

# HOTEL

**B u s i n e s s R e v i e w**

An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

## Safety of Women Guests

**Business**  
Skilled Staff Needed to Boost Hotels

**Feature**  
Wedding Segment for Revenue Growth

**F&B**  
Crocery Selection

**Housekeeping**  
In-house Laundry

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One of the distinctive socio-economic and socio-cultural features currently developing in modern India is the growing segment of women traveller. There is a growing tendency among women to travel solo or with female companions. The Indian hospitality industry to ensure their patronage, have to ensure their safety and well-being. We have discussed the safety factor in the accommodations offered by the hotels and resorts in our Cover Story.

The revival of travel and tourism industry has resulted in an increase in the influx of guests in hotels. This, in turn has increased the need for skilled staff in the industry. Due to new openings and the attrition during the pandemic there could be problems not only during the recovery period but even in the forthcoming years. Business story discusses on the current need for qualified and skilled manpower in the industry.

The Indian Wedding industry is massive and one of the key business segments to contribute towards hotel revenues. The feature in current issue shows how various factors contribute to make this segment a profitable one.

Tableware plays a very important role in presenting food to the guest. The growing role of Tableware in the hotel business is being probed through our F&B section. Laundry service is an integrated part of services offered by hotels industry. The Housekeeping section dwells on the benefits of having an on-premise laundry.

The hotel industry cannot afford to ignore the unimaginable potential loss of business due to the presence of pests, where care, sensitivity and eye for detail are mandatory requirements. Various procedures being adopted by the industry to checkmate these pests, is discussed in Operations section.

Besides these relevant issues for the industry, the comprehensive information between the covers is expected to give our valued readers an engrossing time.

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 An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

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HAMMER

# HOTEL

Business Review

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**INDIA INTERNATIONAL  
HOSPITALITY EXPO**  
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AUGUST 2-5, 2023

## 6th Edition of the India International Hospitality Expo 2023

August 02-05, 2023, at IEML, Greater Noida



The India Expo Mart & Centre (IEML) is all geared up for the 2023 edition of the India International Hospitality Expo (IHE2023), which has emerged as one of the country's leading B2B show designed exclusively for the hospitality and food sectors. The Expo, to be held during August 02-05, 2023, will be representing verticals that are relevant to the hospitality sector, notably, Amenities, F&B and Kitchen Equipment, Furniture and Furnishings, Housekeeping, Laundry, Tableware and more.

Speaking regarding the forthcoming expo, Rakesh Kumar, Chairman, IEML, and Director General, Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH), said, "IHE has emerged as one of the most well-managed hospitality shows across India and our core focus on B2B engagement and business generation has helped make a mark in Indian hospitality. We welcome decision makers from star hotels, resorts to guest houses as well as fine dining restaurants to cloud kitchens. If you're anyway linked to the hospitality sector, you're cordially invited to know how we can help you grow your business by sourcing from the best."

In addition to 1000+ exhibitors and over 25000 visitors, the 4-day expo will host the concurrent events with the support of prominent industry bodies.

Four-day conference loaded with knowledge-based discussions by industry

leaders on emerging market opportunities, new technologies and sourcing alternatives. Some of the country's top hotel and restaurant CEOs like Rattan Keswani, Priya Paul, Zorawar Karla and many others have spoken at the past editions of IHE Conclave.

At the Master classes the country's leading chefs and mixologists will share their recipes and expertise. The event has seen the likes of Chef Ranvir Brar, Chef Vineet Bhatia, Chef Ajay Chopra and many others.

The young chefs' competition, conducted by the Indian Culinary Forum (ICF).

Sommelier Training and Competition among the students for beverage master is added attraction.

And the much-awaited IHE2023 Excellence Awards, honouring the best and brightest of the hospitality world.

"We have been growing non-stop and



our teams have been working round the clock to create IHE a very fruitful business experience for our exhibitors and visitors. We can guarantee a seamless exhibition experience to all our attendees and participants as the venue hosts some of the most prestigious events like the Auto Expo, Elecrama, COP14 and has catered to the state heads of over 15 countries. India Expo Centre and Mart has been the venue of out of the 12 biggest trade shows in India, is spread across 58 acres (2,35,000 sq. m.).

Like in the past six years, IHE2023 will be much more than an exhibition – it will also be a knowledge fest for professionals engaged in the food and hospitality sectors. From students of hotel management and the culinary arts, to professionals in the F&B, front office, housekeeping, kitchen management, purchase, and engineering departments of hotels, to owners and operators of standalone restaurants, IHE2023 offers something for everyone. It is a show that just cannot be missed. The show ensures all about helping businesses grow.

If you've been waiting to upgrade your Hospitality and F&B business, do not regret waiting till August 2023 to source from the best.

For further information visit:  
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## Iconic Taj Announces 100th Taj Hotel

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced the addition of the 100th hotel to its portfolio of the iconic brand, Taj. Established in 1903, Taj with its world-renowned landmarks from modern business hotels, idyllic beach resorts to authentic Grand Palaces, each offering an unrivalled fusion of warm Indian hospitality and world-class service.



It has been ranked as the World's Strongest Hotel Brand and India's Strongest Brand as per Brand Finance Hotels 50 Report 2022 and India 100 Report 2022.

Speaking on the milestone occasion, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, IHCL said, "This is a momentous occasion as Taj's portfolio will offer 100 hotels across India and in key international destinations. This growth is a testament to the unwavering trust our stakeholders have consistently placed in us. I would like to thank all our owners, partners, guests and employees who have supported us in this journey."

He further added, "With signing of our second Taj hotel in the city, we look forward to offering yet another address in the port city of Cochin.

We are delighted to partner with Cochin International Airport."

The 211 key hotel is strategically located a short distance from the airport. It will offer an all-day diner, a bar, a lounge and an open-air specialty restaurant. It will feature banqueting spaces and meeting rooms, a spa, a swimming pool and a gymnasium. A major hub for commerce in southern India, Kochi is also well - renowned for its rich cultural heritage. It is one of the most visited tourist destinations in India with its picturesque beaches on the southwest coast of Kerala.

## Hoeller To Open New Manufacturing Facility

Hoeller Manufacturing, the Austrian-based designer and manufacturer of innovative buffet solutions, is to open a new manufacturing facility in India to serve new and existing foodservice customers on a global stage. The announcement coincides with an agreement reached with Intertek India to certify the safety of its products, processes and systems for use by US foodservice operators who require 110v power (as opposed to 230v for Europe and Asia).



The new facility, which mirrors Hoeller's existing facility in Europe, will include a manufacturing line, design office and warehouse/storage to support the manufacture and delivery of its complete range of buffet systems. These include an innovation that enables operators to alternate between hot and cold buffet service throughout the day while using exactly the same plate.

The flexibility comes from the plates themselves that can operate in the range between +140°C (hot) to -5°C (cold). They are also extremely fast to heat up or cool down, taking minutes not hours, thus giving chefs flexibility in service. They take 30 minutes to go from hot to cold and less than 15 minutes for cold to hot. In addition, the buffet counter and cabinet, and the lighting and the heat bridge can also be further customised.

Joachim Hoeller, Founder of Hoeller Manufacturing, says his business pursues a mission of ceaseless innovation: "We aim to take the consultant's and owner's perception of a buffet system to another level, where we innovate and engineer solutions that are practical, meaningful and flexible. With this new facility, and our agreement with Intertek India, we will be able to give even more consultants the flexibility of being able to create either a hot or a cold buffet system, virtually at the flick of the switch and using the same plates, removing a major headache and delivering greater choice for their customers and projects."

Its systems are all produced to the highest (H3) hygiene standards and can accommodate 304 stainless steel, Dekton, Gorilla Glass, ESG glass and a range of other quality, yet cost-effective materials. Standard products in GN sizes are also available.



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## Chalet Hotels and Marriott Launch an All-Women Operated Hotel

Chalet Hotels Limited has launched The Westin Hyderabad Hitec City in partnership with Marriott International. This 168-key property will be managed and operated by an all-women team, making it the first-of-its-kind not only within the city but also within the entire Chalet Hotels and Marriott International portfolio across South Asia.

Strategically located in the prominent technology township of HitecCity, The Westin Hyderabad Hitec City offers an ideal destination for guests. With 168 spacious guest rooms and suites, the hotel provides a rejuvenating atmosphere, ensuring a comfortable and memorable stay for its guests.

The hotel has received an overwhelming response from a single entity that has fully booked it for three consecutive years, starting from June 2023. As a result, the hotel premises and services will be exclusively dedicated to this corporate entity during this period.

Speaking about the announcement, Sanjay Sethi, Managing Director & CEO, Chalet Hotels Limited, said, "We at Chalet Hotels are



delighted to announce the opening of our second hotel in Hyderabad with the opening of 'The Westin Hyderabad Hitec City'. This hotel is unique in more than one way. Not only is it going to be sold out from day one, an equally path breaking event is that it will be launched by an all-women team. This groundbreaking initiative is a beacon of empowerment, reflecting our vision for a more inclusive and forward-thinking hospitality industry."

### Chalet inks a Franchise Agreement with IHCL

Chalet Airport Hotel Private Limited (Chalet) a wholly owned subsidiary of Chalet Hotels Limited signs a franchise agreement with IHCL (The Indian Hotels Company Limited) for the 'Taj' brand at the upcoming new luxury hotel at the Terminal 3 of Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi.

The upcoming hotel is strategically located, a short walk from the Terminal 3 and 2, providing easy access to both domestic and international travellers. The luxury hotel will feature 400 state-of-the-art rooms and bespoke dining and conferencing facilities, welcoming domestic and international travellers, to the capital city of India.

Speaking on the announcement, Sanjay



Sethi, Managing Director & CEO, Chalet Hotels Limited, said, "We are delighted to partner with IHCL for our upcoming hotel in New Delhi with signing of this Franchise agreement. It was a well thought out decision to choose the 'Taj' brand for this marquee asset. We look forward to a grand opening of the Taj at the New Delhi Airport in a couple of years."

## The Iconic Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai is Now 100% Green

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced that its landmark hotel, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai is now 100% green. In its drive to minimise its environmental impact, the hotel in addition to using renewable energy, has also implemented water conservation, and waste reduction measures.

Speaking on the occasion, Gaurav Pokhariyal, Executive Vice President – Human Resources, IHCL, said, "In line with the vision of IHCL's ESG+ framework of Paathya, we are committed to energy conservation and long-term goal of deriving 50 percent of energy across all hotels from renewable sources by 2030. Reducing its carbon footprint, The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai has yet again set a benchmark of being 100% powered by renewable energy. This achievement advances

our transition to a more sustainable and low-carbon future and provides an example for others to follow"

Having successfully implemented sustainability measures to minimize carbon



footprint, the hotel is also accelerating its efforts towards water conservation and waste reduction by efficiently treating and using water, reducing waste generation, and promoting recycling and reuse. Towards its commitment of phasing out single-use plastic, the hotel had introduced a bottling plant. Other sustainable measures include EV charging stations, use of low flow aerators for taps and showers, using treated water for horticulture and flushing and the use of LED light energy-efficient motors and time control lighting systems.

IHCL has announced its sustainability commitments for the year 2030 under Paathya and will continue to pursue sustainable practices in its pursuit towards excellence and creating benchmarks.

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**Anil Madhok**

The hospitality industry has suffered a great loss with the passing of its visionary leader Anil Madhok, Founder and Executive Chairman of Sarovar Hotels & Resorts. He has left behind a huge void within the hotel industry. Under his leadership and profound understanding of the evolving needs of the industry, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts achieved tremendous success. He always focused on service and innovation which made Sarovar from small hotel enterprise to the most sought after brand. He had profound impact on the Indian hospitality industry and was inspirations for many in the industry. The industry mourns the loss of its leader whose contributions to the industry will always be remembered.



## PPFI Synergy-2023



Purchasing Professionals Forum India (PPFI) held its prestigious event 'Synergy-2023' on April 15, 2023 at Pride Plaza Hotel, Aerocity Delhi. The primary goal of the meet was to bring together professionals across hospitality industry from different parts of the country for an open dialogue under one roof. The emphasis was to mitigate roadblocks and develop mutually beneficial collaboration opportunities.



PPFI Synergy 2023 – gave an opportunity to attend interactive sessions by intellectual & eminent personalities across the hospitality industry like: Mandeep Lamba, President HVS-South Asia, Rakesh Kumar, Director General Export Promotion Council for Handicraft and Vikramjeet Singh, President Lemon Tree Hotels

Their presentation on Procurement's pivotal role in a business at the event was worth attending. It turned out to be an eye opener for existing and as well as future generations of purchase professionals.

Amarjit Singh Ahuja, President-PPFI said, "It has been a years of awards accolades and recognition for Purchasing Professionals Forum-India (PPFI) when the whole world has endured a near constant drumbeat of loss. Loss of friends & family, loss of physical togetherness. Corona virus pandemic sent the whole world into seclusion, people sought connection. For purchase professionals it proved that they are the real back bone of the hospitality who worked day and night in the difficult lockdown period by arranging while sitting at home, all what require to full-fill the need of hotel room guests who were stranded or on quarantine period of stay in hotel. All of sudden found a beautiful bond with everyone in hotel while working in corona virus."

The event was well attended by 250+ members of PPFI. They had a networking conversation on how further to enhance the cooperation among members to educate and update on the latest developments and innovations.

## Taj & Air India Unveil 'The Maharaja Suite'

Taj Mahal, New Delhi unveiled The Maharaja Suite at the capital's landmark hotel. The suite design is a tribute to the world-renowned symbol of Air India, welcoming the national carrier back in the folds of Tata group.

A journey through time, The Maharaja Suite, offers a uniquely themed master bedroom, dining room, an enclosed balcony lounge, and a study paying homage to the pioneer of Indian aviation. The characteristic style, wit and warmth of the Maharaja comes alive in its specially-commissioned furniture and artworks. Maharaja's distinctive moustache takes centre stage in the upholstery and aviation aesthetics in the airplane styled windows, lounge chair, luggage elements and the deep red in the doors and ceiling.

Designed by Bobby Mukherji and Associates, introduction of The Maharaja Suite also marks the completion of the renovation of the marquee Taj Mahal, New Delhi.

## Pride Hotels Group Announces D.R.E.A.M Program

Pride Hotels Group announces the D.R.E.A.M. program, which offers excellent opportunities for associates to join the MT/HOT Programme. The programme aims to give candidates a comprehensive understanding of the theories and processes involved in the development of the hotel industry.

Pride Hotels Group's D.R.E.A.M program pledges career progression from MT/HOT to GM/EAM positions, respectively. The candidates would have the chance to learn from knowledgeable industry professionals in the hospitality industry. "Each candidate would receive mentoring from the Leadership team, GM, Corporate HODs, and other Senior Managers. Each candidate would be exposed to different departments within the Pride Hotels Group" said Atul



Upadhyay, Senior Vice President of Pride Hotels Group.

