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HAMMER

HOTEL

Business Review

An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry



Business

Beachside Weddings: Big Revenue Spinner...

Feature

Hotel Lobbies: Come of Age – Functionality Meets Design

Design

Designing Wellness

Green Hotels

Green Signal for Rise in Eco-Tourism

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Works : Plot No. 345, HSIIDC Industrial Estate , Refinery Road, Panipat- 132140, Haryana (India)

Amitabh Awasthy, CEO & MD
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Mala Awasthy, Director
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Arjun Awasthy, Vice President
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The increasing number of green hotels are helping in changing environmental malaise of carbon emissions in atmosphere every year. The hospitality industry has started to shift focus towards sustainability. Innovative technologies are being adopted by the hotels to achieve their sustainability targets. With guests becoming more environmentally conscious, there is an increase in number of eco-friendly hotels in India. The concluding part of Cover story delves on the methods being adopted by the hotels to maintain their eco-friendly status.

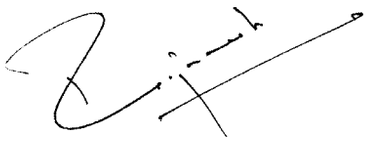
A wedding by the seaside is the latest trend for wedding couples. These weddings also bring in large chunks of additional revenue for hotels located by the beachside. The popularity of beachside weddings has become a vogue. And it is likely to continue in the future. Business story views how the beachside properties have great opportunity for additional revenue.

Hotel lobbies are adapting to the modern-day needs of their guests by creating lively spaces that encompass functionality and thoughtful design. Feature story finds how the modern lobby creates a warm and inviting atmosphere with a special focus on design and architectural elements.

Wellness business in India is growing impressively and it will continue to grow at a fast pace. The concept of spa has graduated from being a fashion to a passion for the upwardly mobile and the elite classes of India, and this trend too is percolating to the middle class segment. Design story elaborate on the need to understand the role of various aspects of spa designing, to be a successful venture.

Regular sections updates on news & reports, events and movements in the industry.

We at HAMMER wish all our readers Merry Christmas & Happy & Prosperous New Year.



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An Exclusive Business Magazine for the Hotel Industry

Publisher cum Editor
Rajneesh Sharma
rajneeshhammer@gmail.com

Resident Editor
Sharmila Chand (Delhi)
Ashok Malkani (Mumbai)

Layout & Design
Hari Kumar V

Production Assistant
Jyoti Gupta

Advertising Sales
Sumesh Sharma

Director Sales
Sanjay Anand
Mobile: +91 9811136837

Director Operations
Rajat Taneja
Mobile: +91 9810315463

Editorial & Advertising Office:

Hammer Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
206, Samrat Bhawan,
Ranjeet Nagar Commercial Complex, New Delhi-110008
Phone: 91-11-45093486, 45084903

E-mail: info@hammer.co.in

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Ambiente 2025

07-11, 2025 at Frankfurt Exhibition Centre, Frankfurt, Germany

Enhancing Its Hospitality Programme

Ambiente 2025 is further expanding the growth area of hospitality and emphasising its design expertise with special presentations such as The Lounge. For the upcoming edition, the leading international trade fair for consumer goods is reorganising its offering for commercial bulk buyers in the hospitality industry and augmenting its portfolio under the special interest Hospitality. The fringe programme, with the Hospitality Academy, Hotelier Day and themed tours, is enhancing the range with inspiration and information.

Ambiente is the quintessential go-to place for business success for hospitality professionals, real estate developers and furnishers: exhibitors from all relevant product segments present their product portfolio at Ambiente, from tableware, glassware and kitchenware to home accessories, interior design and office solutions. With the comprehensively reorganised Special Interest Hospitality, commercial buyers are pointed in the right direction to companies with expertise in equipping hotels and resorts, restaurants and caterers, cruise ships, lounges and other hospitality venues.

Partner for the Hospitality Industry

In addition to the range for the gastronomy and hotel industry in Hall 11.0, previously known as HoReCa, and including BHS tabletop, Kar Porselen with the Bonna brand, RAK Porcelain, Steelite and Utopia Tableware, the Special Interest Hospitality also encompass, as before, suppliers from other dining halls with their own product lines for the hospitality industry. These include, for example, De Buyer, Ilcar Di Bugatti, Ruffoni and Victorinox in Hall 8.0, Casalinghi and Ideas Denmark in Hall 9.0, alfi and Lifetime Brands in Hall 9.1, and simplehuman in Hall 9.3. In the Table and Table Select area in Halls 12.0 and 12.1, exhibitors such as Abert, Dibbern, Eternum, Grestel, La Rochère, Noritake and Porzellanfabriken Christian Seltmann will be represented with their ranges for the hospitality industry.

From the Ambiente Living area, exhibitors in the interior design Hall 3.1, such as blomus, Christine Kröncke, Lambert and Scholtisek, will complement the range. For the first time, exhibitors from the Office Design & Solutions section at Ambiente Working in Hall 3.1 will top off the comprehensive portfolio for the hospitality industry. This goes from customising and individualising mass-produced items to high-quality production in large quantities. Visitors can choose between different qualities, with a focus on the high-end range. Trade visitors will meet competent business partners for projects of any size here.

In line with the Hospitality special interest, outfitters of properties outside the hospitality industry will find a comprehensive range of products under the special interest Contract Business. Exhibitors of both special interest programmes will be listed in a printed guide that will be available on site during the event. Additionally, they will also be easy to find with a corresponding label at the stand and in the online list of exhibitors.

Hotelier's Day

Ambiente will once again be putting the spotlight on the hospitality industry next year with a tailored programme for decision-makers in the hospitality sector, as this growth segment is expanding worldwide. With themed tours across the Ambiente Dining halls, a target group-specific lecture programme on Hoteliers' Day on 10 February and the special interests of Hospitality and Contract Business, the trade fair addresses professional hosts, purchasing decision-makers and project developers in the industry.

The lectures cover topics such as sustainability, design and trends in the hotel industry and the emotionalisation of the guest experience. Curated special presentations for cleverly and beautifully designed kitchen tools, as well as an outlook onto the guest room of the future complement the range.

Hospitality Industry of the Future

The focus of the Hospitality Academy, formerly known as the HoReCa Academy, in the north foyer of Hall 11.0 is on current trends, concepts, best practices and practical tips from renowned experts – this is where professionals meet professionals. The focus is on answers to current questions and trends in the industry. In the lectures, trade visitors from the international hospitality industry will learn what is important for tomorrow's success in this dynamic segment.

Ambiente, Christmasworld and Creativeworld will continue to take place at the same time at the Frankfurt exhibition centre. However, they will be moved to the beginning of February to ensure that the trade fair dates are aligned.

Ambiente, Christmasworld: 07-11 February 2025

Creativeworld: 07-10 February 2025

For further information contact:
Antje Janes-Linnerth
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Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur is Hotel of The Year 2024

Umaid Bhawan Palace, Jodhpur has been honoured as the 'Hotel of The Year 2024' by Gallivanter's Guide. Set above the 'blue city' of Jodhpur, the palace is recognised for its exceptional blend of heritage, luxury, and hospitality.

An architectural marvel commissioned in 1928 by Maharaja Umaid Singh, Umaid Bhawan



Palace blends Art Deco and Indo-Saracenic styles. Perched on Chittar Hill, this 26-acre golden sandstone masterpiece, designed by Henry Lanchester, remains the home of the Jodhpur royal family. Today, under Taj's stewardship, the palace offers guests a journey into a bygone era of grandeur, seamlessly combining modern luxury with warm Indian hospitality.

HRAWI And Vihaan Outdoors Collaborate to Promote Inclusivity

The Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India) – HRAWI and Vihaan Outdoors have entered into a partnership to promote inclusivity within the hospitality industry for persons with special needs. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed by Pradeep Shetty, Hon. Secretary, HRAWI and Sudhir Kothare, Proprietor, Vihaan Outdoors. The social initiative aims to empower individuals with disabilities through skill development and employment opportunities in the hospitality sector.

The collaboration seeks to promote capacity building, training and generate job opportunities for persons with disabilities paving the way for mainstream acceptance and inclusivity within the industry. The partnership represents a vital step towards building a more equitable and inclusive hospitality sector.

"The collaboration between HRAWI and Vihaan Outdoors is a transformative step towards reshaping perceptions within the hospitality industry. The MoU signifies a shared commitment to enhancing skills, creating opportunities and building an inclusive community. Together, we aim to celebrate diversity and develop a hospitality sector that truly embraces and empowers persons with disabilities," said Pradeep Shetty.

Indian hospitality is taking active participation in the movement, with leading hotel chains including Lemon Tree Hotels, IHCL, and ITC Hotels actively hiring and empowering individuals with disabilities. The F&B sector, in particular, has seen remarkable progress. The hospitality industry, a major segment of the broader travel and tourism sector, is a vital contributor to employment and economic growth, particularly in India.

Despite these optimistic projections, the sector is grappling with severe workforce shortages. The sector presently faces acute workforce gap with an estimated need for an additional 100,000–150,000 skilled workers annually.


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Leisure Hotels Launches a Boutique Business Hotel in Dehradun

Leisure Hotels Group has launched a boutique business hotel, Auradoon, in Dehradun. Positioned as the "Gateway to the Hills, Heart of the City," Auradoon marks the 18th addition



to LHG's portfolio in Uttarakhand and continues the brand's commitment to offering exceptional experiences for both leisure and business travelers.

Auradoon combines contemporary architecture with warm, locally inspired interiors, reflecting the charm of Dehradun's scenic beauty. Featuring 54 elegantly designed Deluxe Rooms, Premium Rooms, and Suites, the property offers stunning hill views and the open-air rooftop Jacuzzi. The property also houses Aura, an all-day dining restaurant with locally inspired dishes, Euphoria, a bar offering signature cocktails, a gym and spa for relaxation.

Emphasizing its role as a versatile venue with flexible banquet spaces and verdant lawns, Auradoon caters to both MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) and intimate gatherings with personalised and curated events.

The Lalit Group Partners with IHMs

The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group has announced its strategic partnership with the Ministry of Tourism's Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) at Srinagar and Chandigarh. This collaboration, launched as part of a national initiative to expand Indian hospitality on a global scale, aligns with the Ministry's commitment to "Skill in India for the World" and will serve as a model for fostering excellence in hospitality education across the country.

The partnership will bridge the gap between academic knowledge and real-world experience, giving students the chance to develop key competencies, hone soft skills, and acquire practical insights aligned with the highest standards of the hospitality industry. Students at these institutes will benefit through internships, training programs, masterclasses, and mentorship sessions led by industry experts, preparing them to thrive in the dynamic hospitality sector.



Vivek Shukla, CEO of The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, expressed his enthusiasm for the partnership: "Education and industry must work hand in hand to build a strong foundation for the future of hospitality. We are thrilled to partner with IHM Srinagar and AIHM Chandigarh and our collaboration reflects our commitment to empowering young talent with the skills, knowledge, and values essential to excel in this dynamic field. This provides great opportunity for us to share our expertise with future hospitality leaders, preparing them for successful careers in an ever-evolving industry."

IHCL Announces Hospitality Skilling Centre at Aguada Plateau

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced country's largest skilling centre in Goa based at the Aguada plateau. This announcement coincided with the 50th anniversary celebrations of Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, Goa in the presence of Rohan Khaunte, Minister for Tourism, Goa.



Rohan Khaunte said, "Goans have a natural flair for hospitality, and as tourism continues to evolve, skilling, reskilling and upskilling are the need of the hour. Goa, as the country's premier leisure & MICE destination, has always been at the heart of tourism. IHCL's initiative will create new employment opportunities for our youth, supporting Goa's vision for sustained growth in the tourism sector. By fostering essential skilling programs, this effort embraces our principles of regenerative tourism, ensuring sustainable development while empowering local communities, and enabling them to build successful careers right here in Goa."

Under its industry leading ESG+ framework of Paathya, IHCL with 38 skilling centres, continues to invest in talent pools to support deserving youth and their families, enhancing employment opportunities and contributing to the growth of the hospitality sector.

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Sterling Launches Boutique Resort in Wayanad

Sterling Holiday Resorts launches Sterling Lontano Waterfront Wayanad, its ninth property in Kerala and third in Wayanad. Nestled amidst the scenic landscapes of the Western Ghats, the resort is located near the iconic Karapuzha Dam, offering spectacular views of the Karapuzha waterfront and Cheengeri Hills.

Spread across 3 acres of Wayanad's pristine eco-belt, Sterling Lontano Waterfront boasts luxurious rooms and suites with breathtaking water views. Designed for couples seeking tranquillity and rejuvenation, the resort provides easy access to Wayanad's key attractions, making it an ideal



getaway for those looking to unwind amidst nature.

