

# HOTEL

## Business Review

An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry



**Business**  
Ensuring Success of a Hotel

**Feature**  
Wooing Millennial Guests

**F&B**  
Ensuring Menu Success

**Housekeeping**  
Making Room for Hygiene

# All About Resorts

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There are many resorts today operating in the Indian hospitality industry providing a comprehensive range of facilities and amenities, similar to a star-rated conventional hotel. Neither do resorts are only preferred for weekend gateways but are coming across as great venues for MICE and weddings too. Cover Story talks about how resorts are different from hotels and what multiple services being offered by them.

The key to success of a hotel depends on the continuous efforts of the property in exceeding the guests' expectations. Business story discusses the need for the industry to gauge the new trends among the guests and their changing preferences for the success of the property.

To effectively understand and convert millennials into loyal customers, it is crucial to acknowledge their distinct characteristics and preferences. Feature story offers views of industry experts on how by consistently delivering on certain aspects, businesses can foster lasting connections and turn them into devoted customers and advocates for their brand.

For an F&B outlet to succeed it is important to set the mood for an exhilarating dining experience, which can be ensured by an attractive menu. The new menu is considered an excellent way to get the visibility and break the monotony. The F&B section explains that a good menu is at the heart of every restaurant, but executing a new menu launch is no easy feat.

The Housekeeping section dwells upon the need of proper hygiene in the hotel spaces, to ensure guest satisfaction. The other regular sections interview, news, reports and events provides current updated information.

We at HAMMER wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Also let us all hope 2024 will bring an impressive growth and new revenue earning avenues for the Indian hospitality industry.

# HAMMER HOTEL Business Review

An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

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# Ambiente 2024

January 26-30, 2024, Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Centre, Germany

Ambiente 2024 will be held during January 26-30, 2024 at Frankfurt Main, Germany. It offers a unique experience full of inspiration, design trends, new products and ideas. There are always new possibilities thanks to the very varied product range. You'll find a comprehensive reflection of what the market has to offer, with four product areas Dining, Living, Giving and Working.

After a spectacular comeback in 2023, Ambiente continues to set new standards in terms of quantity and quality. The fair motivates visitors with its comprehensive and clearly structured product range and its inspiring programme of events. It can be experienced live, but also digitally.

For years, trade buyers, manufacturers, and importers have found reliable and strong partners in the sourcing sector for volume business ranging from industrially manufactured to handcrafted goods from all over the world. The joint global offering of Ambiente and Christmasworld opens up valuable business opportunities. For buyers who have not previously sourced globally, the platform provides uncomplicated access to traditional sourcing markets.

It's the hotspot for the entire sector and a vibrant business platform. Here one can reach all target groups, including international buyers from all types of trading organisation and large-volume buyers. Exhibitors will be presenting their products to restaurant and hotel suppliers, project planners and office furnishers – and other highly motivated trade visitors to Ambiente as well as Christmasworld and Creativeworld, which take place concurrently.

New international contacts, inspiring business encounters and intensive networking: for the three consumer goods trade fairs featuring Ambiente, Christmasworld and Creativeworld recorded strong registration figures across all product segments and excelled with the



industry's meta themes. At the opening press conference, experts will share their thoughts, give the latest insights and open up new perspectives on the consumer goods market.

Ambiente is putting the hospitality industry in the spotlight with a top-class lecture programme and the newly designed Hotelier's Day: from 27-29 January 2024. The HoReCa Academy in the foyer of Hall 11.0 invites the industry to exchange valuable knowledge and to network. Visitors can look forward to renowned speakers, exciting presentations, stimulating discussions and an overview of the latest hospitality trends.

## The Solutions at Ambiente 2024

They are small household and kitchen helpers that make everyday life much easier – and also score points with a trendy, high-quality or sustainable design: For the special presentation Solutions at Ambiente 2024, British industrial designer Sebastian Bergne is once again curating a selection of practical problem-solvers – providing simple answers to the little obstacles in everyday life.

They may be inconspicuous, but their impact is all the greater: the Solutions are innovative household and kitchen helpers that offer a clever solution for every situation. For the special presentation at Ambiente 2024, British industrial designer Sebastian Bergne curated selected exhibitor products in the foyer of Hall 9.0, where he presents a total

of 14 products that make everyday life easier for consumers.

In his selection, the industrial designer pays particular attention to the innovative value, but functionality and the aspect of sustainability also play an important role – as does high-quality design. Whether sustainable alternative materials, practical cleaning methods or small appliances for quick food preparation – with Solutions, Sebastian Bergne provides an

overview of the latest problem solvers on the market. The special presentation is enhanced by short videos that digitally illustrate the function of the individual products.

## Special Interest Ethical Style

A total of 374 exhibitors at Ambiente, Christmasworld and Creativeworld will be entitled to bear the Ethical Style label in 2024: an independent jury of international experts has reviewed all the entries and curated them for the special interest scheme. The Ethical Style label is valid for three years.

In addition to the existing participants in the programme, a total of 176 more will be added for the coming trade fair cycle, who will be able to present themselves to the trade as sustainable companies in future. Ambiente will present 140 newly juried exhibitors, Christmasworld will see 21 new additions and Creativeworld 15.

The Special Interest takes into account various aspects of sustainability such as environmentally friendly and recyclable materials, resource-saving manufacturing processes, craftsmanship that preserves traditions, as well as future-oriented products and processes and socially responsible working conditions.

Ambiente will continue to be held at the same time as Christmasworld and Creativeworld at the Frankfurt Fair and Exhibition Centre.



# Lifetime Achievement Award

Mr. J.K. Khurana, Founding Chairman of Venus Industries, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 18th Annual International Travel Awards 2023. Commemorating six decades of visionary leadership, he entrusted Venus Industries to the next generation, dedicating the award to his son Vicky (Praveen) Khurana and daughter-in-law Seema Khurana. Under Mr. Khurana's guidance, Venus became a global leader in hospitality cutlery, with a legacy of quality and innovation. The baton is now passed to Vicky and Seema, who aspire to elevate Venus Industries to new heights, ensuring continued excellence.



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## Hilton Introduces Curio Collection by Hilton to India

Hilton announced the signing of the first Curio Collection by Hilton in India through a franchise hotel agreement between Hilton and Roach Lifescapes Pvt. Ltd., marking the brand's debut in the Indian market. Curio Collection by Hilton represents a global collection of premium upper upscale hotels and resorts handpicked to immerse guests in one-of-a-kind moments in the world's most sought-after destinations.

Conveniently situated approximately one hour from the Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru airport, the property in Whitefield, Bengaluru is poised to deliver an exceptional, one-of-a-kind stay in the vibrant city. Complemented by distinctive architecture and contemporary design, the hotel will feature a total of 221 well-appointed rooms, from king rooms to spacious suites, and offer a generous 8,000 square feet of event space, accommodating a wide range of gatherings and functions.



Navjit Ahluwalia, senior vice president and country head, India, Hilton, said, "We are absolutely delighted to expand our brand portfolio in India and debut the Curio Collection by Hilton brand in India. Our partners Roach Lifescapes Pvt. Ltd. have astute development expertise and I am confident that together, we will add another world-class product to Hilton's growing presence in Bengaluru. This highly strategic destination represents Hilton's biggest estate in the country – with five of our brands already present and one in the pipeline – and this latest signing symbolises a commitment to enhance and diversify the travel experiences that Hilton offers to visitors in this vibrant metropolis."

When open, the hotel will offer a comprehensive array of curated amenities including two elevated dining outlets, a stylish lobby bar, an inviting outdoor pool, a rejuvenating spa and a fully equipped fitness centre. Business travellers will appreciate the convenience of a well-equipped executive workspace.

Austin Roach, managing director, Charishma Hotels said, "We take great pride in entering into this partnership with Hilton, to introduce their upper upscale brand – Curio Collection by Hilton in India. The city is a perfect blend of culture and modernity and makes it an ideal location to debut a global lifestyle brand. This collaboration represents a significant opportunity for us to harness Hilton's formidable global reputation and rapidly growing network within the Indian market. As lifelong residents of this city, our family is particularly excited about the prospect of contributing to the burgeoning tourism sector by offering Hilton's best in-class hospitality and personalised guest experiences to our beloved city."

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## Pride Hotels Launch Pride Resort Ambaji

Pride Hotels Group has announced the opening of Pride Resort Ambaji. Nestled amidst the breathtaking natural beauty of Ambaji in the heart of the Aravalli Range, this exquisite resort marks a significant milestone in the group's expansion plans in Gujarat.

Pride Resort Ambaji boasts meticulously designed rooms and villas, each offering the ultimate in comfort, as one of its standout features. Guests can



indulge on a diverse culinary journey at its in-house restaurant, a delightful showcase of both regional and international cuisine. Additionally, the resort boasts a sparkling swimming pool and well-equipped banquet halls, making it an impeccable choice for special events and gatherings.

SP Jain, Chairman and Managing Director, Pride Hotels Group, said, "Our relentless journey of expansion and unparalleled growth surges ahead with the grand unveiling of Pride Resort Ambaji, a dazzling jewel in our crown. This opulent resort epitomizes our unwavering commitment to providing a world-class experience to our esteemed guests. With an illustrious track record of establishing our signature presence in diverse locales, the launch of Pride Resort Ambaji represents a monumental stride in our ambitious mission. As we make our indomitable presence felt in the heart of Gujarat, we take pride in enhancing the region's hospitality landscape."

Pride Resort Ambaji is meticulously crafted to provide an unforgettable experience in a serene, idyllic setting. Offering sumptuous accommodations, cutting-edge amenities, and an unwavering dedication to excellence, the resort is a haven nestled amidst nature's embrace, enveloped by lush greenery and majestic hills.

## IHG Adds 350-Keys in Punjab

**IHG**  
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IHG® Hotels & Resorts has signed a management agreement with NK Sharma Hospitality Pvt. Ltd. to develop two new hotels in the Chandigarh tri-city area - Crowne

Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur in the premium segment and Holiday Inn & Suites Chandigarh Zirakpur from the essentials collection. Currently under construction, both hotels are scheduled to open in January 2027.

Complementing Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula and Holiday Inn Chandigarh Zirakpur, the dual signing will strengthen IHG's offerings in Punjab and add over 350 keys to the company's portfolio in the state. Forming a cluster in Zirakpur, the new hotels will be strategically located adjacent to National Highway 22, one of the busiest highways in India, attracting travellers from nearby cities and towns.

Once opened, both Crowne Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur and Holiday Inn & Suites Chandigarh Zirakpur will be positioned amongst the large banqueting facilities, with approximately 100,000 sq ft of meeting space, poised to meet the high demand for weddings, conferences, and events from Zirakpur, Chandigarh, Mohali, Panchkula and Dera Bassi. Situated in close proximity to Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, and Uttarakhand, the hotels will tap into guests seeking ideal stopovers for travelers on leisure trips.

Commenting on the signings, Sudeep Jain, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG Hotels & Resorts said, "We are thrilled to expand our mainstream offering with another Holiday Inn hotel in Punjab in the vibrant locale of Zirakpur, and to introduce Crowne Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur, alongside our longstanding partners NK Sharma Hospitality Pvt Ltd. The hotels' strategic location along the NH22 and their easy accessibility to popular leisure destinations like Shimla and Kasauli will undoubtedly prove to be a significant draw for travelers across segments, both leisure and business.

NK Sharma, Managing Director at NK Sharma Hospitality Pvt Ltd. added, "We are delighted to further strengthen our partnership with IHG Hotels & Resorts through the expansion of Holiday Inn & Suites and to debut Crowne Plaza in Punjab. Building upon the success of Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula, we have confidence that our partnership will prove to be fruitful, dedicated to providing top-quality hospitality to our guests. We look forward to harnessing the benefits of IHG's global systems and robust loyalty program to maximize our mutual success."

### **Crowne Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur**

Crowne Plaza Chandigarh Zirakpur will feature 150 keys and four F&B outlets including an all-day dining, specialty restaurant, a lobby lounge and bar. Alongside premium rooms, the hotel will also include meeting spaces across 9 venues including a ballroom for special events. Other facilities to relax and unwind include a Club Lounge, Pool, Fitness Centre, Spa and Retail.

### **Holiday Inn & Suites Chandigarh Zirakpur**

The upcoming 200-keys hotel will feature three F&B outlets including an all-day dining, bar, and a lobby lounge. To cater to MICE demands, the hotel will be equipped with 3 meeting rooms including a ballroom. The property will also feature a pool and a fitness centre. Holiday Inn & Suites Chandigarh Zirakpur will attract business and leisure travellers looking for comfortable and convenient accommodation.

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## Fortune Hotels Enters Aligarh

Fortune Hotels announced the launch of Fortune Park in Aligarh, making it the fourth opening in the state of Uttar Pradesh. Designed to be a perfect option for city residents and the upbeat business



and leisure travellers to celebrate, engage and unwind, this upscale hotel is sure to charm all guests with its warm hospitality and seamless services.

Fortune Park Aligarh offers 65 well-appointed, stylish rooms featuring chic interiors and a contemporary setting. It offers top-of-the-line amenities, an array of F&B outlets, 'Zodiac' the all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant and 'Nakshatra' the stunning soon-to-open rooftop restaurant, along with lavish event spaces, with a capacity to host up to 500 guests.

Announcing the addition of this newest hotel Fortune Park, Aligarh to their portfolio Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels said, "We are delighted to add another Fortune to our growing footprint in Uttar Pradesh and thank the promoters for recognizing the Fortune Advantage and bestowing their trust in us. This unique disposition of the bustling city draws both tourists and business travellers to it and we look forward to hosting them all."

## Efcee Hotels Signs MOU with Uttarakhand Government

Efcee Hotels, the hotel investment arm of the Leela Group of Companies, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Government of Uttarakhand. The MOU, formalized at the Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit Road Show in Ahmedabad, paves the way for the development of environmentally responsible hotels at four strategic locations within the state of Uttarakhand. The ceremony was attended by the Honourable Chief Minister of Uttarakhand, Shri Pushpaksingh Dhama, and Efcee Hotels' CEO, Nirav Akshay Oza.

Komalkant F. Sharma, Group CMD of Leela Group of Companies emphasized the group's commitment to Uttarakhand's economic growth and environmental preservation. He said, "Our intention goes beyond hospitality. We aspire to generate substantial employment and adhere to the strictest environmental principles"

Nirav Akshay Oza, CEO of Efcee Hotels, added, "This partnership aims to set benchmarks in responsible tourism and sustainable development, aligning perfectly with both Uttarakhand's ethos and the principles set forth by our Group CMD."

The Honourable Chief Minister, Shri Pushpaksingh Dhama, was enthusiastic about the collaboration: "This initiative will simultaneously boost our economy and preserve our natural heritage, creating a win-win scenario for all stakeholders."

The project is slated to break ground in the coming year, focusing on local employment and eco-friendly practices.



## Ramee Group of Hotels Enters Tamil Nadu

Ramee Group of Hotels has announced its entry into Tamil Nadu through the sign-up of a management contract property in Coimbatore. This strategic move marks the commencement of expansion plans in the state of Tamil Nadu. This property is positioned amidst key business hubs and cultural landmarks.

Comprising 45 well-appointed rooms, a 24/7 dining haven, a tranquil spa, and a state-of-the-art event space, the Coimbatore property will cater to both business and leisure travellers.

Saurabh Gahoi, VP India, Ramee Group at Ramee Group of Hotels said, "We are excited to introduce the Ramee experience to the dynamic city of Coimbatore. Our unwavering commitment to delivering exceptional service and creating indelible memories aligns seamlessly with the ethos of Coimbatore. We eagerly anticipate contributing to the city's ascent as a premier hospitality destination."





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## Taj Wins The 'World's Finest Luxury Grand Palaces' Award

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, has been recognized among the 'Best Hotel Companies in the World' at the esteemed 101 Executive Summit held in Germany with Taj being ranked the best in the 'World's Finest Luxury Grand Palaces' category.

Speaking about the announcement, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, Indian Hotels Company said, "IHCL's iconic brand Taj has been an industry leader for over a century. A proud custodian of India's rich heritage, Taj has maintained a steadfast commitment to rekindle India's glorious past by restoring some of the country's most celebrated properties that date back to the pre-independence era. With authentic and magnificent Palaces, IHCL is the country's largest palace operator and proud to be India's custodian of heritage and culture for over a century."