The Program is divided into 2 years of MT Program and 1.5 years of systematic HOT Program. Candidates can choose between Assistant Manager and Executive Positions after successfully completing the program. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the final year Hospitality students to start their careers with Pride Hotels Group.



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TS-678



TS-26C01



TS-30C01



TS-21C02A

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TS-34C01

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TS-5006



TS-3503



TS-32C01

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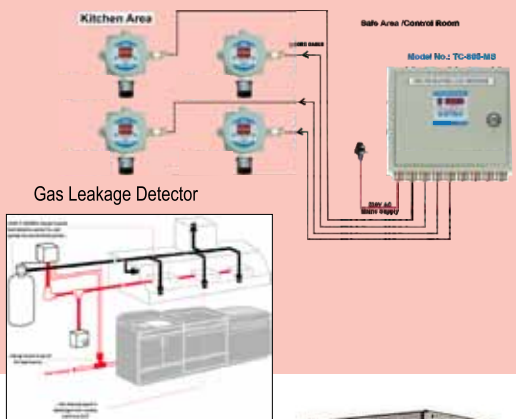


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# The Fern Hotels & Resorts Announces its 100th Hotel

The Fern Hotels & Resorts opened its 100th hotel, The Fern Shelter Resort, Palghar (Maharashtra). The hotel is located on National Highway 48 between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, has 81 tastefully appointed rooms that offer a blend



of modern amenities and elegant décor. For those seeking a panoramic view and an elevated experience, the rooftop lounge provides the perfect ambiance to unwind and enjoy scenic vistas.

In addition to its exceptional infrastructure and dining options, The Fern Shelter Resort, Palghar boasts top-of-the-line banquet facilities, including a picturesque lawn. This makes it an ideal destination for weddings, social events, and corporate offsites, offering a seamless blend of luxury, comfort and convenience. The hotel will be fully operational from the end of June.

The Fern Shelter Resort, Palghar follows the brand's ethos by incorporating eco-friendly features and initiatives to minimize its environmental impact. The Fern Hotels & Resorts takes pride in its sustainable practices and has received several accolades for its initiatives in eco- friendly hospitality. The group celebrated its 100th Hotel Milestone with a Green Gesture by planting 100 tree saplings at The Fern Shelter Resort, Palghar.

Suhail Kannampilly, Managing Director, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, expressed his utmost pride and joy as the brand reached this momentous milestone with the launch of its 100th hotel. He added "The unveiling of The Fern Shelter Resort, Palghar not only marks the expansion of the brand into this bustling business district but also signifies a significant achievement in the group's journey. We are grateful to our valued guests, dedicated team members and esteemed partners who have played a significant role in our growth and success. As we celebrate this achievement, we remain dedicated to expanding our presence and setting new benchmarks in the hospitality industry."

# The MET Bags 'Travellers Choice Award' 2023

The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa (a.k.a. THE MET), a Five Star Deluxe full service hotel located in the heart of the business and commercial hub of New Delhi, won the 'Travellers Choice Award' by Trip advisor. The title is conferred upon for Hotel's exceptional service, and is the highest accolade a Hotel can ever hope to receive. As for participants, this Awards challenge service excellence and highlight the importance of constant improvement. The Award truly puts the Award winners ahead of their peers; add to the honour, prestige and gives a complete global exposure.



Expressing his happiness at this winning moment, Vipul Gupta, Executive Director, The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa, says, "I am extremely proud that our commitment to the highest standards has been recognized once again with this prestigious award. It is a real statement of an ultimately refined luxury experience for our guests and yet another testament to our continued passion for service excellence in the highly competitive hospitality industry. I am sure that this remarkable outcome will be an inspiration for the entire team to continue reaching for excellence and express our gratification and thank Tripadvisor for appreciating our efforts on such a significant platform".



Foodservice

## The growth of Middle East and India markets for Fagor Professional

Fagor Professional has been re-establishing the foot print in India with active presence in the industry and has evolved a good growth in the sector.

The company has recently combined their Middle East and SAARC region together with an intention to provide better delivery terms from their warehouse in United Arab Emirates. With this movement, Fagor Professional will be able to give access to their partners selective materials from UAE warehouse as low as 10 days delivery lead time to Indian ports.

The Spanish manufacturer believes in the power of collaboration and partnership and looking forward to developing strategy to take the business to the next level. Focus will be on customer service and providing exceptional experiences to our customers with fast deliveries.

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## Zone by The Park Launched at Pathankot

Apeejay Surendra Park Hotels announced the launch 'Zone by The Park' Pathankot, the gateway to Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Strategically located on the banks of Chakki River, the hotel has 38 well-appointed rooms, and houses 'Bazaar', an all-day dining, 'Z Bar' – a high-energy bar, 'Playa', a pool with a view of Shivalik mountain ranges, Townhall (3) – ideal banquet spaces that can accommodate up to 500 guests, making an ideal space for social and business gathering.



### Zone Connect Saket, New Delhi



The group also announced the launch of its fifth and newest hotel – Zone Connect Saket, New Delhi. Located in South Delhi's stylish shopping and entertainment hub, the hotel in district centre Saket is at the heart of corporate park with heritage attractions for leisure travelers.

With 57 contemporary rooms, Zone Connect Saket features Café-C – an all-day dining; Co-Bar – a high-energy bar; Terrace Lounge with a capacity of upto 120 guests, Town Hall – an ideal space for social and business gathering of upto 50 guests. The hotel offers comfort, space, tech-enabled facilities, best in class service and mouth-watering delicacies.

## Novotel Jodhpur ITI Circle Opens

Novotel Jodhpur ITI Circle marks the 23rd Novotel property opening in India and will be the first hotel in South Asia to be built with the new Sundkovy Sisters design, which is part of the brand's broader design philosophy, centered around plain architectural volumes and lines that create an intuitive and welcoming space for guests.



Offering 93 rooms & suites, alongside public spaces spread across 7 floors, Novotel Jodhpur ITI Circle offers guests a perfect blend of chic and comfort. Featuring 2 premier suites, 5 junior suites, 5 executive rooms with balconies and 81 superior rooms, which offer a breathtaking view of Mehrangarh Fort & Green Belt.

The hotel is a pure vegetarian hotel, making it an ideal choice for guests looking for a unique and conscious travel experience. Boasting Novotel's signature restaurant brand Food Exchange – all day dining multi-cuisine vegetarian restaurant and bar, the restaurant offers a cool and casual design with live cooking stations that keep guests entertained, alongside a contemporary step-up bar where one can enjoy specialty cocktails and fusion hors d'oeuvres. Gourmet Bar, a lobby-level outlet, offers a tempting array of freshly baked pastries, cakes, and chocolates, balanced by garden salads, sandwiches, and wraps for quick bites. For visitors looking to experience the street foods of India, 21 Street Walk café is an ideal destination, a 24-hour street-side eatery that changes its offerings as the day progresses.

During their stay, guests can indulge in a range of amenities including a spa and steam facility, a rooftop swimming pool, and a gymnasium. From large weddings to corporate events, Novotel Jodhpur ITI Circle provides ample space with 14,000 sq. ft and state-of-the-art facilities to make any occasion a special one.

# Fairmont Hotels & Resorts Signs Property in Agra



Fairmont Hotels & Resorts announced the signing of a new property in Agra, is set to open by 2025. The hotel will offer 205 rooms, including 44 suites. Guests can look forward

to a luxurious experience that seamlessly blends world-class hospitality with the enchanting beauty of one of India's most legendary destinations. Fairmont Hotels & Resorts has partnered with Shekhar Resorts Limited, introducing the first Fairmont in the city.

"We are delighted to partner with Fairmont, an iconic luxury brand within the Accor Group. Given Accor's expertise in luxury hospitality management and knowledge of the markets they operate in, we found Fairmont and Accor as the most adept partners to manage the upcoming Fairmont Agra. We believe that the property will stand out and elevate the luxury hospitality experience in Agra and northern India. We are excited to start our first partnership with Fairmont and Accor and to bring the most unique and memorable experiences to our guests," says Anuj Jain, Director of Shekhar Resorts Limited, Agra.

# Waldorf Astoria to Debut in India

Hilton and Dangayach Group have announced the signing of a branding and management agreement for the launch of Waldorf Astoria Jaipur, marking the debut of Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts in India. The exclusive signing ceremony, held at the Hotel Investment Conference South Asia (HICSA) in Bangalore, signals an exciting new phase of growth for Hilton as the company shapes the next golden age of travel.



Globally renowned Waldorf Astoria is comprised of a portfolio of more than 30 iconic properties across the globe. Spanning 22 acres overlooking the magnificent Aravalli Hills, Waldorf Astoria Jaipur will be the epitome of luxury in Jaipur. Boasting 51 expansive pool villas and 174 elegant guest rooms. It will also feature a luxurious spa, an outdoor swimming pool, a state-of-the-art fitness centre, and five distinctive dining experiences, including the world-famous Peacock Alley, the iconic lounge and bar synonymous with the Waldorf Astoria brand.

Offering 2,400 square meters of meeting space and 3,000 square metres of open lawns, courtyards and gardens, Waldorf Astoria Jaipur will serve as an unparalleled venue for celebrations, lavish weddings, and world-class events.

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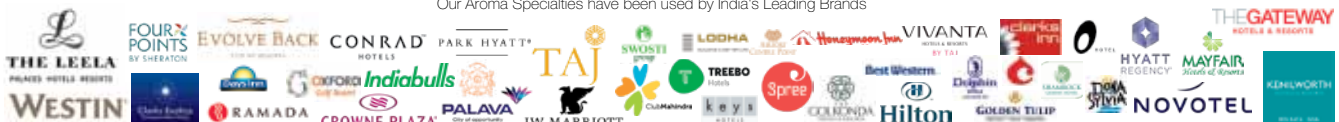
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## Shangri-La Eros New Delhi CSR Initiatives

Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, is creating a positive impact on communities and environment through their corporate-level CSR Committee drives initiatives in stakeholder relations, environment, health and safety, supply chain, and employees. These focus areas are unified under the umbrella brand of "Sustainability" together with Shangri-La's core CSR projects "Embrace" and "Sanctuary". The Sanctuary programmes concentrate on Shangri-La's Care for Nature Project, which promotes the conservation and restoration of biodiversity.

Abhishek Sadhoo, General Manager, Shangri-La Eros New Delhi, explains the various initiatives taken by the property to ensure CSR objectives are achieved.

The recent gastronomic initiative, Rooted in Nature, presents diners with locally or ethically sourced food offerings. The programme encourages culinary teams across the hotels and resorts to incorporate sustainable items from local markets into the menus, ensuring authentic flavours with every bite. Guests can identify Rooted in Nature menu items by spotting the pea shoot logo beside the dish description on all restaurant menus.

The culinary team presents Rooted in Nature dishes such as Greek Black Quinoa Salad, Kadaknath (Black Chicken) Shorba, and Grilled Tiger Prawns with Coconut Cream and Kaffir Lime Leaves at the hotel's international cuisine restaurant, Tamra, and guests may also indulge in Stir-Fried Hydroponic Pokchoy and Kale with Golden



**Abhishek Sadhoo**

Garlic and Range-Free Chicken Clear Soup at Shang Palace.

In 2022, Shangri-La announced a partnership with Make-A-Wish International. Celebrating the importance of family, special offerings across select hotels in the Middle East, Europe, India, the Indian Ocean, and Canada have been created to raise vital funds for the inspiring work the foundation does for children and families around the world. Shangri-La works closely with Make-A-Wish International to support the granting of wishes for children with critical illnesses across hotels. Shangri-La Eros New Delhi is also supporting Make-A-Wish International to help grant life-changing wishes for children. Guests may book special Ultimate Half-Board room offer, and 1 USD per night of proceeds goes to Make-A-Wish.

Under Shangri-La Cares, hotel-level Embrace programmes focus on Shangri-La's Caring People Project, which aims to promote

the highest level of education and health support in underprivileged communities. The hotel's Embrace partner, the Noida Deaf Society, is committed to reintegrating the hearing impaired into mainstream society by teaching life skills and children's education and has been working with the hotel since 2021. A regular batch of 10 students is taken in and trained by a team of operational division heads on basic hospitality skills. The ongoing CSR initiatives include Earth Day celebrations and participation in the Cancer Support Walk and also actively supporting HCRO, the Handicapped Children's Regeneration Organisation.

Shangri-La Eros New Delhi is dedicated to preserving and conserving environment! They use eco-friendly practices like providing guests with the option to not have their bed linen changed daily to conserve natural resources, using biodegradable plastics for packaging, and switching off lights when feasible. They have also implemented solar panels for water heating and a treatment plant to use wastewater for gardening and flushing. Plus, the lights in the public restrooms automatically turn off when guest exit.

The property is also taking measures to reduce carbon footprint by planting an organic waste converter to convert kitchen waste into manure and using eco-friendly fuels to generate electricity and water. They are also using CFL and LED lights to save electricity and raise awareness about the devastating effects of plastic on the environment.

## Taj Corbett Resort & Spa Unveils Ultra-Luxury Suites

Taj Corbett Resort & Spa, unveils a collection of lavish suites that will redefine the standards of comfort and style in the country. Coupled with bespoke services and the unmatched hospitality, the 11 new suites have been designed to spark a sense of wonder in travelers.

Poised to be the most luxurious wildlife getaway in the country, the Taj Corbett Resort and Spa has already carved a niche in Uttarakhand. Nestled amidst the majestic Himalayan foothills, the resort spans over a spacious 11 acres featuring 75 rustic cottage-



style rooms, 2 eclectic restaurants, an old-world style bar and multiple event spaces to cater to guests' every need.

The suites are a harmonious blend of nature and culture, with soothing earthy tones

to add to the quietude. The use of natural materials, such as wood and stone, evokes a rustic atmosphere capturing the essence of Corbett. The artwork and lighting fixtures are imbued with elements that are unmistakably local, such as the metal leaves adorning the walls, inspired by the verdant foliage of the surrounding forest. The veneer, for instance, draws inspiration from the majestic tiger and has been exclusively sourced from specialized suppliers. Each design piece is a unique ode to the flora and fauna that call this land their home.

# Pride Hotel Group Announces New Launches



## Pride Hotel Bhopal

Pride Hotels Group has added another landmark in Central India with the launch of "Pride Hotel Bhopal". Conveniently located in the heart of the city, the hotel is easily accessible to prominent tourist & leisure destinations, marketplaces, and commercial establishments. Well-connected through rail, road, and air to all major cities, the hotel gives you the best of the city of Bhopal.

Pride Hotel Bhopal encompasses 75 well-appointed fully air-conditioned rooms and equipped with tea/ coffee makers, wardrobes, ergonomic work tables, Wi-Fi connectivity, LED TVs, and safety lockers. The facilities at the hotel include 24-hour room service, a travel desk, a multi-cuisine restaurant, 3 banquet halls, a board room, a rooftop banquet, and an approx 20,000 sq ft green lawns. It is an ideal venue to celebrate larger-than-life fantastic functions in banquet halls, wedding lawns, and rooftops to create reminiscent heartfelt memories. The hotel also boasts swimming pool, health club, and fitness center.

