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fhrai magazine

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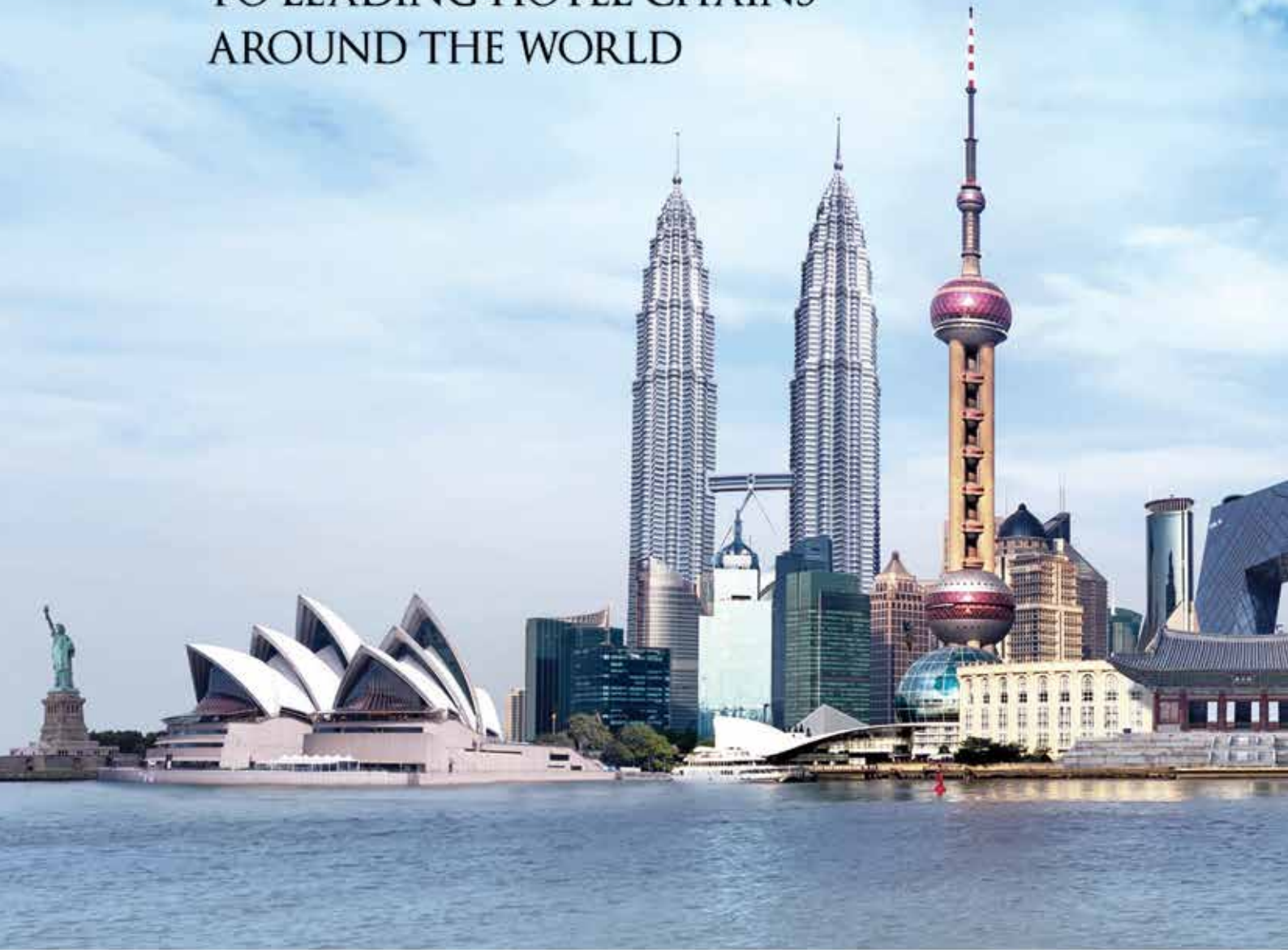
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EC MEMBERS

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FAST ADAPTABILITY TO FIGHT SLOW ECONOMY

In the first six months of 2019 there have been visible signs of a slowdown in the Indian economy. EC members share what hoteliers can do to rise above the ongoing slowdown.

Cover Image

Grand Mercure Mysore
Courtesy: Accor Hotels



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Rahul Lall
Secretary General
FHRAI

“Schemes like UDAN and reduction in the GST have further augmented the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry”

Dear fellow members,

Hon'ble Vice President of India, Shri. **Venkaiah Naidu** presented the National Tourism Awards, under various categories, on the occasion of the National Tourism Day. While addressing the awardees, Shri. Naidu ji reiterated the suggestion made by the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri. **Narendra Modi** that the people, especially youth, should visit 15 tourist destinations in India by 2022. Speaking on the occasion, Shri. **Prahlad Singh Patel**, Hon'ble Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (IC) congratulated the awardees and shared the importance of 'Atithi Devo Bhava'.

After the successful completion of the second edition of the India Travel Mart (ITM) in September 2019, the Indian tourism industry started gearing up for the World Tourism Mart (WTM) 2019, London. The three-day event from November 4-6, 2019, where the Ministry of Tourism participated, was attended by the dignitaries and representatives of the state governments, union territories, hotels, tour operators, etc.

The theme of the India pavilion was 'Incredible India – Find the Incredible India' and it attracted scores of visitors. The most important and attractive promotional feature was the prominent display of the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi and the Statue of Unity. Various luminaries of India and the world marked their presence at the pavilion. We would like to congratulate and thank the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for extending their support to the Indian business fraternity by participating in the WTM 2019.

On one hand, the Indian industry is discussing an economic slowdown across the country,

and various sectors have been facing the heat of global economic crisis. However, on the other hand, the Indian tourism industry is witnessing a paradigm shift, based on the various positive initiatives taken by the Government of India. For instance, e-Visa, which has favoured the hospitality industry in a big way. In the last six-month period from January- July 2019, a total of 15,34,293 tourists arrived on e-Tourist Visa as compared to 12,68,077 during January-July 2018. Schemes like UDAN and reduction in the GST has further augmented the growth of the tourism and hospitality industry. We firmly believe that the tourism industry will leverage the opportunity and grow manifold in the coming years.

I would like to conclude by addressing the key issue of an increase in pollution levels and deteriorating air quality which is being endured by the residents, and tourists, travelling to New Delhi from different parts of India and the globe. Based on the discussion with some of our members, we have learned that tourists have either rescheduled their flights or shortened their stay in the capital city of India.

It's indeed a big loss to not only the hospitality industry but to the overall economy of the country. Now that the government and as well as the individuals have taken measures to curb the pollution, and sensitised people about the matter at the grass-root level, we hope that things would get better soon.

With kind regards,

Rahul Lall
Secretary General, FHRAI

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FHRAI LOGS OUT, IN SOLIDARITY WITH NRAI

Main industry bodies come together to protest against deep discounting and other predatory policies employed by the Food Service Aggregators (FSA's). The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI), the apex body of the Hotel Industry in India, comprising of HRANI, HRAWI, SIHRA & HRAEI, has extended its whole-hearted support to the #Logout movement initiated by the National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) in August, 2019.

Along with FHRAI, several other associations such as AHAR, Thane Hotel Association, Pune Restaurants & Hotel Association (PRAHA), NHRA, Vadodara Food Entrepreneurs (VFE) have also unitedly joined the #Logout movement.

NRAI and FHRAI are two national representative bodies of the Industry and their coming together as a group is a very significant development meant to send out a strong message to the FSAs about their highly detrimental and predatory trade practices. Several city-based and affiliated bodies joining the campaign strongly indicate that the pain is being felt across the entire industry and everyone is aligned together in this movement.

"The group recognises the need for a peaceful co-existence of the hotel and restaurant industry with e-commerce aggregators, but is also very clear that the terms of engagement between the two sides have to be equal at all times, that no one can usurp the role of the other, and aggregators cannot dominate the Industry or conduct its business in a manner that is detrimental or negatively impacts the Industry's growth or profits," said **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**,

President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of India (HRAWI) & Vice President, FHRAI.

"The group is further clear that these aggregators, who are heavily funded by Private Equity Funds, have to recognise that their role is that of a 'market-place and/or a service-provider', akin to a travel agency or a discovery platform like Yellow Page of yore. Their role is to merely aggregate services of the Industry; they 'DO NOT' represent the hotel and food service industry. Therefore, they cannot decide or dictate commercial terms to and on behalf of the industry," added Kohli.

The united Associations have identified the following core complaints and grievances, against Zomato and others aggregators as: Deep discounting; lopsided/oppressive contracts with arbitrary rule changes; high commissions, high penalties and unilateral changes to them; delayed payments and unreasonable penalties; unreasonable additional charges; unethical practices such as showing a restaurant closed when riders are unavailable; private labels; forced use of delivery services;

Unreasonable and arbitrary rules of engagement; no transparency and inconsistency of search algorithms; imposed certification; data masking of 'OUR OWN' customers from us; employing coercive tactics by threat of drop in rating etc; breach of promise and changing goalposts; Zomato Gold is a classic example; surreptitious attempts to collect 'OUR CUSTOMER DATA' through schemes such as free Wi-Fi etc.

"This group also unanimously agreed that the ZOMATO GOLD is an extremely detrimental product for the



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
Vice President
FHRAI

“Aggregators cannot dominate the industry or conduct business that is detrimental to growth”

Taking Back Control

1. Always **CONSULT** us
2. Never **APPEASE** customers solely at our cost
3. Always ensure our **PROFIT** as you ensure your GMV-led valuation
4. Never **POLICE** us
5. Never **COMPETE** with us

FHRAI



Anurag Katriar
President
NRAI



This group also unanimously agreed that the ZOMATO GOLD is a detrimental product for the industry

industry and strongly opposes the same. It is clothed in such a manner that it misleads a few gullible members into disastrous consequences.

The FSAs are slowly but surely gaining dominance with the help of massive funding being made available to them through venture funds and private equity capital, the funds are then used towards several unfair trade practices.



Pradeep Shetty
Jt. Honorary Secretary
FHRAI



The group has joined hands to save the Industry and protect its individual member entrepreneurs

As responsible industry bodies, we stand strongly to protect their interests," said **Anurag Katriar**, President, NRAI.

"The group has joined hands to save the Industry, protect its individual member entrepreneurs and the hospitality & food service industry from becoming sick, and will not hesitate in embarking on a nationwide agitation and resistance against

Zomato and others if its demands are not met within a stipulated time frame," says **Pradeep Shetty**, Vice President, HRAWI & Jt. Hon. Secretary, FHRAI.

We say #TakingBackControl because:

- The world respects those who assert their rights to get their own, the justice they seek and deserve.
- We have to take back control over our Industry, our business, and stop the pretenders in their tracks from dictating to us and controlling our lives.