He added, "We are delighted to be recognized at the 101



Best Executive Summit. The award underlines IHCL's commitment to excellence, innovation, and the delivery of unparalleled guest experiences at our hotels and resorts."

Intrinsically bound with the country history, Taj hotels have long been heralded as a purveyor of Indian heritage. With its presence in key historic destinations such as Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, Gwalior, Hyderabad, Varanasi and Mumbai; the brand focuses on conserving the cultural heritage of the regions.

A palace stay at the Taj is like no other. The award-winning Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur with its illustrious 275-year history is one of the world's most photographed hotels. Guests can relive Rajput hospitality at the World's No 1 Hotel 2023 by TripAdvisor Travellers' Choice Awards, Rambagh Palace, Jaipur, the former residence of royalty, built in 1825.

Home of the erstwhile Jodhpur royal family, the World's Best Hotel as rated by Conde Nast Travellers Readers' Choice awards, Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur and the 126-year-old Taj Falaknuma Palace, Hyderabad, offers a slice in time of the Indian royalty.

## Leisure Hotels Group Sign New Properties

### 'Bedzzz' in Goa

Leisure Hotels Group (LHG) has signed its newest "Bedzzz" property in Goa. Following the success of Bedzzz in Varanasi and Rishikesh, this would be LHG's third Bedzzz property in the country.

Bedzzz, a unique lifestyle concept accommodation with an emphasis on innovation and immersive guest experiences offers budget travellers with premium stays and modern travellers get a healthy dose of social interactions. Both get the quintessential Leisure



Hotels Group personalized service, hospitality and curated hyperlocal activities which are DIY and hotel-led.

A stone's throw away from the pristine Morjim Beach, Bedzzz Goa will boast of 27 charming and well-appointed rooms, each adorning playful interiors inspired by local art and culture, this hotel will give vacationers a glimpse of the vibrance and true spirit of Goa. With contemporary comforts at their fingertips, guests can choose to relax in the on-premises swimming pool, recreational lounge, high-energy bar and signature resto-cafe 'Travel Diaries' offering mesmerizing views of the Arabian Sea.

Speaking on the occasion, Vibhas Prasad, Director, Leisure Hotels Group, said, "The proposed addition of Bedzzz in Goa marks another milestone in the Group's journey with expansion in Western India. The hotel concept is ingeniously designed to provide the perfect blend of susegad, social interactions and unforgettable memories. With a focus on exuberant ambience and immersive activities, Bedzzz Goa is positioned to meet the burgeoning demand for affordable experiential travel in the country".

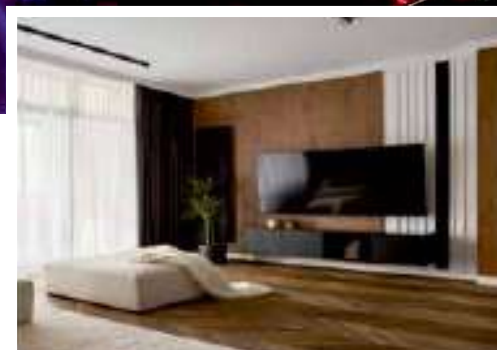
### Resort in McLeodganj

The group has also announced the signing of an exquisite boutique resort nestled in the vibrant hill town of McLeodganj. Scheduled to open early next year, this addition further emphasizes LHG's commitment to growth within the picturesque state of Himachal Pradesh.

This tranquil resort will be home to 34 elegantly designed rooms and suites that offer guests an unparalleled experience. An All-Day Diner promises a delightful culinary journey, while state-of-the-art amenities seamlessly interlace with LHG's hallmark of personalized services, to create an unforgettable holiday. Guests can also unwind at the bar, savoring handcrafted cocktails by expert mixologists, or revel in the serene beauty of McLeodganj from the Rooftop Café, all while enjoying a specially brewed coffee.

The Resort is conveniently located, within close proximity to several key tourist attractions including the revered Dalai Lama Temple, a kilometer away. Guests can immerse themselves in the dynamic local culture by taking a leisurely stroll down Mall Road for a delightful shopping spree or indulging in delectable street food.

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### Our Associates



# Fortune Hotels Expands its Southern Footprint

As Fortune Hotels continues to grow and grow its offerings in south India, it will now have new alliances in Tamil Nadu. Fortune Hotels has signed new properties in South India. A brownfield resort located in the picturesque area of Uthandi, Chennai and an over 100-room conversion hotel in Hosur, just an hours drive from Bangalore. The two strategically located hotels, scheduled to open in a few months, add strength to the Fortune Hotels portfolio. It also had signed property in Thrissur in Tamilnadu and two operational agreements in Kerala.

## Resort in Uthandi, Chennai

Fortune Beach Resort ECH Chennai in Uthandi, is appealingly sited on the Golden beach-one of the cleanest, beautiful and most sought-after beaches in Chennai. With aesthetically designed, spacious and well-appointed rooms, multiple food and beverage outlets including



an all-day diner and a trendy bar and lounge the resort is sure to become a splendid getaway for family and friends. To cater to the ever growing 'socials' in this area, it will also house a spacious banquet hall along with sprawling lawns and an array of other modern day facilities essential to extend a warm and comfortable experience to both city residents and travellers seeking an unparalleled blend of both style and elegance.

## Fortune Hosur

Fortune Hosur will have 107 stylish rooms and suites and a host of modern facilities designed to suit the present-day business traveller on a short or long stay. Hosur is home to a flourishing manufacturing industry that attracts a wide range of corporate and business travellers throughout the year. Undergoing refurbishment as per Fortune brand standards, the majestic hotel, conveniently located in the industrial town of Hosur is being prepped to add that perfect zing to guest stays. A delightful all-day dining outlet, a speciality restaurant, relaxing bars, a rejuvenating spa and an outdoor swimming pool will add to the oomph of the place. Additionally, multiple banquet venues, make the hotel a coveted venue to host corporate events and memorable social functions.

## Fortune Park Tiruppur

Fortune Park Tiruppur in the historic city of Tiruppur, Tamil Nadu, is strategically located in the heart of the textile and knitwear hub of India. Stylish, welcoming, and opulent, the hotel promises a perfect blend of modern conveniences and warm hospitality, catering to the

discerning needs of its travellers. It features well-appointed guest rooms and suites, all of which are equipped with modern amenities.

The hotel promises diverse dining options – the Zodiac, an all-day dining restaurant; the Neptune Bar that beckons with an eclectic ambiance and refreshing cocktails; Nakshatra the rooftop fine-dine offering a romantic setting under the blue skies with a menu that complements its ambiance and design.

Guests coming to the Fortune Park Tiruppur will also be able to indulge in a holistic wellness experience, with a symphony of facilities ranging from a well-equipped gym a restful spa, and a soon-to-open stunning rooftop swimming pool. Additionally, the hotel features versatile banqueting and meeting spaces with a dedicated pre-function area to host business events and social gatherings..

## Two upscale hotels in Kochi

Fortune Hotels also announced the inking of its latest operating agreements for two Fortune Park brownfield projects in Kochi –one each in Athani and Kakkanad. The two strategically located hotels, scheduled to open in the year 2025, mark Fortune Hotels' much anticipated entry into Kerala.

Anticipated to debut by March 2025, the Athani addition will offer 72 stylish rooms and suites. Situated just 10 minutes' drive from the Cochin International Airport, this contemporary hotel is set to be the first branded hotel in the area in its segment, and a premier address for transient guests, both business and leisure.

The Kakkanad project, a business hotel, is scheduled for a late 2025 launch, encompassing 67 rooms. Located in the Ernakulam district of Kerala, home to umpteen IT and industrial projects such



as Cochin Special Economic Zone, Kochi Info Park and the Smart city project, Kakkanad emerges as a pivotal location with robust IT presence and thriving industrial activities.

The two Kochi hotels are designed to include multiple dining options, state-of-the-art banquet and meeting venues, and other wellness facilities like gymnasium, spa and swimming pool, ensuring guests have plentiful options to relax and unwind.



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# The Fern Hotels & Resorts Launches New Properties

The Fern Hotels & Resorts, India's leading sustainable hotel chain, has announced the launch of The Fern Residency Subhash Bridge, Ahmedabad. This is the company's 24th operational hotel in Gujarat. It has also opened The Fern Residency, Ajmer, its latest property in the enchanting city of Ajmer, Rajasthan. This is the company's 14th hotel in Rajasthan.

## **The Fern Residency Subhash Bridge, Ahmedabad**

This new hotel is located on the banks of the Sabarmati River, offers easy access to Ahmedabad's many famous attractions. It has 69 well-appointed rooms and suites, fully air-conditioned and equipped with tea/coffee makers, a Minibar, Wi-Fi connectivity, LED TVs, in-room dining and eco-friendly bathroom amenities.

The hotel also boasts a 24/7 all-day diner that offers an unmatched dining experience The Gourmet, Corner Café a cozy open-air eatery that provides a selective range of snacks and



beverages and a Patisserie that offers an extensive range of baked goods along with top-of-the-line banquet facilities, making it an ideal choice for both corporate and social events.

Kevin Ashley Martis, General Manager - Sales & Marketing (West India), The Fern Hotels & Resorts, further elaborated, "Our choice of location is not merely strategic; it's a gateway to unforgettable experiences. The proximity to iconic attractions ensures that our guests can easily immerse themselves in the cultural and leisure delights of this vibrant city."

## **The Fern Residency, Ajmer**

This new hotel offers a harmonious blend of contemporary comfort and classic charm. Conveniently located near the Ajmer Sharif Dargah and Anna Sagar Lake, The Fern Residency, Ajmer is perfectly suited for both business and leisure travelers. Nestled in the heart of the city, this new establishment features 31 well-appointed rooms and suites, ensuring a memorable experience.

The Fern Residency, Ajmer offers an array of meticulously designed rooms and suites, each fully equipped with modern amenities, including high-speed Wi-Fi internet, LED televisions, air conditioning, and in-room dining. To further enhance the guest experience, The Fern Residency, Ajmer offers a wide range



of services and facilities. These include express check-in and check-out, both smoking and non-smoking room options, and a 24-hour front desk.

The hotel provides complimentary buffet breakfast as per the rate plan selected, an all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant, spacious banquet halls for conferences and special events, a spa, laundry services, a travel desk, and doctor on call. Guests can indulge their taste buds at Laziz, which offers a wide range of local and global vegetarian & non-vegetarian dishes, including the popular Rajasthani thali. Ocean, the rooftop lake-view bar will open shortly. The hotel also offers meeting & banqueting space for up to 300 persons.

Suhail Kannampilly, Managing Director, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, expressed his enthusiasm for The Fern Residency, Ajmer, stating, "We are delighted to introduce The Fern Residency, Ajmer to our valued guests. This new property symbolizes our commitment to offering an exceptional blend of modern comfort and timeless elegance. Whether for business or leisure, we look forward to providing an unforgettable experience for all our guests."

## **Signs The Fern Resort & Spa Chikmagalur Karnataka**



The group also announced the signing of its new property, Planetree The Fern Resort & Spa, in Chikmagalur, Karnataka. The company at present operates 5 hotels in Karnataka. This latest addition strengthens the brand's presence in the region, further underlining its commitment to providing world-class experiences for its guests.

Planetree The Fern Resort & Spa, located strategically in the tranquil environs of Chikmagalur is just 5 hours away from Bengaluru and a mere 2 hours from Shivamogga. With the newly opened Shivamogga airport, the accessibility to this serene location has dramatically increased, attracting visitors from all corners of India.

The resort is designed with 70 tastefully decorated rooms, each one equipped with modern comforts and amenities to ensure a pleasant stay for the guests.

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## The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai – The Icon Celebrates Its 120<sup>th</sup> Year

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) celebrates 120th year of its flagship Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, reflecting the journey of the iconic brand 'Taj', that has etched its name in the annals of history, having shaped the evolution of the hospitality landscape in India.

Speaking on the occasion, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL said, "Founded by Jamsetji Tata in 1903 and nurtured by the visionary leaders of the Tata Group, Taj, continues to be a legendary symbol of timeless hospitality. From pioneering landmark tourism destinations of



Rajasthan, Goa, Kerala, Andamans and North-East to opening doors to India's living grand Palaces, Taj rated as India's Strongest Brand 2023 by Brand Finance is an icon

that is both loved and sought after."

He added, "On this momentous occasion, I would like to thank the many people who have been integral to its success, having made it an institution and a benchmark."

The Taj Mahal Palace opened in Mumbai, then Bombay, in 1903, country's first harbour landmark was a pioneer of fine living and luxury. The recently trademarked hotel overlooks the majestic Gateway of India having preceded it by 20 years. Standing witness to the changing tides of time, it has played host to kings, dignitaries and eminent personalities from across the globe. Its Indo-Saracenic architecture has become synonymous with city's skyline, reflecting an amalgamation of traditions and modernity. Each of the rooms and suites are a striking blend of nostalgic elegance, rich history and contemporary conveniences.

Ritesh Sharma, General Manager of The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, said, "Over more than a century, The Taj', as it is fondly called, has woven itself into the cultural fabric of Mumbai. Its regal architecture, world-class amenities, and unwavering commitment to service has created an indelible mark in the hearts of our esteemed guests. We remain committed to offering the quintessential Taj service with genuine warmth, and care in the years ahead."

## IHCL Opens New Hotels

### Taj Taal Kutir

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), has opened Taj Taal Kutir, Kolkata. Located in proximity to the Kolkata International Airport, hotel blends its colonial design with its contemporary setting in the smart city of New Town.

Overlooking the 100-acre lake in the Eco Park, Taj Taal Kutir offers 75 luxurious rooms and suites with colonial touches of high ceilings, vintage-style furniture,



and sit-outs. Guests can enjoy their favourites at The Verandah, the all-day diner, indulge in the classic jazz & Gatsby era inspired bar – Rhyddim or choose to spend languid evenings at The Lakeview Lounge. Embrace wellness at the award-winning J Wellness Circle spa with its wide-ranging holistic practices rooted in the rich and healing traditions of India. The expansive banqueting and conferencing facilities spread across 50,000 sq. ft offer six venues ranging from 3,000 sq. ft. to over 12,000 sq. ft. It includes indoor and outdoor spaces with open to sky terraces, making it an ideal destination for grand social events and conferences.

Harshavardhan Neotia, Chairman, Ambuja Neotia Group said, "We take great pleasure in the inauguration of the Taj Taal Kutir, offering a luxurious getaway in Kolkata's contemporary township of New Town juxtaposed with art-deco architecture reminiscent of a past era. Taj Taal Kutir is the newest addition to the portfolio of these boutique offerings which are called 'Kutir'. It is the fifth in the series after Guras Kutir, Ganga Kutir, Raajkutir and Chia Kutir. We have taken yet another step forward in our partnership with IHCL, adding our third hotel in Kolkata."

### Ginger Gangtok

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) also announced the opening of Ginger Gangtok, Bojoghari in Sikkim. The 89-room hotel is strategically situated on Indra Bypass, just a short drive from the traditional business district and with easy access to major tourist attractions. The well-appointed rooms offer panoramic valley views. Ginger Gangtok features Qmin, the signature all day diner offering global and local favourites, an inviting bar, a flexible meeting room and a state-of-the-art fitness centre. It serves as the perfect place for both business and leisure travelers.



Commenting on the occasion, Ms. Deepika Rao, Executive Vice President–New Businesses, Hotel Openings & Corporate Communications, IHCL, stated, "We are delighted to open the doors of Ginger Gangtok. This hotel marks the debut of the Ginger brand in the city, the state's capital and most important commercial hub. With this opening, IHCL is expanding in Sikkim and will now have three of its brands present in the state."

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## IHCL Signs Two Taj Hotels In Bhutan

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, today



announced the signing of two new Taj-branded hotels in Phobjikha and Paro, in Bhutan. These are Brownfield projects.

The 45 keys Taj resort in Paro is spread over 7.6 acres surrounded by protected forests is a tranquil oasis in the lap of nature, graced by a stream running along the property. The idyllic retreat will offer an all-day diner, speciality restaurant and bar, complemented by recreational amenities including an indoor swimming pool, gym, spa and meeting facilities. Steeped in history, Paro, boasts sacred sites and historical buildings set against a breath-taking backdrop of snow-capped Himalayan peaks.

