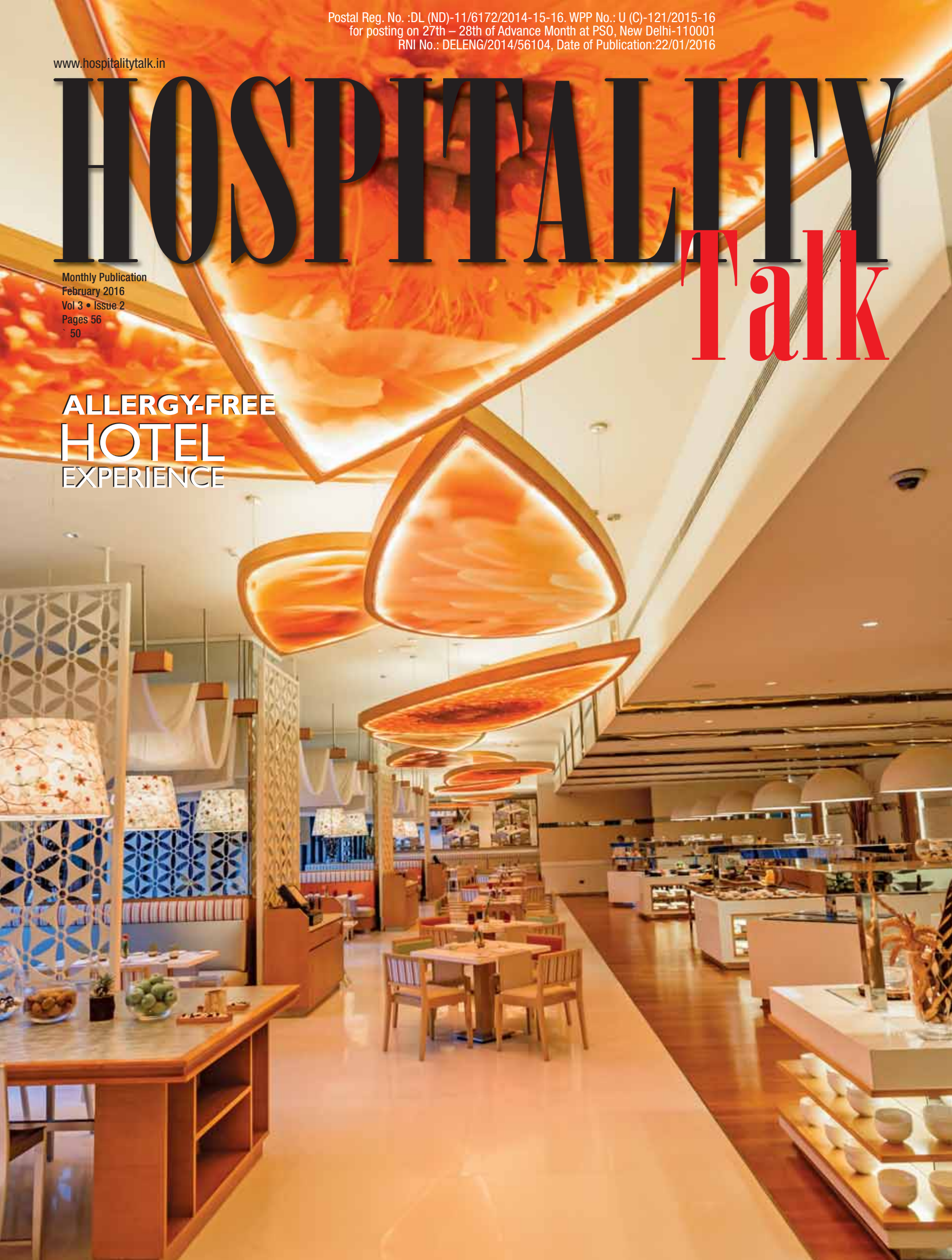


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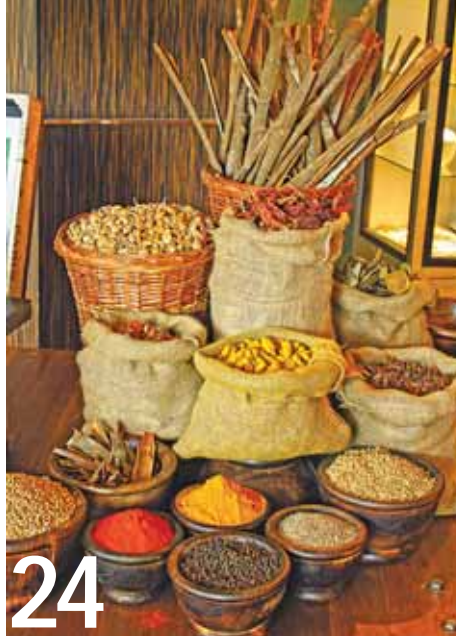
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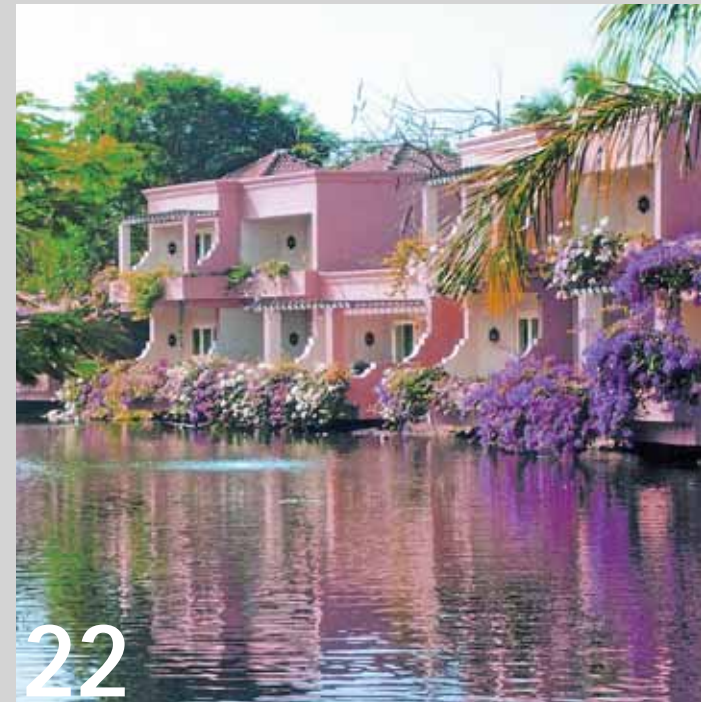


Editor's note

The hospitality industry has high expectations from the government, not forgetting their pre-election manifesto, which assured that tourism and hospitality would play an important role in the economic growth of the country. The industry is currently beleaguered by several bureaucratic obstacles, due to which the growth of the overall sector is stagnating. The result of the budget is anticipated with crossed fingers, hoping the government relaxes the stringent restrictions, rules and taxes and gives some respite to hoteliers.

In this issue we bring you some interesting interviews with the stalwarts of the industry. Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts talks about the industry and the plans of The Leela Group. Anil Madhok, Managing Director, Sarovar Hotels discusses the Indian hospitality industry in general and his expectations from the budget. Also, getting into F&B, we discuss how global spices are an emerging trend and are a transporting experience for diners. As hotels and hoteliers become more aware of guests with allergies, they have begun to take measures to make their hotel stays comfortable and allergen free. We speak to senior executives of leading hotels who tell us of the steps that they take. The Global Hospitality Conclave 2016, which concluded successfully on 8th January 2016, was attended by the stalwarts of the industry. Rakesh Sarna, with his august presence, made the entire event more powerful. The InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort was recently inaugurated and we got into a tête-à-tête with Shantha de Silva, Head, South West Asia, IHG, to learn about the unique features of the property, what he thought of the competition and the brand's future plans.

We hope Q4 remains bright for Indian hoteliers. Happy Reading!



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IHG's InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort now open

Mahabalipuram's first exclusive beach resort, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort, was officially launched on 15 January 2016 as part of the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG). Set near the UNESCO world heritage site of Mahabalipuram, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort features world-class accommodation with ocean front suites and rooms and three dining experiences including a specialty Chinese restaurant. The Resort offers rejuvenating spa journeys and family experiences with unrivalled IHG hospitality standards.



V Resorts' user-friendly payment options

V Resorts has come out with a slew of payment options to make booking a vacation seamless. Types of payment options available:- Paytm Wallet, Cash pick-up service and IVR Payment.

Aiana Hotels & Resorts L.L.C. expands in Karnataka

Aiana Hotels & Resorts L.L.C. has announced the signing of an agreement with Bengaluru-based Ferns Estates & Developers to manage and operate four new resorts in Karnataka. Scheduled to open in 2019, the first resort is set in 45 acres of verdant, hilly coffee plantation land in the district of Sakleshpur, approximately three hours away from Bengaluru.

Deltin Royale kickstarts New Year in style

Deltin Royale kick started 2016 with acts from Prajakta Shukre of Indian Idols fame, India's dancing superstars MJ5, Bollywood dancers, international dancers, Goa's lead bands like True Blue, Chrisalis and lots more. The patrons swayed to the tunes of Prajakta Shukre as she churned out hit after hit.

Shangri-la's - Eros Hotel, New Delhi launches Mister Chai

Shangri-La's - Eros Hotel, New Delhi has launched Mister Chai, a first-of-its-kind tea restaurant in the heart of the city. Mister Chai is a unique concept that is curated to give patrons a local 'tea shop feel'. It focusses on regional Indian street food and beverages with emphasis on tea.





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Vivanta by Taj - Guwahati, Assam now doorway to North East

Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces announced its latest addition with the opening of the highly anticipated Vivanta by Taj - Guwahati, Assam. This hotel will be a doorway to the unexplored and magical North East.



All Stir Fry's pan-Asian food now in Andheri, Mumbai

Waterstones Hotel has opened doors to its oriental masterpiece, All Stir Fry. All Stir Fry is an oriental street kitchen style restaurant with an open noodle and produce bar that allows for interactive wok cooking. The restaurant also serves a-la-carte pan-Asian food with a wide variety of exotic and select dishes.



First Radisson hotel opens in the heart of Udaipur city

Radisson Udaipur has opened its doors to welcome guests visiting Udaipur, a city famous for its historical palaces, rich culture and scenic locations. The hotel is located in the heart of Udaipur, situated along the city centre at the Lake City Mall of the Riddhi Siddhi Group.

