

HOSPITALITY Talk

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Lords Hotels and Resorts adds a property at Gir, Gujarat

Lords Hotels and Resorts has signed a hotel property at Sasan Gir, Gujarat. Located at a close proximity to the Madhuvanti Dam, the premium property offers 72 keys to stunningly spacious villas, luxurious suites, and plush rooms. Some of the other amenities include a mini theatre, swimming pool, game zone, a well-furnished restaurant, and above all a great view of the Gir forest.



IntelliStay Hotels launches third brand, i-Stay Hotels

IntelliStay Hotels has launched its third brand, i-Stay Hotels, with its first hotel in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. Essentially a youth and transit hotel, the brand also provides shared accommodation for families and groups. i-Stay Hotels – Raipur Junction is located in the heart of the city, just beside the railway station. This central location makes it easy to access for transit-stay travellers.



Absolute Hotel Services launches Eastin Residences Vadodara

Thailand based Absolute Hotel Services has launched Eastin Residences Vadodara in the cultural capital of Gujarat. All 44 well-appointed residences have fashionable décor with great attention given to functionality. Lounge sitting area, walk-in wardrobe, sofa cum bed, kitchenette with microwave, refrigerator and heating facility give the property a competitive advantage. The property is located in main Alkapuri, a hub for shopping, family attractions, and commercial centre.



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Pullman New Delhi Aerocity launches video menu

Pullman New Delhi Aerocity has introduced an innovative way to look at menus at its restaurant, Pluck. Idea Chakki and Pullman New Delhi Aerocity have partnered to bring this interactive digital image and video menu together. Pluck, an avant-garde farm-to-table restaurant will have the Dash application on iPads to showcase the new menu. The Dash app will feature the menu in a video and image format, allowing diners to preview their meal visually. The app also sorts the menu in innovative ways and lets guests see what they can expect from the restaurant.

IHG's first Holiday Inn hotel in Kolkata

InterContinental Hotels Group strengthens its presence in East India with the introduction of its first Holiday Inn hotel in Kolkata – Holiday Inn Kolkata Airport. With the opening of this 137-room hotel in partnership with Jain Group, the total number of Holiday Inn hotels has gone up to 11 in India. Located just five kms



away from the city's international airport, with close proximity to business parks, SEZs, and IT hubs of Kolkata, the hotel offers comfort and convenience to the contemporary business and leisure traveller. It also provides state-of-the-art meeting and banqueting spaces that imbibe the latest technology in providing creative offerings to its guests.



Wyndham adds three hotels to India portfolio

Wyndham Hotel Group has announced the addition of three new hotels under the Ramada and Ramada Encore brands to its India portfolio. In order to expand the brand across Eurasia, the recent additions at Kumbhalgarh (Rajasthan), Jalandhar (Punjab), and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh) will further strengthen Wyndham Hotel Group's presence in the northern belt of the country. The group now has 28 operational hotels in India and 36 hotels in the Eurasia region.

Radisson Blu Atria Bengaluru opens with 167 rooms

Radisson Blu Atria Bengaluru has opened doors to guests. Located in the capital of India's southern state, Bengaluru, the hotel features 167 guest rooms and suites with modern amenities. Bringing exciting flavours from around the globe, the hotel has

four food and beverage outlets for guests to indulge in. Guests can enjoy international cuisines at One Atria Café or delight in authentic fine Indian cuisine at the hotel's specialty restaurant, Tijouri.



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Radisson Blu Jammu opens with 119 rooms

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group has opened Radisson Blu Jammu, offering comfort, style, and sophistication to the guests in the city. Radisson Blu Jammu is a mere 14 minutes from Jammu Airport and six minutes by car from Jammu Tawi Railway Station, the city's main railway station.

Goa's third Fortune hotel now open

Fortune Hotels has announced the opening of its 46th hotel in the country – Fortune Miramar, Goa. This is the chain's third hotel in Goa, joining Fortune Acron Regina, Candolim and Acron Waterfront Resort, Baga. Located in the heart of Panaji city, the hotel is aesthetically designed to infuse Goan

vibes with modern-day amenities to make for a delightful stay. It features 45 beautifully-furnished rooms, complete with latest amenities. To add to its charm, the property is situated at an advantageous location, just 200 metres from the famous Miramar Beach and well-connected to the airport, local shopping district, casinos, beaches, and other areas of interest.



Deutsche Hospitality sets foot in Indian market

Deutsche Hospitality is adding another country to its hospitality portfolio. The German company will set foot in the Indian hotel market with its Indian joint venture partner, MBD Group. From year 2020, guests will be able to relax in Bengaluru's Zephyr – MBD Steigenberger Hotel and Apartments. Aimed at redefining luxury in the city, Zephyr is a pioneering mixed-use development entailing luxury hotel and luxury serviced apartments by MBD Steigenberger.



Meliá Hotels' second roadshow in India

Meliá Hotels International conducted its three-city roadshow in Bengaluru, Ahmedabad, and Mumbai, from February 20-22, 2017. The roadshow was aimed at building and strengthening relationships with key travel partners across India and to showcase the USPs of the brands – Gran Meliá, ME by Meliá, Paradisus, Meliá Hotels and Resorts, Inside by Meliá, Tryp by Wyndham, and Sol by Meliá. Led by Ruben Casas, Senior Director - Sales and Marketing, Asia Pacific, and senior hotel representatives, the roadshow witnessed active participation from several trade partners, travel consultants, major tour operators, wedding planners, and the media.

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Address Boulevard, Dubai, welcomes guests

Emaar Hospitality Group's latest property, The Address Boulevard, has finally opened its doors to guests. The hotel has formally started operations. Situated in Downtown Dubai, the property offers the best in hospitality and service. With its signature dining concept, The Restaurant at Address, spa facilities, engaging Qix club for children, access to The Dubai Mall, and state-of-the-art serviced residences, the property offers a panoply of experiences and tastes.



JW Marriott expands Vietnam portfolio

JW Marriott Hotels and Resorts has announced the opening of JW Marriott Phu Quoc, Emerald Bay. Located on Vietnam's largest island of Phu Quoc, a hidden paradise off the southern coast of Vietnam, and designed by award-winning interior designer Bill Bensley, the hotel comprises 244 guest rooms, suites, and villas for an idyllic island retreat. JW Marriott Phu Quoc, Emerald Bay, is the second hotel for the brand in Vietnam, and joins a portfolio of more than 80 JW Marriott hotels across 25 countries. It offers five distinct restaurants and bars, ensuring guests have a wealth of world-class dining options.

IHG and Linzhu to open Holiday Inn Sydney

InterContinental Hotels Group and Linzhu have signed an agreement to open the Holiday Inn Sydney Central in the city's CBD. Adding 305 rooms in Sydney by 2020, the flagship hotel is the largest mid-scale property in the Sydney CBD pipeline and will embrace the joy of dining with its design-led restaurant, terrace bar, and 120-seat meeting space. The hotel will be part of a mixed-use development that will include a private art gallery and a retail concourse.



Mandarin Oriental, Bodrum, to open in April

Luxurious Turkish Riviera resort, Mandarin Oriental, Bodrum, will open for the summer season in April, this year. New fitness and wellness facilities, a butler service for every room category, a new partnership with Worldwide Kids, and specially-curated room packages will become available at the resort that overlooks the aptly named Paradise Bay. By booking the new Stay and Dine room package, guests can take advantage of the resort's latest offerings and existing five-star amenities.



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Belmond Road to Mandalay introduces cruises in Myanmar

Belmond Road to Mandalay introduces mindfulness cruises in Myanmar, taking passengers along the spiritually enriching Ayeyarwady River on expert-led journeys of self-discovery. Guests can choose from a seven-night round trip cruise, departing Bagan on October 7, 2017, or three-night 'taster' cruise departing Mandalay on October 11, 2017. In a country renowned for its golden-topped temples, monasteries, and hidden pagodas where meditation is a way of life, there is no better voyage to digitally detox and pursue inner fulfillment.



Al Bait Sharjah – UAE's latest in luxury hotels

Al Bait Sharjah, the new luxury resort to be managed by General Hotel Management Ltd (GHM), is set to raise the bar for luxury hotel accommodation in the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) cultural city while adding interest and vibrance to the historic inner-city precinct in which it is situated. Developed in partnership with Shurooq (the Sharjah Investment and Development Authority), Al Bait in Sharjah is part of the Emirate's largest and most ambitious historical preservation and restoration projects known as Heart of Sharjah.

FCS and NEC partner for EMEA sector

FCS Computer Systems (FCS) and NEC Enterprise Solutions EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa), both leading providers of advanced ICT solutions to the hospitality sector, have inked a partnership agreement that incorporates FCS solutions into the NEC Hospitality offering for the hotel sector in EMEA. The FCS suite of hospitality interface and operational



solutions, encompassing billing interface, voicemail, job dispatch, engineering, housekeeping, glitch management and more, are fully-tested and integrated to work with NEC's range of IT and communication servers, and will be available directly to order through NEC's business partners in EMEA.

AccorHotels launches new online booking tool

AccorHotels has announced a new group online booking tool, Leisure Online, for partners in the Indian tourism industry, including travel agencies and tour operators. This digital solution provides travel professionals with real time availability and best rates guaranteed for leisure group bookings of 15 to 60 persons (from 8 to 30 rooms) at more than 900 hotels and resorts worldwide, including India. Leisure Online, which is user-friendly and designed like a booking engine for ease of use, is available anywhere, anytime, giving bookers the flexibility to make reservations easily in no time.

Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay, Spain, to open end June

The Balearic Island's most exciting new luxury five-star resort, Nobu Hotel Ibiza Bay, a member of the globally recognised Small Luxury Hotels of the World, is set to open towards the end of June. Ibiza Bay is designed to be the ultimate playground for grown-ups. The Ibizan-style rooms and suites, two private seafront pools, restaurants, spa, boutique, adult and family experiences have been carefully curated to provide guests with the finest, authentic island escape, without ever having to leave the resort.





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JA Resorts and Hotels set to debut in Sri Lanka

Dubai-based JA Resorts and Hotels that currently has properties in Maldives, Seychelles, and Dubai will be making inroads into a new destination with its property in Sri Lanka. Local design features such as laterite stone walls, wood teak ceiling, veneer teak walls, split granite, and rich vibrant Sri Lankan textiles have been incorporated into the design of the hotel.