The resort offers thoughtfully designed accommodations, featuring expansive rooms and suites equipped with en-suite bathtubs or jacuzzis, plush bedding, and signature amenities. Each room includes a private balcony with panoramic views of the Karapuzha basin and Cheengeri Hills.

Guests can enjoy a serene infinity pool, the Subuthi Spa, a meditation center, and a scenic cycling track. These facilities, combined with the resort's lush surroundings, provide a perfect escape for relaxation and rejuvenation.

The Tamarind, the resort's in-house restaurant, offers a gastronomic journey featuring traditional Malabari cuisine alongside international favorites. Guests can savour these delicacies while soaking in the stunning views of the infinity pool and waterfront. For special occasions, the resort's outdoor gazebo creates the perfect setting for celebratory dinners or sparkling brunches.

The resort boasts of an indoor banquet hall, Celebrations, complemented by a sprawling 10,000 sq. ft. outdoor lawn. These versatile spaces are ideal for hosting intimate weddings, corporate offsites, themed celebrations, or any special event, ensuring unforgettable memories.

The Leela Opens Hotel in Banjara Hills



The Leela announces the opening of The Leela Hyderabad, an urban retreat located in the neighbourhood of Banjara Hills. The Leela's signature experiences promise to reignite the spirit of Banjara Hills and reimagine classic luxury for modern times.

The hotel offers 156 rooms and suites, designed to reflect a balance of modern luxury and the cultural legacy of the Deccan Plateau. The interiors draw inspiration from the region's storied heritage, featuring bespoke design elements, intricate craftsmanship, and curated art pieces. Set on 2.5 acres in the heart of the city, the hotel blends business and leisure, catering to the discerning traveller.

The hotel offers a curated selection of world-class dining venues providing an unmatched culinary experience. It also features a dedicated wellness center spanning 1,900 sq. m. offering a luxurious spa, fitness facilities, and a serene pool area.With over 930 sq. m. of event space, including a stunning terrace courtyard, The Leela Hyderabad is an ideal venue for both corporate gatherings and social celebrations.

Fortune Hotels Opens a Beachfront Retreat in Puri

Fortune Hotels has launched Fortune Beachfront Puri, its second hotel in Odisha. Situated on the serene coastline of the temple town, the hotel offers a seamless blend of beachside tranquillity, spiritual experiences, and Fortune's signature warm hospitality. Fortune Beachfront Puri is designed to extend a unique combination of cultural exploration and seaside bliss, converting into a warm haven for the unhurried leisure traveller looking to soak in the beauty of the stunning Bay of Bengal coastline.



A sea-facing property, Fortune Beachfront Puri, features well-appointed guest rooms and suites, offering panoramic sea views from most rooms. Stylishly tailored for relaxation and a soothing stay the rooms are an inviting retreat for travellers seeking chic elegance and serenity. Together with thoughtfully curated amenities, including an outdoor swimming pool, a restful spa, and a well-equipped gym, the hotel is perfectly suited for both spiritual sojourns and relaxing getaways.

Fortune Beachfront Puri is set to be a food lovers delight, with a plethora of dining options available in its confines. Zodiac, the all-day multi-cuisine restaurant caters to the diverse palate of food enthusiasts serving global and regional cuisine on their plate. The soon-to-open, signature speciality restaurant, Sea & Spice, is all set to display the ocean's bounty in all its flavourful glory with its zesty seafood curries and sea-inspired preparations. Additionally, at Fortune Deli, guests can indulge in light snacks, pastries, and beverages to satiate their hunger pangs and odd-hourly cravings.



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New IHCL Hotels Opens

Ginger Candolim Goa

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) announced the opening of Ginger Goa, Candolim, embodying the brand's lean luxe philosophy.

Speaking on the occasion, Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO, IHCL, said, "For over five decades, IHCL has maintained its pioneering leadership in the state of Goa since the opening of Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa, in 1974. The re-imagined Ginger began its journey in Goa in 2018, and since has become a portfolio of 100 hotels. The opening of 262 key Ginger Candolim aligns with the brand's growth strategy of large-format hotels in key lodging markets of the country."

Located within walking distance of Candolim and Moterio



beaches, the 262-key Ginger Goa, Candolim features the brand's signature Qmin restaurant and bar. The hotel offers recreational activities including a swimming pool with panoramic views of the surroundings and a kids play area. Hotel features over 4,500 sq. ft. of versatile meeting and banqueting spaces to host corporate meeting and social gatherings.

Ginger Diu, Jalandhar Beach

The group also announced the opening of Ginger Diu, Jalandhar Beach, an addition to its growing lean luxe portfolio.

Ms. Deepika Rao, Executive Vice President – Hotel Openings & New Businesses, IHCL says, "We are delighted to step foot in Diu, a hidden gem along the western coast. Ginger in Diu will offer a blend



of style and comfort, enhancing the destination's appeal for travellers."

The 45-key Ginger Diu, Jalandhar Beach offers guests the perfect retreat to unwind and explore the captivating seaside landscapes and Diu's local attractions. The hotel includes the brand's signature all-day diner Qmin, along with a poolside bar and a swimming pool, allowing guests to relax while enjoying scenic views of the Arabian Sea. Designed to host a variety of events, the hotel includes a spacious conference hall, ideal for meetings and conferences, with an outdoor venue by the poolside for social gatherings.

Raajsa, Kumbhalgarh - IHCL Seleqtions

IHCL announced the opening of Raajsa, Kumbhalgarh - IHCL SeleQtions in Rajasthan. Nestled at the foothills of the Aravalli



range, the resort epitomizes timeless heritage combined with contemporary luxury. Located near the iconic Kumbhalgarh Fort, the 175-key Raajsa, Kumbhalgarh - IHCL SeleQtions offers panoramic vistas of the Aravali hills and the serene Lakhela Lake. Constructed in the distinctive style of a fort, the grand fortress-styled door is a masterpiece of traditional Rajasthani architecture. At the heart of the resort lies a picturesque courtyard, creating an atmosphere of tranquillity and grandeur.

The resort's culinary offerings include Pangat, a multicuisine restaurant serving vegetarian Asian and Indian specialties, and Aakhali, a lounge and coffee shop, perfect for relaxed conversations. Guests can also enjoy the resort's outdoor pool, a serene oasis that perfectly complements the resort's allure and natural beauty.

Ideal for hosting a variety of events, the resort features exceptional banqueting spaces. The expansive Darbar Hall, a pillar-less venue with intricate detailing and plush furnishings, serves as the perfect backdrop for grand celebrations while Darikhana and Choupal provide a modern and elegant setting for small conferences and intimate gatherings.

La Estoria, Goa - IHCL Seleqtions

IHCL announced the opening of La Estoria, Goa - IHCL SeleQtions. Nestled in the picturesque coastal village of Candolim, hotel offers a harmonious blend of Goan-Portuguese design and contemporary elegance.

La Estoria, translating to 'The Story', celebrates the intricate history and modern elegance of Goa. Located a short walk from Candolim Beach, this 122-key resort weaves Goa's vibrant cultural tapestry into its architectural elements. Each room offers a private balcony, inviting guests to embrace the seaside serenity.

Guests can enjoy a curated culinary journey at Trattoria, renowned for its authentic Italian fare since 1981, and unwind at Canterbury Bar,



which exudes old-Goan charm. The resort also features a modern gym filled with natural light, an inviting open swimming pool framed by swaying palms, and a spa offering a retreat.

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42nd Annual General Body Meeting (AGM) of HOTREMAI



The 42nd General Body Meeting of HOTREMAI was held on 27th September 2024 at Maple Room, India Habitat Centre, New Delhi. 40 representatives from 30 member companies were present at the AGM. The meeting was chaired by The President, Nitin Kumar. Addressing the gathering, he warmly welcomed The Immediate Past President, The EC Members and the members of General Body present and thanked them for making it convenient to attend the 42nd General-Body Meeting and mentioned that he is deeply grateful for the continuous support, dedication and commitment of the members towards the growth and success of the association.

He further said, together we have navigated challenges, celebrated milestones and strengthen our community, to review the progress and achievement of the past years, he looks forward to reflecting on how all have worked collectively to advance the collective interest of all members. He added that member's active participation and support are the core foundation of the success of HOTREMAI.

He then welcomed members of the general body to contribute, share and discuss the future course of the association and continue to build strong foundation, embrace new opportunities and make slides towards the greater accomplishment in the years to come. He wished for a collective and fruitful meeting ahead by requesting The Secretary to present the Annual Financial Report of the association for the financial year 2023-2024 before the members of the general body.

The Secretary presented before members of General body the Executive Committee Report on the affairs, activities and achievements during the period 2023-2024 emphasizing the achievement and how we can take the association forward in the subsequent years.

The Secretary also presented the Audited Accounts of the Association for the financial year 2023-2024 before the House which was unanimously adopted.

The association has taken initiative in promoting products of its members, thus started working on HOTREMAI Members Directory App which is ready to introduce to all HOTREMAI members and the industry. He urged the members to download HOTREMAI App and avail the privileges given by the association for their own benefit.

The President said that by looking into this our association having a good corpus for which we are also planning to buy a new office space.

The Secretary offered thanked members for sparing their precious time to be a part of 42nd AGM. He also thanked to the Chairpersons & Members of Sub-committee for their efforts towards fulfillment of the tasks at hand. He offered special thanks to the founder members for their noble guidance. He wished HOTREMAI to reach new heights in the coming times. The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to chair. A dinner marked the end to the 42nd AGM.

Hilton Signs New Properties

Hilton Garden Inn in Bengaluru

Hilton announced the signing of Hilton Garden Inn in Whitefield, Bengaluru, set to open in early 2025, this new property will bring Hilton's Bengaluru portfolio to seven trading and ten pipeline hotels. Upon opening, the new hotel will offer 223 guest rooms. Guests will have access to a range of dining experiences across three outlets. For events and corporate gatherings, the hotel will feature 650 sqm of total meeting and function space. Other amenities include a fully equipped fitness centre and an outdoor pool.

The Hilton Garden Inn, Bengaluru, Whitefield, being developed in partnership with Minerva Executive Apartment Private Limited, a repeat owner and existing operator of the Hilton Garden Inn Pune Hinjawadi, will be Hilton's third hotel in Whitefield, after the DoubleTree by Hilton Bengaluru Whitefield which opened earlier this year and Curio Collection by Hilton, Bengaluru, Whitefield, scheduled to open in 2025.

Hilton Hotels & Resorts in Udaipur

The group also announced the signing of its flagship brand, Hilton Hotels & Resorts in Udaipur, marking its debut in the iconic 'City of Lakes'. Developed in partnership with Elysian Hotels Private Limited, the 118-key Hilton Udaipur is slated to open in early 2026. Hilton currently operates two hotels in Rajasthan, namely Hilton Jaipur and DoubleTree by Hilton Jaipur Amer.

Upon completion, Hilton Udaipur will offer 118 exquisite guest rooms and spacious suites across verdant gardens, each designed to reflect the destination's unique aesthetic and cultural ethos. The hotel will offer a distinctive blend of contemporary amenities and traditional charm. Catering to the booming weddings market in Rajasthan, the hotel will offer 1,850 square metres of indoor and 438 –square metres of outdoor event spaces including lawns, and courtyards. Guests can indulge in culinary delights at the hotel's four dining outlets spanning an all-day restaurant, a specialty venue, and a bar, while the extensive recreational amenities will include an outdoor pool, spa, fitness centre, and an executive lounge.

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Khizer Khan

DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad has appointed Khizer Khan as Hotel Manager. With over 17 years of experience, he worked at Marriott in London Kensington, Hilton at London Heathrow Airport, and Hampton by Hilton in London Waterloo. His career spans various leadership positions, providing him with a deep understanding of hotel operations, guest services, and driving operational excellence across diverse environments. In his new role he will focus on enhancing guest experiences, improving operational efficiency, and strengthening the hotel's reputation for exceptional service.



M L Choudhary

The Earth at Ranthambore, a flagship property of Earthian Hotels N Resorts, has appointed M L Choudhary as its new General Manager. With over 15 years of experience, he brings a wealth of knowledge in strategic operations, guest satisfaction, and team management. He held key leadership roles at Sairafort Sarovar Portico, Jaisalmer, and Ambassador Sky Chef at IGI Airport, Delhi. Known for his strategic vision and hands-on approach, he has led initiatives that improve operational efficiency while elevating guest experiences.