SAMHI receives ₹ 441 crore investment from Goldman Sachs

SAMHI Hotels has received an investment of ₹ 441 crore from Goldman Sachs (NYSE: GS), a leading global investment bank. SAMHI Hotels will utilise the funds to expand its footprint through acquisitions across India.



JW Marriott Pune's has Food Truck for foodies

JW Marriott, Pune is all set to bring to you its 'Food Truck'. This latest offering will bring on the platter the best of street food which is the latest obsession for foodies from around the world. To start with, the Food Truck will offer much loved New York style street food for the street food lovers in the city.

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Elanpro's Experience Center launched in Delhi

Elanpro has inaugurated its Experience Center in Delhi. The state-of-art facility will showcase modern and innovative refrigeration solution. The Experience Center was inaugurated by Nitin Arora, CEO, Devyani Food Industries Ltd (Creambell Ice cream). Sanjay Jain, Director, Elanpro and Ranjan Jain, Managing Director, Elanpro Refrigeration were present for the ceremony.



AccorHotels inaugurates ibis Chennai City Centre

AccorHotels has announced the opening of ibis Chennai City Centre. The opening marked AccorHotels' third hotel in Chennai followed by ibis Chennai SIPCOT and Novotel Chennai SIPCOT in 2014. The hotel features 155 rooms and is centrally located on the city's arterial and historic, Mount Road.

Hotel The Royal Plaza, Delhi to launch micro-brewery

Hotel The Royal Plaza, a boutique hotel in the heart of the city is all set to launch Delhi's first micro-brewery. It would prepare a magnificent integration of freshly brewed beer that will be served indoor as well as outdoor along the swimming pool. A one of its kind Irish micro brewery, it will be operational from February 2016.



The luxury Taj Santacruz, Mumbai officially opens

Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces has announced the opening of its luxury hotel Taj Santacruz, Mumbai. Strategically located just off the Western Express highway, the hotel offers a vantage point of access, with proximity to the city's financial and entertainment centres. The newest addition in Taj's home city, and the fourth group hotel in the financial capital, Taj Santacruz is a tribute to this historic city and its pulsating cosmopolitan spirit.



The Oberoi Philae to cruise the Nile

The Oberoi Group announced that The Oberoi Philae, Luxury Nile Cruiser, Egypt will sail between Aswan and Luxor, offering itineraries of four and six nights. The group already operates another luxury cruiser, The Oberoi Zahra, and will be increasing its presence on the Nile with The Oberoi Philae. Adding to the luxury provided by The Oberoi Zahra, The Oberoi Philae will offer guests unrivalled views of the River Nile as they experience the legendary Oberoi service and explore 5,000 years of Egyptian culture.

FOOD TRIVIA



Interesting food facts...

- 1 The most expensive pizza in the world costs \$12,000 and takes 72 hours to make.
- 2 Radishes are members of the same family as cabbages.
- 3 Coconut water can be used as blood plasma.
- 4 Peanuts aren't nuts, they're legumes.
- 5 The most expensive fruit in the world is the Japanese Yubari cantaloupe, and two melons once sold at auction for \$23,500.

- 10 There are 7,500 varieties of apples grown throughout the world, and if you tried a new variety each day, it would take you 20 years to try them all.

Source: www.buzzfeed.com



- 6 Eating bananas can help fight depression.
- 7 Honey is made from nectar and bee vomit.
- 8 Apples float in water, because 25% of their volume is made of air.
- 9 One of the most hydrating foods to eat is the cucumber, which is 96% water.





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 More Dealers are solicited all over Country.

Hi-Aim 2016 to be held in Sri Lanka

Hi-Aim has been conceptualised to become a landmark forum for hospitality industry. It provides an enriching opportunity for the convergence of hoteliers, hotel brands and hospitality related decision makers such as architects and interior designers on a common knowledge sharing platform to confer and exchange ideas on key issues and emerging trends in the hospitality industry. Hi-Aim 2016 will be held on March 15 & March 16 at Galadari Hotel, Sri Lanka.



Tattva Spa inks partnership with DoubleTree by Hilton, Agra

Tattva Spa has announced its partnership with DoubleTree by Hilton in Agra. Tattva will offer an exquisite assortment of salon and wellness treatments that will leave guests feeling rejuvenated and reinvigorated.



OYO Rooms forays into South-east Asia, launches in Malaysia

After a successful pan-India expansion in 2015, OYO Rooms has announced its foray into South-east Asia through launch of operations in Malaysia. In India, OYO Rooms has scaled to offer 40,000 rooms in its network, becoming the country's largest branded network of hotels.



AHS' Eastin Hotel brand to launch in Darjeeling in April

Thailand's Absolute Hotel Services (AHS) is expanding its upscale Eastin hotel brand in India, with the launch of a new property in Darjeeling, West Bengal. Set atop a mountain surrounded by nature and views of the valleys and foothills of Kurseong, the land of the white orchids, Eastin Hotel Kurseong, Darjeeling, will open its doors in April 2016.

The Gateway Hotel Gir Forest welcomes guests again

The Gateway Hotel Gir Forest, located at the edge of the world-renowned Gir Forest is now open for guests. The hotel, set in an idyllic environment, is perfect for a relaxing holiday. Farhat Jamal, Senior Vice President - Operations (West India) & Africa, Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces said, "We are pleased to welcome guests once again. It is the ideal time of the year to watch the majestic Asiatic lion and other wildlife or indulge in a cultural expedition to interesting historical places like Junagadh and Gondal."



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InterContinental Hotels Group unveils its 5,000th hotel

InterContinental Hotels Group has unveiled the Hotel Indigo Lower East Side New York as its 5,000th hotel globally. The opening of this landmark New York property takes IHG's global system size to 5,000 hotels, in nearly 100 countries. This outstanding achievement illustrates the strength of IHG's leading portfolio of brands, which are loved by millions of guests around the world.



Atlantis, The Palm partners OTT to offer e-learning

Atlantis, The Palm, in Dubai will begin a partnership with Online Travel Training (OTT) to offer those in the travel trade the opportunity to embark upon e-training courses focusing on the resort. Rewarding benefits for those taking an OTT course on Atlantis, The Palm include an increase in product knowledge and a boost in sales confidence and potential.

Luxury Hotels Group announces its first Taiwanese acquisition

Luxury Hotels Group has announced the first Taiwanese addition to its growing portfolio. Located on the picturesque shores of Taiwan's largest alpine lake, The Crystal Resort Sun Moon Lake is an intimate getaway in a stunning mountain setting. It is designed with a clever use of glass and crystal to create a sense of light and space and make the most of sweeping views across the lake.

THE PLAZA Seoul a new addition to Autograph Collection Hotels in South Korea

This January, following an agreement signed in September, THE PLAZA Seoul, a member of the Hanwha Hotels & Resorts group, officially joined Autograph Collection Hotels—Marriott International's exclusive portfolio of properties recognised for celebrating bold individuality. The Autograph Collection Hotels brand is an evolving ensemble of strikingly independent properties around the world. Each hotel is hand-picked for its memorable guest experience, bold originality, rich character and uncommon details. THE PLAZA Seoul is renowned for providing personalised services to its guests, including the creation of individual itineraries for each traveller to help them stay in style amidst the hustle and bustle of the city, matching the brand promise of Autograph Collection Hotels.

Best Western has new midscale hotel in Subic Bay, Philippines

Best Western Hotels & Resorts has unveiled a new midscale hotel in the Philippines. Located at Subic Bay on the west coast of Luzon Island, approximately 100 km north of Manila, the new Best Western Plus Hotel Subic becomes the first internationally-branded midscale hotel in the area. Set in a brand new building that exudes contemporary style, Best Western Plus Hotel Subic offers 77 midscale rooms, all including flat-screen TVs, mini-bars and complimentary Wi-Fi. The hotel also features a range of facilities for both business and leisure travellers.



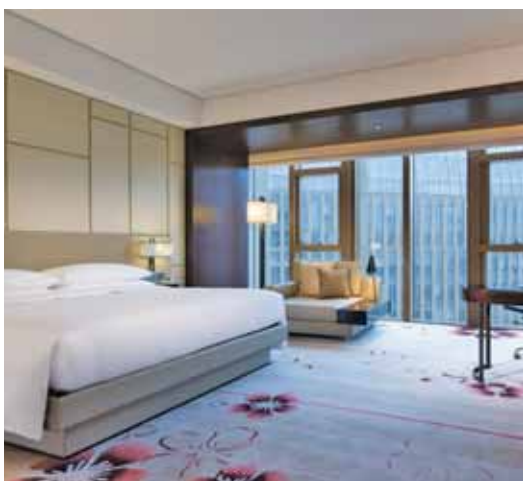
GuocoLand to manage new-built Sofitels in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur for AccorHotels

GuocoLand Limited ('GuocoLand') has signed a landmark deal with AccorHotels for the management of the group's two new-built hotels at Tanjong Pagar Centre, Singapore and Damansara City, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The Sofitel Singapore City Centre and the Sofitel Kuala Lumpur Damansara, adds a total of 534 rooms to the AccorHotel's luxury brand portfolio.



City of emperors now offers lifestyle travellers the Renaissance Nanjing Olympic Centre Hotel

Marriott International has announced the opening of Renaissance Nanjing Olympic Centre Hotel, its first hotel in Nanjing, recognised as one of the four great ancient capitals of China. Renaissance Hotels is a highly acclaimed hotel brand appealing to next generation lifestyle business travellers who seek to discover unexpected cultural experiences with every trip.



One&Only The Palm introduces the New Guerlain Spa with exclusive signature treatments

Following the recent launch of Guerlain Spa at One&Only The Palm in Dubai, guests are invited to relax and indulge with three exclusive signature treatments: 'Dubai Harmony', 'Solar Evasion' and 'Désert d'Orient'- designed for discerning guests to Guerlain Spa at One&Only The Palm. The prestigious House of Guerlain has designed the treatments in partnership with One&Only The Palm to bring pure indulgence and the quest for beautiful skin to spa and wellness aficionados in Dubai. The launch of Guerlain Spa at One&Only The Palm represents the first time signature Guerlain treatments have been made available in the United Arab Emirates.



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DEALERS / DISTRIBUTORS ENQUIRIES SOLICITED

Bringing out the 'HUMANE' IN THE 'HOTELIER'

In a heart-to-heart conversation with fellow hoteliers, at the Global Hospitality Conclave 2016, **Rakesh Sarna**, MD and CEO, India Hotel Company, talks of the often forgotten yet extremely important aspect



Rakesh Sarna

As recorded by Kanchan Nath and Anupriya Bishnoi

Around 120 delegates made the 3rd Global Hospitality Conclave 2016 (GHC) a full house. Rakesh Sarna, MD and CEO, India Hotel Company, who came to Delhi exclusively to address the event, had much to say to hoteliers.

