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HANDICRAFTS INDIA YEAR BOOK

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NORTH INDIA

The Lodhi, New Delhi, now part of Leading Hotels of the World

The Lodhi, New Delhi, has now come under The Leading Hotels of the World portfolio. The property reflects a dynamic, new interpretation of simple and easy luxury. Spanning across seven acres on the green edge of Lutyens' Delhi, the hotel is just across the road from the Delhi Golf Course. Guests can relish exotic delicacies at its restaurants and enjoy the cool ambiance of the courtyards and public areas. The hotel also preserves a sense of seclusion, peace, and a club-like atmosphere in its eight floors of guest accommodation. The property was extensively renovated in 2013, with all rooms and suites featuring private balconies. The hotel is in close proximity to Lodhi Gardens as well as many stylish shopping precincts.

WEST INDIA

AccorHotels' Mercure debuts in holy city of Dwarka, Gujarat

Mercure has made its debut in the holy city of Dwarka, Gujarat, with the opening of Mercure Dwarka. Strategically located, the hotel is a short drive from Dwarkadhish Temple, popularly known as Jagat Mandir. The hotel is conveniently located at a five-minute drive from the railway station, an hour's drive from Porbandar Airport, and a little over two hours from the Jamnagar airport. The hotel is also in close proximity to other religious sites of Nageshvara Temple, Gopi Talav Theertham, Rukmini Devi Temple, and Hanuman Mandir. The opening of Mercure Dwarka marks AccorHotels' fourth property in Gujarat. Featuring 99 well-appointed guest rooms, including one suite, the hotel offers contemporary homely comfort in the cosmic land of Krishna. Each guest room features spacious interiors and modern design; the rooms are equipped with in-room amenities and high-speed Wi-Fi access.



PAN INDIA

ITDC profit surges in Q1, 2017

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), the public sector undertaking under the aegis of Ministry of Tourism, posted a remarkable performance for the first quarter of the current financial year, 2017-18. The total turnover in the quarter ending June, 2017, increased to ₹109.60 crore as compared to ₹91.42 crore in the corresponding quarter last year. The company registered Net Profit Before Tax (PBT) at ₹25.19 crore as compared to ₹14.30 crore in the corresponding quarter last financial year, an increase of 76.15 per cent from last year.

NORTH INDIA

Hyatt Regency Delhi, first Hyatt to receive LEED Platinum certification

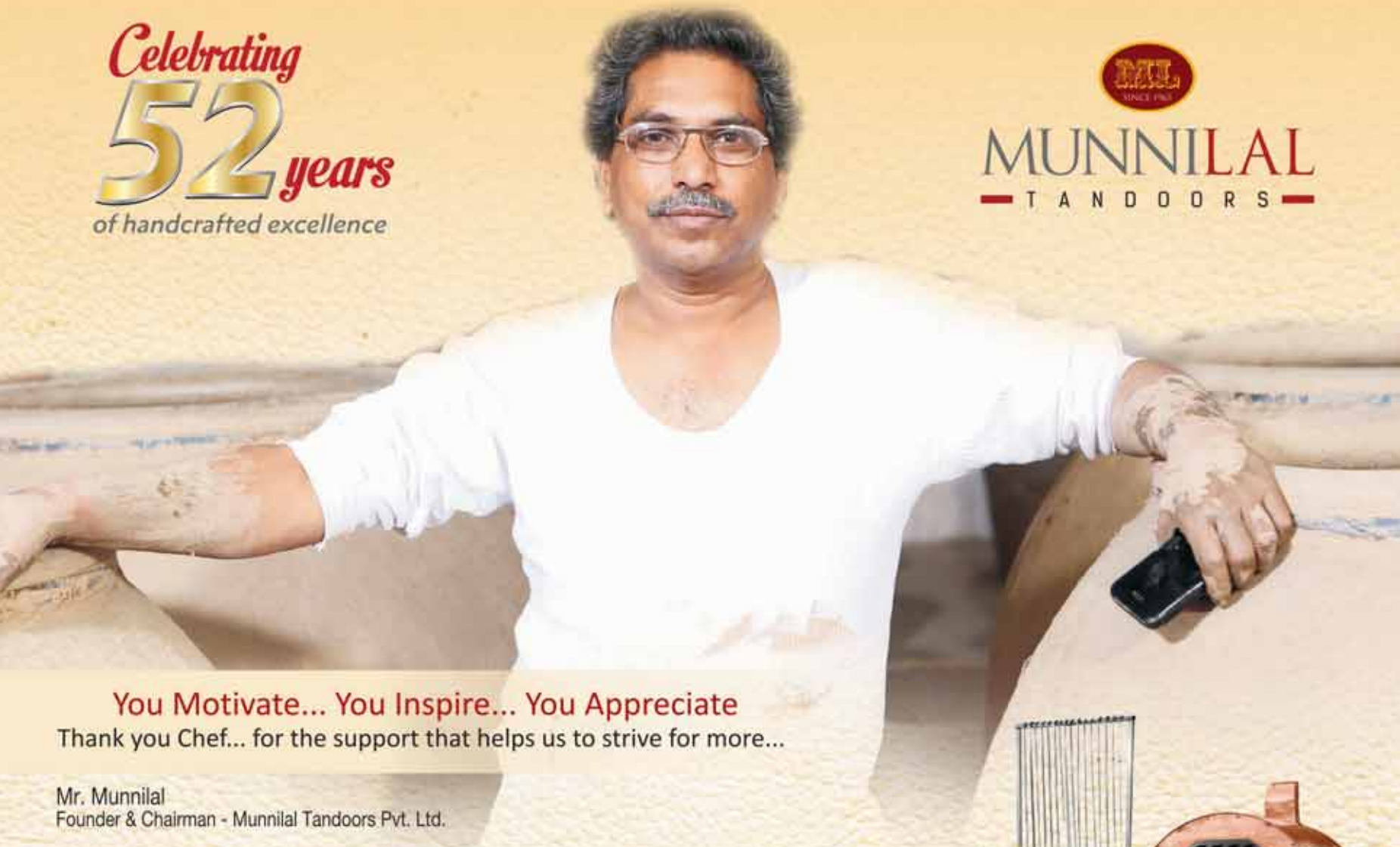
Hyatt Regency Delhi has been certified as LEED Platinum by Green Business Certification (GBCI), the body that certifies all LEED projects globally. With this honour, Hyatt Regency Delhi becomes the first Hyatt hotel in over 700 properties across the world and one of the few hotels in Delhi to have received this esteemed green building certification. During a special ceremony at Hyatt Regency Delhi, the internationally recognised LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) plaque and certificate were presented to Shiv Jatia, Chairman and Managing Director of Asian Hotels (North) by Gopalakrishnan P, Managing Director – Asia Pacific & Middle East, GBCI. Speaking at the occasion, **Aseem Kapoor**, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Delhi, said, "It is a proud moment for all of us, especially as we are the first hotel to receive this certification within the Hyatt family. With this, Hyatt Regency Delhi establishes itself as one of the few global leaders for energy and environment design."



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SOUTH INDIA

WelcomHotel to soon open in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu

WelcomHotel is soon to open a contemporary hotel in the heart of Kovai City, Coimbatore, where rich history, wild sanctuary reserves, and booming businesses effortlessly blend together. WelcomHotel Coimbatore will feature 103 well-appointed rooms with modern amenities, a rooftop pool, an all-day dining restaurant, and a lounge bar that offers an international selection of wines. The hotel is the perfect home base for both business and leisure guests.



PAN INDIA

Radisson Blu unveils The Art of Weddings

Radisson Blu has launched The Art of Weddings, a campaign created exclusively for the India market. Building on the brand's global 'Something Blu, A Wedding of a Kind' concept, the initiative will run across all of India's 34 Radisson Blu hotels. Aimed at establishing the upper-upscale brand as the venue of choice for weddings and bridal events, The Art of Weddings is targeted at new age Indian couples and brings together the finest names in wedding services for a truly elegant, stylish, and sophisticated wedding experience. Special privileges, such as food and beverage discounts and a bonus of 25,000 Club CarlsonSM Gold Points, will be extended to all wedding bookings made at Radisson Blu hotels across India during the campaign period.

WEST INDIA

Le Méridien opens in Calangute, Goa, with 146 rooms

Le Méridien Hotels & Resorts has announced the opening of Le Méridien in Calangute, Goa, further strengthening the Paris-born brand's presence in India with its 10th property. Situated on the bustling Calangute-Candolim road, Le Méridien Goa, Calangute is set to expose the curious and creative minded traveller to the best-kept secrets of North Goa. With experiences and programmes centred on the brand's filters of discovery – culture, co-ordinates, and cuisine, the hotel promises accessible and stimulating experiences.



NORTH INDIA

RCI expands network with Hill Stream Resort, Dehradun

RCI, the global leader in holiday exchange and part of the Wyndham Worldwide family of brands, has announced an agreement to affiliate the Hill Stream Resort in Dehradun to its network. Hill Stream Resort is a perfect serene getaway with a unique experience of the hills, water streams, gardens, and forests, all rolled into one. The property boasts of immaculate accommodation in terms of luxury and private balconies. Additionally, the resort offers a wellness spa, personalised tours, camping, trekking, and adventure sports like rock climbing.