Guests can enjoy a magnificent culinary journey that spans diverse gastronomic experiences and sumptuous cuisines at Casablanca- All day fine dining restaurant offering the best of world cuisine and Café Pride- Open Air Poolside café offering casual dining with bakery & café menu and a board room. The 3 state-of-the-art banquets with a capacity to accommodate guests ranging from 50 to 400 are designed to host private parties, small gatherings, and social events, Sky Deck- rooftop banquet. The banquets are well-equipped with all audio-visual facilities to conduct corporate meetings, special alliances, and training and development programs

"Madhya Pradesh has witnessed a steady inflow of leisure and business travelers from across the globe. Recognized as a Smart City,



**Satyen Jain & S P Jain**  
Opening of Pride Hotel Bhopal

Bhopal has witnessed lots of urbanization and has become an attractive investment hub. We are pleased to open our third property in the State, with the other two located in Indore and Jabalpur. With this launch, we now move a step further to establish our presence across popular destinations across the country", said Satyen Jain, CEO, Pride Hotels Group.

## Pride BiznoteL at Whitefield, Bengaluru

Pride Hotels Group announces the launch of Pride BiznoteL at Whitefield, Bengaluru. Located in the vibrant Whitefield area of Bengaluru, Pride BiznoteL offers a perfect blend of comfort and convenience for business travelers. With its strategic location near major business hubs, IT parks, and entertainment centers, the hotel caters to the needs of modern professionals.

Pride BiznoteL at Whitefield, Bengaluru will encompass 65 spacious rooms, a banquet hall, Imperial with capacity of approximately 200 people that includes a board room, Chowki, an Indian cuisine restaurant to cater 150 people, and live kitchen, and a spa, a fitness centre & Cafe Pride a rooftop restobar coming soon. Rooms are equipped with LED TV, mini bar, tea/ coffee maker, Wi-Fi, heater, individual air conditioning, and comfortable beds.

"We are delighted to launch Pride BiznoteL at Whitefield, Bengaluru. This will be our

second property in the city, with our flagship Pride Hotel Bengaluru located at Richmond Road. With its strategic location, impressive decor, delectable food options, exceptional banqueting facilities, and a host of hospitality services, we are confident that the hotel will resonate with guests seeking a memorable and comfortable stay" said Atul Upadhyay, Senior Vice President, Pride Hotels Group.

## Pride BiznoteL Canopus Digha

Pride Hotels Group also announced the launch of Pride BiznoteL Canopus Digha, located in the coastal town of Digha. The Pride BiznoteL Canopus Digha is a sophisticated hotel that offers comfortable accommodations in a prime location with an array of amenities that make it the perfect destination for both business and leisure travelers. The hotel is conveniently located near the beach.

Pride BiznoteL Canopus Digha offers guests a choice of elegantly appointed modern Deluxe, Superior & Premium rooms, a swimming pool, fitness center; with a 1,500 sq ft space, the Imperial Banquet is the ideal venue for corporate meetings, training, social gatherings, and weddings in Digha. Rooms are equipped with LED TV, mini bar, tea/ coffee maker, Wi-Fi, heater & air conditioning.

Guests can enjoy a range of dining options, Café Pride, a multi-cuisine also includes authentic Bengali treats, the soon-to-launch lavish rooftop restaurant PuraN Da Dhaba will ensure patrons to savor delectable authentic punjabi food.

"We are delighted to launch Pride BiznoteL Canopus Digha. With this launch we are further solidifying our commitment to provide superior quality hospitality services to our customers and create memorable experiences for them. Our visitors can anticipate a top-notch encounter that combines comfort and convenience," said Binay Thakur, AVP of Pride Hotels Group.



### Beejal Desai

Beejal Desai, has been promoted as Ex. Vice President – Corporate Affairs & Company Secretary (Group) at IHCL, and will join the Executive Committee (ExCom). Beejal joined IHCL in 2011 as Vice President – Legal & Company Secretary and carries rich cross functional experience of 38 years. Beejal has been the custodian of Legal, Secretarial, Corporate Governance, Corporate Affairs and Compliance. Beejal

was conferred a certificate of excellence in Corporate Governance from Institute of the Company Secretaries of India in 2017 and 2022.



### Kiran Muniraj

Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai, Vashi announces the promotion of Kiran Muniraj to the position of Director of Operations. With over 17 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Kiran has worked with some of the top hotel groups, including Hilton Worldwide, Taj Hotels, Resorts and Palaces, and The Oberoi Hotels. Kiran joined Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai as Director of Rooms in July 2022. In this new

capacity, Kiran will be responsible for driving strategic initiatives that will enhance the property's visibility and revenue generation.



### Neha Kapoor

Hyatt Place Vadodara, has appointed Neha Kapoor as their new General Manager. She started her career as part of the Front Office Team and brings in over 19 years of hospitality experience. Neha has spent over 13 years with Hyatt and started with Grand Hyatt Mumbai in 2004. She worked at Park Hyatt Hyderabad and Hyatt Regency Pune, and later Hyatt Place Hyderabad Banjara Hills. She also worked with JW Marriott

Mumbai, Sofitel Mumbai (Preopening) and Palladium Hotel Mumbai in the Sales Department.



### Devidyuti Ghosh

Mulberry Shades Nandi Hills has appointed Devidyuti Ghosh as the Hotel Manager. With 15-year background in the hospitality industry, Ghosh completed her education at the Institute of Hotel Management. Her unwavering commitment to professionalism is reflected in the numerous accolades she has received throughout her career. As Hotel Manager, Ghosh's primary focus will be to position the hotel as a wellness

paradise for travelers. As Hotel Manager, Ghosh aims to enhance the establishment's food and beverage revenue as well.



### Gurpreet S Kandhari

The Fern Seaside Luxurious Tent Resort and Nest Beacon Resort has announced the promotion of Gurpreet Kandhari as General Manager. With his successful leadership of operations in Daman since 2020, Gurpreet has consistently exhibited exceptional skills. In his new role, he will be entrusted with the responsibility of elevating the guest experience, managing the hotels' online reputation, driving core sales, cultivating

valuable relationships, and uplifting both properties. He encompasses over a decade of experience with ITC, Taj, Hilton, and Radisson.



### Sanket Thakur

Seven Eleven Club has appointed Sanket Thakur as the new General Manager of the hotel and club. With extensive experience in restaurant management, Sanket brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his new role. Sanket have 11 years of experience in the hospitality industry and worked at Peninsula Grand Andheri, The Resort, Smaaash Entertainment, The Orchid, and Sofitel Mumbai BKC. Sanket holds a BSCHS

degree from Viva College of Hotel Management and has completed various certifications and specialized training programs throughout his career.



### Kartikeshwar Panda

The Fern Hotels and Resorts has promoted Kartikeshwar Panda as General Manager, The Fern Gir Forest Resort, Gir. Kartik began his journey with The Fern Gir Forest Resort in 2011 as a Sous Chef. Hailing from Odisha, he holds a degree in hotel management from IHM Bhubaneswar and commenced his career in 2005. Prior to this, Kartik worked with Hotel Hindustan International (HHI), gaining valuable expertise in the hospitality

field. Over the past 11 years at Fern Sasan Gir, he has played a pivotal role in driving business growth in the renowned lion sanctuary of India.



### Parinita Samanta

Shangri-La Eros New Delhi Appoints Parinita Samanta as Director of Marketing and Communications. She has more than a decade of expertise championing brand communications and marketing for India's leading hotels. Parinita held the position of Director of Marketing and Communications at Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity and Hyatt Regency Delhi. During her career, Parinita has led

the launch of multiple successful restaurant and bar concepts. Prior to this role, she played a crucial role in handling media relations also.



**Malcolm Moniz**

Hilton Goa Resort has promoted Malcolm Moniz from IT Manager to Cluster IT Manager. Having joined Hilton Goa Resort as an IT Manager in August 2018, Malcolm held key positions in renowned brands including Radisson Blu Resort Goa, Park Hyatt Goa Resort & Spa, Alila Diwa Goa, The Radisson White Sands Resort, and Holiday Inn. He will oversee three properties, Hilton Goa Resort,

DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Arpora - Baga, and DoubleTree by Hilton Goa - Panaji.



**Sandeep Naik**

JW Marriott Bengaluru Prestige Golfshire Resorts & Spa appoints Sandeep Naik as the Director of Services. He has professional background of over 16 years of association with Marriott. He has excelled in key leadership positions with Bengaluru Marriott Whitefield and Kochi Marriott Hotel then progressing towards JW Marriott Hotel Pune. He will play a pivotal role in ensuring the highest

levels of the service standards by leading a service team and oversee the rooms operations, project coordination, and people management.



**Salil Kopal**

Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai appoints Salil Kopal, as its new Director of Marketing. A graduate of the IHM Ahmedabad, he has built on his academic training in hospitality management with 18 years of service with leading luxury brands like the Ritz Carlton, Sheraton Hotels, The Oberoi Group, Marriott Hotels and Encalm Hospitality. His impressive arsenal of innovative ideas, strong leadership skills, and keen

understanding of market dynamics are an asset to this crucial role at Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai.



**Tulasha Pillai**

Conrad Pune has appointed Tulasha Pillai as the new Director of Conference & Events. Having an experience of over 12 years in the hospitality industry with Marriott, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts, ITC & Hilton, she will play a pivotal role in the seamless management of Conference and Banqueting Sales & Operations, ensuring the delivery of an exceptional guest and member experience. Prior to

joining Conrad Pune, Tulasha held the position of Head of Sales at The Leela Palace Udaipur.



**Ritika Paffett**

Ritika Paffett has been appointed as the Director of Marketing and Communications for Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity. She has worked with brands like IHCL, Marriott and ITC. Her last stint was with The Leela Ambience Gurugram and The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel New Delhi where she spearheaded the marketing domain for the two properties together. In her new role, she will be driving

key campaigns and collaborative events to drive maximum mileage towards the brand and will also work towards positioning F&B restaurants.



**Praveen C**

Novotel Visakhapatnam Varun Beach has appointed Praveen C as the new Food and Beverage Manager. With 16 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Praveen brings a strong passion for excellence and a drive to achieve the highest quality and service standards. As the Food and Beverage Manager he will oversee F&B promotions, events, and marketing efforts, while managing multiple

outlets. He will collaborate with sales managers to plan promotions, set sales goals, and provide staff training.



**Aditya Sabharwal**

Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore has announced the appointment of Aditya Sabharwal as the new Revenue Manager. He will be responsible for ensuring the strategic goals of the hotel are met through a methodical approach to pricing, while maximizing revenues and yield. Before he was a Senior Revenue Analyst with Marriott International in the Goa Cluster handling the St. Regis Goa

Resort and has around 8 years of experience in various hotels like ITC, Oberoi Hotels & Resorts & Leela Palaces Hotels & Resorts.



**Sangeeth Janardhenan**

Sangeeth Janardhenan has been elevated to Food and Beverage Manager at Crowne Plaza Chennai Adyar Park. With over 15 years of experience across India he has been part of IHG Hotels for more than three years. He also worked with Oberoi Hotels and Marriott. He will continue to support day-to-day F&B Operations and indulge in understanding business requirements, shaping strong restaurants

& bars image gaining the brand equity, customer-value maximization and developing new business processes and revenue streams.

# Propelling Growth & Inspiring Success in the Hospitality Industry

## Ayon Bhattacharya, Vice President, West India, The Orchid Hotels & Resorts

Ayon Bhattacharya's career trajectory spans across three decades in various International and Indian Hotel chains. It has been one of consistent success with sound leadership, as demonstrated by his impressive tenure at The Orchid Hotel Pune. As a testament to his excellence in this role, he was elevated to the position of Vice President, West India, The Orchid Hotels and Resorts (Kamat Hotels India Ltd). Under his guidance the region has flourished, experiencing significant growth and acclaim in the hospitality industry. His exceptional leadership skills, combined with his extensive knowledge of the hotel industry, have been instrumental in driving the company's success.

Here he gives an insight into his leadership philosophy and management style in an interview with [Sharmila Chand](#).

### Take us through your journey as the GM of Orchid Pune and VP, West India.

In December 2017, I assumed the leadership of one of Kamat Khandan's biggest assets in Pune. At the time, the property was striving to establish its position in the competitive Pune hospitality landscape and was in the midst of transitioning to new technology, processes, and business outlooks.

Initially, I took a step back to analyze the gaps and assess the potential of the property, which was located in a strategic location and boasted the largest MICE facility catering to corporate, transient, MICE, and social segments. Through well-defined roadmaps and strategies tailored to each business segment, we experienced sizeable growth and took advantage of the increasing demand for commercial and business facilities in Baner and Balewadi.

However, our journey remains ongoing, and we must remain adaptable to evolving customer needs to continue making an impact in Pune. Last year, I was promoted to VP of West India, tasked with driving the growth and culture of the region's existing hotels and expanding our portfolio in West India through various transaction modules.

### How is the Orchid Group unique in the hospitality space?

Orchid Group is setting a new benchmark in the hospitality industry with its exceptional eco-friendly practices and sustainable growth approach. Our company's mission is to



prioritize our people and the environment over profit. Each of our hotels has been performing exceptionally well in their respective markets and segments.

Fort Jadhavgad, for instance, is not just a hotel but a unique experiential tourist destination. Our Namaskar culture embodies our core values of humility and being grounded. Our Lonavala hotel is one of the most highly-rated properties in the region, as evidenced by guest reviews.

Additionally, our Lotus Eco Beach Resorts in Dapoli, Murud and Benaulim Beach in Goa are both stunning and sought-after locations. We have consistently strived to enhance our

facilities and products in the past 5 years to stay relevant to our customers, and we will continue to be relentless in our pursuit of excellence.

In 2023 all our hotels have been awarded with the Travelers Choice Award by Trip Advisor a testimony of the fact of being the top 10% Hotels Globally operating at their respective markets

### How have you established the hotel and the resorts under your aegis?

The hotels were already established in their respective market, and my contribution was to infuse effective leadership. To me, leadership is not just about one person or their position, but rather a dynamic relationship between individuals built on trust, obligation, commitment, emotion, and a shared vision of the greater good.

True leadership is not merely about giving speeches or being liked; it is defined by tangible results rather than superficial attributes. Success hinges on the way in which a team operates as a cohesive unit. Even if there are many individual stars in the world, if they do not work together in unison, their efforts will be in vain.

### How did you combat challenges along the way?

Challenges are a part of any business and its all about holding onto the core values and adapting to situations providing crucial guidance in holding the business together is

what it matters. Flexibility and adaptability is our watchwords, which enables us to stay relevant to business during any crisis situation

Despite the pandemic, our businesses and assets continued to operate, and we scaled down and scaled up as required. Our ability to bounce back instantly when the markets started showing signs of improvement is a testament to our resilience and determination.