Complimenting the gathering of Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development (OCLD) alumni, he said, "I look at you not just as Oberoi graduates, I look at you as guardians of our industry, the guardians of our culture and that guardianship transcends all brands and companies and employment letters. I stand here to pay tribute to what you have accomplished and what you will accomplish. If the past is any signal the future is very bright. I stand in front of you today because you and I are blessed and

privileged that we are allowed to stand in the shadows of Jamshedji Tata and Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi. Those were the 'devtas' who created what we are enjoying today. But, to be standing in the shadow of that greatness, you have to deserve, it's a big burden."

EMPATHISING WITH YOUR HEART

From his personal point of view, Sarna shared the struggle he is facing in India. He said, "Here the patriotic flame continues to flicker, sometimes with pride and sometimes with shame. I struggle because I find an absence of mutual respect. I find a lack of empathy for the less fortunate. Mutual respect is not just about agreeing with everyone, it's about doing the right thing. The other things that I think



The supply in India today (of tourists) is still very anaemic. What are we doing to get people to come to India? We cannot wait for the government.





of include: gender diversity, work-life balance, fair-play and removing servility in our culture. What of the beast of inequality which has existed in our culture for decades and we continue to look the other side?"

GO FOR A BIGGER CAUSE

Sama said, "Let's not fight the RevParr of Marriott, Starwood, Hyatt, Taj and Oberoi, lets fight the number of arrivals of Thailand versus India, of France versus India. The supply in India today is still very anaemic. What are we doing to get people to come to India? We cannot wait for the government. I cannot do it alone; If we all get together there might be a small chance we can do it."

JOIN FORCES TO ADD VALUE

Sama further added, "Mutual respect extends in many ways, in the way we look after our owners and our

properties. I request you to start looking at these aspects; they will make us the Global Economic Engine we deserve to be.

Commenting on the Marriott Starwood merger, he said, "They have joined forces to become stronger or equally strong and be able to add value. What does that do to us? There will be some initial setbacks—people in India are also quite addicted to miles and loyalty programmes. The thought process might be why not just get a Marriott card with 30 brands to choose from anywhere in the world. We, on the other hand, have to create a distinction in our services. In the long run this will be good for India; the more foreign brands we have, the more India gets validated as a destination. That way we become more cosmopolitan and more international. The pie is very large, so I am not worried in the long run."



“India is one of the best value for money destinations today”

Anil Madhok,
Managing Director,
Sarovar Hotels
discusses the Indian
hospitality industry.

Anupriya Bishnoi



Anil Madhok

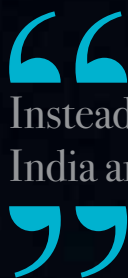


What are your expectations from the budget?

To be honest, I have stop expecting anything from the budget. The Government have not given any indications of what they are doing. Last year we had very high expectations. So now I just want to leave everything and get surprised if they give us anything.

What are your views on luxury tax?

It's unpredictable too. The government is not mentally prepared to go for deficit financing and say they want to spend big money so they are trying to scrap the bottom of the barrel. That's a bit of an issue.



Instead of sending people abroad, we should retain our talent in India and that's possible only when we have world-class institutes

Are you satisfied with the kind of education hospitality institutes are providing?

World class institutes like The Oberoi School of Hotel Management do not produce mass students. The number of students they produce every year is very limited.

But I guess in the next few years India will see world-class hospitality institutes. If high-end hotel schools will be developed in India that would be really helpful to the entire hospitality industry. Also, I think, instead of sending people abroad, we should retain our talent in India and that's possible only when we have world-class institutes.

What are your views about inbound tourism for 2016?

Inbound tourism should grow. I think e-visa is a great help for the tourism industry. This is a major step that has been done to push tourism in India forward. But it depends on how the world economy is because people travel on that basis. For example India, today, is one the best value for money destinations. Government has promised to take tourism very seriously. I presume we will see a better year ahead and this industry will grow.

What are the plans for your group in 2016?

We have 18-19 hotels in the pipeline and in 2016 we should be able to open quite a few. Quite a few will get commissioned in the next few months. A few destinations which will see Sarovar in 2016 are Dehradun, Vandalur Chennai, Bengaluru, Jaisalmer, Bhavnagar, Raipur, Amritsar, Greater Noida, Junagarh, Gorakhpur, Jalandhar and Rishikesh. We are also looking at Africa. We already are doing one hotel in Africa which is a large one and will open anyway by July but we will be able pick up a couple of properties more in Africa this year.



Dealing with procurement

The fifth edition of the Hospitality Purchasing Managers' Forum (HPMF) brought out important points for purchase managers and one touched on the procurement pain points and strategies to counter them.

Hazel Jain

Traditionally ignored as a community, purchase managers in the hospitality industry have now come together to share ideas and knowledge and discuss the issues that they face on a daily basis. Under the banner of the Hospitality Purchasing Managers' Forum (HPMF), the community of 150-strong hospitality purchasing managers recently converged in Mumbai from all over India, specially Pune and New Delhi.

The discussions touched upon the key topics and challenges that procurement managers face in their line of work and gave the young inexperienced ones some interesting food for thought. Some of the experienced hands in the industry shared their perspective. Talking about the strategies that should be kept in mind while running this department successfully, **Ouseph Francis**, VP (Materials), Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, said, "The difference between being in the hospitality industry and any other field is that here you need to procure literally everything.

You can't have one strategy for everything and you need intense enthusiasm to figure what works. Sometimes it helps to get out of the comfort of your office and visit the vendor. On the other end, get into the hotel and see how much is being used, talk to the guests and figure what they feel about it. I would advise everyone to get out of their comfort zone and go to their suppliers, go to their customers, and find out how they feel about the product. This way you will be able to understand the pain points in procurement. This requires a lot of passion for the job."

R. Bharanidharan, Director, Procurement India, Marriott Hotels India, also spoke on this topic and added, "When it comes to a strategy, we need to understand the difference between urgent and important. One needs to have clarity on that as sometimes some things are urgent but not really important. Number two is to adapt the 80-20 rule where 80 per cent of our work contributes to 20 per cent of the value and vice versa. We also need to understand user expectations, and strengthen the entire procurement process accordingly."

DEALING WITH PRICE HIKE

The discussion turned interesting when it came to the most painful point of contention—price hike. What happens when a vendor asks for payment with a price increase? **Sanjay Varghese**, Director-Materials, Imperial New Delhi, is of the opinion that the procurement manager needs to buy time to make a decision on this. "No vendor will say that he will not supply. But ask for more time and find out if the price increase is relevant.



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The bottom line is that relationships are important in the market and they must be maintained. If your vendor gives genuine reasoning, then its best to comply," he says.

Bharanidharan feels that it is difficult to predict trends, specially fluctuations in prices. But when you are doing your annual budgeting, you need to study the pattern of key ingredients and materials like onion, crude oil, cotton, dollar rates and so on and allow for such fluctuations.

Sharing his perspective is **Rajesh Nair**, Materials Manager – Ibis & Novotel Bengaluru. He says, "When our supplier comes with a price hike, we find out what is happening in the market. We need to have a strategy to deal with this. Sometimes it's good to refuse their offer and say thank you for your business. But we are no longer insular and get affected by world events. If you have been doing your homework you are able to connect the dots and forecast accurately. Also, don't put all your eggs in one basket. If the vendor hasn't asked for a price hike, that may be because they are also dependent on you. So there is mutual dependency." Joseph Tito, Corporate Head – Materials, GRT Group, however, gave a very different angle saying that he has known many suppliers who have gone out of their way to help them out in times of distress.

RELATIONSHIPS ARE IMPORTANT

In these times when human relations are everything, it is important to create long-term relationships with vendors. The option is to either build and improve relationship with current vendors or work on developing a small vendor.

Giving a glimpse of what it used to be in the olden days, **Tito** says, "We didn't have any social media back then and we had to physically go to the market to meet the vendors. It was hard work."

Bharanidharan meanwhile suggests ideas on how to do this. "We can either develop a new vendor or an existing one. But in either case, vendor interaction is important. We must explain our goals to them and our ethics and then sync with their aims. You then need to evaluate your vendors—review their performance and do a product quality check. The third step is vendor audit. To help him improve further; you need to give him feedback. This is the basic methodology. This is an ongoing process and not a one-time occurrence. In many cases, managers develop multiple long-term suppliers. New suppliers require more patience," he says. But with oversupply, it's not too tough to get out of a sticky situation. Francis adds, "Practically, every product is available with at least 10 vendors in the market today. We found that the big guys didn't care, and the small ones didn't have the technology for specialised products—like for instance, organic products, or ways to reduce carbon footprint. Users must be convinced that it's beneficial, and then upgrade your operations and your equipment. One needs to handhold the vendor all the way."

Varghese, on the other hand, states that procurement managers need to have the power of conviction which of course takes time and experience to develop. Then quotations don't matter; all they need is to be convinced about the vendor. Well said, indeed.

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Three strong weeks in Q4 2015



Rajiv Kaul



Certain weeks are able to be engines of growth; by and large it is flat overall. Oversupply has been neutralised



On the sidelines of the Global Hospitality Conclave, 2016, we got in touch with **Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts**, to find out more about the industry and the plans of The Leela Group.

Kanchan Nath

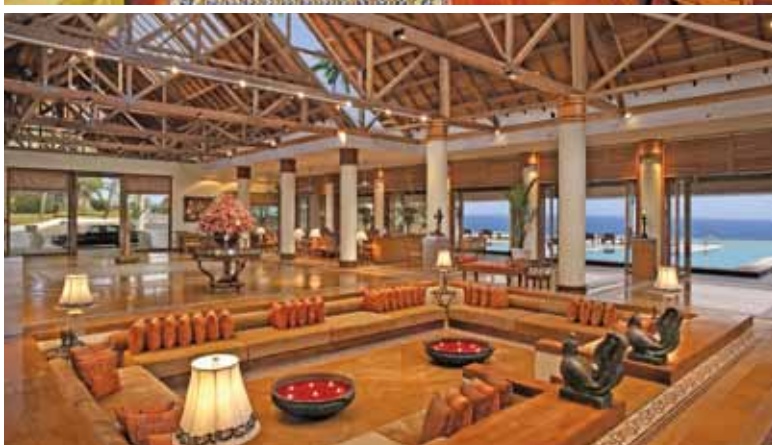


Talking in general about the present hospitality scenario, Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts said, "If you compare to the last year, there has been a growth in room rate of about five to eight per cent which is a modest growth. Occupancies have also grown by about two per cent to five per cent. On the whole there is a top line growth of seven to eight per cent; it's a single digit growth. We all were hoping it will be 15 per cent growth, but that is not the case. We expect Q 4 to be three strong months, but what you are getting is three strong weeks. Certain weeks are able to be engines of growth; by and large it is flat overall. Oversupply has been neutralised. Rates today are less than what they were eight years ago in rupees; in dollars it would be even worse."