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NORTH INDIA

Country Inn & Suites By Carlson opens in Kota, Rajasthan

Country Inn & Suites By Carlson Kota made its debut in Kota, Rajasthan, recently. The hotel is the first-ever international brand to have a presence in the city. Strategically located in the heart of the region, Country Inn & Suites By Carlson Kota offers 85 modern rooms and suites. The hotel is located in proximity to corporate zones and educational service institutes, making it the perfect stay for both business and family guests. "I am delighted to welcome Country Inn & Suites By Carlson Kota to our growing portfolio in India. With 557 properties in operation and under development globally, Country Inns & Suites By CarlsonSM is a leader in the upper-midscale hotel segment," said **Raj Rana**, Chief Executive Officer - South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

NORTH INDIA

Tree of Life Resort & Spa, Varanasi to open soon

Tree of Life Resort & Spa, Varanasi is set to open on September 4, 2017. The resort will offer Junior Suites, each with a private area of around 650 sqft. Decorated in local architecture, each Junior Suite allows you the luxury of space and privacy. The resort has a large private sit-out overlooking the gardens and the Ganga Kund (religious pond), with open spaces around. It is situated away from the noise and chaos of the city. Situated in rural surroundings, 11 kms from the airport and just 12 kms from the city centre, the new expressway connecting the airport and the city makes it a convenient 20-25 minute drive to either location. The new Ring Road to Sarnath starts just a few kilometres from the property and once operational, will make it a pleasurable 25-minute drive away.



NORTH INDIA

Chandiwala Hospitality Ensemble from October 11-13

The 16th Chandiwala Hospitality Ensemble will be held in New Delhi at Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology (BCIHMCT) between October 11 and 13, 2017. The ensemble not only includes finest culinary competitions, but also various challenges related to the hospitality industry, being participated in by colleges of hotel management from India and abroad. The objective of this event is to provide an opportunity to aspiring hotel management professionals by giving them a platform to demonstrate their knowledge, skill, and talent, leading to enhanced learning from each other's experience and expertise. For the first time in the history of Chandiwala Hospitality Ensemble, school students of Grade 8-12 will also be participating individually by preparing and presenting a mocktail and a dish, with recipe, in the Future Chef Contest. The most outstanding participant during the three-day event will be given the Eclat Hospitality Award. A themed dinner titled 'AgniHom – The Revival of Soul', along with a valedictory function, will mark the closing of Chandiwala Hospitality Ensemble on October 13, 2017.



OBITUARY

In Memoriam: Ronnie Lobo



Ronnie Lobo, survived by his wife and children, passed away on August 14, 2017, at his New Delhi residence. In the span of his career, Lobo worked with prominent hospitality players in the industry such as Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group & Taj Hotels and Resorts.

The Carlson group honoured him for an outstanding career achievement with its 2011 Carlson Fellows Award. A gentleman at heart, Lobo will be deeply missed by all.

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NORTH AMERICA

W Hotels debuts W Bellevue in Washington, USA

W Hotels Worldwide has announced the opening of W Bellevue, Washington, marking a new era of design for W Hotels in North America. Playing off Bellevue's tech-forward neighbours and centuries-old traditions, the design of the hotel embraces the region's juxtaposed affinity for both its natural surroundings and groundbreaking innovation. The hotel pays homage to lakeside culture with cabin-like architecture, thoughtfully reimaged traditional décor, and locally-inspired cocktails and cuisine. Built as a W from the ground up, W Bellevue offers a modern, yet invitingly familiar setting to welcome locals and travellers alike to 220 guest rooms and 25 suites in the newest Lincoln Square expansion.



ASIA

Pullman announces new opening in Zhouzhuang, China

Pullman has announced the opening of its latest hotel in China's heritage water town of Zhouzhuang, Jiangsu province. The hotel is nestled within a 50 acre wetland park and gateway to the century-old water system that joins the Yangtze River. Boasting 174 guest rooms and suites with private balconies and panoramic lake and park views, the spacious rooms feature the signature Pullman bedding, a wireless Bluetooth docking station, and premium in-room amenities. Dining options include La Lune Chinese restaurant that features 18 private dining rooms serving Cantonese cuisine, an all-day dining restaurant- Café 88, a Western-style bar- V Pub, and a lobby lounge featuring a selection of freshly ground coffee and artisanal pastries. For weddings, events, and meetings, the hotel has an 820 sqm grand ballroom and seven function rooms that can accommodate up to 1350 guests. Wellness facilities include a 2000 sqm Fit Lounge villa that comes with an indoor pool, Jacuzzi, gym, and yoga studio.

EUROPE

Residence Inn by Marriott debuts in London

Marriott International has announced the opening of Residence Inn London Bridge, marking a debut in the capital city for the company's industry-leading extended-stay brand. The property offers 87 well-appointed studio, one and two-bedroom suites with separate living, working and sleeping areas, as well as a fully-equipped kitchen. Guests looking for a home-away-from-home experience during longer stays are catered to with upscale design and amenities such as complimentary hot breakfasts, communal laundry facilities, free Wi-Fi, and a 24x7 grab-and-go market in the lobby. An on-site, state-of-the-art fitness centre is available 24x7 and custom running routes can be accessed via MapMyFitness, thanks to the brand's global partnership with Under Armour Connected Fitness. A short walk from some of the city's main historic attractions such as Tower Bridge and St. Paul's Cathedral, Residence Inn London Bridge is ideally situated for leisure and business travellers alike.

NORTH AMERICA

ONE UN Plaza joins Hilton network

Hilton has announced that ONE UN New York will soon join the Hilton network as Millennium Hilton New York One UN Plaza, the group's seventh local property. The landmark hotel, situated alongside the headquarters of the United Nations, has long welcomed both leisure and business travellers, and the world's most esteemed leaders, diplomats, and Heads of State. The iconic property is now poised to deliver Hilton's flagship hospitality to visitors from across the globe. It has completed a USD 68 million phased renovation since 2012, which preserved the distinctive architecture and layout of the original Kevin Roche-designed building, while upgrading the hotel's 439 guest rooms and suites, meetings and events space, public areas, and restaurant.



WORLDWIDE

AccorHotels' results for first half of 2017 remain solid: Sébastien Bazin

Sébastien Bazin, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, AccorHotels, says, "AccorHotels' results for first half of 2017 are particularly solid. They reflect growth in our hotel business, the rapid integration of recently acquired brands, our persistently dynamic development, and the ramp-up of our new businesses. In this way, we are increasing our market share and consolidating our global leadership while profoundly transforming our business model. The separation of AccorInvest into a stand-alone legal entity has been completed. Discussions about the opening of this business to outside investors are ongoing. Our pursuit of this growth strategy enables us to aim for another year of record growth in 2017."

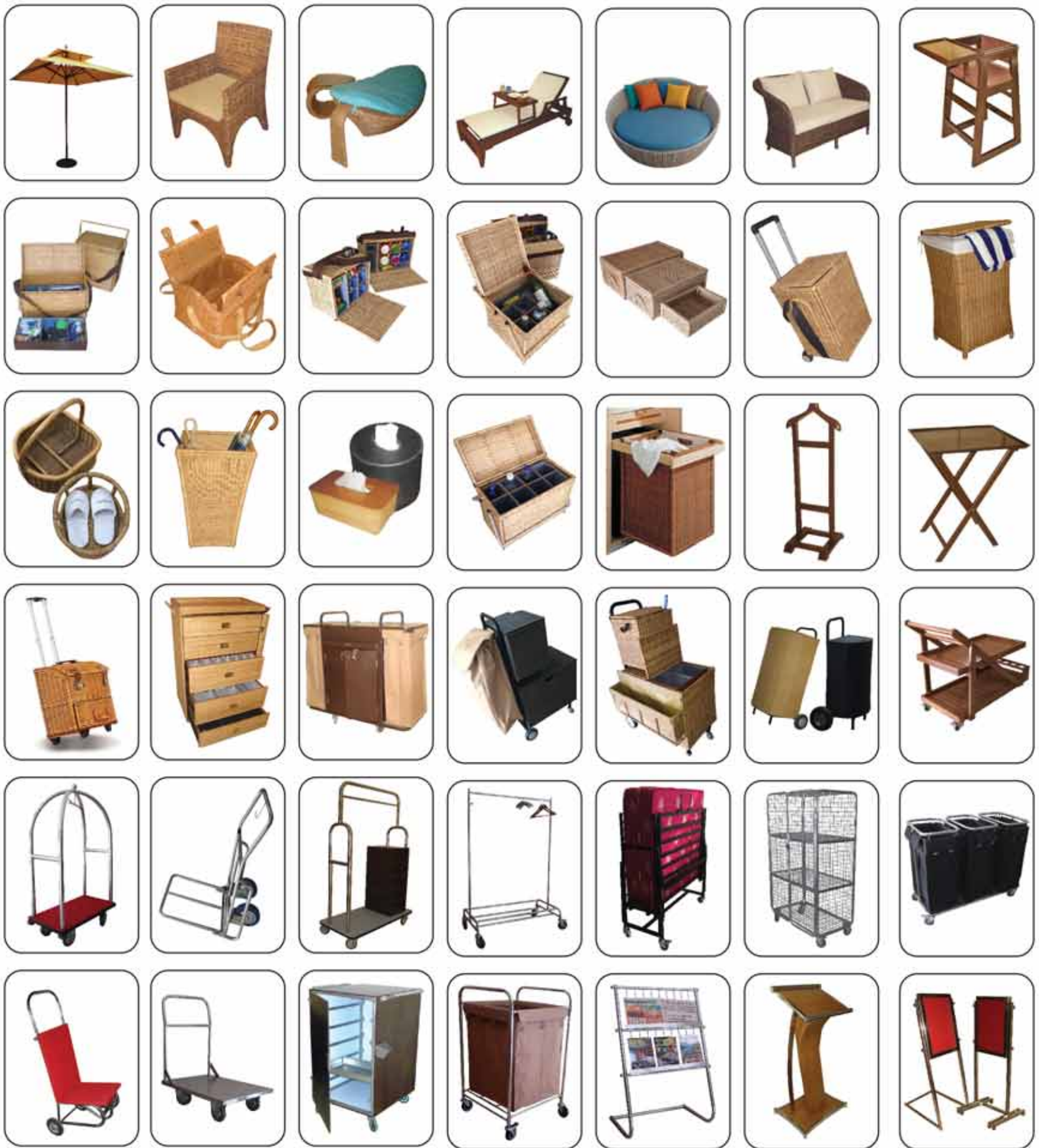
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NORTH AMERICA