**Post pandemic, how has Orchid Hotels adapted to the changing industry landscape?**

Post pandemic, our key business indicators experienced a significant rebound, and we were able to return to if not surpass, our pre-pandemic levels. This success was due to our timely and proactive adaptation to the new post-pandemic norms.

**How does Orchid Hotels approach sustainability and environmental responsibility?**

For the past 25 years, practicing eco-

sensitive measures has been an integral part of our brand ethos. Our Chairman Dr. Kamat has pioneered and championed this for others in the industry to follow, we began endorsing and implementing various eco-friendly practices even when they were uncommon, and we can proudly claim to have been at the forefront of this movement.

**What is your work philosophy?**

My work philosophy is centered around setting ambitious dreams and committing to an even greater level of effort and dedication in pursuit of those dreams.

**What is the key to your success?**

The key to my success lies in prioritizing the establishment of a strong culture before implementing specific rules and regulations. A strong culture drives people and processes to achieve success. There is no definite successful module or formula, we need to take a module and make it successful

**What are your future plans?**

Kamat Hotels India Ltd is rapidly and strongly expanding its portfolio by incorporating new properties using different transaction models in the upscale and mid-market segment throughout the country and we look into adding more than 20 Hotels to our portfolio by 2024 which will be called 'Ira by Orchid Hotels'.

**What advice would you give to aspiring hotel managers?**

Aspiring hotel managers should demonstrate exemplary leadership by exhibiting 100% commitment to all stakeholders in their business, including guests, employees, vendors, and owners. They should prioritize delivering quality service and implement tools to measure key indicators for assessing satisfaction levels. Prompt corrective action should be taken based on these metrics. It's essential for hotel managers to lead by example and inspire their team to become leaders themselves instead of mere followers.

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# Safety of Women Guests

With celebrations of woman's day earlier this year, one saw the distinct visibility of woman empowerment. Today, there is a growing tendency among women to travel solo or with female companions. According to a report by IndiaSpend, over 75 million women in India, who are single out of choice, are socially and financially independent, which could be one of the reasons for solo-travel among them. These travellers not only want 'me-time' which could be the reason for solo travel, but they are also keen on exploring scenic and culturally rich destinations. For them health and safety also takes precedence. They want – and choose hotels which provide them safety. Thus hotels, to ensure their patronage, have to ensure their safety and well-being. With rising percentage of solo-women travellers, this has become essential for hotels industry. Ashok Malkani views the safety factor in the accommodations offered by the hospitality industry.

India, with its rich cultural heritage, scenic beauty and diverse traditions has been a destination of fascination for tourists. The Union Budget 2023 has also shed light on the promising future of tourism industry in India.

According to travel intelligence company, Adara, which has been recently acquired by RateGain, women travellers from developed countries visiting India, on a year-on-year (y-o-y) basis has, during the first quarter of 2023, risen to 49 per cent. The data is based on a study conducted on behaviour of travellers from nine countries, including the

destination.

Rajeev Kale, President and Country Head, Holidays, MICE, Visa, Thomas Cook (India) avers that more and more Indian women prefer solo travel. According to the company's internal data there has been a 10-12 per cent increase in demand for solo women travel as compared to pre-pandemic days. These solo travellers, according to Rajiv, want to experience a sense of freedom, rejuvenation and to pursue their passion – be it culture, cuisine or shopping.

Nitesh Chauhan, founder of Jugni Travels, discloses that solo women travellers are not

of 350 per cent. According to the data, the ratio of female travellers flying from developed countries to India has been on a consistent rise.

According to 2022 TravelReady survey by JourneyWoman, the world's original solo travel publication for women, these enthusiastic women travellers are willing to pour time and energy to venture into culture rich travel and tourism destinations. But at the same time they also want their health and safety needs to be prioritized, especially by hotel and lodging providers. 75% of JourneyWoman's 2022 survey respondents



US, UK, Australia, Canada, Japan, Malaysia, Russia, Germany and France.

More and more women are now travelling alone or stepping out without immediate company to feel empowered, enjoy freedom or just explore. Solo trips are on the rise for 'me-time' and offbeat destinations, and there is high pent-up demand and higher consumer confidence driving this segment.

According to a study conducted by Kayak, a travel search engine, 'me-time' is gaining popularity among Indian travellers, 38% of whom prefer to travel solo. The latest Global Travel Trends Report, from American Express Travel, disclosed that 58% of the travellers were willing to travel solo to visit their dream

city or country specific. In fact his company was getting a lot of solo women travellers from tier 2 cities now.

Female travel statistics compiled from multiple leading sources find that Female travel has not only increased in popularity, but it is also becoming the driving force for growth in the travel and tourism sector worldwide. As more women join in the phenomenon of seeing the entire world, the number of female clientele and solo travellers has risen at a fast pace.

Globally, over sixty thousand women travelled alone between 2018 and 2019. The number of pins for 'solo female travel' on Pinterest has seen a dramatic increase

said that safety for women and solo travelers was a top consideration factor in choosing a tour, accommodation, or retreat.

One of the key markets for the hotel industry are female travellers; and enormous efforts are put by them to improve their services for meeting the demands of female guests. With safety and comfort being of prime importance for solo-female guests, the success of hotels largely depends on how much more they can offer to their guests. In many hotels the entire floor is dedicated as Women's Only Floor. In many hotels, as per reservation, they provide a guest room with safe environment and specific amenities.



### Women Friendly Policies

The first hotel which launched Women Friendly Policies was Wyndham, which started program named “Women on their Way” in 1995. Indian five-star hotels have commenced to introduce women-only floor, room and specific area accommodation providing female personalised amenities and facilities including extra security. ITC Hotels was the first to conceptualise EVA rooms exclusively for women travellers in the 1990s. The concept has, since then, evolved further.

To meet the requirements of its female guests travellers, ITC Hotels has designated an entire floor in each of their luxury collection properties as an EVA Floor – a floor in which it is completely staffed and serviced by female employees from the point of welcome till departure.

Bhagwan Balani, General Manager, ITC Grand Central Mumbai, avers that the hotel’s Eva Floors comprised of two floors which were dedicated to single women travelers. They had special in-room amenities and an ‘all-women butler service’ to ensure security and privacy. Some of the facilities and amenities provided by hotels for women travellers on “women only” floors are:

- Provision of airport assistance on arrival.
- No male staff on women only floor.

Operation on the floor/floors is managed

by a female staff or employee.

- Separate elevator for “women only” floors.

- Some hotels provide separate Hotel Lobby Front Desk for check-in purpose on women’s floor.

- The décor of the rooms is also different, emphasizing femininity – like ladies grooming kit, jewellery box, facial steamer, etc.

At ITC a lady guest can ask for meal preferences, as per her diet, on a “dial a chef” programme. These hotels also have a complimentary cocktail hour.

Hotels also offer women-only or women-friendly activities like surfing lessons or painting or golfing.

JW Marriott has a separate check-in section on a particular floor in the hotel dedicated to single women travellers. The list of the single women travellers is shared with the hotel’s Loss Prevention team on a regular basis to ensure there is better patrolling and security. The hotels also screen calls which are made or received by all single lady travellers to ensure more safety. Additionally, they also have the facility of a lady doctor on call. At JW Marriott Mumbai all services, including in room dining and housekeeping, are carried out by lady associates on women-only floors.

DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Bangalore provides two tiered security checks for

women travellers at the entrance to enhance safety and security. Single lady travellers are allocated rooms closer to the elevator and in one specific wing of the hotel. These floors have additional security patrolling on all floors, and are covered by CCTV cameras. A lady security personal is available on all shifts.

At Ibis Mumbai Airport solo women’s room numbers are not shared with anyone for safety reasons and calls are traced before transferring. Rooms are allocated near brightly lit parts of the corridor covered by CCTV camera.

Most of the star hotels in India are taking measures to ensure safety of lady-guests. They are making extra effort to sensitize their staff when it comes to dealing with single female guests. Some of them are also conducting special training to cater to this segment. The staff is sensitized through training to the needs of all guests, particularly single lady travellers,

### Woman Friendly Hotel

An inspirational quote for women encouraging them to travel and feel enlightened goes thus: “Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do. So, throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your

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Suzy Strutner, Managing Editor at Netsuite advises ladies: “Solo travel not only pushes you out of your comfort zone, it also pushes you out of the zone of others’ expectations.”

With increasing number of solo women travellers there is need for increasing safe accommodation for solo-women travellers – on business or leisure. Some tips for becoming a female friendly hotel are:

**Airport pick up:** Arriving in an unfamiliar city and trying to locate your hotel is a trying experience, particularly for women. This is all the more so at night time. Airport pick-up removes the potential worry of finding their way, with luggage, to the hotel, particularly during the night or early morning.

**Discreet check-in:** The front desk attendant should be trained not to mention the name or room number of solo female guests loudly at the check-in time.

**Detail oriented trained staff:** You should train the staff to pay attention to the different needs of each female guest. Since women are believed to experience sleep problems, their rooms should be away from noisy guests.

**24-hour manned front desk and other security measures:** It is essential to maintain 24-hour manned front desk which can be contacted by intercom or by WhatsApp. Other security measures are double locks on room doors and room alarms.

**Provision of superior extras:** Ladies often use devices like hair dryers/straighteners. Besides this they may need an iron for pressing clothes, exercise mat, a make-up kit. Provision of these would elevate your hotel’s reputation among female travellers. Besides these you could also provide a selection of teas and coffees as well as magazines.

**Employ staff with knowledge of local sites and amenities:** Solo or group female guests are often desirous of knowing local activities available in the vicinity. Your information desk and other staff should be able to enlighten them about these.

Your hotel could also indulge in promotional activities like:

**Yoga or meditation classes:** Not just women but guests in general, would appreciate if your hotel provided yoga or meditation classes. These could also bring likeminded tourists together.

**Guided tours:** These would attract solo travelers as they would be able to meet other travellers.

**Hosting events:** congregating for events in common areas helps in bringing solo travellers together.

Besides these, women travellers would also like special facilities in their rooms. Provision of these facilities could raise the property’s status/standing among the females.

A full length mirror in the room enabling them to have a look at the entire dressed up self before going out would definitely be appreciated by all women.

They would also like to have countertop space for face soap and moisturizer.

Female sized robes would also be appreciated as male sized robes can result in tripping and falling down.

A container where they could keep their jewellery is also a necessity for women travelers. Jewels that don’t go into the hotel safe can be kept in this.

Besides this, being more attracted to luxurious services in comparison to males, they would appreciate if provided with high quality products like soaps, shampoo, cream, conditioner, and other beauty products. You can also give a luxurious touch to their stay by offering spa service. Take care of the hygiene of guests’ rooms.

### Solo-Women Travelers

While hotels make all efforts to maintain the safety of solo-women travellers, they too have to be careful and observe some precautionary steps while checking in.

Some of precautions suggested for them are:

**Keeping track of your luggage:** While you walk in to the lobby don’t leave the luggage as you step up to the desk for registration. Keep the luggage in front of you.

**Selection of room:** Under no circumstances should you occupy ground floor rooms. In hotel nomenclature, generally, first floors are referred to as the ground floor. Experts say that ground-floor rooms are the easiest to break in. Staying between 2nd and 6th floor is preferable as, according to these proficient people staying on the 6th floor or below is easier access for the fire department ladders in case of a fire.

**Inspect your room:** On being escorted to the room, it is preferable to check your room before closing the door. You can ask your chauffeur to wait at the door while you quickly scan every nook and corner, making sure that no surprises are waiting for you. Check all the locks and understand how they work, while the hotel staff is with you, so that you are not stuck in an unfavourable situation. Check to see that there are no loopholes in the windows and passageway doors that can be breached and broken into.

**Usage of VPN:** Activate a Virtual Privacy Network (VPN), which is provided by most computer security companies, for your laptop or phone, instead of using the public Wi-Fi of the hotel as the latter would enable everyone to access all the information on your device. Activating a VPN provides more security for your devices and the information stored there.

**Don’t publicise your room number:** Revealing your room number or name to strangers can compromise your safety. Refrain from calling out your room number in common areas like lobby, waiting room or restaurants.

**Don’t answer doorbell:** Unless you have ordered room service or are expecting visitors, be vigilant while answering the doorbell. If someone, claiming to be working for the hotel, rings the doorbell you can call down to the front desk for verification.

**Store valuables in hotel safe:** You may wear your jewellery while travelling out but even your laptop is valuable as it may have confidential information. So store that also in the hotel safe. While storing valuables in the safe make sure that that the room safe has a changeable combination lock.

**Be vigilant while paying:** While paying by credit card make sure that no one is taking a sneak peek at your pin code.

### Conclusion

Women travellers – solo or in groups – are registering an increasing percentage of travel and tourism industry and hotels have thus to sate all their specialized needs – particularly, safety – for them to patronize the property. However, while the hotels are making all efforts to make the property a safe haven for them, the women travelers too have to take precautionary methods for their safety. As the wise people claim: it takes both hands to clap! ■

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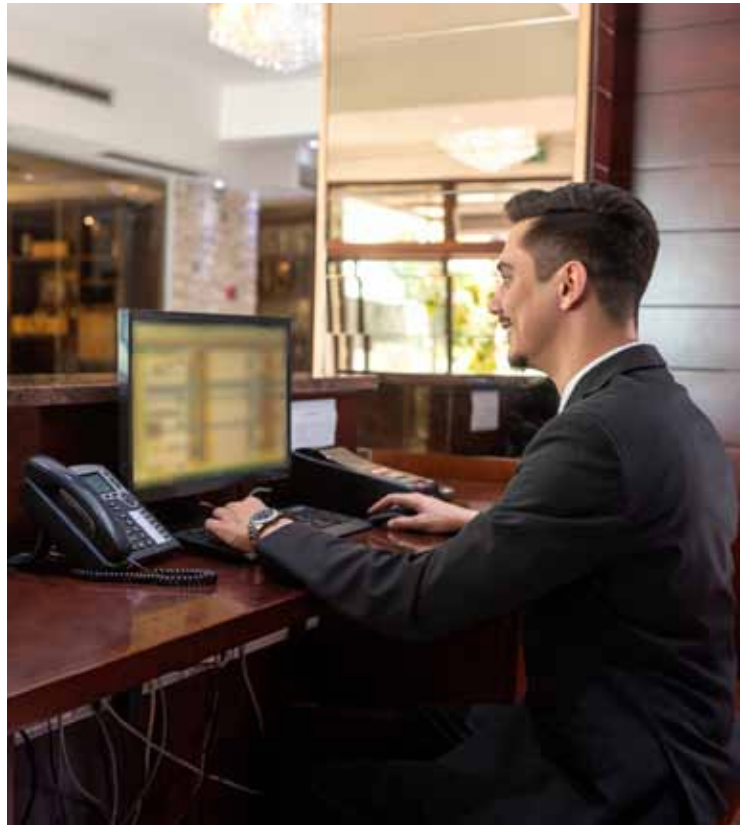


NO CHIPPED EDGES



# Skilled Staff Needed to Boost Hotels

Post pandemic has seen a revival of travel and tourism industry resulting in an increase in the influx of guests in hotels. This, in turn has increased the need for skilled staff in the industry which had seen many of the trained employees bid adieu to the industry forever. With the hotel industry set to escalate, not just to its previous levels but exceed far above it, there is an urgent need for staff which is trained in all the intricacies of guest satisfaction to ensure growth of the property. And since the industry has gone through changes which have necessitated adoption of advanced technology, the employees must have, or acquire, the skill and know-how of these technological advancements. These would gratify the guest and help in increasing the popularity of the property. **Ashok Malkani** takes a look at increase in travel and tourism, its effect on hotel industry and the qualifications and talents needed for the hotel employee currently.



