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fhrai magazine

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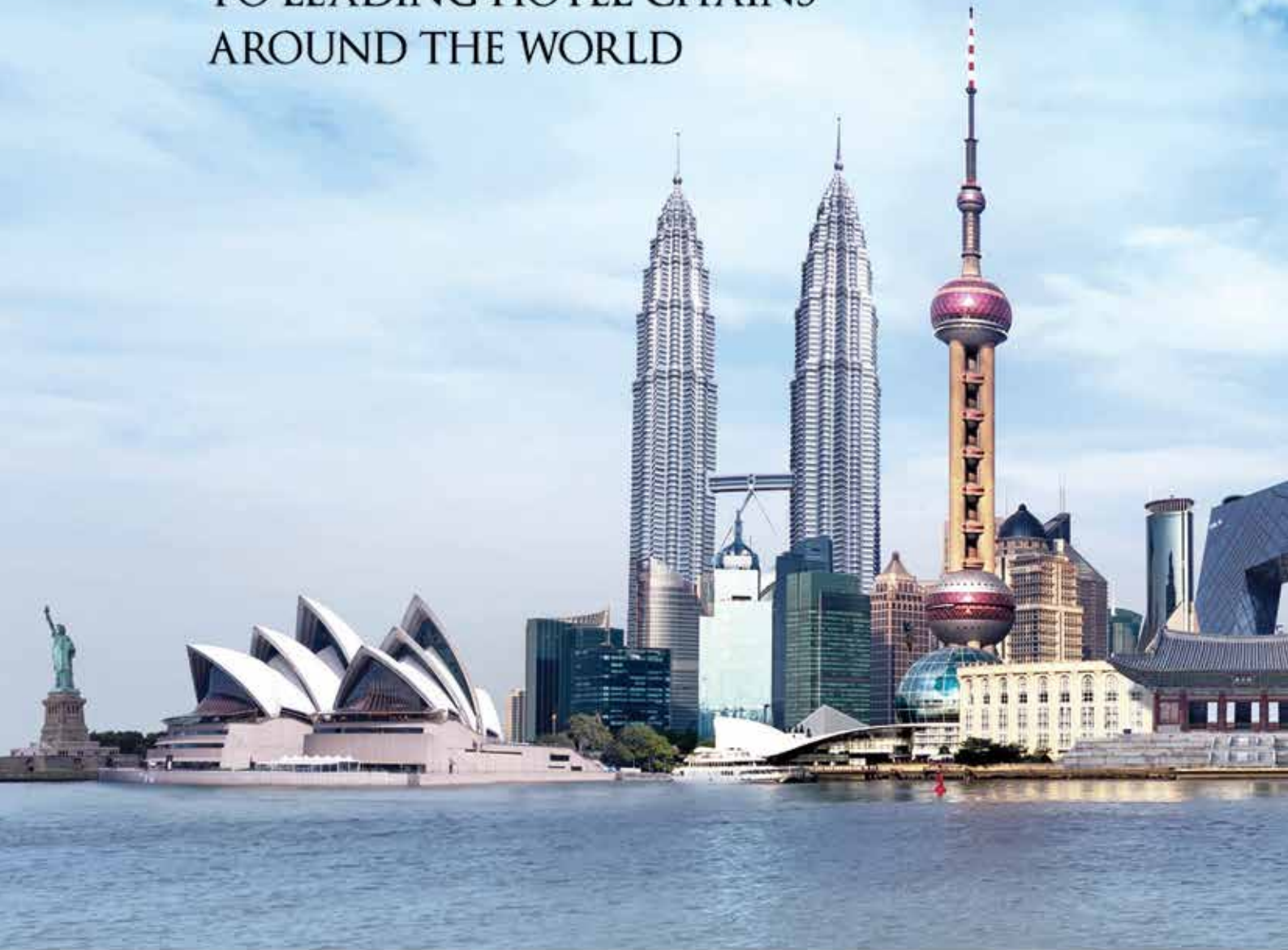
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FEBRUARY 2020

EAST HOTELS ECSTATIC ON RULE FOR BARS TO SERVE FOOD AFTER MIDNIGHT 14

Restaurants with bars in West Bengal can now allow guests to enjoy their dinner even after midnight due to a successful representation to the Excise Department of the state by the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI).



Cover Image

Courtesy: Atlantis, The Palm, Dubai



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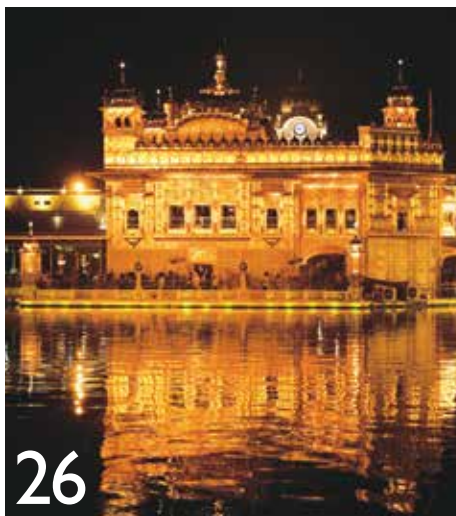
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FHRAI

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Rahul Lall
Secretary General
FHRAI

“
Seven projects worth ₹594 crores were sanctioned for Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh, primarily focusing on tourist facilities
”

Dear fellow members,

At the outset, we at the FHRAI, on behalf of the hospitality industry, would like to congratulate the government for presenting the Budget 2020–21 which is in line with the vision of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of building a confident and new India. We welcome the announcement made by the Hon'ble Finance Minister for developing five archeological sites in Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu into iconic sites with on-site museums to promote tourism. Such a move shall indeed boost local tourism and open new avenues for the hospitality sector.

This budget also reflects that the government is giving special impetus to connectivity by allocating funds for the development of airports, highways, roads, railways, and waterways. Initiatives like these will certainly help boost tourism, especially in the unexploited and rural destinations.

However, despite various announcements, the hospitality industry's expectations and requests have not been met and addressed. We, on behalf of the industry, from last many years, have been requesting the government to grant infrastructure status to hotels, which was again not covered in the budget. Single window clearance is something that requires immediate attention, as developing hotels and operating restaurants requires multiple licenses and clearances, in-advance, and any delay in obtaining such documents discourages the entrepreneurs from entering the hospitality industry business. We are still hopeful that the government will look into our requests and do the needful soon.

Started on the evening of the Republic Day, Ministry of Tourism concluded Bharat Parv 2020 on January 31, which is an annual

event that encourages people to travel across the length and breadth of the country and complement the spirit of 'Dekho Apna Desh'. 27 theme-based pavilions and 79 handloom/handicrafts stalls were of key interest to the visitors this time.

Apart from supporting and organising such events, the Ministry of Tourism has various schemes for the industry, and out of many, two such schemes are Swadesh Darshan and Prasad that provide financial assistance to state governments/ UT administrations, for development of tourism infrastructure. Under the schemes, seven projects worth ₹594 crores were sanctioned for Jammu & Kashmir, and Ladakh, primarily focusing on the development of tourist facilities. The industry welcomed the move as such an initiative would attract both foreign and local tourists and help the hospitality industry of the UTs flourish. This will also increase investments and employment opportunities in the country.

I would like to conclude by saying that the government and the hospitality industry are working hand-in-hand to provide a world-class experience to both foreign & domestic tourists in comparison to other nearby international tourist destinations. The government supported the industry by reducing the GST last year, and the industry further passed it to the travellers that increased foreign tourist arrivals. However, the recent outbreak of the coronavirus has caused a dent in the Indian industry with cancellations of the tourists coming from China. We are hopeful that China will overcome the epidemic soon.

With kind regards,
Rahul Lall
Secretary General, FHRAI



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Rakesh Kumar Verma appointed as Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism

Rakesh Kumar Verma, a 1993-Batch Punjab cadre officer, has joined as the new Joint Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. He has succeeded Suman Billa, who has joined UNWTO as Director, Technical Cooperation and Silk Road Development. Before this appointment, Verma was serving as the Secretary, Technical Education and Industrial Training.

He has been appointed for a tenure of five years or until further orders, whichever is earlier. He has also held posts like Principal Secretary, Department of Science, Technology & Environment, Government of Punjab; Secretary, Medical Education and Research; Commissioner, Municipal Corporation of



Rakesh Kumar Verma
Joint Secretary, MOT

Ludhiana; Managing Director of Punjab ICT Corporation (Punjab Infotech); Deputy Commissioner, Patiala and Kapurthala.

He has also held the Directorial post at the Department of Technical Education and Transport Department. An alumnus of IIT Delhi, Verma has pursued B.Tech in Computer Science and Engineering. In his new role, Verma will have the responsibility of the following segments as Joint Secretary Tourism: international cooperation, events, Swadesh Darshan, niche tourism, information technology, overseas marketing, hotels & restaurants, Administration-i, Administration-ii and Administration-iv.

FHRAI Secretariat bids adieu to retiring colleague, Bachan Singh Rawat



Bachan Singh Rawat retired as 'Daftari' on February 2, 2020. He had joined on May 11, 1982 and was an important part of the association for almost 38 years. Applauding his support

and contribution to the association, **Rahul Lall**, Secretary General, FHRAI, said, "He is the perfect example of a dedicated, sincere and hardworking employee. A man with a positive attitude, he used to

finish the tasks assigned on time and with perfection. FHRAI wishes him a long, healthy, and prosperous life ahead. We all will always remember him for his hard work and positive attitude."

MOT focus on connectivity and training

Ministry of Tourism (MOT) is keeping itself busy in ensuring India gets the numbers that it is targeting. **Rupinder Brar**, Additional Director General, MOT, shares details.

DOMESTIC PROJECTS

Brar revealed that the government is focused on developing the heritage and culture of India and that there are many projects at different stages of completion across the country which are great value additions to the experience of tourists. "We are also working with Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) to increase connectivity under UDAN.

We are working with Ministry of Roads to not only upgrade, but also provide last-mile connectivity to these places that are being developed. We are also working on creating wayside amenities, whether maintained by National Highways Authority or by state governments. Discussions are also on with



Rupinder Brar
ADG, MOT

Ministry of Railways to improve facilities at platforms," she said.

IITFC

The Incredible India Tourist Facilitator Certification (IITFC), which was rolled out

on January 1 this year, already has 3,200 enrolments, revealed Brar. "The programme started off really well and there has already been a growing interest among people to join the programme. Currently, there are about 3,200 people who have enrolled," she said.

BUDDHIST CONCLAVE

This year, MOT is due to organise a Buddhist conclave that, Brar revealed, will be held in late September or early October. While dates have not been finalised yet, MOT is gearing up for it and expects active cooperation from all stakeholders in the process.

20 MILLION BY 2024

Despite a growth of 3.2 per cent in 2019, Brar claimed that there is no reason why India could not get 20 million tourists by 2024. "In fact, we are sure to cross this target. As long as we put the right products, right processes and the right promotions in place, there is no reason why we cannot achieve the target," she shared.



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HRANI hosts 36th session of Food Safety Supervisor Training

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) organised the 36th Food Safety Training & Certification (FoSTaC) programme at New Delhi. A class of 40 participants attended the training session. The faculty of the session was Vikas Gupta, Professor, Amity University Noida, who informed the participants on various aspects and procedures to keep food safe and the policy framework pertaining to the FSS Act and law. "I would like to thank HRANI for this initiative. The workshop was very informative and comprehensive. It will go a long way in instilling awareness on food safety," said **Suresh Kumar Rohila**, a participant from The Umrao.