THE LEELA GROUP IN DELHI – NCR

The Leela group now operates three properties in the Delhi-NCR and commenting on this, Kaul said, "The three properties in the NCR are very different properties catering to three different market segments and catering to different price points.

The Leela Palace, New Delhi, Chanakyapuri does not have negotiated rates (90 per cent of the business is on non-negotiated rates). In The Leela Ambience Gurgaon Hotel & Residences only has 15 per cent of the business as MICE business whereas, The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, will have 60 per cent of the business as MICE."



FUTURE PLANS

Talking about their prospective JV partnership, where The Leela will be the managers in line with their asset light growth strategy, he said, "We are going to start work in Jaipur by February and we hope to have that ready in a year's time. It will be a 56 room Leela Palace Hotel. We hope to break ground in April or May in Agra which will also be a luxury hotel. Agra

will take close to three years, and will be a 90 rooms luxury property, with all rooms overlooking the Taj Mahal."

BUDGET EXPECTATIONS

As far as expectations for the forthcoming budget were concerned, he said, "There are some pending issues pertaining to infrastructure benefits. The vast majority of the

hotels that have been built in the last five years are stressed assets, so there is a structural issue today with regard to hotels. They need to confer infrastructure status so that longer loans can be given at friendlier interest rates."

INBOUND

Commenting on the inbound, Kaul said, "Inbound has gone down; however I am still optimistic. The US market is showing growth and the US market will continue to do well particularly because their dollar is strong. We have to be selective in Europe because there are certain countries that will do well and others that will not. The Russian market is down in a big way. That is definitely a deficit that we have to overcome particularly for Goa and other leisure destinations."

DISINVESTMENT

Elaborating on the divestment plans of the company for debt recovery, he said, "The Leela Goa has been divested; we are continuing to operate the asset. We will in six months come out with a comprehensive solution. Which property is going to be divested next is something I am not at liberty to disclose. We are working closely with an asset reconstruction company."



The vast majority of the hotels that have been built in the last five years are stressed assets, so there is a structural issue today with regard to hotels





The flavours of exotic spices

The F&B industry in India has evolved a great deal in the recent past. With the advent of speciality restaurants, the Indian diners are getting a flavour of international cuisines without having to travel. But, the trick is to use the right kind of spices and seasoning. Nowadays, chefs with their expertise and by the use of global spices and seasonings, are able to create magic, so much so that the diners are transported to various geographical locations. We talk to expert chefs from different hotels across the country to understand how important right spices and seasonings are in the kitchen, especially for Indian diners and how these exotic spices are sourced.

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Anil Khurana
Corporate Indian Chef
Hyatt Regency Delhi



Indian diners look for all kind of spices from sweet, fragrant cardamom to the world's spiciest chilli pepper



INDIAN DINER PREFERENCE

Spices are the base of cooking and each spice has a taste and flavour of its own. Guests in India generally prefer Indian spices and seasonings for their delightful flavours and aroma. In fact, a lot of international guests also enquire a lot about Indian spices and seasonings. **Anil Khurana**, Corporate Indian Chef, Hyatt Regency Delhi says, "Indian diners look for all kind of spices from sweet, fragrant cardamom to the world's spiciest chilli pepper, from smoky cumin to pungent mustard seeds. Bold, aromatic spices add character and a rich bouquet to Indian dishes.

Sofitel Mumbai BKC welcomes guests from every corner of the world and caters to different palates and spice tolerance levels. Guests are sometimes hesitant to try different cuisines as they assume that they may not be able to tolerate the high spice content. However, these are common misconceptions. For instance, most international guests assume that Indian cuisine is too pungent for their palates. It then becomes the obligation of chefs to inform these guests about the use of aromatics such as saffron, cloves and cinnamon amongst others, as opposed to only using chilli spices, such as chilli powder. **Manav Koul**, Executive Chef, Sofitel Mumbai BKC



says, "I have observed a change in the spice intake of many of our Indian guests and they prefer the subtle flavours of aromatic spices roasted in oil, a technique that subdues the flavour of the spices in the dish."

Global spice preferences are drawn from countries like China, Indonesia, Vietnam. African spices like ras el hanout, chermoula, dukkah, harissa, Chinese spices star anise and Sichuan pepper, cinnamon from India and nutmeg from the USA are some of the most common spices used globally. Spices have herbal and medicinal value so it is the composition that people look at. Overpowering a dish with spices can change the palate. **Chef Ilango**, Executive Chef, Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai SA says, "It would be difficult to pin down a particular spice as being preferred globally as local produce and flavours, exposure to



ethnic cuisines and the availability of produce is what determines taste. The most common is *garam masala*, which is a combination of 10 spices. cumin, coriander, cinnamon, cardomom, bayleaf, peppercorn, mayce and nutmeg are other extremely popular spices in the Indian market.”

Ashish Bagul, Executive Chef – Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences says, “Today guests are well travelled and are aware of various spices and seasonings available. Among spices

and seasonings the preferred ones are adobo seasoning, five spice, barbeque spice, Italian seasoning, jerk spice, Cajun spice and creole spice. Cajun spice and Italian seasoning are both preferred by Indian diners.”

Vishal Atreya, Executive Chef, JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar, says, “With the advancement of global travel, there is a gradual incline towards spice mixes like Cajun seasoning, zatar, Ras el Hanout, Herbes de provences, gremolata, togarashi,

Chinese five spice, jerk spice and so on. In today’s times, the Indian diners also are developing a liking for similar spices and are using them in their kitchens. However, their propensity and penchant for Indian spices is predominant.”

IMPACT OF GLOBAL SPICES AND SEASONINGS

Global spices and seasonings definitely transport the diners to a different world class location since they are the essence of a perfect meal. Khurana says, “Herbs and spices spark the food be it any cuisine. They either make it or break it. Spices enhance the flavour of food and contribute to bright colour, savory taste and sensational aroma.”

Koul however believes that he has never been of the belief that food could transport the diners to the place of its origin. He says, “Considering each ingredient comes from different regions, it helps guests



Ashish Bagul
Executive Chef – Novotel Kolkata Hotel & Residences

“ Today guests are well travelled and are aware of various spices and seasonings available. Cajun and Italian seasoning are preferred ”

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Chef Ilango
Executive Chef
Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai



It is local produce, exposure to ethnic cuisines and the availability of produce that determines taste



to identify and connect with that part of the world and give an idea about the regional cuisine."

Ilango says, "Global spices do transport the diners to different geographical locations. Take Chinese food for example and how relevant it is all around the world. So much so that different countries and cities have their own spin on traditional Chinese dishes. The Indianised version of Chinese food has a mix of Indian spices, chillies and so on and cannot be found anywhere else. Or for that matter, Italian or Mexican food, which also takes on a local flavour in many countries."

The usage of spice mixes and various seasonings not only gives an authentic taste but also enhances the overall meal experience of the well-educated palate of the guests. Bagul says, "A little bit of effort towards the ambience and the correct usage of the spices would definitely put a person into a different time zone."

Atreya says, "Every spice is born off a particular region and carries with it the essence associated with the place."



SOURCING SPICES

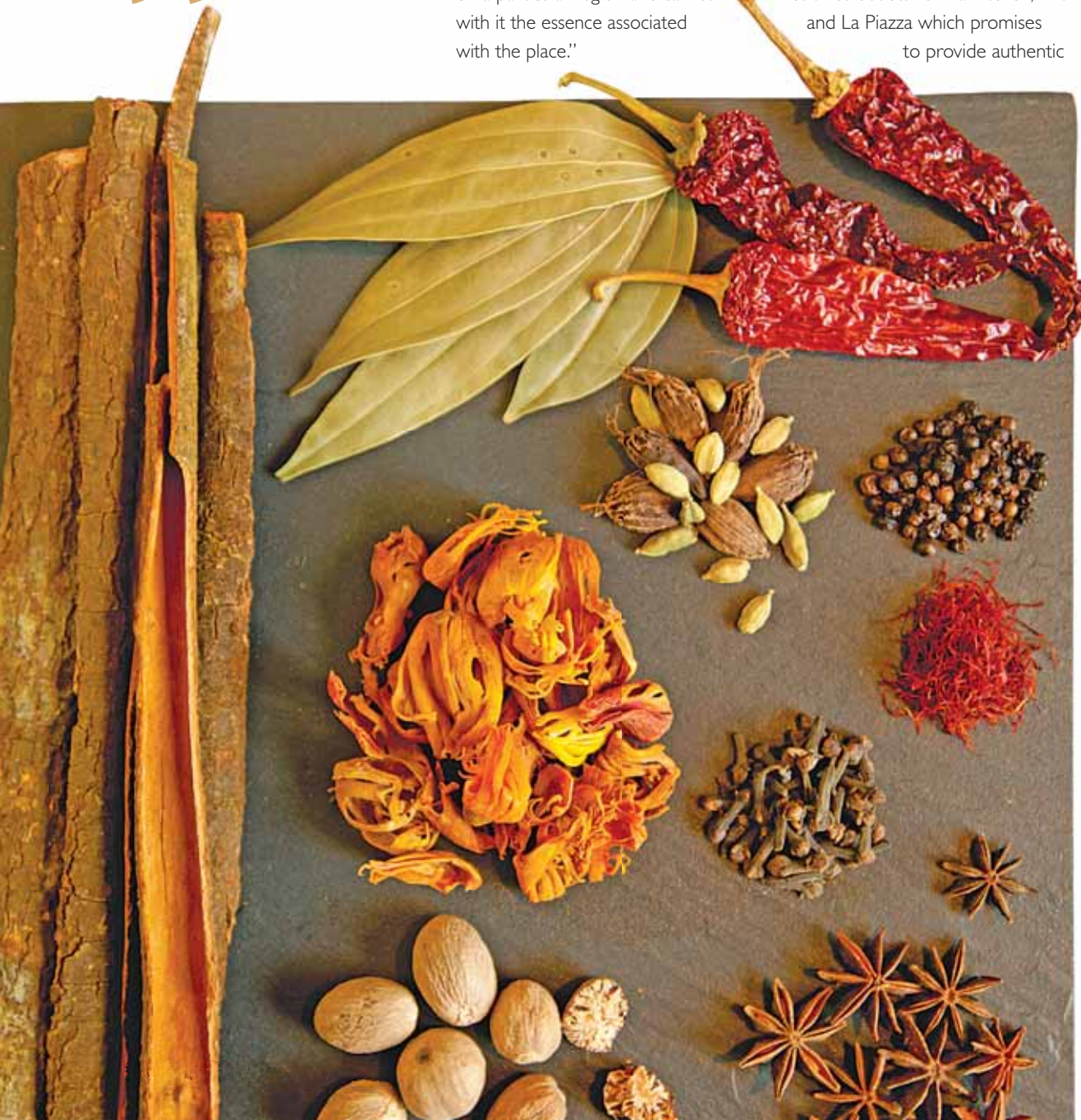
Khurana says, "Hyatt Regency houses award winning international cuisines outlets—China Kitchen, TK's and La Piazza which promises to provide authentic

international experience to our patrons and hence we still import a few spices, though times have changed and most of them are available in India."