Ascott acquires 80 per cent stake in Synergy Global Housing in the US

The Ascott Limited is acquiring an 80 per cent stake in Synergy Global Housing (Synergy), a leading accommodation provider in the US. The acquisition will expand Ascott's footprint in the US and strengthen its extensive range of international-class serviced residences for corporate customers worldwide. It will also triple Ascott's portfolio from over 1000 units to about 3000 units in the US. This acquisition is yet another move to transform Ascott's global operating platform following hot on the heels of its investment in Quest Apartment Hotels earlier this month, which will leapfrog Ascott to becoming the largest serviced residence provider in Australasia.



EUROPE

Roseate Hotels & Resorts announces acquisition of Villa at Henrietta Park, Bath

Roseate Hotels & Resorts has announced its acquisition of Villa at Henrietta Park (formerly known as Villa Magdala) in Bath, United Kingdom. Acquired from the independently-owned Kaleidoscope Collection, Villa at Henrietta Park

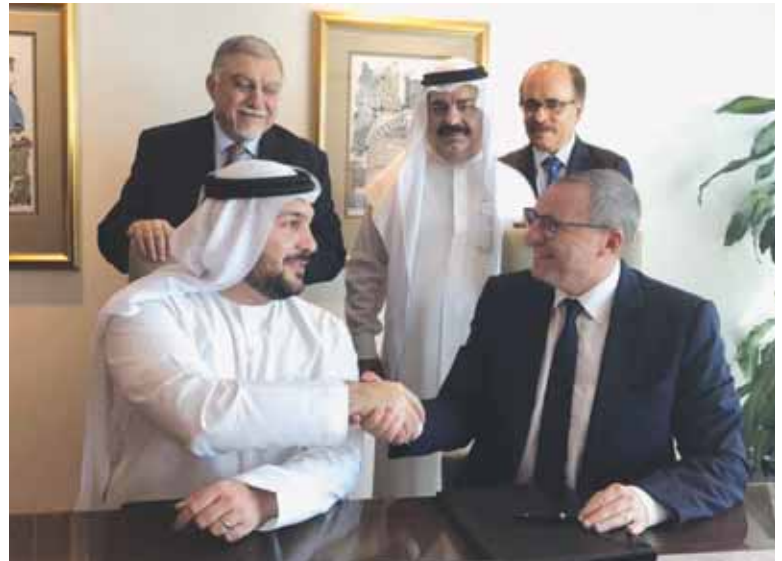
is Roseate Hotels & Resorts' third property in the UK. Tucked away in a quiet corner in the heart of Bath, the boutique property offers 21 spacious and exquisitely appointed rooms. Set in two carefully restored Victorian houses with individual gardens, Villa at Henrietta Park features a quirky, yet elegant personality. The unique and picturesque property echoes chic classism blended with a buoyant, yet relaxed ambience. **Ankur Bhatia**, Executive Director, Bird Group, says, "We are proud to put our flag on one of the most iconic properties in Bath. Bath is an important market for us as it is one of the most visited cities and is amongst the UNESCO World Heritage sites. Villa would be branded as The Roseate Villa Bath."



MIDDLE EAST

IHG signs two new properties in Dubai Business Bay

InterContinental Hotels Group has announced the signing of two new properties in Dubai- Crowne Plaza Dubai Business Bay and InterContinental Residence Suites Dubai Business Bay. Both properties are in partnership with API Hotels & Resorts, and their location in Dubai's Business Bay area, the planned business capital of the region, is in line with IHG's strategy to grow these brands in emerging business epicentres.



NORTH AMERICA

Autograph Collection Hotels and SMASHotels introduce Hotel EMC2

Autograph Collection Hotels and SMASHotels have announced the official opening of Hotel EMC2 in downtown Chicago. Celebrating the convergence of art and science through its design, cuisine, and guest experience, Hotel EMC2 joins the diverse and dynamic portfolio of more than 100 Autograph Collection hotels around the world that are independent, one-of-a-kind, and champion values of vision, design, and craft.





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More India for Alila

Doris Goh, Chief Marketing Officer, Alila Hotels and Resorts, talks to us about the group's properties in India and where they see themselves amongst travellers.



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Doris Goh



India is as important for us as China, both in terms of hotel development and outbound tourism



Tell us about Alila Fort Bishangarh.

Alila Fort Bishangarh is a unique example of Jaipur's Gharana architecture, influenced by both the Mughals and the British, and is possibly the only boutique warrior fort of its kind in India that has been converted into a resort. Hidden away in the Aravalli hills of Rajasthan, an hour's drive from Jaipur, Alila Fort Bishangarh commands a remarkable presence upon a granite hill with a 360-degree view of the Rajasthani landscape of hills, *havelis*, villages, and temples. The resort boasts of 59 spacious rooms and suites, individually configured to capture stunning views of the Aravalli hills. Within the walls of the old fort are two diverse restaurants, Amarsar and Nazaara, with

innovative culinary options that have been specially curated by Chef Ranveer Brar. Deep in the dungeon, carved out between granite rocks, is Spa Alila. Alila offers a specially crafted Rajasthani journey for guests to engage with the local community, watch local artisans work their art of carpet weaving, silversmithing, and marble sculpting.

Is expansion on the cards for Alila?

This year, we opened Alila Fort Bishangarh after seven years of dedication and toil. We have also just opened Alila Yangshuo in Guilin, China, which was another project that took seven years in the making. Next year, we will be opening Alila Koggala, Sri Lanka; Alila Villas Koh Russey, Cambodia; Alila Tianxi Lake, Zhejiang, China,

and Alila Villas Niushoushan, Nanjing, China, situated within a Buddhist cultural site, something that may entice our Indian audience to come and discover this culturally vibrant destination. Furthermore, we will be opening two iconic city hotels - Alila Bangsar in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Alila SCBD in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Who do you see as your clients?

We seek to tap the segment of both business and leisure travellers. At all our properties, we have curated creative spaces for innovative meetings and corporate retreats, complete with destination experiences and team building activities to take people outdoors. It has proved to be very popular with guests and many now choose to



bring their families along for extended stays. At Alila Fort Bishangarh, we have conceptualised 23 creative venues for meetings, events, and all other occasions.

How important is India as a market for Alila?

India is as important for us as China, both in terms of hotel development and outbound tourism. However, development projects take time to manifest as they are dependent on the right partnership. We have been fortunate to have good owners at both Alila Diwa Goa and Alila Fort Bishangarh. Ever since Alila Diwa Goa opened in 2010, it has done very well year-on-year and won acclaim from both domestic and international travellers.

Tell us about the competition you face.

We believe in healthy competition as it serves to benefit the destination. Travellers today have many hotel choices to cater to their business and leisure needs. We certainly need business hotels, but boutique hotels



like Alila are also highly sought-after. We are not for the masses, but we do have a growing clientele. Typically, Alila guests are well-travelled and have a sense of adventure. They know what they want and are not afraid to stand up for what they believe in. We want to keep doing what we do, which is to push for sustainable tourism and deliver unique destination experiences to

our guests while keeping things surprisingly different.

What is Alila's philosophy?

Our business philosophy is to integrate commerce, conservation, and community. The hallmark of Alila is the combination of innovative design and crafted luxury in unique locations, set apart by private spaces and bespoke journeys. 🏡

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MARRIAGE OF MICE WITH MARRIOTT

Neeraj Govil, Area Vice President – South Asia, Marriott International, elaborates on how the group's innovative concepts and invigorating partnerships help drive results and guest satisfaction in the wedding space.



 Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us about the involvement of Marriott in the wedding segment. The whole premise behind the campaign 'Shaadi by Marriott' is to show that we have our fair share of the burgeoning wedding space. This is a segment we have been interested in for a very long time. There are two reasons for that; the first is that we are looking to attract

domestic tourists and ensure we endear ourselves up to them. Wedding is beyond just the couple. People place a lot of trust whenever they ask any hotel to manage their wedding. We are likely to win them as an audience. The second reason is that we are a global player and the largest hotel company in the world. More and more Indians are now travelling outside India. We are confident that if people can

understand and value what we can do in India, when they travel outside India, they are likely to stay at a Marriott property. We see this as a means to grow our share of wedding business in India.