"It was heartening to see a good turnout of HRANI members in the session. Food safety has assumed a crucial role in the wake of increasing urbanisation, pollution and changing lifestyles," said **Surendra Kumar Jaiswal**, President, HRANI.

"We have been conducting the FoSTaC programme for the last three years in different cities of northern India. The next three training programmes are scheduled



in Jodhpur on March 14 & 15 at Chandra Imperial & in Shimla on March 28, 2020 at The Oberoi Cecil. We plan on continuing to host these programmes in a series so that the maximum number of hospitality professionals from our member units can benefit from it," said **Renu Thapliyal**, Secretary General, HRANI.

HRANI is the lead training partner for the organised sector in northern region empanelled by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). HRANI has been conducting FoSTaC programmes in all nine states on rotation basis to facilitate the members of the association.

Section 16 (3) (h) of FSS Act mandates that Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) shall ensure training of Food Business Operators.

FSSAI has developed an ecosystem which will create trained food handlers who will be called Food Safety Supervisors. There should be at

least one trained and certified Food Safety Supervisor for a maximum of 25 employees in each food service establishment including the catering industry. The Food Safety Supervisor will be nominated by the owner of a food business organisation (FBO) and may be the business owner, manager or an employee who is in charge of food safety in their organisation.

The Food Safety Supervisor will be responsible for hygiene as per FSS regulations in their respective food outlets and also training the food handlers in their outlets about safe food handling practices.

“
It was heartening to see a good turnout of HRANI members. Food safety has become crucial in the wake of urbanisation, pollution & changing lifestyles”

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India – a northern outfit of the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India is an apex body which represents hotels & restaurants and associates of the nine North Indian states.

The legendary Rai Bahadur M. S. Oberoi formed the association in 1950. Since then it has been working for the cause of the hospitality industry and plays a vital role in developing tourism in the states, which come under its purview.

The nine states are Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, UP and Uttarakhand.

As the single largest association of northern India and being a voice of the hospitality industry & allied sectors, HRANI is assisting its members to create a conducive environment to tap the vast potential of the hospitality industry in northern India.

HRANI

Business gets a fillip with Mumbai opening 24x7 says HRAWI

Welcoming the Maharashtra State Cabinet approval, **Dilip Datwani**, Immediate Past President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI), said, "We are thankful to the Cabinet of Hon'ble Ministers for approving the 24x7 Mumbai plan. This is a long-awaited demand from the hotel and tourism industry and, finally, after almost two decades, our demands have been met.

This will give a big fillip to business in Mumbai and has tremendous potential to transform the tourism landscape of the city. It was a decision which could not have been deferred any longer. We are grateful to Shri Aaditya Thackeray, Minister of Tourism – State, for championing the cause and single-



Dilip Datwani
Immediate Past President
HRAWI

handedly pushing it through. We also thank Shri Praveen Pardeshi, Municipal Commissioner and Shri Sanjay Barve,

Police Commissioner and all the officials from both departments for their cooperation and support. This will add more jobs in the hotel and tourism industry and will have a positive impact on the economy. Mumbai could be a model city in this regard and provide a roadmap to the rest of the country." HRAWI is a 68 years old association of hotels and restaurants in western India. Its members include various restaurants and smaller hotels up to 5-star deluxe categories. The bulk of its members like any growth economy are made up of restaurants and budget hotels. With membership base spread across western India, HRAWI covers Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa and the Union Territories of Daman, Diu & Silvassa.

HRAWI

East hotels ecstatic on rule for bars to serve food after midnight



Restaurants with bars in West Bengal can now allow guests to enjoy their dinner even after midnight with the State Excise Department making an amendment to its 2018 order that made it compulsory to close the premises before midnight.

The change in the rule has been made possible due to a successful representation to the Excise Department of the state by the Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI).

According to the 2018 order, hotels and restaurants having bars were allowed to run till midnight, beyond which no customers were allowed to stay on the premises, which included the service area where food was served. This meant both the bar and the restaurant would have to stop operations on or before midnight.

Restaurant owners said that in order to implement the rule, the last order of food and drinks had to be taken by 11 pm so that all customers could vacate the premises by midnight. Failure of compliance could attract suspension of license of the establishment or a penalty of ₹12,000 an hour as late closing fee.



Pranav Singh
President, HRAEI

“If a restaurant with a bar licence wanted to just serve food beyond midnight, it had to take an hour's extension for ₹10,000

HRAEI had raised the issue with Excise Commissioner, Khalid Aizaz Anwar, IAS, who modified the rule at the behest of the industry body and separated the bar from the service area. The change came into effect

on January 15. According to HRAEI, two major issues cropped up while implementing the earlier order. At restaurants/banquets, it became embarrassing to ask customers to leave while they were still eating.

At small hotels, the bar and restaurants operate on common premises. These hotels usually use the premises to organise the next day's breakfast. Since they were to shut by midnight and reopen at 11 am the next day, running the organisation became difficult. The association, however, had informed the Excise Department that there was no problem in closing only the bar by midnight.

Restaurants were perplexed with the 2018 order that linked food to the bar service. Pranav Singh, President of HRAEI, had said in the representation that it was almost impossible for small and medium establishments to realise the steep late closure fee with additional business.

Sudesh Poddar, Honorary Secretary of HRAEI said the earlier regulation was embarrassing as guests had to be forced out by the Cinderella hour.

Singh is optimistic that the relaxation will lead to a 5-8 per cent jump in revenue from food that had taken a 30 per cent hit in the past year.

“Not just during festive days, even on Fridays and Saturdays, we had to clear the tables by midnight. That means taking the last order at 11.15 pm. If a restaurant with a bar licence wanted to just serve food beyond midnight, it had to take an hour's extension for ₹10,000. That did not make business sense as you need to make ₹30,000 during those 60 minutes to make a profit. We are glad the new Excise Commissioner, Khalid Aziz Anwar, IAS, acted on the matter in less than a week after we submitted a representation seeking a rule change,” added Poddar.



MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa Resort, Kalimpong

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The hill town of Kalimpong for its pristine ambience and diverse tourism offerings has always been a paradise for nature lovers. The City which once used to be the hub of Trans-Himalayan trade between India and Tibet shares a fascinating history and a rich culture. It is said that every monument & building at Kalimpong has a story attached to it and so is equally true for the Majestic MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa Resort that now crowns the glory of this beautiful city.

MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa resort with a legacy that dates back to the early 1900s is an exquisitely renovated version of the legendary Himalayan Hotel- the first Hotel of the Darjeeling Hills. Constructed by David Macdonald- the Britain's Political officer in Sikkim, the Himalayan Hotel had to its credit comprehensively transforming the tourism landscape of Kalimpong. From Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Edmund Hillary to Eminent Bollywood & Hollywood actors, the property intricately and passionately managed by the Macdonald & family remained, for over decades, the cherished and celebrated destination of one and all.



With a fascinating history that truly evokes a sense of nostalgia, when the last of the Macdonald decided to call it a day, MAYFAIR stepped in to infuse a new life in this Heritage property. Incorporating its benchmark standards in offering themed Hospitality experiences, MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa Resort has been artistically designed to offer guests a history themed experience of Luxury.

For Nature Lovers who wish to have a luxurious Himalayan experience, MAYFAIR Himalayan Spa Resort is the ultimate address. The Heritage Rooms named after the legends who graced it, the spacious Suites, the elegant Executive Suites, et al at the property promises guests an one-of-its-kind experience of Hospitality that remains a memory for life.

Savor delicious cuisines at Tiffany which also features an outdoor seating facility with breathtaking views of the Kangchenjunga. Treat yourself with the choicest of spirits at the Johnny's Bar named after John Macdonald- the first from the Macdonald family to come to the Kalimpong. Open your taste buds to the lip smacking Himalayan food at Mamma Mia- a bakery shop that serves freshly baked cakes, breads and pastries.

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Accor to eliminate single-use plastics by 2022



Hotel Fairmont Jaipur

Accor has announced its commitment to join the UN Global Tourism Plastics Initiative and to remove all single-use plastic items in guest experience from its hotels by the end of 2022. This action by Accor toward reducing environmental impact and strengthening efforts to combat plastic pollution of the world's oceans and other natural environments is a significant step forward for the global hospitality industry and for the group, which has been committed to sustainability for many years.

"We are aware of the significant impact we have on our planet and our responsibility to create tangible benefits for our employees, guests, suppliers, partners and host communities," said **Sébastien Bazin**, Chairman & CEO, Accor. Welcoming over 120 million guests and

servicing more than 200 million meals each year, Accor takes its role as a responsible corporate citizen to heart, working within the framework of its sustainable development programme for the past 25 years. In addition to Accor's previous commitment to eliminate all plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds, the new commitment includes the removal of individual plastic toiletry amenities and cups by the end of 2020, and the elimination of all remaining single-use plastic items in guest rooms, meeting areas, restaurants and all leisure activities areas (spas, fitness centres, etc.) by the end of 2022. Relevant alternatives to plastic will be proposed for items, considering Life Cycle Assessments to ensure better environmental performance for the solution proposed to Accor's hotels.

44-key Fern Residency opens in Sarnath

The Fern Hotels & Resorts has opened The Fern Residency, Sarnath in Uttar Pradesh. This is the second hotel which the company is managing in the state. The company also manages Howard Plaza



The Fern in Agra. This takes the number of hotels managed by the company to 71 hotels across the country as well as in Nepal and Seychelles. **Suhail Kannampilly**, CEO of The Fern Hotels & Resorts, said, "People visiting Sarnath can look forward to our sustainable hospitality. The Fern brand is going to expand its footprint in North India in a big way in 2020." The Fern Residency, Sarnath is a 44-room hotel situated close to Lord Buddha's sermon site. It offers contemporary rooms in three categories viz. Winter Green, Fern Club and Hazel Suite. All the rooms are equipped with modern facilities such as high-speed Wi-Fi internet, LED television, complimentary bottled drinking water in-room, complimentary in-room tea & coffee facility, digital in-room safe etc.

The rooms are also fitted with eco-friendly room lighting besides having eco-friendly bathroom amenities. The hotel is equipped with multicuisine restaurant, bar, swimming pool, gym, board room, kitty hall and state-of-the-art banqueting facility.

The hotel provides good dining options to the guests. Cilantro is the multi-cuisine restaurant with an open-air section offering Indian, Chinese & Continental cuisines while Tipsytales lounge bar with ample variety of spirits & cocktails is the perfect place to unwind in the evenings.

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IHCL opens 'Taj Fateh Prakash Palace', Udaipur

Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), South Asia's largest hospitality company, has added to its magnificent collection of authentic palaces – Fateh Prakash Palace. Renamed Taj Fateh Prakash Palace, this aesthetic edifice is located within the historic City Palace on the shores of Lake Pichhola in Udaipur; offering panoramic views of the lake, while being surrounded by the Aravalli Hills, Jagmandir Island



and the legendary Taj Lake Palace. With this addition, IHCL emerges as the largest hospitality operator in Udaipur with four hotels. Also, on offer to guests is the exclusive option of hosting glamorous soirees at Jagmandir Island in Lake Pichhola. **Puneet Chhatwal**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL, said, "As custodians of Indian hospitality, it is our privilege and honour to be entrusted with the responsibility of managing Taj Fateh Prakash Udaipur. This addition is an important milestone in our growing portfolio of iconic and luxurious hotels. We remain most grateful to Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar for having reposed his trust in us."