Nestled in the enchanting Phobjikha valley, 34 keys Taj resort spread over 3.5 acres will feature an all-day-diner, alfresco speciality restaurant, bar along with spa and fitness facilities. Phobjikha promises adventurous journeys, from mountain treks to visits to the venerable Gangtey Monastery, all amidst a serene environment that leaves a lasting impression.

Dr. Binod Chaudhary, Chairman, CG Corp Global and CG Hospitality Global said, "Taking forward our partnership with IHCL spanning 25 years and 12 assets across 6 countries, the two Bhutan hotels built with sustainability at the core, will showcase the unique blend of traditional Bhutanese charm and Taj's unmatched hospitality, offering travellers an unforgettable stay in the Himalayan kingdom."

## IHCL Signs New Properties

### Vivanta Hotel Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh



The group announced the signing of its first hotel in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. The Greenfield hotel will be branded Vivanta. The 150 keys hotel is strategically situated at a driving distance from the Donyi Polo Airport. The hotel will have the signature multi-cuisine restaurant and bar, along with recreational facilities including swimming pool, health club and a fitness centre. It will also offer over 6500 sq. ft. of state-of-the-art banqueting space including meeting rooms.

Ms. Joram Jumse, Partner, Taling Eichir Infra LLP said, "We are delighted to collaborate with IHCL, a hospitality leader well-known for pioneering new destinations and putting them on tourism map. This hotel will offer Vivanta's stylish spirit to the city."

### Seleqtions Hotel Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh

IHCL signed its first Seleqtions branded hotel in Sirmaur, Himachal Pradesh. This is a Brownfield property, slated to open in 2024. The 42-key hotel, spread over six acres offers panoramic views of the Shivalik range. It is located at a convenient driving distance from Chandigarh. It will house an all-day diner, a bar as well as an outdoor cafe. Other recreation facilities will include a spa, swimming pool, and fitness centre.

Neeraj Soni, Managing Director, Dolphin Terra Firma Pvt. Ltd. said, "We are thrilled to partner with IHCL to bring the Seleqtions brand to Sirmaur. We believe this partnership will help attract more visitors to this undiscovered part of Himachal Pradesh."



### Hotel In Dehradun



The group signed a Taj branded hotel in Dehradun, Uttarakhand. The hotel is a Brownfield project. The 215 keys hotel is strategically located off Rajpur Road connecting Dehradun to Mussorie and is close to commercial areas within the city and tourist attractions around it.

The array of facilities will include an all-day diner, a specialty restaurant, a bar and a lobby lounge. The hotel will be equipped with over 8,000 sq. ft. of banqueting space along with pre-function area and meeting rooms. The recreational facilities will include a spa, swimming pool and a fitness centre.

Amarjeet Singh Juneja and Parvinder Preet Singh, Partners, La Roche Hotels & Resorts, said, "We are excited to announce the collaboration with IHCL to bring a Taj branded hotel in the verdant foothills of Dehradun. The iconic brand has been rated India's Strongest Brand across sectors and industries."

### Vivanta Hotel In Aluva

IHCL signs a new Vivanta hotel in the heart of Kochi, Aluva. The 95-keys hotel is strategically located at Aluva, a comfortable driving distance from the airport as well as leisure spots. The hotel will feature an all-day diner and bar, 4,500 square feet of banquet space, swimming pool, a gym and a spa.

KM Abdul Latheef, Managing Director, Hotel Pearl Dunes Pvt Ltd. said, "We are happy to work once again with IHCL, India's hospitality leaders. This hotel will offer guests a flavor of the stylish Vivanta brand in Kochi."



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# Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre Opens Its Doors



Accor has launched its 24th Novotel property in India, with the opening of Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre (NJCC). The hotel's proximity to the Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC), is renowned as South Asia's premier purpose-built, state-of-the-art venue for exhibitions, conventions, and entertainment. This significant expansion in Accor's capacity for hosting MICE events, enhances its ability to cater to the needs of business and conference travelers, offering them a comprehensive solution that combines high-quality accommodations with world-class event facilities.

Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre has 226 modern, well-appointed rooms, catering to the diverse needs of every guest, offering essential amenities and a tranquil hospitality experience. Conveniently located near Jaipur International Airport, the hotel provides quick access to key tourist sites and commercial hubs.

The hotel and exhibition centre spreads over an area of 42 acres with South Asia's leading pillar-less exhibitions-convention-entertainment facilities. It has 13 breakout meeting rooms, a VIP Lounge, 2 Green Rooms and a Grand Ball Room with modern technology with 740 retractable auditorium-style seats, making it ideal for conferences, exhibitions, gatherings, and weddings. With its enchanting 70,000 sq. ft. lawn, Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre offers an exquisite venue for celebrations and special events, adding a touch of elegance to any occasion.

"We are thrilled to announce the grand opening of the Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre in the vibrant city of Jaipur. This latest addition to our portfolio in India strengthens our commitment to delivering cutting-edge amenities and services. The Jaipur Exhibition Convention Centre represents a valuable expansion that is poised to fuel the growth of the Accor in India, further solidifying our position as a leading provider of large-scale exhibition and convention venues in the country," said Puneet Dhawan, South Asia's Vice-President Operations, Accor in India.

"The opening of this beautiful property is a harmonious combination of contemporary design and world-class event facilities, marking a new and exciting journey for Novotel in the Pink City. With a strategic location, we will be truly a one-stop destination for world-class exhibitions, conferences, and events.

Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre invites guests to savour a diverse and delightful dining experience, offering three distinct dining venues, each promising a unique and memorable encounter with the cuisine. Food Exchange, the multi-cuisine restaurant, has two exclusive open kitchens, harmoniously

blending global and local flavours in a stylish setting that encourages social interactions. For a more intimate atmosphere, Ravanta provides intimate dining by the pool amidst a musical ambiance. Meanwhile, the Gourmet Bar provides a casual and friendly space for enjoying trendy drinks, balanced meals, and coffee, perfect for unwinding at the bar.

"The property provides heartfelt service, comfortable yet stylish accommodations and shared spaces in a relaxing and friendly atmosphere," said Manuj Ralhan, General Manager of Novotel Jaipur Convention Centre & Jaipur Exhibition Convention Centre.



Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC) has 2 large pillar-less exhibition halls, with an area of 1,06,347 sq. ft. each and a 43-feet high ceiling connected through a common entrance plaza with an extensive Pre-Function area, large open spaces, and a food court, further

offering 22 acres of open space to host outdoor entertainment events. The exhibition centre has a parking space, that can accommodate up to 2,000 coaches or 5,000 cars, providing an ideal space for an array of events, including exhibitions, conferences, corporate meetings, entertainment events, seminars, banquets, and social gatherings.

"We are pleased to partner with Accor to manage and operate NJCC and JECC. Their expertise and global reach will act as a catalyst to put Jaipur on the International map and provide impetus to the hospitality sector in the state" said Mr. Harimohan Dangayach, Chairman, Dangayach Group.

"NJCC and JECC have the leading exhibition and convention space equipped with state-of-the-art infrastructure in South Asia to conduct large events. We hope the partnership with Accor will help us leverage the full potential of this infrastructure" added Pramod Kumar Agarwal, Chairman, Derewala Group.

# DS Group Launches InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road



InterContinental Hotels & Resorts and DS Group, announces the grand unveiling of InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road following a monumental transformation. The transformation of the Jaipur hotel from Crowne Plaza to InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road reflects IHG Hotels & Resorts dedication to growing its luxury & lifestyle portfolio around the world.

InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road, located near the airport and Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, serves as an ideal destination for both business and leisure travellers, capitalizing on its prime position near the Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre. In a city renowned for its opulent cultural heritage and historical treasures, Jaipur beckons both domestic and international travellers.

Nalin Mandiratta, Regional General Manager & General Manager – InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road, said: “We are extremely proud and delighted to open our doors at InterContinental Jaipur, the third InterContinental in India. Modern travellers lead diverse lives, and InterContinental acknowledges the need for seamless transitions throughout their day.”

Nathan Andrews, Head Hospitality, DS Group said, “The preferences of luxury travellers are evolving and we are experiencing a strong demand and growing inclination for personalized and exclusive experiences. We have worked with IHG Hotels & Resorts and we believe this partnership will assist us to deliver world-class hospitality in Jaipur.”

## The Lobby

The new lobby at InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road exudes an aura of contemporary opulence and warmth, seamlessly blending avant-garde architectural design with artistic flourishes. Guests are welcomed into a captivating space that not only

invites serenity but also fosters a sense of conviviality, encouraging both relaxation and social engagement as guests shape shift through their day.

## The Insider Expertise

At InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road, colleagues will serve as cultural connectors, helping guests embrace and explore the locality. The concierge, at the heart of cultural exploration, will play a hugely significant role in the guests’ stay, striving to create seamless and unforgettable experiences. They will proactively share their extensive cultural expertise, providing personalized recommendations and assistance.

## Guest Rooms

The hotel offers a total of 218 generously appointed rooms, including 20 bespoke suites which have undergone an extensive transformation, striking a harmonious balance between contemporary aesthetics and timeless comfort. Each room showcases intricate Thikri glass inlay work and has been elevated with top-tier amenities, a luxurious four-fixture bathroom complete with a generous bathtub and Byredo bath amenities, locally inspired artwork, sleek furnishings, and captivating urban vistas.

## The Facilities

Guests can luxuriate in the experience with the option of pool views, private terrasses, and balconies, immersing themselves in the seamless fusion of modern style and traditional décor, all while enjoying exclusive access to the Club InterContinental Lounge. This access brings a wealth of benefits to those who opt for the hotel’s Club InterContinental Lounge accommodations, such as complimentary breakfast, all-day non-alcoholic beverages, afternoon hi-tea with delectable snacks, pre-dinner cocktails,

and exclusive check-in and check-out services to enhance their stay. The lounge also offers a curated selection of books and magazines.

## Culinary Excellence

InterContinental Jaipur Tonk Road offers a diverse array of gourmet delights across fine dining and relaxed settings. Guests can choose from an array of dining options at award-winning restaurants, including Socorro, a global cuisine restaurant, The Royal Root, an authentic Indian cuisine restaurant and House of Han a Chinese specialty restaurant.

## For Occasions

The hotel provides flexible meeting spaces equipped with state-of-the-art features, establishing the perfect stage for conferences, weddings, and special events. The property entails a 51,000 sq ft banquet spaces, as well as open-air venues and extensive lawns with the capacity to cater to up to 2,000 guests at a time. With modern amenities and the expertise of the hotel’s facilities prove ideal for weddings and special events, ensuring each occasion becomes an unforgettable experience.

The lush green landscape of outdoor venues under the canopy of open skies and the well sculpted pillarless indoor spaces together makes Intercontinental Jaipur a perfect location for incredible Occasions.

## Wellbeing

For guests seeking relaxation, the rejuvenating spa and wellness facilities offer a haven to unwind and refresh after a day of exploration and activities. The property features an open-air pool, a state-of-the-art fitness centre, Tattva Spa with dedicated couple massage rooms, yoga sessions, and Planet Trekkers- dedicated kids’ play areas, ensuring a comprehensive wellness experience for guests.



### Aaron McGrath

Six Senses Fort Barwara has appointed Aaron McGrath as Regional General Manager. A holder of both a Diploma in Hotel Management from Hotel Institute Montreux, Switzerland and an MBA from Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne, Switzerland, has a career spanning over three decades in the international hospitality industry, as General Manager for Six Senses Zighy

Bay in Oman, Regional General Manager for Saudi Arabia, and Regional General Manager for Australasia & Pacific, before taking up his current role as Regional General Manager for India and Bhutan.



### Harshad Nalawade

DoubleTree by Hilton Goa Panaji appoints Harshad Nalawade as General Manager. With an experience of two decades he started his career at Taj Mahal Palace Mumbai. He later joined the Marriott group in 2003. His leadership, particularly in the areas of food and beverage service and hotel operations, left an indelible mark across various

brands and locations. In his most recent role as the pre-opening Hotel Manager at Courtyard by Marriott Navi Mumbai, he successfully positioned the hotel as a sought-after urban oasis.



### Samit Kazi

Samit Kazi has been appointed as the Area Head of Sales for the West division for ITC Hotels India. Samit will drive hotels sales for Welcom & Storii brand. Samit with experience of over 2 decades started his career with Renaissance Mumbai Hotel and Convention Centre. Before joining ITC Hotels, he was part of Marriott Hotels,

where he managed a portfolio of 13 hotels owned by SAMHI Hotels and worked as a Resident Manager for Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and General Manager for Novotel Kochi.



### Umapathy Amirtham

O by Tamara has appointed Umapathy Amirtham as the General Manager – Operations for O by Tamara Coimbatore. With over 27 years of experience, he previously occupied key positions at The Leela, Hyatt International, and ITC Brands. His recent position was as Hotel Manager at The Leela Gandhinagar, where he spearheaded operations with

a focus on enhancing guest experiences, refining feedback processes, and overseeing rooms, food, and beverage services and played a crucial role in managing extensive convention and banquet facilities.



### Shiv Bose

Jaisalmer Marriott Resort & Spa has appointed Shiv Bose as General Manager. With over two decades of experience started as a bell desk associate at the JW Marriott Juhu, Mumbai. He has served multiple General Manager roles in the past, namely Le Meridien Nagpur, Courtyard by Marriott Hebbal, Bengaluru, Sheraton Grand

Chennai Resort and Spa & Double Tree by Hilton Panjim, Goa. In his last assignment, his resort was bestowed with the Award of Excellence for the APEC region.



### Sandeep Sinha

The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences has appointed Sandeep Sinha as Hotel Manager. An alumnus of The Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development, he has over two decades of experience in the prestigious hotels like Taj Hotels, Marriott International, and Hyatt Hotels. His most recent assignment was with The Oberoi Group, where he

was deputed at the Trident Bandra Kurla. Beyond his dedication to the hospitality industry, he is known for his passion for travel and his unwavering enthusiasm for cricket.



### Vaibhav Gupta

The Astor Goa has appointed Vaibhav Gupta as General Manager. With over 18 years of experience he began his career at Oberoi Hotels & Resorts after graduating from the Institute of Hotel Management in Bhopal. He worked with Accor Hotels, Radisson, Shangri-La, and The Oberoi. During his association with Accor Hotel he lead promoinent portfolio

hotels such Ibis New Delhi Aerocity, Ibis Styles Goa, and Ibis Bengaluru Hosur Road. The Ibis Kolkata Rajaghat, reached new heights under his able leadership.



### Vikas Nagar

Pilibhit House - IHCL SeleQtions, Haridwar's has appointed Vikas Nagar as Hotel Manager. He has Masters in English Literature from C.C.S University, Meerut and holds a Diploma in F&B from Delhi Institute of Hotel Management. With an experience of over 18 years in luxury hospitality, He worked at The Grand, New Delhi, and later joined Ambassador, New

Delhi - IHCL SeleQtions, Taj Ganges, Varanasi. Before joining Pilibhit House, he was associated with the Taj Ganges and Taj Nadesar Palace, Varanasi.

**Amit Malhotra**

The St. Regis Goa Resort has elevated Amit Malhotra as Hotel Manager. He has work experience at Grand Hyatt, The Imperial, Taj Hotels and The Leela Goa. In his new role, he will ensure that all aspects of operations run seamlessly to scale new heights. He will oversee the opening of 2 new restaurants, a cache of refurbished

guestrooms and will actively work with the resort's team of butlers in bringing the halo brand offering of the Butler Service Desk.

**Sanjay Gautam**

Sanjay Kumar Gautam has joined Onora Hospitality Pvt. Ltd., having three brands portfolio – jüSTa Hotels & Resorts, Bookmark Resorts and NUO, operating 23 small luxury hotels and resorts, as the Chief Financial Officer. He has over 20 years of experience in accounting and finance. After completing Chartered Accountancy in 2002, he worked with

several reputed MNCs in the manufacturing industry. He joined the Oberoi Group in 2011 and worked there for almost 11 years before leaving the organization in January 2023.

**Nishal Seebaluck**

The Ritz-Carlton Bangalore has appointed Nishal Seebaluck as Hotel Manager. He began his career in finance after obtaining a post-graduate diploma from The Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development (OCLD). In his 18-year tenure, he has handled key leadership assignments in F&B in Mauritius with Sun Resorts, The Oberoi Mauritius and played

a pivotal role in the luxury resort success at The Oberoi Marrakech, Morocco as the Executive Assistant Manager. He is recognized for his strategic leadership and commitment to operational excellence.