Increase in travel and tourism sector affects hospitality industry in a positive manner. According to Mohit Makhija, Senior Director of Crissil Ratings, "Leisure travel had gained traction post the Delta wave last fiscal, while business travel has started picking up steadily after a much milder Omicron wave in January 2022." Augmentation in travel & tourism has boosted the demand in the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Events) segment of the hospitality industry.

According to Crissil Ratings Report there would be an improvement in international travel in the second half of this fiscal which, in turn, will strengthen hospitality industry's performance. According to Makhija, occupancy which was 68 per cent in 2020 would rise to 73 per cent this fiscal. The average room rate (ARR), due to the demand and supply equation, is expected to increase 8-10 per cent.

The report further adds that revenue will increase 23 per cent over the pre-pandemic level, riding on a strong recovery in business travel and continued traction in leisure travel.

Vishal Lonkar, General Manager- Business Development, Renest Hotels & Resort is of the opinion that the hotel industry would gain its sheen in 2023 and everything, from occupancy to ARR will improve mainly due to the domestic leisure travel. The international tourists – business as well as leisure will also further rise.

According to India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), the Tourism and Hospitality Industry in India is growing at a robust rate. The travel market is projected to reach \$125 billion by FY 2027 from an estimated \$ 75 billion in 2020. The influx of international tourists in India is projected to reach 30.5 million by 2028. This is a reflection of the booming growth and potential of the hospitality sector in India, which is now rising, after the lull created by the pandemic.

**Employment Potential**

However one problem that was a vexatious issue in the pre-pandemic days and still continues to be a disconcerting dilemma is: Attrition.

From times immemorial hospitality industry has been labour intensive. Some time back, Jobsplus in a survey estimated that about 25-30 per cent of the skilled and experienced workforce of the hospitality industry, due to the pandemic, have disconnected with the industry permanently

with no intention of rejoining the industry. Elie Younes, Global Chief Development Officer, Radisson Hotel Group, believes that about 25% of the entire hotel workforce left the industry during the pandemic.

If one considers only the branded hotel segment, having about 1,500,000 keys across India, employing about 1.4 million people it would mean that the shortfall is of about 3,50,000 skilled employees, now that the hospitality industry is limping back to normalcy.

Hotel companies tendency during the pandemic was to reduce employees. In other words: to be lean. Indian Hotel Company Limited, in April 2020, reduced its workforce from 1.53 staff ratio to a room to 1.14.

However, with the emergence of new customer segments like staycations, bleasure travel, et al in 2022, the industry witnessed a recovery. With the revival of business travel and MICE events the next 7-8 years are expected to see significant opportunities for growth and development for hospitality players.

This would mean that the hotel industry would need more talented employees. Even presently the industry is finding it difficult to find skilled and dedicated employees. The shortfall, could pose a significant threat to the growth of the industry.

Due to new openings and the attrition during the pandemic there could be problems not only during the recovery period but even in the forthcoming years of growth of the industry. As per estimates of Job Plus study, the need for skilled employees would grow at an estimated CAGR of 5.5% till 2029. This means that there would be an additional requirement of 100,000- 150,000 skilled workforce year on year in the banded hotel segment alone.

World Travel & Tourism Council predicts that over the next 10 years the hotel industry would need about 20 million young people who are willing to work for long hours as well as on weekends.

Divya Krishan, VP- Commercial, The Job Plus is of the opinion that talent shortfall

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in the hospitality sector is a significant threat for the post pandemic recovery of the hospitality industry. According to Job Plus study the growth in the employment segment of the industry would be at a CAGR of 5.5% (which would account for new openings as well as attrition) till 2029.

### Risk to Growth

CEO of Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC), Rajan Bahadur, has disclosed that currently, hospitality industry is facing over 60 percent demand-supply gap in manpower. He opines that with hotels expanding at a rate 20 to 25 percent per year, the shortage of skilled manpower is being fore grounded at each level of the hospitality sector. THSC stresses on the need for skilled manpower. Rajan declares that post-pandemic, the world has seen a major skill supply shortages in the hospitality sector. It is estimated that a shortage of about 350,000 workers would hit the sector.

The biggest problem of shortage of skilled employees is the non-availability of quality customer service which is the key factor for the property to attain competitive advantage and retaining the customer base. A decline in customer satisfaction would result in tarnishing the reputation of the hotels or restaurant.

If there is a shortage of skilled labour it would result in the current workers having to put in longer hours, which could lead to their frustration and possibility of seeking employment in some other sector. Unskilled labour could also have a flow-on effect. In other words, when

one team member underperforms, other team members automatically become less incentivised to perform at their best.

### Investing in Training

As there is a renewed surge of tourists hotels all across the globe are looking for talented and skilled staff. Marriott International, for instance, is working with state governments across India to scout for new talent and train them, while Lemon Tree Hotels is looking to hire from alternate industries.

Ranju Alex, area vice president for Asia Pacific at Marriott, is of the opinion that while India doesn't have any shortage of labour, it has a scarcity of skilled labour. He claims that Marriott is partnering with local governments, especially in locations like the Northeast and other parts of India, to add fresh talent and train them for six months before bringing them onboard on a full-time basis. He has disclosed that the company was looking to build a pipeline to create about 10,000 incremental jobs for its upcoming hotels.

Royal Orchid Hotels has its own hotel management college where it teaches multi-skilling. After opening about 15 hotels during the pandemic, the company began to promote a lot of its team members to these new properties, which helped develop people internally and promoted them to heads-of-departments.

Indian Hotels Company Ltd, (which operates Taj Hotels), has opened 16 skilling centres for training 100,000 people in the hospitality industry by 2030. At present it needs 28,000 employees, which may further

increase to 35,000.

Brands like The Leela are investing more and more in training and upskilling their managers.

Founder and Chief Executive of the Indian School of Hospitality, Dilip Puri, believe that hospitality companies will have to spread out their recruitment efforts beyond hotel schools. He is of the opinion that besides the need for training, the industry also needs to change the perception of long hours. It needs to offer better working conditions, better work-life balance and pay parity, he declares. As far as work-life is concerned it may be mentioned that Hyatt Mumbai have a policy to offer their employees a five-day week or, in other words, give them eight days off in a month.

Every Hyatt hotel in India will have the freedom to structure its leave policy in line with local laws and regulations from this year, discloses Roopesh Rajan, area director, human resources, west and south India, Hyatt Hotels Corp.

Marriott India's employees have a 40-hour work week and hour long lunch breaks. It's a six-day week but managers are asked to make sure staff don't exceed shift timings

Starwood Hotels & Resorts, which operates a mix (under management and franchised arrangements) of 47 hotels in India, with 37 more in the pipeline, is thinking of providing more part-time options for women. Ritu Verma, regional director, HR, South Asia, at Starwood avers that this was aimed at improving gender diversity. The company has also introduced seven days of paternity leave and three days of

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bereavement leave for its directly managed 5,000-plus employees.

Natwar Nagar, Managing Director of HVS Executive Search in India declared that these benefits were long pending for employees in hotels. He believes that this was a positive step which provided equality to employees in the hotel industry as compared to employees in other industries. He avers that this is a fundamental change and companies needed to work towards changing the face of the Indian hospitality sector by becoming pro-employee.

### Necessary Skills Needed

Added to the shortfall in experienced skilled professionals, the hotel industry is dealing with the uphill battle to attract new talent in the future pipeline as there is staggeringly low enrolment rates in Hospitality Management courses, which have traditionally been the funnels feeding into the talent pool.

One of the most important skills for hospitality employees is customer service. How staff serve customers can have a defining impact on business success, particularly in an industry where customers frequently leave reviews online.

The employees have to be well trained. According to Torrens University, Australia, the 10 essential skills for hotel employees are:

**Customer service:** According to consumer research, 86% of customers agree that good

customer service turns one-time clients into long-term brand champions. Great customer service involves not only in being a friendly and empathetic communicator but also responding quickly, listening to feedbacks and thinking proactively to anticipate customers' needs.

**Teamwork:** This ensures the satisfaction of the guest and, thus, the success of a property. To be a good team member, you need to respect, hear, empathise with and communicate with your team members.

**Organisation and time management:** One has to work efficiently under time pressure. You must thus think ahead, delegate and prioritise tasks and manage your limited time effectively.

**Communication:** A successful hospitality professional is adept across the whole range of soft skills. Verbal and non-verbal communicative skills are essential.

**Problem solving and initiative:** Hospitality industry has several issues that need to be solved immediately and one has to take the initiative to tackle these at short notice because customer service is important when it comes to brand loyalty.

**Resilience:** Hospitality is a high pressure industry, where employees often have to not only work long hours but also, at times, deal with problematic guests. Thus resilience which makes you a calmer and happier person is a necessity to succeed in

the industry.

**Attention to detail:** Employees have to pay attention to every minute detail like ensuring that every necessity is available in the room.

**Conflict management:** Resolving conflicts with customers in a way that leaves them feeling satisfied can have a positive impact on the rate of customer return. Conflict among the team members can disrupt the flow of business operations affecting the reputation of the hotel.

**Emotional intelligence:** This is the foundation for effective communication, teamwork and listening.

**Industry knowledge:** Understanding the industry landscape will help you navigate where you want your career to go. Knowing the hospitality brands will help you to understand your options. It will enable you to know the importance and essentials of online booking platforms, Apps and OTAs

### Technology

Constant technological advances make it essential that the hotel employees to be aware of the latest developments taking place. As the consumers become accustomed to different latest technologies in every aspect of their lives, the organisations expect the employees in the hospitality industry to also develop a working knowledge of the new and improved technologies available.

The employees have to be aware of operation of these technological developments. Though hospitality industry thrives on maintaining a personal touch with the guests, technology is enabling the hotels to serve them better by offering more efficient service with the help of advanced technology.

The employees thus have to be familiar with some of technological trends that are shaping the industry. One has to be aware of how to operate the software involved in the operation of contactless check-in, digital cashless tipping, cloud computing, service automation through AI, et. al.

### Conclusion

While the hospitality industry has to make all efforts, post pandemic when there is a necessity to attract more skilled staff, there is also a need for the employees to be adept in several developments that are taking place in the technological world. ■

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# Wedding Segment for Revenue Growth

By Sharmila Chand

After the big hiatus, the hospitality industry is seeing significant growth in wedding banquet operations. There is no doubt that the Indian Wedding industry is massive and one of the key business segments to contribute towards hotel catering and banqueting revenues. Several factors contribute to make this segment a profitable one, namely Décor, Food & Beverage and Service. Hence, the industry leaders aim to keep a step ahead in curating personalised wedding experiences to create a niche in the market.

Here we have hospitality stalwarts sharing their unique selling propositions for the segment, highlighting F&B trends and giving tips on how best to capture the market.

## USP in Wedding Planning and Operations

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

At Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla, we believe in blending timeless elegance with mesmerizing venues, extravagant decor,



“While there is an extensive interest in the international-style carts and menus, there is an equal bend towards hyper-regional cuisines as well. The couples want the best of both worlds, quite literally.”

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

tailor-made experiences and innovative culinary offerings to curate a fairy tale wedding. Our diverse indoor and outdoor venues can host wedding events with up to 700 guests. We have recently renovated our spaces to add that extra vibrancy, warmth and eye appeal to the wedding festivities.

A few of the key highlights of our wedding offerings include:

Thematic experiences such as ‘Haldi by the poolside’ and ‘Pheras under the stars’ for picturesque setups.

Diverse curations range from the traditional ‘SajanKoth Thali’ to course-wise progressive dinners.

Regional cuisine-based menus for community weddings, by bringing in local chefs from the mainland.

Specialist event curators with an eye to detail for rituals for community-based festivities, such as Anand Karaz, Nikaah, Kalyanam & more.

**Biswajit Biswas, General Manager, Fort Jadhavgad, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

Royal weddings at Fort Jadhavgad are so extravagant that some might even mistake it for arrogance. But that’s just the surface story, once you experience the warm hospitality, you will fall in for it and everything about it.

Royal Maratha Welcome with Dhol,Tutari and Aarti Tika – our bespoke experiences.

This is Maharashtra’s first fort museum Gadh Heritage Hotel where the Aai Museum is Traditional and Royal Wedding Venue.

300 years old Lord Ganesha Temple within the Fort for grand rituals and traditions.

Sprawling lawns, which can accommodate around 3,000 people with Royal Fort in background

The rooftop poolside dining facility which would serve best for small gatherings and pre-nuptial functions like Haldi, Mehendi and Cocktail parties.

Wedding Barat Welcome on the Elephant.



Very famous for the Pre wedding Shoot as lifetime memories.

Highly influenced self operated audio tour to know the history of the Fort Jadhavgad.

**Moize Rocque, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Westin Mumbai Garden City**

At The Westin Mumbai Garden City we aim to give priority by making it the exclusive event at the Westin Grand Ballroom with only one event per day. This allows for a focused team as there is one event, keeping them involved in every aspect of the event and even extended the pre function area for the baraat welcome at the Ballroom. Additionally we offer attached lawn area with the ballroom to provide a seamless indoor and outdoor experience to the wedding events.

**Latest Trend in Food and Beverage for Wedding Banquets**

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

Couples nowadays are ditching the traditional wedding menu patterns and requesting dishes that narrate their story of togetherness. Our chefs at Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla personally interact

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with the couple to integrate food stories with thematic menus. This could revolve around the first date, the heirloom recipes, partner's favourite, valentine's nostalgia and many more, so that the guests connect with them in a unique manner.

As far as trends are concerned, the well-travelled millennial couples ask for plant-based & vegan options, late night snacks, grab and go miniature snack stations, grazing tables, progressive dinners, vintage cakes, innovative cocktails, dramatic live stations & more. While there is an extensive interest in the international-style carts and menus, there is an equal bend towards hyper-regional cuisines as well. The couples want the best of both worlds, quite literally.

Additionally our strengths in food and beverage operations are:

Our culinary team boasts of 40+ chefs from across the country with a flair for curating menus for regional and international cuisines. We also associate with local chefs from regions across India to bring in real flavours for community weddings. This includes delectable delights such as Benarasi Chaats, Kolkata-style Kathi rolls, Rajasthani Lal Maas, South Indian Malabar Parottas & more.

We focus extensively on creating sustainable yet Instagram-able set-ups to break the clutter of the buffet market.

The live stations are always a treat to the eye as well as the palate, with spectacular props, layout and action sequences for dramatic effect.