The Taj Fateh Prakash Palace is akin to a living museum with 65 heritage rooms and suites, an award-winning Sunset Terrace restaurant, Surya Darshan bar and boasts one of India's most flamboyant Durbar Hall – a dramatic heritage banquet venue with a show stopping 1,000 kilogram central crystal chandelier. **Shriji Arvind Singh Mewar**, Chairman and Managing Director, The Lake Palace Hotels & Motels, said, "My family has shared a close and fruitful association with IHCL since 1971 – when we commenced our valued relationship with Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur. In 2020, we strengthen our bond through Taj Fateh Prakash Udaipur, which is a significant palace by virtue of having been witness to many a royal function over time."



'YU' opens first hotel in Goa with 32 keys

Located on the bustling street of Candolim just a short distance from the famed beaches of Goa, YU Hotel is the latest entrant to the coastal holiday state. The 32-room hotel designed in warm hues draws inspiration from elements which are unique to the seaside location. YU Hotel offers just the right mix of comfort, luxury and excitement synonymous with Goa. Guests can indulge themselves with fine cuisine and a relaxing experience at the wellness centre which includes jacuzzi baths, gym and therapies at the spa. YU Hotel threw open its doors with the launch of two of its signature international restaurants, Noaa and Spice Mantraa, in India. Having carved a niche for itself with its diverse culinary offerings in Bali, Noaa and Spice Mantraa have now expanded its reach to Goa.

International Chef Richard, Celebrity Chef Shailendra Kekade and Chef Sanjay Kotian have specially curated the menu for the two international restaurants keeping in mind the needs of today's discerning travellers. **K S Ramkrishnan**, the Chairman of Star Alliance Resorts, said, "We are delighted and thrilled to announce the launch of YU Hotel which brings something new and exciting to the area. The hotel is conceptualised with the aim of providing a warm and welcoming space for guests." Yu Hotel is a part of the Star Alliance Resorts LLP and BDC holdings. The genesis of Beyond Dreams Corporation Holdings Inc. (BDC Holdings) was a start-up company and an entrepreneurial zeal for chasing the big dream. BDC Holdings is a multi-million-dollar global conglomerate.

Lords Hotels and Resorts upgrades website



Lords Hotels & Resorts has launched a major refresh of www.lordshotels.com featuring an upgraded design and innovative booking engine. It provides an improved user experience, while reflecting brand values and showcasing exquisite products. The new website is powered by Internet Moghuls, an award-winning hotel digital marketing agency for the hospitality industry. A push notification service has also been included for new special offers.



Choice Hotels opens Comfort Inn Lakhimpur

Choice Hotels has added yet another property, Comfort Inn Lakhimpur, to its fast-growing portfolio. Comfort Inn – a city boutique & business hotel in Lakhimpur, is located at DC Road, Sikatiya, near Saujanya Chowk, which is just 10-minutes away from the railway station. **Vilas Pawar**, CEO of Choice Hotels India, said, "We are committed to offer international experience with world-class services at the best value proposition. We are excited about our association with Comfort Inn Lakhimpur which is the first internationally branded hotel in the city."

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Budget neglects hotels

Regional Presidents share their disappointment with the Union Budget 2020 and wish that the Finance Minister had more to boost the hospitality sector.

Kanchan Nath



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli
President, HRAWI

NO BENEFIT TO HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

This Union Budget, like the preceding budget has neglected the hospitality industry. While the budget allocation of ₹2,500 crore for the tourism sector sounds like it may translate to spill-over benefits for the hospitality sector, we don't have sufficient information about where or how the funds will be used. The increase in the number of Tejas type trains to iconic destinations has the potential to boost travel but alas is vague. The construction of 100 airports is also an encouraging

“Unfortunately, none of the concerns of the industry have been addressed in this budget”

announcement but unless infrastructure is boosted nothing will take place.

INFRASTRUCTURE STATUS REMAINS A PIPE DREAM

We have been expecting reforms in rate slabs of GST, Input Tax Credit (ITC) and a definitive step to boost the domestic and inbound traffic. It has been our long-pending demand to include tourism in the Concurrent list which has not seen the light of the day, nor has hospitality been given infrastructure status.

Unfortunately, none of the concerns of the industry have been addressed in this budget. Neighbouring countries continue to have the advantage of a lower GST, while the hospitality industry which is a major facilitator of jobs in India remains at a disadvantage. Single window clearances for hospitality projects remain a pipe dream, even as hotels continue to face challenging situations.

One positive is the development of five archaeological sites with on-site museums: Rakhigarhi (Haryana), Hastinapur (UP), Shiv Sagar (Assam), Dholavira (Gujarat) and Adishanalloor (Tamil Nadu). ₹4,400 crore allocation is for clean air: Govt proposes to incentivise states that are making plans for ensuring cleaner air.



Pranav Singh
President, HRAEI

INCREASE IN BUDGET FOR TOURISM

The budget allocation of ₹2,500 crore for the tourism sector for financial year 2021 is certainly a commendable decision. Further allocation of ₹3,150 crore for Ministry of Culture is another significant

“No immediate short-term relief has been announced for hospitality enterprises”

step to boost the tourism and hospitality sector in the country. This will help establish the Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation with greater emphasis on the Ude Desh ka Aam Naagrik (UDAN) scheme and introduction of more Tejas trains for iconic destinations. The new proposal to develop five archaeological sites as

iconic destinations along with museums on site should provide a boost to the tourism sector. In the list of proposed sites, we have Shivsagar in the state of Assam.

In addition, a tribal museum is supposed to be set up in Ranchi, Jharkhand. The sites and museum will surely increase footfalls of tourists in eastern India.

NO COMPETITIVE GST RATE

The industry's demand for a competitive GST rate was ignored. Since tourism and hospitality is a labour-intensive industry and generates one of the highest employment rates, taxation should not be more than five per cent.

Most South East Asian countries have low taxation rates for the hospitality industry which helps them attract more tourists than us.

Even though a huge budget has been allocated for tourism, no immediate short-term relief has been announced for hospitality enterprises.

We expected more incentives for new entrepreneurs in the field. Also, we expected that infrastructure status would be accorded to the hospitality industry which is a Capex heavy industry that creates substantial employment.



K. Syama Raju
President, SIHRA

MORE COULD HAVE BEEN DONE FOR TAXES

Budget 2020 held a lot of hope for the hospitality industry. Post the budget, it is clear that there are some positives that would give a boost to the sector. However, there remains a sense that more could have been done with regard to taxation and the long pending demand to accord infrastructure status for the hospitality industry.

“The allocation of ₹2,500 crore for the tourism sector is indeed good news”

The allocation of ₹2,500 crore for the tourism sector is indeed good news as is the allocation of funds to the Ministry of Culture and the proposed plan to set up the first Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation.

One must view these developments positively and look at the larger picture in conjunction with the announcement that another 100 airports would be launched under the UDAN scheme (a regional airport

development and regional connectivity scheme) by 2024 and the launch of the Tejas trains to iconic destinations. All these will have a significant positive impact on the tourism and hospitality industries.

ONUS ON STATES

The proposal to develop five archaeological sites as iconic destinations will help boost tourism. In the South, one such site is at Adichallanur in Thoothukudi district of Tamil Nadu, which dates back to at least 3,000 years ago.

The onus for the development of tourism has been placed on the state governments. They are to identify tourist destinations and share their plans for the development of the location and the financial plans in order to avail of the grants in 2020-21. Therefore, state governments would need



to prioritise this and ensure that they are ready with the necessary details to be able to avail of these grants.

The southern states have well defined tourism policies in place. With a clear plan, these states could well take advantage of the grants for further development.



Surendra Kumar Jaiswal
President, HRANI

EMPHASIS ON CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The Union Budget 2020-21 is a progressive document to ensure economic growth. Measures for enhancing investment climate, boosting transport infrastructure and education and the push towards digitalisation will spur the tourism and hospitality sector. The proposal of earmarking a fund for cleaner air will ensure sustainable

(Uttar Pradesh) amongst the five archaeological sites with on-site museums would put Haryana and UP now on the map of international travellers. This will further strengthen the position of these states on both the inbound and outbound tourism stage.

The planned electrification of 27,000 km of tracks and more Tejas like trains on the cards to connect iconic destinations will certainly inspire new tourism concepts and avenues.

Also, the proposal to establish more airports and monetise 12 lots of highway bundles

“The proposal of earmarking a fund for cleaner air will ensure sustainable living”

living. To set up the first Indian Institute of Heritage and Conservation with the status of a deemed university to be operated under the Ministry of Culture is a welcome move.

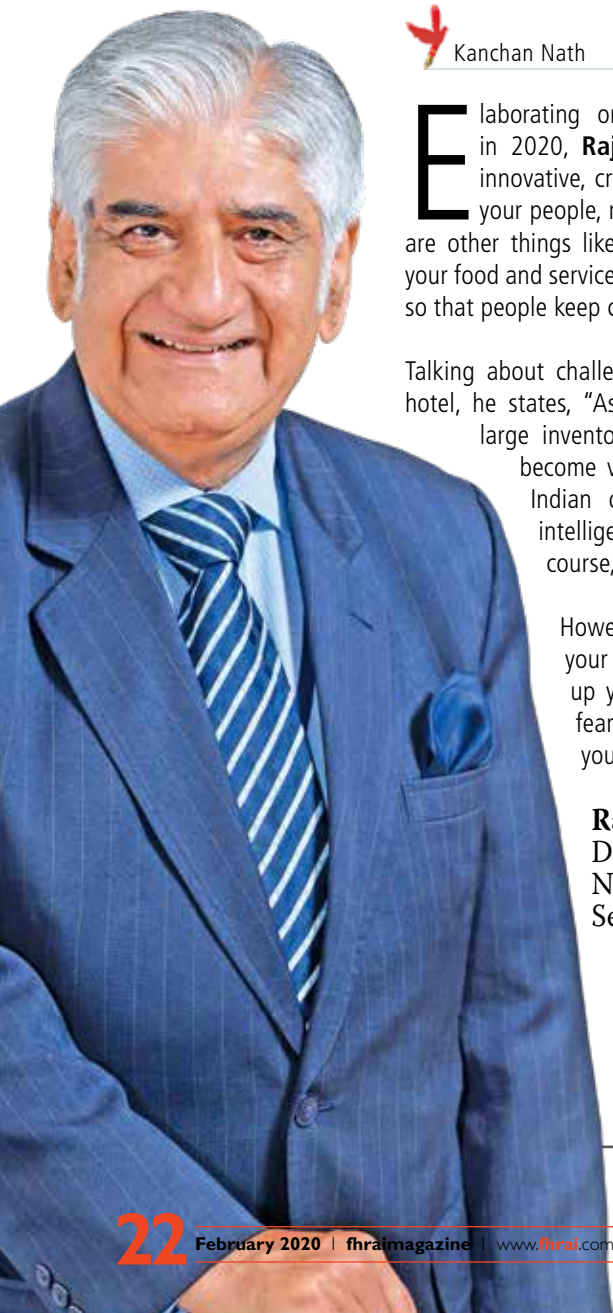
HARYANA & UP TO GET MORE TRAVELLERS

Announcing Rakhigarhi (Haryana) and Hastinapur

of 6,000 km by 2024 will lay the framework for enhancing the attractiveness of India as a tourism destination. The completion of Delhi-Mumbai expressway along with the other projects would also boost tourism and enhance travel and tourism frequency and better connectivity between North and West India.