**Prabin C.B.**

Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai has appointed Prabin C.B. as Director of Revenue. With a strong background in revenue optimization and a proven track record in the luxury hospitality industry, he brings a wealth of experience to the Four Seasons family. He previously held key positions in luxury hotels and resorts like Hilton Chennai and Westin

Hyderabad. His strategic insights and innovative approach to revenue management have consistently led to increased revenue and a strong competitive advantage for his previous employers.

**Sunaina Manerker**

Pullman and Novotel New Delhi Aerocity has announced the appointment of Sunaina Manerker as the Resident Manager to lead the operations team of the 670-room complex. She has impressive 23-year tenure in the hospitality industry, beginning with Le Meridien Delhi, and later at Alila Fort Bishangarh & Alila Diwa Goa, Ramada

Caravela Beach Resort Goa, Crowne Plaza Today Gurgaon and Radisson Blu Delhi. After graduating in commerce from Delhi University, she enrolled herself at IHM Ahmedabad for diploma in hotel management.

**Zubin Sutaria**

Sheraton Grand Pune has appointed Zubin D. Sutaria as Director of Sales & Marketing. He has over 12 years of experience as Director of Sales & Marketing at Hilton Garden Inn, Pune Hinjewadi, and prior to these held key roles with Cushman & Wakefield, Hyatt Hotels Corporation, and Marriott International. He did Post Graduate

Diploma in Culinary Arts from The Culinary Institute of America, providing him blend of culinary and managerial skills. He is committed to excellence and passion for customer service.

**Nilesh Jain**

Indore Marriott Hotel has announced the appointment of Nilesh Jain as its new Director of Operations. With a career spanning 18 years in the Food & Beverages department, he worked at Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur, The Oberoi Vanyavilas, The Leela Palace Udaipur, The Oberoi Rajvilas, Trident Jaipur, Trident Hyderabad, The Oberoi

Cecil, Sheraton Grand Bangalore and Intercontinental Jaipur. As the Director of Operations at Indore Marriott Hotel, he will be responsible for overseeing and optimizing the day-to-day functions of the hotel.

**Waseem Karbelkar**

Novotel Goa Resort & Spa and Novotel Goa Candolim, has appointed Waseem Karbelkar as the Director of Sales & Marketing. An MBA degree holder in Sales and Marketing, Karbelkar previously served as Director, Sales and Marketing at Novotel Imagicaa. Leveraging his extensive knowledge and experience in the hospitality industry,

Waseem in his new role, will be responsible for leading the sales and marketing initiatives for both Novotel Goa Candolim and Novotel Goa Resorts & Spa, aiming to elevate their positioning in the market.



# Resorts

Mention resorts and several people's imagination generally visualize a lavish and extravagant accommodation. But one would believe that a star hotel would provide the same. So why opt for a resort? The answer would be because a resort does not merely provide lodging but it is a place meant for relaxation and recreation like beaches, seashore, scenic or historic areas, ski parks, spas, etc. **Ashok Malkani** tries to fathom the difference between the two kinds of accommodation – hotels & resorts – and several issues concerning resorts.



In this digital era of hectic lifestyle, there is a desire, now and then, to break away from the frenzied day-to-day life and travel to some beckoning place for a vacation. Particularly during the festive season like Christmas and New Year one is keen break from your everyday hustle-bustle and enjoy with family and friends. So you search for a destination and an accommodation. The destination would often depend on the sights that you are interested in, but you would be puzzled about the accommodation. Perusing through the internet or consulting a local travel agent you would get a plethora of options regarding hotels or resorts. But not being aware of precise difference between the two kinds of accommodation could leave you perplexed. So what exactly is the difference between the two?

Ajay Sharma, General Manager, Taj Corbett Resort & Spa, Uttarakhand states, "Resorts ideally are unique and exclusive and has

sense of place. A resort depicts its culture and drives the advantage from the locations by being away from the hustle bustle; by offering more space and natural vistas. The purpose of stays in resorts is primarily leisure and accordingly the comforts, amenities, services are thus designed. In contrasts hotels are in confined space and cater to a different set of requirements which is more pertaining to transit, business or formal setting and offerings are limited vis a vis resort."

Karaan Kapoor, General Manager, Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Goa, avers, "A hotel primarily offers rooms to stay and basic amenities while a resort offers a broader range of leisure facilities and curated activities. Resorts thus create an immersive and recreational experience for guests. Resorts would have features like pools, spa, sports facilities and various sightseeing and entertainment options, differentiating them from hotels."

Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO, Signum

Hotels & Resorts, disclosed, "We have two different hotel brands - Cityscapes for B2B and Signum Resort for resorts. Each brand has its unique features. Signum Resorts offers a yoga experience deck, an Al-fresco restaurant, an open air cinema experience, and engaging activities like picnics and bonfires. On the other hand, Cityscapes provides state-of-the-art guest rooms, restaurants, and a fitness centre."

Vibhas Prasad, Director, Leisure Hotels Group, says, "In a normal scenario, hotels concentrate on basic accommodations, suitable for a diverse clientele on shorter visits. In contrast, resorts present a holistic experience with expansive leisure options. Often located in picturesque settings, resorts are ideal for extended stays."

He adds, "Experiential Resort chains like ours stand out by providing a wider array of recreational amenities, crafting a more immersive and serene guest experience. The essential disparity between hotels and resorts lies in the range of amenities, with hotels emphasizing efficiency and resorts prioritizing a laid-back, recreational atmosphere."

### Preferred Accommodation

An individual, even after being aware of the two formats of accommodation may still be wavering on which kind of lodging would be preferable.

Ajay opines that the purpose of the visit would determine the type of accommodation where to live. "Resorts are a great choice to take a pause from the hustle bustle of the cities and spend time with oneself, indulge in soul seeking and outdoor activities. Resorts



**Vibhas Prasad****Mehul Sharma****Karaan Kapoor****Ajay Sharma**

are an apt choice to do mental and digital detox and return refreshed, whereas hotels are primarily preferred due to ease of transit and business purposes."

He further adds, "Tourists usually prefer to stay in a resort where they could relish the natural beauty of the place and could reunite with nature and rejuvenate themselves and have precious and quality time with their family and friends."

Vibhas is of the view that a tourist's decision between a hotel and a resort hinges on the Traveller's preferences, trip purpose, and desired ambience and activities

He says, "Some opt for hotels for convenience and central locations, ideal for short stays. Discerning Travellers these days are looking beyond accommodation and dining. They are more drawn to their immersive, recreational experience, scenic & natural settings, and suitability for longer leisure stays, which is what resorts offer. The choice between staying in hotels or resorts depends on individual preferences and the nature of the trip."

Karaan states, "A tourist prioritizing recreational activities and a more immersive experience would prefer a resort. However, if guest is looking to explore the city and spend most of the time outdoors visiting museums, forts and zoo, then a hotel is a better option."

He sums up, "A tourist with a keen interest in the local sightseeing and exploring the city might stay in a hotel, while tourists who come to relax and rejuvenate would prefer a resort for their holiday."

Mehul avers, "The decision tends to depend on the reason for travelling. Are you just looking for a place to stay near the conference center or downtown? Or are you going on a long-awaited vacation with your family? Will you be spending most of your time outside exploring your destination, or do you plan to relax at the pool and do as little as possible? Both options have their positives depending on the purpose of your travel."

### Current Scenario

As far as resorts are concerned, it is almost a rebirth for Indian resort tourism. Travellers, during the past couple of years, when Covid prevention was upper-most in peoples' minds, they preferred privacy, hygiene, flexibility, convenience. Today, their minds are away

from the Covid scare. Wellness tourism emphasizing yoga and meditation have gained importance over adventure tourism."

Karaan discloses, "The government has helped in promoting the hospitality industry, on the whole. Besides, 'Dekho Apna Desh' flagship scheme, encouraging Indians to explore India instead of options that are located abroad, the finance minister has announced "mission mode" which includes developing 50 new tourist destinations, promoting eco-tourism, building new airports and railway stations that improves connectivity to promote tourism, which, in turn would promote the hospitality industry on the whole."

Vibhas declares, "The prominence of resorts, villas, and bungalows surged during Covid due to restrictions on international travel. People have started looking at domestic hospitality players for immersive experiences. Resorts that provided outdoor activities, expansive surroundings, and wellness amenities have seen increased popularity."

Mehul states, "Resorts have a significant role to play in tourism. They serve as nodes for regional development and contribute to the local economy. Resorts are not just places that accumulate tourism demand and supply, but they also serve other functions such as development and everyday life. They attract tourists who have a higher level of environmental concern and engage in environmentally friendly behaviours, leading to increased loyalty. Overall, resorts serve as important hubs for tourism activities and contribute to the overall growth and development of the regions they are located in."

He further informs, "The hospitality industry in India concluded the current year with an occupancy rate ranging between 59-61 percent, which is an increase of 15-17 percentage points from the previous year. The average rates (ARR) have fully recovered in the current year and are 37-39 percent higher than the rates of the previous year."

Ajay asserts, "The demand for resorts is, presently, soaring and would continue to do so. New unexplored locations are coming in the fray eventually giving guests more options to go for. Travellers, post Covid, have extensively experienced the resorts and are

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now looking for more unique and isolated options.”

### Challenges Facing Resorts

According to industry sources managing a resort involves heavy on-site investment and a high level of physical presence. Even after tremendous planning with all the resources on board, some things do not work according to the plan. Resorts have not only to get their marketing strategy right but also have several other issues like maintaining their extracurricular outdoor activities in ship-shape form, etc.

Karaan says, “Managing a resort comes with challenges like unique guest experiences, operational complexities. Season variation is also a problem. For example Goa experiences rains for about 6 months in a year. Environmental sustainability is foremost for our resort, Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Goa, which is situated on the beach front.”

Vibhas states, “Running a resort comes with a lot of challenges. These include dealing with high costs, meeting different customer needs, handling staff matters, and making sure everyone gets the right training. To manage things well, it’s important to keep up with rules and use new technologies. Overcoming these challenges means doing smart promotions, to handle changes in business throughout the year. Making things more efficient with good systems, training the staff well, and using technology can help deal with these challenges.”

He adds, “To handle these challenges, resorts of our Leisure Hotels Group, focus on being creative & staying updated on what’s happening in the industry. It’s also important to balance having luxury amenities while

taking care of the environment.”

Ajay declares, “Generally, the challenges are pertaining to the remoteness of the location and to coexist with the local community or area. Resorts are extensive and maintaining them, especially due to climatic conditions, is a challenge. Maintenance costs are high as we have to employ skilled manpower consistently, which is a challenge. Training, skill development and finding ways to utilise the locally available resources and creating more stakeholders from the area can help one overcome the challenge to manage resorts.”

He continues, “We, at Taj Corbett Resort & Spa, Uttarakhand, try our best to make a positive impact on the local flora & fauna with our sustainable practices that only add to the beauty of National Park.”

Mehul, elaborating on the challenges faced by resorts and how they can be overcome, states, “Managing a resort in India comes with its own unique set of challenges. From intense competition to the diverse needs of guests, resort owners and managers face numerous hurdles in delivering exceptional guest experiences. However, with careful planning and innovative strategies, these challenges can be overcome, ensuring an unforgettable stay for visitors.

One of the primary challenges faced by resort managers in India is the high level of competition in the hospitality industry. With an increasing number of resorts and hotels popping up across the country, standing out from the crowd can be daunting. To overcome this, resorts must adopt a unique positioning strategy, focusing on their distinctive offerings, such as eco-friendly practices, local cultural immersion, or specialized wellness and spa

facilities. By promoting these unique aspects, resorts can attract a niche market and differentiate themselves from competitors.

Another significant challenge is the seasonality factor. In popular tourist destinations, resorts often experience peak tourism seasons followed by periods of low occupancy. Maintaining a steady flow of guests throughout the year requires strategic planning. To combat this challenge, resorts can tap into the potential of off-peak seasons by offering attractive packages, organizing special events, or partnering with local tour operators to create exclusive itineraries for guests. Additionally, focusing on attracting corporate events and conferences during slower periods can help maintain consistent occupancy levels.

The diverse needs of guests also pose a challenge, especially in a culturally rich country like India. Resorts must ensure that staff members are well-trained and capable of catering to the requirements of guests from various cultural backgrounds. This can include providing multi-lingual support, understanding dietary preferences or restrictions, and organizing cultural activities that celebrate the local heritage. By creating an inclusive and welcoming environment, resorts can exceed guest expectations and build loyalty.

Moreover, infrastructure and transportation can be significant challenges in certain regions of India. Resorts located in remote or lesser-developed areas may have limited access to reliable transportation, making it difficult for guests to reach their destination. To overcome this, resorts can establish partnerships with transportation service providers or invest in their dedicated shuttle services to ensure seamless connectivity. By taking the initiative to address transportation hurdles, resorts can enhance the overall guest experience.

In conclusion, managing a resort in India comes with its fair share of challenges. However, through strategic planning, innovative marketing, and a strong focus on guest satisfaction, these challenges can be successfully overcome. By capitalizing on unique offerings, leveraging the potential of off-peak seasons, catering to diverse guest needs, and addressing transportation concerns, resorts can thrive in the competitive Indian hospitality industry. Ultimately, these efforts will lead to greater guest satisfaction,

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positive word-of-mouth, and increased success in the Indian resort market.”

### Technology in Promoting Resorts

In recent years, hospitality industry on the whole – including resorts – has undergone unprecedented innovations. Technological advancements have played a crucial role in shaping the way hotels and resorts provide their services. As we approach 2024 it is time for the industry to look forward and explore top trends to further transform its services.

Technology is advancing at a rapid rate. From artificial intelligence powered chatbots to sustainable practices prioritizing eco-consciousness among travellers.

So what is the role of technology in promoting a resort and can it help in making resorts fully automated?

Karaan states, “As we progress technology plays a crucial role in managing the promotions of a resort. Right from online information on guest history in terms of preferences, it helps us curate personalised stays. Digital marketing, social media management and mobile apps make the information you seek, on your fingertips.”

Referring to fully automated resorts he says, “Resorts thrive on customisation and curated experiences which are human touch driven. As such it might be highly difficult to do the same. For example, a check in process is a simple 2 minutes automated task. However, in a resort typically a check in process would mean guest interaction to

understand the meal preferences, areas of interest, purpose of visit etc to curate a unique experience for the guest.”

Ajay has positive views on technology but is not so approving of full automation. He says, “Technology has been the biggest contributor to popularity of resorts and their effective management. I would say that it has helped increase the happiness quotient by saving on time in terms of delivery of service and for guests it helps in navigating the services better. Technology has come to good effect by helping in reducing waste, effectively using the various renewable and non-renewable resources, putting electronic vehicle charging stations to be more sustainable. We, at Taj Corbett Resort & Spa, Uttarakhand, are also generating a significant amount for solar energy and efficiently running on it. Additionally, technology is enabling digital marketing and its reach has been one of the most potent sources of promotion.

However, as far as automation is concerned, I believe complete automation of resorts is not feasible and is not recommend as it will eliminate the human element that is a USP of resort. Also, with inundated digital interventions in our daily lives now there is a dire need to have constant digital detox too. Humans fill soul to a space and making a space fully automated would take the soul out of the place.”

Mehul avers, “I would say, technology plays a vital role in both the promotion and management of resorts. In terms of

promotion, technology has enabled resorts to reach a larger audience and offer better-targeted marketing. Social media platforms, such as Instagram and Facebook, have become important marketing tools for resorts, allowing them to showcase their property and amenities to a global audience. Additionally, search engine optimization (SEO) and pay-per-click (PPC) advertising have enabled resorts to capture the attention of potential guests while they are actively searching for accommodations. Technology has also made it possible for resorts to collect and analyze data on guests, enabling more targeted marketing efforts and personalized experiences.

In terms of management, technology has a significant impact on the operations of a resort. Management software systems, such as property management systems (PMS), help streamline operations by managing everything from reservations to billing. Technology also plays a vital role in communication between staff members, with software systems such as messaging apps and task management tools enabling efficient communication and collaboration. Furthermore, technology such as sensor-driven automation and artificial intelligence can help monitor and control critical systems, reducing maintenance costs and enhancing guest experiences.