Rezidor appoints first Saudi Arabian woman as General Manager

The Rezidor Hotel Group, one of the most dynamic hotel companies in the world, is proud to mark a milestone in its history by appointing its first Saudi female General Manager in the company and the hospitality industry. Maram Kokandi will be the General Manager of the new Park Inn by Radisson hotel in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, scheduled to open later this year. The appointment complements Saudi Vision 2030, which emphasises the significance of Saudi women and their role in leading the development of both social and professional growth of the kingdom.



Hotelbeds and Tourico Holidays join hands

Hotelbeds Group, a global bed bank and business-to-business provider of services to the travel industry, has announced plans for Tourico Holidays to merge with its bed bank business unit. The proposed deal will enable Tourico Holidays to enhance its footprint, especially in Tourico Holidays' home market of North America whilst benefiting from belonging to Hotelbeds Group's global network. For the time being, both businesses will continue as usual, focusing on providing the best possible service to partners and clients.



AccorHotels to acquire Travel Keys

AccorHotels has begun exclusive negotiations for the acquisition of Travel Keys, one of the leading players in the private vacation rental market. Founded in 1991, Travel Keys is an elite travel broker representing a luxury collection of over 5,000 highly curated villas across more than 100 destinations in the Caribbean islands, Mexico, Hawaii, the United States, Europe, Asia, and Africa. A pioneer in the industry, the Atlanta-based company focuses on guest satisfaction, offering professional vacation planning, and 24x7 concierge services. The combination of Travel Keys with 'onefinestay' and 'Squarebreak' will provide AccorHotels with a unique offering of about 8,500 addresses in the luxury private rental market in both vacation and urban segments. The transaction is expected to close in the second quarter of 2017, after customary due diligence.



Sarovar Hotels announces hotel in Zambia

Expanding its overseas portfolio, Sarovar Hotels has announced the signing of its latest project in Africa, Sarovar Premiere Lusaka, Zambia. This development marks Sarovar's presence in five countries of Africa, including Tanzania, Kenya, South Sudan, Ethiopia, and Zambia. Sarovar Premiere Lusaka is an 82-key all-suite hotel conveniently located around the city centre. With an elegant design and all modern facilities, it is the only all-suite hotel in the region that will offer the space and comfort of a personal apartment. The hotel is being developed by Neelkanth Group that is based out of Zambia, whose core business lies in steel, lime, copper cables, and real estate.



HICSA 2017 – Defining the future

To address the growing need of a uniform platform for industry participants to exchange ideas and discuss the future of the hospitality industry, the Hotel Investment Conference – South Asia (HICSA), launched by HVS, shall be conducting its 13th edition this year.

HVS is set to host the 13th edition of HICSA on April 5 and 6, at Grand Hyatt Mumbai, which will once again bring to fore the most relevant subject matter, key issues, and latest industry trends that shape and transform the future of hospitality businesses in South Asia and around the world. Over the last 12 years, HICSA has consistently managed to scale greater heights, establishing itself as one of the most coveted forums for all industry players in the region. Each year, the conference brings together more than 500 delegates from over 20 countries, comprising the best and the brightest from the region's as well as the global hospitality industry.

This year, the conference will feature CEOs from four of the most respected global hotel companies, Christopher J Nassetta, President and CEO, Hilton; Mark Hoplamazian, President and CEO, Hyatt Hotels Corporation; Rakesh Sarna, Managing Director and CEO, Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris; and Vikram Oberoi, Managing Director and CEO, The Oberoi Group. The conference will also feature a series of powerful keynote addresses by eminent industry specialists such as Amitabh Kant, Chief Executive Officer, NITI Aayog; David Scowsill, President and CEO, World Travel and Tourism Council; and Michael Issenberg, Chairman and CEO - Asia Pacific, AccorHotels. This year, HICSA is

also honoured to recognise Dr. A B Kerkar as the recipient of the 'Lifetime Achievement Award'.

Notable speakers at the conference include industry stalwarts such as Arun Nanda, Chairman, Mahindra Holidays and Resorts India; Craig Smith, President and MD - APAC, Marriott International; Jonathan Vanica, Managing Director- Asian Special Situations Group, Goldman Sachs; Kavin C Bloomer, Executive Director, Morgan Stanley; Peter Kerkar, Group Chief Executive Officer, Cox and Kings; Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts; and Thorsten Kirschke, President - APAC, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, to name a few.





Welcome to my **POD**

Urbanpod, the first-of-its-kind pod hotel, launches in India, pioneering a new segment of smart hotels. **Hiren Gandhi**, Co-founder and Director, Urbanpod, gets in an exclusive tête-à-tête with us to describe his plans for the Indian market and his 'Pod' concept.

HT Bureau



Hiren Gandhi

A pod hotel sounds extremely fascinating. Do tell us about this concept.

Urbanpod, Andheri SEEPZ, Mumbai, is the first-of-its-kind pod hotel in India that indulges discerning travellers with a smart-stay option. It is a GenNext, futuristic, smart accommodation and shared-living concept at a humble cost that does not compromise on luxury, comfort,

safety, and quality. Urbanpod is modern, stylish, and minimalistic, providing guests with an experience unmatched. The pod theme also makes it a great arena to network and make new friends from across the globe.

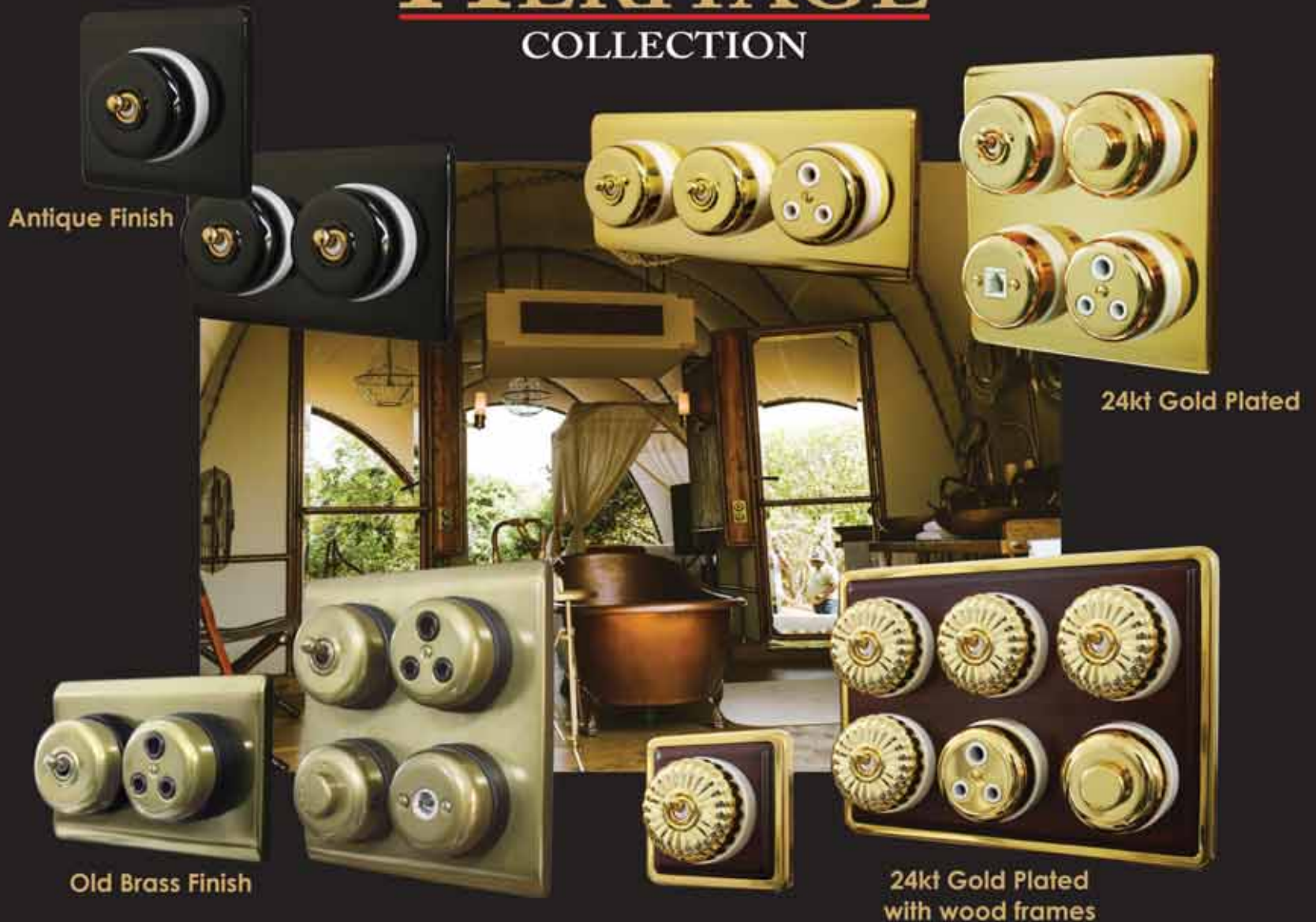
What prompted you to introduce this unique concept to India?

Shalabh Mittal, a co-founder at

Urbanpod, during his work-related assignment in Singapore, got a chance to stay and experience an elegant pod hotel. He absolutely loved the concept, business-model, service, quality, and many other aspects of this unique experience. He shared his thoughts with another entrepreneur-hotelier friend, and they, along with Singapore-based Berlin Lee, a veteran in the architec-

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Urbanpod is modern, stylish, and minimalistic, providing guests with an experience unmatched



tural design and interiors business, gave birth to the concept of Urbanpod.

The Indian hospitality industry has a huge potential. Booming domestic economy, globalisation, and better infrastructure are spurring a growth in the number of business and leisure travellers to the country.

Even the sub-segments in the leisure category, that is single-travellers, backpackers, spiritual-travellers, study tour groups, explorers, researchers, and group travellers are expanding more than ever before. These new-age travellers are looking at smart and practical stay options.

Accommodations that are hygienic, safe, provide all basic amenities, have free Wi-Fi, proximity to airports and business hubs, and provide an ambience and opportunity to interact with people from all geographies are the things that today's urban travellers are looking for.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the three of us felt that the Indian audience was ready for this new product and decided to introduce it to India, offering



value-for-money to customers and giving them the choice of a smart accommodation.

How well-equipped are the pods?

Perfect for anyone seeking accommodation on a budget,

Urbanpod is strategically located in the heart of Mumbai's business hub and in close proximity of the domestic and international airports. It offers 140 pods with various upgrades, such as suite pods, private pods, classic pods, and an exclusive ladies-only pod.

The suite pod category is suitable for couples, private pods have more room, and the exclusive ladies-only pod gives single women travellers added safety and privacy.