Running SeleQtions with the Ambassador of hospitality

Veteran hotelier **Rajindera Kumar**, Director, Ambassador, New Delhi IHCL SeleQtions shares trends, challenges, and more about his hotel.



Kanchan Nath

Elaborating on the mantra for hospitality in 2020, **Rajindera Kumar** says, "To be innovative, creative, know your people, love your people, recognise them. However, there are other things like you keep up your standards, your food and service production and your ambience so that people keep coming back to you."

Talking about challenges faced while running the hotel, he states, "As you know the scenario with large inventory of rooms, competition has become very tough. The guest traveller, Indian or international, has become intelligent and seeks the best price. Of course, these are trying times.

However, I strongly believe that if your product is good and you keep up your place, there is nothing to fear. The followers will come to you, no matter what happens. This

Rajindera Kumar
Director, Ambassador,
New Delhi IHCL
SeleQtions



is how we have succeeded in our hotel over the last 70 odd years. In general, in the competitive set we have done well. In terms of occupancy we have done nearly 80-85 per cent. In the competitive set we always come in the second or third position. Our aim is to move to the number one position, with a new look in 2020." On challenges the industry is facing, Kumar says, "Suddenly there is unrest and advisories are issued within the country. Expats are asked not to travel to one place or the other.

These do affect business at large. The main problem was multiplicity and quantum of taxes. To replace that GST was brought in. GST has yet to find the right slot in the hospitality industry. After GST one thought it will go into single quantum, single digit, but it has not come in so far. We are hoping one day this will happen and rationalisation will take place on the GST level." He goes on to add, "Hospitality needs to find its slot as a priority sector, employment generator, foreign exchange earner -- where we have always been eluded and we hope that the right GST level for the hotels and restaurants should come into play so that we can succeed in carrying on our business. However, we want regulation but with freedom." On being among the best, Kumar concludes, "Let the

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In terms of occupancy we at Ambassador have done quite well and are nearly at 80-85 per cent

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competition come, it's a very healthy thing to have. If we can maintain our legacy, our food and service, our production, we have nothing to fear.

Let 20 restaurants come in the neighbourhood, nothing will happen to us. It has been a very successful journey so far and we have never looked back."

TWO DECADES OF LARRY'S CHINA

The iconic Sichuanese restaurant of the hotel is elated to offer a culinary experience to mark the 20-year milestone with a bespoke menu and an all-new ambience. On the restaurant's success, Kumar says, "I am proud to be associated with the Ambassador and we are celebrating two decades of Larry's China's journey. It has been very successful and interesting. The restaurant has enjoyed a huge following. We have been proud of the fact that people not only within the country but also from overseas come back to what has been a favourite place for them. From January onwards we have been celebrating our different cuisines. We are trying to be innovative and creative, trying to offer whatever our travellers

“

Hospitality needs to find its slot as a priority sector, employment generator & FE earner

”

want. We want them to know that they will always get whatever they are looking for here." Opened in 1997, Larry's China is a premier Chinese restaurant at Ambassador, New Delhi IHCL SeleQtions.

The re-designed Larry's China traces the intricacies of the Chinese culture between the 19th and 20th centuries through the lens of notable photographer, Larry Corrington. The restaurant revels in the essence of their life by fusing wooden pagodas, lanterns, fabric colours, and other light wooden work into the new setting. The culinary festivities with Executive Chef Sanjeev Chopra, and his team, who will be curating exquisite delicacies that have won over the hearts of its patrons for the last two decades.



Picture courtesy: Bharatahs (Wikipedia)

Airport entry pass: Essential for hotels

Hoteliers share how abolishing issuance of commercial Airport Entry Pass (AEP) will adversely impact hotels and employment.



Souvagya Mohapatra

Souvagya Mohapatra
Executive Director, Mayfair
Hotels and Resorts

CHALLENGING SITUATION

The decision of abolishing the commercial Airport Entry Pass (AEP) couldn't have come at a much worse time. The economic slowdown fuelled by the all-time low consumer demand has had an impact on the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. It was further aggravated by the ongoing nationwide protests in the peak business season, i.e., November to February, following which various countries issued travel advisories that led to considerable decline in foreign tourists' arrivals and now this decision only adds to the already challenging situation.

SEAMLESS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

It will be worth mentioning here that commercial AEPs were issued only to four-star and above category

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Commercial AEPs were issued only to four-star hotels to facilitate a seamless arrival/departure of guests

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Picture courtesy: Kondephy (Wikipedia)

hotels to enable them to facilitate a seamless arrival/departure of the guests. For a property to be classified as a four/five-star hotel, it has to conform to a number of regulatory policy prescriptions in which, inter alia, verification of staff's antecedents by a competent authority is mandatory.

Over and above this, the commercial AEPs were issued to the hotels after a thorough vetting by a select committee comprising of officials of Airport Authority of India (AAI), Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) and the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF). With such a credible and unflinching mechanism in place, the

concerns of security, if any, were decisively allayed and in this light, the decision to abolish AEPs is surprising as well as arbitrary.

ADVERSE IMPACT ON COMPETITIVENESS

Around 2 lakh people have been employed by various industry stakeholders to facilitate the check-in & check-out of tourists and travellers and this decision will eventually lead to a loss of livelihood for a major chunk of them apart from taking a toll on the image of India as a tourist-friendly country. This is even more surprising given the notable initiatives undertaken by the Central Government in the recent past to position tourism and travel as a major engine of economic growth. In the luxury segment, the service begins the moment the guest lands and this is a rule that is generally followed across the globe.

However, on many parameters we lag behind considerably vis-à-vis our peers and competitors, and this move will further dent our competitiveness by considerably impacting the service standards of the industry, more so in the eastern and Northeastern parts of the country, which of late, have been witnessing rapid tourism growth. Industry associations have voiced their concerns and I believe that the government will do



Picture courtesy: Ramesh NG (Wikipedia)

“
AEP guidelines will have serious consequences including security risk to tourists
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the needful to address the issues at the earliest. Though much has been done, our tourism potential remains untapped. Post this decision, instituting a multi-sectoral Empowered Tourism Committee that comprises of members from Tourism, Civil Aviation, External Affairs and Finance Ministry may bring about coherency in our tourism promotion efforts and ensure that the efforts undertaken by one department are not negated by an adverse decision of some other department.



Sudesh Poddar

Sudesh Poddar
EC Member, FHRAI

SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES

The issuance of commercial AEP to hotels is not a security concern as the hotels follow strict SOPs to obtain the commercial AEP from the Airport Authority of India which comprises BCAS verification and AVSEC certification including approval or classification from Ministry of Tourism, Government of India and certification of FHRAI and its four regional associations. The permit is issued after thorough scrutiny of applications by the AEP committee which has officials from AAI, BCAS and CISF. The new AEP guidelines will have serious consequences including security risk to tourists. The decision will lead to substantial lay-offs and job terminations across hotels at pan-India level, thereby worsening the unemployment situation in the country. This new practice will also hurt tourism.

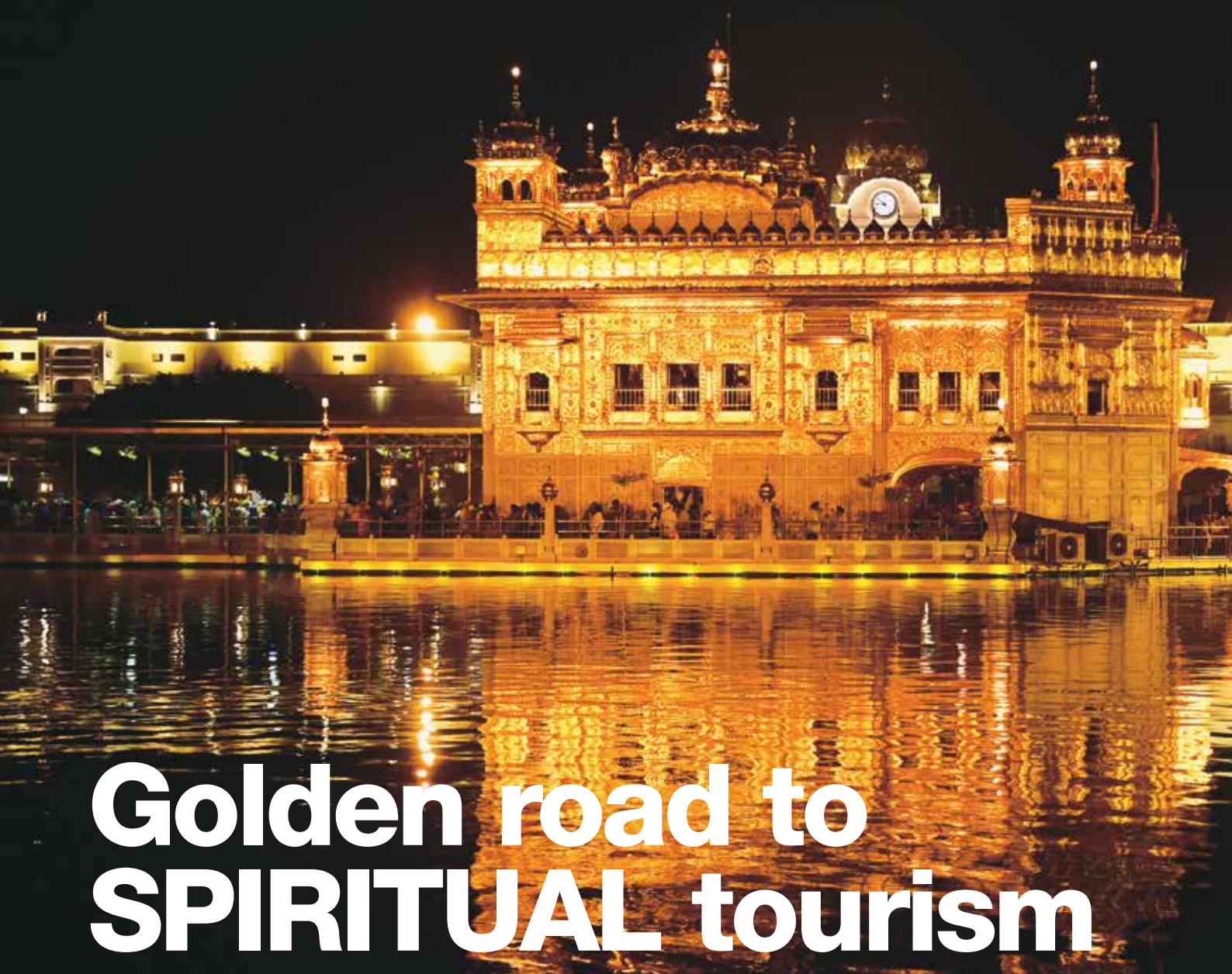
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Golden road to SPIRITUAL tourism

The divinity and pilgrim trails for Indian travellers have held a huge potential from yore. Millennials can be tapped in this segment to help them revisit their cultural routes.

India, with its diverse culture and numerous religions, is a goldmine when it comes to spiritual tourism. The avenue for spiritual tourism in the nation is wide and deep, and the tourism and hospitality sector is putting this diversity to use.