This group of united associations moots the following five-point charter towards realising the above objective of #TakingBackControl. This group further sends out a strong message to all FSAs that they must: - Always CONSULT us; Never APPEASE customers solely at our cost; Always ensure our PROFIT as you ensure your GMV-led valuation; Never POLICE us and Never COMPETE with us.

With this five-pronged charter, the group clarifies that tech start-ups masquerading as new age businesses are a mere digital extension of a traditional marketplace. The service providers offering aggregated services such as discovery and directory will henceforth be recognised by the industry as 'ancillary service providers'.

"FHRAI along with its constituent bodies across India and NRAI is committed to educate its members and the F&B fraternity at large,

as well as the government, media and most importantly its guests that it will in no way allow these 'ancillary service providers' to be considered as 'partners' which nomenclature has been conveniently abused to confuse everyone into thinking they represent the primary business of hospitality and food service," concluded, Kohli. FSAs are being informed they should stop pretending to be the guardians of service taking customers as well as try to participate in defining the rules of trade.

HRANI CONDUCTS FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR TRAINING IN DELHI

HRANI recently organised Food Safety Training and Certification session at Eros Hotel, New Delhi. The session witnessed full participation of food handlers from its member hotels and restaurants. The faculty for the session was **Pritha Tripathi**, Scientist (IV), (Training), FSSAI. All participants were informed that as per the guidelines of FSSAI, it is mandatory for all food business operators that have Central or State Licence of FSSAI to have at least one trained and certified food handler



“ FoSTaC certified Food Safety Supervisor serves as a conduit between FSSAI and the FBO ”

for every 25 food handlers in all their premises. It is also mandatory requirement for the renewal of FSSAI License. The participants were further apprised that FoSTaC certified Food Safety Supervisor serves as a conduit between FSSAI and the Food Business Operator(FBO)

Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General HRANI sensitised the participants about various types of competence-based certification programmes available under FoSTaC



and the duration of each course which is of eight to twelve hours spreading over one to two days. She also pointed out some difficulties faced by trainees during registration process and requested the team of FSSAI to update the FOSTAC portal as user friendly. Apprising the participants, Thapliyal also discussed

Fostac 1 : Trainer Pritha Tripathi, Scientist (IV), (Training), FSSAI interacting with participants
Fostac 2 : Participants at FOSTAC session
Fostac 3 Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI addressing the participants in FOSTAC session

about the Hygiene Rating and RUCO (Repurposing of used cooking oil). The session was well attended and very interactive.

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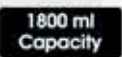
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HRANI TAKES UP NON-ISSUANCE OF T- PASS WITH MoCA & MOT



Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) represented the issue of Non-Issuance of Commercial Airport Entry Permits (T- Pass) with Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) & Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Government of India. A delegation from Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) met **Pradeep Singh Kharola**, Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Government of India. A delegation also met **Yogendra Tripathi**, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and requested him to take up the matter with MoCA.

The delegation informed the Secretary about the concern of 4-star and above hotels on new AEP guidelines 2019 issued by BCAS under Ministry of Civil Aviation, Govt of India. The Commercial AEP Terminal Pass (T-pass) is issued to hotels on chargeable basis which gives access to terminal building other than security hold, customs and immigration but include baggage claim area of domestic

Pradeep Singh Kharola, Secretary, MoCA meeting Garish Oberoi, Treasurer; Renu Thapliyal, Secretary General, HRANI; Bhupinder Singh, Airport Operations Manager, JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity & GM, Nitesh Gandhi & Sumit Kapoor, Airport Manager, The Leela Palace.

terminal. The delegation shared with the Secretary Ministry of Civil Aviation that The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) under Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) has unveiled the new Airport Entry Permit (AEP) guidelines 2019 on August 2, 2019 wherein as per para 9.7 of said guidelines, the issuance/re-issuance of the commercial Airport Entry Permits have been abolished. As a result all commercial AEP issuance/re-issuance has been stopped. A detailed representation was submitted by the Association to both the ministries. Through the representation, HRANI submitted that abolishing issuance of commercial

AEPs is highly arbitrary and not an industry centric decision. It will result in draconian consequences such as security risk for tourist especially in the case of senior citizens and single lady travellers keeping the background that India is still perceived to be an unsafe destination as per foreign media; Increase in touts and will also affect livelihood of many people in travel trade. It will also lead to substantial lay-offs and job terminations across the hotels on pan India level, there by further deteriorating the unemployment situation. This new practice will also hurt tourism to a certain extent. The Secretary, MoCA Pradeep Singh Kharola gave a patient and positive hearing. He assured the delegation that the issuance of passes will not be stopped but the number of the same will be reviewed. He requested the association to work out a proposal in consensus with hotels so the ministry/BCAS can come up with a more acceptable guidelines.

“ He requested the association to work out a proposal in consensus with hotels for acceptable guidelines ”



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HOTEL OWNERS VS ROOM AGGREGATORS, THE WAR GOES ON

An association of budget hotels and guesthouses in Kolkata recently staged a protest before the office of OYO, the leading hotel room aggregator and alleged that its discount-based pricing policy was driving the industry into distress. The association that has around 50 members has alleged that OYO was usurping nearly 40-45 per cent of the booking amount though the commission in the agreement ranged from 15-24 per cent.

It is not an isolated event, independent protests by small hotel owners are springing up in big cities as well as mid-tier towns across India. Says **Pranav Singh**, President HRAEI, "Even our members have complained that some hotel room aggregators have been cheating them of their promised returns and minimum guarantees by levying a slew of charges, often without informing them. Many of these charges are not specified in the contract between the owner and the aggregator." Before the room aggregators came in, basic room rates varied from ₹1,200 to ₹2,500. But these outfits offered half rates

to capture the market that make many budget hotel owners unable to meet the daily expenses and basic rent and salary. However, the aggregators refute the allegations,



Pranav Singh
President
HRAEI

“**OYO was usurping 40-45% as commission though the agreement was in the range of 15-24%**”

terming them baseless and motivated. They say that listing on their platforms has given thousands of hotels opportunities for easy booking, ability to get high return of investments, access to easy finance, offer quality customer service, thereby significantly increasing occupancy and profitability. "The most common grievance is that many of the aggregators reduce payments owed to them on the pretext of deductions, which they say are not specified in their contracts. The protestors say that the aggregators auditing process, and the penalties associated with minor faults and errors, are so heavy that they sometimes find themselves owing money to them at the end of the month," says Singh. At the heart of this matter is the aggregators' promise of "Minimum Guarantee Fee"—the so-called promise of paying a certain amount to the hotel owner each month in lieu of allocating some of the room inventory for those who use the platforms, irrespective of the bookings the hotel gets from them or the occupancy rate. "Many hotel owner now call this model unethical," he adds.

HRAEI

Representative image of Dzuko Valley, Senapati

OPENING

LEELAVENTURE TO OPERATE UNDER A NEW NAME



Hotel Leelaventure Limited (HLVL) has completed the transaction with BSREP III India Ballet/its affiliates ("Brookfield") for sale of the Company's (a) Hotel undertakings in Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai and Udaipur (b) Hotel operations business, and (c) 100% shareholding in Leela Palaces and Resorts Limited (its wholly-owned subsidiary) which owns property and holds licenses for the development of a hotel in Agra (collectively "Undertakings"). A few procedural formalities are pending and would be completed shortly. The total consideration of ₹3950 crores was received from

Brookfield on October 16, 2019 and the entire consideration, net of transaction-related costs of ₹70 crores were used to repay the banks and financial institutions who were lenders to the Company, in full and final settlement, as one-time settlement.

The lenders have issued release letters to the Company whereby they have confirmed that there are no further dues payable by the Company and have thereby released all the security interest created in that regard including security on assets which are not part of the sale of Undertakings to Brookfield.

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GINGER PARTNERS WITH IHM-A

Ginger has announced its partnership with the Institute of Hotel Management-Aurangabad (IHM-A), one of the country's top hotel management institutions, to launch the 'Ginger Leadership Program' that will enable IHM-Aurangabad students to achieve Hotel Manager positions, akin to General Manager positions, in a short span of five years.

Speaking about the program, **Deepika Rao**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Ginger said, "The Ginger Leadership Program has been created specifically to meet the career aspirations of young talent in hospitality. Our partnership with IHM-Aurangabad underlines our commitment to build a strong talent pool of hospitality professionals in the country, who will be valuable assets to Ginger".

Through the program, within a period of two years, a potential candidate will progress in the job to the level of Assistant Hotel Manager with leadership inputs, eventually leading to the position of Hotel Manager by the end of the fifth year.

The pre-selection process for this program has been digitally enabled in partnership with GlobalGyan Academy of management education



via an intuitive game-based mobile application, followed by video screening, group discussion and final one-on-one engagement with the prospective candidates.

Prof **Satish Jayaram**, Principal and Director at the Institute of Hotel Management-Aurangabad, is highly enthused with the first set of students being evaluated from the institute. "We are delighted to participate with Ginger Hotels in the Ginger Leadership Program. This will enable fast-track growth and development for the students and give them a great platform to rise in their careers rapidly.

EXPANSION

GOLDSTONE HOTELS & RESORTS IN VRINDAVAN

The boutique hotel management company Goldstone Hotels & Resorts announced its official opening in Vrindavan by the name of Goldstone Elite, with the announcement; company marks a milestone of its seventh operating hotel in India and plans on launching eight more hotels by December 2019.

The company plans on expanding its portfolio in key destinations across the country, already making its mark in Dehradun with three hotels, Shimla, Nahan, Dhanaulti, and now Vrindavan and plans to expand worldwide. Goldstone Hotels & Resorts has six different brands called Comfort, Elite, Luxury, Exotic, Heritage, and Stay with a different ambience and services to it. Goldstone Hotels & Resorts

is seeking for global opportunities for ground-up developments, re-development of existing assets, repositioning of under-performing properties, and re-flagging currently operational hotels. The company facilitates in branding, marketing, managing the property and customer relationship management, making sure no customer goes unsatisfied.

The Vrindavan hotel is located on National Highway, amid the landmarks of the city yet in a peaceful surrounding. The hotel is kids, family and business friendly place, providing free high-speed internet, complimentary breakfast and conference rooms for business meetings. Apart from these luxurious facilities the hotel owns a fun zone for kids, organises recreational activities for its guests and is surrounded by lush green gardens along with a spiritual touch as all the historic temples are nearby the property.

Inderjeet Singh, President & Co-Founder, on the occasion of the opening of Goldstone Hotels & Resorts, Vrindavan said: "Under a year, we've successfully launched seven hotels across the country, reaching this milestone allows us to create a better future of the company and help under-performing hotels do better. 'Money saved is money earned', is what me and my team believes in. I look forward to take this venture on a crowning level. I appreciate all the people for striving towards the growth of the company."