Are you going to do away with all the external wedding planners? We are not doing away with them, we are working in partnership with them. If a consumer wants to work

directly with the hotel, we are more than happy to work with them. We are working with a lot of wedding planners across India. The whole idea, from an operations perspective, is about planning to be able to cater to all sorts of weddings. A great example is JW Marriott Hotel Kolkata that was opened last year. We have had great success in the wedding space because of the way the hotel is laid out and we are now putting bridal rooms in our hotels because we understand the need of the bridal



room next to the Grand Ballroom. We have also put specialist wedding planners in our hotels.

Conducting a wedding is extremely different from conducting a MICE event. If someone wants to do a food tasting, they usually visit the hotel. However, we are now increasingly visiting a client's home so they can sit down and taste the food, conveniently. This personalisation

has been very well accepted by our guests. We also launched a campaign towards the end of last year which stated, "If you do your wedding at a Marriott, we will take care of your honeymoon". We are trying to be a one-stop-shop for weddings, but this is not at all about getting rid of our partners. We realise that partnering with Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla will elevate this whole concept. They are pioneers in their field and through such unique partnerships and initiatives, we look to offer our guests handcrafted experiences like never before.

Talking about MICE, how strong is Marriott in this segment?

Marriott is a big player in MICE; we have got big hotels. A large portion of our business comes out of MICE. Most of our JW Marriott properties have large banqueting spaces, both indoors and outdoors. Even our resort locations are pretty big in MICE. We understand the value of this sector and as we are moving ahead with designing our future hotels, we are making sure these hotels are designed in a way that they facilitate the movement of

larger groups without meddling with the operations of the rest of the hotel. We are also keen to be close to large convention centres. For instance, Aerocity has a large convention centre planned that makes it a great place to be. We are also going to open an Aloft in the same location, very soon. Growth, for us, has been phenomenal, despite the fact that demonetisation, at some point or another, had an impact. We have well-mitigated all negative impacts now. We have also seen a significant amount of increase in our weddings and are looking for a double-digit growth in this segment of business.

What is your opinion of the GST?

We are complying with the GST. Most of our hotels lie within the 28 per cent bracket and the rest are in the 18 per cent space. We haven't had any adverse impact yet, but I think it will make international MICE all the more difficult to get because India will become uncompetitive as a destination as other locations like Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, and Dubai have a significantly lower GST rate.



Neeraj Govil

“
Most of our JW Marriott properties have large banqueting spaces, both indoors and outdoors

”



Sanjay Sharma

SANJAY SHARMA

Market Vice President - North India and Nepal
Marriott International

How is North India, as a market, performing overall?

The North India market is phenomenal at the moment. If there is a bit of sluggishness in terms of inbound tourism, it is because performance in Rajasthan has been sluggish. On the contrary though, Rajasthan has achieved phenomenal numbers in comparison to last year because of domestic tourism. The wedding segment has grown in

leaps and bounds from the domestic market, but at the same time, inbound has slowed down a bit.

Which is the best performing city for Marriott in North India?

Delhi-NCR has done extremely well, so has Jaipur. Also, Lucknow is among the top markets of our growth trajectory. Remote locations like Jaisalmer have done very well and continue to do well. One city that we would love to see doing well is Srinagar. However, due to the current situation, it's lagging behind a bit.

Do you think mid-segment or budget hotels are performing better than luxury ones?

Both these sectors are doing very

well for us. We have 15 brands in the country. In most of the larger cities we have luxury brands as well as select-service brands, both doing well in terms of growth rate. There is double-digit growth in both these segments in comparison to last year.

Growth mostly comes from B-category cities or the cities that are in remote locations.

What are the group's immediate expansion plans?

We just opened Four Points By Sheraton in Srinagar. We will have four more hotels by the end of the year. We have JW Marriott coming up in Jaipur, Fairfield in Jodhpur and Amritsar, and a Marriott in Indore.



Luxury brands as well as select-service brands are doing well in terms of growth



SHAADI BY MARRIOTT - THE CONCEPT

The Marriott brand has been built on a philosophy of utmost thought and care towards the customers and nowhere is this attitude more evident than when they host weddings. Shaadi by Marriott, a first-of-its-kind wedding-specific customised campaign, was thus born to showcase Marriott's unmatched wedding expertise and to make Marriott synonymous with weddings in India.

At Marriott, they pride themselves in excelling at all necessary parameters to provide a wedding experience that is unforgettable. Shaadi by Marriott is exactly that - a promise of faith, trust, quality, and value. It is about helping customers realise that the occasion means as much to Marriott as it does to them. Whether it's the biggest wedding of the season or the most private affair, Shaadi by Marriott aims to craft that unique, luxurious, and personalised wedding experience,

all under one roof with the help of in-house wedding celebrants.

As the post-wedding celebrations continue, Marriott goes a step further with a special honeymoon package that offers couples the best possible start to a lifetime of wedded bliss at select Marriott properties across the world. Couples who plan their weddings at any of the Marriott hotels in India with a minimum spend of ₹5 lakh, can pick from beautiful destinations such as Goa, Jaisalmer, Mussoorie, Bhutan, Thailand, and even Australia to enjoy a complimentary 2-night or 3-day honeymoon stay from May 15, 2017, until April 30, 2018. In addition to this, Marriott wedding specialists assist and cater to every couple's wedding needs. This year, they wanted to take the campaign to a whole new level by tying up with Abu Jani and Sandeep Khosla, one of the most notable designers in India.



FAIR PLAY IN NEPAL

Marriott debuted its Fairfield brand in the Kingdom of Nepal this June to tap the leisure as well as business traffic with its 115-key property in Thamel, Kathmandu.



Hazel Jain

Nepal was recently introduced to Fairfield by Marriott, Marriott International's first hotel in the country. Fairfield by Marriott Kathmandu is located five kilometres away from the airport in Thamel district, which was a bohemian haven before it became a popular shopping destination. The 115-room hotel is close to all UNESCO World Heritage sites as well as popular attractions including the Narayanhity Palace Museum, Garden of Dreams, and Kathmandu Durbar Square.

Prakash Jayadevan, General Manager, Fairfield by Marriott Kathmandu, believes this is the right product for this market as it fills a much-needed gap in the moderate-tier segment with its fresh, contemporary design. Speaking about the traffic to the hotel, Jayadevan says, "India is the biggest source market for Nepal. It has always been a key

destination for Indians for religious and adventure tourism. Nepal is a year-round destination with some key religious destinations like Muktinath, Pashupatinath, and Lumbini. In fact, Kathmandu has been a favoured destination for Indians as it offers a quick getaway from the tropical heat."

Fairfield by Marriott already has four hotels currently open in India – Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Rajajinagar, Fairfield by Marriott Bengaluru Outer Ring Road, Fairfield by Marriott Lucknow, and Fairfield by Marriott Belagavi.

Jayadevan adds, "Being in the tourist district of Kathmandu, we expect majority of our guests to be tourists. However, since we are also close to key embassies, government offices, and the commercial district, we are looking to get a good mix of tourists and business travellers. The hotel has been operational since June, this year, and we have seen a mix of 40 per cent Indian guests,

35 per cent Chinese guests, and the remaining being of other nationalities. We expect the hotel to achieve an ARR of around USD 85 by the end of the year." He says that Nepal's government is taking steps to promote Thamel as a 24-hour destination where activities and parties can continue non-stop.

For MICE, the hotel has two meeting rooms for board meetings and small trainings. In time, the hotel expects to have more business space on offer with larger banquet halls. It is a contemporary hotel with bright, natural lighting in the lobby and the restaurant. The art work gives a unique sense of place to the hotel. 🐦



Prakash Jayadevan

INSIDE THE HOTEL

Kava, the all-day dining restaurant, serves local, Indian, and international cuisine. Kava - The Bar and lobby lounge offers coffee and cocktails in the evening. The business centre meeting rooms are equipped with the latest audio-visual facilities and all public areas and guest rooms have high-speed Wi-Fi. The hotel also features a 24x7 convenience store.

WEAVING AN ARTISTIC TALE

Rachel Winokur, Senior Interior Designer, Elkus Manfredi Architects, founded a design studio in Los Angeles catering to clients, ranging from celebrities to developers of luxury hotels and residences. We get in conversation with her to understand what's buzzing in the design space and what inspires her.

Image credit: Hedrich Blessing



Is your design aesthetic conformist or non-conformist?
I would say, non-conformist. In my mind, there really aren't any rules. I always try to approach a project with a fresh perspective. I don't want to imitate anything else or to repeat myself and I don't follow trends.

Doesn't that get a little tricky?
I think it's exciting and I think you get a better product in the end. For instance, eight years ago, I used reclaimed wooden panelling on the walls of a luxury spa in Los Angeles, way before this became popular. I didn't want it to look too rustic, so I balanced it with a natural shell veneer, routing out the wood. It wasn't the predictable route, and initially, the installer didn't know how to do it. But, we figured it out and in the end, we had something truly original. I like to explore ideas; I wouldn't call it tricky.

