.

The **Masala Trails** programs are hosted by Rushina Munshaw-Ghildiyal, a noted Indian cuisine author and columnist, who will lead the journey 'off the road less eaten' and introduce guests to the piquant flavours, delicate aromas and tantalising dishes that has influenced many cultures and imperial courts for over 5,000 years.

Offering two unique tour options **South India Masala Trails** program departs September 30 – October 10, 2011, and the **North India Masala Trails** program departs October 13 – October, 23, 2011. The programs can also be combined with a complimentary three night stay in Goa. In addition, guests enjoy outstanding accommodations at a variety of luxury properties and heritage hotels including Taj Hotels and Trident Hotels, numerous sightseeing, market and culinary excursions and an array of sumptuous Indian meals and cooking demonstrations.

"The **Masala Trails** programs have been designed so that guests not only visit some of the most captivating cities and regions in India but also savour the many zesty flavours and tastes as our culinary expert, Rushina Munshaw-Ghildiyal reveals the variety of exotic ingredients used in traditional cooking and specialty dishes while weaving in the history and culture of each region," says Himanshi Munshaw – Luhar, Director of Beacon Holidays - Asia Pacific.

The 11 day / 10 night fully-escorted **North India Masala Trails** program departs October 13 – October, 23, 2011 and includes the popular destinations of New Delhi, Agra, Samode, Jaipur and Jodhpur, in the heart of Rajasthan. Additionally, guests will enjoy a number of cooking demonstrations, superb regional specialties and banquets including a Royal dinner and evening picnic, shopping excursions, an elephant and jeep ride, and the opportunity to interact with local families and vendors at a number of regional markets.

Priced from AUD \$4,050.00 (based on double occupancy), the fully-escorted **North India Masala Trails** program includes daily breakfasts and most dinners, local English-speaking guides, a local culinary expert for market and cooking demonstrations, monument entry fees, an elephant and jeep ride, location transfers and sightseeing in air-conditioned vehicles, and taxes.

The 11 day /10 night, **South India Masala Trails** program departs September 30 – October 10, 2011, and includes the 'hot' destinations of Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), Hyderabad, Cochin, Thekkady – home to the spice plantations, Periyar National Park and Tiger Reserve, Kumarakom and vibrant Mumbai, the capital of Maharashtra and the heartbeat of modern India. Additionally, guests will enjoy an array of cooking demonstrations and specialty dishes, shopping excursions, an evening Kathakali Dance Show performance, a boat ride in Periyar National Park - a vantage point for spotting elephants and many species of birds – and an overnight houseboat stay on Kerala's beautiful backwaters. The trip concludes in dynamic Mumbai, guests take delight in a Gujarati cuisine cooking demonstration and enjoy a private dinner at a cosmopolitan home.

Priced from AUD \$4,955.00 (based on double occupancy), the fully-escorted **South India Masala Trails** program includes daily breakfasts and most dinners, local English-speaking guides, a local culinary expert for market and cooking demonstrations, a spice plantation tour and boat ride, a dance performance, location transfers and sightseeing in air-conditioned vehicles, and taxes.

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“At the end of the gastronomic journey the food aficionado will soon see that Indian cuisine is as rich and diverse as the country itself,” adds Ms. Munshaw-Luhar.

If the programs are combined, guests enjoy three complementary nights in Goa, which nestles on one of the most beautiful coastlines in India. A combined **North and South India Masala Trails** program is priced from AUD \$9,000.00 per person, based on double occupancy.

Single occupancy room rates are also available upon request. Air fares are quoted on the guest’s personal choice of airline and seating.

To book a **Masala Trails program**, please contact your preferred travel specialist or call Beacon Holidays on 1800 667791.

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#### **ABOUT BEACON HOLIDAYS:**

**Beacon Holidays** is a boutique tour operator and wholesaler specialising in customised FIT and special interest packages with a focus on high-end leisure tourism. Working in partnership with the world’s leading destination management companies, prestigious marketing organisations as well as an assortment of award-winning hotels and boutique properties, Beacon Holidays provides the discerning traveller with an anthology of all-inclusive, customised programs; each tailored and delivered by dedicated professionals who constantly travel the world to seek out unique experiences for their guests.

Beacon Holidays’ destination portfolio includes **India, Eastern and Southern Africa, Turkey, New Zealand, Fiji** and **French Polynesia**. The company’s collection of destination programs is available through a select network of retail agents and associations.

For further information on any Beacon Holiday itinerary, the new Masala Trails program or to secure a travel brochure, please contact Beacon Holidays on 1800 667791.

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