OPENING

THE FERN RESIDENCY OPENS WITH 120 KEYS IN AURANGABAD, MAHARASHTRA

The Fern Hotels & Resorts, is opening of the Fern Residency in Aurangabad, Maharashtra. This is the 16th hotel which the company is managing in the state. Overall the company's count has extended to 69 hotels across the country and in Nepal and Seychelles. The hotel is situated in the heart of the city, with easy access to the airport, railway station, major sightseeing attractions in town and to public transport.

Suhail Kannampilly, the CEO of the company said, "People visiting Aurangabad which is steeped in history will be delighted by the hospitality extended to them. The Fern brand is extremely popular in the state and this property will go a long way in further expanding the popularity." The Fern Residency, Aurangabad is a 120-room business hotel offering modern-day accommodations, swimming pool and state-of-art banquet halls. A finely-designed multi-cuisine restaurant and a bar are the dining and unwinding options for the guests.



The hotel offers three categories of room viz. Winter Green, Fern Club and Hazel Suite. Some of the amenities in the rooms include packaged water, eco-friendly light arrangement and bathroom conveniences, tea maker and satellite TV connections. The other facilities the guest can look forward to are laundry service, swimming pool, gym, etc. Riwaaz-

the multi-cuisine all-day dining restaurant at the Lobby level, offers a wide variety of food from different parts of the country as well as popular international cuisines. Firangi-The Bar is a relaxed lounge bar, where cocktails and cuisines strike the perfect balance.

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Peek into the peak season...

The upcoming months mark the peak season for Indian hotels. Regional Presidents share what the hoteliers in their regions are doing to prepare for the same. They also tell us what the bookings are looking like.

Kanchan Nath



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
President
HRAWI

EXPECT BETTER OCCUPANCY

The industry welcomes the move of the GST Council of considerably bringing down the GST slabs on room rates. As a result, we look forward to increased demand in the sector, expect better occupancy and growth in the upcoming festive and winter season. This tax cut will give a major fillip to the hospitality and tourism industry making India's hotels more competitive globally while helping them focus on fresh investments, expansion and further job creation. A lot needs to be done, but we are hopeful of

“During the slack period, marketing and training take priority, to help properties become more competitive”

this being just the start. Hotels usually use slack periods to up their game, renovate to be competitive with newer, properties. During the slack period, marketing and training take priority, to help properties become more competitive. Hotels are paying a lot of attention to guest needs. Restaurants and in-house F&B are being prepped up as the number of demanding and knowledgeable travellers grow. Unique experiences in food and beverage is one area which is proving attractive to the potential guest.

SOCIAL MEDIA IMPERATIVE

Introducing hotel stories, on Instagram, twitter and Facebook is fast gaining prominence. Theme based off- season promotions, period events, etc also are being adopted. Creation of seasonal hotel packages to attract the guest are just some of the ideas being explored by hotels. Bookings are looking healthier now, but the real effect will only be seen after the festive season, hopefully we should be looking at an increased demand for our country as a destination which will automatically boil down to increased sales. I foresee the demand growing both for domestic and foreign travels as the prices get more competitive. Majority regions attract both domestic and foreign travellers.



Pranav Singh
President
HRAEI

GALA BANQUETS FOR WEDDING SEASON

Most of the hotels have already geared up for the peak season well in advance. This is the time there is nearly 100 per cent occupancy in the city hotels. Thanks to a number of events and conferences—such as India International

“Kolkata city attracts many tourists from abroad as the weather is salubrious this time”

Science Festival and Mega Science Exhibition—all the hotels in the eastern fringes of Kolkata have been booked. In the past few months several new keys have been added in the area with the opening of Fairfield Marriott and

Lemon Tree Premier hotels. The colossal new hospitality landmark ITC Royal Bengal has a huge banquet that can accommodate 1500 guests at one go. Bhubaneswar and Guwahati hotels have also geared up to welcome MICE tourists for the upcoming season.

Odisha's temple city will receive hordes of pilgrims and tourists looking for cultural travel. Apart from this, the wedding season will usher in thousands of guests to gala banquets, booked months in advance.

DEMAND IS HIGH

Since this is the peak season not much marketing is required in these months. On the contrary, the demand is so high that it becomes difficult to accommodate all guests. Bookings have already been done five-six months in advance.

In West Bengal and Odisha there's a mix of domestic and international tourists. Calcutta, the colonial city, attracts many tourists from abroad as the weather is salubrious this time. The temple city Bhubaneswar draws its share of tourists from India and abroad. Guwahati and North East draw nature lovers from different countries. Bodhgaya and Rajgir draw several international tourists—especially from the south east Asia—to the Buddhist circuit.



K. Syama Raju
President
SIHRA

COMBINATION OF STRATEGIES

The start of the tourist season in India is from October and it goes right on to March before the onset of summer. Tourist arrivals continue to grow year-on-year, both domestic and foreign arrivals have recorded increases. Hotels use different strategies to sell their rooms and most often it is a combination of marketing strategies that yield the best results. The most widely pervasive method is the use of the internet and social media. Today a strong media presence is essential. Hotels advertise their brands and use cross selling to offer special packages and incentives to guests on their websites. It could be a visit to the spa or a free local tour to a place of interest for the tourist. Search engine optimisation will help to ensure the hotel features in a search, thus giving the hotel the visibility it needs.

LOYALTY PROGRAMMES

Loyalty programmes that offer value will help in ensuring return stays from members. Email marketing effectively supports this and the hotels have the advantage since they can use the information gathered from the customer's

earlier stay to tailor make the message.

Email continues to be an effective method of marketing. Statistics show that the largest number of foreign tourist arrivals in India is from USA, followed by UK, Canada and Australia. In India, Tamil Nadu receives the largest number of domestic tourists visiting the state and Karnataka comes third. Hotel websites should be well designed and showcase the hotels and the amenities it provides. A hotel website should make the process of booking simple and easy for a customer to follow. Online content that is created by a customer through his blogs have the advantage of being first hand information of the experience that they had at a hotel and therefore tend to be trusted more than those promoted by the brand. Bloggers are influencers and help customers make decisions.

“ Search engine optimisation helps ensure the hotel features in search options ”



Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
President
HRANI

IMPROVING RECALL

The hotel industry is rolling out special offers and promotions, hoping they will be scooped up by potential travellers already delighted by the lowering of tax on luxury hotel stays. The offers and campaigns are for the peak season aimed at boosting occupancy, getting more people to sign on to loyalty programmes and improving recall.

The reduction of GST from 28 per cent to 18 per cent applicable on room rates above ₹7,500 per night will provide a great fillip to the premium and luxury hotel segments. The relaxation in GST for catering and banquets to the extent of 5 per cent (without input

tax credit) from 18 per cent for hotels having room tariffs less than ₹7500 will also lead to increase in wedding and MICE business. Also, significant reduction in corporate tax will strengthen investor sentiment.

ENVIRONMENT CONDUCTIVE FOR GROWTH

Also, to increase the influx of tourist in north region, all the members of HRANI have been asked to pass the benefit of reduced GST quantum to customers and guest. An advisory has also been sent to all hotel members of association. We believe that the economic environment is becoming more conducive for growth in the long term. We

“ Members have been asked to pass the benefit of reduced GST to customers ”

hope that room night demand will grow in major business cities as well as in the leisure destinations, and this demand will drive the growth in the hospitality industry.



CONCEPTU

Skills Remain Crucial For Hoteliers

Clear concepts of design and feasibility can make or break an entrepreneur who is unaware of the highs and lows of risks involved in the hospitality business. It is important to develop conceptualisation skills.



Himanshu Talwar



CONCEPTUALISATION

Term Conceptualisation is an individual's basic ability to invent or formulate an idea or concept. The conceptualisation phase of a hotel or a restaurant generally lies in the inaugural phases of a project involving design, theme, activity, location, financial viability, etc when the magnitude of the project is outlined and a list of required features and essentials are created.

There are a set of certain skills which help a hotelier to foray into conceptualisation. These skills are called 'Conceptualisation Skills for Hoteliers'.

The capacity of an individual to think creatively, evaluate and understand complicated and abstract ideas all fall under the set of 'Conceptualisation Skills'.

Why are Conceptualisation Skills important?

Using a well-defined skill set, prominent hoteliers, managers and entrepreneurs are able to look at their establishments as holistic entities, see the interrelationships between the various divisions of a hotel, and understand how the establishment fits in and affects the environment.

Few illustrations of 'Conceptualisation Skills'

- It is the ability of analysing situations and evaluating it clearly to go ahead and make proper decisions.
- Strong communication skills are necessary for a hotelier to communicate his or her ideas and solutions.
- Creative or 'out of the box' thinking enables a hotelier to stand out and think of solutions to abstract problems.
- Strong leadership skills are important, as a hotelier needs to be able to convince his or her subordinates of their visions and also provide inspiration.
- Critical thinking and decision making are absolutely necessary for a well-rounded conceptualisation skills set.
- Commitment to achieving predefined goals is a requisite as this commitment is what drives a hotelier and enables a professional to stick to the right path.

- Strategic planning is necessary for an establishment to smoothen out every wrinkle that may occur in the future in the operation of the hotel.
- Team building is a core skill which helps a hotelier to undergo obstacles together and thereby induces strength into each activity of the establishment.

How to develop 'Conceptualisation Skills'?

1. Developing conceptualisation skills takes time. The primary strategy is to observe hospitality industry professionals/ strategists/ financial experts/ academicians and influential people in the hospitality and tourism industry to see how they make certain decisions and analyse situations.
2. Identify problems within your establishment and try to come up with solutions and recommendations on your own.
3. Discuss your ideas with people around you and gather their perspectives and opinions. These opinions will help you gain further perspective on your part.
4. Venture into other departments of your organisation to gain as much exposure as possible.

All of these skills are necessary for a budding hotelier to inculcate conceptualisation and, to understand the utter significance of conceptualisation in the hospitality industry.

'Conceptualisation Skills' can help a hotelier to see the bigger picture clearly and recognise how their own contributions add onto the big picture, thereby making sure they work on the right track with utmost clarity.

*(The article has been contributed by **Himanshu Talwar**, Assistant Secretary General, FHRAI, the view's expressed are the author's personal views.)*



Observe and learn from influential people in hospitality and tourism industry and analyse



Fast adaptability to fight slow economy

In the first six months of 2019 there have been visible signs of a slowdown in the Indian economy. EC members share what hoteliers can do to rise above the ongoing slowdown. Flexibility in adjusting to client requirements is paramount.

Kanchan Nath



Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar

Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar
EC member
FHRAI

DOMESTIC TOURISM CONTINUES TO GROW

The hospitality industry is a challenging one: every year throws up new challenges and opportunities. Yes, the slowdown of the economy is a reality, but it is no reason to panic. For large and small hotel-chains, there are several new opportunities to discover as domestic tourism continues to grow. I would not be wrong to say that the MICE market continues to grow, even though the willingness of corporates to spend may be reduced, it would not be curtailed.