The sleek individual pods are self-contained with modern, superior interiors. Each pod comes with a cosy bed, personal locker with secure keycard access, plasma TV, personal reading light, power socket, hangers, a dresser, free Wi-Fi, adjustable air-conditioning facility, air-purifier, and a sliding door with locking facility for added privacy. Each pod also has a smoke detector and a fire extinguisher.

After a long day, guests can unwind and relax in their individual pods with mood lighting giving just the right ambience.





What are your expansion plans?

We would like to explore more hotels in Mumbai because of the sheer necessity of such spaces in the city. We also aim to provide this innovative product to as many customers as possible.

For now, we have plans to go with 1,000 beds in a span of two to three years and we will do this with strategic partnerships with like-minded partners from across the industry. We would also like to expand this innovative concept to other metros, such as Delhi and Bengaluru, to begin with. Additionally, we are looking to explore strategic partnerships with larger setups, such as IT-parks and real estate owners.

How are you going to market your product?

We have tied-up with leading OTAs and have already started receiving bookings from their end. Through our marketing agency, we are tapping corporate and travel operators. We aim to reach out to the end-consumer through PR and social media communication. Slowly, we will be adding more activities to connect with the end-consumer.

“
The sleek individual pods are self-contained with modern, superior interiors
”

What kind of client base do you want to cater to?

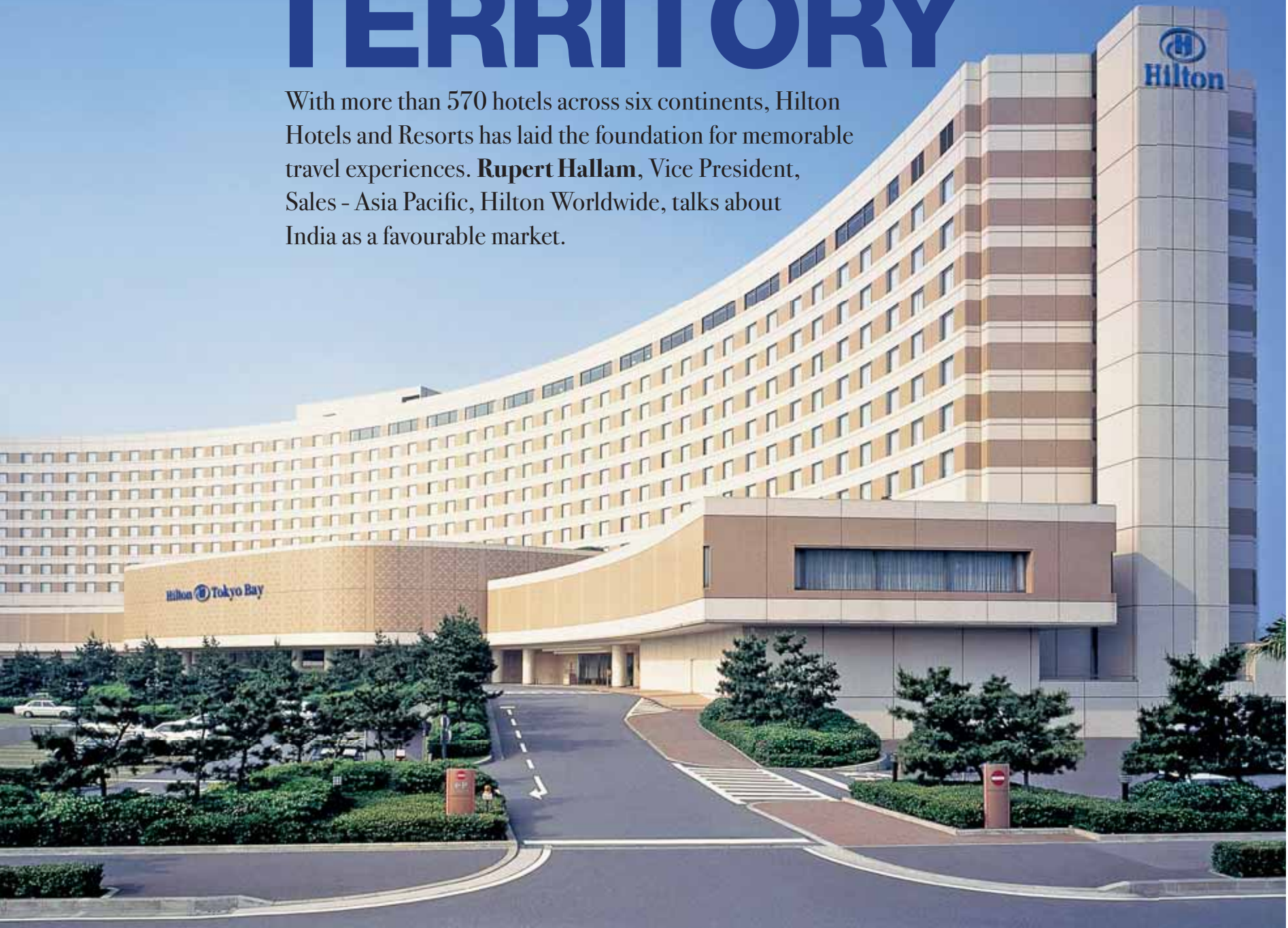
Our target segment includes new-age travellers (both business and leisure), single travellers (both men and women), group

travellers of all kinds (spiritual, study-related groups, researchers, explorers, cultural-exchange travellers), and backpackers, among others.



HILTON – Marking new TERRITORY

With more than 570 hotels across six continents, Hilton Hotels and Resorts has laid the foundation for memorable travel experiences. **Rupert Hallam**, Vice President, Sales - Asia Pacific, Hilton Worldwide, talks about India as a favourable market.



Rupert Hallam

Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us about the Hilton Showcase 2017.

We hold Hilton Showcase once a year and it's all about our customers. We have around 25 hotels worldwide that are joining us here in Delhi to connect with Indian customers. Hilton Showcase is all about engagement, expanding our customer base, networking, and helping clients understand the Hilton brand. Hilton has 14 brands spread across the globe and this showcase helps them connect at a local level,

while building relationships that could further grow into business partnerships and associations.

How important is India as a market for Hilton?

India is incredibly important to Hilton. We have 15 hotels presently operating in the country, with two more scheduled to open by the end of the year. Conrad Bengaluru, the second Conrad hotel in the country after that in Pune, will open in the third quarter. Hilton Garden Inn Lucknow will open in the fourth





quarter. Both hotels beautifully complement the footprint of hotels we already have in India. Outbound business is equally important to us. India now ranks in the top ten outbound markets of the world in terms of both business and leisure tourism.

Hilton has 4,800 hotels across the globe, and we are here to ensure that we see this market as an absolute mandate for the growth of Hilton.

Tell us more about your expansion plans.

At the moment, we have around 184 hotels across Asia Pacific. We plan to take this count up to 200 by the end of the year. A large part of this prospective expansion will be concentrated in China.

Apart from the two hotels that will be opening in India this year, we have another 18 in the pipeline. Southeast Asia is also a strong development point for us. We are also looking to expand our presence in Australia.

What's your take on mergers and acquisitions?

We grow organically, continuously on the lookout for associations with the right partners, in the right locations, with the right products. In India, we are adding few hotels every year, which is entirely an organic growth.

How different is managing properties in India from those in the Asia Pacific region?

I have managed properties in Australia and I see the way properties are being managed and operated in different parts of the world. I don't think there is much difference in running a property in India and running one in any other part of the world. We have to ensure that the clients are looked after. The energy that I see in my team in India is palpable and that comes through in operations as well. We develop that talent and maintain that talent, making sure that it stays within the Hilton brand. You can have a beautiful hotel but without the right team, it's worthless. This industry is not just about beautiful properties, but also about people and delivery of services, and that is exactly what we do as a sales team.

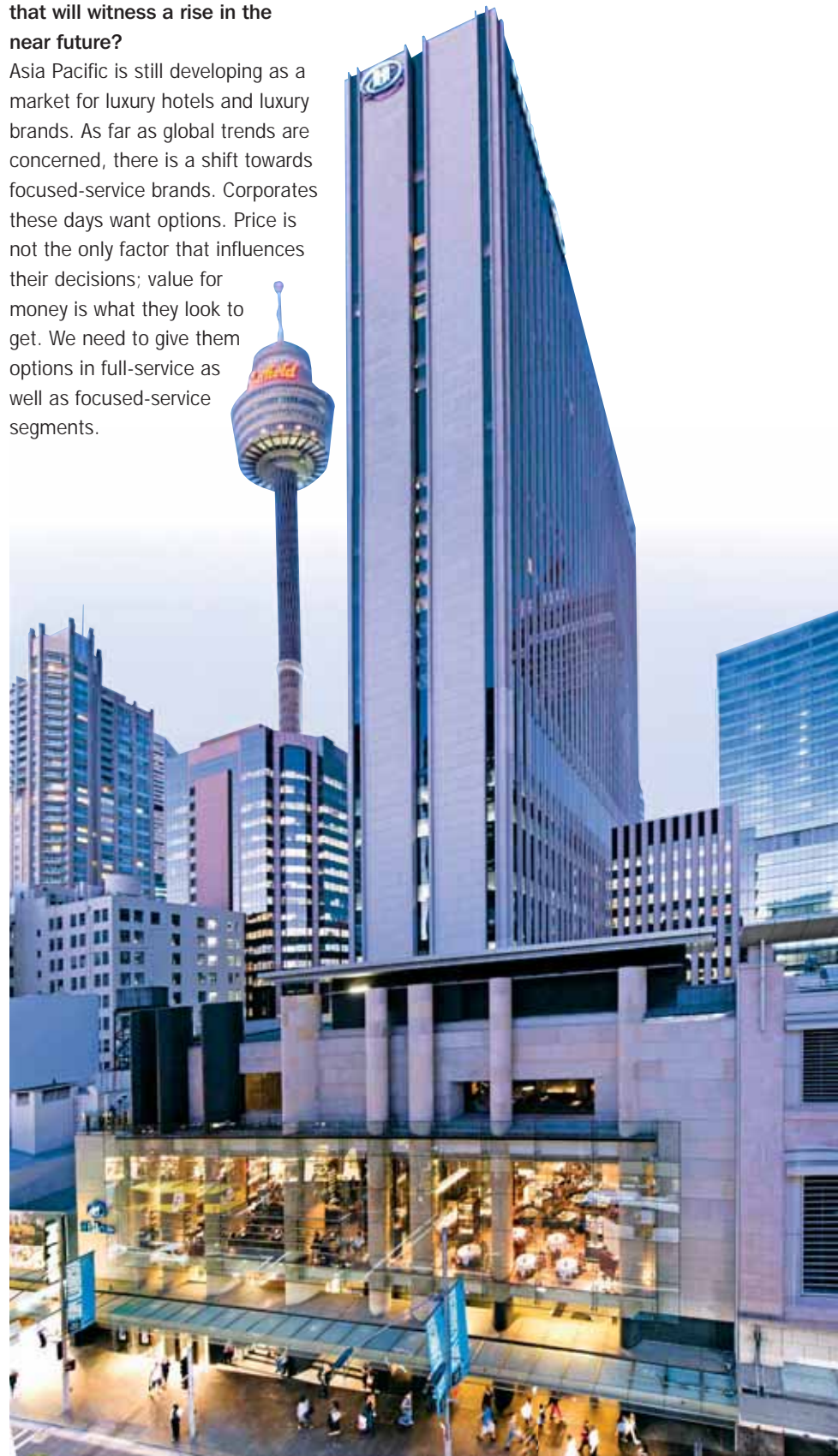


Has demonetisation affected Hilton in any way?