Koul says, "While most spices are now readily available in India, there are some ingredients that are exclusively available from their region of origin and are special because of their unique flavours. For instance, while sea salt is abundant in various forms and from different origins, it is the unique flavour of Sel de Guerande or Fleur de Sel, from the Mediterranean that sets it apart from the others."

Ilango says, "Most foreign spices are not available in India. Only the 5-star hotels and hypermarkets procure and store these spices. It is complicated to import directly. The authorities have various regulations that the exporters must adhere to (for example, Japanese spices must have English labels), hence importing for all levels of stores becomes a little difficult. That being said, there are many vendors who supply foreign spices to numerous stores across the city and this number is only growing."

Bagul says, "India being a fairly large country with varied terrains enables cultivators to grow almost all the spices which are available in most of the demographics. In fact India is among the top suppliers





of spices to the world. Though proprietary spice mixes are easily available the mixes could be done inhouse as well."

Atreya says, "Nowadays most global spices are readily available in the supermarkets in India. However, in some cases we do have to import."

INDIAN SPICES AND INTERNATIONAL CUISINE

Khurana says, "The use of Indian spices and herbs have helped shaped the cuisines of many countries around the world. In fact, Indian spices such as coriander, turmeric, ginger, and cinnamon are the most commonly used spices in international cuisines. These cuisines have a distinctive taste due to their ingredients and spices hence Indian spices add a lot to international cuisines and definitely they work in favour and flavour."

Koul says, "Experimenting with spices in different cuisines is highly dependent on guests' preferences. Sometimes we cater to requests of enthusiasts who are intrigued by cross fusions, encouraging us to work on new flavours. However, this may not always be the case, as there are guests who prefer absolute authenticity."

Ilango says, "There are some common spices used in world cuisine, so these are easy to use in different dishes. If you add too many Indian spices to a foreign dish it complicates the cuisine and takes away the authenticity. However, in cases of fusion food, the preparation could be Indian but the ingredients could also contain spices from other countries. It is always a matter of experimentation."

Bagul says, "Adding Indian spices to international cuisine creates a completely different experience for a guest. However it is recommended that if this is done then small portions should be given to people from different regions to understand if it goes down well with them. Changing the traditional spices in a dish would completely make the dish lose its identity."

Atreya says, "Again, I would say, in some cases they do impart a unique twist to the traditional flavours but caution is advised. I believe the authenticity of the dishes should be maintained, thus usages of spices across the various cuisines should be in their true form."



Manav Koul
Executive Chef
Sofitel Mumbai BKC

“
Our Indian guests
now prefer the subtle
flavours of aromatic
spices roasted in oil
”



Vishal Atreya
Executive Chef
JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar

“
While there is an incline
towards international
spice mixes, Indian
diners have a penchant
for Indian spices
”



“WE ARE BRINGING A UNIQUE ANGLE TO OUR BRAND”



Shantha de Silva

Mahabalipuram’s first exclusive beach resort, the InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort, was officially launched recently as part of the InterContinental Hotels Group. On this occasion we met **Shantha de Silva, Head, South West Asia, IHG** to learn about the unique features of the property, what he thought of the competition and the brand’s future plans.

Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us about the USP of InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort?

InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort is about creating experiences. Every single aspect of the resort has been thoughtfully put together. Whether it’s the design elements like the way the resort is built, the unique bridge across the centre, the way services are designed and so on. After all, at the end of the day it’s all about providing unique experiences to the customers. It’s a resort that will rejuvenate you, and give you an experience like no other resort can give. In the evening we have a unique ritual that

happens to give our guests a taste of local culture. Also, we have one of the best spas in the resort. The F&B angle also remain our USP. The food at the resort is unique and private dining experiences with the private chef are some of our key elements. Our services, in short, are something beyond what a normal resort would offer.

What do you have to say about the hospitality market in Chennai?

I think we are very positive with the hospitality market in Chennai. South India has been growing as a hub and that’s why we have been growing our presence in South India



We are very positive about the market and India has a huge opportunity whether it's IT or leisure travel



too. Interestingly enough, Chennai will be the first city in India to host all the four of our brands. We have Intercontinental now in Mahabalipuram, we have Crowne Plaza, then we have Holiday Inn Express and in the next couple of months we will be opening another Holiday Inn Express and then a Holiday Inn. We will have five hotels and we will have all our brands. We are very positive about the market and India has a huge opportunity whether it's IT, leisure travel and so on.

What about competition? How are you dealing with it?

We think we are bringing a unique angle to our brand. In fact, recently we have crossed 5,000 hotels globally. So we are one of the largest hotel companies in the world. That gives us strength to support our hotel. For example, we have the oldest and the largest loyalty programme in the world. That gives us the ability to channel more business to our hotels than our competitors can. Also our different hotels offer different experiences to the guests.

What are the group's expansion plans for this year?

This year is a very short time frame. Actually currently we have around 25 hotels in India. Across 14 cities and in the pipeline we have 51 hotels that will come up in the next three to five years. So we will be double in the next three to five years. India, per se is the third growth market for the IHG Group. Our primary growth market is the US followed by China and the third largest is India. Over the next 10 to 15 years, we plan to have 100 to 150 hotels both operating and in our pipeline.

What about inbound tourism?

If you look at the numbers, tourism has been growing, but I think India also has a large domestic demand factor. With the infrastructure improving, with a lot of investment coming in, with the number of airports and business hubs increasing, we see a lot of domestic travel increasing as well. India sees about seven or seven and a half million international arrivals but there are over a billion domestic trips that happen in the country. There is enough demand generated locally that suffices for our hotels.

How was 2015 for IHG?

It was a fantastic year. We are happy with our growth. We added six hotels to our portfolio. Our growth has been better than the market.



A LUXURIOUS stopover in Panchkula

Amit Rana, General Manager, Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula talks about his hotel, the hospitality market in Chandigarh and Panchkula, the prospects for 2016 and the India Travel Awards and & India Hospitality Awards hosted there.

HT Bureau



Amit Rana



Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula is a unique conference destination as it offers a rare example of modernisation co-existing with nature's preservation and the exotic with the mystical



How has the hospitality market in the U.T. evolved?

Chandigarh is one of the most organised contemporary cities of the country. The union territory includes the satellite cities of Mohali (Punjab) and Panchkula (Haryana). With a major hospitality chain, Chandigarh is becoming a hotspot for the hospitality industry. With the expansion of its industrial and business profile, Chandigarh is turning into a major corporate destination. For long, the hotels catered to persons who came for business purposes, or as transit tourists heading towards Himachal Pradesh, the Sivalik hills or Simla. For this reason, the city has had a dearth of branded hotels for all these years. Now the city offers a handful of international hotel brands.

Since Chandigarh Tourism is promoting the city as a golf terminus, hotels in the city have come up with persuasive packages. Strategies like these will certainly increase the bar for ARRs as compared to the former phase and popularise the flavour of the leisure destination in the city.

How do you deal with the competition?

To maximise a hotel's success, we need to know who it is up against. You should be regularly keeping tabs on your competition, what they are doing and how well they are succeeding. Watching competitors' social media channels is important. Explore your opponent's website content and blogs.

Think of something else that will

make you stand out. Look at their packages and how they work to market your destination. If the hotel has a blog, see which posts get the most traction and use that to inspire your hotel's content marketing efforts.

Kindly explain your MICE facilities.

Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula is a unique conference destination

as it offers a rare example of modernisation co-existing with nature's preservation and the exotic with the mystical. It pre and post conference tours. The hotel has large parking space for 250 cars. The hotel has 20,000 sqft spread over eight banqueting venues with the ballroom accommodating 500 guests. There is a wide offering of world class food and beverage offerings. The banquet





planners and professional service staff ensure that every event is managed with clockwork precision.

Who all are part of your clientele?

Holiday Inn offers option for both business and leisure travellers. We are conveniently located at the Chandigarh Shimla highway close to the airport and the railway station. We have business travellers who stay and visit Baddi and the Derabassi commercial hub.

Our guests want to be treated like real people while staying away from home. Holiday Inn is the only hotel brand that delivers on your real world expectations of what you want when you are staying away from home.

Your expectations from 2016 and how was 2015?

Business and leisure travel have increased steadily in the last few years and are projected to continue along this trend. Building off on the people's renewed desire to travel, IHG has been expanding and developing new properties, renovating old infrastructure and improving its service offerings.

Another goal is to remain strong at exceeding year-over-year revenue, while also surpassing the annual budget



by improving ADR, Occupancy and RevPAR. A 'WOW' service is the only way to ensure repeat business. By creating unique guest experiences that exceed all expectations we are able to capture customers whether it is with or without technology.

What is the USP of your property?

Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula is located in Panchkula on the Kalka Shimla highway away from the crowd at the foot of the Morni Hills and next to this luxurious stopover is

an 18-hole golf course. With a selection of tastefully designed 127 guestrooms, eight event facilities for all types of gatherings, with an all-day dining option Café G, a chic bar Stills, fully loaded with a fine collection of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages and a spa and wellness centre with separate bridal rooms and gymnasium, Holiday Inn Chandigarh Panchkula offers an extravagant service, paradisaical locales and is an oasis of excellence.

What was hosting India Travel Awards and India Hospitality Awards like?