Yes, the slowdown of the economy is a reality, but there is no reason to panic

BE FLEXIBLE AND PROACTIVE

Hotel chains will have to demonstrate great flexibility in proactively, and reactively, adjusting to the changing requirements of clientele. This is also the time to pull up the socks and tighten up the hotel-operations in every which way. I see more opportunities than challenges in the present scenario which is a cyclical one.

In the metro-cities and the smaller towns too, F&B outlets continue to be favourites and are performing well. This too is a fine chance for hotel chains to boost their F&B outlets, reach out to new clientele and create a buzz around F&B festivals! Indians today are well travelled and have developed a discerning taste for fine dining, wines and whiskies from all over the world, ethnic cuisine and Asian culinary delights. It is high time that hotels should go beyond the routine F&B offerings and generate excitement around new ideas and culinary festivals! Our chefs at HRH Group of Hotels are continuously working on such festivals and the results are more than encouraging.



Param Kannampilly
Co-opted EC Member
FHRAI

BUSINESSES REQUIRE TRAVELLING

The slowdown has not affected the hotel industry in big way. There are of course a few indicators that suggest of some issues which like all the other industries, hospitality is also facing. However, the situation is not at all alarming for the industry. There are a few reasons for that, the first and the foremost is almost all the businesses require travelling. They cannot just completely stop travelling even if there is a slowdown. And if they travel, they have to use the room. There can be a possibility of them demanding lower rates but as of now nothing of that sort has happened at least at The Fern group. Moreover, corporates bookings are done at the start of the year, so such kind of question doesn't arise now.

F&B TO TAKE A HIT?

Also, my feeling is that the slowdown will first hit the leisure sector and the luxury chains. The reasons are obvious. If you have less money in your pocket you postpone your holidays first as an individual traveller. The corporates also will try to book their executives to mid-scale brand rather than opting out for luxury



Param Kannampilly

chains. I think the restaurants will take a bigger hit due to slow down specially in the metros. Probably this will happen in the FnB business of the hotels as well. But the revenues of the hotels come from the rooms mainly that is the reason I think they won't be impacted much. In the worst-case scenario, I can think of ARR's going down.



Hotels won't be impacted much, in the worst-case scenario, I can think of ARR's going down



Sudesh Poddar
EC member
FHRAI

MARKET AGGRESSIVELY

To rise above the economic slowdown the hospitality sector must immediately take up an aggressive marketing strategy. First of all, accept that technology has taken over in the field of hotel bookings. Today's travellers are empowered to do their own research. Design your hotel website in such a way that looks breathtaking, yet simple to navigate.

Next, your hotel should be easily searchable online, especially through the smartphone. You need to be bidding aggressively on Google's search and social platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Offer incentives to those who directly book from your website. This will take care of profit-sharing with online booking platforms like Oyo. Finally, build a customer loyalty program so that your customers come back to you and also refer your property to others. Word of mouth publicity works the best.

BE PRICE COMPETITIVE

It is important to make your hotel tariffs price competitive. Guests should get value for money

offers and must not feel cheated. Even if you can't pamper your guests ensure that they don't feel miffed and post a negative review of your hotel in the review sites. Even if they do so try to talk to them or engage with them in a polite way to put across your viewpoint.

Finally, the members of hospitality sector must unite and appeal to the government to bring down the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates to 12 per cent across the board. This can help hotels and restaurants in India with their counterparts in south east Asia. We can attract more international tourists from these countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore if GST rates are brought down.



Sudesh Poddar



We must appeal to the govt to bring down the GST rates to 12 per cent across the board





M.Venkada Subbu

M. Venkadasubbu
Jt Hony Secretary
FHRAI

CONTROL COSTS TO SURVIVE

Hoteliers alone cannot do much to rise above the ongoing slowdown in the economy. We are dependent on all other industries. In a recession, discretionary spending gets trimmed first and is the last to recover when the economy gets better. Hoteliers have to control costs and survive the downturn just like everyone in the economy does. If a hotel investor is flush with money, he can benefit from the lower construction costs and interest rates due to the slow down and build new hotels.

Interesting fact that I read recently comes to my mind when this question was posted. Is the economy really slowing down or are we facing a paradigm shift in the way consumers see the world. WhatsApp has taken over email, Transport As A Service (TAAS) like Ola, Uber have taken over Taxis, Online portals have taken over retail stores. This has created a world of instant gratification and impulsive planning. Similarly, travellers have taken to review based online

bookings of rooms at the time of travel, rather than detailed planning as they used to do in the past. This instant traveller is a major chunk of all our customers today. We need to recreate the business around this customer to find the way forward. Instead of competing for the existing tourist and travellers, we need to attract tourists from foreign countries with the government support by marketing the world's best available resources like our seashores and hill stations, ports and forts, deserts and forests.

AVOID DEBT TRAPS

Two things are most essential in our business outlook, first to cover the downside and not get into debt traps in uncertain times where the competition is getting intense. Secondly have a fighting spirit and looking ahead with confidence so as to not to lose the existing customer loyalty and then investing further in attracting new customers. It's like watching both sides before crossing the street. The same kind of cautious step forward is the right approach, no matter what we can't afford not to move forward. Please understand friends there is no status quo in business, we either move boldly forward or slide down. The positive hotelier would definitely find a way to stay ahead in these tough times and wait for the right opportunity to grow strongly.



A hotel investor can benefit from the lower construction costs & interest rates at this time



Vineet Taing

Vineet Taing
EC Member
FHRAI

STABILIZE SALES FIGURES

With all the major sectors experiencing turbulence and affected by the uncertain economic outlook, now it is time the domino effect to singe the hospitality industry too. According to a recent report 'Foreign tourist arrivals grew a mere 2.12 per cent in the first half of calendar 2019 — the lowest for the comparable period in the last four years.'

The general slowdown has prompted most core sectors to implement measures and stabilize the sales figures. Hospitality industry anticipated the ongoing issues and many leading chains have started taking precautionary measures. The major of these involve caution and cost management.

FOCUS ON LONG TERM STRATEGIES

In these tough times hoteliers are suggested to take vital steps rather than panicking. Let's take a look at what possibly can be done: Hoteliers' should focus on optimum utilisation of resources. There should be a lot of focus on cutting down waste and focusing on energy conservation strategies which would help in cutting down on the operating costs exponentially. Another pertinent step could be to re-negotiate the existing borrowing rates or shift to economical loans so that the lower costs can help pump more money back into the business, since the interest rates have come down. More focus should be given towards loyalty programs and targeting the right market segment through the right mediums. One step could be increasing corporate tie-ups and brick walling the existing ones. It is suggested that one should look beyond the short-term factors and focus on strategies for a longer tenure. The prudent planning and preparation can help to rise above the ongoing slowdown which is here to stay.

Focus on loyalty programs and targeting the right market segment through the right mediums



Unfolding elegant designs

With over 32 years of experience in the field of interiors, HS Ahuja & Associates (HSAA) has delivered the best in the industry designs and won clients over with fascinating creations and innovative methods.

Starting with one room renovations, HSAA has developed faith of prestigious clients all across the country. Ramada Hotel, Sagar Ratna, Berco's, Oxford Public School, Embassy of the United Arab Emirates and the list goes on. They have demonstrated their competence in luxurious residential interiors, café, restaurant & hotel designs, villas, schools, architectural consulting and commercial concepts. In addition of being awarded with some of the most esteemed awards like MAMR India's Most Prominent Architect & Design Awards and National Icons Award, HSAA has won a million hearts with their craftsmanship. "Our obsession for perfection is fueled by endless appetite of possibilities. With years of experience in the industry, at H. S. Ahuja & Associates (HSAA) we have seen the design revolution and possess the potential of envisioning elegant and innovative trends. It has now become our obsession to shape your dreams in the most impeccable marvels, for which we always go an

extra mile. This dedication of ours makes us different from the rest; and our obsession for perfection is fueled by endless appetite of possibilities," says **Hema**, Principal Interior Designer, HSAA. Hema is a dynamic but thoughtful designer whose work is invariably trendy and emotionally expressive. "After weeks and months of creative brain storming and hard work, it really pays off when we see that "surprising smile" on the face of our clients" she added. This is why HSAA clientele has reached over 500 projects. It is the team of experts that puts in every effort, working day & night to ensure highest level of precision. With end to end solution including interior, civil, 3D, custom paintings, furniture, custom lighting and almost everything that is needed to change your imagination into reality, HSAA achieves it with their two massive in-house production facilities. The image on the top is a recently delivered Café at Cyber Hub, Gurugram and the image at the bottom is Classic Banquet Hall near Hyderabad Airport .Their latest designs can be explored at www.hsaa.co.in.



Hema



“Our obsession for perfection is fuelled by an endless appetite of possibilities”

Tourism of hospitality

Hotels and infrastructure go a long way in developing tourist destinations. GMs of hotels share what role their hotels play in developing tourism through hospitality.

Kanchan Nath



Rishi Puri

Rishi Puri

Senior Vice President- Operations & Development
Lords Hotels & Resorts

COLLABORATE WITH GUIDES

We do take assistance of guides to tailor make city or destination tours like Royal Rajasthan for our hotels in Jaipur, Jodhpur and Nathdwara, Khushboo Gujarat ki for our hotels in Gujarat, Pilgrimage package for our hotels in Nepal, Jammu, Shirdi, Dwarka, Somnath and Chotila etc. It takes time, money and efforts in promoting the place where a unit is located. Initially people would try and promote the unit only but now it is categorical that the destination needs to be pushed and hence which in-turn would help push the hotel in the location. Few ways that can be looked at are create an attractive web page, provide virtual tour of not only the hotel but the destination in general to engage with the audience. Running digital marketing campaign and ensuring search engine optimisation would surely help. Blogs and published articles can

also be eye catching and tourist can be lured to visit the place if they are done well.

PROMOTE LOCAL CUISINES

We do promote local art, culture and cuisines of the places in some of our hotels as a regular feature and whereas in other units promote through food festivals. Revival Lords Inn in Vadodara offers local cuisines like *sev usal*, *gol gappa*, *matka biryani*, *moong dal khichdi* and many more at our multi cuisine restaurant – Blue Coriander. The world's tallest statue – Statue of Unity near Vadodara over the Sardar Sarovar Dam is promoted by us via special offers and group packages with guided tours through experts

DETERRENT TO GROWTH

The liquor ban policy in Gujarat not only has resulted in illegal liquor supply network but also acts as a deterrent to MICE and larger conventions and marriages. The policy of government of giving day licenses helps the cause slightly and is a welcome move by authorities.

“

The destination needs to be promoted, which in-turn would help push the hotel in the location

”

Sandeep Johri
General Manager
Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences

PROMOTING CITY OF JOY

Kolkata is the City of Joy and as the name suggests we strive to make our guest feel joyous during their stay at Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences. Our hotel is situated at New Town whose vision is to become the most vibrant and liveable place in Kolkata.

fields, cow carts. It also has a Yule Tea Lounge which has an artificial tea garden attached to it, enabling guests to get a feel for tea estates while they enjoy their cup of tea. During the tour, the guide we work with understood that four guests were golfers and thus a round of golf was also organised, ultimately giving our guests a 'WOW' experience.