Sarvesh Kumar Singh

Clarks Resort has appointed Sarvesh Kumar Singh as General Manager. With over 20 years of background in hospitality, he has served at The Great Kabab Factory, Le Meridien, Brij Gajkesari Bikaner and many more. His skillsets include managing finances, promoting and marketing the business, grievance handling, ensuring the smooth running of the property. In his new role he aims to maximize revenue and optimize operational costs and will be responsible for the development of strategies and asset management within Clarks Resort portfolio.



Abhishek Sharma

Leisure Hotels Group (LHG) has appointed Abhishek Sharma as the new Resort Manager of Aloha on The Ganges, Rishikesh. With over 21 years of hospitality experience, he brings a wealth of knowledge. His diverse background spans key areas, including Food & Beverage service, Front Office, and Guest experiences, across both boutique and wildlife properties, enabling him with a comprehensive grasp of resort operations. His skill set includes maximizing property value and profitability through strategic planning, operational efficiency, and performance optimization.



Annam Lubana

JW Marriott Goa has appointed Annam Lubana as Director of Operations. With over 10 years of experience at JW Marriott Pune, JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar and The Oberoi Group of Hotels, she will oversee operations departments, including Food & Beverage, Culinary, Front Office, Housekeeping and Spa. She did PG Diploma from the Oberoi Centre of Learning & Development and a degree in Hospitality and Hotel Administration from Institute of Hotel Management, Mumbai, and won the T.R Oberoi Gold Medal in Academic Excellence.



Harkirat Singh

Novotel Pune has appointed Harkirat Singh as the new Director of Revenue. With over a decade of experience in revenue management, sales, and business development, he served as the Cluster Revenue Manager for Ibis and Ibis Styles India. He also worked at CoWrks, OYO Workspaces, GoWork, Golbibo & MakeMyTrip, Le Meridien Gurugram, Hyatt Regency Delhi, and Oberoi Hotels & Resorts. A graduate of the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering, and Nutrition, Gurdaspur, holds certifications in advanced internet marketing, Google Analytics, and MS Excel.



Anthony Crasto

Anthony Crasto is the new Revenue and Reservations Manager at Angsana Oasis Spa and Resort, Bengaluru. Having over 2 decades of experience, he worked at The Lalit Suri Hospitality Group, Radisson Blu, Novotel, and ITC Hotels. His proficiency in revenue optimization, reservations management, and guest service has been instrumental in driving organizational success and client relationships. He is recognized for his strategic acumen and precision in forecasting, data analysis, and revenue management, managing complex distribution channels, pricing strategies, and seamless operations.



Dilip Nikam

DoubleTree by Hilton Pune-Chinchwad has appointed Dilip Nikam as Assistant Financial Controller. With over 12 years of experience in hospitality finance at Marriott International, Hilton, Accor, Hyatt, Sterling Holidays and The O Hotel, he is set to bolster the hotel's financial operations with his expertise. He holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree in Accounting from Pune University. He is pursuing advance study in cost management account from The Institute of Cost Accountants of India, further strengthening his expertise in financial management.



Shabad Ahuja

The Lodhi, New Delhi has appointed Shabad Ahuja as the Director of Food and Beverages. With over 15 years of experience, he joins from Annamaya Holdings Ltd., where he served as General Manager at MA-HE Coastal Indian in the UK. He also worked at JW Marriott Hotels in Bengaluru and New Delhi. His expertise includes pre-opening management, beverage ordering, vendor negotiations, and service excellence. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Hospitality and Hotel Administration from the IHM Chandigarh.



Raj Kadamuturu

Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway has appointed Raj Kadamuturu as Director of Food and Beverage. With over 19 years of experience, he worked at Curio Collection by Hilton in Nairobi, The Westin in Pune, and Four Seasons Hotels. He holds a Diploma in Hotel Management from the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition in Goa. He possesses a formidable set of skills in coaching, creating operational strategies, financial management, and forecasting analysis, has history of successful pre-openings.



Rana Shil

Novotel Goa Panjim has appointed Rana Shil as the Food and Beverage Manager. With over a decade of experience in the hospitality industry, he worked at Mercure Lavasa & International Convention Centre, Holiday Inn Goa Candolim, brings a passion to his role, focused on driving revenue through innovative events, food festivals, and strategic marketing initiatives. He aims to further elevate the dining experiences by introducing creative culinary events, improving service standards, and fostering a motivated team, ensuring seamless day-to-day operations.



Satish Vishwakarma

Novotel Pune has appointed Satish Vishwakarma as the Chief Engineer. With over 17 years of experience, held key positions at Jio World Centre, Taj Vivanta Hotel, Four Points by Sheraton, and JW Marriott Sahar Mumbai. His expertise spans across hotel engineering, including comprehensive energy management, preventive maintenance, MEP management, and statutory regulations. He holds a B.Tech in Mechanical Engineering from Swami Vivekanand Institute of Management Science & Technology and a Diploma in Electrical Engineering from Meghdoot Technical College, Dadar, Mumbai.



Vinayak M. Prabhavalkar

Novotel Goa Panjim has appointed Vinayak M. Prabhavalkar as the Director of Sales & Marketing. With over 17 years of experience in the hospitality industry, he worked with Marriott International and IHG. He has demonstrated excellence in driving revenue, leading sales teams, and optimizing customer satisfaction. His previous experience has given him in-depth knowledge of the region's unique market dynamics, invaluable in his new role. His collaborative leadership style and local knowledge will be key drivers of the success.



Arsheesh Todywala

Grand Hyatt Gurgaon has appointed Arsheesh Todywala as its new Cluster Director of Marketing. He will oversee the marketing and communication strategies for Grand Hyatt Gurgaon, Hyatt Regency Jaipur Mansarovar, and Hyatt Regency Dehradun. This pivotal role highlights the brand's commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences and enhancing the unique essence of Hyatt's purpose of care. He brings over 17 years of experience in the automobile industry with renowned brands, Hyundai, Jaguar Land Rover & Audi.



Ganapati Pandurang Patil

Hyatt Place Aurangabad Airport has appointed Ganapati Pandurang Patil as the new Director of Sales. With over 16 years of experience, he worked at Ibis Hyderabad, HITEC City, and held leadership positions at Novotel Pune, Hyatt Pune, Holiday Inn Pune. He holds an MBA in Marketing from Pune University. His career in hospitality began in 2007 with early roles at Marriott Hotel Northampton and J.W. Marriott Mumbai. He will be responsible for overseeing key projects and ensuring their successful execution.



Srikant Kodali

JW Marriott Hotel Bengaluru has appointed Srikant Kodali as Director of Sales & Marketing. With over 13 years of experience, he held key leadership roles at various renowned properties within Marriott International. He brings extensive expertise across sales, marketing, and event operations. He will be responsible for leading the sales and marketing team to achieve the hotel's revenue goals. His exceptional leadership and performance have earned him numerous prestigious awards, including multiple Presidents Circle Awards and Pinnacle Award Achiever recognitions.

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Green Hotels

Green Signal for Rise in Eco-Tourism

Eco-tourism and eco-hotels are becoming popular across the globe. Eco-friendly hotels' construction and design often leave a good impression on overnight guests. Practicing sustainability in hospitality industry comes with many benefits. Besides attracting more customers, it is also more profitable for the hotels. A recent survey by Trip Advisor found that 62% of travelers had opted for more environmentally friendly hotels, food and transportation, while 69% of the respondents of the survey stated that they intended to make more environmentally responsible travel in future as far as hotel accommodation was concerned. The result is that there is an increasing number of eco-friendly hotels in India. Ashok Malkani in this second, and concluding segment of the story on eco-friendly hotels, delves on the methods being adopted by the hotels to maintain their eco-friendly status and the future of eco-tourism and eco-hotels.

Green hotels, or eco-friendly hotels, often attract not only eco-conscious travellers but also tourists who would like to experience something new and innovative. According to Future Market Insights the eco-tourism market is predicted to grow at 7.9% between 2018 and 2022. Today sustainable tourism has become more important than ever, as travellers and businesses alike are shifting toward eco-friendly practices. Consumers are increasingly demanding greener options.

There is also a growing trend of tourist preferring eco-friendly hotels. Green hotels have gained recognition for their commitment to energy conservation, water preservation and waste reduction. Pioneering sustainability has been predicted to be the future of the Indian hospitality industry. The number of green hotels have increased globally.

Chandran Venkatesan, Chief Engineer, ITC Grand Central, Mumbai, states, "As people want to travel in more sustainable ways and become more conscious of environmental issues, ecotourism has grown significantly. Destinations that contribute to ecotourism frequently emphasise activities in the outdoors, supporting the conservation of ecosystems and cultural heritage."

He adds, "As the eco-consciousness of travellers rise, the hoteliers are increasingly adopting sustainability in their hotels. Due to the hospitality industry's increased desire for sustainability, the number of green hotels has



been rising globally. Several boutique hotels and hotel chains in India are implementing green certifications such as the Green Key accreditation or LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). This pattern is in line with the global movement for environmentally conscious travel and preservation. ITC Grand Central is a Leed Platinium & Leed Zero Carbon certified hotel."

He claims, "Hotels frequently use the following strategies to increase sustainability:

Sustainable building practices and renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar power.

Initiatives to conserve water, such as collecting rainfall and recycling greywater.

Programs for recycling and waste reduction.

We, at ITC Grand Central have adopted the following initiatives to promote Responsible Luxury:

Zero-mile water (in-house water plant) – Sunya Aqua

EV Charging station.

These are besides other practices like Eco-friendly packaging, Green Banqueting, Farm-to-plate and Sustainable eating like One-bite eating."



Suhail Kannampilly, Managing Director, The Fern Hotels & Resorts disclosed, "The rise of green or eco-friendly hotels is a significant global trend, with both environmental awareness and consumer demand for sustainable travel practices driving the growth. This trend is evident both globally and in India, reflecting a broader shift in the hospitality industry toward sustainability and responsible tourism. As travelers increasingly prioritize sustainability in their choices, hotels worldwide have begun to adopt green practices, including energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable building materials. This shift is reflected in the increasing number of eco-certifications, such as Green Key, EarthCheck, Green Globe, and LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), which help set industry standards for sustainability."

He adds, "In India, the growth of eco-friendly hotels has been particularly notable in recent years, fuelled by both government initiatives and increased awareness among consumers. Hotels are increasingly seeking


Suhail Kannampilly


Ms. Kavita Thapa


Sameer Kapoor


Darshan M. R

certifications like Ecotel and LEED to align with global sustainability standards. The Fern Hotels & Resorts has been a key player in this movement, implementing sustainable practices across its properties. These include energy-saving technologies, rainwater harvesting, waste management, and the use of organic materials, all of which contribute to reducing the environmental impact of our operations.

"The eco-friendly practices not only benefit the environment but also offer cost savings for hotel operators through reduced energy consumption, lower water usage, and efficient waste management. Additionally, as environmental issues gain more attention globally, both businesses and consumers are more attuned to the importance of sustainable practices."

Sameer Kapoor, hotel manager at Courtyard by Marriott Goa Colva, is of the opinion that popularity of eco-hotels would increase as consumers become more aware of sustainability. He states, "Guests benefit from unique experiences at eco-hotels as it connects them with nature, healthier environments, and the opportunity to support local economies. Our hotel embraces the rise of ecotourism by encouraging guests to engage with the area's natural beauty and rich culture."

He adds, "At Courtyard by Marriott Goa Colva, a commitment to eco-friendly practices shapes every aspect of the guest experience. In keeping with Marriott International's Serve 360 program of doing good in every direction, the hotel prioritises initiatives that minimise its ecological footprint, including solar energy utilisation, water conservation techniques, and waste recycling programmes. A key part of this sustainability strategy is its wet composting system, which converts organic waste into nutrient-rich compost, reducing landfill contributions while enriching the soil for the hotel's gardens. To further enhance water conservation, the hotel has installed aerated water taps throughout its facilities. These innovative fixtures significantly reduce water flow without compromising the guest experience."

Gaurav Miglani, Area Director Taj North Goa and General Manager Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa, says, "While there is no way of fixing or defining the number of hotels adopting sustainability, as yet, many hotels and resorts have taken the first step towards being green and are implementing elements as they progress along."

He adds, "Eco-friendly amenities reduce operational costs for hotels through energy and water savings, while also enhancing guest satisfaction by meeting the demand for sustainable practices. Our hotels adopt sustainable practices such as rainwater harvesting, solar power, and efficient waste management. We promote local biodiversity through tree-planting and coastal preservation, reducing our ecological footprint."