**Biswajit Biswas, General Manager, Fort Jadhavgadh, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

Vegetarian or vegan food culture is on rise now days with personalised menu and traditional delicacies. Themed Bars with wedding cocktails/ mock tails with trendy glassware and it could be a showstopper at the reception evening.

**Moize Rocque, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Westin Mumbai Garden City**

The wedding banquets are continuously evolving with each couple wanting to make their special day unique and



“Providing packages with inclusions to attract the wedding guest and focus on creating unique immersive experiences plays a significant role”

**Moize Rocque, Director of Sales and Marketing, The Westin Mumbai Garden City**

memorable. Currently the trend has been to create themed events for the wedding with the decor, cuisine, entertainment etc, all complimenting the theme. Additionally there is a demand for Healthy menu options, not to forget the patrons desiring for a variety of world exotic cuisines to be experienced over live stations.”



“Vegetarian and vegan food culture is on a rise now days with personalised menu and traditional delicacies”

**Biswajit Biswas, General Manager, Fort Jadhavgadh, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

## Wedding Banquets for Additional Revenue Generation

**Shuvendu Banerjee, General Manager, Crowne Plaza New Delhi Okhla**

It is extremely vital to identify under-utilized areas in your hotel that can be further transformed into thematic event spaces with mesmerizing decor & aura.

I would also recommend adding the natural spaces such as pretty gardens, refreshing poolside to the indoor banqueting facilities to create a magical canvas for the guests to paint their mesmerizing weddings.

One of the evergreen ideas is to create breakaway sections in a huge banquet space that makes them apt for both intimate ceremonies as well as big fat weddings.

I would also suggest identifying ancillary revenue generation options such as wedding cakes, customized invites & sweet boxes, pre-bridal beauty & spa packages & more from the upselling point of view.

**Biswajit Biswas, General Manager, Fort Jadhavgadh, Kamat Hotels India Ltd.**

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# Crockery Selection

It is said that food is first eaten or for that matter savoured with eyes, that is, if the food is nice to look at then the appetite grows. For the food to look nice a lot of importance is given to the plate in which it is dished out so that it is good to look at and at the same time convenient for the customer to have food from.

No wonder, in a hotel's or a restaurant's kitchen and as well as in hotel's room service, crockery plays a very important role. Presenting your food to your guest can be a tricky proposition, especially if you are not used to making it look pretty on the plate.

Before you begin styling your food, you need to decide on what you will present it on. You wouldn't want all your efforts in the kitchen to be ruined by your choice of plates. Plates should complement your food presentation and heighten your culinary skills.

## Adding Delight to Eating

The various types of crockery used in hotels' and restaurants' kitchens and hotels' room service depends on the type of menu/ cuisine that is being served. For example,

the requirement of crockery for soup varies from the crockery required for serving pastas (depending on its nature-consistency and texture of food).

If the right crockery selection is made for the right food then this facilitates the eating experience, as ideally eating should not only involve satiating of hunger and palate, but also a celebration of all the senses.

Good food with appropriate crockery selection could result in wonders. The right selection of crockery helps to put the right impression on the guest, making them delightful and to think about a repeat visit to the establishment, which may eventually



increase the number of footfalls at the restaurant.

Nowadays, crockery is used extensively in India in the hospitality sector and due to the evolving hotel industry, the use of crockery has been not only restricted to serve food but also extended in terms of eye appealing presentations and in terms of serving food in a style which lasts long in the minds of the guests and gives value addition to the overall meal experience.

As compared to the earlier half of the last century, the recommendation and buying process of the crockery has become very important in the hospitality sector, which takes into account of the hospitality establishment's theme, interior decor, etc. Overall, institutional crockery purchase has become a more professional exercise for both the buyer and the seller.

Crockery brands now have unique features to showcase. Preferably, they give opportunity to the Chef to present his signature dish in something which combines and completes the array of dishes coming straight from the kitchen to the table.

The shape and design of the crockery is rated quite highly in the process of crockery selection. Although, durability and shipping together plays a vital role in maintaining the crockery for long, more emphasis on the selection process of crockery is placed on how the crockery will bring life to the food and the venue, and how different will it be from others in the competition.

### The Crockery Range

The requirement of crockery in hotels varies according to the operational status. For example, star hotels' banquets and room service spaces require economical crockery in porcelain, etc. For premium dining spaces, premium lounges, bars, etc. more expensive crockery is preferred in Bone China and Perception China. The high end premier international brands are preferred for these spaces.

The various types of crockery being used in a hotel's restaurants or other restaurants are salad plate, appetiser plate, soup dishes, pasta plate, round dinner plate, rectangular or oval dish, simple wooden boards, serving platters, enamelware, stoneware, pewter, dessert plate, etc. Besides in tandem with the operations, the type of crockery chosen should be in harmony with the theme, cuisine, menu and decor of the restaurant, whether be it a stand-alone restaurant or a restaurant in a hotel. But most importantly, the choice of crockery perhaps depends on the types of food which is expected to be served on it.

For instance, in an Italian restaurant deep dishes would be used for the food as on a flatter plate it would not be easy for the guest to have food. Another example would be if the restaurant is serving oriental food and the theme of the restaurant relates to red colour, then the dishes can be handmade and be red in colour.

Similarly, for hot beverages, cups or thermal glasses are used, and for solid food items, pasta plates or flat plates are used. Similarly, salad plates are generally used in high-end restaurants for serving various salads, while appetiser plate is the right choice for serving various appetisers like fish, chips or tandoori chicken tikka, etc. B&B plates are the right option for placing breads and butter that accompany the main course, cheese plates are generally used for the serving of cheese, fish plate can be used for serving of an array of dishes, soup dishes are the preferred choice for serving of soups, dessert plate is for serving various desserts, etc.

The location of serving also influences the crockery selection. For example, if the food is to be served in room for the guest, then the dishes have to be smaller in size so that they can fit into the hot box and the food can be presented in a single shot without disturbing the guest. These are some of the various factors to be kept in mind while choosing from the wide range of crockery options available in the market.

Positioning the right crockery products into each potential market segment, companies do offer different brands for the Indian market. Though tableware technology does not change or move fast, unlike the technology in telecommunications or electronics industry, companies still need to use latest and state-of-the-art technology to produce innovative products.




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### Buying Crockery

Proper training manuals are provided by companies in terms of serving of food items. Starting with the selection of the crockery, storage of crockery is also discussed and briefed during various training sessions conducted with the operations team. Systematic schedule for proper record of the breakages is also prepared in order to maintain the stock and financials. Purchasing is eventually done once the best quoted price is placed with regard to the quality of the product.

Consultants use different parameters for recommending to a hotel's kitchen/restaurant the supplier or the different types of crockery. First step in this direction is to identify the concept of the outlet, its cuisine and style of service, which would lead to the selection of the required crockery through well reputed suppliers.

Consultants along with culinary team at the property connect with the crockery supplier to ensure that the hotel gets the optimum deal in terms of products, replacements, costs and discounts and after sales service. This is done through the reputation build up over time with the vendors and keeping in loop their involvement with hospitality companies to whom the products are being sold.

Besides the operations where the crockery is applied to, and the F&B options at the outlet or outlets for which the crockery is to be supplied, the cost/budget of crockery in question, durability of that crockery, theme/ décor of the restaurant in question all have to taken into consideration before opting for the ordering of the crockery.

The planning of crockery in hotels' kitchen/restaurants depends on various things like number of restaurants/ types of restaurants (in terms of cuisines), cost of crockery, durability, the theme and décor of the outlet concerned. The other parameters to consider are temperature at which they are likely to subject to, the weight of the crockery, and terms for payment, all contribute towards arriving at the final decision of their purchase

While designing the concept of a restaurant all the things are kept in mind like theme, cuisine, furniture, furnishing, etc. and one of the crucial parts of the concept is the tableware. For a formal restaurant, the plates chosen are generally white in colour, although their shape and size can vary. For a casual restaurant the plates can be of various colours as long as they go along with the theme of the restaurant.

Further, while ordering for crockery the kitchen's/ restaurants' design & layout should be kept in mind, so as to enable efficient stacking, storage, serving, retrieval and washing of the crockery. As the crockery is the main tool for serving the best quality food in a better manner so for that, the proper layout is to be done, which would ensure that efficient stacking, storage, retrieval and washing could take place.

The cost of chinaware contributes greatly towards the costing of the restaurant so a lot of importance should be given to its storage and stacking. In star hotels there are different dedicated storages given to glassware, chinaware and equipment. There is also a dedicated dish landing area where the soiled plates are brought from the guest's table for washing with a specific detergent and sanitiser, which is not harmful for the plates. Later they are stacked in different racks and covered for later use. The most important thing to keep in mind while placing the order for chinaware is the easy replacement of them as chinaware is prone to chipping off and breaking.

### The Technology

Traditionally, crockery was and still is made of ceramic materials such as earthenware, stoneware or porcelain. However they could also be made of other materials such as wood, pewter, silver, gold, glass, acrylic and plastic. Now these different materials

of crockery could be best used as per the theme and design of the place. For example, the unbreakable crockery made of acrylic or melamine definitely gives an edge where there is possibility of rough use. Leading brands keep flexibility when it comes to accommodating change of design, colour, and theme, with the use of technology.

Due to advancements in technology, these days the process of making crockery has become very intricate and scientific. The plates are made with machines and moulds and baked to certain temperature for strength and durability so as to last long. There are certain themed restaurants which still use handmade plates but they are very costly and less durable as compared to the chinaware made in factories.

Various factors drive technological developments in the manufacture and design of crockery and suppliers usually use the inputs/feedback from hotel's kitchens/ restaurants to improve their products.

The crockery marketed to hotels, restaurants, etc. each has its product strengths. For example, some of these products are very India specific and are not used worldwide. The product selection should be done after careful feedback from F&B Managers and Chefs regarding the style and size of the crockery. New developments and improvements in the realm of crockery are an ever evolving process and companies nowadays are very sensitive to the new requirements and concepts generated by the industry. Suppliers share the feedback on a continual basis with their associate companies overseas who then implement the changes and develop crockery, based on those specific requirements. It is associate company's sustained endeavour to design and develop products as per the changing concepts and requirements.

The most important thing which drives product strategy is based on customer's satisfaction. Thus much effort is placed on research to gather the data and get back with the product and service that fulfills the requirement. This helps in ensuring competitive position. The designs and products must also keep up with the market trend. Thus, it is important for to always keep developing new designs of ceramic tableware as well as be innovative enough to be among the leaders in the industry. ■



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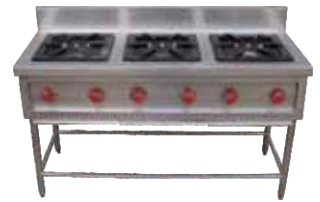
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# Fazlani Nature's Nest

## A Wellness Retreat!



By Sharmila Chand

Fazlani Nature's Nest is a hidden gem nestled on 68 acres of lush greens, offering breath-taking views of Andra Lake and the majestic Sahyadri hills in Maharashtra. This enchanting abode truly embodies the essence of nature. Conveniently located near the popular hill station town of Lonavala in Maharashtra, Fazlani Nature's Nest offers easy accessibility from both Mumbai and Pune, making it an ideal destination for those seeking a serene getaway. This retreat exudes an ambiance of a peaceful sanctuary, providing guests with an opportunity to reconnect with nature and rejuvenate their mind, body, and soul.

The property boasts diverse flora and fauna, organic plantations, yoga sessions, forest bathing experiences, animal-assisted therapies, and a range of other activities. What sets this remarkable resort apart is its philosophy behind every experience, offering bespoke packages for holistic wellness.

The wellness journey begins with the mind and gradually extends to physical well-being. The wellness modules

focus on holistic healing to achieve desired results, incorporating Ecotherapy, Ayurveda, Naturopathy, Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT), homegrown wellness cuisines, and environmental activities. This comprehensive approach creates a sustainable path towards physical and mental well-being.

### Accommodation

Fazlani Nature's Nest offers luxurious living in the lap of nature, combining the best of modern conveniences. It houses 76 luxury rooms and suites along with a 64-seat restaurant and a 2700 sq ft banquet hall.

Stylishly modern in decor and finished with opulent detailing, the premium guest



rooms and suites feature spacious layouts, luxury amenities and large windows that reveal stunning views of the lake and manicured gardens.

The premium suites feature plush beds with luxurious linen, marble-accented bathrooms, a rain shower, and mesmerising lake views. An added attraction with the suites is a personal butler and private yoga sessions.

All rooms and suites have amazing unhindered views where nature is all around you and add to the overall feeling of every sense being pampered.

### The Food Philosophy

The Ayurvedic concepts practiced at Fazlani Nature's Nest incorporate all the dimensions that contribute to the concept of holistic wellbeing. An Ayurvedic diet is based on the individual's body type which is determined by studying personality, response to factors like stress, weather and taking into account the season and time of day when a particular food is eaten.

The nurturing kitchen at Fazlani Nature's Nest offers a mindful dining experience. The menu is thoughtfully curated based on a balance of all elements of a healthy diet. The thoughtful approach to eating is always with an emphasis on fresh, organic and seasonal. The farm-to-fork experience where fruits, vegetables, spices and a wealth of local produce are gathered from the resort's own gardens is delicious, nurturing and bursting with flavours.

The hearty dining experience at the restaurant, 'The Hive' includes world cuisine and local delicacies in line with holistic eating. The Hive is an eclectic global cuisine open garden restaurant that offers an enchanting dining experience in natural surroundings.

Additionally there is a "Poolside Health Bar" to chill with a range of freshly squeezed organic juices to healthy and non-alcoholic mocktails. The consumption of alcohol and smoking is a strict no at the resort.

The dining experience completes with a new star venue, 'Satvik' restaurant where "Pathya" or Local authentic fresh food is curated and prepared by local home chefs



of the nearby village. They not only cook in front of the guests, but also let guests lend their hand in cooking, making the whole experience so personal and memorable. One sees forgotten freshly ground spices and kitchen tools being used like the traditional "Sil batta" and more. The food is delicious, the chefs weave their magic, and you have the best of both worlds.

### The Spaces

The retreat offers lush green lawns and open spaces for training programmes, outdoor activities and children's games along with a state-of-the-art banquet hall for seminars, social functions and corporate parties. The hall can be divided into two separate venues to organise events different events simultaneously.

For its corporate clients, Fazlani Nature's Nest offers a variety of solutions that not only deepens the bonding among team members but also helps them to discover a different perspective on life and experience how it affects their mind, emotions and behaviour. Fazlani's 'Conscious Change Retreats' empowers every individual to unlock their hidden potential to make the most of their journey together.

The retreat offers inspiring venues from

alfresco lakefront gardens to farmland settings. Besides mind boggling venues, Fazlani Nature's Nest in-house specialists can tailor-make boot camps. Nature trails walks, dynamic yoga, group exercise activities and stretching sessions can be incorporated during breakouts or pre/post meetings.