We carried on with our business, so demonetisation really didn't affect us.

Is there any category of hotel that will witness a rise in the near future?

Asia Pacific is still developing as a market for luxury hotels and luxury brands. As far as global trends are concerned, there is a shift towards focused-service brands. Corporates these days want options. Price is not the only factor that influences their decisions; value for money is what they look to get. We need to give them options in full-service as well as focused-service segments.





Food, avant-garde

Gaurav Malhotra, Executive Chef, Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and HICC, tells us about the hotel's marketing strategy to promote F&B along with the challenges of catering to the MICE segment.

HT Bureau

Tell us about the USP of the restaurants housed in the hotel. Each restaurant at Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre is different from the rest.

The Square: An all-day dining restaurant, The Square has outdoor spaces adjacent to the pool and lawn. With an alfresco setting, it features live stations dedicated to a variety of cuisines. While one generally spots corporate lunch meetings on weekdays, The Square has weekend specials of Pan Asia-themed Fridays, Seafood BBQ Saturdays, and Sunday brunches. The restaurant also hosts numerous indoor and outdoor activities for kids and teens.

The Bar: With a live band perform-

ing classics as well as contemporary hits late into the night, the bar at the hotel sets an ambience for those who wish to immerse themselves in its vibe.

La Cantina: A Mexican-themed poolside restaurant, La Cantina brings forth authentic gourmet offerings in a very relaxed, serene setting. Its F&B offerings make it a unique destination in the region.

Le Café: This is a European sidewalk-themed deli that stocks the choicest of baked delights and desserts. It has a large selection of coffees and sandwiches along with customised cakes for all occasions, with multi-tiered cakes being a favoured speciality.

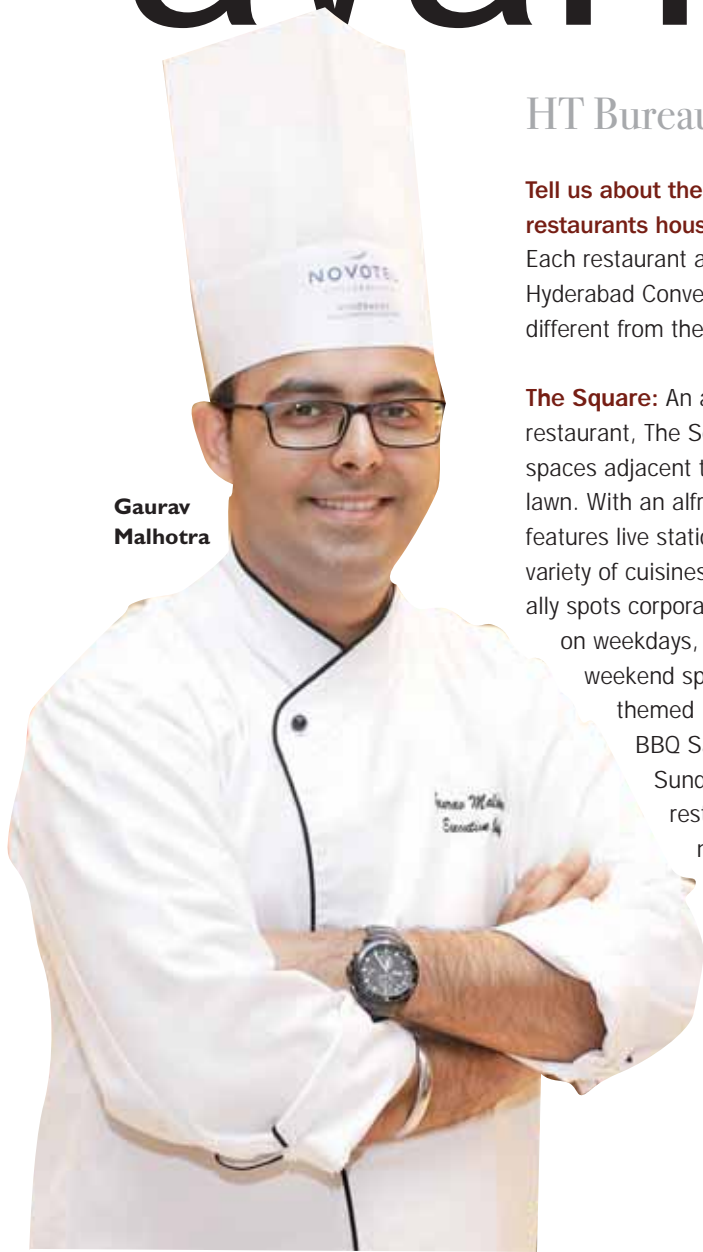
What is your marketing strategy to promote F&B at the hotel? We frequently host food festivals and update our menus in order to

promote our F&B. We extensively use digital platforms where we can be in touch with clients in real time and keep them updated about promotions. Reviews from food bloggers and a sizeable following help us translate the essence of the experience of dining.

How diverse is your client base? Our diners are a mix of room-stay guests, regular clientele from IT hubs, expats, and HNI citizens from the city of Hyderabad. About 20 per cent of our clientele also flows over from the adjoining convention centre.

Being one of the biggest MICE hotels of the country, what challenges do you face and how do you overcome them?

Planning for an event is key, being facilitated by transparent communication between organisers and venue managers. Movement of



Gaurav Malhotra



“
We extensively use digital platforms where we can be in touch with clients in real time
”

large gatherings is a major challenge. We pull up a plan in advance for the infrastructure required, signage that would provide proper directions, immaculate coordination with organisers of the event, understanding guest expectations, and communication tools to be used.

Business travellers look for a more casual and comfortable option, while a section of the guests love our weekend brunches or afternoon teas. Families look for dining options with food that is suitable for children. While it is challenging to have one restaurant cater to all needs, the key in luxury hotels is to have a wide variety of offerings and be extremely flexible.

How has the palate of Indian diners evolved over the years?

Around 65 per cent of the Indian population aged between 18-35 years typically drives the growth index of the food service market. They are tech savvy, have constant access to news and trends from

across the globe, are well-read, well-travelled, and are empowered with a high spending power. This has subsequently allowed the consumer palate to open up to new experiences and a wider range of cuisines. Nowadays, the clientele is more experimental in terms of cuisine and is seeking a modern, globalised gastronomic experience more eagerly.

Have you seen a shift in the food habits of the people of Hyderabad?

Hyderabad has really evolved in the last five years in terms of cuisine; a lot of restaurants that have opened recently provide unique dining experiences. The residents of the city, in general, have become more open to international cuisines.

How do you solve the divide between authenticity of food you offer and the modifications guests often request?

We try to draw a fine line between authenticity and customisation.

Regularly educating guests on the importance of authenticity of cuisines goes a long way in this regard.

For a restaurant to exist in the long run, what are the few things that are essential?

Every guest must have a memorable dining experience consisting of scrumptious bites and impeccable service. A well-executed dining experience helps meet the expectations of clients, making them a regular at the restaurant.

Tell us something about your signature dishes.

We have a repertoire of dishes that are modern interpretations of some of our most loved classics. Deconstructed tiramisu with duo of berry textures, Tawa Masala Halibut, mustard greens stuffed with cottage cheese, and textures of *chaat*, white chocolate *golgappas*, airy *dhoklas*, and *rasam* foam are some of our signature offerings.



A rendition of modernity

Raya Shankwalker Architects, a multidisciplinary boutique architecture and design studio based in Goa, is the new buzz in town. Portraying architecture as an experiential space than just a pretty structure, **Raya Shankwalker**, Principal Architect, Raya Shankwalker Architects, is breaking stereotypes. We get in a conversation with him to know more about his unconventional ways.

HT Bureau



In regard to your architectural style, would you say you are a conformist or a non-conformist?

I am a compulsive non-conformist, in the sense that I never hesitate to take unconventional design approaches in an urge to create unique design expressions for each project.

Modern or cultural, which has been a more definite influence in your work?

Modernity enriched by cultural references and influences or rather culture-sensitive modernity is what inspires my work.

Tell us something about each hospitality project you have worked on.

SinQ Beach Club: Located in Sinquerim, Goa, The SinQ Beach Club offers a diverse party experience with an outdoor poolside lounge, a Goan tavern, and an industrial-styled nightclub. The outdoor lounge comprises an eclectic open bar, poolside cabanas, and outdoor dining. The area is also serviced by a micro-brewery and wood-fire pizzeria. The tavern is designed as an upmarket, modernised take on a traditional Goan tavern. A fun and colourful wall mural by artist Jimmy Devasia depicts iconic elements of Goa and stands in contrast with the traditionally-styled interiors. In contrast, the nightclub is minimal and stark with exposed ducts and wall finishes for a chic industrial look that is cost-effective and easy to maintain.

SinQ Inn: The SinQ Inn is a 32-room party hotel adjacent to the SinQ Beach Club. The exterior of the hotel has bold lines painted in bright orange, creating a vibrant introduction to this unique hospitality concept. The interiors have a contemporary and sleek design with a retro touch, designed for a party-loving clientele. The rooms are monochromatic, with a burst of a single pop colour and each of the four floors carry a different colour. Each room is equipped with coloured lights and a sound system that can be synced with the nightclub music.

Soro: 'Soro', meaning 'alcoholic beverage' in Konkani, is a tavern

conceptualised within the ruins of an old corner store located in Assagao, Goa. The corner store itself became the protagonist in the story of the bar, the design being centred on the concept of a 1940's warehouse owned by a local dealer who traded in different merchandise. Thus, retaining as much of the original structure as possible became pivotal.