Darshan M. R., Asst. Director of Engineering, Aloft Bengaluru Outer Ring Road, asserts, "The rise in the number of green hotels, both in India and globally, has been remarkable over the past decade. As awareness of environmental issues and sustainability increases, travellers are actively seeking accommodations that prioritize eco-friendly practices. This shift has prompted many hotels to adopt sustainable measures and achieve certifications for their green initiatives."

He adds, "In India, the growth of green hotels can be attributed to the country's unique biodiversity and rich cultural heritage, which travellers increasingly want to preserve. The government and various organizations have also been promoting sustainable tourism through initiatives that encourage hotels to adopt environmentally friendly practices. From utilizing renewable energy sources to implementing waste management programs. Globally, the trend toward green hotels is strong. International hotel chains are increasingly incorporating sustainable practices into their operations, while boutique hotels and eco-resorts are gaining popularity for their commitment to preserving local ecosystems."

Amit Raman, General Manager, Radisson Blu, Hinjewadi, Pune, states, "There is a noticeable trend in the hospitality industry towards sustainability as environmental challenges become more widely acknowledged. The rise of "green hotels," which include sustainable technologies to lessen their environmental effect while enhancing the visitor experience, is a noteworthy part of this shift. This trend emphasizes how sustainable practices benefit the environment and increase customer pleasure."

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Sales, Sayaji Hotels, affirms, "The number of green hotels is increasing both in India and globally, with many hotels adopting the eco-hotel theme. This trend is driven by consumer demand and the hospitality industry's commitment to sustainability."

Jitendra Kumar, F&B Director, Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan, states, "The number of green hotels is rapidly increasing in India and globally, driven by the rising demand for sustainable travel. With more properties adopting eco-friendly practices, such as energy efficiency and waste reduction, travellers now have greater access to environmentally conscious accommodations that prioritize sustainability and guest comfort."

Kanchan Kumar, Rooms Division Manager, Novotel Goa Panjim, avers, "Eco-friendly amenities do more than just save energy–they appeal to a growing demographic of environmentally aware travellers. Offering such amenities allows us to lower operational costs while also creating stronger guest loyalty. Guests appreciate the thoughtfulness of these touches, from energy-efficient systems to eco-friendly dining options, making their stay more memorable and responsible. There is, thus, an increase in eco-friendly hotels all over the world, including India."

Promotion of Sustainability

Hotels are, increasingly, opting for sustainable practices. According to Madan Prasad Bezbaruah, Secretary General of Hotel Association of India (HAI), big luxury and five star operators are leading from the front on adopting sustainability practices. However, he believes that smaller members of HAI are lagging behind due to cost issues. HAI is thus considering asking government to provide incentives to small hotel operators for adopting sustainability practices.

Yes, sustainability is uppermost in the mind of the hospitality industry. Green hotels are gaining popularity among the tourists. There is an increasing awareness among the customers for saving the environment. And hotels are adopting several methods impairing the environment.

One may ask whether the hotel guests are keen on sustainability and what are the methods used by hotels to promote in sustaining environment?

Sameer Kapoor states, "As travellers



Chandran Venkatesan

increasingly seek responsible accommodations, eco-friendly hotels like Courtyard by Marriott Goa Colva have gained popularity by adopting sustainability methods like solar energy utilisation, water conservation techniques, and waste recycling programmes. A key part of this sustainability strategy is its wet composting system, which converts organic waste into nutrient-rich compost.

He stressed the fact that even culinary offerings at Courtyard by Marriott Goa Colva reflect a strong emphasis on sustainability. "By sourcing ingredients from local farmers, the hotel not only reduces its carbon footprint but also supports the local economy, providing guests with fresh and organic options that enhance their dining experience."

He disclosed. "Through Marriott International's partnership with South Pole (a carbon asset developer and climate consultancy), Courtyard by Marriott Colva will soon offer its guest sustainable ways to enhance its new meetings program. This collaboration enables event organizers to measure and offset their carbon footprint, promoting sustainability. By integrating eco-friendly practices, the hotel will support responsible gatherings, helping guests make



Kanchan Kumar

a positive impact on the environment."

Chandran, states "Sustainability is increasingly important to hotel guests, particularly among the millennials and GenZs. These guests value products that not only maintain high standards of comfort but also minimize environmental impact. At IHCL's Goa properties, we offer a diverse range of sustainable amenities, such as energy-efficient lighting, water-saving fixtures, and biodegradable toiletries, all designed to reduce our environmental footprint while delivering an exceptional guest experience.

Darshan declared, "Sustainability is not just a trend but a key consideration for environmentally conscious travellers. Guests appreciate efforts such as using renewable energy, offering locally sourced food, reducing single-use plastics, and providing eco-friendly amenities."

He continues, "Eco-friendly amenities now range from energy-efficient lighting and water-saving fixtures to refillable bathroom products and biodegradable toiletries. Many hotels are also eliminating single-use plastics by offering reusable alternatives.

"At Aloft ORR, we have embraced several of these sustainable methods. We have installed energy-efficient lighting throughout the property and solar heaters. We have an electric vehicle charging station and use smart systems to optimize energy consumption in guest rooms and common areas. Our water-saving initiatives include an on-property water bottling plant, low-flow showerheads, and faucets. We also have a comprehensive recycling program that includes waste separation in guest rooms and composting food waste from our dining facilities.

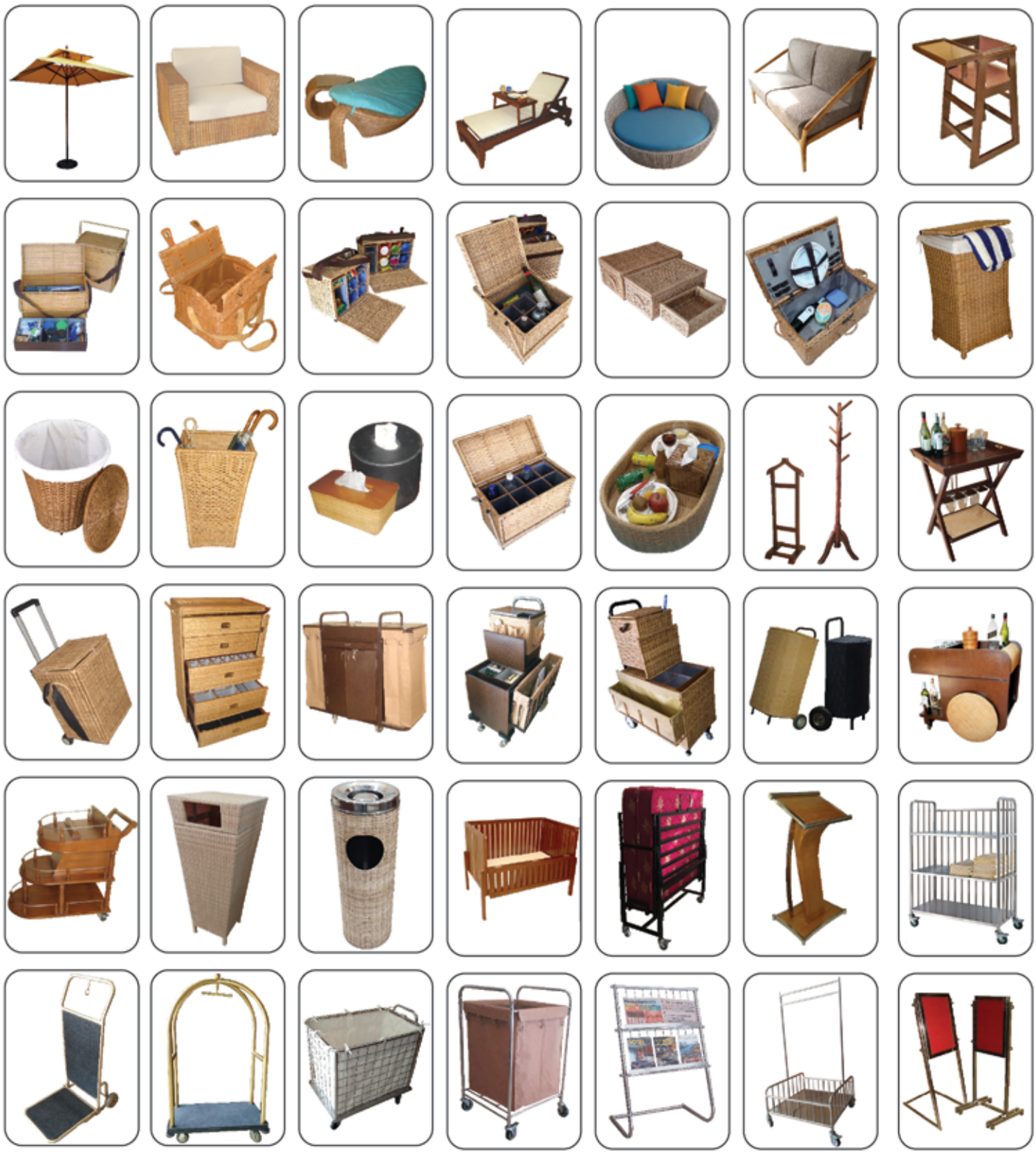
"We prioritize using locally sourced and organic products in our restaurants and spas. Additionally, we engage our guests in sustainability efforts through informative signage, workshops, and initiatives that promote responsible behavior during their stay."

Gaurav states that sustainability has become increasingly important to hotel guests. "Eco-friendly amenities in hotels have been driven by guests who seek to enhance their experience while supporting sustainability initiatives. In response, hotels have increasingly embraced sustainable practices, with eco-friendly amenities

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becoming a hallmark of modern luxury hospitality."

He revealed, "At IHCL's Goa properties, we offer a diverse range of sustainable amenities, such as energy-efficient lighting, water-saving fixtures, and biodegradable toiletries, all designed to reduce our environmental footprint while delivering an exceptional guest experience."

Amit avers, "There is a noticeable trend in the hospitality industry towards sustainability as environmental challenges become more widely acknowledged. To lessen their reliance on groundwater and lessen their impact on the environment, more hotels and restaurants are implementing water-efficient technologies and setting up systems for rainwater harvesting, bottling plants, LED lighting conversions, ozone treatment for pools, electric vehicle charging infrastructure, and air pollution control measures."

He adds, "Several eco-friendly initiatives have been done by our hotels and other hotels in the sector. They are:

Rainwater Harvesting System: To lessen its influence on the environment and recharge groundwater, a complete system has been built.

Sustainable Energy Usage: We greatly reduced our carbon footprint by partnering with MSEDCL to get 60% of our electricity from wind power.

Commissioning of the Bottling Plant: To cut down on the usage of plastic bottles and fight pollution, an internal facility was established to bottle alkaline mineralized water.

LED Lighting Conversion: Energy-efficient LED lighting was installed throughout the facility in place of CFL and PL lighting, significantly lowering carbon emissions.

Ozonation of the Pool and STP: To improve sanitation and environmental friendliness, ozone was used in place of chlorine in the swimming pool and sewage treatment plant.

Infrastructure for EV Charging: To encourage environmentally friendly transportation, electric car charging stations have started to be installed. A full rollout is anticipated soon.

Control of Air Pollution: To reduce air pollution, sophisticated scrubbers were installed for sewage treatment and kitchen exhaust."

Ms. Kavita affirms, "Green hotels contribute to environmental conservation by reducing waste, conserving water, and lowering energy consumption. This promotes biodiversity and encourages sustainable practices in local communities. These hotels play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism practices, preserving natural resources, and supporting local economies. This involvement allows guests to participate in the green revolution, enhancing their satisfaction"

She adds, "Hotels often implement recycling programs, energy-efficient systems, water conservation strategies, and CSR activities. At Sayaji Hotels, we use sustainable sourcing for food, ensure proper disposal, employ sensors to turn off electricity when there are no guests, and invest in renewable energy solutions."

Jitendra Kumar informs, "Ecotels play a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism by prioritizing environmental conservation and community engagement. They benefit environment by reducing waste through recycling and composting, optimizing resource use, and incorporating sustainable materials. These initiatives lower carbon emissions, safeguard natural ecosystems, and support biodiversity. Eco-systems are also beneficial to the hotel as they help in reducing operational costs through energy and water savings, enhance guest satisfaction by meeting the growing demand for sustainable practices and improve brand reputation as environmentally responsible establishment."

Kanchan Kumar informs, "Green hotels benefit the environment by actively working to restore and enhance local ecosystems. They reduce energy consumption through energy-efficient technologies, conserve water with low-flow fixtures, and minimize waste via recycling and composting. Eco-friendly amenities offer hotels a dual advantage by enhancing both sustainability and profitability. At Novotel Goa Panjim, we have adopted several eco-friendly features, including censored lights that activate upon entering the room and digital keycards, which minimize the use of plastic. These amenities not only appeal to the growing number of eco-conscious travelers but also help us reduce operational costs."