India is widely known for its spiritual and religion-based tourism. A lot of people from both within and outside the country go on many pilgrimages throughout the year. There are tourist schemes and circuits for every religion, one among them being Sikhism.

Sikhism is a religion that emerged in the Indian subcontinent in the 15th century and is now the fourth largest religion in the country. Also, Sikhism happens to be one of the youngest of the major world religions & the globe's fifth largest organised religion. It is the world's ninth largest overall religion as well. The core beliefs of Sikhism, which are outlined in the sacred scripture, Guru Granth Sahib, include faith &

meditation on the name of the one creator, engaging in selfless service, striving for justice for the benefit and prosperity of all, divine unity and equality of all humankind, and honest conduct and livelihood while living a householder's life.

The Sikh gurus taught that by constantly remembering the divine name and through selfless service a devotee can overcome egoism. Service in Sikhism comprises of three forms – physical, mental and material. The religion emphasises on 'honest work' and the concept of sharing – giving to the needy for the benefit of the community.

Sikh tourism is a rapidly growing category under spiritual and religion-based tourism. There are a great number of gurudwaras in India which attract high footfalls throughout the year from across the globe. The most sacred Sikh pilgrim visited sites, called 'Takhts', are located in various parts of the country. Sri Harmandir Sahib (Sri Akal Takht Sahib)



Himanshu Talwar



Picture courtesy: Shagil Kannur (Wikipedia)

and road infrastructure, and increased security. Such measures have let Sikh pilgrims visit all the sacred Takhts and gurdwaras which are scattered in different states across the country.

The state of Punjab has a profound cultural background and rich heritage, along with numerous Sikh places of worship, museums, natural wonders

Picture courtesy: Bijay Chaurasia (Wikipedia)



Sikh tourism is an extremely engaging and popular category in spiritual and religious tourism

at Amritsar, Sri Hazoor Sahib at Nanded, Sri Patna Sahib at Patna, Sri Damdama Sahib at Bhatinda and Sri Keshgarh Sahib at Anandpur attract the maximum number of pilgrims.

SERVICES AND FACILITIES

To specifically cater to the Sikh pilgrims, the tourism and hospitality sector has been offering a lot of services and facilities in and around the gurdwaras. There are numerous tour packages available, which include facilities like booking tickets for Air/ Rail/ local transport, attendants to accompany the aged, 24x7 medical facilities, food (langar), etc. for people from all walks of life and religions.

There are several hotels around all of the famous Sikh places of worship and pilgrim sites, and hospitality industry professionals ensure that the pilgrims are offered the best of the services at a reasonable cost. To further boost this avenue of Sikh tourism, both Central and state governments have taken initiatives such as the development of the airports in nearby cities, upgraded the railways

and resources. Various schemes and customised packages make things easy as well as comfortable for pilgrims while they go to the state and/or around the country visiting and worshipping different places in single or multiple trips. This has also helped in increasing the interest of tourists, resulting in the overall growth of tourism and hospitality industry.

Overall, Sikh tourism is an extremely engaging and popular category in spiritual and religious tourism. Due to the services and facilities that are being provided with even more innovative ideas and dedicated efforts, a lot of pilgrims are more than likely to be attracted to visit the sites.

With the government and hospitality industry working hand-in-hand to support the pilgrims and travellers, such initiatives are a welcome move and will surely boost Sikh tourism potential immensely.

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



Hospitality route to brighten **Brand India**

Various countries have issued travel advisories against travelling in India due to changes in the political and social scenario. Hoteliers share how to rejuvenate Brand India.



Kanchan Nath

Vibhas Prasad
Owner, Leisure Hotels Group



Vibhas Prasad

PROMOTING THE BEST OFFERINGS

The focus needs to be taken off from what is wrong, and we need to market the sum total of experiences the country has to offer. One needs to focus on tourism, marketing destinations aggressively, bringing out the ethos of heritage & cultural tourism, Ayurveda and encouraging medical tourism etc. We are not seeing anything different from what we come across in various other countries, whether it is political or whether there are incidents. These should not take away from the fact that India is a growing tourism destination with much more to offer.

“

Focus on marketing destinations aggressively, bringing out the ethos of heritage & cultural tourism

”

HOTEL TRENDS FOR 2020

Going green and eco-friendly, reduction of plastic, recycling and efficient waste management & environmental sustainability will get bigger. Alternative accommodation will be growing more than before and we will see changes in this segment with newer offerings.

Technology will again see further progress and will adapt to growing requirements in multiple facets of the industry. Traveller preferences & experiences will become more dominant as we move ahead.

The continued growth of the wedding business segment, the increase of boutique, small inventory experiential resorts is a growing trend. There is also going to be a renewed focus on total revenue management.

Shiladitya Mukherjee

Sr. Area General Manager

SK Lords Eco Inn Ahmedabad, Lords Inn Jodhpur, Lords Eco Inn Dahej, Lords Eco Inn Gandhidham, Lords Plaza Ankleshwar and Rang Lords Inn Bharuch



Shiladitya Mukherjee

STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

India is fast gaining popularity as a tourism destination amidst inbound travellers. As India is adding more feathers to its cap, it's upon us to help maintain it as a flourishing tourist destination. To change the current situation the government should strengthen its sustainability initiatives like energy conservation, recycling and waste reduction, water conservation, installation of low flush toilets etc.

To ensure safety and security of tourists, especially women travellers, measures like building good quality roads, constructing public restrooms on highways and petrol stations should be adopted.

a trend now. Hotels are looking to offer the best products in the market to their patrons.

Luxury hospitality brands in particular are putting their best foot forward to collaborate with reputed service providers for in-house services and branded merchandise. Self-check-in service through kiosks and mobiles are gaining popularity among the top



Partnership with reputed brands for a variety of exclusive services & merchandise is a trend now



HOSPITALITY TRENDS 2020

The hospitality industry is increasingly competitive, and India is a tourism powerhouse. With emerging technologies and rising guests' expectations continually shaping it, it's important to keep up with the latest trends. Majority of guests today are self-sufficient, tech-savvy travellers who are comfortable using apps or mobile websites.

Hotels need to make sure their offerings are up-to-date and user-friendly. At business meetings and conferences, travellers expect hotels to have high quality tech equipment and a knowledgeable support staff. Partnership with reputed brands for a variety of exclusive services and merchandise is also

hospitality industry trends. With the implementation of such services in hotels, guests can easily find whether their room is ready, make requests for amenities, check their bills, update their preferences and do a lot more. If you want to survive in today's scenario, it's important to be up-to-date with market analytics and information on the latest technology available in the market.

Taking on sustainable initiatives has always been beneficial in the long run for hotels. One of the fastest growing and leading mid-segment hotel chains in India and Nepal, Lords Hotels & Resorts has become an eminent name in a span of 10 years since its inception.



A day at the spa

Hoteliers share the trends and latest offerings that hotel spas are providing for wellness and the 'wow factor' that they leave guests with.

 Kanchan Nath



Prateek Sharma

Prateek Sharma
General Manager, Lords Inn Somnath

LATEST TRENDS

Hammam beds, mud therapy, saunas are becoming increasingly popular because people are rediscovering their health benefits.

POPULAR TREATMENTS

Swedish massage increases the blood supply and nutrients to the muscles, besides alleviating arthritis.

RELEVANCE OF SPA

The spa in our hotel has witnessed a growth of

“

The spa in our hotel has witnessed a growth of around 25 per cent as compared to last year

”



around 25 per cent as compared to last year. We promoted our spa through promotional e-mailers, newspaper ads and write-ups.

RELAX IN NO TIME

Foot massage with a special balm relieves stress and tension in feet, increases blood supply and improves energy and alertness.

Varun Nishant
 Operations Manager
 Top3 Lords Resort, Bhavnagar



TRENDS AND MORE

The new trend is to go on vacation to a spa hotel and enjoy daily treatments. Spacation can include active leisure, health-promoting exercise packages and authentic dining experiences. Lords Hotels and Resorts have a selection of packages that consist of massages, saunas and baths.

QUICK RELAXATION

From relaxing Swedish massages that soothe tired muscles to healing with ambient music, Aleenta Spa at Top3 Lords Resort has varied options to keep body and mind in good health.

MOST POPULAR TREATMENTS

Hot stone massage is the most popular massage at Aleenta Spa. In hot stone massage, smooth, rounded basalt stones are heated in water. The heat helps warm up muscles and is also very relaxing.

SPA GROWTH

The spa in our hotel has witnessed a growth of 15 to 20 per cent as compared to last year. We promoted

our spa through e-mail marketing, social media promotions, mass messaging etc.

TOP3 LORDS RESORT, BHAVNAGAR

An elegantly designed property with top class service round-the-clock, Top3 Lords Resort, Bhavnagar, has a 24/7 cafe serving beverages and snacks. Bhavnagar is one of the first cities to get an airport in the state of Gujarat. One can find quite a few places which are unique to this city and a must-visit, such as, the Blackbuck National Park, Palitana, the pilgrimage for Jains, a modern Akshar temple and others.



Varun Nishant

“ Spacation can include leisure, health-promoting exercise packages and dining experiences ”

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All our Equipments are 100% Indigenous **MADE IN INDIA** with complete service back up, High Quality, Exclusive Designs, Energy Saving & Low Maintenance. AKASA gives you more than you pay for.

Koil cosy with King

With King Koil you can be assured of well-being with the promise of good sleep. **Archit Gupta**, Director, King Koil, shares more about the company and trends in the segment.



Archit Gupta

Kindly share the USP of your company. What kind of growth have you had in the last five years?

King Koil is a leading global mattress brand and one of the preferred brands for major hotel chains worldwide. We focus on our key USP of customising as per hotel chain specifications with the use of highest quality raw materials which provide better sleep experience to hotel customers along with high product durability.

What are the new trends in terms of mattresses for the hospitality industry in India?

New trends for mattresses include use of 'no flip' technology with Euro-top or Pillow-top construction that saves effort by housekeepers as there is no need to flip mattresses after regular intervals. Also, these constructions provide more comfort and durability as compared to flip mattress technology.

Kindly elaborate on the new offering that you have come up with for the hospitality industry.

We have recently introduced a special model, Roman Luxury, for luxury/boutique hotels and resort properties. This model is made with pocketed springs as the core along with a combination of HR foam and Memory foam in Euro-top construction. Since a year we have been supplying this model which is liked immensely by customers.

What are your targets for 2020?

We have been growing at 30-35 per cent CAGR in the hospitality industry of India in the last five years and will continue to see the same growth in the year 2020.

King Koil, a heritage name in the mattress industry globally, was established in 1898. King Koil is not only loved by customers but is recommended by doctors. King Koil has presence in over 100 countries, and each country has state-of-the-art manufacturing unit, to give its customers nothing but the best. No matter where you are, King Koil's quality is unparalleled and has stood the test of time.

“

We have been growing at 30-35 per cent CAGR in the hospitality industry in the last five years

”



The background of the advertisement features a row of white lounge chairs with cushions, each under a large white patio umbrella. The scene is set outdoors, likely at a resort or hotel poolside, with greenery and a building visible in the background. The lighting suggests a bright, sunny day.

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Coffee solutions with Kaapi

Kaapi Solutions, a one-stop solution for coffee business in India, was started by **Vikram Khurana**. Here's how his company has been helping cafes & hotels serve that perfect cup of coffee to clients.