Guided meditation, digital wellness tips and relaxation zones can be incorporated in meeting programme.

### Amarnine Medi Spa

The retreat draws on Ayurveda, Naturopathy, western and oriental massage techniques as well exercises, and lifestyle choices to help guests preserve their ability to enjoy life to the fullest. Steam rooms and Hot Saunas are well maintained.

Besides the tastefully done-up Healing Spa and Wellness Centre, Fazlani Nature's Nest is also equipped with a gym and a unique outdoor 3-tier swimming pool for ladies, gents and children in a spectacular outdoor setting.

The healthcare itinerary created for each guest encompasses a range of procedures using a combination of Ayurveda and Naturopathy and Western methodologies to offer the best



rebalancing and rejuvenating experiences as per their body constitution.

## In-house Activities

### Nature Trails

The nature trail at Fazlani Nature's Nest is a 3.5 km short but enduring hiking trail on the periphery of the lake. Guests are led to walk into the greenery, rejoice over bird songs, spot butterflies, and encounter magnificent flora and fauna around the retreat.

### Fishing for Weal

Fishing at the Retreat is not just about catching a fish but it aims at practicing mindfulness while you fish for wellness, on and off the water. A ritual that is way more than just throwing the rod out and waiting for a big catch helps you let go of your worries and be in the moment.

### Self-Discovery with Horses

A significant and unique wellness therapy at Fazlani Nature's Nest is 'Equine Therapy' that incorporates horses into a therapeutic and spiritual healing process.

### The Art of Birding

Explore the vibrant world of the feathered friends here at the property as you will encounter more than 200 birds in their natural habitat found not just flitting



in the air, but also on the surface of the lake and stealthily hiding in the tall trees.

### Tour of Organic Farming

Part of the joy of eating at Fazlani Nature's Nest is to fill your basket from the organic farm nourished by nature. Spread across 10-acres, Ahara farms at Fazlani Nature's Nest bear a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, and spices.

### Tour of Rose Garden

Here the rose garden, one of the largest in India with high-quality roses of myriad hues too offers guests a fantastic experience.

### Reboot. Refresh. Revive

Start your day with Yoga and meditation guided session. Spend leisurely hours playing indoor games like table tennis, chess, carrom and other board games. For thrill seekers, there are ample of fun activities –cycling, kite flying, basketball, cricket, football, volleyball or experience riding in a bullock cart and meet the retreat's pet farm animals.

There is horse riding, kayaking, cooking demonstrations, pottery, trekking, art

classes, stroll in the bird park or just lie back in a hammock during the day as you soak in the amazing view that surrounds the retreat on three sides.

## Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

The retreat's owners place paramount emphasis on sustainability and responsible tourism. Besides large-scale organic farming, all waste generated in the kitchen is recycled. Every care is taken to ensure that no pollutants enter the clear water of the lake or disturbs the flora and fauna of the wilderness all around.

Renewable energy sources like solar is of paramount importance here. The retreat uses solar energy for operational purposes. Moreover, using light fixtures that consume significantly less energy and ample use of natural light through places like open air restaurant has helped the property to ensure less carbon emissions. One can find Pathway Lamps in the hotel which are sensor based.

It converts all its organic waste into vermicompost which is then used as manure across the farm. Roughly around 150 to 200 kgs of waste is processed on a daily basis. The retreat has moved away from plastic and depends on alternatives like bamboo, or glass to store drinking water.

Localization is a key aspect in Fazlani's sustainable efforts. The property utilises produce like vegetables and fruits that it grows organically on 35 acres of its farmland. This also results in significantly reducing transportation time to source raw material to be used in its restaurant which ultimately means less energy consumption.

The retreat employs staff from the local village to safeguard the livelihood of the villagers. They work in different sections like the farm, engineering, front office, food and beverage (F&B) etc. There is also a CBSE-affiliated school within the retreat that offers free education and boarding and lodging to 150 homeless children.

Fazlani Nature's Nest has created a rainwater harvesting pit with a capacity of more than 10 lakh litres as part of its efforts to conserve water. The retreat also follows drip irrigation system to conserve water. ■



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# “Being a trusted mentor to my team and achieving success together is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling”

## Jagdeep Nambiar, General Manager, Fazlani Nature’s Nest

A seasoned hospitality professional with over 16 years of experience in the industry, Jagdeep Nambiar currently holds the position of General Manager at Fazlani Nature’s Nest. Jagdeep’s expertise lies in managing luxury properties, where he focuses on guest satisfaction, employee engagement, and overall business growth. Under his leadership, Fazlani Nature’s Nest has achieved remarkable success in terms of guest experience and business growth. He has implemented several initiatives to enhance guest satisfaction, including unique wellness programs, eco-friendly practices, and sustainable processes. Here he gives us an insight into his work philosophy in an interview with [Sharmila Chand](#).

### What is the USP of your property?

Fazlani Nature’s Nest is a truly exceptional luxury retreat that stands out for both its stunning natural setting and its unparalleled focus on holistic wellness. The property’s breath taking location amidst open spaces, greenery, waterfront, and mountains creates a cinematic natural canvas that is truly awe-inspiring. We offers guests a unique and personalized wellness experience with organic farm on-site, providing access to the freshest and healthiest produce for personalized wellness meals.

### What green initiatives the hotel has taken?

Focusing on sustainability, we use 40 out of 68 acres of land for organic farming, and the produce is served in our restaurants to ensure the freshest and healthiest dining experience. Additionally, all organic waste generated on the farm and gardens is composted and used as fertilizer, demonstrating our commitment to reducing waste and promoting eco-friendly practices.

### What about the sustainable processes in your property?

In addition to providing education and boarding to 150 orphan children through the Fazlani International School, which is CBSE affiliated and has a track record of students earning seats in medical colleges based



on merit, we also prioritize eco-friendly practices. For instance, we have recently installed two large water storage tanks on our campus with a combined capacity of one lakh litres to collect rainwater during the monsoon season, demonstrating our commitment to sustainable water management through rainwater harvesting.

### Your marketing strategy to promote property?

Our marketing strategy is a thoughtful blend of both traditional and modern techniques, allowing us to maintain visibility across print and digital media. However, we believe that the key to promoting our

property is through the creation of curated guest experiences that not only encourage repeat visits but also turn our guests into brand ambassadors for our retreat.

### What distinguishes your property from others?

Our holistic approach to wellness offers a wide range of activities, allowing guests to stay engaged and occupied during their wellness journey with us. We strongly believe in the healing power of nature and our property is blessed with an abundance of natural beauty. Our guests have the opportunity to connect with nature and experience its rejuvenating effects.

### What is the ‘Differentiating Factor’ of your F&B outlets?

Our F&B outlets offer a unique dining experience with a focus on using fresh, chemical-free produce grown in-house at our organic farm. Our menus include beverages made from homegrown fruits and vegetables, ensuring our guests have a truly wholesome and healthy dining experience. Our menus are curated in consultation with doctors to cater to the specific body types of our guests. We offer special diets that align with the Vata, Pitta, and Kapha elements of the body, ensuring our guests have a healthy and customized dining experience.

**Your future plans and new initiatives you wish to undertake in your property?**

As we continue to establish ourselves as a leading wellness destination, we are excited to announce our plans for the second stage of our project. We will be building eco-friendly villas that harmonize with the lush greenery and waterfront of our property. We believe this expansion will enhance our guests' experience by providing them with a serene and eco-friendly stay.

**What is the most crucial issue to tackle in the Hospitality industry today?**

In addition to hiring and retaining staff, the hospitality industry is facing the challenge of adapting to rapidly evolving technology. Environmental considerations and sustainability have also become increasingly important to guests who prefer to make informed choices about where they stay. It is crucial for the industry to balance the use of technology while still maintaining a human touch, and to implement sustainable practices to protect the environment for future generations.

**What do you enjoy most about being at the helm of affairs at the hotel?**

As the leader of the hotel, what brings me the most joy is the ability to make a positive impact not only on our guests' experiences but also on our team members. Being a trusted mentor to my team and achieving success together is incredibly rewarding and fulfilling.

**How do you de-stress?**

To de-stress, I prioritize spending time with my family and cherishing the small moments of joy together. I also try to maintain a positive work environment and create opportunities to share smiles and have fun with my colleagues, as work-life balance is crucial for overall well-being.

**What is your working Mantra, your guiding philosophy in work?**

My guiding philosophy at work is to constantly seek ways to improve my efficiency. I enjoy learning new things and developing new skills while also becoming proficient in what I already know. Collaboration is key for me as I work best in a team setting where I can share my experiences and learn from my colleagues.

**What advice you would like to give youngsters aspiring to excel in Hospitality?**

As someone who has succeeded in the hospitality industry, my advice to young aspiring professionals would be to set clear goals and pursue them with passion. It's important to maintain a positive mindset and work consistently towards achieving your objectives, even in challenging situations where you may doubt your abilities. Persistence is key in realizing your dreams, so stay focused and dedicated to your path.



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## Making Hospitality Inhospitable for Pests

The presence of pests in the hospitality industry has always been unacceptable. Bed bugs have been a bane for hotels. Let's take a look at some of the procedures being adopted by the industry or should be adopted by the industry to checkmate these pests.

Jokes aside, hospitality sector cannot afford to have pests. Hotels, irrespective of their size and category, have to observe strict vigilance to prevent pests if they want to continue having guests. No guest would like to have the company of bed bugs or cockroaches or any other pest. Whether guests are staying overnight at your hotel, visiting your restaurant to eat dinner, or having a couple of drinks at your bar to unwind, you want to present a clean, tidy environment where they feel comfortable.

Perhaps nothing chases away your guests faster than sharing their stay with unwanted pests. Pest control should be a zero-tolerance zone in the hospitality industry. Hotel and Restaurant Managers must do everything they can to keep pests away from the guests. Birds pooping on the pool deck are a highly irritating sight; mice in the lobby are an embarrassment; cockroaches in the kitchen are a nightmare; whereas bed bugs in the guest rooms can be construed as nothing short of a disaster for the hospitality property concerned. Particularly in this age of powerful

social media and 24x7 news channels, the presence of pests in hotels can easily become news before they get detected by the hotel's management.

However, with guests checking in daily from all over the world, pest problems are hardly uncommon in hotels and motels. With round-the-clock activity, restaurants, meeting rooms, guest rooms and numerous storage areas, hotels present unique challenges when it comes to pest control.

### Bed Bugs

One of the pests whose presence can mar a hospitality property's reputation is the bed bug. Truly, they have been bugging the

hospitality industry for ages. Bed bugs are prone to strike anywhere, anytime, thereby making them more dangerous. Thus hotels have to be extremely careful about these pests. Incidences of bed bugs have been on the rise over the last few years as these insects have become increasingly resistant to certain pesticides.

Because bed bugs have developed resistance to many chemical pesticides currently being used, many agencies

stress the importance of integrated pest management to counter them. It is also necessary for your housekeeping staff to be aware of how to properly check for bedbugs in the room. They need to pull back the linens from the bed and check all the way around the mattress.

Then, they need to check all the nooks and crannies in the headboard. Pests are often found in the seams of the bedding or the corners of the bed. Signs of bedbugs include small black dots or blood stains that are about the size of ground pepper. They can often be mistaken for mold, so the staff member should be careful on this



account. Bedbugs look a bit like apple seeds.

Even if the bed is clear, the search shouldn't end. Most bedbugs are found within 15 feet of the bed. Employees should next check anything near the bed where bedbugs might exist. Places like picture frames, on the nightstand, and even in the guest services menu and materials, bed bugs can be found. The bed and the immediate area nearby are the most likely places for bedbugs, but they can be found throughout the room, in places like the closet or furniture. Once the sweep gets to the bathroom, things should be all clear. Because the bathroom has less hiding places, bedbugs rarely take root there.

**Flies**

Flies are mostly found hovering around food outlets. Among the most dangerous of the disease-causing organisms which have been found on flies are E.coli, and Campylobacter spp.

Correct identification and knowledge of biology and habits of the flies will help locate their breeding sites that need to be targeted for their effective control.

Successful integrated management of flies should include the exclusion, restriction and destruction of flies.

Exclusion: If the flies are entering from outside, it is essential that doors and windows are kept shut or fitted with fly screening products.

Restriction: This is a crucial component of effective fly control. Waste should be bagged and tightly sealed prior

to disposal. Furthermore, bins and skips should have tight-fitting lids.

Destruction: This entails the usage of insecticides. The non chemical method of destruction includes physical methods like electronic fly killers.

**Cockroaches**

Another pest in the food handling areas of commercial kitchens is cockroach. Traditionally, cockroach control has been done with so called 'powerful chemicals' which give out high odour and cause irritation post or during spray treatment.

This was perceived to be very effective

for cockroach control. Now there are compounds which are odourless. These new-age chemicals also have a 'Flushing Action' where cockroaches will come out of hiding areas due to the effect of these chemicals and get killed.

One of the best ways to beat any opponent is to understand his tactics and set up your defense accordingly. To

this end, cockroach baiting has become a preferred tool for pest management. In comparison with spray treatments, baits are designed to be very attractive for the cockroach and take advantage of their innate feeding behaviour. In addition, the baits are not immediate kill, so the cockroach's natural tendency to scurry back to harborage and share or exchange the bait with others in the population of cockroaches extends the toxic impact of the bait. Not only do the cockroaches carry the bait to an area which may be difficult to reach otherwise, they also can expose other members of their population to the toxicant through their behaviour.

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### Integrated Pest Management

But the hotels' problems do not begin and end with these three pests. There are several other pests like ants, mice, birds, et al, which need to be tackled effectively by the hospitality industry.

Moreover, tackling pests holistically, particularly for the hospitality industry, poses more challenges than in other

sectors as hospitality properties cannot afford to use pesticides that would disturb guests' stay. Eco-friendly or 'green' methods of pest control should ideally have to be adopted in hospitality properties to tackle the pest menace. Recent advancements in green pest management technology entail that you can have a pest-free hospitality property with minimal adverse environmental impact.

An important aspect of green pest control in hospitality properties is that most of the pest management exercise

should be done behind the scenes and shouldn't disturb the guests' stay.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a holistic approach to pest management that emphasises source reduction. It explores why pests infest a facility in the first place. Though it is difficult to get rid of bugs in an eco-friendly manner, there are ways in which these pests can be handled the 'green' way.

Integrated pest management, which

is defined as the selection, integration and implementation of pest control based on predicted economic, ecological and sociological consequences, makes maximum use of naturally occurring control agents, including weather, disease organisms, predators and parasites.

According to Government of India, "Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is an eco-friendly approach which aims

at keeping pest population at below economic threshold levels by employing all available alternate pest control

methods and techniques such as cultural, mechanical and biological with emphasis on use of bio-pesticides and pesticides of plant-origin like Neem formulations."

IPM, along with other non-chemical green pest control practices, can facilitate to ensure that the lodging property

remains pest-free, aesthetically pleasing, and a welcome place for guests.