Suhail says, "Green hotels provide significant environmental benefits by focusing on resource conservation, waste reduction, and minimizing their overall ecological footprint. Initiatives such as energy-efficient lighting, water recycling, composting, and the use of renewable energy sources like solar power are key to reducing a hotel's carbon footprint. By educating travelers on environmental responsibility and encouraging them to adopt eco-friendly habits, these hotels inspire positive behavioural changes that extend beyond the hotel walls."

He avers, "At The Fern Hotels & Resorts, we implement a comprehensive 'Five Globes

Model' across all our properties to ensure sustainability in every aspect of our operations. This model covers five key areas- in terms of energy management, we utilize solar power, energy-efficient LED lighting, and make extensive use of natural light to reduce energy consumption. Our water management practices include low-flow fixtures, in-house water bottling plants, dual flush systems, and sewage treatment plants that recycle water for landscaping, all of which help conserve water and reduce waste. For waste management, we have implemented color-coded bins, composting, and recycling programs to minimize landfill waste and promote responsible disposal practices.

"In addition, our sustainability commitment extends to the use of eco-friendly guest amenities, such as natural toiletries and renewable-material stationery. We also emphasize employee education and community involvement, offering comprehensive training to staff on sustainable practices and encouraging participation in local environmental initiatives, such as Earth Hour and clean-up drives. Through these efforts, The Fern Hotels & Resorts not only fosters a culture of sustainability within our properties but also sets a standard for the hospitality industry."

Future of Eco Hotels

Growth in eco tourism is boosting the evolution of hotels and encouraging the properties to incorporate more ecological and environmentally sustainable friendly practices in their operations. India's eco-tourism market is showing robust growth. According to a report by The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), KPMG and the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI), India's sustainable-tourism market was valued at $26.01 million in 2022 and is expected to rise to $151.88 million by 2032 at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 19.3%. The growth in eco-hotels is also in keeping with the enhancement in the eco-tourism. Eco-hotels are beneficial not only for the environment but also for the properties and the guests, financially.

Suhail asserts, "The future of eco-tourism and eco-hotels looks bright, with a growing number of travelers prioritizing sustainable, low-impact travel options. As awareness of climate change and environmental issues continues to rise, eco-friendly hotels will become increasingly essential to meet the demand for responsible tourism. Travelers are seeking accommodations that not only provide comfort but also align with their values of sustainability and environmental stewardship."

He continues, "As the global focus on climate change intensifies, the commitments of The Fern Hotels & Resorts to further expand our sustainable practices and set new industry benchmarks for eco-conscious hospitality will continue to evolve through innovations that enhance guest experiences while minimizing our environmental impact. By integrating cutting-edge eco-friendly technologies and continuously refining our sustainable practices, we aim to lead the way in shaping the future of eco-tourism. This proactive approach ensures that eco-hotels will remain at the forefront of the hospitality industry, offering travelers memorable, environmentally responsible experiences that contribute to eco-tourism. This proactive approach ensures that eco-hotels will remain



at the forefront of the hospitality industry, offering travelers memorable, environmentally responsible experiences that contribute to a healthier planet."

Sameer believes, "the future of eco-tourism and eco-hotels is promising, driven by a desire for sustainable travel experiences. By choosing to stay at Courtyard by Marriott Goa Colva, guests can enjoy luxury while contributing to a more sustainable future. With its comprehensive sustainability initiatives, the hotel not only elevates the guest experience but also sets a benchmark for responsible tourism in Goa."

Gaurav asserts "There is a promising future for eco-tourism as travellers place greater emphasis on sustainability."

He adds, "Goa, with its natural beauty and biodiversity, is a prime destination for eco-tourists. IHCL hotels in Goa such as Taj Holiday Village and Cidade de Goa are leading the way by implementing environmentally friendly practices such as providing guests with opportunities to explore the region's natural beauty while also contributing to its preservation. Additionally, our hotels in Goa use energy-efficient systems and offer activities that help protect the local environment. Offering these amenities, we have seen a rise in Ecotourism, driven by a growing interest in responsible travel. At IHCL Goa, we recognize the promising future of eco-tourism as travellers place greater emphasis on sustainability."

Ms. Kavita iterates, "The future of eco-tourism and eco-hotels looks promising, with a growing emphasis on sustainability, innovation, and responsible travel. We anticipate that more travellers will seek eco-friendly options, prompting hotels to adopt even greener practices."

She adds, "The shift to ecotels plays a crucial role in promoting sustainable tourism practices, preserving natural resources, and supporting local economies. This involvement allows guests to participate in the green revolution, enhancing their satisfaction."

Amit declares, "Genuine encounters with local cultures, outdoor activities, and immersive experiences are becoming increasingly in demand among travellers. To provide visitors with distinctive and unforgettable experiences, this trend has increased demand for eco-friendly lodging.

"With a growing emphasis on social responsibility, environmental accountability, and economic sustainability, the future of sustainable hospitality is bright. Major themes influencing the future include of eco-tourism and eco-hotels are:

Green Building and Design

Sustainable Tourism Practices: Responsible tourism that minimizes negative impacts on ecosystems and communities will be encouraged by sustainable hospitality in the future.

Standards and Certifications: To demonstrate its dedication to environmental and social responsibility, the industry is progressively implementing sustainability certifications.

Technology and Innovation: Improving sustainability in the hotel industry requires a strong focus on technological breakthroughs.

Jitendra Kumar states, "Tourists are increasingly seeking experiences that allows them to connect with nature, support conservation efforts and engage with local communities. Eco-tourism and eco-hotels are expected to grow significantly as travelers increasingly seek sustainable experiences. Future advancements will likely include innovative green technologies, enhanced conservation efforts, and stronger community partnerships. This trend will drive the development of environmentally responsible accommodations, fostering a deeper connection between guests and nature while promoting responsible travel practices.

Chandran asserts, "In the future, eco-tourism and eco-hotels are expected to grow as sustainability becomes a key consideration for travelers and businesses alike. Hotels will likely:

Incorporate technologies such as energy management programs and smart thermostats.

Increase their dedication to zero-waste and carbon-neutral projects.

Use reporting and certifications to meet the growing requirement for sustainability efforts to be transparent. With the growing awareness of environmental issues, the eco-tourism sector is set to become a more commonplace aspect of international travel."

Darshan declares, "Eco-tourism and eco-hotels are set to see significant growth and evolution in the coming years, driven by increasing awareness of environmental sustainability and responsible travel. As more travellers prioritize minimizing their impact on the planet, the demand for eco-friendly accommodations and nature-centric experiences will continue to rise.

"Many hotels may aim to achieve zero-waste operations, further reducing their environmental footprint. Energy efficiency, waste reduction, and water conservation will become standard practices across the industry. The concept of eco-tourism will expand beyond the preservation of natural landscapes to include a focus on local community engagement and cultural sustainability. Guests will increasingly seek immersive experiences that support local economies, protect biodiversity, and promote conservation efforts.

"Overall, the future of eco-tourism and eco-hotels will involve deeper integration of sustainability into the travel experience, making it a core element of hospitality."

Kanchan Kumar affirms, "The future of eco-tourism will emphasize creating a positive impact on the environment, moving beyond merely reducing harm. Eco-hotels will increasingly engage with local ecosystems, incorporating innovative practices that enhance sustainability and community well-being. These establishments will operate as self-sustaining entities, seamlessly integrated into their surroundings, redefining hospitality by balancing luxury with environmental responsibility. This evolution will set new industry standards and inspire travelers to participate in meaningful ecological practices during their stay."

Conclusion

Traditional hotels, it is believed, release about 60 million tons of carbon emissions in atmosphere every year. The increasing number of green hotels are helping in changing this environmental malaise. In recent years hospitality industry has started to shift focus towards sustainability. Innovative technologies are helping the hotel industry in achieving their sustainability targets. With the customers (hotel guests) becoming more environmentally conscious the future of green hotels seems bright. ■

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Beachside Weddings

Big Revenue Spinner…

Romantic, ethereal and scenic. That is Beachside wedding! A wedding by the seaside is the latest trend for wedding couples. The combination of bright white sands, turquoise oceans and spectacular sunsets is a perfect combination to etch memories that will leave memorable recollections not only for the couple but also reminiscences for the guests. These weddings also bring in large chunks of additional revenue for hotels located by the beachside. India has a vast number of beaches for the prospective wedding couples to conduct their ceremonies amidst picturesque landscape. Ashok Malkani views the beachside wedding scenario and the revenue it adds to the earnings of the beachside hotels.

India, with one of the world's longest coastlines, which stretch for 7517 km, both, on the eastern and western coast, has a multitude of incredibly scenic beaches offering everything, from solitude and sunbathing to parties, adventure and the latest trend of beach weddings. Beaches are one of the most desired places for destination wedding for young couples. Their dream of saying "I do" by the ocean is a dream for many of them. Beach venues are an ideal pick to add that extra colour to the ceremony. The idea of a beach wedding, for many, is pure bliss, with stunning views, soothing sound of ocean waves, and the salty sea air. At the beach side venue, a feeling of calm and relaxation permeates your entire wedding.

According to AI overview over 80% of Indians have had, or are planning, a destination wedding, with a strong interest among Gen Z. Beach weddings are a popular choice, with 26% of Indian couples envisioning a beach celebration as their dream destination wedding.

Mehul Sharma, Founder & CEO, Signum Hotels and Resorts, states, "Beach weddings are becoming increasingly popular in India, especially in coastal states like Goa, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. The serene natural beauty of the coastline provides a picturesque and romantic setting, making it an ideal backdrop for couples seeking a memorable wedding experience. As the trend of destination weddings grows, more couples are choosing unique and exotic locations that blend traditional elements with contemporary aesthetics. The calming sound of the waves, golden sands, and vibrant sunsets create a magical ambiance that is hard to replicate in conventional venues."

He adds, "Another reason for their rising popularity is the growing influence of global trends and the increasing accessibility of luxury resorts and planners in India's coastal regions. Many resorts now offer customized beach wedding packages, including decor, catering, and accommodation, simplifying the planning process for couples. Additionally, the pleasant weather during the winter months (November to February) makes beaches an attractive choice for outdoor celebrations. Combined with social media inspiration and a shift toward more intimate yet glamorous events, beach weddings have become a preferred choice for many modern Indian couples."

Varun Bharadwaja, Director of Sales & Marketing, The St. Regis Goa Resort, states, "Beach weddings have become increasingly popular in India, captivating couples with their serene, picturesque settings and the relaxed yet elegant vibe they offer. Coastal destinations like Goa provide stunning backdrops of golden sands, turquoise waters, and breathtaking sunsets, creating a naturally romantic atmosphere that sets the perfect stage for a memorable celebration. The charm of a beach wedding lies in its unique blend of intimacy and grandeur. Unlike traditional venue-based celebrations, a beachfront ceremony feels deeply personal, enhanced by the soothing sound of waves and the open sky's endless beauty. Many couples are drawn to this setting as a refreshing

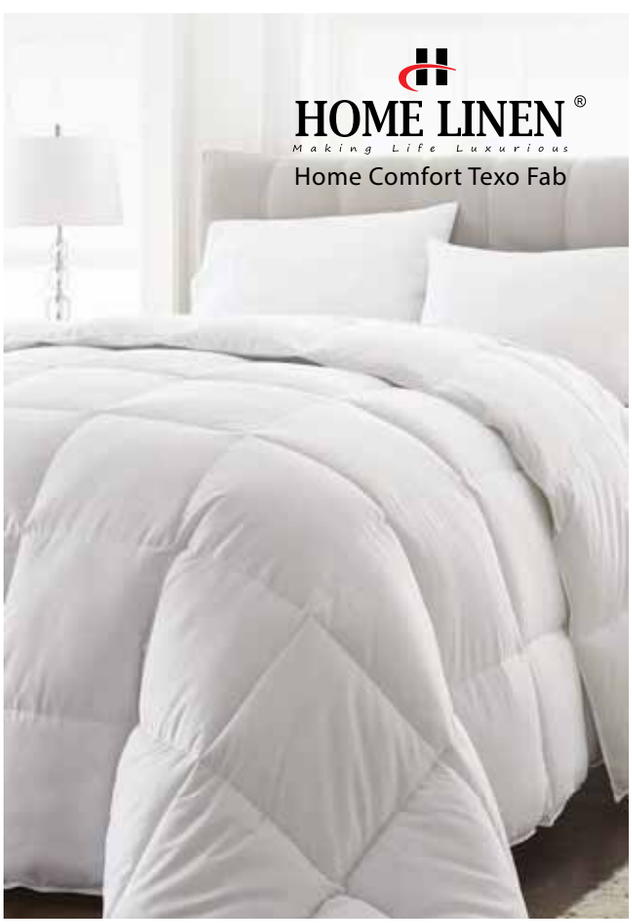
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departure from formalities, opting for a more laid-back yet profoundly meaningful experience."