Sandeep Johri



The Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences is in proximity to multiple tourist destinations and experiences. We recommend the Eco Tourism Park, the largest eco-friendly park in the city, Eco Park Golf Arena and the Mother's Wax Museum, which is a must visit for all guests with its 105 life size models made by veteran wax sculptor Susanta Roy. We have tailored many guest city tour experiences between their busy schedule of office hours and resting hours. We have curated experiences to enable guests to enjoy a complimentary way to energise themselves at the Eco Tourism Park which boasts of a 480 acre park, 112-acre lake and seven low lying virgin green islands. We have also tied up with the Eco Park Golf Arena to facilitate our guests to play a round of 9 holes of golf at a minimal rate of ₹500 plus taxes.

For example, we once had a group of 10 guests that stayed with us during their business trip and they wanted to truly experience what Kolkata had to offer in just a day. We tailored a tour to take them to Eco Park to give them a sense and help them feel the essence of Bengal. The Eco Park has an artificially created, rural life area which showcases huts, paddy

“

We have also tied up with the Eco Park Golf Arena to facilitate our guests to play a round of golf ”

FOOD FESTIVALS

To promote the local cuisine, we conduct Food Festivals during 'Poila Boishakh' (Bengali New Year), Hilsa Fish Season (Ilish Food Festival) and one during Durga Puja which is a talk of the town. We have a Bengali cuisine specialist chef as well, who curates the magic of the local taste in the dishes.

WOW MOMENTS OF GUESTS

Our hotel is located away from the hustle of the city at New Town, which is an attraction for most of our guests as it gives them a break from their daily busy lives and all the main places to visit are only 30 minutes away from the property. We had a guest that stayed with us for two months and to ensure he was able to enjoy the city, we organised a trip to the city twice a week to truly explore Kolkata. Not only did he enjoy his stay, but he truly cherished the city.



Biswajit Chakraborty

Biswajit Chakraborty
General Manager Delegate
Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity

CULINARY STAYCATION

At Pullman New Delhi Aerocity, we have recently introduced Culinary Staycation that is trending with local and international guests. The weekend staycation is different in its offerings in Delhi & NCR as guests can spend a day at the hotel and choose to dine at either Pluck or Honk for a magnificent 7-course meal as a part of the impeccable staycation package.

Further, the staycation allows guests to interact with the culinary team while plucking and picking vegetables from the in house farm at the upscale hotel. Guests even have the opportunity to go with the Chef to the local market to get ingredients for each dish being prepared for their dinner.

During the afternoon, guests can 'Meet the Masters' of the culinary team at the upscale hotel through a session on either one of the following - art of baking, cake decoration, blind tea tasting, art of dim sum making and preparing hand pulled noodles. Further, they can savour a sparkling traditional breakfast either in bed or at the executive lounge.

PLAYGROUND BY PULLMAN

Pullman Hotels & Resorts worldwide are known to encourage art, culture and gastronomy. At Pullman New Delhi Aerocity, we constantly organise promotions and events that are under the umbrella of these themes. Artist Playground by Pullman is an innovative and inspiring concept that comprises a permanent art space with an amazing array of artworks that complement the luxury and design of the hotel. Separately, Art Zone by Pullman is a vibrant space curated in collaboration with emerging artists who can showcase their work in a unique environment. Through the showcase, we share a percentage of the proceeds to various charities. At Pluck our signature dining outlet, the culinary team's endeavour is to provide varied international cuisines from across the globe that appeals to local and international guests. Additionally, by inviting chefs from the Accor family globally - Pluck is working towards curating international Food Festivals that offer authentic, yet innovative global experiences to food connoisseurs right here in India.

WOW MOMENTS OF GUESTS

At an upscale property like ours, we provide customised services that support in providing 'Wow Moments' to our guests. Our staff is trained to anticipate the needs of the customers and we work on curating an exquisite luxury stay in the rooms and our dining outlets. Special arrangements are made for guests on birthdays and anniversaries to make it memorable at the hotel.

“

We constantly organise promotions and events to encourage art, culture and gastronomy

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PAN INDIA PRESENCE



RESIDENCE (DELHI)



RESIDENCE (DELHI)



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SCAN ME

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Jagannath Mohanty

Jagannath Mohanty
General Manager
Swosti Chilika Resort

EXPERIENCING CHILIKA 'LIVE'

The new venture of Swosti Group "Swosti Chilika Resort" situated at the Chilika Lake, the largest lagoon in the Northern Hemisphere, is the first and only resort which has come up and has obtained the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) Platinum Award as an Eco Resort. The Resort within a period of two years has been established as a major tourist attraction to the state and has become famous as a wedding and MICE destination. Swosti Chilika Resort has been built to cater to high-end domestic and international tourists. Chilika lake attracts large number of migratory birds from Siberian countries during the winter season and throughout the year the Irrawaddy Dolphins are an attraction for the tourists. We offer an exclusive experience to the guest, focus on letting people sharing their experience LIVE, create awesome destination videos with the attractions available and market it digitally, always inviting bloggers to write about Chilika Lake and its nearby areas, show off the uniqueness and market it via social media as well as print articles, we also do a lot of CSR activities in the localities.

“

The resort's 100% greenery and boating available to many islands, is a dream come true for many

”

FRESH SEA FOOD

We promote the local and regional arts and crafts, culture and traditions of people near to Chilika Lake. Chilika also exporting highest quantity of prawn, crabs and other seafood and the guests staying in Swosti Chilika Resort enjoy the fresh seafood available in the resort. The local dishes such as *machha bhaja*, *kankada jhola* are very famous among many dishes.

WOW MOMENTS OF GUESTS

There were many instances of WOW moment, but the main one would be The Eco Luxury Resort with 100 per cent greenery along with boating to many island is always a dream come true for any travellers.

TOURISM IN ODISHA

The State Tourism Policy of Odisha is one of the most progressive policies in the country. The incentive provided in the policy attracts many investors to invest in the tourism sector.

The new tourism policy is going to be launched in the year 2020 which we hope attracts more investment opportunities in this sector. In the recent past, the tourism dept, has taken a lot of initiatives to improve tourism. They have been committed to attend each and every query of hoteliers, but the infrastructure still needs to be developed aggressively.

Sunaina Sharma
General Manager
Grand Mercure Mysore

HELP GUESTS PLAN THE DAY

Grand Mercure Mysore is situated in the land of royalty and a culturally rich region. It offers guests a number of opportunities to explore the city. To ensure our guests can truly take advantage of their stay to enjoy the city, we inform them of the Mysore Palace, Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, Chamundi Hills, Talakadu Temple and many other such 'must visit' places when in Mysuru. We offer customised city tours/ places to visit as per the guest's preference. The front desk representative personally suggests and help guests plan the day so they can have an interesting and seamless experience. We have collaborated with a local tour guide who can be contacted directly by the guests for guided trips with genuine stories about the places and their history.

CULTURE HIGHLIGHTED IN DESIGN

Considering local art, you can find subtle elements of the traditional motifs and royal architecture when you look at the façade and interiors of the hotel, be it the lobby, restaurant or rooms. Guests are always greeted with a traditional Namaskara. The food also reflects the local cuisine, we have several dishes and beverages that bring out the local flavours. One of the best dish to depict the local culture is the *Mysore Thali*, where dishes are served one after the other starting with salt, pickles, a vegetable salad and then continued with *roti* or *ragi mudde* (a specialty of Karnataka), a rice preparation, *rasam* and completed with *Mysore pak* and a banana. It's a wholesome and healthy meal served at Grand Mercure Mysore throughout the year.

WOW MOMENTS OF GUESTS

Keeping in mind the popularity of Indian tourism with individuals from different countries, international guests are always amazed by how culturally rooted we are and how we have still preserved the historic places in Mysuru. During Diwali, a group of international guests staying at the property saw the hotel employees decorating the lobby with *rangoli* and *diyas*. The guests waited in the lobby for more than an hour until the staff completed the decoration, took pictures of it, praised the staff for being artistic and took pictures with them. It was definitely a wow moment for the guests as well as the staff.

PROMOTING DASARA FESTIVAL

The state government of Karnataka has helped promote tourism in Mysore, with placement of

ads in newspapers and posts on social media, especially during the Dasara period.

During this time people travel from different cities as well as countries just to experience the festivities of Dasara. The hospitality sector has benefited from these activities.



Sunaina Sharma



“

International guests are always amazed by how culturally rooted we are, they love Mysuru

”



Sarbendra Sarkar

Sarbendra Sarkar Managing Director Cygnett Group

PROMOTING LEISURE DESTINATIONS

Since Cygnett have a pan India presence and at many niche locations, we always try to promote the local destinations especially hotels located across leisure destinations. To do the same, we do tie up with local resources. We have built one such business relation with Villotale. Via this venture we promote the local community in Nainital district, Uttarakhand.

We curate tours and packages which include nature walks, bed and breakfast in a mud house and engagement with local community. A lot of our guests truly enjoy these experiences.

guests. Our unit also serve *Jhangore ki kheer* which is a delicacy of Uttrakhand.

WOW WITH NATURE

Cygnett Resort Mountain Breeze, Nainital is an untouched jewel in that vicinity. The resort offers the guest panoramic views of the surrounding hills and starlit wintery nights.

It is a perfect place, away from the concrete jungle to relieve from day-to-day routines and relax in the magnificent paradise in the lap of 'Mother Nature' which creates a "wow moment".



SUBSIDISED LOCAL CUISINES

All of our hotel menus offer around 20 per cent local cuisines as it is a brand standards across the chain.

At Nainital we are offering local food like *Kafuli*, which is an assortment of hand grinded green leaves with mustard and dry spices. *Aloo ke gutke* is preparation of Kumauni potatoes and *Gahat ki dal* is adored by our

PROMOTING NEW DESTINATIONS

The state's policy to come up with new tourist destination as locations like Mussoorie and Nainital are crowded have open doors for new destinations.

As our resort is situated in Jeolikot which connects destinations such as Nainital, Haldwani & Bhimtal, it is attracting many tourists.

For sustainability it is essential to develop new destinations, hotels can play a major role in that. A good hotel can provide the perfect holiday and introduction to a new destination. At the end of the day, it is the hospitality of the hotel that the guest remembers.

“

We always try to promote the local spots especially hotels located across leisure destinations

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Elanpro celebrates its 10th anniversary

As it completes this milestone Elanpro, is ever ready for business with a new corporate site as an expression of the company's identity and a point of reference for partners, dealers and customers.