The three walls that stand at the junction of the roads abutting the site have been left largely untouched. Their dilapidated charm became the perfect opportunity to create an understated entrance into the young, hip, industrial chic bar that unfolds within. The interior walls have been brought to life with vintage graffiti by Patanga Art, a Mumbai-based set design company. Bold elements of graphic design were introduced into the flooring by using an eclectic array of cement tiles in a customised pattern. All the ducting and electrical piping was left exposed carrying forward the theme of the industrial warehouse.



Raya Shankwalker

“ We seek to view each project and its context as a fresh opportunity for design ”





The Rice Mill Café-Bar: Located in the heart of Morjim village in North Goa, is a restoration project and F&B venture- The Rice Mill Café-Bar. The structure of the café-bar, with its exposed laterite walls, old art deco grills, wooden trusses, and Mangalore-tiled roof was originally built in 1955 and functioned as a rice mill.

Over the years, subsequent to the shutting down of the mill, as the decades passed by and tenants shifted hands, the mill underwent several modifications.

Wooden trusses were concealed by a gypsum false ceiling, oxide flooring was covered with vitrified tiles, mud plastered walls were coated with gloss paint, and the nostalgic charm of the old rice mill was lost. The abandoned corner structure

located at the busy Morjim junction made the perfect setting for the contemporary Goan café-bar. The concept is inspired by the two most popular centres of culinary and social interaction in Goa – the café and the bar. The design for the café-bar revives and restores all the elements that once lent the rice mill its old world charm and strives to be an example of conservation of our built heritage.

The structural additions are synonymous with the existing distressed walls, the roof is interjected with glass tiles allowing natural light to flood in, and several items of furniture have either been sourced from local Goan carpenters or constructed from recycled wood.

Indoor plants breathe life into the space while items of utility from

the old rice mill become elements of décor in the café-bar.

What are the trends in design you see for the year?

Following trends is rather boring. We seek to view each project and its context as a fresh opportunity for design innovation. I also firmly believe that India should stop following trends in design and begin setting them. We have so much inspiration around us and so much opportunity for rich, culture-sensitive designs.

How do you achieve sustainability in your projects?

We have been practicing a certain degree of sustainability in all our projects with the use of recycled wood, conservation of existing building structures, upcycling, and the use of energy-efficient lighting. We also use every project to add to the green cover by planting a lot of mature, low-maintenance native trees and plant species in our landscape design.

Are budget disagreements with clients a hindrance for you?

We enjoy the challenge of working within specified budgets. and clearly understand that the success of any project depends, to a large extent, on how much is spent on it. I firmly believe that the Indian hospitality industry is spending way too much per key in new projects and that is precisely the reason that many projects do not break even at all.





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Photo Courtesy: Les Roches, Marbella, Spain

Reviving quality EDUCATION

As per the Ernst & Young report, Global Hospitality Industry Insights, 2016, the hospitality industry is going to be the single largest employer globally, contributing one among 11 jobs generated. What is important to see though, is if the quality of education being delivered is on a par with that of international institutes. We get an insight into the points of view of spokespersons who are heading some of the country's renowned hospitality schools.

Anupriya Bishnoi

With growth in tourism, the need for expansion of the hospitality industry and the services being offered by them has grown tremendously, spurring

the need for more and more institutes that impart the required knowledge and expertise to aspirants. The resultant upsurge in hospitality institutes has created

a wave in the country. In keeping with the standards of illustrious hotel chains, the education being offered by these institutes must also be exemplary.



Prof. Irfan Mirza

PROF. IRFAN MIRZA

Director

V M Salgaocar Institute of International Hospitality Education (VMSIHE), Goa

SKILL SET REQUIRED

Specialised skills required in the hospitality industry are soft skills, an ability to deal with customers, a problem-solving approach to situations, optimal resource management, a pleasing personality, and a positive attitude.

PROVIDING EXPOSURE

The problem with many of our hotel management institutes is that there is no proper update and review of the curriculum to ensure that it matches the needs of the industry. Given an opportunity, every institute should try to give its key faculty members an international as well

as industrial exposure, to spread awareness of the happenings of the industry and update their knowledge. Though some of the colleges in India are at par with some leading hotel schools in the west, the other aspects closely linked to the industry are missing.

A GROWING NEED TO EVOLVE

To find skilled staff is always a challenge, especially in the fields of food production, F&B services, and accommodation operations. Though many hospitality schools offer a three-year bachelor degree programme, graduates passing out are not willing to start their career

at the entry level. Government and private entities must emphasise on certificate or craft-level courses to produce more line-level staff to match the demand of the industry.

Another area of concern is the long working hours and a pay that does not match up. It is also important for the industry's outlook towards entry-level staff and trainees to evolve. In many European countries, there is a minimum salary to be paid by the hotel not only to the junior-most staff member but also to trainees, thereby attracting the young population to choose a career in the hospitality industry.

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Dr. Bhupesh Kumar

DR. BHUPESH KUMAR

Acting Director

Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, New Delhi

TRAINING STILL LIMITED

The hospitality sector, despite its low status, is one of the fastest growing sectors in our economy that continues to face the challenge of matching its skill requirements to the changing labour market in India and abroad.

Broad estimates suggest that up to ten per cent of the global workforce is employed in tourism and hospitality-related work and, as a consequence, this is a sector that cannot readily be ignored.

There are limited studies or public policies on the range of work in services and functions of areas like front office, food and beverage services, housekeeping, reservation services, etc. Most of the skills that are employed within the hospitality industry also have relevance and application in other sectors such

as office administration, IT system management, BPOs, etc. Those employed in areas where there is considerable skill overlap with hospitality may well see themselves in terms of their generic skills area, rather than as part of the hospitality labour market.

Thus, we can conclude that specialised skill training is still limited in our industry, in spite of being the need of the hour. Also, most of the skill sets delivered through training, which is cost-intensive, are still generic in nature.

REGULATIONS TO BE ALTERED

Indian hospitality institutes are still living in the era of 1970s due to lobbying and red-tapism in the government. Policies and strategies have not been designed as per global standards. Even the curriculum is still what it used to be back



then. A lot has been deliberated on by the industry and hotel management institutions, especially private institutions, about the need for the curriculum to change. However, neither industry partners nor institutions have been able to take an initiative due to excessive regulations by the government, considered redundant and bureaucratic, serving as a hindrance to action and decision-making.

Nowadays, western universities are venturing into the Indian market. However, it has been noticed that the curriculum these institutes aim to follow in India is very different from that of other countries. It is merely a marketing strategy, a fusion of the old with the new, with no impetus on actually upgrading the structure of hospitality education in the country.

It will still take at least a decade for Indian hospitality institutes to be at par with international ones, if things continue to be taken as lightly as they are presently being taken.





Madhav S. Punekar

MADHAV S. PUNEKAR
Principal
American College of Culinary and
Language Arts (ACCLA), Goa

IMPORTANCE OF SPECIALISATION

Each employee in the industry has a specific role to play and these roles require each individual to have specialised skills which have to continuously be updated. For example, a chef has to have specialised skills in culinary operations and has to constantly keep himself or herself updated with the changing trends in the culinary industry.

ON THE PATH TO CHANGE

A majority of Indian hospitality institutes do not deliver the standard of education that international institutes maintain. However, there are a few institutes like ours that closely follow fast-changing industry trends and guest expectations. Some institutes are making a difference, training students to quickly catch up with changing international trends and quality standards. They make a genuine effort to get candidates job-ready for demanding roles in specialised hospitality sectors like luxury cruise liners.

FOCUS ON THE ESSENTIAL

There exists a huge demand, especially of chefs, in the domestic and international markets. Hospitality companies and international cruise liners are looking at hospitality institutes to fulfil this growing demand. The focus of institutes should be on skill development rather than dishing out paper certificates and degrees. They must also educate students to be realistic in their expectations and make them aware that they would eventually have to start at entry level positions.



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DEMAND ON THE RISE

Today, especially with the Indian economy and the hospitality industry on a growth path, the demand for rooms is going to show a steep increase. The industry is expected to generate 13.45 million jobs across sub-segments, such as restaurants (10.49 million jobs), hotels (2.3 million jobs), and travel agents and tour operators (0.66 million jobs). The Ministry of Tourism plans to help the industry meet the increasing demand of skilled and trained manpower by providing hospitality education to students as well as certifying and upgrading skills of existing service providers. All these factors clearly indicate to the rising

need of skilled manpower in the hospitality industry. Most of the big players need a huge pool of manpower, especially in operations. This will result in a huge demand for skilled manpower in the near future.

EDUCATION TO BE MORE PRACTICAL

"Atithi Devo Bhavo" is what Indian hospitality institutes are believed to teach students. In terms of personalised service, our institutes rank much higher than other institutes from the west, but the system of delivery of education as compared to our western partners is entirely different. Today, we follow a stringent process of theory papers and judge students by the marks they score. In contrast, international institutes lay more thrust on the application of modules. I strongly believe that hospitality education in India should be based more on practical aspects in terms of application, innovative modules that include practical assignments, group discussions, brainstorming sessions, practical experiences, and case studies, than just concentrating on theory exams as a criteria for evaluation. A number of institutes today are collaborating with the west, bringing in the western culture in our education system. Since KIMI is already a partner-institute of University College Birmingham, the



students get a chance to experience the education system in the west. Being a hospitality group with three-star category hotels, our students get a unique opportunity to run an operational restaurant for ten days as part of their finale year module.

MUSHROOMING INSTITUTES HAMPER QUALITY

There has been an influx of international hotel chains in the country and this only goes to show the kind of market India portrays to the world. There is also an increase in the number of institutes offering hotel management studies. That said, the question on quality still remains somewhat unanswered. A number of hotel management institutes do not necessarily impart quality education and are a bigger threat to institutes that are working hard to produce skilled manpower.



Hassan Djeebet

HASSAN DJEEBET

**Academic Co-ordinator
Les Roches International School of Hotel Management, Marbella, Spain**

At Les Roches, students receive highly specialised trainings to develop a unique set of hard and soft skills and adopt a high degree of professionalism through mandatory internships that are highly valued by the international hospitality industry. The career readiness of our students has given rise to an interest from sectors related to experiential industries where their qualities, together with a high level of customer service and managerial preparation, are especially appreciated. Brands such as Valentino, Louis Vuitton, and Bloomberg also seek hospital-

ity management professionals to join their teams. Having bright and successful students is not the only thing an institution strives for. The

faculty must seek to instill and nurture human qualities in people through an equilibrium of discipline, humility, teamwork, and solidarity.