He continues, "The trend of destination weddings has further fueled the popularity of beach weddings in India. Combining the wedding with a vacation-like getaway for guests, these events offer a perfect mix of celebration and leisure. Resorts in top beach destinations, like The St. Regis Goa Resort, specialize in catering to this demand with tailored packages that ensure a seamless and luxurious experience. Adding to the allure of beachside celebrations is the growing interest in vow renewal ceremonies. At The St. Regis Goa Resort, couples can relive the magic of their love story with a beautifully crafted vow renewal experience. Whether it's been one, five, fifteen, or fifty years since you first said "I do," our butler team ensures every detail is perfect, creating a cherished memory that celebrates your enduring bond."

He further adds, "Ultimately, beach weddings and vow renewals represent modern, romantic, and unconventional choices, resonating with couples seeking unique and heartfelt ways to honor their love stories amidst the beauty of India's coastline."

Beachside Hotels

The desire and conception of beach weddings has been a growing trend all across the globe and India, having a multitude of lovely beaches across the country, is seeing a rising inclination of young couples desiring to have marriage ceremonies in beach hotels and resorts. Some of the reasons for people being attracted to beachside weddings are:

Irreplaceable experience: The sun, sand and sea can create a rare and romantic atmosphere. Beach weddings offer a one-of-a-kind experience.

Flexibility: With open areas there is ample room for having ample floral decorations, have open air receptions, et al. Here the planners can arrange decorations and seating arrangements as per the number of guests.

Cultural significance and unforgettable memories: Weddings are culturally rooted.



Mehul Sharma

Local customs with flowing beauty create unforgettable memories. Kerala beach weddings are a thorough way of expressing the power of local customs in union with the flowing beauty and spirit that blesses every bride and groom. They result not only in unique experiences for the couple but also for the guests.

There is little doubt that the concept of having a wedding in venues attached to beachside is increasing.

With increasing number of people desirous of having a beachside wedding, the question arises about the percentage of people desirous of having their marriage ceremonies conducted in beachside hotels and the percentage of hotels located by the beachside.

Mehul discloses, "Beach weddings have become an increasingly sought-after choice for Indian couples, particularly those looking for a unique and memorable venue for their special day. Approximately 26% of couples envision a beach celebration, citing the appeal of serene natural settings, intimate atmospheres, and the aesthetic value of picturesque coastlines like Goa and the Maldives. Such weddings cater to modern trends emphasizing personal style and experiential celebrations while maintaining a connection to the grandeur often associated with Indian weddings."

He adds, "Professionally, hosting a beach wedding can be seen as an innovative way to merge traditional ceremonies with a contemporary twist. While they come with logistical challenges, including weather unpredictability and cost management, the long-term benefits–such as creating a distinctive experience for guests and building strong emotional memories–often outweigh these concerns. As the demand for destination weddings rises, industry professionals are adapting by offering specialized packages and support to help couples achieve their dream beach wedding seamlessly."

Speaking about the venues located by the beachside, he says, "There isn't much detailed information available about the percentage of hotels in India located near beaches. However, India boasts a diverse range of accommodations, including beach resorts in Goa, palace hotels in Rajasthan, guest houses in the Himalayas, and houseboats in Kerala. I may add that the hotel industry in India, in general, experiences an occupancy rate of 50–60%, indicating a healthy demand for hospitality services. The market is growing steadily, with a projected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.4% from 2024 to 2030, expected to reach nearly USD 59.44 billion by 2030. While domestic hotel brands dominate in terms of overall numbers, international chains have a significant share of premium rooms, reflecting India's growing appeal as a destination for diverse travelers."

He continues, "India's coastal cities are home to a significant number of beach properties, offering unique hospitality experiences. Goa is particularly well-known for its high concentration of beach resorts, making it a premier destination for travelers seeking seaside relaxation. Cities in Kerala, such as Kovalam and Bekal, are also prominent for luxury beach resorts that emphasize natural beauty and wellness. Pondicherry provides a unique blend of coastal charm and French colonial heritage, perfect for couples looking for something distinctive. Finally, Lakshadweep is emerging as a luxury wedding destination for those seeking an exclusive, off-the-beaten-path experience. Similarly, destinations in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, like Havelock Island and Port Blair, are renowned for their pristine beach resorts that cater to adventure and tranquility seekers alike."

It is generally believed that Goa and Kerala are the two main beach wedding destinations in India, with many properties ranging from average to 5-star. There are

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also options like Gokarna, Mahabalipuram, and Pondicherry.

Mehul mentions other cities like "Chennai, Pondicherry, and coastal areas of Maharashtra, including Alibaug. They feature a growing number of beach properties that blend leisure and cultural heritage. These cities are highly favoured due to their accessibility, picturesque beaches, and rich experiences tailored to both domestic and international travelers."

Varun states "While the exact percentage varies, a significant number of couples express a strong preference for beach weddings. The serene beauty of Goa's coastline, coupled with the luxurious ambiance of our resort, creates the perfect setting for an unforgettable celebration. Many of our couples are drawn to the allure of a beachside ceremony, where they can exchange vows with the sound of the waves as their backdrop, making their wedding day truly magical."

He adds, "At The St. Regis Goa Resort, we understand that every couple has unique preferences for their special day. While the exact percentage of wedding couples preferring beach weddings varies, a significant number of couples express a strong preference for beach weddings. The serene beauty of Goa's coastline, coupled with the luxurious ambiance of our resort, creates the perfect setting for an unforgettable celebration. Many of our couples are drawn to the allure of a beachside ceremony, where they can exchange vows with the sound of the waves as their backdrop, making their wedding day truly magical. Additionally, our resort is growing as a favoured destination for vow renewal ceremonies, offering couples a beautiful setting to celebrate their enduring love stories amidst the tranquil charm of the sea."

Revenue Escalation

Beach side weddings are revolutionising hospitality sector. According to Spectra Hospitality Services, one of the leading hotel consultants, over the past two decades, India has seen a significant growth in the size of wedding business due to increasing disposable income and a demand for lavish celebration.

With rising costs more couples are preferring to avoid overseas wedding ceremonies and choosing Indian destinations. One of the preferred sites being the beachside. Even globally Indias is becoming a favoured wedding destination. The Ministry of Tourism's wedding tourism campaign positions India as a top global wedding destination, moving beyond the "royal" wedding image to themes like Beach. The wedding sector is valued at Rs. 10.7 lakh crore.

India is expected to have around 40 crore weddings over the next 15 years. With 600 million people yet to marry, and 11 to 13 million weddings celebrated annually, the scale of this market is immense. And with growing aspirations of youngsters to have a beachside wedding the scope for hotels located by the beaches in India there is likely to be an immense boost in their revenue.

The hotels can aid in making the beachside wedding memorable by offering a variety of services and amenities like:

Venue options

Tailor-made choice of accommodation

Exclusive décor

Personalised wedding menus

Hotels also help in providing cultural entertainment.

Varun disclosed, "At The St. Regis Goa Resort, beach weddings play a pivotal role in driving both success and revenue, contributing to our reputation as a premier destination for luxurious and unforgettable celebrations. The stunning beachfront setting, coupled with our world-class service, makes us a preferred choice for couples seeking a picture-perfect backdrop for their special day. Beach weddings at our resort attract high-end clientele willing to invest in a curated experience, from elegant décor and gourmet dining to luxurious accommodations for both the couple and their guests. The unique allure of our beachfront location also enhances our venue's appeal, making it a sought-after destination for weddings and events."

He adds, "Revenue opportunities extend well beyond the wedding itself, with pre-wedding celebrations, post-wedding stays, and additional bookings from guests turning their visit into a mini-vacation. The sharing of these magical moments on social media also acts as organic marketing, bringing increased visibility to our resort. By offering exceptional destination wedding services, The St. Regis Goa Resort not only enhances its brand presence but also fosters long-

term relationships, with couples returning for anniversaries, family vacations, and future milestones. This creates a cycle of repeat business and referrals, ensuring sustained engagement and profitability."

Mehul affirms, "Beach weddings contribute significantly to the success and revenue of properties located along coastal areas. First, these weddings attract a niche clientele willing to pay premium rates for the unique experience of hosting a destination wedding. Properties often offer customized packages that include not just venue rental but also services like catering, decor, event planning, and guest accommodation. This bundled approach maximizes revenue per booking and enhances profitability.

"Second, hosting beach weddings elevates the property's brand value and visibility. Such events are often highly photographed and shared on social media, providing organic marketing for the property. Furthermore, these weddings often result in extended stays, as guests may arrive early or stay longer to enjoy the destination, boosting ancillary revenue streams like dining, spa treatments, and recreational activities. Additionally, they help generate repeat business, as satisfied clients might return for anniversaries or recommend the property to others for similar celebrations. This combination of direct revenue and long-term brand benefits makes beach weddings a lucrative venture for coastal properties."

He adds, "At a beach property, wedding couples enjoy a range of exclusive facilities and conveniences designed to make their special day seamless and memorable. These include picturesque outdoor venues like private beaches, oceanfront gardens, and scenic terraces that provide stunning backdrops for ceremonies and photographs. Many properties offer all-inclusive wedding packages that cover venue rental, catering, décor, entertainment, and even photography and videography services. Couples also have access to luxury amenities such as spa treatments, personalized room décor, and honeymoon suites with ocean views. To enhance the overall experience, resorts often provide professional wedding planners who assist with customizations, ensuring the event aligns with the couple's vision.

"In addition, some properties provide added services like pre-wedding rituals, private rehearsals, transportation arrangements for guests, and even wellness packages for relaxation before the big day. These services are designed to minimize stress and allow the couple to focus on enjoying their celebration. Special touches such as private candlelit dinners, fireworks, or live music further elevate the experience. Resorts also offer options for extended stays, where couples and their guests can enjoy luxurious accommodations and explore the destination before or after the wedding."

As far as the revenue earned from these exclusive weddings is concerned, Mehul states, "Beach properties in India, particularly in popular wedding destinations like Goa, Kerala, and Rajasthan, generate substantial revenue through destination



weddings. Beach resorts earn significant income from wedding bookings, catering, décor, and additional services, often offering exclusive, personalized wedding experiences. These properties cater to high-end clientele seeking scenic beach locations for their nuptials, with many venues charging a premium for their picturesque settings and luxury offerings, which significantly boosts the property's overall revenue."

Varun adds, "At a beach property, the wedding couple enjoys a host of conveniences designed to make their special day seamless and memorable. The most obvious attraction is the stunning location itself, where the sound of the waves and the sunset provide an idyllic backdrop. Many properties offer private beach access, which allows for intimate ceremonies right by the water, enhancing the romantic and serene atmosphere."

He adds, "Besides the setting, the couple benefits from a range of tailored services, from a dedicated wedding planner who handles every detail, to curated catering options that reflect the couple's preferences. The venues often come equipped with state-of-the-art sound and lighting systems, and an in-house team that can arrange everything from floral decorations to customized seating arrangements. For added luxury and convenience, many beach properties also provide pre- and post-wedding services such as spa treatments, private dinners, and even excursions for guests, making the entire experience feel like a destination getaway. Exclusive packages might include suites for the couple to stay in, often with spectacular ocean views, and VIP services like personal butlers or drivers to ensure the couple's comfort throughout their stay."

He avers, "At The St. Regis Goa Resort, we take the wedding experience a step further. Our dedicated team works closely with couples to bring their dream wedding to life, from personalized catering options to exquisite decorations tailored to their preferences. Moreover, we provide exclusive experiences like private yacht rides for pre-wedding parties and sunset cocktail hours, as well as photographers to capture every



Varun Bharadwaja

precious moment. At The St. Regis Goa Resort, we go above and beyond to ensure that every detail is taken care of, offering the couple a stress-free, magical celebration in one of the most beautiful locations in India. Whether it's arranging a themed wedding or an intimate sunset ceremony, we are committed to making their wedding day a timeless, unforgettable experience."

Preference for Beach Weddings

India, with its over 7500 km coastline and an array of lovely beaches is also proving to be attracting overseas couples to have a beachside wedding in the picturesque beach locales of the country. Some of the most popular destinations like Goa, Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Kerala, Rishikesh, Bikaner, Agra, et al, even attract overseas couples to have their wedding ceremonies by beachside in India.