It was a great experience and honour to host 'India Travel Awards - North & East'. We were delighted to win the 'Best Hotel in the Tricity in 2015' award.

The recognition of our experience and service delivery has great meaning for our team. It was an exceptional honour for us to have hosted this spectacular event that is attended by India's top hoteliers.

“
Holiday Inn is the only hotel brand that delivers on your real world expectations of what you want when you are staying away from home
”





Dr. Henry O. Chusuey

FILIPINO HOSPITALITY

in an island paradise

The biggest beach resort in Panglao Island, Bohol, Henann Resort Alona Beach, Bohol sits on a lush 6.5 hectare property on the pristine shores of Alona Beach. TravTalk speaks to **Dr. Henry O. Chusuey**, Chairman, Henann Group of Resorts, to know more about the property.

Anupriya Bishnoi from The Philippines





Kindly give us the background of Henann Resort Alona Beach, Bohol.

It all started with one man's simple idea of building his own resort in the island paradise of Boracay where his family and friends could enjoy a hassle-free vacation. Seventeen years since Boracay Regency's inception, Henann Group of Resorts has re-branded Boracay Garden and Regency Lagoon as Henann Garden and Lagoon respectively in the hope of unifying the Henann brand all over the country and making it stronger than ever. In May 2015, the group opened the biggest resort in the province of Bohol and it is situated in Panglao Island, making it the first venture out of Boracay and the biggest yet.

Currently, the group is still expanding in Boracay with Henann Prime Beach Resort in Station 1 which is planned to be opened in the first quarter of 2016 and two more beachfront properties scheduled to open in 2017. This beach resort is a 6.5 hectare property with 400 world-class rooms with balconies for higher floors and outdoor terrace settings for rooms located on the ground floor. Also, the resort has 12 exclusive villas with their own private plunge pools. The resort also has the longest beachfront on Alona Beach. Our main aim is to focus on Filipino hospitality. We use indigenous materials, so that people who come from other countries get a local taste while being in the hotel. The mantra of Hennann is—affordable luxury accommodation.

Kindly explain the MICE facilities at the hotel?

We try to not only get the client who wants luxury accommodations or just wants to have vacations but we also want to tap the corporate segment. In our resort we

receive guests who not only want to experience resort getaways but also hold seminars and other such events. Also, our convention centre has 16 breakup rooms. The wonderfully designed, state-of-the-art, three storey convention centre features 2,160 square metres of floor area combined, priding itself on accommodating over 1,000 guests, making it the largest in the province of Bohol. It can also accommodate smaller groups for seminars or meetings for which our break-out rooms may be used. With 400 world-class rooms, it is truly an ideal venue for all types of events ranging from the corporate to the social.

How do you manage outdoor activities?

We have the banquet and events team who are in-charge of that. Also, our F&B team works with them. We provide team building activities, games for both corporate and leisure and we are also considering putting up wall climbing activities, volleyball and then other beach games. This will be materialised soon.

How convenient the hotel is located?

Right now the Tagbilaran Airport is the closest one. It's just a 30 minutes drive from our hotel. It's very close from the airport. But the good news is the government will be developing an international airport in Panglao. Once it's built, it will be really convenient for the guests.

How long this project will take?

Actually this project has been a proposal for years now. But the work has finally started. So I guess five years from now the airport at Panglao should be operational.



The mantra of Hennann is—affordable luxury accommodation





The Dining Dog
Edmonds, Washington

World's Weirdest



KinderKookKafe
Amsterdam, Netherlands



Tufelrunde
Berlin, Germany

Restaurants



On TLC's *World's Weirdest Restaurants*, television show host Bob Blumer takes a wild ride around the globe to find the wackiest, craziest and downright strangest places to grab a bite. Bob has spent a lifetime exploring the outer limits of the food world, but there are still a few surprises out there, even for him.

KINDERKOOKKAFFÉ AMSTERDAM NETHERLANDS

These days, when we eat out, we've grown to expect a certain level of experience from the staff and servers, but here at the KinderKookKafe in Amsterdam, the staff is anything but mature. If your kids hate helping out in the kitchen, you might want to try the KinderKookKafe. Children big and small just love spending hours to cook up meals for mom, dad and the general public to enjoy. KinderKookKafe is a place where kids cook and serve it for the adults. The kids not only make the things, but they really serve it, and it's like a real restaurant. You can just walk in, no reservation, and then you can eat what the children have made. This place is a combination of a professional kitchen and a pretty classic cafe, albeit one where everything's just a little bit lower and a little more kid-friendly. In this restaurant, you get a sense of the proportion of everything. You've got the mini-rollers, little mini-cookie-cutters, even mini-cutting boards. This restaurant also houses an impressive vegetable garden broccoli, rosemary, raspberries, verbena, onions and so on. These kids are using real grown-up tools. KinderKookKafe teaches children to be

more helpful, and safer in the kitchen by encouraging creativity with food. The kids make entire meals from the scratch. The kids in this restaurant don't know a specific technique, they just seem to improvise. At the end of the day, it's all work. Even though the kids are cooking for the adults, the chefs actually get to sit down and enjoy the meal themselves.

TUFELRUNDE BERLIN, GERMANY

Eating with your fingers would get you thrown out of most restaurants, but here at Tafelrunde in Berlin, Germany, it's not only encouraged, it's mandatory. Looks like it's time to get medieval. Tafelrunde restaurant is like walking into the Middle Ages. You'll be entertained by a court jester, and served a feast hearty enough to satisfy a round table full of knights. Your first impression when you walk into the room is like you walked into a medieval tavern. With 130 customers a night, the kitchen prepares a set dinner using traditional recipes of the era fit for a king. Everyone digs in with their hands and their daggers. In the beginning, it will be really weird to eat with your hands and daggers but you get used to it. You can take your glass, and say to all the people, "Auf die Gesundheit". Every time you say, "Auf die

gesundheit," you have to drink. Where else can you be fed, shackled, entertained, and knighted? The whole experience is delicious. It's creative.

THE DINING DOG EDMONDS, WASHINGTON

Nothing's more satisfying than treating your best friend to a great meal, especially when they roll over and beg for seconds. And that's exactly what happens right here in Edmonds, Washington. Dining Dog Café is a full service dog restaurant where canine fashion compliments an upscale menu. The menu here is like at a fine restaurant. But if you walk on two legs, don't expect to be served. Clearly it's gone to the dogs. Open three days a week, the café serves 50 dogs a day. Many of the dogs are regulars. They know it so well; they lead their owners to their own reserved table. Four course meals in the restaurant is ten dollars. The food here is great. It's homemade. It makes the dogs happy. One of the dishes served here is—Combination of chicken breast and roast served with broccoli and carrots. Along with this, doggie cupcakes and heart-shaped flower cookies are also served.

World's Weirdest Restaurants airs every Friday at 6 PM only on TLC

to be continued.



Allergy-Free HOTEL EXPERIENCE

As hotels and hoteliers have become more aware of guests with allergies, they have begun to take measures to make their hotel stays comfortable and allergen-free. Senior executives of leading hotels tell us of the steps that they take.

HT Bureau

“

The hotel maintains a robust guest history programme which helps the team to anticipate the needs of the guests

”

Staying in a hotel should be a pleasant and healthy experience for everyone, including those with asthma, allergies and other sensitivities. A large number of people suffer from allergies of various kinds and there is increasing awareness in the hotel business about this issue. When a person is an allergy sufferer, a stay in a hotel can become a restless and problematic experience. Dust mites, molds and mildews are the largest contributors to allergies: If there are poor standards of cleanliness and hygiene in hotels then the levels of dust mites become high.

Various other factors, such as smoking rooms, pet friendly hotels, air fresheners, to even the detergent brands used by

the housekeeping staff for laundry can cause allergic reactions. Similarly, there is the rise of food intolerance. While these factors can make travel more difficult, there are precautions a hotel can take in order to reduce the potential of an allergy filled trip for their guests. To make hotels as accessible as possible to people with these conditions, hotels have now begun to take steps to reduce allergens in their premises and to ensure good indoor air quality as well as to cater for food allergies.

Senior executives in the hospitality business tell us of the various steps that their hotels are taking to make the stay of their guests allergen-free and pleasant.



Venus Patni

VENUS PATNI
Housekeeping Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Gurgaon

Customer delight has always been the top most concern for Courtyard by Marriott, Gurgaon. To enhance the experience, Courtyard by Marriott, Gurgaon takes extreme care about the guest's hypersensitivities by ensuring that their rooms are allergen-free. The housekeeping team at Courtyard by Marriott, Gurgaon has a thorough system in place to check the room after each and every check out. From conducting daily vacuuming to dusting the corners of the room with micro-fiber dusters

for lint and dust, the hotel extends its warm hospitality to all its patrons. The hotel ensures that organic cleaning agents are used to clean the rooms while dehumidifiers are also provided to guests on request.

Sometimes guests are allergic to fibers and feathers and, considering these common allergies, the hotel provides wooden floor rooms without carpets and feather free rooms. The hotel also maintains a robust guest history programme which helps the team to anticipate the needs of the guests and make their stay memorable. Through these small initiatives Courtyard by Marriott, Gurgaon ensures their guests have a comfortable stay.

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Sanjay Verghese



The imperial has launched the Sanipill Ozone Treatment programme. This is to significantly reduce the impact of potential irritants



SANJAY VERGHESE

Director Materials
The Imperial

Moving towards providing a completely safe environment, an enjoyable stay, a sybaritic rest of the senses and an enhanced experience, the imperial has launched the Sanipill Ozone Treatment programme. This is to significantly reduce the impact of potential irritants, allowing guests to rest comfortably, sleep better and awake refreshed.

Our hotel is treating the pillows, duvets and all linen articles by ozonation process, which is an effective way of disinfecting and deodorising them as they are generally loaded with various microorganisms because of prolonged usage by guests. The Imperial believes in the philosophy that luxury is exemplified not only in the ambience but also in the amenities and services provided to the guests. This hypoallergenic environment where the guest comfort is our primary concern is a step further in creating an unmatched stay experience for global travellers at The Imperial.

The effectiveness of the Sanipill ozonizer, as per the claims by the manufacturer of the equipment, in bringing significant reduction in the total microbial load has been verified by the in-house Microbiology Lab of The Imperial. Detailed microbiological studies were conducted for the untreated and treated pillows and linen.



Raghunathan Murali



Every surface in the room is cleaned with pure clean and pure shield technology and the bed is kept allergy-friendly



RAGHUNATHAN MURALI

General Manager
ITC Rajputana - A Luxury Collection Hotel

Many guests suffer from allergies that might trigger and disturb their travel plans. The moment one enters a different environment all senses come into play—the sense of touch, sound, smell, light and so on. ITC Rajputana offers luxurious and breathable allergy pillows.