Elanpro celebrated its 10th anniversary as a leading provider of innovative, customer centric commercial refrigeration solutions. The celebration is an expression of the company's last 10 years of pioneering products and services and continuous evolution. In 2009, Ranjan Jain, Sanjay Jain and Shashank Goel set out with a vision to provide excellence in after sales service apart from providing state-of-art refrigeration products used in HoReCa, Retail, Dairy and Ice Cream industry and pharma sector. Over the course of 10 years, Elanpro has evolved from a small niche to a technology enabler in refrigeration sector. The company has built a tradition of excellence in providing its customers with innovative refrigeration products.

"We are very proud to celebrate this milestone that we love to summarize with the claim '10 years of customer centric service'. In the last ten years we have been boosting our products knowledge and transforming our company, and now we are very excited to see what our future has to offer" said **Sanjay Jain**, Director, Elanpro.

He added, "During these last 10 years, our passion for state-of-art technology, the distinctive competences and skills of our people, and our industrial roots have been the engine behind our daily efforts to invest in new capabilities and continuous innovations for our customers and partners. Our ambition is to follow this path, keeping our eye on the long-term to continue to create long-lasting relationships and strengthen our position as one of the most trusted worldwide company."



Sanjay Jain

He also said, "Now more than ever, businesses require products that are eco-sensitive, cost effective and trusted. Elanpro is all of those, and it is something we work hard to maintain. We are focused on delivering high quality products which is dedicated to our customers. I think next ten years will be even more exciting, both for the sector and Elanpro."

Over the last 10 years, Elanpro and the people involved in it have worked hard to develop and maintain trust and integrity in everything they do, from bringing market-moving technology to our growing eco centric product portfolio.

Today, the brand has expanded its global presence to Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. Elanpro has expanded its national reach with the help of over 310 dealers and 68 employees who are passionate and committed to enhancing the company's role as a reliable partner for its clients, able to face the challenges of the fast-paced global environment.

The company kicked off its celebration with the dealers meet in Delhi. The celebration was attended by dealers, employees, partners and well-wishers.

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Businesses require products that are eco-sensitive and cost effective

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The women power of hospitality

The 6th edition of the Global Hospitality Conclave discussed the trials and triumphs of women in leadership in the hospitality industry.

Kanchan Nath

The daylong conclave brought together a host of industry leaders, professionals as well as stalwarts in their own fields, be it tech startups, sports or journalism.

Panelists included: **Pushpa Bector**, EVP & Head, DLF Shopping Malls; **Priya Paul**, Chairperson, Park Hotels; **Ragini Chopra**, Executive VP, Interglobe Enterprises; **Katerina Giannouka**, President Asia Pacific Radisson Hotels. They shared their thoughts on “**Trials and Triumphs of Women in Leadership.**” The panel was moderated by **Dr. Chekitan Dev**, Prof. of Marketing at Cornell University’s School of Hotel Administration.

Dev: What are the main challenges of the hospitality industry?

On the challenges of running their companies, Katerina Giannouka said, “Its not an OTA or Airbnb

“

Most hotel companies have huge amount of data, key decisions can be made based on that data”



as a disruptor that keeps me up, I worry about google hotels, I worry about data companies stealing our data. Most hotel companies have huge amount of data and key decisions can be made based on that data. I worry about what we are doing to get ahead of the trend and mine our own data. Of managing different streams of expertise at senior management, with set ideas and the youngsters who are open to what’s happening today, open to disruption.”

Elaborating on challenges, for the hospitality industry, Ragini Chopra added, “With so many women joining the workforce, it has been great in terms of productivity and social and cultural milieu that the organisation has because of them. Citing from my previous experience with an airlines, women coming in, caused an upheaval, because a lot of the younger women were from conservative environments. They did bring some attendant problems dealing with young men and older men created some disruption as they were suddenly in this very exposed, luxury segment and this led to a lot of issues on sexual harassment. Therefore, it became paramount to have education for men, young as well as old and also for women. This is specific to the





Indian context as, most women were coming in from the smaller towns, conservative homes into this wild world. So that is one of the challenges."

Meanwhile Priya Paul added, "For me as the owner of my company, challenge is really about how to keep it fresh, alive and young. 50 per cent of the population of our country for the next few years is going to be below the age of 30-32. So, it's important how you make your company stay relevant, stay ahead of disruption whether technology or traditional hoteliering. Not only keep your team rejuvenated but also keep the company going. It's at a faster pace now."

Pushpa Bector added, "I represent retail real estate. The mall business is asset heavy. Millennials today are very friendly with their smartphones and how do we get close to their smartphones having an asset heavy space like retail? That is what worries us and we have taken a lot of steps in that direction. Change is the only constant. People are still very social, and specifically in India, brick and mortar business. We need to look at thinking asset light and being asset heavy."

Dev: How many of you have a formal sexual harassment policy?

On the same, Paul said, "Guidelines in sexual harassment were put in place in 1996, subsequently the Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) law has come through. Meanwhile I feel that it is essential to sensitize your team on what is acceptable and what is not, men as well as women."

On getting more women in leadership positions she added, "This is an issue that corporate India is grappling with not just the hospitality industry. I joined the hospitality industry 30 years ago and I feel that in India, it is far more open to women in leadership positions. The funnel obviously gets narrowed at the top. Women in India are not joining the formal kind of workforce. So how do you increase



80 per cent of millennials will choose a company based on its inclusion and diversity policy



that level of participation? I think its at just 25-27 per cent nationally, which is far below the average in Europe or USA. We can exponentially increase the GDP with more women being part of the workforce. We need to think about how do we ensure that women move from the HOD level to the GM level? In most hospitality companies its just the corporate communication, housekeeping, maybe the sales, few chefs are the only roles we find women in, we need to increase their roles and participation.

On the topic of harassment Bector, added, "At DLF, in India it is a quasi-judicial procedure, where a committee is set up, there is an outside person, preferably from an NGO, the HR is there, there are those involved and us. I have seen its basically a change of culture that India is experiencing at a very rapid pace. The age difference between the workforce is there. So far we have been able to handle things amicably."

Katerina Giannouka went on to say that they have no woman GM in their portfolio in India. She added, "To make a positive impact we have a fast track programme to build GMs and in our 2018 class, we have 57 per cent women. We promote 70 per cent of our general managers from within. So, our new training programmes need to produce more women GMs, so that we can start getting more fairness and inclusivity. Asia has 60 per cent of the world's millennial population. A PWC report said that 80 per cent of millennials will choose a company based on its inclusion and diversity policy. So, if we want future employees, we need to be a more inclusive, diverse community."



Nirmal Khandelwal

Tell us a bit about your company and where you started from?

Our company has a track record of doing business for the last 178 years. Our principal business was steel, hardware and brass in the name of Fakir Chand Mohan Lall which started in 1840. In due course of time we have abbreviated the name to FCML and that is our brand name today.

We have our headquarters in Delhi and are having display centers/show rooms in Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Surat. Now we are planning to open our branch in Pune as well. Our principal business was steel, hardware and brass. Thereafter in 1971 we entered into hospitality industry. It has now been almost 50 years. Initially no one felt that this industry has so much potential, due to this there were limited vendors available for hotel industry in



At the Service of the Service industry

Nirmal Khandelwal, Chairman, FCML, talks about his company that has been in the business for the last 178 years and shares how they have been adapting to the demands of the dynamic industry by developing products.

those days. However, 1972 onwards the industry started growing and we kept on changing our product line as per the requirements of the hotel industry.

As per the specific requirement of each hotel group we started developing the products and fulfilled their requirements to their

utmost satisfaction and that is the essence of our growth.

What are the products that you offer for the hospitality industry?

We are a one-stop-shop for the hospitality industry. Starting with bathroom products, wood floor, tiles, all in-room items (mini-bars, safes, etc.) carpet, crockery, cutlery, glassware and table top items. All our major items are imported from Europe, America and Japan, and a very few Indian

manufactured items to complete our range. For ensuring quality we deal with companies, who still have their manufacturing facility in their respective country and not sourcing the product from any third country.

We are dealing with all segments of hotels starting with the most luxurious, boutique, high end, mid segment and budget Hotels. Just to name a few our customers include Ritz carton, JW Marriott, ITC, Taj, Oberai, Marriot, Raddison, Sarovar, OYO hotels, Royal Orchid etc.

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We are also growing annually by 12-13%, target for 2019 is 15-20%”



How has your company been doing? How has the hospitality segment been doing in India?

India being a developing country with the growth of the industry we are also growing annually by 12-13% and current year we expect a growth of 15-20% due

to the unprecedented growth of the hospitality segment in our country.

As we understand there are almost 250 project which are off the ground and there are another 100 projects which are on the drawing boards, soon

they will start construction. Another 150 projects which are in the pipeline, they should start the work within 12 to 18 months. To keep a track the way the market is going,

we expect at least 300 to 350 hotel projects will be completed by end 2022 and the beginning

the implication of GST, but gradually they also started taking benefit of the scheme.

The inception of GST resulted in the reduction of various duties on our products from 30 to 11 per cent, which made our products more competitive in the Indian market.

TIP FOR YOUNGESTERS

I have only one tip to give **“You need to be true to the customer and transparent with the customer. Keep updating the product and changing as per the changing time to be one up in the market”**

We are happy to note that acceptability of our products is encouraging in the hospitality industry. In other words our products come upto to their expectation. Majority of Indian products are definitely much lower in quality and appearance.

Do you offer after sales service?

The backbone of our business is after sales service, without which we cannot survive in this field. We are always committed to our way in the service of the service industry. We are equipped with the complete back up staff who looks after all aspects of services. We have qualified engineers, technicians, plumbers, electricians on our roll for the day to day needs.

Why FCML and no other company?

We are a company, who keep ourselves updated with the latest technological changes and environmental requirements. We try and incorporate all the changes in our product line to help the customer get the latest technology and the environmental benefit.

of 2023. Virtually all these hotels which we are referring are 50 rooms plus upto 500 rooms in all different segments.

It was encouraging that the hoteliers had a very good occupancy last year and even the ARR's were also very decent. With the further growth of the industry and the upcoming hotels we are very confident that tourism segment is going to take a big lead within the next 2/3 years, which will result in a high occupancy for the existing and upcoming hotels and the business would flourish in the right direction.

What is the impact of GST and Custom duty on your products?

With the inception of GST almost two and half years ago, it turned out as a boom to our business, as it has paved the way to route out the unscrupulous elements from the market and truly the gray market. Initially a lot of traders and manufacturers had a lot of problem and did not understand

We are taking care of the environmental requirement like water conservation, usage of recyclable material and the companies who are committed to the green concept. Our product line which we have now introduced helps the customers to get LEED certification for green buildings and even helps them in getting carbon credit.



Honouring culinary artists

The Indian Culinary Forum organised the 16th Annual Chef Awards to honour the best culinary artists of India. The awards have been conceptualised to bring international acclaim to Indian cuisine and to honour chefs.