Varun discloses, "Overseas wedding couples are increasingly choosing beach weddings in India, attracted by the country's diverse coastal destinations, luxury properties, and rich cultural heritage. India's beaches offer a range of idyllic settings that combine natural beauty with world-class hospitality, making it a preferred choice for destination weddings. From Goa's pristine coastline to the serene beaches of Kerala and the Andaman Islands, India's beaches offer something for every couple, whether they seek a vibrant celebration or a quiet, intimate ceremony by the sea.

"Couples from around the world are drawn to India for its unique blend of romance, opulence, and cultural richness. Beach weddings in India provide not only stunning backdrops but also a level of personalization and luxury that makes these events feel truly special. The warm weather, diverse wedding traditions, and the ability to combine a beach wedding with a luxurious vacation experience are additional factors that make India an attractive choice. Many overseas couples also enjoy the cost advantage compared to other popular beach destinations, while still receiving high-quality services and experiences."

He adds, "At hotels like The St. Regis Goa Resort, these weddings contribute significantly to both the property's revenue and the broader Indian economy. The revenue generated from these weddings extends beyond the ceremony itself, encompassing pre- and post-wedding events, guest accommodations, and luxury services. Destination weddings also bring in a steady stream of international tourists, with couples and their guests often booking extended stays, indulging in spa treatments, private dining experiences, and curated excursions, further boosting local businesses and tourism."

Mehul affirms, "Overseas wedding couples prefer beach weddings in India, and this trend is growing. Goa, Kerala, and coastal destinations like Mahabalipuram and Andaman & Nicobar Islands have become popular for international couples looking for exotic and picturesque settings for their weddings. India's cultural richness, diverse wedding venues, and favorable exchange rates make it a compelling destination for couples from countries like the US, UK, and Australia. The Indian destination wedding market is expected to grow significantly, with luxury weddings contributing to both the hotel industry and the broader economy."

He adds, "The growing number of overseas couples opting for beach weddings in India contributes substantially to the hospitality sector, with individual weddings often generating revenue in the range of several crores. This influx of international weddings helps drive economic growth through spending on venues, services, accommodations, and related tourism.

Additionally, the increased interest in India as a wedding destination is supported by government initiatives to promote domestic tourism, potentially contributing further to the nation's economy."

The Future

Beach weddings have become popular. But is this source of revenue for hotels located by the beachside going to continue in the future?

Mehul is optimistic. He avers, "The future of revenue from beach weddings for hotels and resorts along India's coastline looks promising, driven by a combination of growing demand for destination weddings, increasing disposable incomes, and India's appeal as a romantic and exotic location. As the wedding industry continues to evolve, beachside weddings are becoming increasingly popular, not only among domestic couples but also with international clients. India's diverse coastline offers a wide range of unique settings, from serene beaches in Kerala to vibrant coastal areas in Goa, which appeal to those seeking picturesque, unforgettable wedding experiences.

He adds, "The rising trend of experiential luxury and the desire for personalized, destination-style weddings ensures that the popularity of beachside weddings will likely continue. Hotels and resorts are evolving their offerings, including comprehensive wedding packages, specialized services, and creating unique, customized experiences that resonate with modern couples. This growth is further fueled by social media, where real-life weddings shared online continue to influence couples' decisions. As the sector develops, more international brands may enter the market, and regional destinations may see higher wedding tourism demand, contributing substantially to hotel revenues. Additionally, with rising foreign interest, the revenue from overseas weddings will likely continue to be an important economic driver for the hospitality and tourism sectors."

Varun affirms, "The future of beachside weddings as a revenue source for hotels located by the beach is incredibly promising. As more couples seek unique and unforgettable wedding experiences, the demand for beach weddings continues to rise. The natural allure of beach destinations–coupled with the growing trend of destination weddings–makes these venues increasingly popular for couples looking to celebrate their special day in an exotic, picturesque setting. Hotels located by the beach, like The St. Regis Goa Resort, are well-positioned to capitalize on this trend, offering not only stunning venues but also luxury services that cater to the specific needs of wedding parties and their guests."

Conclusion

The popularity of beachside weddings has become a vogue. And it is likely to continue in the future, adding to the revenue of the hospitality industry's properties located by the beachside across the country. ■





Hotel Lobbies

Come of Age – Functionality Meets Design

By Sharmila Chand

Hotel lobbies are more than just a place to check in or check out. These constitute a warm, comfortable space that fulfils several functions. They are perfect spaces for 'on-the-go' professional looking for a space to plug in, a family that needs a space to sit down and relax, visitor to have coffee while waiting to meet an in-house guest or a solo traveller simply loving his or her corner with a cup of coffee. Hence, hotels' lobby is beyond simply an aesthetically pleasing design, in fact, it is a multi-purpose vibrant space to serve both functions - social activation and revenue generation with a seamless flow.

By creating lively spaces that encompass functionality and thoughtful design, hotel lobbies are adapting to the modern-day needs of their guests, say hospitality professionals. Here they share their thoughts on how the modern lobby design creates a warm and inviting atmosphere through its comfortable flexible seating, multiple electrical points to plug in for free wi-fi, grab a bite, network or relax. Not to forget, efforts taken to create soothing, impressive environment with a special focus on Design and Architectural elements.

Souvik Bhattacharya, General Manager Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

Stepping into the lobby of the Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa in Goa is akin to entering the living room of a grand Goan home. The lobby exudes a warm and inviting atmosphere, where guests gather much like families do to share their experiences and plan their adventures.

This space is more than just a waiting area; it is a vibrant hub of activity. Guests interact with the service associates to plan their dining and excursions, while children are often seen engrossed in their drawing or colouring books. The hustle and bustle of the lobby, combined with the excitement of planning holidays, create a lively environment. For those seeking tranquillity, the internal courtyard offers a serene retreat, allowing guests to relax and "watch the world go by.



"Arriving at the lobby of Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi is such a refreshing experience for me. It truly feels like a dynamic hub where modern comforts meet Pune's rich cultural heritage. A refreshing aroma enhances the ambiance, making the lobby more than just a transitional space—it's a thoughtfully designed haven that offers comfort, inspiration, and a deep connection to local heritage"

Pankaj Saxena, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

Pankaj Saxena, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

Arriving at the lobby of Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi is always a refreshing experience for me, whether it is in the morning or passing through during the day. The ambiance instantly uplifts my mood with its vibrant yet soothing atmosphere.

The blend of contemporary design and Puneri architectural elements, such as framed Paithani sarees and local artwork, always catches my eye and sparks my curiosity. Natural light floods through large windows, and lush greenery creates a sense of openness and tranquillity. The low seating sofas and modern upholstery add to the comfort, while a refreshing aroma enhances the inviting space.

It truly feels like a dynamic hub where modern comforts meet Pune's rich cultural heritage.

Abhimanyu Lodha, General Manager, The Lodhi New Delhi

At The Lodhi, our hotel lobby seamlessly blends rich historical elements with modern luxury to engage guests on multiple levels. Upon entering, guests are greeted by an architectural marvel that echoes the monumental yet serene ambiance of the surrounding historical landmarks.

Designed by Kerry Hill, our lobby is inspired by the Indo-Saracenic tradition, featuring rough sandstone colonnades reminiscent of Mughal arcades. These elements create a majestic yet inviting atmosphere that immediately transports guests away from the

bustle of Delhi into a peaceful retreat.

A Vibrant Hub to Work & Meet

Pankaj Saxena, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

The lobby at Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi transcends its traditional role, evolving into a vibrant hub that engages guests and fosters a sense of community. Designed to be more than just a passageway, it invites guests to unwind over coffee in a cozy ambiance, encouraging spontaneous conversations. Comfortable seating, laptop-friendly tables, and ample plug points ensure seamless transitions from work to relaxation, catering perfectly to the modern traveller.

Architecturally, the lobby is a stunning fusion of modern elegance and local charm. Expansive glass panels flood the space with natural light, highlighting curated artwork, local artifacts, and lush greenery. This thoughtful design not only conserves energy but also immerses guests in Pune's rich cultural tapestry, offering a picturesque setting that is both inviting and inspiring.

"The combination of thoughtful design, engaging activities, and serene spaces makes the lobby of Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa, a perfect blend of tradition and modernity. It stands as a testament to the resort's commitment to providing an unforgettable guest experience. Whether guests are planning their next adventure or simply unwinding, the lobby offers a welcoming haven that captures the heart of Goa's rich heritage"

Souvik Bhattacharya, General Manager, Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

For business travelers, the lobby provides an ideal blend of functionality and style. High-speed internet, numerous charging stations, and versatile zones support informal meetings and productive work sessions. Quick bites from the coffee shop and convenient takeaway meals cater to busy schedules, ensuring guests remain well-fed and connected in an environment that seamlessly integrates comfort, productivity, and community.

Abhimanyu Lodha, General Manager, The Lodhi New Delhi

The lobby at The Lodhi hotel is more than just a place to check-in as it allows guests to explore India's rich cultural tapestry. It features curated art displays that celebrate both contemporary and traditional Indian art forms. Guests can engage with these exhibits, offering a deeper understanding of the region's artistic heritage without leaving the comfort of the hotel.

This space also acts as a prelude to the various in-house experiences available, such as art viewings, cooking classes, and guided tours that take guests into the heart of Delhi's cultural and historical landscape. The ambient music, inspired by traditional Indian instruments, further enhances the sense of tranquillity and cultural immersion.



Distinctive Design and Décor

Souvik Bhattacharya, General Manager Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

The design of the lobby at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa is a tribute to Goa's rich cultural tapestry. The Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa, has been a landmark in Goan tourism since its opening in 1981. Spread over 28 acres, the resort is designed to resemble a typical Goan village, with the lobby being one of its most distinctive features. The lobby's design as the living area of a large Goan home creates a cozy and unique setting. It embodies the spirit of Goan culture, offering a space where guests can feel at home while experiencing the luxurious hospitality that Taj is renowned for.

Architect Ashok Kulkarni and subsequently Architect Dean D'Cruz, along with the in-house project team, crafted a space that blends traditional Goan elements with modern elegance. The design draws inspiration from Goa's vibrant past, where local musicians strummed their guitars in village squares and aristocrats enjoyed their tea in richly decorated drawing rooms.

The lobby's palette is inspired by the region's natural biodiversity, featuring hues of teal from the kingfisher and yellow from the throated bulbul, alongside the lush greens of banana palms and the striking bird of paradise. Patterned floors, wooden and rattan furniture, and decorative wall plates evoke the charm of a traditional Goan home. Stucco elements add a touch of sophistication to the facade, while the courtyard, designed like a quaint village square, enhances the overall aesthetic.

Architect Ashok Kulkarni, the visionary behind the original design at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa, shares his thoughts on the concept: "The goal was to create a space that feels both grand and intimate, reflecting the essence of Goan hospitality. By incorporating elements from nature and traditional Goan architecture, we aimed to craft a lobby that is not just a place to pass through, but a destination in itself. The choice of materials, colours, and design elements was meticulously planned to evoke a sense of nostalgia and comfort, reminiscent of a bygone era. Each element, from the patterned floors to the decorative wall plates, was selected to tell a story of Goa's rich heritage.



"At The Lodhi, we recognize the value of solitude and have created a lobby that serves as a tranquil sanctuary amidst the chaos of urban life. The elements not only contribute to a visually stunning space but also foster a peaceful ambiance that allows guests to unwind and find solace. This space encourages reflection, allowing guests to recharge and rejuvenate in a setting that feels both luxurious and profoundly personal"

Abhimanyu Lodha, General Manager, The Lodhi New Delhi

The lobby serves as a microcosm of the region's beauty, offering guests a unique and immersive experience from the moment they step in."

Pankaj Saxena, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Pune Kharadi

The lobby seamlessly blends contemporary flair with timeless elegance, characterized by clean lines and muted tones punctuated by vibrant accents. Comfortable low seating sofas and modern, aesthetically designed upholstery invite relaxation. The space exudes sophistication, resonating with modern sensibilities while integrating natural light and greenery. Expansive windows flood the area with daylight, and indoor plants add a refreshing touch, harmoniously connecting the indoors with nature.

A distinctive touch of Puneri architecture is subtly framed by Paithani sarees and references to Maharashtra's rich cultural heritage, serving as engaging conversation starters. Local artworks by talented artists enrich the lobby, reinforcing the hotel's commitment to celebrating Pune's vibrant cultural identity. A refreshing aroma enhances the ambiance, making the lobby more than just a transitional space–it's a thoughtfully designed haven that offers comfort, inspiration, and a deep connection to local heritage."