What's your take on hotel designs in India?
I have seen spectacular hotel designs in India, especially in the last year or so, both in new construction as well as in restoration of existing properties. India's rich heritage, diversity, and abundance of local flavours provide an infinite inspiration. Designers working in India have such a range of exquisite architectural elements and centuries-old crafts that can be adopted and reinterpreted to create a unique hotel experience. Using

them can be a challenge, but it's a wonderful opportunity to bridge thousands of years of history with what's current today. I love finding evidence and elements of India's rich history in its contemporary hotels. At its best, hotel design in India affirms the country's past while breathing new life into its present and future.

How much do location and context influence your design?
Context is always important. You need to understand why a guest is drawn to a certain locale or a particular area within that locale. You have to offer the guest a surprise, an experience they weren't thinking they needed.

I do draw my palette inspiration from the location. If it's a beach location, there will be a lot of blues and greens. But they aren't standard blues and greens; there's always a twist, something unexpected. Every location has its own vibe. A hotel needs to tell a story.

I spent part of my childhood living on a sailboat on the New England coastline with my parents and sister. That experience certainly helped broaden my sense of space. We also lived in semi-rural areas in New England and had pigs and cattle and chicken. Growing up like

that gives me a unique foundation for working in the luxury sphere.

Which projects at Elkus Manfredi attracted you to the firm?

I was very taken by the InterContinental in Boston. There was a unique design challenge there- the property's site was on top of an underground highway with a vent stack jutting out of its centre. Solving that clearly required an impressive level of collaboration and some very inventive engineering. The firm managed to rid the skyline of an eyesore and create luxury housing and a full service hotel. It was a win-win for everyone.

The Peninsula in Chicago does so many things well. Elkus Manfredi took an incredibly complex project located at the heart of Chicago's Magnificent Mile shopping district and focused the design on the guest experience. There's a transforming moment on arrival at street-level that ushers the guest in, out of the urban buzz and into an oasis of calm. The retail and hospitality portions are beautifully knit together.

Aloft, as part of the Starwood Hotels in Boston's Seaport District, offers



Rachel Winokur

“ Designers working in India have such a range of exquisite architectural elements ”



Image credit: Anton Grass/Esto



Image credit: Andrew Bordwin

a nice range of areas for people to gather. Each one of them is distinct, yet they relate. It all feels connected within a larger space that is still quite intimate. There's also a pleasing rhythm to the space that's very easy on the eyes. I like that the designers use local images from Boston such as the John Hancock Tower and the Zakim Bridge, and they achieve a very comfortable balance of textures with the warm

Image credit: Anton Grass/Esto



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wooden ceilings, polished concrete floor, and raw concrete columns. The energy of the design and the fun elements pick up on the urban buzz of the location. It's fun, it's sophisticated, and it is LEED-certified, which of course is very important to me.

What design trends do you envision for the year?

For quite a while, I've noticed a general softening in design—a softening in materials, in form, in the objects, and in the vernacular we use. People are now looking for more of a residential feel in hotels, a sense of coming home. They still want that 5-star service, but they also want to relax and feel comfortable.

Minimalism is still very strong, but more and more we're seeing artisanal and handmade elements that celebrate locally made products and locally sourced materials. There is a growing awareness around how things are made and that consumer decisions can help save a culture, a trade, and help support a local family. This social awareness is manifesting itself in hospitality design and even apartment building owners want to use local artists to liven up their corridors and public spaces. Hotels purchase carpets and decorative items, the origins of which they can trace and where there's no sacrifice on aesthetics. With ethical sourcing, I can provide a beautiful design that falls within my client's budget, while at the

same time create a meaningful experience for the hotel guest.

How do you achieve sustainability in your projects?

My middle name is Carson, after Rachel Carson, who wrote the book *Silent Spring*. I've worked for several firms and had my own firm as well before coming to Elkus Manfredi. At each stop along the way, I've been able to step back and ask myself what's important to me and the answer has always been the same—sustainable design. It is always possible to create something that looks great and is healthy for the guests, healthy for the greater population as well as the environment.

How difficult is delivering your best while staying within the budget?

There is always a fantastic design solution within any budget. I think budgets are helpful for a designer. You may have to be more creative, perhaps use a little more strategy, but budgets and schedules are not limitations. They provide a structure within which everyone can work.

In design, having unlimited options can sound great, but it also means you can explore those options forever. Having a budget limits those options, keeps everyone on the same page, and lets you know where the client is comfortable. It's easier to make decisions. When someone tells me that the sky's the limit, I start to feel lost.

What are the challenges you face?

The pace of change in technology is a challenge. In a long-term design project, you might design a reception desk around today's equipment, but by the time the project is realized that equipment has changed size. Another challenge is that the way people do business is constantly changing. It's an opportunity to try and anticipate the way a hotel will greet its guests and how the guests want to be treated in the next 10 or 15 years. Another opportunity is trying to remain current. There are, of course, traditional hotels that offer the same services and aesthetic over a long period of time, but the smaller boutique hotels have to always offer something new. 🍷



Green summit on sustainability

GreenOtels kicked off its first western region summit on sustainability in hospitality, in collaboration with HRAWI, on July 1, at the Sofitel Mumbai BKC Hotel.

Held under the aegis of HRAWI and Maharashtra Tourism, GreenOtels' western region summit was the first-of-its-kind held for the hospitality industry in the region and was attended by prominent members of the industry. Nitin Gadre, IAS, Principal Secretary, Maharashtra Tourism, was the Chief Guest for the event and in his address, assured the industry of all possible help and support.

Setting the tone of the convention, **Minakshi Agarwal**, Founder and CEO, GreenOtels, said, "We have to make

the cause have the effect. GreenOtels is the cause and healthier bottom lines for the industry and society will be the effect. Nature has been creating a zero-waste lifestyle for 3.8 billion years, I am confident that we can as well."

The keynote address was delivered by Dr. CB Ramkumar, Director, Global Sustainable Tourism Council, who eloquently explained the relevance of climate change and sustainable tourism. Environmental specialist, Niranjan Khatri, Founder and Principal Consultant, iSambhav, also addressed a rapt convention as he brought a

new perspective to sustainability and related it simply to one's daily life. He made a strong point when he said, "What we need is to make a disruptive change."

Eric Ricaurte, a frequent speaker, organiser, and researcher of sustainability measurement shared insights into what hotels were doing or not doing globally, explaining further the shifts that were taking place in travel consumption.

The day-long conference was attended by over 100 hospitality professionals.

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SMART WASTE MANAGEMENT

Samruddh Hegde Desai, Managing Partner, Alterenergy, talks about the urgent need for efficient waste management systems in hotels.



Samruddh Hegde Desai

Hotels are major consumers of resources and contribute heavily towards generation of waste. Poorly managed waste can pose a threat to health, the quality of our environment, and place a burden on businesses and national economics.

On an average, a hotel creates around one kilogram of waste per guest, per night. Waste management involves carrying out a proper waste audit of a hotel. To enable such an audit, an essential step is to segregate waste at all waste generation points.

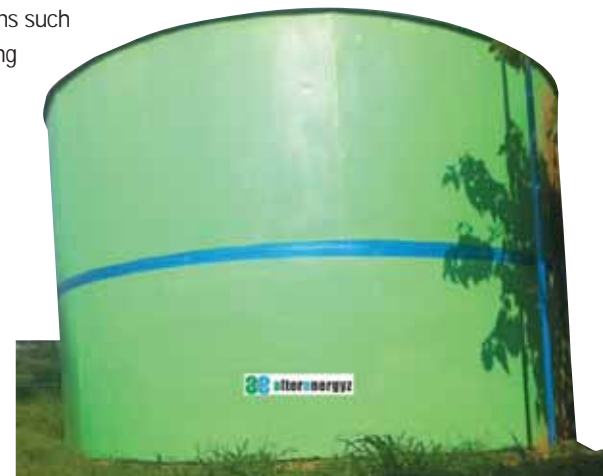
The audit will help identify the issues that need to be dealt with, subsequently facilitating the preparation of a proper waste management system, which is based on the four 'R's- Reduce, Reuse, Recover, and Recycle.

Studies have shown that more than 60 per cent of the waste generated is organic. This waste can easily be treated at the source using bio-methanation technology to generate methane gas, which can be used as a substitute for LPG. Additionally, the system also provides liquid organic slurry, which can be used as manure for plants in landscaping. The gas that is generated can be used for various applications such as generation of power, heating water, etc.

With developing technology, these plants require minimal land usage, have proven to be very efficient, and have a very quick return on investment. The government also promotes such technologies by providing commercial benefits.

Hotels should make an effort to reduce the amount of waste they produce and work towards saving materials, resources, and energy.

A proper waste management system and treatment of waste at source will also lead to increased profit margins of the hotel and help make a clean and green India.



An all-purpose, hygienic shield

Dhananjai Mediratta, Director, Diversified Green Biocides Pvt. Ltd., elaborates on Clean O'Fresh, the company's environmentally friendly disinfectant that is 100 per cent food-safe.



Dhananjai Mediratta

The food industry employs a number of disinfectants to ensure that the food stored and prepared is free from harmful bacteria and pathogens. However, most of these cleaners are based on alcohol and chemicals that have several disadvantages such as high cost and chemical residues, and often affect the quality of food products.

Diversified Green Biocides Pvt. Ltd. has tied up with a European partner for revolutionary technology that offers a unique product, Clean O'Fresh, a superior, non-chemical bactericide that has several advantages over existing products

available in the market. The innovative technology offers unique benefits due to its low cost and environmental friendliness. Clean O'Fresh has numerous advantages over conventional alcohol and chemical-based cleaners. It is non-toxic for humans, plants, and animals; is active against a broad spectrum of bacteria; possesses

non-selective antimicrobial properties; effectively eliminates bad odour; and is cost-effective.