We have different pillow options on our pillow menu such as Silk Cotton, Orthocare, Relax support, Cotton Comfort, Feather and superior quality Micro fill. The rooms are carpet-free, which prevents the dust from collecting. Every surface in the room is cleaned with pure clean and pure shield technology and the bed is kept allergy-friendly.

The bed linen is none allergic 100 per cent cotton satin weave 300 Thread Count, decorative dobby check soft bed for suite rooms and 100 per cent cotton Indian free trade cotton snow white bedsheets with 40/40 Thread count for other category rooms. We provide none allergic superior duvet TOG 4.5 with quality Micro fill. Linen with these specifications avoids moisture in the bed linen, preventing dust mites and any other allergen.

Likewise, food is a significant area for allergy prone guests and ITC Rajputana promises to look after its valued guest by ensuring the following:

- We have indicators in our menus for foods that contain nuts, shellfish, lactose and other such products and we

have gluten-free items and other such foods for guests who could be allergic to the most common items.

- We have a quarantine kitchen where we cook food for people who are allergic to any item.
- We have separate chopping board which is pink in color which is used only for cooking meals for any allergic guest.





- We don't mix utensils.
- Buffet has signages that state that in case a guest is allergic, please inform the steward so that meals can be customised.
- While taking orders, the order-takers ask the guests if they are allergic to any item.
- A guest's history is also updated at the Front Desk so that the next time the guest visits us, he doesn't need to tell us.





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Manav Koul



The hotel also collects information of guests' preferences and any allergies via verbal or written communications



MANAV KOUL

Executive Chef
Sofitel Mumbai BKC

At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, we take the issue of allergenic food materials very seriously and understand that they can create an acute hypersensitive reaction amongst guests. We take certain precautions from the beginning itself to avoid any such incident. We ensure appropriate handling and storage of these products which are received

in separate crates and trolleys from our other requisitions. A separate storage space has been dedicated for these products to avoid cross-contamination. The hotel also collects information of guests' preferences and any allergies via verbal or written communications and guests are also kept informed about the use of certain products, such as nuts and gluten, which is communicated either in our menu or by our ambassadors. Sofitel Mumbai BKC also uses separate equipment for the preparations of such food items to avoid cross-contamination.



S.K. Roy



The bed linen used in our guests rooms are 300 thread count which repels dust, mites and other contaminants



S.K. ROY

General Manager
Indana Palace Jodhpur

Our rooms do not have carpets which tend to trap mites, dirt, smoke and other contaminants and thus are a boon for anyone who is worried about hotels allergies. We place only a small rug besides the

bed which can be rolled out if the guest is very sensitive. We also take the following measures:-

- We ensure that no pets are allowed in our hotel as they can also cause an allergic reaction in many individuals.
- Since many people are sensitive to cigarettes and cigars, a separate place has been





Manish Chakraborty

MANISH CHAKRABORTY
Executive Housekeeper
Jaipur Marriott Hotel

In the guest rooms, we provide feather free bedding for the guests who are allergic to feathers. We launder the beddings with chemicals that are suitable for sensitive skin. For guests who are allergic to dust, the pillows, duvet, mattress and toppers at the hotel are tumble dried at 80 degrees. This helps in killing the dust mites. In order to prevent a direct contact with the duvet, an additional bed sheet is also used under the duvet. Since a lot of guests are allergic to different types of fragrance, we make sure that

our guest rooms stay odourless. For the same reasons, we don't use any additional scented air freshener. For improving the air quality in the guestrooms, we use damp dusters; it allows dust to be trapped and removed completely from air.

Apart from regular vacuuming of the upholsteries like carpet rugs and sofa, we also do a regular shampooing of these items to remove the settled dust and to stop the production of bacteria and germs. Even if the rooms are ready days before guest arrival, we ensure that they are cleaned (dusting, vacuuming, mopping and water closet sanitization) on day of arrival as well.

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Even if the rooms are ready days before guest arrival, we ensure that they are cleaned on the day of arrival as well

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designated for the smokers thus leaving fresh air to breath.

- The bed linen used in our guests rooms are 300 thread count which prevents dust, mites and other contaminants from penetrating between the fibres. Since high count sheets are more tightly woven, you don't have to worry as much about allergens pilling up on the sheets.
- To ensure the protection of guests who could be prone to pollen, our horticulturist takes care that we do not plant anything that causes floating pollen.
- Lastly, for guests who are sensitive to certain food items we ensure we do not include them in their menus and offer tailored menus.





Gyanendra Kumar Singh
Head – Business Solution Sales
Sony India



Technology is enabling more engagement with the hotels right from booking until the stay. Therefore it is becoming important



THE **Smart** HOTEL

Gyanendra Kumar Singh, Head – Business Solution Sales, Sony India talks about the latest technology trends in hotels.

How has the technology evolved in hotels?

Technology has become a very important part of the hospitality industry to ensure that the guests' stay is even more comfortable. Smartphones, tablets, Internet-enabled devices and Android TVs are making quick inroads in hotel offerings. Hotels nowadays provide fast-speed Internet connectivity, multiple plug-in ports and TV services to support two-way interactivity and have more satisfied guests.

How important is technology in hotels?

Technology is enabling more engagement with the hotels right from booking until the stay. Therefore it is becoming very important to the business. A tech-savvy guest looks for a hotel that has user-friendly

technology interface that allows all their gadgets to work seamlessly.

What kind of upbeat technologies are provided by your brand for hotels?

Our technology, which meets the evolving needs of today's guests and hotels, includes equipment such as Sony android TVs, hotel TV in-room solutions which utilises a server to runs applications (user interface, PMS integration and so on), IPTV head-end compatibility for multi-casting of TV channels and the storage of on-demand music and videos.

Not only this, our IPTV solution provides seamless interface to guests using tablets for remote television control, music and movies on-demand, ordering food and so on. Our content management solution

brings ease to hoteliers in promoting their hotel offerings and services. The application integrates with the hotel's property management system and allows for changes from a central location. These settings can be passed on to multiple hotel locations and be instantly applied to every TV in the hotel.

What are the areas of improvements in hotels as far as technology is concerned?

TV is an integral part of a guest's stay in a hotel room and, with high expectations of guests these days, it's important to have two-way interaction. Hotels need to align their TV service with guest expectations arising from modern technological advancements in order to create a service differentiator.

STYLING HOSPITALITY

Today there is a growing trend of Designer uniforms for the hospitality and corporate sector. A stylish yet practical uniform adds value and unifies the complete experience of hospitality. Most hotels, corporates and institutions do have fine uniforms but there is yet so much richness in our culture that a Designer with a holistic approach can offer. Zubin Mehta – MD and CEO – Uniforms Unlimited, heads his designer brand 'Dezenzia' and is one such designer with a holistic approach towards uniform design. Besides being well known for his manufacturing skills, Zubin has also made a mark in the hospitality world by delivering stunning concepts of uniforms for niche hotels, resorts and corporates. His uniforms are now being flaunted by clients as their brand differentiator.

Zubin in his designs imbibes the value of a region/culture into design by repackaging the couture into finely styled garments that enhance the image of the client to the highest standards. His endeavour has always focused on amalgamating top style with highly practical attire. This is a huge challenge for fashion designers per se, but Zubin, having the thorough knowledge of uniforms and a state-of-the-art facility to back his experience, can bring about this fusion with ease. Modern travellers are extremely selective of hotels and especially seek advice on the experience shared by others on the Internet and by word of mouth.

Today a guest looks closely for classy interiors, bathrooms, amenities provided and even at the uniforms, whether they are clean, finely tailored and intricately designed. The uniform speaks volumes about the organisation. Zubin emphasises on the textures of fabrics used, the princess lines on the uniform, the subtle detail of embroidery and pleats that turn a uniform into a couture garment.



Uniforms
Unlimited



ZUBIN MEHTA
(MD & CEO)

PRESIDENTIAL SUITES OF DELHI/NCR HOTELS



Vivanta by Taj
Gurgaon



Taj Palace
New Delhi



Hospitality Talk creates a collage of Presidential suites in the hotels of Delhi/NCR



The Leela Palace New Delhi



JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity



GLOBAL HOSPITALITY CONCLAVE 2016

Around 120 delegates made the 3rd Global Hospitality Conclave 2016 (GHC) a full house. Delegates not only reminisced about their Oberoi Centre of Learning & Development (OCLD) days, but met old friends as well.







VitrA introduces its Nest Trendy series

VitrA introduces a new range of highly modular family bathroom furniture—Nest Trendy. This series is designed by Pentagon Design, a leading Finnish design agency. Nest Trendy series by VitrA draws inspiration from the needs and desires of every member of the family and is backed with VitrA's aesthetics and advanced technology.

Marshalls Wallcoverings introduces Global Love Collection

Marshalls Wallcoverings has launched 'Global Love', an ensemble of super exclusive signature series wallcoverings that showcases a celebrated international designer, Karim Rashid. Inspired from the vibrations out of the speakers, this collection showcases an array of designs which represents loud, quite, compact, transparent and many other variations in sounds in an artistically interpreted computer design.



Delta Faucet Company introduces Tesla Lavatory Faucet in India

Set apart from typical modern designs with its divergence from cool, straight lines, the Tesla™ lavatory faucet from Delta Faucet Company is an elegant, soft, contemporary solution for homeowners and designers looking for a warm, modern collection with clean lines.



Pergo launches its new collection for commercial spaces

Pergo's latest collection, Original Excellence (AC-5 Grade) Class 33 is a strikingly attractive flooring for commercial space and the perfect way to stand out and make people take notice. Pergo's Original Excellence is available in 25 attractive decors consisting of single strip, multi-strip plank patterns with different shades of Walnut, Merbau, Oak, also the Genuine™ sawcut, Genuine™ wood; Genuine™ rustic surface structure creates an intensive experience of space in your room.



Ukiyo-e collection by Olympia Ceramica at ETRELUXE

Ukiyo-e collection by Olympia Ceramica at ETRELUXE, a luxury lifestyle brand for interior spaces that makes available international design products in India, is inspired by the spirit of eastern thinking and the concept of a floating universe as an enticement to living and savouring life.

The collection has soft flowing lines throughout inspired by zen and the movement of water. The collection comes with the entire collection of accessories and attachments that are coordinated and can be used together. The product is suitable for all areas of hotels and has an attractive price range.