Amenities – Value addition or necessity?

The recent report formulated by Cornell University highlights the value of amenities offered by hotels, helping them analyse what guests need and reaching a suitable decision.

Hotel owners and operators have long offered complimentary amenities to enhance their guests' stays and differentiate themselves from competitors. While brand managers are eager to enhance their brands with the latest and best amenities, owners are reluctant to pay for amenities that don't pay off. Debates often arise between owners who pay for amenities and brand managers who mandate these amenities as brand standards.

A new report from Cornell University's Center for Hospitality Research (CHR) helps resolve this debate by suggesting a return on investment (ROI) analysis to determine which amenities are the best ones to offer. The research is described in "Hotel Brand Standards: How to Pick the Right Amenities for Your Property" by Chekitan S. Dev, Rebecca Hamilton, and Roland Rust, available from CHR at no charge.

The researchers collaborated with a global multi-brand hotel company to analyse the return on investment on three popular complimentary amenities—bottled water, internet access, and fitness center use—for



six hotel brands, using thousands of pre and post-stay guest surveys and archived guest data. Their study found notable differences between brands for which amenity had the highest payoff, and differences in the impact of amenity use on first-time guests and repeat business. It was found that internet access had a significant impact on attracting first-time guests.

"ROI analysis based on customer lifetime value provides a useful way for owners and operators to assess the incremental value of a particular amenity based on revenue

from new and returning guests net of costs," said **Chekitan S. Dev**, Associate Professor - Marketing and Branding, School of Hotel Administration, Cornell SC Johnson College of Business. "From our ROI analysis we learned that some amenities are great at attracting first-time guests, while others have a significant impact on generating repeat business. In addition, we found that guests generally overestimate their likelihood of actually using various amenities. This means that a marketing survey that asks potential guests about their intended amenity use may not provide an accurate estimation of their actual use," explained Dev.



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SOCIAL MEDIA: WORTH THE FRENZY?

HospitalityTalk gets in conversation with spokespersons of select hotels to understand how important social media has become in recent times and how it's helping business grow.

Anupriya Bishnoi

Social media, besides being a great marketing medium, is an extremely helpful platform that gives hotels real time opportunity to showcase new and innovative concepts of food and beverage. The use of social media platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram has evolved from being mere peer-to-peer communication channels to those that allow businesses to effectively engage with clients.

Fuelling a trend

As more consumers indulge in eating out, social media allows hotels to jump into engaging conversations with guests and reach out to them not as individuals working for the brand, but as the brand itself. A highly effective tool, this platform empowers guests to speak directly to the brand, at the same time providing the brand with multiple opportunities to engage guests directly.



Gaurav Magoo
Director F&B
Novotel Imagica Khopoli



‘Click before you eat’ and ‘Eat then tweet’ phenomena ruling the world of social media, the concept of eating out has only been flourishing. Restaurants are increasingly paying attention to the presentation of food so that food shots look more appealing to the social media audience,” adds Magoo.

For **Manhar Garegrat**, Digital Marketing Manager – Cluster, Hyatt Hotels (Mumbai, Goa, Hyderabad), eating out has always been a social phenomenon. “You typically eat out with your partners, friends, family, and acquaintances to really just socialise over food. With the advent of social media, these experiences are getting captured and expressed in many different forms, such as check-ins, selfies, food photos, etc. Obviously, the more you see your friends raving about the latest Sunday brunch in town, the higher your chances of considering the same for your next big occasion,” he explains.



Manhar Garegrat
Digital Marketing Manager-
Cluster, Hyatt Hotels
(Mumbai, Goa, Hyderabad)

The popularity of multiple social media networks continues to be in ascendance. Everything a hotel does needs to be updated on the several social media platforms out there. “Smartphones have made it incredibly easy to document each moment of our lives. Social media defines what you eat, where you eat, and what is trending in terms of food concepts and beverage innovations. It has taken the idea of dining in restaurants by storm, to the extent that ‘#food’ is the 25th most popular hashtag with 205.6 million mentions, while ‘#foodporn’ is the 40th most popular hashtag on Instagram

with more than 110.9 million mentions,” says **Gaurav Magoo**, Director F&B, Novotel Imagica Khopoli.

The food décor at Novotel Imagica Khopoli has always been exceptional. With users clicking and posting pictures on their social media handles and accounts, the hotel has garnered immense word-of-mouth publicity. “Apart from food décor, the morning Irolic Parade (a concept unique to the hotel) and the breakfast spreads have not only been lauded by our guests but also been shared extensively across all popular social media channels. With

Furthermore, as a powerful marketing tool, with its highly visual nature, rich consumer data, and overall low cost of advertising, social media can enable businesses to market highly visual imagery to target markets and amass popularity.





Ananya Sinha
Director of Sales & Marketing
JW Marriott Hotel
New Delhi Aerocity

Ananya Sinha, Director of Sales and Marketing, JW Marriott Hotel New Delhi Aerocity, feels that social media acts as a visual stimulant, giving the consumer an idea of how a dish would look, before inducing a customer into ordering it. "Social media can significantly fuel a restaurant's footfall by the sheer quality of visual it gives to viewers. This is very helpful for our restaurants as it instills an urge in consumers to either try a new dish or return to the restaurant for a dish of their choice and liking. Also, through social media we are able to involve audiences in the story of and inspiration behind the food we serve, taking the experience of dining out to a whole new level."

The outreach of social media cannot wholly be quantified. While posts, shares, likes, comments, and other social media sharing jargon give us a good sense of how powerful a tool it can be, the efficacy of it is intangible.



Dinesh Arora
Owner
Tourist Janpath and Unplugged
Courtyard, New Delhi

Dinesh Arora, Owner, Tourist Janpath and Unplugged Courtyard, New Delhi, says, "Today's customers are empowered. They expect brands to give them what they want, how they want it. Good social adoption starts with a focus on people, not the technology. Social media is a platform which gives us an opportunity to interact directly with our consumers."

With the advent of technology and its resultant services like 4G and affordable smartphones, the rele-

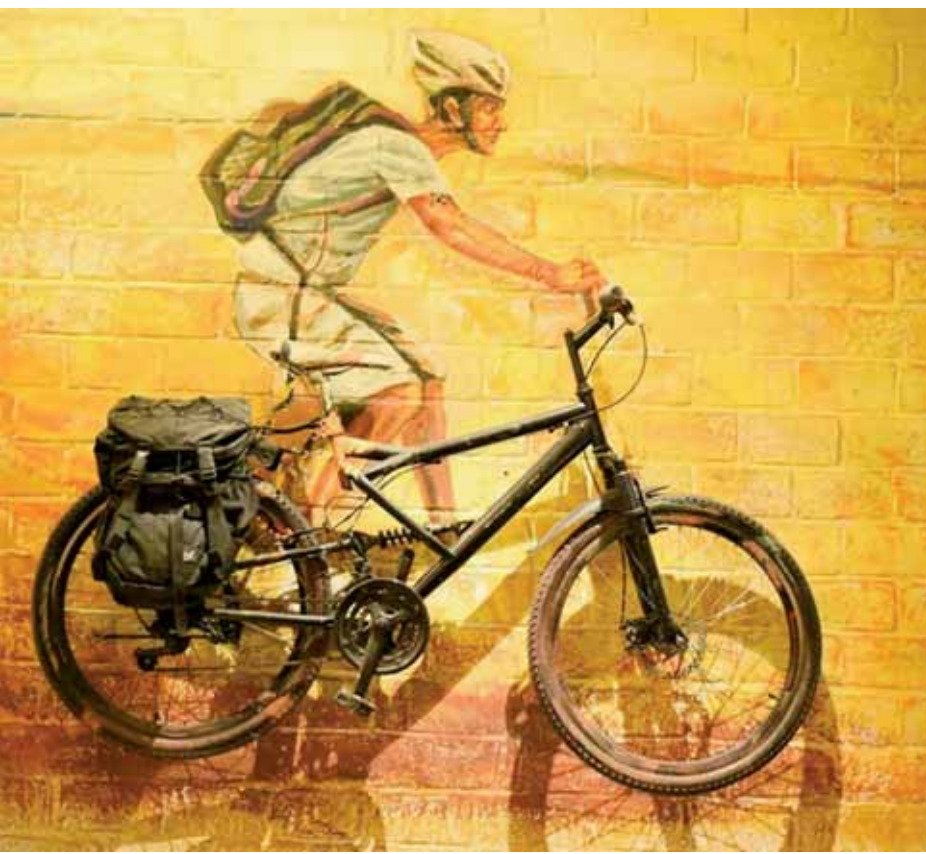


levance of social media today cannot be disregarded. Social media plays a vital role in not just promoting a business but also building a brand and its reputation. It is one of the most effective tools in terms of both reach and cost, available to marketers of today. Slowly but surely, it has positively impacted the dining industry and been instrumental in shifting the power of restaurant reputation management from publicists to consumers.

"When dining out, it is now common practice to click pictures of the food and post them on a social media platform with a short description of the dining experience. This short post, either on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, or any other interactive platform, not only helps diners share their experience but also serves as a technique of marketing for the brand. A single image is equal to a thousand words,

servicing as an instant review for the restaurant, being broadcasted to all followers in real time. As social media platforms cater to a global audience, word-of-mouth marketing can take place at a global scale. The phenomenon has helped build communities of food enthusiasts and created a new breed of diners who are snap happy and social media savvy, and with a few key-strokes, dole out recommendations of the best picks at a restaurant or highlight a restaurant's faults, thereby making other prospective diners aware of food options when eating out," says **Zorawar Kalra**, Founder and Managing Director, Massive Restaurants.

In the Indian context, social media is at a nascent stage. Though still a tad way behind traditional media, it is fast gaining ground as the preferred mode of communication, effective for users and businesses.





Zorawar Kalra
Founder and Managing Director
Massive Restaurants

"At Massive Restaurants, we realise the importance of social media and hence, have a dedicated in-house team, part of our marketing department, to drive all social media communications and campaigns for a stronger control on the tonality of the communication as well as to deliver measurable revenue and help build a strong brand presence. As a resultant impact, guests use various platforms to connect with us for queries on cuisines and reservations, applauding us for providing them with remarkable experiences, or for putting forth any displeasure they may have had as part of these experiences. In either of these situations, the feedback received helps us in taking immediate corrective steps in offering our patrons better dining experiences," adds Kalra.