In conclusion I would say, by harnessing the power of technology, resorts can enhance guest experiences, streamline operations, and improve marketing efforts. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve, technology will undoubtedly play an increasingly important role in the success of resorts.”

Speaking about automation, he states, “The hospitality industry has been using automation to improve efficiency and enhance the guest experience for quite some time now. From self-check-in kiosks to robotic room service delivery, hotels and resorts are increasingly turning to technology to streamline their operations. However, the growing trend of automation has also raised concerns about job elimination and workforce displacement. As hotels and resorts continue to explore automation, it is essential to strike a balance between efficiency and employee retention. This means that while technology can be useful, it should not be used at the cost of human jobs. Here are a few strategies that

the hospitality industry can consider:

As automation takes over certain tasks, employees need to embrace upskilling and reskilling to stay competitive in the job market. Employers can support their workforce by investing in training programs and reskilling initiatives to help them adapt and remain relevant.

It is important to focus on tasks that require a personal touch and cannot be automated in the hospitality industry. Employers can prioritize jobs that demand high levels of customer service, creativity, and problem-solving skills. For instance, jobs such as concierge services or event planning require human interaction and attention to detail.

One way to keep employees and productivity levels intact is by considering flexible work arrangements. Rather than eliminating jobs, employers can explore options such as job sharing and flexible work arrangements. This can involve offering part-time or seasonal work or allowing employees to work remotely. By being open to flexible work arrangements, employers

can retain talent and maintain productivity while accommodating the needs of their workforce. Employers can retain talent, boost morale, and adapt to new technologies by investing in employee training and development.

By striking a balance between automation and employee retention, the hospitality industry can continue to innovate and provide exceptional guest experiences while supporting its workforce. Let's work together to create a future that is efficient and equitable."

Vibhas affirms, "Technology is integral to both promoting and managing resorts. In terms of promotion, we, at Leisure Hotels Group, take an integrated approach in digital marketing, online booking platforms, and social media engagement to enable resorts to reach a global audience, streamline bookings, and providing immersive previews of their amenities.

In management, reservation systems, CRM, and property management systems enhance efficiency by coordinating bookings,

managing guest interactions, and integrating various operational aspects. Overall, technology plays a pivotal role in optimizing both promotional efforts and day-to-day resort management."

Delving on fully automation of the resorts he says, "While some aspects of resort operations can be automated, achieving full automation in the hospitality industry, including resorts, is challenging due to the inherently personalized and service-oriented nature of the sector. Certain routine tasks, such as reservation management, check-in/out processes, and even housekeeping scheduling, can be automated through the use of technology like reservation systems and mobile apps. Additionally, some resorts have implemented automation in areas like billing and inventory management. "

He maintains, "While automation can enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and streamline certain processes, a complete replacement of human involvement is unlikely given the importance of personalization and guest satisfaction in the resort experience." ■

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# Ensuring Success of a Hotel

The hotel industry can be rough and tumble, but not if you have the right formula for success. The world is undergoing a major shift in decision-making and buying power, and it's changing the hospitality industry. The only way to see continued success is to prepare for these inevitable changes. The varying and shifting mind set of the guests has to be gauged accurately to ensure continuous popularity, recognition and reputation of the hotel.

**Ashok Malkani** discusses about the need for the industry to gauge the new trends among the guests and their changing preferences for the success of the property.

**T**he key to success of a hotel depends on the continuous efforts of the property in exceeding the guests' expectations. This can be achieved by knowing the new preferences of the guests and incorporating the same in the property. The world is undergoing a major change in decision making and buying power. This is changing the hospitality industry. By learning about the upcoming trends the hotelier and the industry will be able to understand the new adjustments to be adopted in their marketing to make business grow.

It is a well known fact that hospitality marketing has always played an essential role in the success of the industry. In the current landscape of competitive industry, any business has to keep up with the latest trends of the consumers – which are guests, in the case of hospitality industry – for the success of the property. A hotel can keep ahead of its competitors by keeping up with the latest trends among the guests.

There is a major shift taking place in decision making and buying power, globally,

which is changing the hospitality industry. To ensure continued success one has to prepare for the inevitable changes.

Jaidev Dutta, General Manager, Holiday Inn Bangalore Race Course, states, "Being cognizant of future hospitality trends is vital for a hotel's success. It enables anticipation of evolving customer preferences, fosters a competitive edge through innovation, and ensures alignment with changing market dynamics, technology, and sustainability expectations, ultimately enhancing guest satisfaction and business resilience."

For future success, hotels must focus on areas such as anticipatory customer service, technology integration, sustainability practices, adaptation to changing market dynamics, personalized guest experiences, health and safety protocols, and staying informed about emerging industry trends. Prioritizing innovation, flexibility, and social responsibility will contribute to sustained relevance and competitiveness."

Sunil Bhatia, Director, Sales & Marketing, The Mirador, Mumbai, asserts, "Understanding

future trends is of utmost importance as only then would the Hotel's services and facilities be aligned with the changing demands of clients."

He adds, "Embracing technology, understanding hotel design, the demographics and psychographics of the target market and upcoming food trends, is extremely essential today. A touch of environmental sensitivity would also help in garnering the right client database."

Rachita Sood, Director of Operations, Sofitel Mumbai BKC affirms, "Undoubtedly, an acute awareness of forthcoming trends in the dynamic hospitality industry is paramount for achieving success in the realm of hotel management. This discernment allows us to adeptly navigate evolving guest inclinations, technological advancements, and progressive industry innovations, ensuring that our offerings remain not just current but avant-garde."

She maintains, "The pivotal facets for enduring hotel triumph encompass embracing sustainable practices, curating bespoke guest experiences, adeptly integrating cutting-edge technology, and instilling a culture of staff excellence through comprehensive training initiatives."

Atul Upadhyay, Executive Vice President, Pride Hotels Group, states, "Staying abreast of future trends in the hospitality industry is crucial for success. This practice enables hoteliers to effectively adapt to changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, and industry innovations, thereby ensuring they remain competitive and meet ever-evolving guest expectations."

He maintains, "Sustainability is paramount—



adopting eco-friendly practices. Additionally, integrating technology to enhance guest experiences is crucial. Personalisation plays a pivotal role; tailoring services to meet individual preferences is a must. Health and wellness initiatives, including comprehensive programmes and amenities, are essential. Being flexible to evolving travel and work trends is also a major key. Lastly, strategic location considerations are critical to ensuring an optimal experience for guests."

### Demand for Sustainable Practices

Today millennials form about 23 per cent of the global population. They play an essential part in evolving the demography of the hotel industry. Professional advancement, international exposure and higher income can be deemed to be the major contributors to their high spending power. The current events too can be said to have contributed to their role in influencing the need for changing trends in the hospitality industry. The pandemic, which created the work-from-home opportunities, led them to travel extensively taking advantage of flexible remote working. This led to increase in travel demand and gave a boost for new life to the hospitality industry. According to reports the reign of the millennials is expected to last

well into 2034, at which point Gen Z will be fully employable.

According to Diana Verde Nieto, co-founder and CEO of Positive Luxury, a London based organisation, which issues certification to their clients, Millennials are twice as likely to support brands with strong management of environmental and social issues. She disclosed that 55% of global travellers are more determined than ever to choose sustainable accommodation than they were before the Covid-19.

### Location

While environment-friendliness is important, the location of the property is also crucial for its success. The way it is connected to various activities in the area plays a vital role in the choice of a hotel for the tourist.

Rachita states, "The idyllic location for a hotel would be one which converges seamless accessibility, cultural allure, and proximity to pivotal business hubs. Paramount considerations include proximity to transportation arteries, a commitment to safety, and the availability of local amenities that enrich the overall guest experience."

Atul avers, "In today's world, the location should not only be strategically close to workplaces but also offer a chance to unwind and enjoy things nearby. Selecting an ideal location involves a careful evaluation of various elements. Accessibility is a primary consideration. Safety is a non-negotiable—you want customers to feel secure and welcome. Understanding and responding to local demand are critical, as is the availability of nearby attractions to enhance the overall appeal. For resort-based locations, personalisation is a big factor—services tailored to individual preferences. We also incorporate cultural experiences into our offerings to make the stay more enriching."

Jaidev explains, "Selecting an optimal hotel location involves strategic considerations. You have to prioritize accessibility to transportation hubs, proximity to tourist attractions or business districts, and ensure a safe and well-maintained environment. One must also assess the competitive landscape, understanding local demographics, regulations, and infrastructure. He must consider the appeal of the surroundings, engage with the community, and anticipate future development



**Rachita Sood****Atul Upadhyay****Sunil Bhatia****Jaidev Dutta**

plans. One has also to consider factors like seasonal variations, and evaluate the overall cost implications. A successful location aligns with the hotel's target market, offering a blend of convenience, safety, and local amenities while considering long-term growth prospects and financial sustainability."

Sunil maintains, "Location depends on the type of hotel in consideration. For example a resort would work better in a tourist destination, whereas a business hotel would work well in a CBD or near the Airport Area. Also research on the area and things to do with substantial marketing would help attract interested clients."

### Guest Experience

While location is an asset, providing the guests with a unique experience is also important. Memorable experience breeds customer loyalty. If they have a positive feeling about their stay they are not only likely to return but also recommend the property to their friends and acquaintances. So how do you keep them satisfied and how do the hoteliers manage to encourage employees to communicate effectively to avoid miscommunication?

Jaidev disclosed, "Guests seek a memorable hotel experience through personalized services, exceptional customer care, comfortable accommodations, and attention to detail. Hoteliers can achieve this by integrating technology, offering diverse dining options, engaging activities, and fostering community connections. Wellness amenities, prompt issue resolution, and eco-friendly practices contribute to a holistic guest experience. Clear communication, feedback mechanisms, and surprise-and-delight moments enhance overall satisfaction, fostering loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. The goal is to exceed expectations, providing a guest-centric experience that resonates long after their stay."

He adds, "To encourage employees to communicate effectively with guests we have established clear channels, setting expectations, and providing communication training. To promote openness, hoteliers have to use technology wisely, and clarify goals. Conduct regular team meetings, encourage feedback, and document crucial information. Creating a culture of transparency and respect enhances collaboration, reduces miscommunication, and contributes to overall

team success."

Rachita reveals, "Discerning guests, in pursuit of immersive and individualised encounters, can be captivated through innovative room aesthetics, distinctive amenities, and the strategic utilisation of technology to orchestrate bespoke services tailored to their preferences. Effective communication of the staff is also necessary. The cultivation of effective communication amongst our staff, at Sofitel Mumbai BKC, is nurtured through ongoing training, fostering transparent channels, and leveraging collaborative tools. This approach serves to mitigate the potential for miscommunication and fortifies the collective synergy of our team."

Sunil states, "Easy accessibility, comfortable rooms, appealing food & beverages, and professional, warm and responsive staff, are necessary to create a favourable image of the hotel. For our staff to communicate ably and effectively for customer satisfaction, we have regular Team briefings and Inter-departmental meetings."

Atul affirms, "Guests nowadays appreciate cultural experiences, so integrating local culture into our offerings is a great way to enhance their stay. Personalisation is key as well—customising services based on what each guest prefers creates a more tailored and enjoyable experience. Achieving this involves a multifaceted approach. First and foremost, providing thorough communication training to our staff ensures they can effectively meet guest expectations. Establishing open communication channels is crucial for understanding individual preferences. Fostering a collaborative work culture through team building not only improves internal dynamics but also positively impacts the guest experience. Lastly, encouraging and acting upon guest feedback is instrumental for continuous improvement and maintaining high standards."

### Technology

As in all other industries, technology is also pivotal in the hospitality sector as it not only allows you to increase your presence among motivated travellers but also helps to simplify and alleviate your property's operations.

Jaidev declares, "Leveraging cutting-edge technology, hotels enhance their image through trends like augmented reality (AR) and

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virtual reality (VR) for immersive virtual tours. Artificial intelligence (AI) and chatbots provide personalized customer service, while mobile apps offer seamless bookings and keyless entry. Smart room technology, social media integration, and online reputation management tools elevate guest experiences. Robots assist in tasks like room service, and blockchain ensures secure handling of data. Contactless payment systems and environmental sustainability solutions contribute to a hotel's modern and eco-friendly image, showcasing a commitment to innovation and guest well-being.

Technology revolutionises hotel operations, streamlining processes and enhancing guest experiences. From seamless online reservations and mobile check-ins to keyless entry systems, hotels leverage technology to minimize wait times and provide convenience. Communication is optimized through chatbots and unified platforms, while smart room controls and IoT devices personalize guest environments and optimize energy usage.

Mobile payments and automated billing systems offer efficient financial transactions, and CRM software tracks guest preferences for personalised services and loyalty programs. Data analytics tools enable hotels to understand customer behaviour and make informed decisions, while advanced security measures protect both physical and digital assets. Employee scheduling software and training platforms optimize staff management, ensuring efficient operations.

Finally, online review platforms allow hotels to gather and respond to guest feedback, continuously improving service quality. The integration of technology across these areas not only improves operational efficiency but also elevates the overall guest experience, keeping hotels competitive in the dynamic hospitality landscape."

Rachita states, "Pioneering technology trends that encompass the provision of virtual concierge services, the implementation of intuitive room controls, and the integration of augmented reality applications, have elevated a hotel's image. Integration of augmented reality applications facilitating virtual tours, have bestowing an elevated sense of sophistication.

Technology's instrumental role in fostering the seamless orchestration of hotel operations is epitomized through streamlined booking

systems, automated check-in protocols, sophisticated data analytics discerning guest preferences, and cutting-edge staff management tools."

Suniil says, "Some new trends in technology for improving the hotel's image are: pre registration, booking your meals and other services online, more access to OTT Channels.

Technology helps in speeding up the entire booking process, be it booking a room, ordering a meal, blocking a table at any of the hotel's restaurants or a slot at the Spa. Easy and safe payment options also enable a better guest experience. Guests also have accessibility to the nearby things to do, areas of interest, and in general have information on everything they want to know of on the tip of their fingers."

We're witnessing a surge in Virtual Reality (VR), providing virtual hotel tours for online visitors. Social Media Integration is another powerful tool, allowing us to showcase positive guest experiences and create a vibrant online presence.

Additionally, Smart Room Technology, leveraging IoT devices, is becoming increasingly popular for ensuring guest convenience and a seamless experience. Pride Hotels has introduced Pride Services, a feature that empowers guests to effortlessly upgrade their current stay, reserve future tables, explore other available properties, discover local attractions, and book transportation—all with a single click on WhatsApp. This comprehensive use of technology streamlines various aspects of guest services, ensuring a seamless experience at every touch point.

### Future Trends

Hospitality industry, being highly competitive has to be aware of the latest developments and trends. The hotelier has to be prepared to take on new challenges to avoid being left behind. So what would be the trends over the next five years?

Atul says, "Over the coming years, we're likely to see a significant rise in Artificial Intelligence, particularly in the realm of guest services and operations. There's a growing emphasis on sustainability initiatives, reflecting a broader commitment to eco-friendly practices.

Wellness tourism is expected to take center stage, with an increased focus on providing guests with health and well-being

experiences. Additionally, we can anticipate the continued integration of AI chatbots to enhance customer engagement on websites.

Rachita predicts, "The anticipated trajectory of hospitality trends over the next quinquennium is poised to accentuate an intensified emphasis on sustainability, the seamless integration of contactless technology, and the delivery of personalised experiences meticulously tailored to individual predilections."

Suniil states "In the future hoteliers would be trying to understand the minds of the younger generation and satisfy their needs. In future the hotels would offer more packaged deals and better and faster booking experiences with the help of technology. Innovative F&B Experiences would also be there."

Jaidev declares, "Over the next five years, the hospitality industry is poised to witness sustained trends in contactless technology adoption, personalised guest experiences, and a heightened commitment to sustainability. Wellness tourism will likely expand, offering fitness facilities and wellness programs.

The remote work trend is expected to drive the creation of flexible co-working spaces, while advanced cleaning protocols will persist post-Covid. Continued integration of technology, such as AI and virtual assistants, is anticipated.