Storm

HIGHLIGHTS-CT8

- Variable Pressure System (VPS)
- HACCP certified
- Clean in Place (CIP)
- Integrated Instant Mode
- Warm or cold milk
- Automatic readjustments

Vikram Khurana, CEO of Kaapi Solutions, winner of the silver medal at World Barista Championship 2002, Oslo, and a certified Arabica Q grader, feels that the biggest challenges that a hotel faces are availability of good technology, trained manpower and many times good specialty coffee beans or powder that can be served either as espresso-based beverages or through alternate brewing methods. According to him, the following few technologies available in India, can help serve a great cup of coffee in specialty cafes, hotels and even high-end corporates depending upon the complexity of operations.

STORM

Storm is a competition machine that guarantees

total control of the manual dispensing of mono-origin coffee and, at the same time, is suitable for use according to memorised brewing curves, which can enhance perfume and aromatic notes constantly. The Barista Attitude anti-scald and cantilevered steam wand offers great safety and easy return movement to the basin, in case of inactivity. Super Dry is the innovative system that keeps the steam dry and with minimum initial condensation, guaranteed by a solenoid valve placed in the discharge. A reduced quantity of humid steam is discharged at 110°C in order to guarantee the presence of dry steam ready for use.

'HYbrid' FROM THE HOUSE OF BRAND ASTORIA

HYbrid is the link between traditional espresso machines and super-automatic models, a solution that simplifies what can only be carried out by the expert hands of a professional Barista. This high-tech espresso machine integrates the typical grinding, dosing and compressing steps of super-automatic coffee machines, yielding excellent results even in the hands of inexperienced Baristas or users.

MELITTA CAFINA CT8

The fully automatic coffee machine, Melitta Cafina CT8, meets the highest demands with regard to performance and ease of use. Excellent coffee is always possible, round the clock, seven days a week. With Melitta Cafina CT8 you are always equipped for continuous operation and peak demand. A major customer in the food service industry was the inspiration for this top model. Their requirements for performance, ease of use, beverage variety, and quality in the cup set the course for developers to come up with Melitta Cafina CT8.



Melitta Cafina CT8



'HYbrid' from the house of brand Astoria

“

HYbrid is the link between traditional espresso machines and super-automatic models

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Amusement Expo 2020: Feb 26-28

The three-day exhibition is supported by Ministry of Tourism, Gol. **Sohansinh Jadeja**, President – IAAPI, shares what's in store for those who attend.

What are the highlights of Amusement Expo 2020?

The event by Indian Association of Amusement Parks and Industries (IAAPI) is hailed as India's only focussed B2B event for the Amusement, Theme Park, Indoor Amusement Centre sector.

Over 150+ exhibitors from India and across 18 countries including Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Kuwait, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Taiwan, Turkey, UAE, United Kingdom and USA will be displaying their products and services for the above sector.

The event will provide an excellent networking platform with decision makers from India and overseas which will include – park and FEC operators, resort owners, real estate & mall developers, and allied professionals connected to the amusement and leisure industry. Concurrently the National Awards for Excellence 2020 will be presented for new endeavours within the amusement & entertainment industry. Over 4,000 business professionals from India and neighbouring countries are expected to visit the event.

What kind of tie-ups can hotels and restaurants have with amusement parks?

Tie-ups with hotels and food brands are win-win situations for both the segments. A lot of amusement

parks and indoor amusement centres wish to associate with major food and hotel brands as F&B goes hand-in-hand with entertainment. Around 30 to 35 per cent of revenue is generated through F&B. Families always try to opt for a variety of foods other than the traditional foods during their visit to amusement parks. Therefore, it is always better to tie-up with F&B specialists as operating an amusement park along with F&B is a challenge.

What is your major plan for 2020?

Safety is the most important aspect in the amusement industry. Therefore, to promote and safeguard the interests of the Indian amusement industry the association is working closely with BIS in setting safety standards. These standards will help the manufacturers as well as park operators to follow all standard operating procedures.

This will ensure that the quality of raw materials used in equipment adhere to all safety specifications. To create more awareness, IAAPI is organising a safety conclave & regional training programme to keep our members abreast of the trends.



Sohansinh Jadeja

GROWTH STATS

Indian amusement and theme park industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of more than 30 % with annual revenue of ₹2,261 cr. (USD 315 million) and is estimated to grow to at least ₹6,250 cr. (USD 884 million) by 2022



The overall amusement industry (indoor included) was ₹5261 cr (USD 763 million) in 2018



Raising the bar at 3rd edition of IHE

To be held from August 5-8, 2020, the third edition of IHE is aiming to be the ultimate go-to show for hospitality and F&B businesses across the globe.



Rakesh Kumar

While the second edition held in 2019 became the largest exposition in South Asia celebrating hospitality, F&B, and more, the third edition is all set to become synonymous with the future of hospitality. IHE 2019 witnessed over 30,000 attendees and 900+ exhibitors, making it a grand success with participation from countries like Indonesia, Canada, Peru, Ecuador, El Salvador, Italy, Chile, Myanmar, Vietnam and New Zealand.

On being asked about his vision for IHE 2020, **Rakesh Kumar**, Chairman, IEML & DG, EPCH,

said, "It is our goal to make IHE 2020 the greatest hospitality show not just in India, but across the globe." While building a platform for global brands to showcase their new tech, innovation, and more, IHE has also rapidly become a platform that celebrates MSMEs and their unmatched contribution to the hospitality industry.

IHE 2020 aims to bring together hospitality professionals, students, and experts under one roof to share knowledge, learn about innovation, and expand their horizons. The event encompasses everything about hospitality including F&B, Housekeeping, Management, and more. One can expect to witness gastronomic experiences of a lifetime, impressive product demos, and the who's who of hospitality taking masterclasses, presenting research, and partaking in panel discussions with eminent speakers and industry leaders. The 2020 event is expected to grow in terms of business volume generated and the number of exhibitors and visitors. There is also an expected rise in the number of conferences, panel discussions, keynotes, and masterclasses, which only means more immersive learning for the attendees.

Speaking about the scale of IHE 2019, **Vineet Bhatia**, Michelin Star Chef and Restaurateur said, "I think it's a great event to have. Platforms like these showcase Indian hospitality at its finest. This is, by far, the largest expo of this kind. There are beautiful products, great for sourcing, and great for networking too. I am honoured to be here."

Zorawar Kalra, MD, Massive Restaurants, said, "We need more and more events like this. I think something on this scale has rarely been done. This is truly next level. I have seen such incredible exhibitors putting up their products, people from all over the world, and I've seen the best of India being represented at IHE 2019."

With such an overwhelming response from the hospitality and F&B Industry, the organisers, India Exposition Mart Limited, are gearing up to raise the bar a lot higher in making IHE the most sought-after hospitality and F&B expo in the world.

“

It is our goal to make IHE 2020 the greatest show not just in India, but across the globe

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In tune with nature

In an interview, **Pawan Kumar**, Resort Manager, Cabo Serai, shares more about this exotic resort in Goa, which offers magnificent coastal views amidst tranquil environs.

 Kanchan Nath



Pawan Kumar

Kindly share the USP of the resort. How is it a haven for nature lovers?

The USP of Cabo Serai is rejuvenation and tranquility, while keeping in tune with the harmony of nature. From freshly sourced organic ingredients in our kitchen, to ancient Indian yoga and Ayurveda therapy, we focus on giving our guests an experience that embodies magnificent coastal views along with a measure of complete relaxation and peace.

We also make sure our guests experience the best of Goa's natural world by offering them ethical and non-intrusive dolphin watching, nature walks, bird watching, camping under the stars, private meals and sundowners, amongst so much more.

“

At Cabo Serai, the expected ARR for the six-month period from October to March 2020 is ₹12,000 ”

What has been your occupancy, ARRs and RevPAR for 2019 and what are your targets for 2020?

Cabo Serai started commercial operations in October 2019. The ARR for the three months ending December 2019 was approximately ₹11,500. Expected ARR for the six-month period from October to March 2020 is ₹12,000.

What are the sustainable policies that your resort follows?

Built on the grounds of sustainability, all our rooms are sea-facing whilst also being nestled in the privacy of a flourishing forest. The material used to build our cottages all lie within the regulations of the coastal regulation zone (CRZ) guidelines and are hence environmentally friendly. Supporting local trade is an important part of our philosophy. A considerable amount of our décor is sourced from local craftsmen, giving our rooms indigenous and tasteful detailing. Our organic fruits, vegetables, grains, and sea food are also



at Cabo Serai

sourced from local and fair-trade suppliers, who provide us with the freshest produce in its most wholesome and natural form. Our resort is also a no single-use plastic zone, which is integral to our ethos as an eco-conscious marine resort.

What is the tourism and hospitality growth in your part of Goa?

Tourism in South Goa has increased substantially over the last few years. There is a distinct move from tourists to stay at South Goa hotels and resorts to experience tranquility, less crowds, less noise and far better beaches and scenery as compared to North Goa. Growth estimates in South Goa are approximately 10 per cent per year.

How do you see the present status of the Indian hospitality sector?

The Indian hospitality sector is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, estimated at around 15 to 20 per cent a year. This is mainly on account of the large increase in domestic tourism.

The Indian middle class is growing substantially every year with a big increase in disposable income. There are challenges which have been prevailing for many years, for instance, poor infrastructure especially when

it comes to roads, airport facilities, toilet facilities and taxi services.

What are the challenges that hoteliers are facing in terms of government policies in Goa? What would you like to see changed or improved?

Challenges faced by hoteliers regarding government policies in Goa are mainly connected to government approvals and permissions.

“

Basic infrastructure like electricity, water and connecting roads should be made available

”

A great deal of time and money is wasted in getting approvals compounded with corruption. Also, some restrictions on operating are not justified. The government must have a one window system where any new ventures in the tourism or hospitality industry are looked into on a priority basis and permissions are given in reasonable time from one source. Basic infrastructure like electricity, water and connecting roads should be made available.

The Art of Spice



If you want to enjoy traditional flavours of the North Indian cuisine, then you must visit the newly opened fine dining restaurant – Spice Art in Crowne Plaza Greater Noida.

 Kanchan Nath

Serving authentic North Indian food, Spice Art offers a handpicked menu of culinary delights from Awadhi and Mughlai cuisines covering regions of Punjab, Delhi and Lucknow. Spice Art is led by 'Master of Spice' Chef Hardev Singh known for his delicious and robust Punjabi cuisine preparations along with Awadhi cuisine expert Chef Kaleem Qureshi who brings forth a lineage of culinary expertise in his field. Together, the two master chefs bring close to seven decades of culinary accomplishments to Spice Art. The menu is a handpicked selection by the two chefs, dotted with their respective signature dishes for guests to relish.

MUGHLAI, AWADHI AND PUNJABI FLAVOURS

Telling us more about the restaurant's cuisine, **Hardev Singh**, Master Chef, Spice Art, Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, states, "First of all I welcome all to come and visit this restaurant in Greater Noida. Spice Art offers authentic North Indian Mughlai cuisine. Also, many

“

At Spice Art we take pleasure in playing with different spices to bring out the best of flavours

”





Punjabi cuisines hail from royal dynasties. All the food we are serving is the regular food that was served to the royalty. Crowne Plaza Greater Noida is well known for their amazing F&B offerings. Nowadays chefs have become the face of the restaurant. People know F&B now because of the chefs."