Masud Samandari, Promoter, L'Opéra, says, "There are many dimensions to social media, one of them being its visual appeal. Without having to leave the house, one can see the kind of food that restaurants serve. Unfiltered images, those that are not touched up by restaurants, provide a true picture to potential customers. Another dimension is trust, especially in times of heightened wariness among consumers owing to several food-related scandals throughout the country, in addition to concerns about quality and safety of food. Consumers would rather go to a restaurant recommended by someone in their circle of friends, both online or otherwise, than print media and other traditional means."

Wanting to be seen at a certain establishment is also a driver of sales. "In our case, posting pictures or updating statuses about having consumed L'Opéra's iconic macarons (The "Macaron selfie" being a prominent example) displays a sense of status. The medium has also been helpful for us in terms of reaching out to a younger, more dynamic, internet-savvy crowd that may not have known about L'Opéra or had preconceptions about the brand in terms of pricing and offerings," he adds.

As a casual dining restaurant that is youth-focused, using social media is almost intuitive for Nando's. **Sumeet Yadav**, CEO, Nando's India, says, "The youth uses the internet and social media for information and to spot trends; consumption being fuelled by ease of



Masud Samandari
Promoter
L'Opéra





Sumeet Yadav
CEO
Nando's India



access to relevant information. Social media has been and continues to be an important platform for us to reach out to the right audience."

Social media is a channel where you can not only pick who you want to talk to but also measure how your engagement with them has been. "I think there is some interesting content out there that is fuelling the idea of eating out and even ordering in. Restaurants are also using this channel to promote events that are getting more esoteric. Social media

Magoo says, "To keep our guests engaged, we run various food and beverage contests with regard to recipes, ingredients, and places of origin to engage our guests. We ensure that we keep our guests updated about our offers and share our creations in real time to get instantaneous feedback."

Hyatt Hotels (Mumbai, Goa, Hyderabad) has ensured that social media is a two-way road and not just another tool to bombard followers with promotions. "To encourage two-way interactions, we have deployed extremely competent listening and responding tools across all social media platforms. Our teams are constantly monitoring all guest chatter across our platforms and closing the communication loop in the least possible time," says Garegrat.

Hyatt's F&B and culinary teams put in a lot of effort in creating exciting dining experiences, like the Backyard Barbeque, Sunday Brunch, etc. "We make it a point to re-create these experiences through social media to give our guests a glimpse of what they can expect when they come to our hotel. We use videos, animated graphics, photo albums, etc., to reach out to our guests through social

media. As pure tactical measures, we are constantly running direct, targeted campaigns on social media platforms with relevant messages and compelling offers to drive online reservations at our restaurants," elucidates Garegrat.

The social media campaign of JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity focuses on promoting each restaurant individually. Weekly posts on all famous, upcoming or must-eat dishes from the menu are showcased. Hashtags are used to differentiate the restaurants from others, so that if consumers were to search for related posts, they would easily be able to find them. "We engage our audience through regular contests and food promotions, giving the uninitiated a chance to come and experience the hospitality at JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity," adds Sinha.

For Arora, social media is an amazing platform to engage customers directly. "We update our guests about the musical gigs happening at the place, besides conducting contests and fun-filled activities," he says.

Social media serves as a vital, out-of-the-box communication tool that

provides several options to alter content in a way that it is directed towards targeting a certain kind of audience," adds Yadav.

He also feels that for brands that are looking to evolve, social media proves to be a helpful tool in getting unbiased views from consumers and speaking to them directly to get to the bottom of any issue that may have arisen.

A bag full of innovations

With guest engagement increasingly becoming a key differentiator, restaurants are routinely innovating on ideas and forming strategies that not only keep customers coming back for more, but also help garner wider social media coverage, thereby attracting more and more potential clients.

Engaging initiatives by Novotel Imagica Khopoli

- Celebrating international food days like National Pizza Day, Cheese Macaroni Day, Beer and Burger Day, etc., with special offers for in-house guests.
- Celebrating themed events like Halloween, Father's Day, Christmas, etc.
- Breakfast events for groups of owners of Harley Davidson bikes.
- Live coverage of events, like New Year's Eve, GM's Cocktail Party, etc.
- Inviting bloggers for events and reaching out to their followers.
- Special photo shoots for promoting hotel's food and beverage options on social media.
- Season-themed festivals like Burger and Beer Festival during IPL, Cupid Cocktails for Valentine's Day, Winter Cocktails, etc.



not just helps brands fortify their presence but also aids them in instantly communicating with their patrons about different events being planned at restaurants across the country, broadcasting novel developments, or showcasing culinary innovations. “We, at Massive Restaurants, consistently endeavour to strike a balance between the traditional and modern, innovating continuously to deliver engaging culinary experiences to our patrons, without losing the essence of the cuisine we serve, making it more relevant for the modern day, well-travelled, tech-savvy diners,” explains Kalra.

For Samandari, product launches are good opportunities to engage with customers who appreciate novelty and innovation. Similarly, inaugurations of new points of sale can also create a buzz for potential buyers within the catchment area of a new outlet. “The immediacy in targeting of social media is one of the main advantages of this medium; reaching the intended audience in a timely fashion is a challenge with other mediums. We generally avoid giving discounts as this can harm the image of the brand,” he helps us understand.

Yadav says, “Nando’s is a brand with a purpose and our most successful campaigns online have been the ones where we’ve built a better community through our food. For instance, at the recent opening of our flagship outlet in Bengaluru, we fed 1,000 people who could not afford to buy food for themselves. We narrate the Nando’s story online by giving people a peek into our most important assets - our people, our products, and our restaurants.”

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*Travel Show Exhibitors, 2016.

AAHAR 2017 - FACILITATING FOOD CONNECTIONS

The 32nd edition of AAHAR, The International Food and Hospitality Fair, held in New Delhi between March 7 and 11, 2017, showcased products, food technologies, and services to all buyers.

HT Bureau

Organised by India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), the premier trade promotion body of the Government of India, AAHAR is one of Asia's best known brands in food and hospitality shows. The event has grown by leaps and bounds in recent years and is today a well-known destination for global vendors and sourcing professionals.

come to all participants of this edition of AAHAR. Debuting in the year 1985, AAHAR has grown into a mega international event, with more than 1,500 exhibitors covering 17 halls belonging to 18 countries. I am confident that events like this will create avenues for showcasing connections among the business community."

positions. The fact that we got the highest foreign direct investment into our country in the last one year, proves that India has arrived and the world is looking at our country for investment. One of the most exciting sectors for investment in India is food processing," she explained.

Harsimrat Kaur Badal, Union Cabinet Minister, Food Processing, Government of India, looked extremely pleased with the participation numbers. Speaking at the event, she said, "I would like to start by congratulating the team of ITPO for putting up this edition of AAHAR. There has been a significant increase in the number of stalls and, more importantly, the event has successfully been able to garner more interest from people around the globe. India is an agricultural hub, the largest producer of food in the world. While the credit goes to hardworking farmers, it is sometimes saddening to see that a country like Poland exports 30 percent of its agricultural produce to 70 countries with 38 million people, while in contrast, a country like ours with a population of 1.3 billion, has a processing level of only 10 per cent."

Indian agriculture is repeatedly faced with challenges and obstacles. Our farmers and other industry stakeholders are continuously striving to overcome them, but it is a hard task at hand. Challenges, such as those of transport and infrastructure, limit our processing power to only 10 per cent of the total agricultural produce. "The ministry has decided that from November 3-5, 2017, it will organise World Food India, the first-of-its-kind food fair on the lines of Anuga and SIAL, which are renowned international food fairs. It is time for India to showcase her potential.

We need a platform where all countries interested in connecting with India are facilitated. We aim to provide a one-stop platform for states and countries to connect to each other and take their business forward. There will be a participation from all states, each of them depicting their own potential. I will personally be visiting different countries to encourage them to participate here and hope that this platform helps India take the next big leap," she added.

Speaking at the occasion, **Rajneesh**, Executive Director, ITPO, said, "I extend my compliments to the Minister, Harsimrat Kaur Badal, for the landmark decision of allowing 100 per cent FDI and multi-brand retail of food items produced and processed in India, in the previous year. I also take this opportunity to welcome the CMD of ITPO and compliment him for his vision to steer the redevelopment plan, to transform Pragati Maidan into a world-class integrated exhibition cum convention centre with state-of-the-art facilities. I extend my warm wel-









A mission to converge

Marriott International Inc. successfully hosted the eighth edition of its annual roadshow, Global Sales Mission 2017, from March 14 to 16, offering an opportunity to industry patrons and potential customers to connect with each other.

HT Bureau

Global Sales Mission, Marriott's renowned annual event, has always received great support from its customers. Conducted across the three key cities of Mumbai, Delhi, and Bengaluru, the roadshow aimed at bringing together primary contacts across all market segments and Marriott associates, to update them on the company's developments worldwide, strengthen existing relationships, bring new customers into the exclusive loyalty programmes, and discuss opportunities for the year ahead.

HEMA HARIRAMANI Director, National Sales- India Marriott Hotels India

This year we had huge participation from both sides, Marriott as well as Starwood legacy hotels. Within India too, this event is extremely meaningful and there is a lot of business expected. There has been a visible change in participation post the merger, from the perspective of both customers and team members.

BARUN GUPTA Account Director (Global Sales) Marriott International

The hotel numbers have been doubled this year. With business continuing to improve across the world, India still stands tall as a key market for the hotel group.

ROXANA POPESCU Director of Sales JW Marriott Bucharest Grand Hotel

We have seen a lot of interest from the Indian market. We hope that Bucharest and Romania also become famous destinations. Being showcased in some popular Bollywood films has helped us garner more popularity and interest.

NATALIA KALINKINA Senior Sales Manager, Groups and Events The Ritz-Carlton, Moscow

As expected, the event witnessed a huge influx from the Indian market, a trend that has been on the upsurge for the past few

years. I have already seen and hope to continuously see clients, first-timers, and repeat customers who seek a new destination for their companies.

RODERICK MEIJER Head of Proactive Sales Hotel van Oranje, The Netherlands

With the availability of our beach property we are now interested in destination weddings, a segment that is very important to us as a hotel. Our main chunk of business, however, continues to be from corporate travellers and incentive travellers.

MARK MUSCAT DE CELIS Director of Sales and Marketing Le Méridien Saigon, Vietnam

Since our hotel is a new property, we are looking at the business segment to work in line with our marketing strategy. For our hotel, the corporate segment, MICE segment, and segment of incentive travellers has been the prime focus.