Culinary tourism and unique dining experiences, along with community engagement and support for local businesses, will play a pivotal role. Additionally, alternative accommodations like boutique hotels and vacation rentals are expected to maintain popularity. These trends collectively represent the industry's dynamic response to evolving consumer preferences, technological advancements, and global changes."

### Conclusion

In conclusion it may be said that while running a hotel could be a fantastic journey, the success in your endeavour would depend on your alacrity and being continuously evolved in understanding the changing guest behaviour. The hotel industry opens up a world of opportunities for an enterprising entrepreneur but he has to constantly be aware of the changing behavior of the consumer and the continuous transformation, which has a significant impact on the hotels. ■

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# Wooing Millennial Guests

By Sharmila Chand

Understanding millennials goes beyond demographic data and analysis. Interestingly, it involves comprehending their values, preferences, and the desire for offbeat experiences. Latest technology, sustainability elements, and cultural immersions play a key role.

Once the hotel experiences offer services in alignment with these, they have a win-win situation with Gen Y, turning them into loyal customers. However, building loyalty with millennials is a gradual process, and by consistently delivering on these aspects, businesses can foster lasting connections and turn them into devoted customers and advocates for their brand.

Let us have a look at what hospitality veterans have to say in this regard...

## **Ashley James, General Manager, Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort Bengaluru**

Angsana, as a brand, aligns well with millennials due to its emphasis on special moments and the appreciation of discovery. By providing spaces that encourage cultural connection and a sense of belonging, Angsana can appeal to the millennial desire to engage with their surroundings and find a place of solace.

To effectively understand and convert millennials into loyal customers, it is crucial to acknowledge their distinct characteristics and preferences. According to me following points are crucial :

Discerning and experiential travellers - Millennials value unique and meaningful experiences. By providing tailored and immersive experiences that go beyond traditional offerings, businesses can captivate this generation's interest and loyalty.

Health-conscious individuals - Gen-Y prioritizes health and wellness. Offering healthy food options, fitness facilities, and

promoting wellness-focused activities can attract and retain millennial guests who are conscious of their well-being.

Positive interaction - Millennials appreciate friendly and positive interactions. Creating a welcoming and enjoyable atmosphere, coupled with exceptional service, will enhance their overall customer experience and foster loyalty.

## **Sumender Kumar, Rooms Division Manager, Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore**

Personalization is Key - Millennials place great value on personalized experiences. Therefore, we use technology to gather data on their preferences and habits, tailoring our



"Our informal high tea meet every evening with in-house guests offers a glimpse of our efforts towards providing unique experiences which includes collaborating with local artists, providing exclusive cultural experiences such as traditional art workshops, folk music and dance, puppet shows, and heritage walks."

**Gaurav Rege, General Manager, Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa**

services to meet their unique needs. From accommodations catered to their taste to curated recommendations, personalization strengthens the bond and loyalty between us.

Social Media Integration - Millennials are prolific users of social media. We inspire them to share their experiences by crafting Instagram-worthy spaces within our hotels. Engaging with them on various social platforms is also important, responding swiftly to reviews and comments. User-generated content has a remarkable influence on marketing and fostering a sense of community.

Sustainability Initiatives - Show commitment to social and environmental responsibility, as millennials value purpose-driven brands. Consequently, we have launched sustainable practices, like our conservation program which cuts down water and chemical usage in linen washing. Our offerings range from eco-friendly amenities to energy-efficient operations like motion sensor lights in guest rooms. Hyatt, as a brand, contributes positively to the community and the planet. As our company's motto suggests "We care for people so they can be their best."

## **Gaurav Bisht, Assistant Food & Beverage Manager, Hyatt Regency, Pune**

In the dynamic landscape of the hotel industry, catering to Millennials is not just a choice but a necessity. This tech-savvy and experiential generation requires a different approach to turn them into loyal customers. Understanding millennials involves grasping their unique characteristics, preferences, and motivations.

Firstly, hotels should focus on providing memorable experiences rather than just a place to stay. This can involve incorporating local culture into hotel design, offering unique



“By integrating technology seamlessly, offering local experiences, fostering social connections, prioritizing wellness and sustainability, hotels can go beyond conventional accommodations to retain Gen Y loyalty.”

Vikram Bajpe, Director of Sales & Marketing, Courtyard by Marriott, Pune

**Vikram Bajpe, Director of Sales & Marketing, Courtyard by Marriott, Pune**

- To effectively engage millennials and cultivate their loyalty, hotels need to prioritize authenticity, digital engagement, and personalization. Authenticity is crucial, as millennials are drawn to transparent and genuine brands. Key to this is strong and interactive online presence, leveraging social media and responsive communication.

- Aligning the hotel with social and environmental causes to resonate with their values as well as encouraging user-generated content to build a sense of community and authenticity.

- Staying innovative and trendy, demonstrates a forward-thinking approach.

**Top Strategies for Targeting Gen Y**

Targeting Gen Y requires a strategic approach that aligns with their preferences for experiential services. Here are key strategies to create services that resonate with this generation.

activities or events, and creating a vibrant social atmosphere within the hotel premises. Engaging with millennials on social media platforms can also help in understanding their preferences and crafting personalized experiences.

Technology plays a pivotal role. Millennials expect seamless, tech-driven services. Implementing mobile check-ins, keyless room entry, and smart room controls can enhance the overall experience. Additionally, leveraging social media influencers and user-generated content can create a buzz around the hotel, appealing to millennials who heavily rely on online reviews and recommendations.

Sustainability is a key factor for millennials. They are environmentally conscious and appreciate businesses that share their values. Implementing eco-friendly practices, such as energy-efficient systems, waste reduction, and locally sourced materials, not only aligns with their values but also contributes to a positive brand image.

Lastly, millennials seek authenticity. Hotels should focus on providing genuine and personalized interactions. Staff training to engage authentically, offering locally inspired cuisine, and supporting local communities can contribute to an authentic experience that resonates with millennials.



“Successful strategies for targeting Gen Y involve a combination of personalization, technology integration, social media engagement, and a focus on wellness and sustainability.

By aligning services with these preferences, hotels can not only attract but also retain the loyalty of this influential demographic, ensuring long-term success in the competitive hospitality industry.

Gaurav Bisht,  
Assistant Food & Beverage Manager,  
Hyatt Regency, Pune



“Millennials gravitate towards activities that connect them with the outdoors. Incorporating nature-oriented and adventurous elements into products or services can resonate with their desire for exploration and new experiences.”

Ashley James, General Manager,  
Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort

**Ashley James, General Manager, Angsana Oasis Spa & Resort**

- Booking experience should be seamless and technology-driven, allowing for easy and quick reservations.

- Offering authentic experiences that provide a genuine and personalized service will greatly attract this demographic.

- Incorporating sustainability practices, such as using produce and consumables from sustainable sources and reducing carbon footprints, will earn respect and loyalty from Gen Y.

- Being flexible with offerings and providing a price value proposition will make the brand more appealing.

**Sumender Kumar, Rooms Division Manager, Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore**

Flexible Booking Options - We provide flexible booking options to align with their spontaneous and flexible lifestyles. Consideration is given to non-traditional check-in/check-out times, and we offer loyalty programs for dining (Hyatt Dining Club) and stays (World of Hyatt) that deliver instant rewards. This flexibility caters to their desire for convenience and spontaneity.

Wellness and Fitness Focus - We incorporate wellness and fitness offerings

into our services. From healthy dining choices to a fully equipped 24/7 Gym where guests can work out according to their schedules, as well as Spa and Pool facilities.

**Digital Detox Zones** - We acknowledge the need for balance in their lives by providing designated spaces within the hotel where guests can disconnect from their devices and enjoy moments of relaxation. For example, the poolside area showcases the best of Bangalore's weather amidst greenery. Spa treatments are also available to help them unwind and rejuvenate.

**Gaurav Bisht, Assistant Food & Beverage Manager, Hyatt Regency, Pune**

**Personalization is Key** - Utilize data analytics to understand individual preferences and behaviour. Implement personalized services such as customized room amenities, curated local experiences, and targeted promotions.

**Tech-Integrated Experiences** - Invest in cutting-edge technology to enhance the overall guest experience. Implement augmented reality (AR) or virtual reality (VR) for virtual tours, in-room smart controls, and seamless mobile app integration.

**Social Media Engagement** - Create a strong presence on social media platforms.



"As millennials seek unique and authentic experiences that they can share within their social circles, we offer curated experiences that go beyond traditional amenities.

These packages include local cultural immersion activities or guided tours."

**Sumender Kumar, Rooms Division Manager, Hyatt Centric MG Road Bangalore**

Engage with users through visually appealing content, user-generated campaigns, and contests. This not only helps in marketing but also builds a sense of community around the hotel brand.

**Wellness and Sustainability Focus** - Gen Y appreciates businesses that prioritize their well-being and contribute positively to the environment. Provide wellness amenities such as fitness programs, healthy dining options, and spa services. Embrace sustainable practices, including eco-friendly initiatives and community outreach.

**Vikram Bajpe, Director of Sales & Marketing, Courtyard by Marriott, Pune**

In the pursuit of appealing to Generation Y, hotels can embrace technology at both the operational and brand levels. This involves providing a seamless mobile check-in and checkout experience, along with in-room entertainment options and virtual concierge services through dedicated mobile apps.

As said earlier, delivering authentic and locally-inspired experiences; creating visually appealing and Instagram-worthy spaces within the hotel, coupled with a diverse range of local food options, contributes to a memorable and shareable experience.

Recognizing Generation Y's keen interest in wellness and sustainability, hotels can elevate their offerings by providing wellness amenities such as fitness programs and spa services. Additionally, implementing eco-friendly initiatives, such as energy-efficient lighting and waste reduction, aligns with the sustainability values of this demographic.

**Gaurav Rege, General Manager, Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa**

As the General Manager of a luxury resort in Udaipur, understanding and catering to millennials is pivotal for our sustained success. Here's how we approach this:

**Market Insight Utilization** - Given our prolonged presence in Udaipur, we have in-depth market data that helps us comprehend millennials' travel patterns, spending behaviours, and preferences. This data is used to tailor our services to meet their expectations effectively.

**Personalized Service and Tech Integration** - Leveraging these data insights, we personalize our experience offerings and tailor services



"Gen Y is well travelled and is seeking seamless connectivity, tech savvy amenities, less of luxury and more of personalized offbeat experiences. Local culinary, artistic, cultural, outdoor, adventure and niche offerings, with instagrammable visuals would be the best bet."

**Balraj Singh Shaktawat, Director Of Sales & Marketing, Taj Aravali Resort & Spa, Udaipur.**

along with tech solutions to align with their expectations.

**Curated Local Experiences and Sustainability** - Collaborating with local artisans, we offer unique cultural immersions. Emphasizing sustainability, we implement eco-friendly practices that resonate with millennials' values. The E-bike tours around the city is a very popular activity enjoyed by this age group.

**How Can Hotels Stay Relevant For Millennials**

**Balraj Singh Semari, Director Of Sales & Marketing, Taj Aravali Resort & Spa, Udaipur**

- Be ready for last minute bookings for them.
- Be flexible for their specific requirements, may be room with a view, a working desk, king-size bed, or a specific drink. Personalization is key here.
- Have a Millennial-friendly food strategy. Think, grab-and-go options, such as granola bars, yogurt, nuts, or even breakfast packs.
- Sundowners with happy hours is always a big thing for them, especially for their social media activities. Remember outstanding selfie points with a specific hashtag, is a must! ■



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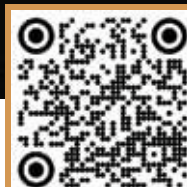
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# Ensuring Menu Success

A new menu is considered an excellent way to get the visibility and break the monotony. No wonder, chefs are always thinking about introducing new dishes in their menu several times throughout the year. Whether it's introducing seasonal produce or replacing dishes that are not taken so well by the diners or improvising with trendier options, changing and rotating the menu keeps diners excited and coming back for more. A good menu is at the heart of every restaurant. But, executing a new menu launch is no easy feat.

## Crucial Aspects

Launching a new menu involves a careful insight about the preferences and likes of the targeted customers. It is important to identify uniqueness offered, and why guests prefer a restaurant over other.

First of all planning plays the most crucial role in making a new menu's launch successful and focus on understanding the taste and preferences of the guests and incorporating it

in chef's culinary repertoire. It requires a proper planning and research over a period of time and to get the flavours and textures right to meet the taste of guests.

Effective training and testing is one of the necessities when it comes to making a new menu launch successful. Talking about training, the servers and host / hostess should be well aware of the changes that have been incorporated in the new menu. From potentially fatal allergies to food sensitivities to price points and trends, knowing how a dish is prepared and what's inside it makes all the difference for customers.

One must be aware of the age group of diners, profile, average time spent on the table to understand what would work. Customers always spend if they enjoy what they're getting in return. When it comes to testing, it is very important to gain feedbacks from guests who order new features. Asking them open-ended questions helps to understand how well the menu will perform when it actually launches.

It is a wise idea to do food trials and seek feedback before officially launching the menu. A soft menu launch is a great way to execute the full menu and gather customer feedback in a controlled fashion. Inviting some customers and a few special guests to sample the menu alongside wine, beer or cocktails is always a nice idea to make the hard launch a successful one.

Analyzing the competitor's menu is important while coming up with the menu for a hotel. Factors like menu size, menu style, delivered portions, ingredient quality, and price points need to be looked into when planning menu for the hotel.

## Menu Engineering

Menu Engineering is the foundation of the entire launch. Every restaurant has a signature dish that caters to a population of faithful diners, never eliminate them from the menu as they will always be in demand and continue to be a classic. Retain the top selling and high profitable items from the previous menu and

remove the low selling dishes.

Menu should be a mix of global trending items as well as the local favourites. There are lot of guests who prefer vegan, sugar free and gluten free options in the menu. These factors should also be kept in the mind.

As far as seasonal promotions are concerned, innovation in terms of concept, presentation and taste is a must as the guests look for novelty.

One must follow the mantra of selecting seasonal, fresh and healthy ingredients. The contemporary travelers love to explore the local cuisine thus make sure to place the local delicacies as part of the menu. Before making a new menu always prepare a concept note talking about inspiration, cause and purpose of the change. Retain your uniqueness and exclusivity. Indulge in a conversation with the guest and get their feedback.

## Social Media

It is important to be always updated with the trends on social media. Hit the wave exactly while it is at its peak, it will benefit and

source a promotion for the restaurant without actually spending a penny on marketing.

Engaging with local bloggers, key influencers and media outlets and encouraging them to act as advocates for the new menu is important to create a buzz in the market. Proper advertising and tying up with third party aggregators is required to let people know that something new is coming up that shouldn't be missed.

Creating curiosity about the new menu or even better, making customers a part of the entire revamp process is a great idea to attract eye balls. This could be done both online and offline. Guest feedback is very important for continuous improvement. Also it is important to encourage guests to leave their feedback on online review platforms to spread a positive word of mouth.

Social media content strategy needs to be on point by creating great teaser videos, utilizing various interactive features such as Polls, Opinions, Quizzes and GIFs to create a buzz. The social media page should not look like a series of classified ads about the food

or the menu. It needs to be more narrative, interactive and relatable which can direct connect with the audiences.

## What to do?

Learn from the past experience and get rid of those dishes that aren't working well helps a lot to understand liking and preference of the audience. Also training the staff efficiently on the new menu and their enthusiasm towards it makes it more appealing to the customers.

Experimenting the new menu with bloggers and influencers helps to get an honest opinion for the discussion of its success. Involving collaborations and tie-ups and keeping in mind the target audience while planning the new menu will hit the sweet spot and entice patrons to come in and dine with us.

Learn what features make the outlet special for the visitors and why they would love to pick you over other competitors. Involve the culinary and marketing team of the hotel in frequent insightful workshops and activities.

The staff should be aware about the



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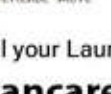
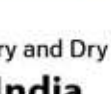
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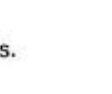
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ingredients and nutritional details of all delicacies in the menu to engage in a conversation with the guests. Arranging talks and discussion wherein the team gets the opportunity to talk about the modification and get familiar.

The chefs and the service staff members are the ones who interact with the guests. That is why it is very important that not only do they know about the new menu / offering but should also be able to recommend dishes basis the taste and preferences of the guests.