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MOVEMENTS

RITESH SHARMA

General Manager
TajFalaknuma Palace

Ritesh Sharma has been appointed the new General Manager of Taj Falaknuma Palace effective January 2016. Sharma started his career with the Taj family 15 years ago as Front Office Associate with the Taj Coromandel, Chennai. Thereafter, he rose from a Front Office Associate to Butler Operations Manager. His achievement was establishing the well-known 'Butler Program' after which he was promoted as the Operations Manager at The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai. Sharma holds a degree in Hotel Management from S.R.M Institute, Chennai. He joined the Executive Management Program at the well renowned S.P Jain Institute of Management and went on to attain the Six Sigma Black Belt certification from the Indian Statistical Institute.



SETHURAMAN SUNDARAM

Food & Beverage Manager
Hyatt Pune Kalyani Nagar

Hyatt Pune Kalyani Nagar recently appointed Sethuraman Sundaram as the Food & Beverage Manager for the property. Sundaram says he was 'Born and raised in Hyatt' and brings with him over 13 years of work experience in the hospitality industry. He has worked in roles like Food & Beverage Trainer, All Day Dining Manager, Pre-opening Banquet Manager and Assistant Director of Food and Beverage in the prime Hyatt properties of Mumbai and Pune. In his current role, he will direct and oversee the Food & Beverage operations of the hotel.



ERUM KHAN

Manager Marketing
Fraser Suites, New Delhi

Erum Khan has been promoted as the Manager Marketing Fraser Suites, New Delhi. She is a marketing specialist with 12 years of experience who has worked with leading companies. She has previously worked with Political Express (Newspaper & Magazine), the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs, and Bureaucracy Today Magazine (producer of the popular crime-busting television show 'India's Most Wanted'). Apart from marketing, she is skilled in events management, public relations and office administration. Erum holds a Master's degree in English Literature from Kanpur University. She has been awarded 35 appreciation letters, medals and trophies in various fields.

VISHRUT GUPTA

Director of Food & Beverage
Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity

Vishrut Gupta has been appointed Director of Food & Beverage at Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity. Gupta comes with 13 years of experience in the hospitality industry. In his new role at the Pullman & Novotel New Delhi Aerocity, Gupta will head the entire F&B Division for the signature restaurants and bars of both the hotels. He shall oversee the smooth functioning of the F&B department. He will be responsible for planning and execution of the annual promotions calendar, managing and executing events held at Pullman and Novotel. He envisions positioning the hotel as one of the premier F&B destinations in New Delhi and Gurgaon.





BABITA KANWAR

Hotel Manager
Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet, Mumbai - Marriott Executive Apartments

With 14 years in the hospitality industry, Babita Kanwar has been re-appointed as the Hotel Manager at Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel & Lakeside Chalet, Mumbai - Marriott Executive Apartments. Babita joined Marriott India in October 2001 as part of the preopening team at the JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu, gradually moving into Sales & Marketing in 2005. Next she moved to Goa Marriott Resort & Spa as the Director of Sales and Marketing and then she joined Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel and Lakeside Chalet – Mumbai, Marriott Executive Apartments as Director of Sales and Marketing.



SHIBIL MALIK

General Manager
Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel

Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel has announced the appointment of Shibil Malik as General Manager. Prior to his new assignment he was the Cluster Executive Assistant Manager of Sales & Marketing for The Westin Hyderabad Mindspace and Sheraton Hyderabad Hotel. With a broad spectrum of hospitality experience, he has played a crucial role in strategising, re-positioning and assisting in brand augmentation and expansion for many prestigious hotels. With over 17 years of experience in the hospitality and banking industry, Malik has been part of many significant assignments. He started with BNP Paribas soon after his MBA in Sales & Marketing. In 2002, he joined the 'The Oberoi Group' and handled various assignments and projects in Mumbai & Delhi as Regional Sales Manager - North.



PRABHAKAR SINGH

Director of Sales and Marketing
Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences

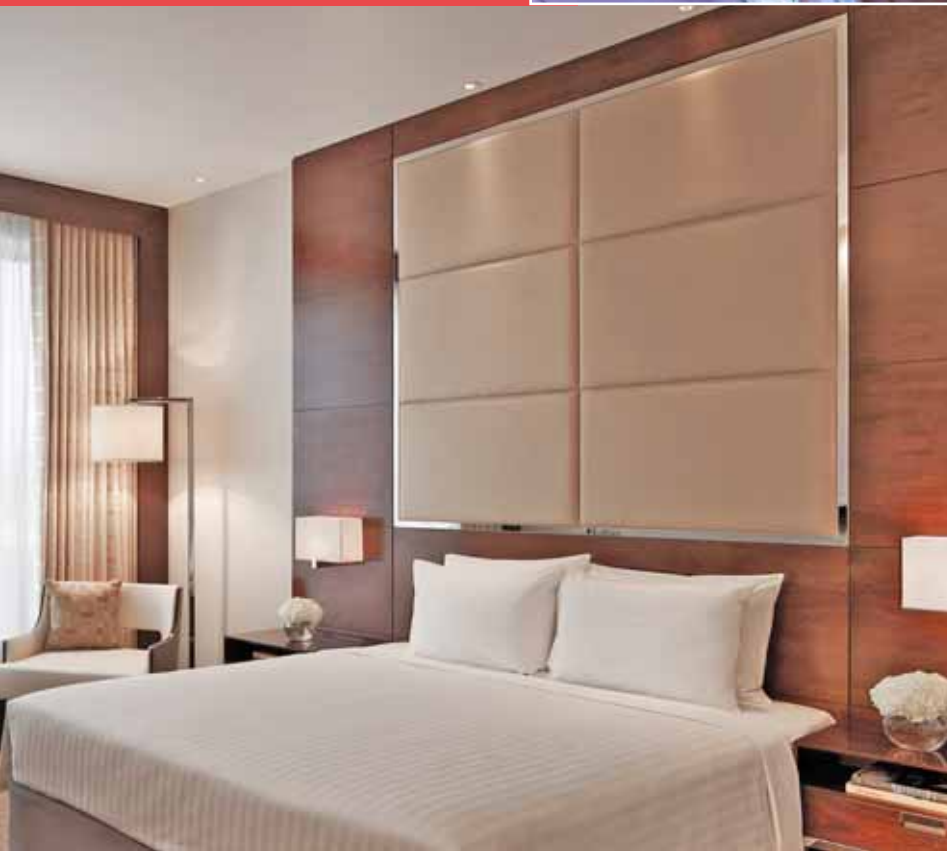
Prabhakar Singh has joined Novotel Kolkata Hotel and Residences, the flagship property of AccorHotels in Eastern India as the Director of Sales and Marketing from November 2015. His previous assignment was at Vivanta by Taj – President, Mumbai as Director of Sales and Marketing. His tenure with Taj Hotels, Resorts and Palaces spans a period of 10 years. He was with Taj Coromandel, Taj Club House, launched the 100th hotel of Taj Group in India – Vivanta by Taj – Gurgaon, NCR and the Vivanta flagship Vivanta by Taj President, Mumbai. He was earlier with The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts in Mumbai.



VISHAL KUMAR

Director of Sales
Holiday Inn Amritsar

Vishal Kumar has been appointed as Director of Sales for Holiday Inn Amritsar. Kumar brings with him almost 15 years of experience in Hospitality & Aviation industry. In his current role he will take care of Sales & Marketing. His experience ranges from Corporate, Travel Trade to Online Business. His new role will include planning and strategising the marketing plans for the hotel and directing all sales and marketing efforts towards achieving the operational goals of the hotel.



MOVEMENTS

“

But my memorable holiday has to be a dinner under the stars on a serene beach in Greece”

ABHISHEK SAHAI

General Manager

**Courtyard by Marriott
Agra**

I de-stress by socialising and devote my free time to travelling, music and discussions. My favourite holiday destination in India remains Goa while internationally I prefer to vacation in Prague. But my most memorable holiday moment has to be a private dinner under the stars on a serene, secluded beach in Greece. My favourite restaurants in India and abroad include Le Cirque at Delhi's The Leela Palace, Gaggan Bangkok and Nusr-Et in Dubai.

“

I enjoy running and feel so lucky to be living and working by the seaside. I also love travelling”

SANJEEV SHEKHAR

General Manager

**Hotel Marine Plaza
Mumbai**

I enjoy running and feel so lucky to be living and working by the seaside. I have run 15 half marathons till date. I also love travelling and there are some holiday moments that really stand out in my memory, like the day I saw the holocaust museum in Washington DC. I love traveling to Jaipur in India. Internationally, I like Texas in the US with its wide open spaces and friendly people. My favourite restaurant is The Oriental Blossom in Hotel Marine Plaza and the Mandarin Oriental Singapore.

“

I also like to explore the eastern states of the country. I think they are just beautiful”

VIJAI SINGH

General Manager

**InterContinental
Chennai
Mahabalipuram Resort**

My favourite airline is Singapore Airlines. As far as travelling is concerned I would really like to go to Leh Ladhak. This destination has been on my list forever now. I also like to explore Eastern states of the country. I think they are just beautiful. I am into fitness and I play sports and I love to play squash. Also I am a foodie and I love to eat all kinds of cuisines. However, Japanese, Indian and authentic Chinese remain my favourite.

“

During off hours I enjoy reading about innovation around the world; that keeps me going”

ASEEM KAPOOR

Area Director-
Northwest India and
General Manager

Hyatt Regency Delhi

I am an ardent reader. During off hours I enjoy reading about innovation around the world; that keeps me going. I also have a keen interest in studying about the booming digital segment. Park Hyatt Milan hotel is my favourite. I love to dine at the Hyatt restaurants—The China Kitchen and TK's Oriental Grill. I am a Thai food lover and when in Singapore I just doesn't miss dining at StraitsKitchen. As far as travelling is concerned I prefer travelling with Swiss Airlines.



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MT-4008



XT-4215E



- Posiflex offering unique fixed & mobile pos solution that meets ever growing needs of Hospitality industry
- The combination of Jiva XT-4215E Fixed POS and MT-4008 Mobile POS helps to serve customer fast & efficiently
- MT-4008 – used as table side order taking terminal or Q-busting in QSR
- MT-4008W version runs regular desktop POS directly on Mobile POS without any modification, cuts down lead time to go Mobility Solution for given Restaurant
- Jiva XT-4215E available in Dual Core upto Core i7 processor
- MT-4008 comes in both Android 4.4 and Windows Embedded 8.1 industry

Repose™

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