Swooning in Eastern elegance

The Great Eastern Home introduces a splendid new range of beds. Apart from comfort and luxury, the new range also adds to the aesthetic appeal of your room. The magnificent new range of beds will provide you with an experience that everyone dreams about. These period-style beds have been reproduced to perfection and are now available at The Great Eastern Home in order to add majesty and opulence to the abode of its connoisseurs and patrons.

Comfort-Maximus with Aeron chair

Herman Miller has unveiled a new Aeron chair that retains the distinctive silhouette of the iconic chair but raises the bar of performance seating with every component of the design being updated. With the inputs of original co-designer Don Chadwick, and a dedicated team of scientists, engineers, materials specialists, and researchers who worked on the project for over two years, Herman Miller has enhanced the chair by combining the latest insights in anthropometrics and ergonomics with two decades of advancement in materials, manufacturing, and technology.



A grey too cool

Junckers has recently launched a stirring range of flooring that brings together premium wood from around the world. The latest addition is the Beech Twilight Grey collection that captures the natural grandeur of oak wood. This range, crafted to perfection, makes interiors look rich and royal. Beech is a hardwood species characterised by being exceptionally hard-wearing and therefore very suitable for flooring.

Purity of water

The new range of RO water purifiers from Faber offers assurance of 100 per cent RO water and 100 per cent UV water. The purifiers being offered under the range make use of Germblock technology that protects the purified stored water from microbial contamination. With Copper Guard acting as an anti-fouling agent and Mineral Addition Technology (MAT) filter adding essential minerals back to the purified RO water, the taste of water is enhanced, making it potable. The purifiers have a nine litre storage capacity.



The sweetness of health

GAIA has launched Stevia under its specialised line, GAIA LITE. A wonderful alternative to the normal caloric-rich sugar, GAIA LITE Stevia is a 100 per cent natural, zero-calorie sugar substitute. Also known as 'Meethi Tulsi', Stevia is obtained from natural herbs and does not contain any artificial sweetener. It has absolutely no side effects and a very little or no after-taste, unlike other extracts. GAIA LITE Stevia is also fat-free, making it beneficial for diabetics.

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MOVEMENTS

RAJIT SUKUMARAN

Chief Development Officer, AMEA
InterContinental Hotels Group

IHG has announced the appointment of **Rajit Sukumaran** to the role of Chief Development Officer in the Asia, Middle East, and Africa (AMEA) region. In his new role, Sukumaran will head the development team and lead the group's growth strategy. With more than 12 years' experience in development, acquisitions, and feasibility, he moves to this position from that of Senior Vice President, Acquisitions and Development, Asia Pacific at Starwood Hotels and Resorts.



DAVID FLUECK

Senior Vice President, Loyalty
Marriott International

Marriott International has announced the appointment of **David Flueck** as Senior Vice President, Loyalty. In addition to overseeing Marriott's award-winning loyalty programmes, Marriott Rewards, he will provide global leadership and strategic direction for the future combined loyalty programme. Flueck joined Marriott with the company's acquisition of Starwood Hotels and Resorts in September 2016 and served as Senior Vice President, Revenue Management and Starwood Preferred Guest.



KESHWAR BHAGAT

Director of Sales & Marketing - India
Akaryn Hotel Group

Keshwar Bhagat joins Akaryn Hotel Group (AHG), part of the small luxury hotels of the world, as Director of Sales and Marketing – India. With a career spanning over 12 years, she is a familiar face on the tourism scene, having been an intermediary for the travel trade fraternity and various regions of France during her role as Promotions Manager for Atout France. Prior to this, Bhagat worked with the French Government in various capacities with the Consulate General of France and Promosalons.



S. KARTHIKEYAN

Vice President – Sales
Sarovar Hotels and Resorts

Sarovar Hotels has announced the appointment of **S. Karthikeyan** as Vice President – Sales. An IIM Lucknow Alumnus, he brings with him an experience of over nine years in the hospitality sales and marketing sector. At Sarovar, Karthikeyan will be responsible for conceptualising and implementing sales strategies at both corporate and regional levels.





JATIN KHANNA

Multi-Property Vice President
and General Manager
Bengaluru Marriott Hotel
Whitefield

Jatin Khanna has been appointed as Multi-Property Vice President at Bengaluru and General Manager at Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield. In his capacity, he will be in charge of all Marriott properties in Bengaluru, which consist of 8 operating hotels and several hotels that are under development. Prior to his present role, Khanna occupied the position of General Manager at JW Marriott Hotel Pune.



NILAY SARAN

Director of Sales and Marketing
Le Méridien Kochi

Nilay Saran, with over 18 years of experience in sales and marketing, joins Le Méridien Kochi as Director of Sales and Marketing. He has worked across various brands like Crowne Plaza Delhi, Ramada Kochi, Four Points by Sheraton Jaipur, Holiday Inn Cochin and Jaipur. His last assignment was with The Chancery Hotels, Bengaluru, as DoSM. Saran brings valuable experience in launching new brands, repositioning and ramping up hotels and resorts.



BHARAT RATANPAL

Director of Sales and Marketing
JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu

Bharat Ratanpal has been appointed as the Director of Sales and Marketing at JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu. His main responsibilities in this position would entail organising and directing all sales and marketing efforts towards achieving objectives and operational goals for the property. He will also be in charge of motivating employees and ensuring that they perform to the best of their abilities, while at the same time upholding the ethics of the Marriott culture.



MAHESH SHARMA

Executive Chef
Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi
Dwarka

Mahesh Sharma, who has culinary experience of over 25 years, joins Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka, as an Executive Chef. As part of his bouquet of duties, he will take the lead role for all food and beverage operations at the hotel. Prior to this, Sharma worked with a number of other renowned brands such as Le Méridien Jaipur; Swallow Hotels, UK; and Rajputana Sheraton as Executive Chef and General Manager.



MOVEMENTS

DILPREET SINGH BINDRA
General Manager
JW Marriott
Chandigarh



“Live life to the fullest by radiating positivity and happiness”

One thing certain about life is that it is full of uncertainties. So, one should live life to the fullest by radiating positivity and happiness. I am passionate about driving and it has taken me to various excursions and road trips across India. India is incredibly beautiful, an amazing place to explore. Driving cross-border is fun. My last cross-border drive from Delhi to Bangkok was an exhilarating experience. I am now looking forward to my next epic cross-border drive from Delhi to London, which will take me through 18 countries in 55 days.



ADITYA SHAMSHER MALLA
General Manager
Four Points by Sheraton



“I unwind with a round of golf and cycling with my son”

I unwind with a round of golf and cycling with my son. These are the two best stress-busters for me. One of my most memorable holiday moments is being ferried on a fisherman's boat, nine nautical miles off the coast, to an uninhabited island and treated to fresh prawns and fish while sipping on *feni*. My favourite holiday destination in India has to be Leh. For international holidays, I prefer London. My favourite cuisine, however, is Rajasthani, possibly because I have a sweet tooth.



SANDEEP JOHRI
General Manager
Novotel Kolkata Hotel
and Residences



“I am unapologetically a huge fan of Bollywood”

My work is my passion and nothing gives me more pleasure than a satisfying day at work. Having said that, what is even more rewarding is going back home to a loving family. Like a lot of Indians, I am unapologetically a huge fan of Bollywood and a complete movie buff with an astounding capacity to tolerate the inadequacies some of our cinematic creations come with. 'Me time' is when I go for my routine walks every morning or when I am honing my skills on calligraphy, a hobby which has stayed with me for the longest period of time.



SUBHRAJIT BARDHAN
General Manager
Swissotel Kolkata



“I love listening to music and watching TED talks”

Things we love make us happy and I believe my rejuvenation mantra is to spend quality time with my loved ones. I also factor in some 'me time' in the midst of my busy schedule which I spend in introspecting and drawing inspiration to think ahead. Other than that, I love listening to music and watching TED talks. Besides this, travel is a great escape for me. My recent obsession is Patagonia in South America, which has been my dream destination for a vacation for a while now.



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TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

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Careers in Tourism & Travel Industry: Tourism is one of the important sectors contributing to the economy of the country for the future growth. In the changing social-political situation, International and national government is also considering travel and tourism as a tool of development. As per the data released by United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Asia has shown a commendable growth in tourism sector. This sector is creating immense opportunities of income, employment, preservation of culture and cross-culture understanding. With the recent developments in transportation and communication, traveling, both domestically and internationally has come to be unproblematic.

TOURISM & HOSPITALITY

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Eligibility Criteria: Intermediate pass or equivalent (10+2 stream) /3 year Diploma in Travel & Tourism/3-year Diploma in Hospitality & Catering technology from any Government recognized college. General, OBC & Physically handicapped categories – 22 years at the date of submission of application. SC, ST - 25 years at the date of submission of application. Candidate must appear UGAT/JEE(NCHMCT)/EAMCET/NEET or National examination conducted by authorized agency to get admission into BBA course and relevant certificate must be produced in original as proof of age. Reservation for Foreign Students: As per government rules Foreign students have to route their applications through MHRD (Ministry of Human Resources Development, Govt. of India, New Delhi) or ICCR (Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi)

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HOSPITALITY & HOTEL ADMINISTRATION

BSc - (Approved by NCHMCT, New Delhi)

Eligibility Criteria: A pass in 10+2 system of Senior Secondary examination or its equivalent with English as one of the subjects, and qualify to appear for NCHM JEE-2017. Those appearing in any other 10+2 or equivalent examination can also appear in JEE 2017 on provisional basis. Provisional admission will stand cancelled if proof of having passed the qualifying examination (10+2 or its equivalent) is not submitted at the time of counseling or at the time of admission or latest by 30-09-2017. The offer of admission is subject to verification of original certificates / documents at the time of admission. If any candidate is found ineligible at a later date even after admission to an Institute, his / her admission will stand cancelled.

Age Limit as on 01 July 2017: for candidates from General and OBC categories, upper age limit is 22 years as on 01.07.2017. In the case of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates, upper age limit is 25 years as on 01.07.2017. Upper age limit for Physically Challenged candidates shall be reckoned as per the category he/she belongs to i.e. General/SC/ST/OBC. Date of birth as recorded in the Secondary Education Board/Pre-University Certificate shall be the authentic proof that will be accepted. At the time of counselling, this certificate must be produced in original as a proof of age, failing which the candidate will not be considered for counseling / admission.

NOTE: All the seats for admission to 3-year BSc(H&HA) programme at NITHM are through JEE followed by counselling only.

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- 26 Acres of scenic landscape Campus

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