It is very important to create a Marketing team within the restaurant who can contribute in promoting the new menu. A marketing hook is a very essential element of the complete launch strategy which can become a talk point amongst the target audiences.

Inviting the food critics, journalists, influencers for the food tasting is very important to create buzz about the new menu. While food remains the star of all such engagements, interesting activities, set ups, experiences add to the enchantment resulting in great press coverage.

Creating special events by collaborating with online food communities can be another great way to reach out a large set of customers. Since these are paid events, the restaurants can not only cover the food cost but also reach out to the new set of customers. Not to forget mentioning great amount of online reach and visibility.

### What not to do?

While planning new menus try to stay put to any uncalled circumstances. Try to avoid expanding and elaborating the menu in order to please everyone as the problem comes in the execution of such elaborate menus that doesn't fit the customer expectations. So, design it in such a way that the culinary team

can flawlessly execute every item in the menu.

Another important point is the menu design which needs to be thematic, yet simple and easy to read. Never ignore the designing aspect of the menu. As appealing the dishes can be, if the design is not appealing guest won't take much interest in going through the menu. Functions and flow should be a major consideration whenever you are designing a menu.

Also nothing hurts more than expectations being broken. Therefore, never launch the new menu without a soft trial. Focus on the demands and preferences of the guest, do not provide them with unfamiliar choices to pick from. Haste can lead to failure of great ideas. Give time to your plan. Research about the availability of the ingredients, their sourcing and try on creative food presentations.

Arrange for tasting sessions so the guests can experience the dishes that are to be offered in advance. Training the internal team is also an important factor and mustn't be skipped. People, who make the food, serve the food and market it must know it, believe in it and understand the reasons and the concepts to represent it well.

Include ingredients that are locally grown and easily available in the market, don't include ingredients that are hard to arrange. As mentioned above, always retain the old classic dishes in the menu, they are the USP of the restaurant and loved by the guests.

The personality of the brand should be in synchronization with the personality influencer of blogger property is collaborating with, to promote new menu. One million followers may not be equal to qualitative content, real followers and high interactivity.

If guest rates food too expensive, they will never come back to the restaurant for a meal again. Value for money is a must. Any

compromise will not just cause business loss but also reputational loss. Here, the factor of hygiene should also be considered.

One must avoid over-experimenting with the dishes and never change the menu completely. The menu must offer a mix of unique dishes and old favourites. Always welcome the feedback by reviewers and visitors instead of ignoring or defending it.

### Conclusion

Menu Engineering forms the foundation of the entire process. Understanding the food trends, sales trends, competition analysis and guest profile is a must to curate the menu.

Half of the success of the new menu launch depends on the planning and research while the other half depends on how well it is marketed. Chefs need to understand the taste and preferences of guests and should work on a menu which is a hybrid of some bestselling items with some newly introduced culinary repertoire.

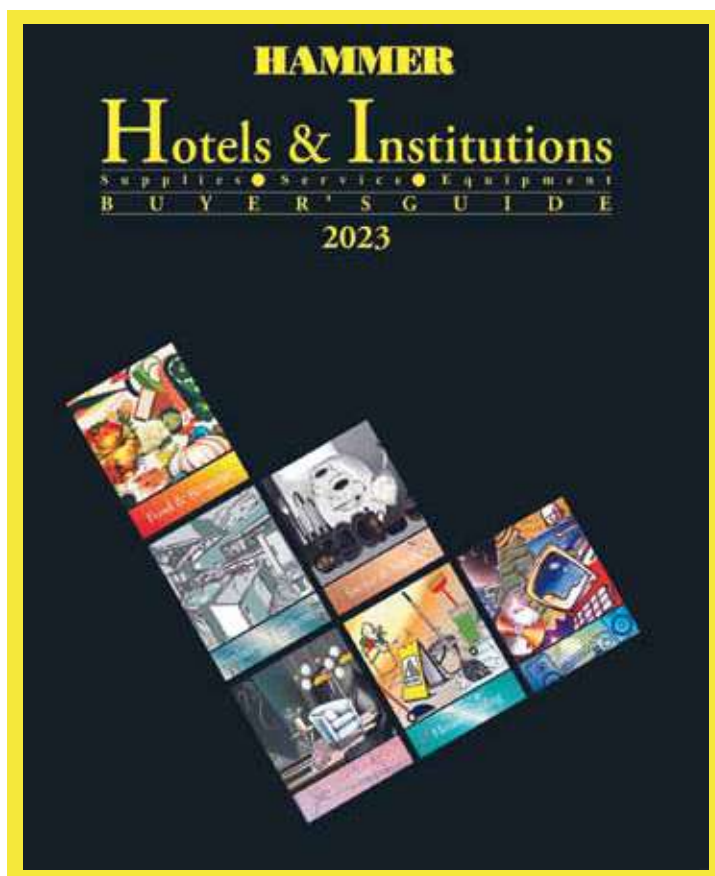
This is followed by an effective sales and marketing strategy. The formula is simple - understand the issue of the market, decide on the business objective, streamline the target audience and then work on the marketing mix and target media.

Remember a menu is more than just a list of the dishes a restaurant has available; it is an advertising tool capable of communicating a restaurant's identity and driving profit if it's well designed. So, its important to understand that more than the dishes what it brings to the dining experience which will buy their loyalty and a positive image for the brand.

Cater to different sections of guests. Create specialised menus as part of personal renewal. For the ardent fitness and health advocates, offer the dedicated health focused menu. ■

# Don't Miss Out ! We are Back

## Hotel & Institutions Buyers' Guide 2024. Suppliers be a part of it !



Hammers Hotel & Institutions Buyers Guide\* is a thorough reference book for hospitality buying needs. We encourage participation from suppliers to the hospitality sector. Our aim is to create the most comprehensive Buyer's Guide as possible. Owners and CEOs, GM's, F&B managers, chefs, executive housekeepers, chief engineers, materials managers, consultants frequently use the guide. It also acts as a handbook for brand-new business owners starting in the foodservice industry.

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With the Annual Hotels & Institutions Buyer's Guide 2023, we were able to give the hospitality industry a more informative & updated edition of the Buyer's Guide. This editorial driven guide provides buyers with informative editorials along with the comprehensive database of suppliers on:

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Today more than 40,000 professionals are using our Annual Guide in more than 417 cities across India. The need has increased since the announcement of more than 500 plus hotel projects in the next 2 years and more and more restaurant/Fast food chains entering the arena.

Just as growth and development are continuous, we at Hammer are making continuous efforts to publish our next updated edition of Hotels & Institutions Buyer's Guide 2024.

With this small note we take the pleasure to let you know that you can now be a part of the guide via advertisement contract with us for the next issue and reserve the positions which you may have probably missed out in the last issue.

We welcome suppliers to the Hospitality industry to participate. Our aim is to create the most comprehensive Buyer's Guide as possible. The premium options are available as we have just started informing our existing patrons of the new edition which will be released in March 2024 during Aahara show in New Delhi.

We invite you to be part of our next Hammer Hotels & Institution Buyers Guide 2024 or suggest your vendors to be a part of the same.

Thank you and hoping to have a long and prosperous association for times to come.

\* The Listing will be Eligible but doesn't Guarantee.

# “It is the Journey Itself, Marked by Innovation and Development that I Relish as much as The Final Product”

## Somesh Agarwal, Chairman and Managing Director, Rockwood Hotels and Resorts

Somesh Agarwal, a distinguished figure as the Chairman and Managing Director of Radisson Blu Palace Resort, Udaipur, boasts an illustrious career of over two decades in the hospitality sector. A seasoned serial entrepreneur, he envisions transforming his hotels into synonymous hubs for weddings, MICE, and industry events. Somesh is a strategic visionary, channeling his expertise in operations and business growth with a keen focus on elevating the hospitality landscape.

Recognizing the untapped potential of Udaipur in the state, Somesh is committed to substantial investments in India, aligning his ventures with a sustainable model. Notably, he has embarked on the ambitious venture of constructing the largest luxury hotel in Rajasthan – a Fairmont Palace in Udaipur boasting over 350 rooms and villas, poised to redefine the market dynamics.

Beyond his professional pursuits, he is characterized by his pursuit of perfection and a penchant for risk-taking. Actively engaged in the forest plantation movement, he is also a fervent participant in various sports. His multifaceted approach underscores his commitment to excellence, innovation, and a broader societal impact.

An entrepreneurial individual, he derives immense satisfaction from the process of creation. A propensity for taking calculated risks underscores his approach, reflecting a willingness to venture into uncharted territories. As he says, “It is the journey itself, marked by innovation and development that I relish as much as the final product.”

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

### What do your hotels and brand stand for?

Our brand epitomizes regality, luxury, and a heritage touch, harmoniously blended with a commitment to eco-friendly practices and unwavering customer-centric values. Renowned as a distinguished wedding



destination, our establishments proudly represent Udaipur on the global stage.

### What is the USP of your brand?

Our brand's unique selling proposition lies in its unparalleled location on the renowned Fatehsagar Lake, boasting the highest inventory of rooms coupled with the largest banqueting facility. The distinctive heritage aesthetics, complemented by luxurious interiors, create an ambiance of refined opulence. Nestled amidst the majestic Aravali Hills, our establishment is strategically positioned in the heart of Udaipur city, further enhancing its exclusivity and appeal.

### How has your journey been, opening new hotels from the scratch?

The odyssey embarked upon in 2009 at Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa has been nothing short of extraordinary. Our vision from inception has been to deliver unparalleled service in the hospitality industry, all the while adhering to the fundamental principles of sustainability. Now, with our upcoming project, the regal “Fairmont Udaipur,” our aspiration transcends mere excellence; it aims to unfurl new dimensions of augmented and personalized services. This endeavor is intricately woven with the ethos of Rajasthan, encapsulating the profound belief of “Athithi Devo Bhava,” where the guest is revered as a deity.

### What has been the major learning along the way?

The main idea here is to keep going, no matter what challenges come our way. After COVID-19, things in the hospitality and service industry changed a lot. Learning how to handle these big changes, providing great service, and keeping the business strong and sustainable are the important lessons we've learned from this experience.

### What tips you will like to give to upcoming hoteliers planning to open new hotels?

Well, one must keep the following points in mind seriously:

- Opening a hotel requires thorough market research, understanding the target audience, and analyzing competitors.
- Develop a solid business plan with a detailed concept, target market, revenue streams, and financial projections.
- Choose a strategic location aligned with accessibility, visibility, and local attractions.
- Identify and highlight unique selling points such as a distinct theme, exceptional service, or exclusive amenities.
- Ensure legal compliance, invest in quality construction, prioritize guest experience, and implement effective marketing, including a strong online presence.
- Conduct a soft opening for feedback, set strategic pricing, and focus on sustainability practices.
- Provide ongoing staff training, and consistently evaluate and improve operations.
- Success hinges on meticulous planning, attention to detail, and a commitment to exceptional service.

### How do you like to de-stress?

To alleviate stress, engaging in physical activities such as working out, going for a run, playing football with my kids, skiing, and diving have proven to be effective methods. These activities not only promote physical well-being but also provide a mental and emotional respite, contributing to an overall sense of relaxation and rejuvenation.

What is your working philosophy?

My working philosophy is based on exemplary leadership, wherein I lead by example, recognizing that a content and motivated team is instrumental in achieving optimal performance. My approach emphasizes the cultivation of leadership qualities within the team, fostering an environment that encourages individual growth. I advocate for a diligent work ethic, combining both hard work and intelligent strategies to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in achieving organizational goals.

Could you reflect on the new plans and initiatives you wish to undertake?

As we embark on this exciting journey into the future of hospitality, I'm thrilled to share some key initiatives that reflect our commitment to redefining luxury and guest experiences.

Our flagship project, the Fairmont Palace Udaipur, is set to become North India's crowning jewel—a haven of opulence that transcends traditional boundaries.

In addition to this grand endeavor, we're venturing into the creation of boutique properties, each a beacon of Uber luxury, nestled near the vibrant city of Mumbai.

These havens will be more than just accommodations; they will be immersive experiences, curated to offer a unique blend of sophistication and exclusivity.

What truly excites me is our embrace of cutting-edge technology. We're harnessing the power of AI and innovative tech solutions to elevate our hotel services. The goal is to provide not just a stay but a seamlessly personalized experience, where technology becomes an invisible hand, anticipating and fulfilling our guests' needs.

In essence, these future plans are a testament to our unwavering commitment to ushering in a new era of luxury, where innovation, sophistication, and personalized service converge to create unforgettable moments for our discerning guests.

Provide tips for youngsters on managing time and fulfilling their roles?

Effective time management is essential for success, particularly for young individuals juggling diverse responsibilities.

- Prioritize tasks, focusing on the urgent and important.
- Set clear, achievable goals, breaking them into actionable steps for a motivating roadmap.
- Embrace time blocking, allocating dedicated slots for work, personal growth, relaxation and responsibilities.
- Learn to say no to prevent overload and prioritize well-being.
- Harness technology wisely with productivity tools to streamline tasks.
- Remember, it's not just about being busy; it's about being intensely productive and meaningfully fulfilling your roles.

What do you enjoy most about your work, being at the helm of affairs?

What I find most gratifying about my role at the helm of affairs is the opportunity to empower individuals, fostering a collaborative team environment. Witnessing the collective efforts of the team making a tangible difference and contributing to meaningful outcomes brings a profound sense of accomplishment and fulfillment.



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# Legacy Secured

**JK Khurana Dedicates Lifetime Achievement Award to Son Vicky Khurana and daughter-in-law Seema Khurana, as he entrusts Venus Industries to the Next Generation.**

**A**t the recent 18th Annual International Travel Awards 2023 organized by Hospitality India, J.K. Khurana, Founding Chairman of Venus Industries received the distinguishing Lifetime Achievement Award commemorating his pioneering vision of growing Venus into Asia's foremost hospitality cutlery brand since 1963. Attended by over 500 industry veterans including political dignitaries like Honourable Minister of State for Tourism Ajay Bhatt, the award cements Mr. Khurana's legacy building Venus Industries from modest beginnings into a pioneering global name synonymous with 5-star fine dining cutlery excellence.

Venus Industries traces its journey back to 1963 when founder J.K. Khurana established the manufacturing firm. A landmark business deal with national carrier Indian Airlines (now Air India) in Venus' formative years offered the huge opportunity to supply premium cutlery upgrading onboard dining experiences. Leveraging the national exposure and large orders from Indian Airlines, Venus steadily built specialized expertise in crafting cutlery for hospitality venues like hotels and restaurants.

This airline partnership provided invaluable early support for Venus to pioneer as India's first dedicated hospitality cutlery maker. It is a testament to the brand's trusted quality and service that decades later, now under the banner of Air India, this national carrier remains one of Venus Industries' most esteemed cutlery clients to date. Fast forward to today, and Venus continues its legacy as an innovative industry leader known for high-quality cutlery enhancing the dining experience at hotels, restaurants, airlines, and other hospitality venues across India and beyond.

Galvanized by early successes, Mr. Khurana focused extensively on R&D to incorporate global styles and durability standards suited



for hotels and high-end restaurants. Ambitious investments expanded into specialized European die-casting equipment and master artisans honing Venus' quality finesse through the 1960s and 70s.

By the 1990s, Venus cut its teeth furnishing thousands of five-star suites drawing international praise, and gaining global repute for enduring quality. Today Venus' lifetime guaranteed commercial collections adorn the finest 5-star properties around the globe, with every piece proudly made in India.

## Attaining Global Prominence Through Industry Vision

As demand outgrew domestic capabilities, Mr. Khurana spearheaded Venus' overseas growth by founding the export wing Prebor Exports Private Limited. Prebor paved access to crucial North American, Middle East, European and South Asia markets cementing Venus' foothold. By the early 2000s Venus accounted for over 75% of production servicing renowned chains like Trident, Oberoi and Taj Hotels plus global names like Marriott, Hyatt and Radisson to name a few.

## Driving Modernization & Innovation for the Future

Now at 80 years old, Mr. Khurana continues mentoring the next generation while steering Venus' future. Recent business modernization efforts drive digitalization, global brand uniformity, and emerging market reach in alignment with his visionary leadership.