Abhimanyu Lodha, General Manager, The Lodhi New Delhi

At The Lodhi, our hotel lobby is a distinguished space that sets the tone for a unique and luxurious guest experience. Here are the key design and decor elements that make our lobby stand out:

Indo-Saracenic Architectural Inspiration - Drawing from South Asia's Indo-Saracenic architectural tradition, our lobby features rough sandstone colonnades that echo the grandeur of Mughal arcades, creating a sense of historical depth and elegance

The intricate nets or filigree screens - wrap the lobby in a delicate pattern, casting beautiful shadows that shift with the natural light throughout the day. This creates a dynamic and visually captivating environment, offering glimpses of the outside world and adding an element of mystery and intrigue

High ceilings and scattered atria - contribute to a sense of grandeur and spaciousness, providing an open and airy atmosphere that enhances the feeling of tranquillity and retreat.

The lobby is punctuated by serene courtyards and reflective water features – These divide the space, offering peaceful retreats and a sense of calm amid the urban setting. These elements create a harmonious blend of nature and architecture.

The lobby features curated art displays – which highlight both contemporary and traditional Indian art, providing a cultural touchpoint and engaging guests with the region's artistic heritage.

The lobby is adorned with cultural artefacts – they reflect the local history and traditions, such as intricately carved wooden screens, traditional Indian pottery, and hand-woven rugs, adding layers of texture and cultural narrative to the space.

Each of these elements contributes to a lobby that is not just a functional entry point, but a distinguished space that embodies the luxurious and culturally immersive experience that The Lodhi offers. ■

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Designing Wellness

Spa and wellness culture is mushrooming in the country. Over the last decade, the concept of spa has graduated from being a fashion to a passion for the upwardly mobile and the elite classes of India, and as is prevalent with most trends, this trend too is percolating to the middle class segment of our society, though slowly, but albeit surely.

To cater to this growing demand, now there are medical spas, destination spas, spa resorts, salon spas, spas in five-star hotels, destination day spas, day spas, and also obscure massage parlours doubling up as spas. How many of these mushrooming spas are offering authentic treatments is a question that has eluded easy answers, but the fact remains that the periodic visit to spas are on the process of being evolving from a luxury to a necessary lifestyle choice for the well-heeled Indians. Today spa is an integral part of the hospitality industry of India, with most premium hotels boasting of a luxurious spa within its premises, to cater to its discerning clientele.

Wellness business in India is growing impressively and it will continue to grow at a fast pace. The growth of India's spa industry can be attributed to the significant increase in disposable incomes in select but sizeable pockets of urban India during the last two decades, tension filled hectic lifestyles of many sections of people of post-modern urban India, and also due to the growing health and wellness consciousness in niches of Indian society.

Now, with the impressive growth and maturation of the wellness business in the country, the demand for innovative spa designs can also be expected to emerge as a trend, whose effects can of course, influence India's evolving hospitality industry, as nowadays a lot many hotels and resorts in the country house spas in them.

To design & develop a good spa it is important to understand the role of appropriate lighting; the trends pervading through spa designing in India's spa industry; to know the elements which should be incorporated while designing a

spa; to get an idea of the futuristic spa design trends in the context of India's spa industry; the relevance of eco-friendly spas among other issues.

Happening Trends

Various happening trends are pervading through India's wellness industry. In a rapidly growing wellness industry, India has witnessed many spa designs that are structurally beautiful, with fusing of some amazing design principles of east and the west.

Spa facilities close to nature is a trend pervading through India's wellness industry. Bringing the 'outdoors in' to keep guests close to nature is a spa design trend in the country. Similarly, wellness meets fitness is also a spa design trend. There is a lot of focus on creative options to stay fit within spa resorts such as meditative walking pathways, Pilates studios, meditative zones etc.



A general trend in spa design is minimalism. Clean neat lines with eye pleasing colour scheme are generally preferred by both spa owners and clients. Spas in India are moving toward thematic interiors, where spa is designed around a particular theme, and elements related to the theme are used in the interiors. For instance, in a spa that specialises in marine treatments and follows a water theme, a water body should be installed within the spa and aqua colours like blue and green should be predominantly used.



Spa Design Elements

All hotels that plan to have a spa facility should in great detail integrate wellness with their other operations. This can enable guests to truly experience and feel the hospitality of the hotel as regards to their overall well-being. This wellness integration should extend outside a spa and should be a part of guestrooms, public spaces and especially the reception areas. This could facilitate the spa to draw more guests into it, instead of it seeming to be just a random inclusion in the hotel's plan.

The ambience and the design of the spa should immediately put the client at ease and provide him/her comfort. A spa room should have attached balconies and sit-out gardens. Spas or wellness centers should act as wellness retreats. Care should be taken to have a common thread running through all aspects of the spa. This can be easily achieved by effective interior design.

The right furniture and appropriate colour schemes can also enhance the design aesthetics of the spa. First and foremost, furniture has to be comfortable. It is advisable for spa designers to not go overboard with heavy furniture. Massage beds with controlled temperature are expected to be welcomed by the guests. As for the colour schemes in the spa



décor, one should recommend soft palette of colours.

Flow of space and availability of amenities in the wet zone is very crucial part of spa design. All wet areas should be clubbed in one zone; away from therapy rooms, so that total silence is maintained near therapy rooms. Spas should also ideally have an area to unwind after the session, where soft music can play.

Of course, the specifics of spa designs should vary from luxury hotels and resorts to budget hotels and resorts. In high-end spas, luxury has to emanate from the interiors and not just the treatments. That is why the design of a luxury spa should focus on spaciousness, privacy, soothing ambience, uncluttered space and intelligent use of light. In an average spa, the focus should be more on increasing the number of walk-ins, hence there the interiors should be attractive and sturdy, and the décor should be pleasing and functional.

In a luxury hospitality property, materials for walls, floors and ceilings in spas should be wisely chosen to exude luxury. Art work like paintings and sculptures should be used to reinforce the spa's theme, if any. If space is a constraint for spas in budget hospitality properties, collapsible walls and multi-functional spaces should be created.

Spas in luxury hospitality properties should be ideally designed in such a way that they face sights of great natural beauty wherever feasible, like sea, mountains, etc. They also can have an outdoor or indoor heated jaccuzi, facing natural beauty. Spa sessions under the moonlight in the open, amidst jasmine, frangipani or other fragrant shrubs, of course in the conducive weather, can also be an option for a highend spa facility within a high-end hospitality property.

Spa designs in average budget hotels and resorts should focus on contemporary décor, and minimalism. Moreover, spa's design should complement the service menu. The spa's design should fall in line with the services offered. For instance, you shouldn't conduct an Ayurvedic massage in a room designed with a Persian theme.

Lighting the Spa

The role of lighting and colours in spa design cannot be overstated. In fact, lighting can be construed as one of the most fundamental and crucial aspect of spa designing. Lighting and colours are extremely important to create the right spa environment. In a single spa there are different types of lighting needed to create a perfect balance of aesthetics and functionality. Ambient light is appropriate for giving the overall soothing mood of the spa environment. In the therapy rooms task lighting is also needed to help staff



clean and also see minute details while doing some jobs, such as while doing skin analysis.

Lighting is one of the most important elements of a spa's design. First and foremost, it is a functional element, so it has to be ensured that the lights are being used optimally. Secondly, lights also act as mood enhancers. Dimmers should be used inside a treatment room to create the desired atmosphere. Effective lighting should be provided around mirrors and in the dressing room. Thirdly, lights can also double as décor accessories in the form of lamp shades, pendant lighting fixtures and chandeliers

In any spa, irrespective of its positioning, light should play a very important part. Harsh light is not required in spas. Warm yellow mellow light, preferably on dimmers or in a cove is always recommended. Soft light always helps to keep the mood calm which is the essence of going to a spa.

Chandeliers and other decorative lighting options in spas are also great to uplift the spirit of the guests and beautify the reception area. Finally, in areas such as the relaxation area, natural lighting should be allowed to fill the space to create a feel of the outdoors. Hence, a detailed lighting plan has to be in place to compliment the spa design.

Indian Context

While speaking specially in the context of India, in a culturally diverse country like India, a spa facility should ideally reflect our societal, regional and cultural ethos. It should at the same time aspire to carve a niche for itself in the global wellness scenario.

India's hospitality industry caters to both Indian and international clientele. Thus the spas within the hospitality properties of the country should ideally convey both Indian and international flavours through their design elements. For example, in a country like India, weddings are huge business and so maybe wedding theme can be used as a central element in spa design. In India, male and female relaxation areas should be demarcated. There should be the amalgamation of royal Indian touch and professional international experience, not only in the services but also in the décor

Spas should help the clients to connect with nature. So, introduce an element of nature inside the spa, be it a water body, greenery or open air spaces. Moreover, the spa's design should tell a story and convey the culture of the spa to the client. A private consultation area should be part of the spa design in today's times. Physiotherapy and yoga rooms should be part of the spa. Prana healing centre and meditation pavilion could be add-on features to the spa.

As far as specifically spas in hospitality properties go, besides incorporation of these features another factor should be kept in mind. There the spa's theme should match with the hotel's decor but at the same time it should also be disconnected from the room/suite design. ■

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"Embrace Your True Self and Infuse Your Passion into Everything You Do"

Anuj Chaudhry, Cluster General Manager, Grand Mercure Bangalore, Grand Mercure Mysore & Ibis Styles Mysore



Anuj Chaudhry, the Cluster General Manager for Grand Mercure Bangalore, Grand Mercure Mysore, and Ibis Styles Mysore, brings over 21 years of rich experience in the hospitality industry, with an impressive 18 years dedicated to Accor. He has established himself as a seasoned leader through his expertise in room division management, revenue optimization, and team leadership.

Anuj's journey began at St. James School, Kolkata, where his people-first approach and strong value system were shaped. His passion for hospitality blossomed during his studies at The Institute of Hotel Management, Aurangabad—one of India's premier hospitality institutions. He further refined his global perspective by earning a BA in Hotel Management from the University of Huddersfield, UK.

In his current role Anuj continues to demonstrate his commitment to delivering exceptional guest experiences while fostering an enthusiastic, motivated team. His leadership is driven by a focus on innovation, sustainability, and creating memorable moments for guests. He is also Accor India's Country champion for RiiSE, Accor International's network in support of gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity.

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

How has your journey been in the hospitality industry?

My journey in the hospitality industry has been like a rollercoaster ride–full of twists, turns, and a lot of laughter! From meeting amazing people to crafting memorable experiences, it's all about making guests and team members smile whilst enjoying the adventure along the way!

What is the USP of your property?

Grand Mercure Bangalore is renowned for its distinctive extended-stay concept, epitomizes the perfect fusion of convenience and tranquility. Situated in the heart of the vibrant social hub Koramangala, this remarkable hotel, an Accor property, offers a respite from the clamour of the outside world.

What is the marketing strategy you have adopted to promote your property?

We focus on a mix of digital and local engagement strategies. We leverage social media to showcase our unique offerings. Additionally, we run targeted promotions and loyalty programs to encourage repeat visits.

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

One of the most crucial issues in the hospitality industry today is the workforce shortage. As the industry rebounds from recent challenges, hotels and restaurants are struggling to attract and retain skilled staff. The demand for employees is rising, but there are significant gaps in the workforce, which affects service quality and operational efficiency.

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

I enjoy the opportunity to cultivate a positive employee experience, which directly enhances the guest experience. By fostering a supportive and engaging work environment, our team members feel motivated and empowered to deliver exceptional service. When employees are happy and invested in their roles, it reflects in their interactions with guests, creating memorable experiences that keep them coming back.

What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

The most rewarding moment in my career was being recognized as the Best General Manager by Accor Hotels India Awards in my very first year as a General Manager, followed by the recognition as the Best GM by HOSI 2020 right after the Covid pandemic.

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

Have fun at work! Embrace your true self and infuse your passion into everything you do.

Advise you would like to give to youngsters aspiring to excel in Hospitality?

As Accor's values outline, my suggestion for youngsters aspiring to excel in hospitality is to embrace Guest Passion as your driving force, ensuring every guest interaction is meaningful and unforgettable. Additionally, prioritize Sustainable Performance by balancing profitability with responsibility, considering the long-term impact of your actions on the industry. Stay open to Innovation, welcoming new ideas and technologies that will keep you ahead of the curve. Adopt the Spirit of Conquest–be ambitious, embrace challenges, and commit to continuous learning and growth. By embodying these values, you will lay a solid foundation for a rewarding career in hospitality.

How would you like to define yourself?

I am someone who tries to inspire and uplift people around me. For me leading with transparency in my communication is imperative to have my team build their trust in me and be accountable for their own excellence. With a heart full of kindness and love for both guests and team, I endeavour to foster a warm, supportive environment. And just when the moment calls for it, I lighten the room with my classic dash of humour, proving that leadership can be both strong and fun.

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