The Indian Culinary Forum organised the 16th Annual Chef Awards in the presence of renowned master chefs and veterans of the hospitality industry at Hotel Le Meridien, Delhi. Hosted to commemorate the International Chefs Day, Amitabh Kant, CEO NITI Aayog was the chief guest of the evening. Also, present on the occasion was one of the most respected and loved chefs of India, Padma Shri Sanjeev Kapoor. Several other industry veterans were also present at the awards. The glittery night witnessed an august gathering of around 400 industry professionals including young chefs & students.

While addressing the attendees, **Amitabh Kant**, CEO, Niti Aayog said, "Indian chefs are one of the best in the world. There is a lot of stress on health food, but if we look at traditional Indian cuisine then there is nothing healthier than it. Indian chefs are the best brand ambassadors of the country and will play a pivotal role in achieving Prime Minister Narendra Modi's dream of becoming a 5 trillion economy by 2024." As a build-up to the awards, four days' culinary competitions were

held at RIG Institute of Hospitality & Management, Greater Noida and Academy of Pastry Arts, Gurugram among young and promising chefs in ten different categories. Over 100 of culinary artistes showcased their creativity and skills during these competitions. Noted Malaysian Chef Peter Chan was the Chairperson of the jury in this year's competitions along with renowned national and international chefs, while Chef Sireesh Saxena was the organizing secretary. The Chef Awards also honour the industry veterans in six other coveted categories. The winners were selected by a panel of an esteemed jury.

Speaking on the occasion, **Anil Bhandari**, a hospitality industry veteran and Chairman of the Organising Committee ICF, said "It's an overwhelming experience to have successfully organised the Annual Chef Awards for the last one and a half decades. Our idea behind the inception of the Chef Awards was to provide both veteran and upcoming chefs a professional platform where they can exhibit and hone their culinary skills." Chef **Davinder Kumar**, President, ICF added, "The Chef Awards aims to not only honour the contributions of our fraternity members but also motivate thousands of youngsters to take up this profession. Hosting the Chef Awards wouldn't have been successful without the constant support and encouragement of the industry experts, jury members, associates, sponsors, and participants."

“

If we look at traditional Indian cuisine then there is definitely nothing healthier than those recipes

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Golden Chef Award, Chef Machindra Umakant Kasture, The Ashok Hotel



Lady Chef Award Chef Rekha Sharma



Silver Hat Award Chef Sanjay Agarwal



Silver Hat Award Chef Vivek Saggar



Student Chef of the Year Male
Chef Kartik Agarwal, BCIMCT



Student of the year female Chef Ashi Nibekar, DIHM



Master Chef Baker Award Chef Deepak
James, Hotel Suryaa



Master Chef International Cuisine Award
Chef Jatin Bhatia, Leela Palace



Master Chef International Confectionary
Award Chef MPK Reddy, Leela Ambience



Master Chef Kabab Chef Ravindra,
Country Inns & Suites By Radisson



Master Chef North Indian Cuisine Award
Chef Dhum Singh, Hotel Lemon Tree



Tourism on a **FOOD** trail

In an interview, **Rajeev Goyal**, Chef and Founder, India Food Tour, leads us through a journey of niche tourism that pampers the palate with Indian flavours.



Rajeev Goyal

How has your company grown?

We started this company in Year 2011 and this field had already taken over in mainstream travel in the global market aggressively. A food tour is one of best ways to explore cuisine, sights and culture. It is a city tour, food walk, sightseeing, urban exploration and culinary tour of Delhi city in one package.

The eating part of the food tour include sampling different varieties of street food from various places in the itinerary. Food is all that you can eat, but we insist you to have a little of everything and enjoy the variety. Apart from the usual and must see, the food tours cover some under-rated and less explored places of Delhi which very few people know about. These places are not listed on most tourist guides. They offer a lot of very good photo-opportunities and bragging rights are online. During the food

tours, you'll get to taste some of the best Indian food dishes available in the city from the oldest and most reputed food joints. The actual number is limited by your appetite. We'll guide you about the dishes, the way to eat them and even their history if you'd like. For example, did you know that butter chicken was invented in a restaurant called Moti Mahal located in Daryaganj, central Delhi? The food tour of Delhi will include not just the food attractions, but also some great landmarks and offbeat but worth visiting places of this city.

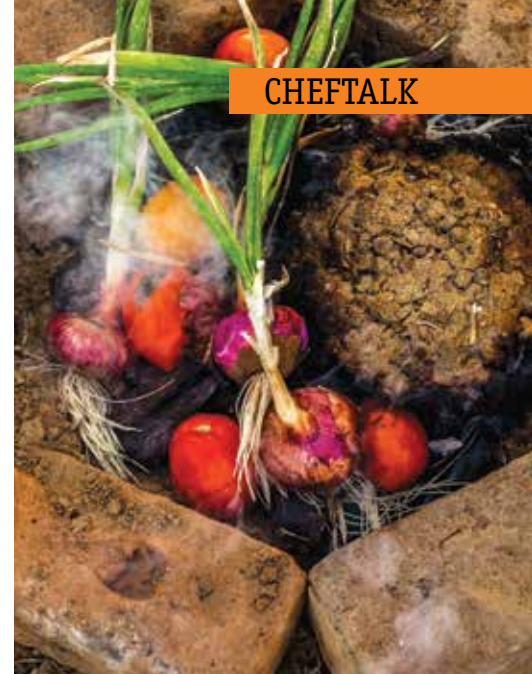
Where all are you offering culinary tours in India?

We are working pan India and most popular is 'Golden Samosa' which symbolizes golden triangle between Delhi-Agra-Jaipur. We have also added some add on tours, which we call 'Chutney's' ie : Varanasi for its street food and sweets and Udaipur for its royal food and recipes. We have a product of 'Royal Kitchens' in which you learn hunter recipes and visit festival foods. The use of unique ingredients is part of our food tour and we have recently added

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Food tours have already taken over mainstream travel in the global market aggressively

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a tour based on eco-tourism which takes you to tribal areas in different part of India ie: Odisha, Ladhak, Gujrat to learn nature cooking.

Which are the different chefs and halwai's that you connect with?

The ideology is to showcase traditional and authentic places with history and logic behind the food they are serving and same applies to Chefs. Examples for the same include: Shyam Sweets for their *halwa nagori*, *bedmi aloo sabji* in Old Delhi and Blue Lassi Shop – *fruit lassi* in Varanasi or Tunday Kababi for there *galaouti kabab* in Lucknow, among others.

Ever deterred by the 'Delhi belly'?

Delhi Belly worked better for our business format as there was need to find right and safe place to eat and the history and logic of food cooked, worked as cheery on the cake. This gave us an opportunity to educate food vendors for visual hygiene, we got them to share the nuances of the ingredients. It was also important for us as well as them to understand global allergies. The process was challenging and was a hard nut to crack as these institutions were running for more than ten decades and asking them to revamp all without offending was commendable work our PR team by working as team with them.

Where all do the tourists come from?

In current model we are only catering to international travellers and countries like USA, UK, Australia, Germany are leading.

How can culinary tours help promote tourism?

If you go by my theory, the most important and repetitive activity while traveling is eating and without any choice you have to eat three times a day. In our country India we only eat according to :- what we grow, weather, culture, religion, Ayurveda, Festival and lot more which makes Food as a most vibrant and explainable subject. In our country 'Food' can be referred to as a history and

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In our country 'Food' can be referred to as a history and cultural handbook, read three times a day”

cultural handbook which is read at least three times a day in different languages.

What are the most popular Indian dishes with the tourists?

Delhi: - *bedmi puri with aloo sabji*, **Agra** – *makhan ke samosa* (Samosa made of butter (sweet), **Jaipur** - *onion kachori*, **Kerela** – *mopla biryani*, **Udaipur** – *marwari thali*, **Varanasi** – *fruit lassi*

Can you please share two instances of 'wow' moments by your guests?

There are many instances but guests love - *pani puri/golgappas* and *daulat ki chat/makhan mallai*, complexity and flavour is commendable.

Do you think the traditional delicacies and cooking art will continue to thrive?

With current scenario my hopes for traditional cooking and food are getting stronger. there is so much to discover and connect each food with health benefits. Many are globally appreciated and handy example is use of *turmeric* in food.

Which Indian cities are the most popular for street food?

Delhi due to its multicultural habitat offerings, remains on top but I always feel each city in India has its own charm. We are active in: Agra, Jaipur, Indore, Lucknow, Amritsar, Kochi, Bengaluru, Mumbai. We are planning new circuits like :- 'Buddha Food Path' in Uttar Pradesh and Odisha, 'Sita Ki Rasoi Trail' in Uttar Pradesh, 'Tribal and Forest Food Trails' in Odisha, among others. Since culinary tourism is not bound by any structural monuments or geographical boundaries.

CONTEMPORARY LIGHTING STYLES

◆ Sources Unlimited, one of the pioneers in introducing high-end international furniture and lighting solutions to the Indian market, has launched a new collection of lights – Babu – by the Italian lighting giant Contardi, which has earned its reputation as “the couturier of contemporary lighting”. The latest collection, Babu, is inspired by the vibrant African continent. A collection of three outdoor lamps in three sizes, Babu Lights are made of fabric with a steel base.



LIGHT UP WITH CHANDELIERS

◆ The WhiteTeak Company, have recently launched 'Colourful Chandelier Collection' that will surely surprise your guests with its unique design and warm and welcoming glow giving a new meaning to your home décor. The latest collection comprises of Chandelier in gold & green-blue colour in shimmering and glass effect. Winter is coming Chandelier is a Smart LED chandelier with the design theory of droplet shaped glass with the amber tint adding more allure to this beautiful long form of the glass.

SKYLINE DESIGN EDGE

◆ World Bazaar has now introduced Spanish brand and outdoor furniture giant Skyline Designs in India. The Skyline Design range available at WORLD BAZAAR ranges from dining, living sets and day beds to bar sets and sun loungers. You may either choose from its range of smaller sized sets or eco-friendly pieces suitable for larger spaces. This collection will certainly change how your outdoor decks and balconies look and feel. Skyline Design has something for each and every occasion.





RIGHT SOLUTIONS FOR BATHROOMS

◆ The new and versatile Liberty taps and fittings range from Villeroy & Boch has the right solution for virtually any bathroom. Featuring a clear design that brings together the three basic shapes (round, oval, straight) as well as a wide range of different heights and spout lengths, Liberty can be combined with more than 90% of Villeroy & Boch's bathroom collections – visually appealing and perfectly functional.

FLOOR LAMP CONCEPTS



◆ The Whiteteak Company have recently launched a floor lamp with storage option collection all across their stores in India. The collection comprises of floor lamps with provision of storage in different designs and patterns. Each floor lamp has an exclusive concept of its theme which adds value to the interiors.

READY TO EAT MOMOS

◆ Using a timeless century old recipe closely guarded by the Prasuma family for generations, delicatessen brand- Prasuma has now launched ready-to-eat fresh and frozen momos that are an improved modern reinterpretation of the Original Himalayan Momos made with the finest ingredients using a fully automated Japanese Technology and world-class packaging technology.