Owners and managers of hospitality accommodations are expected to put into place an integrated pest management plan that can be implemented and audited as part of the business/premises management programme. The plan should be sensitive to the



issues of sustainability without prejudicing public health. The plan should also encourage the minimal use of pesticides, and pesticides should be used in a way that minimises exposure to people and the environment. Sustainable pest management can be achieved through regular inspections, dealing with infestations quickly, and implementing hygiene improvements.

### Being Proactive

Furthermore, for the integrated pest management to be effective, managers and staff working within the hospitality property must keep alert to any signs of infestation. They should inspect the premises for signs of pests on a fortnightly or monthly basis, including mattresses and beds, store rooms, food stores, kitchens and waste retention areas. They should also regularly inspect the premises for any situation that may encourage or support pest infestation. Of course, any case of pest infestation found through inspection should be rectified as soon as possible. Setting up a pest control contract with a specialist service and responding promptly to all reports from guests or staff regarding pest problems or potential pest problems are also necessary requirements for integrated pest management to be effective.

For the optimum results, work with your pest management professional to accurately identify specific pest issues and develop a pest management plan that is appropriate for your property. Also ask your pest management professional to conduct a training session on IPM to equip your employees with the information and knowledge which they need to monitor and report pest activity.

The hotels which have an Integrated Pest Management plan in place should also review the property's current IPM program from time to time with their pest management professionals and discuss implementing some environmentally friendly techniques, in case they are not implemented at those hospitality properties already. These include employing fly lights and sticky boards, use of sticky monitor boards, use of pheromone traps, repellents and desiccants, and the employing of non volatile baits and organic cleaners. ■

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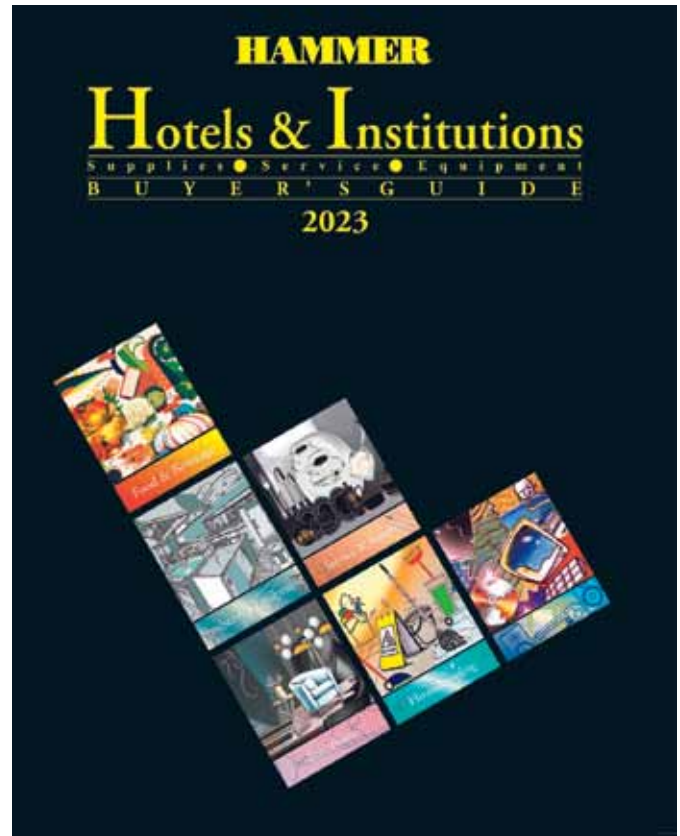
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Setting up an in-house laundry may not be as expensive as it is often made out to be and the benefits of having an on-premise laundry are many including extensive control over the cleaning process

Any establishment has the choice of availing the services of commercial laundry, setting up an in-house laundry or resorting to linen hire. While the third option is still catching up in India, the first two are pretty common. However, whether to go for an external service provider or to set up an on-premise laundry may depend on analysis of various factors that can range from space and manpower issues to concerns of control over the cleaning process.

Generally, hotels and especially the ones in the five-star category prefer in-house laundries driven by the belief that they help maintain high standards of quality, cleanliness and keep the par stocks low. On the other hand, most small and medium sized hospitality properties have some other arrangement. The cost of equipment and space required to house the system are some of the reasons why they get their work done at stand-alone laundry or a collective laundry.

### Edge of In-house Laundry

However, no matter how good the external laundry may be, most housekeepers prefer to have their own in-house laundries for many reasons, some of which are given below.

In-house laundries can easily reduce dependence on others and self-sufficiency leads to increased flexibility. With in-house laundries housekeepers are facilitated to set their own standards and make sure the textiles are cared for the way they should be. Moreover, it is a common complaint in the hospitality industry that on many occasions, linen is being returned without undergoing the entire cleaning process. There is a frequent allegation that linen out of a hotel room is only visually clean and is returned after rinsing and pressing. This can be addressed through in-house laundries, effectively.

Moreover, by having an in-house laundry, the requirement of storage space in the linen room would be reduced, as would the overall requirement for the linen inventory, which would come down by nearly 30-40 percent, thereby contributing to the economy of the laundry.

One is unsure of the type of treatment given to clothes by outside laundries for they use stronger chemicals and acids. These chemicals in turn weaken fabrics and the quantity of discard increases. In the in-house laundry one can choose the right chemicals for facilitating higher production and longer

life of the clothes.

Besides these, with external laundries, often it would be difficult to get the kind of output required by hotel operations, like in case of back-to-back check-in during a conference of a large group.

Since most of the commercial laundries cater to many commercial establishments like hotels, hospitals etc. the chances of the linen getting mixed up are also quite high.

Any housekeeper will tell that it is almost impossible to supervise the above mentioned aspects, in case of an external laundry which may not even be cost effective, for they charge on 'per piece' basis.

### Cost of Care

To say that an 'in-house laundry' is an expensive investment may be an overstatement. In fact, it can at best be a modest investment, if the design and requirements are kept simple. For instance, to process the room linen, it only requires a washer-cum-extractor with a flat-work ironing machine. For processing bathroom linen, a drying tumbler needs to be added. A few hand ironing boards enable the pressing of uniforms and the guest laundry.

In most large hotels, the in-house laundry

department runs as either self-sufficient or even as profit-making centre. But lack of planning may make the process of setting up on-premise laundry appear much more complicated and expensive than it actually is, leading to many hotels avoiding the process all together.

The fact of the matter is in-house laundry investment has the potential to quickly recover its cost, regardless of its size and scope. Over the years, a growing number of establishments have realised the benefits of running their own laundries that offer an essential service and require minimal labour and minimal inventory, and hardly any special skills.

### Buying Equipment

While purchasing or sourcing laundry equipment for your in-house laundry, one should have satisfactory answers to the following questions.

- What would be the quality of the processed linen, uniforms and guest laundry?
- How compact and bulky is the equipment,

as the extent of space required will depend on this?

- What will be the efficiency and optimum production of the machine/s?
- What will be the consumption of various utilities, as there are machines available which could save a lot of energy in contrast with others?
- What will be the servicing and maintenance requirement and the frequency of breakdowns? How expensive would be the spare parts?
- Whether the machine is automated or not?
- What would be the extent of staff training to be imparted for optimum utilisation of equipment?

Once these questions are answered satisfactorily towards establishing an on-premise laundry one would find the enhanced standards of accommodation with meagre cost on the management aspect, on long-term.

But despite the advantages of having an on-premise laundry, many establishments

need to depend on an external laundry to meet their laundry demand. In such cases, it becomes necessary to visit such an external laundry periodically, to check the process, range of chemicals and detergents used, and the quality of finish and folding. Checking the source and quality of water being used in an external laundry can also help safeguard clothes from discolouring or damaging.

### Laundry Rules

A good laundry can be of great importance to an establishment, which includes hospitality properties of course, provided:

- The material is handled carefully.
- Tensile strength of the material is not impaired.
- White material is kept white.
- Stains are removed.
- Materials are not ruined by excessive use of bleach.
- The work is carried out as speedily as possible.
- Vigilance is maintained regarding damage and losses and their prevention.



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RANS Technocrats caters to customers throughout India with a dedicated team that provides service and support. The company's state-of-the-art machinery and commitment to quality have enabled it to deliver equipment that meets international standards.

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ICEDEN provides international quality commercial refrigeration equipment, including display counters, deep freezers,



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### GRATE INOX

GRATEINOX specialises in high-quality kitchen floor gratings made of stainless steel. The company's extensive experience in sheet metal fabrication has also enabled it to offer a wide range of customised commercial kitchen equipment under the RANS brand.

Overall, RANS Technocrats has established itself as a leading manufacturer of kitchen equipment in India, offering high-quality products and excellent service to customers across the country.

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## Innovations in Linen

Established in 1996, Blue Fab is a premium manufacturer and supplier of linen to the hospitality industry. The company offers an exclusive range of restaurant linen, banquet linen, bamboo & jute craft, furnishing, and uniforms. The range of restaurant linen includes napkin, apron, table cloth, place mat & runner, etc. The range of banquet linen includes readymade frills, chair cover, buffet sheet, napkin, etc. Besides furnishing fabric, curtain and upholstery, and shirt, waist coat, trousers, suit, cravette and scarf used for F&B kitchen operations are some of the products offered by Blue Fab.

Company has an exclusive range of bamboo/cane linen. they also came with a laundry project with well equipped advance technology machines. The company has a unique range of production uniform and service uniform which are specially designed to cater to the department/category wise need. With the arrival of more and more fine dining restaurants with innovative ideas, the linen sales are increasing fast and this could enhance the business prospects of the company. At the same time, the introduction of a slew of ambitious hotel projects in the Indian hospitality industry is also expected to increase the demand for their products.

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Cleancare is a company that specialises in the design, planning, manufacturing, supply installation, testing & commissioning, and maintenance of both industrial and commercial laundry projects. With over 7 years of experience, the company has developed expertise in completing and handing over laundry projects, resulting in highly satisfied customers.

Cleancare procures the best-suited inventory of raw materials and uses cutting-edge manufacturing technology to develop high-quality products that are in demand globally. The company invests



substantial resources in conducting worldwide market research to anticipate clients' needs, and its line of products is carefully developed and rigorously inspected to ensure their worth. All work is under the scrutiny of quality controllers who conduct timely audits and verify every product range.

The company is led by Kuljeet Singh, who has more than 2 decades of experience in the hospitality trade and has been an active participant in various events and exhibitions related to the industry. Cleancare provides technical consultancy to its customers regarding different types of laundry and dry cleaning and supports its customers by helping them in lay-out drawing, installation, running, and servicing.

The company aims to build a mutually profitable relationship with its customers, ensuring their long-term success, through the understanding of their needs and the needs of their customers as well. It is committed to achieving its commitments for quality, cost, and schedule and enhancing the systematic research and use of best preventive practices at all levels, ensuring reliable risk management.

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**Rohit Bajpai, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Palace Indore**



A highly accomplished professional with extensive experience in the hospitality industry, Rohit Bajpai is currently holding the position of GM at Sheraton Grand Palace Indore. Armed with a Diploma in Hotel Management from IHM Mumbai, his remarkable journey includes stints at Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, Royal Orchid Hotels, Hilton, and Radisson Hotel Group. Each role further honed his skills, amplifying his expertise in hotel operations, food and beverage management, and customer-centric service.

In an exclusive interview with **Sharmila Chand**, he talks about his work philosophy and more....

## What is the USP of your property?

Nestled in the heart of Indore, Madhya Pradesh, our sprawling 9-acre property emanates an enchanting aura of regal opulence, instantly captivating every guest that sets foot within our premises. With its palatial charm and exquisite beauty, our venue boasts abundant space to host a myriad of events, ranging from lavish social gatherings to corporate MICE occasions. Recently bestowed with the honor of hosting the prestigious G20 event, we are thrilled to welcome this esteemed gathering once again in July. However, it is our unrivaled expertise in curating unforgettable wedding experiences that truly sets us apart.

## What green initiatives the hotel has taken?

We are deeply committed to implementing green initiatives that prioritize environmental sustainability like Tree Plantation Drive, Water Harvesting, Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), Variable Frequency Drive (VFD), LED Lights, Water Aerators and EV Charging Station. Through these initiatives, we strive to make a positive impact on the environment while providing our guests with a sustainable and eco-conscious hospitality experience.

## What is your marketing strategy to promote property?

Our marketing strategy encompasses both online and offline channels to effectively promote our property. Online, we prioritize building a strong digital presence by creating a visually captivating and user-friendly website. This platform showcases our property's unique features, amenities, and offerings, providing potential guests with a glimpse into the exceptional experience we offer. We also maintain an active presence on popular social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram, engaging with our audience and sharing captivating content. Offline,

we place emphasis on public relations to maintain close connections with our guests and the industry.

## What distinguishes your property from others?

Our property sets itself apart from others in the same category through three defining features. Firstly, we take pride in being the first Marriott property that is exclusively vegetarian. Secondly, our palatial look and Greco-Roman architecture set us apart. Lastly, our expansive banquet space, among the largest in the area, allows us to host a wide range of events.

## Your future plans and new initiatives you wish to undertake?

Our future plans entail expanding our property by introducing a new wing comprising 120 exquisite rooms. This initiative aims to elevate our offerings and cater to the discerning needs of high-end guests, ensuring their unforgettable experience remains unparalleled.

## What is the most crucial issue hospitality industry face today?

The most crucial issue to address in the hospitality industry today is the quality of staff and the challenge of staff attrition. As the saying goes, “A key that can unlock any lock is a master key, while a lock that can be opened by any key is a faulty lock.”

## What do you enjoy most about being at the helm of affairs at the hotel?

Being at the helm of affairs brings immense joy as I witness my team excel in every challenge and grow under my guidance. Each day presents new opportunities, and I take pride in seeing my team collectively tackle every obstacle. With unwavering dedication, we strive to attain and uphold our position at the pinnacle of excellence.

## What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

The zenith of gratification in my career was reached as I embraced the position of General Manager. It symbolized a profoundly rewarding milestone, reflecting the harmonious convergence of my unwavering dedication, honed expertise, and relentless pursuit of excellence within the realm of hospitality.

## How do you de-stress?

To unwind, I usually immerse myself in the world of music composition, allowing the harmonies and melodies to wash away stress. Additionally, I indulge in the exhilarating game of badminton, not only keeping me physically active but also providing a mental escape.

## What is your working Mantra, your guiding philosophy?

Embracing the wisdom of “change is the only constant,” my working mantra revolves around staying attuned to the ever-evolving world. By remaining observant, adaptable, and continuously learning from my surroundings, I foster a spirit of unwavering dedication and perseverance to excel through hard work.

## Advice you would like to give youngsters aspiring to excel in Hospitality?

To the aspiring youngsters in the realm of hospitality, my advice would be to recognize that this journey may be challenging and demanding, but with unwavering determination, relentless hard work, and an unwavering spirit, you have the power to triumph and excel in this extraordinary industry.

## How do you define yourself?

A person of unyielding honesty and tenacious perseverance, gracefully accompanied by a keen instinct to continuously evolve and progress with the passing of time.

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