Venus Industries Managing Director Parveen (Vicky) Khurana remarked, "We congratulate my father on this well-deserved lifetime honour. His uncompromising commitment to quality, constant innovation, and foresight expanding globally established an enduring foundation upon which Venus sustains as hospitality's finest cutlery

provider. We aim to continue his formidable legacy meeting international five-star standards while advancing efforts to make fine dining cutlery access more inclusive globally."

Seema Khurana, Managing Director, Venus Industries remarked, that the legacy of Venus Industries which has been bestowed upon us, feels special and fills us with enthusiasm, as we have to meet the highest of standards every day that Mr. J.K. Khurana has benchmarked.

Wishing luck to Parveen (Vicky) Khurana and Seema Khurana, J.K. Khurana said "Now the baton of Venus Industries is passed to my Son and Daughter-in-Law, I wish them luck taking the brand Venus Industries to new heights".

Through J.K. Khurana's dedication spanning six remarkable decades, Venus Industries stands today as the pioneering name behind inimitable dining experiences at iconic hotels and resorts across 35 nations and 6 continents conveying India's world-class manufacturing prowess through luxury craftsmanship. A Life truly celebrated!!

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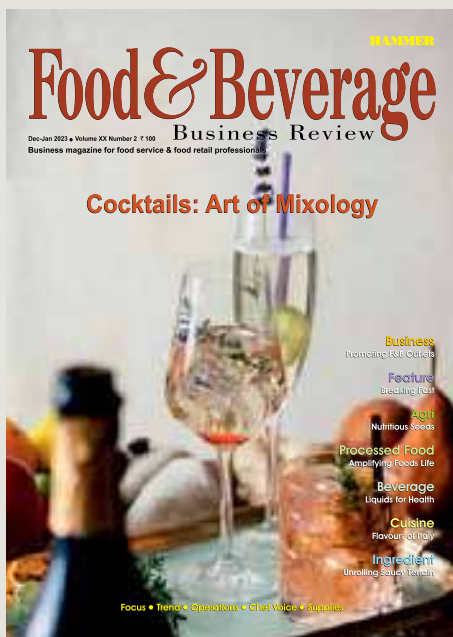
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# Making Room for Hygiene

**Adequate training, strict supervision and ensuring safe and healthy working conditions of the cleaning staff are key to maintaining room hygiene in a hotel.**

There is not just one thing that a person considers while recommending a hotel to another. It could be the price, quality of service, cleanliness or other such factors or a combination of these factors that one would consider before mapping out a rank for a hotel in one's mind and recommending it to others. But there is little chance that one would talk positively of a hotel that ranks low on cleanliness and hygiene standards. In fact, this criterion often emerges as a benchmark for judging the quality of stay in a property.

The challenges for meeting the high hygiene standards are, however, many. Implementing the highest hygiene standards are easier said than done. This is because just by keeping the lobby or the restroom spic and span, one cannot meet the cleanliness standards expected of luxury properties.

Hygiene in hotels has to be a way of life. The dangers of not implementing high hygiene standards are also many. For example, lack of hygiene in the restaurants could mean unsafe food for the valuable guests. Similarly, a slippery floor could increase chances of falls. In other words, lack of cleanliness and hygiene in any area of the hotel could mean dissatisfied guests and loss of revenue.

Cleanliness on both fronts – visible & invisible – needs to be attended with utmost priority at same level.

Moreover, the hotel housekeepers in India face some other unique challenge, mostly surrounding perception. Many people, especially from the western countries harbour a perception that hotels in low and middle income countries may not be equipped to implement adequate levels of cleanliness and hygiene. However, this need not necessarily be true for all hotels. There could be instances where hotels in India could surpass the standards maintained in other parts of the world, while there could be other properties where the hygiene levels are quite low. Therefore, making sweeping generalisation about the hygiene levels of hotels in India often amounts to reaching at the wrong conclusions.

## Room Hygiene

It has already been mentioned that maintaining cleanliness should be a way of life in a hotel. And more than anywhere, a guest is more likely to spend a greater amount of time in his/her room. So maintaining the cleanliness and hygiene of the room should

be a top priority for any property.

A secret video shot by a reporter in a south-east Asian country in 2017 showed that just deputing someone to clean the room may not be enough to maintain hygiene. To the much dismay of the guests, the video showed that some of the top hotels in the country failed basic hygiene checks. In the video, the cleaning staff in these hotels is seen cleaning the cups and basins with the same brush meant to clean the toilets. In one of the hotels, the staff was seen washing a towel in the toilet and using the same towel to clean the floor.

As disturbing as these visuals were, they also pointed to the humongous challenge that the hotel management faces in terms of keeping the rooms clean. Most hotels rely on a checklist and the vigilance of the floor in-charge to ensure that the rooms are cleaned as per the rules.

Most high end hotels have regular inspections of rooms with checklist, daily deep cleaning cycle, and mystery audits to ensure process compliance. This checklist also helps the hotel staff to have control when the housekeeping work is outsourced. Work is controlled according to checklists

designed to ensure complete coverage of all areas and schedules are made with proper documentation to ensure compliance without any lapses.

However, it goes without saying that following a checklist may not be enough if the staff is not properly trained to carry out the cleaning work in the room. And these training need to go beyond the cleaning task as it is the housekeeping staff who often come face-to-face with the guests. They should be able to understand the needs and other requirements of the guests and ensure that those are fulfilled.

It is very important to conduct training sessions for the staff. Training such as grooming, soft skills, and general knowledge awareness are organised for housekeeping staff at major properties, so that it helps to strike up conversation with guests.

The housekeeping staff also needs to ensure that the guests get a pleasant welcome when he/she enters the room. So the hotels are now giving a lot of importance to the room decoration. While sometimes a simple towel art can make a guest smile, some may find the presence of a teddy bear or doll very useful, especially when they are accompanied by children.

However, all these efforts may go down the drain if someone finds cockroaches or rats roaming around in the room, or if someone wakes up with bruises in the skin because of bed bugs. So pest control is a very important part of the room hygiene regimen.

Thus it is important for housekeeping staff that each guest room is scanned and properly inspected. Regular pest inspection and treatments must be conducted every month to avoid bugs in bed.

The other important things that the housekeeping staff need to ensure include keeping the washroom dry and clean. They should see that everything in the restroom – the flush, the shower and all other functionalities – works properly.

Keeping an eye on small details like, the fruits kept for the guests are properly covered or ensuring that the crockery is spotless, can also go a long way in winning the hearts of the guests.

### Supervision and Beyond

While diligence on the part of the



housekeeping staff and adequate training are very important, the job of supervisors is no less significant in ensuring proper room hygiene. While surprise inspection and regular audit could help, the hotel managers can also make use of new technologies to keep an eye on how the work is being carried out.

This is especially important to ensure that the toilet brush is not used to clean the coffee cup in the room as shown in the video mentioned above. For example, it is now possible to record the cleaning work simply by using a smartphone or the “Live” feature available on social media platforms. But such technology will have to be used without intruding the privacy of the guests. If the hotel managers want to use such technology for cleaning work in the room, they would have to get prior consent of the guests.

But one important aspect that is often ignored is the working condition of the staff involved in the actual work. If the people who carry out the cleaning work are properly trained and are satisfied with the working conditions, the results are likely to be in favour of everyone – both the guests and hotel management.

It was reported that the cleaning staff who were filmed not following hygiene checks were overworked. So it is important to ensure that the cleaning staff are adequately equipped to carry out their work as expected.

Personal hygiene of the staff is another important aspect that the supervisors need not ignore. They should not allow a person

suffering from any disease to enter a guest room.

A study found that staying in a hotel is associated with contracting drug-resistant bacteria, with younger travellers aged 20-30 years at highest risk. The research was presented at European Congress of Clinical Microbiology & Infectious Diseases (ECCMID) held in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

This study of 230 people from Germany travelling to low and/or middle-income countries found that travellers who mainly stayed in a hotel or private accommodation had a four times higher risk in each case of returning home with multi-drug resistant bacteria in their gut than those who mainly stayed in other types of tourist accommodations like guest houses, hostels, or camping.

According to the authors, the study is the first to report staying in a hotel as a risk factor for colonisation with extended spectrum beta-lactamase producing Enterobacteriaceae (ESBL-PE), which are resistant to multiple antibiotics.

“Previous studies had already reported this for staying in a private accommodation, but it was unexpected that hotel might also be a risk factor,” said study co-author Lynn Meurs from the Robert Koch-Institute, Berlin, Germany.

Though superficial cleaning is mostly done in the properties, it is also important to ensure that the cleaning staff properly removes the germs from the rooms. Both visible and invisible cleaning ensures the proper hygiene of a room. ■

## Large Benefits of Tiny Homes for Hotels

Loom Crafts is an Indian Steel Building company specialising in designing and manufacturing of Prefabricated Steel Framed Buildings. It has recently tied up with a German company for technical support to manufacture 'Tiny Home' in India. The tiny home is a small factory made home, made of steel, mostly built on a road trailer. It can therefore be moved at any



time and does not require a permit to build. These homes are available with wheels on a trailer or without the wheels which can be

placed directly on pre-casted foundations.

Tiny Homes are best suited for - small Farm Houses on remote locations, Hotels & Resorts, Camping Getaways, Wedding Venues, Retreat Venues, and no Construction Zones. The tiny home concept was born in the United States about twenty years ago.

Tiny home hotels offer a more intimate experience with their environment than traditional hotels for the same price. Tiny home hotels contain homes under 400 square feet. Many tiny home hotels offer features of a traditional hotel: they can sleep 5+ people, have Wi-Fi/cable, have an outdoor deck/grill, and have a full bathroom/kitchen.

In addition, tiny home hotels can be formed on a smaller level. One of the great things about tiny home hotels is that it's very easy to expand capacity. As long as there is land and electricity/water available, tiny home hotels can add more units whenever they wish.

The location of tiny home hotel may be a biggest selling point. Many customers decide to stay in a tiny home because they're looking to disconnect and spend time outdoors. By choosing a location that is close to activities like hiking or swimming, ensures guests have great time while they're on vacation.

As Tiny Homes are on wheels, thus they don't need any fixed foundations / plinth, making them possible to be placed on any Construction Restricted Zones. There are no laws to govern the Tiny Homes in India, which means they can be just parked on the land without any on site construction. Be it next to the beach or a river, hills or mountains, jungle retreat, tiny homes are best suited for any location or site.

The team also offers facilitating tools for self-builders. In our little homes, nothing is left to chance. The alliance between comfort, functionality, well-being and eco-responsibility is our priority.

**Loom Crafts**

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## Legacy of Handmade Products

Mehta Furnishers is a leading name manufacturing handmade products for the hospitality industry. Founded in 1984, with over 37 years of experience in crafting high-quality, durable and stylish products, it meet the specific needs of hotels, resorts, and similar establishments. The products are made using a combination of traditional techniques and modern design elements, ensuring that they are both functional and aesthetically pleasing.



Based in Delhi, India, Mehta Furnishers is dedicated to providing its customers with products that are of the highest quality. It take pride in its ability to manufacture products that are not only beautiful, but also durable and long-lasting. The product range includes baskets, furniture, dustbins, hampers, trolley-carts, and caddies, all of which are made using materials such as cane/rattan, wood, and metal.



The company believes that its products should not only meet our customers' needs, but also exceed their expectations. Proper care and attention is taken in every aspect of manufacturing process, from sourcing the best materials to crafting each product by hand. The goal is to provide customers with products that they will enjoy using for many years to come.

The all new housekeeping strollers and the mobile caddies have carved a niche for themselves in boutique hotels that are always looking for unique ideas and aesthetic values.

Mehta Furnishers is a company with a rich heritage of quality and craftsmanship. With a commitment to excellence and a passion for its products, they are dedicated to providing their customers with the very best that they have to offer.

**Mehta Furnishers**

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## Luxurious Bed & Bath Linen

Home Zone India was created to deliver high-quality bed and bath linen products at affordable prices. This has been the approach of the founder-owner and continues to serve at the core of the organization. The mission is to provide customers with timeless interiors that offer superior comfort and luxury.



Company produces exquisite bed & bath line for hotel rooms with different infill material like down & feather, Microfiber & hollow fibre which makes the highest quality pillows, duvets, toppers, protectors, towels & banquet linens.

The products provides the hotel suite complete luxurious and comfortable. Give a posh look to the room with exquisite bed and bath linen by choosing minimal designs in high-quality fabrics.

With invincible quality associated with Home Zone India which has made it a top-notch brand in the luxury hospitality linen market.

Home Zone India, based in Panipat, Haryana, has marketing offices in New Delhi (Central Office), Punjab, Srinagar. Rudrapur, Kolkata, Jaipur & Palampur.

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# “Committed to Providing Guests with an Exceptional Experience”

## Prantik Ray, General Manager, The Pride Hotel Nagpur

A dynamic and innovative professional with over 26 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Prantik Ray is a graduate of Hotel Management and has a proven track record of success in leadership, personnel management, and customer service. Prantik is currently the General Manager of the Pride Hotel in Nagpur, India. He is responsible for the overall operations of the hotel, including guest services, housekeeping, food and beverage, and sales and marketing. He is known for his customer-centric approach and his ability to create a positive and productive work environment. Under his leadership, the Pride Hotel has consistently received high ratings from guests.

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

### What is the USP of your property?

The Pride Hotel is the first star classified hotel in Nagpur and Vidarbha, and has been in operation for over 3 decades. It is located in a prime location, just a walkable distance from the airport and the upcoming IT Hub MIHAN. The hotel has a rich legacy and offers a traditional Indian hospitality experience. The USP of the Pride Hotel is its focus on providing guests with a comfortable, luxurious, and memorable stay. The hotel has modern and spacious rooms, tastefully designed banquet venues, and multiple restaurants and bars. The hotel also offers a variety of amenities and services, including a 24-hour gym, a swimming pool, and a spa.

### Tell us about the green initiative the hotel has taken?

The Pride Hotel is committed to sustainability and has taken a number of green initiatives, including:

- The hotel has installed an ‘Organic Waste Composting Machine’ to convert food waste into fertilizer. This helps to reduce the amount of waste that goes to landfills.
- The hotel has a ‘Sewage Treatment Plant (STP)’ to treat wastewater before it is released into the environment.
- The hotel has a ‘Rainwater Harvesting Pit’ to collect rainwater.
- The hotel uses ‘Key Card Controllers’ in every guest room to automate and optimize electricity usage.
- To maximize LED lights conversion, the hotel has converted most of its lights to LED lights.
- The hotel has planted more trees across the premises



- Sensor based tap in public area toilets to reduce water consumption.
  - Using refillable glass bottles usage in restaurants and events to reduce usage of plastic bottles
  - Battery charging station in premises
- Few other green initiative plans are in pipeline.

### Future plans and new initiatives you wish to undertake in your property?

We plan to take the Pride Hotel segment to the next level by adding approximately 70 more keys and a banquet event venue. This will make us a more attractive option for guests looking for a larger and more luxurious stay. We also plan to retrieve ‘Puran Da Dhaba’, which was a popular restaurant at our hotel. Finally, we are committed to making our hotel more eco-friendly.

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

What I enjoy most at the hotel is seeing

our guests delighted and satisfied, along with ensuring employee satisfaction in the workplace. Word-of-mouth is still the best marketing tool today, and guest retention is a top priority in the hospitality industry. We thrive on the motto “Atithi Devo Bhava”.

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

I am honoured to have served as personal Butler to Sir A P J Abdul Kalam (Past President of India) during NRI meet at Hyderabad Convention Centre in the year 2004 and served as team member to several Chief Ministers, Cabinet Ministers with Bureaucrats including current Prime Minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi.

### How do you de-stress?

Stress is a mental block, and negative energy can be overcome by positive thinking and a healthy work-life balance. I prioritise tasks in sequence. I also believe in the importance of self-belief and that a fun-loving workplace with a supportive team is a good way to avoid stress.

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

My working mantra is to enjoy my work, always learn new things, gain new skills, especially in technological aspects, and become proficient in tasks. I believe that effective communication and coordination, an eagerness to learn attitude, the implementation of new ideas, and teamwork are essential for success in any workplace. I also believe that it is important to learn from mistakes and to never give up on achieving my goals.



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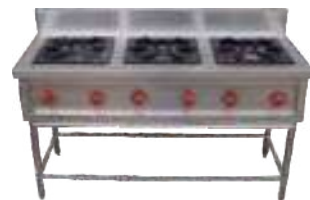
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