CLASSIC ARMCHAIR COMFORT

◆ They say beauty lies in the simplicity and this very phrase reflects beautifully in this floral patterned fabric armchair from Danube Home. The classic old English country-style look is timeless in its appeal and effortlessly adds elegance to any room it is placed in 810 mm in length and 920 in width, the main structure of this one-seater armchair is made of wood with 19 mm thickness pocket coil spring and medium-density foam with a fabric upholstery.





CARGILL REDUCES CARBON FOOTPRINT IN INDIA

Cargill's oils business in India has redesigned its packaging by cutting down on the amount of raw plastic used across all products. In association with Dow Chemical, the business reformulated its plastic material, making 90 per cent of its plastic packaging recyclable. The business is committed to promoting a sustainable environment by reducing raw plastic usage in its popular edible oil brands Gemini™, Sweekar®, and NatureFresh.

To raise further awareness among consumers, the brands carry the slogan "recycle the present, save the future" on their packaging. Speaking on this, **Piyush Patnaik**, Managing Director, Cargill's

oils business in India said, "As a responsible business, we started this initiative with the goal of rethinking plastic packaging without compromising on packaging quality. Our efforts in the future will be strengthened as we are working to further our efforts to reduce, recycle and recover plastic packaging. We are constantly harmonising our objectives with government initiatives to impact change in a sustainable manner."

The company is working to address plastic waste management in three ways: reduce, recycle and recover. Converting 90% of its plastic packaging to recyclable packaging across its oils business.

GROHE AND THE WAF EXTEND ALLIANCE

GROHE and the World Architecture Festival (WAF) announced their new partnership - WAF Trends Asia (WAFTA). GROHE, a power brand from LIXIL, has been a Founder Partner of WAF for over a decade and sees an opportunity and a responsibility to initiate WAFTA. The brand believes that this partnership provides a platform that celebrates the work of aspiring architects and designers (A&Ds) in the Asia-Pacific region and nurtures the next generation, empowering them to improve the lives of many. WAFTA kicked off in India through an experiential event with

India's top 50 architects and designers. Internationally renowned architect and multi-winner of past WAF awards, Sanjay Puri, was also present at the event as the keynote speaker. The 16 shortlisted nominations from India for the upcoming 2019 WAF were also put on display for the audience allowing them to celebrate, share and inspire fellow peers. "We are delighted to be partnering with GROHE in this exciting new programme to promote architecture and design across the region," said **Paul Finch**, WAF Programme Director.



A ROYAL CELEBRATION OF HYDERABADI CUISINE



Unfolding age-old culinary secrets brimming with aromatic spices, Sofitel Mumbai BKC recently held the Hyderabad Food Festival in association with Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre. Chef Mohammed Iqbal from the brand's sister property had joined the culinary artists at Sofitel Mumbai BKC's, award winning signature restaurant Jyran – Tandoor Dining & Lounge, over a 10-day food festival. At the inauguration of the food festival, **Chef Neeraj Rawoot**, Executive Chef, Sofitel Mumbai BKC said, "The mention of Hyderabad Biryani brings images of a mouth-watering pot full of long slender rice grains cooked patiently with delicious meat and spices. We are delighted to bring these flavours along with an array of sumptuous dishes to our guests during this 10-day festival. We look forward for them to explore the aromatic nuances from the

culinary and culturally rich city of Hyderabad." Traditionally known as the *Hyderabad Ghizaayat* or Deccani style of cooking, this authentic cuisine dates back to the Qutb Shahi dynasty around the city of Hyderabad, developed over a two-century long history. Hyderabad cuisine is an amalgamation of multiple foreign influences including the Mughal, Turkish and Arabic, along with native Telugu and Marathwada inspirations.

Known for its generous use of meat, rice, spices and herbs, Hyderabad cuisine is a favourite of food connoisseurs from around the world. The talented culinary team at Sofitel Mumbai BKC and Chef Mohammed Iqbal curated exotic Hyderabad dishes such as *kacchi gosht ki biryani*, *varqi luqmi*, *methi chamam*, *phathar ka gosht*, *khubani ka meetha with saffron cream*, among others.



PASCHIM BHARAT HERITAGE FOOD FESTIVAL

Institute of Hotel Management Ahmedabad and India Tourism Mumbai have come together to showcase the rich culinary heritage of Western India 'Paschim Bharat' – a Food festival to savour the palate from the *kokum sherbet* to *sev tameta* to *Bhopali mutton korma* to *Bibinca* in October 2019.

It was a delectable list of fine delicacies from the respective State cuisines crafted by the hospitality trainers and students of IHM Bhopal, IHM Goa, IHM Mumbai and the host institute IHM Ahmedabad, which not only dished out Gujarati but also Chhattisgarhi Cuisine.

The event saw active participation from the hospitality fraternity, food connoisseurs, and academia and was also open to the food lovers from the Ahmedabad, Gandhinagar, Anand, Vadodara and Surat too. It was a delicious experience.

With a beautiful cultural event start, academia, hoteliers, travel agents, tour operators, entrepreneurs, alumni and local people actively participated under one roof to celebrate one evening of sumptuous array of Western Indian food. Festivals like this not only prepare students for the future but help them realise the extent of diversity yet integrity in a country as vast as India.



appointments



PARAG SAWHNEY

General Manager
The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace

★ Parag Sawhney has been appointed as the new General Manager at The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace. Bringing with him over 17 years of illustrious industry experience, Sawhney is an outstanding hospitality professional. With his innovative thought process and proactive strategic planning, Sawhney has a proven record of being an ideal mentor to his associates. His primary objective is to enhance the overall commercial performance of the hotel by growing the market share substantially and positioning the property as a market leader in its competition set. He has a stellar record of rationalising costs and enhancing profitability; creating and sustaining a highly motivated work environment.



GRIMEK KHIZAKHE

Chief People Officer
Concept Hospitality

★ Grimek Khizakhe has joined Concept Hospitality as the Chief People Officer. Khizakhe has been associated with Human Resource Development for the last 26 years and has worked with some of the most reputed and respectable hospitality brands. In his more than two-decades long career he has acquired a rich expertise in establishing and developing HR practices and contributing to productivity, culture and cost savings initiatives with focus on overall organisational development, change management, business excellence and transformation in a matrix structure. A strategy architect, he is credited with implementation of innovative HR initiatives.



SIDDHARTH PANDEY

Director of Revenue, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre, HICC

★ Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) has appointed Siddharth Pandey as their new Director of Revenue for their dual property. In his new role, Pandey who brings over 10 years of hospitality experience, will be leading revenue operations for Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC. Being a seasoned professional in analytical and functional operations, he will be responsible for forecasting and strategising monthly growth targets.



MANUJ SAHNEY

Food & Beverage Director
JW Marriott Kolkata

★ Highly result-oriented, versatile and armed with over a decade of experience, Manuj Sahney is the Food & Beverage Director at JW Marriot Kolkata. By dint of his proven capability to handle operations in challenging situations, this professional has become an asset to the industry. His high level of proficiency vis-a-vis diverse range of functions in the critical F&B arm of the hospitality industry has proved to be a major high point in his career. Sahney has brought to the table a dynamic energy to JW Marriot Kolkata.



HARDIK SHAH

Director of Food & Beverage
Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru

★ Hardik Shah has been appointed as Director of Food & Beverage at Four Seasons Hotel Bengaluru. A seasoned Four Seasons executive, Shah first joined the company at Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai in 2010 handling the award-winning Asian Restaurant San:Qi and then Café Prato, post which he took on an expanded role of Assistant Director of Food & Beverage in 2016, after a stint in the Middle East. In his current role, his most exciting project will be to position Far & East and Copitas, on the hotel's Level 21 as important entrants.



ANAND ATHAVALE

Director of Sales and Marketing
The Leela Mumbai

★ The Leela Mumbai has appointed Anand Athavale as the new Director of Sales and Marketing. A result oriented professional with over 14 years of experience, he brings with him a sound understanding and a wealth of expertise in the sales and marketing domain. At The Leela Mumbai, his core responsibilities will include planning and implementing of the hotel's sales and marketing strategy, maximizing hotel's revenues, exploring business opportunities through events, setting annual budgets, forecasting, analyzing revenue reports and strategy amongst others. Having graduated from the Institute of Technology & Management, Mumbai, Athavale gained a strong experience in hospitality.



HIMANSHU KUMAR

Revenue Manager
The Leela Mumbai

★ The Leela Mumbai has appointed Himanshu Kumar as the new Revenue Manager. With over 15 years of global experience, Kumar brings with him a vast understanding of the hospitality sector. In his current role, he will be looking after company's revenue function alongside development and implementation of right rate strategy. He will also help the brand to maintain a trajectory of growth, maximising overall revenue and identifying new business opportunities. After graduating from St. Paul's School, Rajasthan, he started his career with Marriott Global Sales and later moved to work with brands like InterContinental Hotels Group, Savoy Hotel Apartments Dubai, among others.



SUKHPREET SINGH BATH

Front Office Manager
Fairmont Jaipur

★ With more than 12 years of experience working with a number of luxury hospitality brands, Sukhpreet Singh Bath brings with him an expertise in Front Office operations. Prior to this role, he was at JW Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa where he joined as Assistant Front Office Manager and rose to the position of Front Office Manager at the beginning of his year. His journey with Marriott International started at the bustling city hotel, JW Marriott Aerocity, New Delhi in 2014 giving him a rounded approach to operations, dealing with every type of guest. We at Fairmont Jaipur are very glad to have his as part of our team and are sure that he will excel in his profile.



ANIKET KULKARNI

Hotel Manager
Fairfield by Marriott Pune Kharadi

★ Fairfield by Marriott Pune Kharadi has appointed Aniket Kulkarni as their Hotel Manager. A well-recognised industry veteran with almost 14 years, Kulkarni has experience in the luxury and upscale hotel segment. Kulkarni has been with Marriott International for the last 14 years and is adept and well-acquainted in the industrial know-how. Aniket kulkarni has completed his bachelor's degree in Hotel Management & Catering Technology from Pune University. Not only a seasoned hotelier but he also brings a wealth of well-rounded hospitality experience after having worked with chains like Marriott and Hyatt where he gained expertise in Hotel Operations, Sales and Revenue Management.



ADITYA GEORGE

Food and Beverage Manager
Double Tree Suites by Hilton Bangalore

★ A discerning professional with over 11 years of rich experience in the hospitality industry, Aditya George joins DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Bangalore as the new Food and Beverage Manager. George has a deep understanding of restaurants, events, catering set-up and banquet planning, pre-openings, optimising guest satisfaction and overall hotel operations management. He holds an Honours degree in Hospitality Management from IHM, Aurangabad, Maharashtra. Having started his career with Hyderabad Marriott Hotel & Convention Centre, he has worked with Marriott Hotels India for more than 10 years. His last assignment as Director of Restaurants was with Sheraton Grand Whitefield Hotel & Convention Centre, Bengaluru.

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