The company has also introduced a wide range of products for domestic and commercial use.



A PLENTITUDE OF USES

- Keeps meat and vegetables clear of bacteria
- Removes E. Coli from water
- Keeps food, equipment, and hands free of contamination
- Cleans glass and mirrors
- Removes odour from kitchen waste and garbage
- Removes red wine stains
- Does not hamper the taste, colour, smell or nutrients of food



A PLAY OF CLAY OVENS

Munnilal Tandoor's wood-fired ovens are easy to use, distinct, and extremely efficient. They add a flavour and quality to food that remains unmatched.

Over the past decade, the mechanism of kitchen equipment has significantly changed with change in food choices and trends. This has been quite apparent through food concepts that have transformed the way kitchens are being designed, in turn impacting the way equipment is being manufactured. While new technologies have made way for new styles of equipment, there have been some that had to go through changing food trends; the tandoor (clay oven) is one of them.

Over the years, one of the foremost players in this domain for commercial kitchen equipment has been Munnilal Tandoors Pvt. Ltd., having exported its tandoors to over 30 countries in the past 51 years of its operational history. **Munnilal**, Founder and CEO of the company, says, "In today's competitive kitchen landscape where food dictates the success of any hospitality outfit, the tandoor has a niche demand. It is an important element of any Indian commercial kitchen. We have, over several decades, nurtured the art of making tandoors and ensured that this art flourishes with time. Therefore, addressing the modern-day needs of kitchens, we have modified the conventional tandoors into unique, wood-fired ones."

A wood-fired tandoor is different from the conventional tandoor in the way food is prepared and also in the way the tandoor itself is made. It has a lot of benefits in terms of cooking output. One cannot ignore the aroma that blends with the food while it is being cooked in a wood-fired oven. The aroma of wood in food offers a distinguished warmth, where different elements of cooking amalgamate to produce a distinct charm. Furthermore, the cooking technique allows unique qualities or ideas of a chef to come through clearly.

The usual question that tandoor manufacturers are confronted with



Addressing the modern-day needs of kitchens, we have modified the conventional tandoors into unique, wood-fired ones



is the characteristic that makes their product unique. Elucidating this further, Munnilal says, "Munnilal Tandoor's wood-fired tandoor is a unique product in its league. There are many factors that lead to this, the most important being that our equipment has an edge over others in terms of product quality and the efficiency with which it bakes. Our wood-fired oven distributes heat evenly, which is the most important aspect that other products in this segment fail to achieve."

The wood-fired tandoor imparts a rich, smoky flavour and adds an extra dimension to the food. "Our newest creation retains the moisture within food that often gets released when one cuts through the food item being served," he adds.

The tandoors also have a large entrance opening that allows for maximum visibility and easy usage. Furthermore, the wood-fired oven is available in steel, brass, and other materials, which make this oven ideal for both domestic and commercial use. Each of the tandoors is hand-crafted. All products meet standards defined by an NSF-approved listing (US) and are also in line with those defined by Certified Gas Product listing (conforming to CSA standards, Canada).



Munnilal



MORE LEGROOM FOR MICE

Hotels that have made a mark in the MICE segment of conventions and banqueting, narrate how this niche market has evolved over the years.



Aashish Vyas



JECC has witnessed constant growth in business in a span of merely two years



Anupriya Bishnoi

The meetings and events space in India has undergone a significant change in recent

AASHISH VYAS

General Manager

Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre

SPACE FOR EVERY OCCASION

Jaipur Exhibition & Convention Centre (JECC) is a 42-acre property consisting of two exhibition halls with a combined column space of 20,000 sqm and an exquisite integrated convention centre. The facility also has open-air venue options that include a 5000 sqm lawn and an expansive outdoor exhibition area of 10,000 sqm. The auditorium in the convention centre can accommodate anywhere between 1000 and 1200 delegates at a time. There are 14 breakout rooms including a VIP lounge for

years. Hindered by a noticeable drop in groups business during demonetisation, there's now more supply and highly differentiated competition. A substantial source of revenue, hospi-

tality players are constantly devising strategies to make the most of the segment. With umpteen options available to customers, uniqueness is the key to keeping them engaged.

20 to 200 guests. JECC offers a global platform to a range of industries with colossal space that can together accommodate more than 30,000 people at a time.

CONSTANT GROWTH

JECC has witnessed constant growth in terms of business in a span of merely two years. The place has acknowledged a footfall of more than 3 lakh till date. Our customers are our brand ambassadors. We proudly proclaim that JECC has hosted prestigious events of national and international fame.

MICE POST GST

The GST has severely impacted the MICE industry. Organisers are hesitating to go large scale and cutting their budgets short in order to be economically viable.

A recent study says that there is an overall decline in MICE bookings across India as compared to the same period last year. However, on an optimistic note, we think that the GST is showing short-term effects and therefore, we are focusing on industries that are least affected by it.



GAURAV AGGARWAL

Director of Catering Sales

Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel

SPACE EVERYWHERE

Renaissance Mumbai Convention Centre Hotel is situated in the northern suburbs of Mumbai, on the banks of Powai Lake. The hotel is spread over five acres, offering 230,000 sqft of indoor and outdoor banquet space, with a capacity to accommodate anywhere between 10 to 2000 guests.

A STEADY GROWTH

Banquet revenue has been growing steadily at 7 per cent, year-on-year. This is primarily driven by volumes, but the real opportunity is Average Per Cover. Customers are willing to pay if they see value and hence, our focus has been on offering customised solutions to our customers.

WEDDING SPECIALISTS

Shaadi by Marriott is a new concept for Marriott in India. We realise there is tremendous potential in the wedding segment and hence, have started to have wedding specialists in the sales team. These associates are experts in arranging a detailed wedding inspection or suggesting options during food tasting. Our hotel has also organised special dinner events for wedding planners where we can showcase different cuisines that we serve during a wedding as food in a 5-star hotel is a focus point. These events have helped planners sell our hotel with confidence and in turn, helped them close a particular piece of business.

MORE OPTIONS FOR LARGER GROUPS

As the hotel has multiple event venue options, large groups have an incentive to choose an indoor or outdoor space depending on the theme and purpose of the event. This helps the organiser break the monotony of having the conference, ceremony or event in the same venue over multiple days. Also, offering different food options and cuisines benefits larger groups in case they are in the hotel for more than two nights.

MICE THROUGH LOYALTY

Our hotel has recently renovated 300 rooms and launched Quan Spa. This helps both old and new customers consider us for MICE business as and when an opportunity arises. More importantly, it is the brand affiliation and location of

the hotel that helps customers choose us over our competitors.

REVENUE SHARE

Our convention sales contribute 25 per cent of our total business. This is split between corporate, association, and wedding business.

**Gaurav Aggarwal**

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Pratyush Anand



Groups and catering verticals account for close to 40 per cent of the total revenue



PRATYUSH ANAND

Director of Sales & Marketing

JW Marriott Mussoorie Walnut Grove Resort & Spa

SPACE APLENTY

Our eye-catching Grand Orchard Ballroom (the main banqueting venue at the resort) is just over 3300 sqft, with an expansive pre-function area, both indoors and outdoors. In a reception-style gathering, we can comfortably accommodate up to 275 guests at the venue.

GROWTH IN DEMAND

There has been a substantial growth in the MICE segment for us, year-on-year. Whether we look at intimate destination weddings or group incentive events, there has been an enormous increase in demand, especially over the last few years.

A BENEFICIAL STRUCTURE

The resort partners with a few local and other wedding and event planners in our major feeder markets such as Delhi-NCR, Punjab, and Mumbai, and works on performance-linked bonuses

with them. This structure enables them to earn overriding benefits based on achieving a pre-defined revenue model.

UNIQUE OFFERINGS

Our unique dining experiences that include breakfast by a stream and pine forest picnics stand out as one of our strongest selling propositions. Hence, a lot of groups choose us over our competitors.

A FAIR SHARE OF REVENUE

Groups and catering verticals form a major revenue stream for the resort; put together, they account for close to 40 per cent of the total revenue.

MARGINAL SLUMP

There has been a marginal slowdown post GST, mostly in the case of individual travellers and families.



Gaurav Mehta



At least 20 per cent of the hotel revenue is contributed by the convention and banquet space



GAURAV MEHTA

Director of Sales & Marketing

Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka

UNMATCHED FACILITIES

Radisson Blu Hotel New Delhi Dwarka features trendsetting interiors capturing the energy and style in every location of the property. The hotel offers 5-star accommodation, 20,000 sqft of meeting space, recreational facilities, and is serviced by staff that excels in providing international levels of service to its guests. We are a preferred hotel partner and the first choice of some of the biggest brands. The three banquets can accommodate a combined gathering of up to 1500 persons.

GST: A BENEFIT

In banqueting, the effective tax before GST came up to 23-35 per cent, following the Luxury Tax applied by select state governments. The GST of 18 per cent will thus lead to banquets becoming reasonable, consequently offering a huge haul to the hospitality industry. That said, hotels have to strategise accordingly.

PARTNERING WITH EXPERTS

Our expertise in wedding planning comes from years of practice and settling only for the best in trade.