SHIKANJVI FROM MODI NAGAR

Elucidating on the tale of the 'Shikanjvi' from Modi Nagar, Chawla says, "Anyone entering the restaurant will be served the authentic *Shikanjvi*. It is an Indian spice mix served with lime and sugar. The beverage is traditional to the town of Modi Nagar (on the Meerut-Dehradun bypass) in UP. We sent our bartender and manager to learn about the authentic recipe of the beverage. They have tried to retain the original flavour of *Shikanjvi*."

ON THE KOREAN FOOD TRAIL

Crowne Plaza Greater Noida is SW Asia's biggest Crowne Plaza. There are very few Korean restaurants in the country and the hotel is one of the few to offer authentic Korean cuisine. This cuisine is becoming very popular with expats,



Amit Chawla



Chefs have become the face of the restaurant. People know F&B because of the chefs



dishes from the Awadhi cuisine are being offered. These include *Galotti Kabab*, *korma*, gravies. We are serving 100 per cent authentic food, there is no fusion or confusion in the same. We source our spices directly from the mandi and they are handpicked. We prepare and refine the ground masalas ourselves. Our specialty is that since it's a Spice Art restaurant, we take pleasure in playing with different spices to bring out the best of flavours. Our kebabs are delicious as is the *korma*. Another specialty is the 'Do Din ki Dal' which is cooked on a slow fire for 48 hours and served on the third day. Whoever likes traditional authentic flavours, once they try the food here, they will come again and again."

Elaborating on the F&B offerings of the hotel, **Amit Chawla**, Director of Food and Beverage, Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, says, "We have an all-day dining restaurant which serves a la carte and buffet for all three meal periods. The name is Mosaic multi-cuisine restaurant. Then we have the only Belgian Beer Café in the country that serves an array of liquors. Then there is Chao Bella, our Italian & Chinese restaurant. We have recently opened Spice Art where the concept is to be as authentic as possible. Mughlai, Awadhi and

people working in Samsung and those interacting with them.

A HOLISTIC EXPERIENCE

The centrepiece of each dining table is 'Tattva' – a golden dome that represents truth and authenticity as key elements of what is offered at Spice Art.

The interiors at Spice Art exude understated elegance. Done up in dark wood with gold accents and large bay windows, the restaurant will soon be an unmatched destination for fine dining and authentic North Indian cuisine in NCR. The show kitchen, studded with glittering copper tandoors, allows a view of expert hands at work. The restaurant's comfortable seating with warm lighting will equally match the mood for a celebratory dinner or a cozy rendezvous. The cuisine is truthful to its origins and authentic in preparation to ensure guests experience only the finest. Some must-try signature dishes on the menu include *Galouti Kebab*, *Khumb Kaju ki Gilawat*, *Kakori Kebab*, *Nalli Nihari*, *Do Din ki Daal*, *Murgh Makhani*, *Lucknowi Gosht Biryani* and more. Live ghazal singing will further accentuate the soul satisfying dining experience at Spice Art.

THE SPICE ART

- **Open daily for dinner:** 7 pm – 11 pm
- **Live music** every evening except Tuesdays
- **Average meal for two** – ₹2500, taxes extra



Elanpro: Not a disruptor, but a Differentiator

Elanpro has been working towards bringing state-of-the-art technology for the Indian market. **Sanjay Jain**, Director, Elanpro, shares more about the company's plans.

STAYING AHEAD OF NEW CONSUMER TRENDS

At Elanpro, we aim at providing products that not only have a high ROI but are available at competitive rates. Another area which has been working to our advantage is the innovative product portfolio that meets eccentric demands of the HoReCa sector. Staying ahead of new consumer trends is our motto. We have always concentrated on meeting customer needs. In lieu of the same, we launched an array of technologically advanced products that can help our customers optimise – whether they're looking to improve energy efficiency, reduce their environmental footprint, or simply reach new levels of performance.

CSR: NEED OF THE HOUR

Fighting hunger and reducing food waste is the need of the hour. Recently, the Global Hunger Index

2019 placed India at the 102nd position among 117 countries, behind many South Asian countries and neighbours like Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Nepal. As many as 1.3 million children die of hunger annually in India. More than 53 per cent of women between the ages of 15-49 have anaemia. Hunger has killed more people globally than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined. Concerned about this issue, Elanpro has been functioning towards aiding NGOs working to reduce hunger amongst the underprivileged.

Recently, Elanpro attempted to help 12 budding NGOs registered as IFSA, FSSAI's Save Food, Share Food initiative. Apart from this, Elanpro has been working in various thrust areas to reduce food wastage and kill hunger with various initiatives, helping to feed people from various walks of life.

GREEN WAY

Eco-consciousness is a trend today. We are witnessing a surge in demand of environment-friendly products as the entire industry is scheduled to move away from R-134A or R404A to R290 or R600. We were the first ones in this segment to introduce R290 in 2012-13 when we introduced products for the brand Pepsi.

However, India has been slow to adapt to this technology because of its challenges including services. Looking at other smart modernisms, basic improvement in technology has been introduced to bring down the utility costs and to improve on the aesthetics appeal aspect. So far, India was struggling with the locally manufactured equipment, from which



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We have been constantly introducing products which help reduce carbon footprint

”



Sanjay Jain

we are now upgrading to international standards. If you look at the confectionery showcase, there was static cooling which was very unpleasant back then wherein you could see ice lying around the food and unhygienic conditions. Now we have started moving to frost-free technology with front-heated glass to ensure that there is zero condensation to give better visibility aesthetics. Apart from the same, modern-day LED-based fridge lighting system has many advantages over conventional fridge lighting. An LED system is much smaller and takes up much lesser space than a bulb-based lighting system thereby sprucing up the usable space of your refrigerator.

LED based lighting systems emit up to 10 times lesser heat than ordinary bulbs, this means that cooling efficiency and temperature swings inside the fridge will be highly optimised. Also, this technology consumes up to 20 times less power and is up to 26 times more durable than conventional lighting bulbs. These days modern-day digital inverter compressors come with fewer friction points which reduces the decibel levels by up to 25 per cent. We have been constantly introducing products which help reduce carbon footprint.

TRENDS: WATCH OUT FOR THESE

The recent trends and statistics of the industry as well as improving domestic macroeconomic data suggest the road ahead will bring higher room revenues and profit margins for the hotels industry in the country. With the growing number of hotel chains, we are witnessing an increased demand for kitchen and bar refrigeration range. Apart from that ice machines, frozen yogurt and ice cream vending machines are also expected to see promising growth with changing food consumption habits. We are witnessing gigantic



Our products are equipped with latest advancements in cooling and refrigeration technologies



innovation in the refrigeration industry. The sudden spurt in the demand for smaller freezers can well be credited to the space-issues faced by most of the retailers. A small footprint and versatile, lightweight design, is the need of hour.

UPCOMING PLANS

Pioneering approaches across the refrigeration industry focusing on energy efficiency, storage, user friendliness etc. are mushrooming. We will continue introducing variants of eye-catching styles and cutting-edge technology, economical solutions for safe storage and display. Addressing the increasing need for doorstep delivery of cold items, Elanpro introduced Mobile Freezer for the delivery platforms and cloud kitchens. This product can be mounted onto a two-wheeler and can be run on a battery or a solar panel. We plan to focus on this product. Our products are equipped with the latest advancements in cooling and refrigeration technologies. We plan to continue providing comprehensive and customisable solutions that utilise connected technologies to envelop an entire operation and ensure optimal performance and protection.

If we talk about business, it was better as compared to previous years. We witnessed a 25 per cent growth as compared to last year. In addition to this, last year the company also entered foreign markets like Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

Kempinski's Lady in Red celebrates 10th anniversary

Providing a genuinely personalised and intuitive guest experience based on cultural empathy, guest intelligence and an understanding of each individual guest's needs is the role of the iconic Lady in Red, a highly emblematic position created by Kempinski Hotels ten years ago. As this unique brand ambassador welcomes guests in each hotel of the elegant luxury hotel brand around the globe, every hotel of Kempinski Hotels paid tribute to the Lady in Red this year by surprising guests with various birthday activities which were held from January 17 to 26, 2020.

On arrival in one of the 79 Kempinski Hotels, the Lady in Red family is instantly recognisable. Dressed in a striking and elegant tailor-made red

“

The Lady in Red is a local expert who knows everything about our hotels

”



outfit that reflects the sartorial traditions in each destination, the Ladies in Red evoke an authentic sense of place and occasion showcasing the cultural nuance and classic European elegance for which Kempinski is known worldwide. Dedicated to please and educated to entertain, these brand ambassadors are alert to any opportunity to go one step beyond to craft unforgettable experiences for well-travelled guests, acting as both the perfect host and a trusted companion during their stay with Kempinski Hotels. “The Lady in Red is a local expert who knows everything there is to know about our hotels and the destination”, explains **Benedikt Jaschke**, Chief Quality Officer and Member of the Management Board, Kempinski Hotels. “Whether it's a special anniversary celebration, a surprise proposal or a once-in-a-lifetime family holiday, they draw upon their passion for craftsmanship.”

Conrad Bengaluru celebrates two years



After year-long celebrations of turning 100 last year, 2020 brings more reason to celebrate for the Hilton Worldwide. The most iconic address located in the heart of Garden City on MG Road – Conrad Bengaluru, a contemporary luxury hotel by Hilton, celebrated its second year on January 15. An oasis amidst the city's hustle bustle, the 24-storey building lends unparalleled views of the Ulsoor lake from 285 rooms & suites and offers the largest meeting & events space in the city spread across 17,000 sq. ft., with a dedicated porch for customised arrivals. Also, there are five distinct dining venues offering innovative cuisine in an inviting setting and a state-of-the-art wellness floor boasting an outdoor temperature-controlled infinity pool, Conrad Spa, and 24x7 fitness centre.

Speaking on the occasion, **Srijan Vadhera**, General Manager, Conrad Bengaluru, said, “It has been a historic year for us at Hilton India. The love, patronage and support received from our guests and brand friends alike have awarded Conrad Bengaluru with noteworthy accolades. We set foot into the new decade with the commitment of delighting global travellers with inspiring experiences infused with local essence.”

“

We want to delight global travellers with inspiring experiences & local essence

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Courtyard Amritsar opens VUE Bar & Grill

After the successful unveiling of its all-day dining restaurant – Amritsar Kitchen, Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar has introduced VUE Bar & Grill. The most anticipated rooftop bar opened its doors to Amritsar’s enthralling nightlife circuit. Offering a fresh atmosphere to unwind, this outlet boasts of live DJ performances, handpicked cocktails, flavoursome grills, and, if you are lucky, local celebrity sighting or two. VUE Bar & Grill, coated in warm tones and shades, offers stunning views of the city skyline. Setting the mood with ambient music, a menu with gastronomic classics, this bar promises to provide the best in nightlife entertainment. Speaking on the occasion, **Rahul Sharma**, Hotel Manager, Courtyard by Marriott Amritsar, shared, “Located in an enchanting city offering a wealth of dining options, ‘VUE’ which interprets a beautiful scenic view, stands true to its name.

We expect people to swing by to enjoy a night of live entertainment and music. With this opening, we have entered into the party scene of Amritsar and are all set to be the most favoured destination for Amritsar’s glitterati.” The bar situated on the 9th floor presents the euphoric view of the cityscape. Only steps away from guests’ rooms, it is the perfect venue to dine and enjoy a cocktail.