We collaborate with experts in the business to shape the intricate nuances that make for spectacular festivities. From online portals to destination management companies, from flower decorators to artist managers, we have the best collaborations when it comes to quality.

REVENUE GENERATOR

We are proud to categorise ourselves as one of the best MICE hotels in Delhi. At least 20 per cent of the total revenue of the hotel is contributed by the convention and banquet space.



VIPUL KAMBOJ

Director of Sales & Marketing

The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences

VAST SPACES

Our hotel has one of the best banquet venues in Delhi-NCR and can cater to big or small weddings at the same time. The total events and meetings space is spread over an area of 26,000 sqft, with the largest venue of 9,200 sqft and a capacity to accommodate 1200 to 1400 persons.

BUSINESS WITH TIE-UPS

We have a tie-up with a couple of wedding and event planners who give us regular business, which includes weddings, MICE events, and cocktail dinners. We regard them as our business partners and ensure that we work together throughout the event.

REWARDING MEETINGS

We have an incentive programme for larger groups- Rewarding Meetings at The Leela, benefits of which are offered to event planners and our partners, depending on the scale of business.

BANKING ON TEAMWORK

We have two dedicated sales teams at The Leela; the

acquisitions team is called Hunters and the retention team is called Collectors. Hunters are in the market on a daily basis to ensure that we get regular business for the hotel. Collectors remain in the hotel to take these leads towards closing of business.

We also have an event services team that is a single point of contact for guests for all their needs and last-minute requests.

DECIPHERING GST

The GST will certainly have an adverse effect on the

MICE industry. Hotels with a tariff of ₹7,500 or above are usually the ones that have large convention centres and this change in the tax structure is definitely going to leave an impact on MICE business in India.



Vipul Kamboj



The total events and meetings space is spread over an area of 26,000 sqft



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Neil Paterson

“The property has served demand of both domestic and international MICE

”

NEIL PATERSON

General Manager

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre

BOUNDLESS CAPACITY

Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) is a purpose-built, state-of-the-art convention facility, the first-of-its-kind in India, with a total size of 55,080 sqm. It features a pillarless hall measuring 6,480 sqm that can be partitioned into six smaller halls. The hall can comfortably accommodate 6,000 guests in seated capacity. At certain events, we have even accommodated floating crowds of up to 10,000 guests. In addition, there are 37 breakout rooms providing added space.

MEETING GROWING DEMAND

Over the past decade, we have built a strong market presence and the

property has served demand from both domestic and international MICE markets.

Recognising the vast potential of the segment in the region, our facilities are set up in a manner to match leading international convention standards.

DECODING THE MARKET

We frequently engage with wedding and event planners to understand the variations in market trends and the changing tastes and preferences of guests. Throughout the year, we also host various showcase and lifestyle events focusing on weddings and other social events to leverage this booming segment.

ASSISTANCE ALL THE WAY

Based on the size and requirements of large groups, we extend incentives like additional room amenities, upgrades, access to the premier lounge, and meeting rooms for small meetings. We also offer business centre facilities and organiser offices, aiding the ease of planning of an event.

A UNIQUE OFFERING

Such a large convention centre being connected to a 5-star hotel and an exhibition centre next door offers a unique proposition in itself. All venues are equipped with state-of-the-art audio-visual facility, translation booths, translator support, etc.



Suraj Kumar Jha

“Last year, we hosted 115 weddings and this year we are looking at conducting over 150

”

SURAJ KUMAR JHA

General Manager

Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport

A PILLARLESS FACILITY

The ballroom at Holiday Inn Mumbai International Airport is a 4000 sqft, pillarless conference and banquet facility. It can cater to a floating crowd of 500-700 persons. The capacity of the facility makes it popular for hosting large gatherings of weddings, MICE, and other corporate events in the city.

UPWARD TRAJECTORY

There has been a steady rise in the banquet space; we have seen an increase in events at our property. Last year, we hosted 115 weddings and this year we are looking at conducting over 150.

FRUITFUL COLLABORATIONS

We have integrations with four decorators who recommend our property as a good hotel venue for wedding functions. We remain in touch with all previous clients

as well and request them to recommend us to their family and friends for similar events. Retaining our loyal customers is one of our priorities.

UNIQUE OFFERINGS

Our talented team of professionals

is constantly working on providing the best of services and facilities to our clients. As part of our wedding package, we offer complimentary individual rooms to the bride and groom. We also offer an extensive menu option for the food and beverage spread. 🍷





BENGALURU TO HOST FHRAI CONVENTION

The 52nd FHRAI Annual Convention will be held in Bengaluru, the Garden City of India, from September 14-16, 2017. The event will feature a diversity of activities that will showcase the best of the region.

Bengaluru, the capital city of Karnataka, is home to scenic parks and famous memorials, apart from being one of the major IT hubs of the country that gives it the name, Silicon Valley of India. The annual convention of FHRAI is returning to the city after more than two decades.

The theme of the convention, **Hospitality 2025 – The Future is NOW**, is inspired by globalisation and technology that have changed the traditional ways that the hospitality industry conducts business, propelling it rapidly into a promising future. Being held at Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru, the event will witness three days of networking, imparting of knowledge, inspiration, and more importantly, the celebration of Indian hospitality.

Shangri-La Hotel, Bengaluru, was launched with the city's largest accommodation inventory offering 397 rooms and suites. It

offers comprehensive meeting and event facilities.

The inaugural ceremony, that will take place on September 14, will be followed by two days of business sessions. The prestigious FHRAI Awards will be given on September 16. The awards have been instituted to encourage and recognise entrepreneurial leadership and individual professional excellence.

Other hotels where arrangements have been made for the stay of delegates are ITC Gardenia, The Lalit Ashok, Radisson Blu Atria, The Chancery Pavilion, 37th Crescent Hotel, Tulip Inn, and Ashraya International Hotel. The organising committee of the convention has invited numerous dignitaries who will be gracing the occasion with their esteemed presence.





Maya honours

The fourth edition of East India Travel Awards travelled to the North East region of Guwahati for the very first time and celebrated excellence in the region's travel and tourism industry.



Ahana Gurung

For the first time in Guwahati, the efforts of stalwarts in the travel and tourism industry of East India were honoured over an evening of merriment and entertainment at Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati on July 26, 2017. Gathering the region's movers and shakers from states of Sikkim, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and several others, the event was

inaugurated by **R Sudhan**, Special Secretary (Tourism), Government of Manipur, who was also the Chief Guest for the award ceremony.

Speaking about the importance of such events in the region, Sudhan stated, "I sincerely believe such events should happen more often, especially in this part of the country, which does not receive much attention. We are certain that the awards can

persuade more entrepreneurs to explore these frontiers."

SanJeet, Mentor, India Travel Awards, added, "Today, tourism is synonymous with progress and development and is echoing around the country. Every small hotel, restaurant, attraction, tourist shop contributes to the growth of this industry but are we doing enough to recognise them? We've instituted these awards for this precise reason. The regional awards



East India stars



recognise those establishments that may not be able to see the day of light on a national level. The industry is now growing by leaps and bounds and these small efforts make a big difference."

The awards were divided into four categories that included Personal Awards, Business Awards, Trending Awards, and Partner Awards. Personal Awards were for legends and leaders who have established themselves and for youngsters who deserve encourage-

ment to become future leaders. Business Awards were for those organisations that have done outstanding work in their field and deserve accolades, while Trending Awards were decided on by critics. Finally, Partner Awards were for the partners that made the awards ceremony a grand success.

The glitzy night was also graced by the presence of the Guest of Honour, Arni Sapkal, Gladrag's Mrs India Mumbai 2017, who, along with R Sudhan, awarded the trophy

to the winners. A total of 41 award categories were presented to travel, tourism, and hospitality front runners. Dilip D Khatau, Chairman, The Corbett Foundation and Chairman, Conservation Corporation of India, joined the Gallery of Legends, while Tsering Wange, Managing Director, Himalayan Holidays, was honoured as the DDP Trailblazer. Additionally, Supratim Raj Basu, Founder and Director, Help Tourism, was conferred the DDP Game Changer award. 🏆







Gallery of Legends

Dilip D Khatau

**DDP Trailblazer**

Tsering Wange

**DDP Game Changer**

Supratim Raj Basu

**Entrepreneur of the Year**

Manoj Saraf, Gainwell Travel and Leisure

**Best General Manager**

Vikas Ray, Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati

**Best Global Distribution System (GDS)**

Travelport Galileo

**Best MICE Operator**

iCON Planners

**Best Debut Hotel**

Holiday Inn Kolkata Airport



Best Corporate Hotel
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Best Business Hotel
Radisson Blu Hotel Guwahati



Best Cultural Tourism Destination
Department of Tourism, Government of Manipur



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Vivanta by Taj - Guwahati

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HPMF TO CELEBRATE 7TH ANNIVERSARY IN JODHPUR

Hospitality Purchasing Managers' Forum (HPMF) is a consortium of procurement managers from the hospitality industry representing star hotels, catering companies, stand-alone restaurant chains, and airlines.