We expect people to swing by to enjoy a night of live entertainment & music



Radisson Agra launches Wonder Terrace

Radisson Hotel Agra has launched an exclusive, one-of-its-kind rooftop restaurant in the city – Wonder Terrace Bar and Kitchen. The launch was attended by Naveen Jain, Mayor of Agra, and Hari Mohan Dangayach, Managing Director of Dangayach Group. As the name suggests, Wonder Terrace provides one of most beautiful views of the Taj Mahal. The guests can dine under the stars, with the Taj. The restaurant is located right next to the rooftop swimming pool and provides a very serene atmosphere for one to relax and spend time with loved ones. They also have temperature-controlled Cabanas and a private dining room. On this occasion, **Vaibhav Sagar**, General Manager, Radisson Hotel Agra, said, “Agra is a growing city. People

here are always on the lookout for innovative cuisine, good ambience, great cocktails etc. Wonder Terrace has it all. One can also enjoy live music on weekends. I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to Naveen Jain who honoured us with his presence.”



Agra is a growing city, people are on the lookout for good ambience & cuisine



Dine with Damien

◆ Sources Unlimited presents the iconic Damien table, along with chairs Miu and Frances by Longhi, a brand renowned for luxurious furniture pieces in the Italian artisan tradition, using rich and exclusive materials. The extraordinary shape and size of the marble top gives this table a strong personality. The three legs further seal its character as a unique and exclusive piece of furniture – a stately table that uses rich materials like marble, leather and metal. The geometric contours of the frame give the Miu chair a modern appeal. A chic structure composed of simple and sensuous lines, the Frances chair is made of double density polyurethane foam.



Kitchen glam index

◆ With Aster Cucine's Luxury Glam kitchen collection, you can now choose from a range of finishes that make kitchens luxurious. The mood of the Luxury Glam is that of a playful sophisticate. Glossy surfaces, sharp features, expertly treated leather, varied textures, steel handles and legs and more, create a space that is hard to define.



Drink it pure

◆ iLiv has launched one of India's most advanced water purification product portfolio. iLiv aims to be India's fastest growing 100 per cent water saving water purifiers with Aqua Reverse and Actiliv technology. Aqua Reverse ensures 100 per cent water usage and Actiliv technology boosts one's immunity and helps fight illnesses.



Sip of Gold

◆ Sources Unlimited has launched a glamorous collection of champagne goblets from Sieger by Furstenberg. Appropriately termed Sip of Gold, the goblets elevate any occasion to a great one. A combination of incredibly thin porcelain and the finest precious metal, they have a 24-carat gold coating on the inside. When the goblets are filled with a drink, the light is reflected hundreds of times to create the sparkling and beguiling effect of liquid gold.





Relax in classic blue

◆ Beyond Designs has launched a new collection of furniture pieces and accessories that extol the Pantone Colour of the Year – classic blue. Cool, elegant and versatile, blue as a colour is a designer's favourite hue to infuse a sense of calmness and freshness into any space. As the colour of the sky and the sea, blue indicates expansiveness, freedom, imagination and sensitivity, and refers to characters such as trust, loyalty, wisdom, confidence and intelligence. As you view Beyond Designs' collection of classic blue, you can feel all these emotions, and more wrapped in them. The design features bring out the inherent regal quality of the colour. The collection comprises sofas, a finely crafted wooden chair, leather console and a petite side table, etc.



Solid Bamboo Pergolas



◆ Notion have introduced Solid Bamboo Pergolas to give an extension to your living area under nature. The entire collection is produced from bamboo poles which are specially treated, free of insects, low moisture, anti-mildew, kiln dry and fumigated. These Pergolas can be used for up to 30 years with proper maintenance.

Relax with Roca

◆ Transforming a bathroom into a space of health and well-being, Roca recently launched Roca Zen Hydromassage Cabin. The shower cabin aims to fight and reduce stress; it also allows consumers to enjoy benefits of hydrotherapy. The shower cabin is inbuilt with a steam bath technology accompanied by aromatherapy. To relieve tightness and knots in muscles, the cabin comes with multiple jet options and an inverter switch with a thermostatic water temperature controller to set the appropriate temperature required by the body.



Airy like Alexis

◆ Maishaa, known for producing superior quality fabrics for home décor, and also for introducing international textiles brands in India, has launched a new collection of sensational fabrics, Alexis, by the famous textiles brand Nya Nordiska. The entire collection features subdued shades that infuse the interiors with a wonderfully diffused light and a soft hue. The airy, floating fabric is 310 centimetres wide and thus perfect for large applications. With 25 per cent viscose and 75 per cent polyester, the Alexis fabrics are light and flowy, and are great for curtains, panel curtains and roller blinds.

appointments



ALLEN MACHADO

Niraamaya Wellness Retreats
Bengaluru

★ Allen Machado has been appointed as Chief Operating Officer at Niraamaya Wellness Retreats. With a career spanning over 20 years in luxury hospitality, he has worked with trendsetting luxury hotels in India and the Middle East, strategically developing profitable business models within his scope of work. Machado's main focus at Niraamaya will be driving brand strategy, increasing presence & footprint in the domestic & international geographies.



GAURAV SINGH

Multi Property VP East India &
Bangladesh & GM, JW Marriott Kolkata

★ Gaurav Singh is the Multi Property Vice President East India & Bangladesh and General Manager of JW Marriott Hotel Kolkata. Enhancing productivity, ensuring guest satisfaction and strategic initiatives are some of his key responsibility areas. In addition to the JW Marriott Kolkata, the other hotels in East India that he oversees are The Westin Kolkata Rajarhat, Courtyard by Marriott Siliguri and Fairfield by Marriott Rajarhat.



FINO BABU

General Manager
Crowne Plaza Pune City Centre

★ Crowne Plaza Pune City Centre has appointed Fino Babu as its new General Manager. Babu has been part of the IHG family for more than two years, having previously worked as Executive Assistant Manager. His strength lies in being able to manage a team consisting of diverse departments. With considerable experience and a healthy forward vision Babu can bring a big change for Crowne Plaza Pune City Centre.



RAVI DHANKAR

General Manager
Pride Hotel Chennai

★ Pride Group of Hotels has appointed Ravi Dhankar as General Manager for Pride Hotel Chennai. Dhankar is a Hotel Management graduate with over 14 years of experience in Hotel Operations, Client Relationship Management, Industry Engagement and Corporate Liaisoning with a blend of Sales and Marketing. Prior to Pride Hotels he has served with brands like Leela Palace, Taj, Lemon Tree and Sarovar Group of Hotels. Pride Hotels has a presence in major Indian cities. Currently the group maintains a network of 14 hotels.



SURINDER SINGH

Vivanta
New Delhi, Dwarka,

★ Vivanta New Delhi, Dwarka has appointed Surinder Singh as its new General Manager. Following a distinguished career in hospitality with over 30 years of experience, Singh has held leadership positions and has worked with renowned properties of IHCL. In the new role, he will be responsible for the continued success of the 250-room hotel through his strategic leadership, and ensure margin enhancement and overall operational excellence. Singh's previous assignment was at Taj Chandigarh, where he looked after the overall business.



RANJANA PAL

Director of Human Resources
Andaz Delhi

★ Ranjana Pal has been appointed as the Director of Human Resources at Andaz Delhi – a luxury lifestyle hotel by Hyatt in Aerocity, New Delhi. She brings with her diverse work experience of over 15 years in the field of Human Resources across IT, manufacturing and hospitality industries. In her new role at Andaz Delhi, she will be managing the Human Resource function of the luxury lifestyle hotel overseeing Training, Employee Welfare, Work Culture and Employee Wellness, HR Operations, among others.



NEHA BHATI

Executive Housekeeper
Andaz Delhi

★ Neha Bhati has been appointed as the Executive Housekeeper of Andaz Delhi. She began her career in 2008 with the Oberoi Group of Hotels as Assistant Manager Housekeeping at Trident Gurgaon. Post this, she moved within the Group to several international and domestic locations before joining Andaz Delhi in December 2019. In her new role, she will oversee the housekeeping operations of the luxury lifestyle hotel offering 401 rooms, 125 fully furnished apartments, four food & beverage venues, state-of-the-art recreation facilities and 37,500 sq. ft. of event spaces. Sustainability and environmentally friendly initiatives will remain her core focus at the trendsetter hotel.



ATUL DONDE

Director of Events
Hyatt Regency Pune & Residences

★ Hyatt Regency Pune & Residences has appointed Atul Donde as their new Director of Events. Donde brings with him a rich 11 plus years of experience in the hospitality industry and he has done his Diploma in Hotel Management from IHMES, United Kingdom. He has varied experience in different industries. Starting his career with an International Fund Management company, his first hotel assignment was with Hilton Hotel – Isle of Man in the UK. He has since worked with renowned hospitality brands like Hilton, Ramada, Marriott and Hyatt in India & abroad. In his new role at Hyatt Regency Pune & Residences, Donde will be responsible for managing operational and administrative functions to ensure the projects are delivered efficiently.



ROHAN JOSEPH

Head of Catering Sales
The Leela Mumbai

★ The Leela Mumbai has appointed Rohan Joseph as the new Head of Catering Sales. He brings with him over 13 years of experience and a wealth of expertise in sales and operations of events. At The Leela Mumbai, his core responsibilities will include revenue and inventory management for catering sales, planning and execution of events and upselling of hotel services. Joseph has worked with prestigious brands like The St. Regis Mumbai, Palladium Hotel Mumbai, Shangri-La Hotel Mumbai, Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai and Grand Hyatt, Mumbai. Prior to joining The Leela Mumbai he worked as the Director of Catering Sales at The Westin Mumbai Garden City.



NITHIN NAMBIAR

Front Office Manager
Sofitel Mumbai BKC

★ Sofitel Mumbai BKC has appointed Nithin Nambiar as their Front Office Manager, who comes with a professional experience of more than 8.3 years in the hospitality industry. In his role, Nambiar will be responsible for supervising the front office personnel and ensuring the guests have a comfortable experience and their requests are heard in a time-bound and efficient manner. He has been associated with a number of luxury hospitality brands. We wish him all the best in his new role.



AJAY JAWAHAR SHARMA

Assistant Director of B&F
W Goa

★ W Goa has promoted Ajay Jawahar Sharma to Assistant Director of B&F. Sharma has been with W Goa for nearly two years, having previously worked as B&F Operations Manager at W Goa. A veteran of the hospitality industry, Sharma has worked across reputed hotel chains such as Hyatt Hotels Corporation, Intercontinental Hotels Group and now Marriott International in his over 15-year stint in the industry. He has won numerous awards: Asia Pacific - Leadership Excellence - Most Improved Retention 2018; among others.



HO CHI MING

Specialty Chef at The Market
The Westin Pune Koregaon Park

★ The Westin Pune Koregaon Park has appointed Ho Chi Ming as the Specialty Chef for The Market – a newly launched all-day dining restaurant. Ming comes to The Westin Pune Koregaon Park with over 11 years of experience in culinary operations in the hospitality industry. He has worked in 5-star hotels like Sheraton Hyderabad, Le Meridien Thimphu, and the award-winning restaurant Baan Tao at Ista/Hyatt Pune. He is all set to treat the guests at The Westin Pune Koregaon Park to rich Asian flavours at The Market.



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