HPMF will be celebrating its seventh anniversary at Indana Palace Jodhpur, Rajasthan, from September 14-16, 2017, with a convention and award ceremony as part of the programme. The unique concept of 'Seven Elements of the Universe' will seek to bring together procurement managers of different organisations on one platform. The synergy, co-ordinated efforts, and passion with which work is done will lead to the establishment of a better environment for procurement in hospitality. Delegates at the three-day event will experience the grandeur of palatial mansions and be transported back to the regal era that has gone by. They will revel in the soulful music emanating from the desert sands and relax their senses at the majestic property that is a perfect fusion of historical elegance and modern luxury.

What to expect?

The three-day event will further strengthen HPMF's commitment to the development and expansion of the purchasing and procurement fraternity, with due recognition being given to those who have made a mark in the industry, contributing towards the achievement of this cause.

DAY 1

Delegates will be welcomed to the vibrant city of Jodhpur. As the day progresses, they will visit sites of historical significance in Jodhpur. A traditional sit-down dinner will ensue at one of the most beautiful palaces here.

DAY 2

The first day of the convention will see the inauguration ceremony. Several presentations and panel discussions that will delve on the latest trends in organic procurement and the future of hospitality procurement will be conducted. This will set the tone for the convention.

DAY 3

Apart from the keynote presentation, there will be two panel discussions and four presentations on different subjects covering the entire spectrum of hospitality procurement. The way ahead for purchasing managers, green hotels, organic procurement, and tips for being a successful buyer are just some of the subjects that will be covered in the presentations that will be delivered by senior leading working professionals.

Delegates will be given the opportunity to conduct B2B

meetings on both days. In the second half, 30 top suppliers of India will have face-to-face meetings with them. In the evening, HPMF Awards for Procurement Excellence in Hospitality Industry will take place. These awards will seek to motivate industry participants towards working for a better, more successful tomorrow. Some of the award categories would be Emerging Procurement Person of the Year, Procurement Person of the Year (Male), Procurement Person of the Year (Female), Best Hospitality Procurement Team, Best Sustainable Development Sensitive Procurement Team, the Living Legend award, etc.





India Hospitality Awards to soon dazzle Delhi

India Hospitality Awards (IHA) will be travelling back to Delhi for its third edition. The event will be held at The Lalit New Delhi on September 29, 2017.

The third edition of India Hospitality Awards will be conducted in line with the previous two editions. A formal black-tie ceremony, the dazzling event will be attended by well-known personalities of the industry. The awards are supported by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and other esteemed trade bodies. Elucidating the trajectory that the awards have seen since their inception, **Gunjan Sabikhi**, Convener, IHA,

says, "The Indian hospitality industry has evolved a great deal over the last few years. It is so big that it is unmissable on the global hospitality map. Without the effort of people associated with it, I don't think the industry would have reached where it has now. India Hospitality Awards is a token of appreciation, more than mere acknowledgment, of the dedication and toil that people of the industry have put in. We are hosting the third edition of the awards at The Lalit New Delhi. One

of the best hotels in Delhi, it has great convention facilities. We have got an overwhelming response and I am sure the show is going to be a great success."

Some of the prominent India Hospitality Award winners from the previous editions are- Ankur Bhatia, Vilas Pawar, Nitin Nagrale, KB Kachru, JB Singh, Sanjiv Tyagi, Zorawar Kalra, Monica Suri, Rajindera Kumar, Rupak Gupta, and Luv Malhotra, among several others.



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Served in style

JW Marriott has made a niche in the market with its signature restaurants. **Vivek Bhatt**, Executive Chef, JW Marriott Hotel New Delhi Aerocity, talks about the USP of the restaurants, their marketing strategies, and the evolution of the culinary scene in the market.



HT Bureau

Tell us about the USP of the restaurants housed in the hotel.

Each of our restaurants has crafted a niche for itself with its consistent food and service quality, and the array of options available to choose from in both vegetarian and non-vegetarian variants. K3 is very popular for a scrumptious buffet, offering an array of delectable cuisines ranging from Cantonese and Tuscan to Indian (Mughlai). The Sunday brunch at K3 is one of the best in town. Akira Back serves renowned chef Akira Back's modern Japanese cuisine with a Korean essence, while JW Lounge is the perfect place to meet over a cup of tea and sliders or an intimate meeting in the cabanas over some of our signature beverages. Delhi Baking Company is revered for its delicious pastries, sandwiches, tea, coffee, and single origin chocolates.

What is your marketing strategy to promote F&B in the hotel?

A marketing strategy varies from restaurant to restaurant. For K3, it is our regulars, demographically

selected Club Marriott members, and table management systems, portals, and social media. The idea is to project and sustain its image as the best buffet restaurant and New Delhi's food theatre. For Akira Back, we focus primarily on HNIs, corporates, high-end associations, and our database of high-spenders. We market Delhi Baking Company for its freshly baked breads, scrumptious cakes, pastries, and sandwiches. JW Lounge is majorly for walk-ins and our resident guests.

How challenging is organising large scale events? How do you cope with the challenge?

Huge gatherings make delivery of service more interesting rather than challenging. With guests from various demographics, it becomes essential for us to deliver timely and flawlessly, and at the same time, strive to exceed their expectations with excellent food.

How has the palate of diners evolved over the years?


People have become more aware of what they want and how they want it. Our guests are accomplished

travellers who are well versed with a variety of cuisines available across the globe. This new age, globe-trotting trend has subtly compelled people to try out new cuisines and hence, helped them in expanding their experience with food. The same is applicable for restaurant and hotel owners, who are well travelled and have brought new ideas and innovations to the F&B industry in India, providing Indian audiences increased options to choose from.

In terms of food habits, do you see a transition in the region?

Health and wellness have majorly taken over food and dietary requirements, and it has grown leaps and bounds. Emphasis is now also on fresh produce turned into authentic delicacies by our master culinary craftsmen.

How do you respond to guest requests for modification to food?

We strongly believe in serving authentic, handcrafted dishes to our patrons as we want them to experience the real taste of a dish, in turn allowing their palates to experience different options. 



Vivek Bhatt

“Our guests are accomplished travellers who are well versed with a variety of cuisines”

”



CARLSON'S RIGHT MIX IN GOA

Pooja Patti, General Manager, Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, Goa Candolim, talks about the uniqueness of the property and the evolution of Goa as a tourist destination.



Pooja Patti



We focus on maintaining quality of our products and services in order to retain existing clients



How is the hospitality industry in Goa faring?

The hospitality industry of Goa has been on a growth trajectory constantly for the past few years. There has been an influx of hotels across brands and the total available rooms in the city has nearly doubled. The city has seen occupancies of approximately 75 per cent, however, the ARR's have been slightly affected with an increase in supply of available rooms and hotels have been focusing on RevPAR.

How do you cope with fall in demand in the off-season?

During the off-season, there is competition everywhere as all hotels want to secure business. We witness a lot of deals breaking or business moving to other hotels due to budget constraints from the client's end. The life-saver for the off-season is the MICE segment, which contributes in a big way both in terms of room nights and additional revenue from

meetings, cocktail dinners, entertainment, etc. The online segment too contributes to this demand as it has a much wider reach and provides ease of booking through mobile applications.

What makes your brand tick in a market teeming with other prime properties?

Each hotel has its niche offering and Country Inn & Suites By Carlson, Goa Candolim is a mixed blend of business and leisure. The hotel offers a meeting space of over 2800 sqft with a pillarless ballroom that is one of the largest in the locality. Also, the hotel is a mere 700 metres from the beach, making it conveniently located and within easy reach, while being away from the hustle and bustle of the busy Candolim streets. As far as dealing with competition is concerned, we focus on maintaining quality of our products and services in order to retain existing clients as well as build a loyal customer base.

What kind of challenges do you face being in Goa?

Though there has been improvement in recent years, Goa has to concentrate on improving the condition of its roads. The local transfer fares have to be modulated as there are no set rules or guidelines and more often than not, customers feel short-changed with the high fares quoted for chauffeured vehicles. The overall infrastructure also has to be improved and more avenues for guest entertainment or engagement need to be developed.

Tell us about your clientele.

Our hotel has guests from across ages and market segments. The clients range from youngsters and honeymooners to families, senior citizens, and business travellers. The hotel offers an old-world charm as it is built to exude Indo-Portuguese architecture that offers contemporary and modern facilities.

MOVEMENTS

RAVNEET KAUR

Chairperson and Managing Director
India Tourism Development
Corporation

Ravneet Kaur, an IAS officer of 1988 batch, Punjab cadre, has been appointed as the Chairperson and Managing Director of India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC). She succeeds Umang Narula, an IAS officer of the J&K cadre. Prior to this role, Kaur was Joint Secretary in Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion under Ministry of Commerce and Industry. In a span of 29 years, she has served multiple prestigious positions in various capacities.



MONICA SURI

General Manager
Jaipur Marriott Hotel

Monica Suri has joined as the General Manager at Jaipur Marriott Hotel. She brings with her over 17 years of experience in the hospitality industry. She commenced her journey as a Hotel Management Trainee with Taj Hotels and Resorts in the food and beverage service department and later worked in Ahmedabad for a year before relocating to Tanzania, East Africa. Later, Suri was appointed as the General Manager at Le Méridien Kochi.



SANJAY GUPTA

General Manager
Le Méridien Gurgaon, Delhi NCR

Le Méridien Gurgaon, Delhi NCR has appointed **Sanjay Gupta** as the General Manager of the hotel. Gupta joins this property after a successful stint at Le Méridien Jaipur. Under his lead, Le Méridien Jaipur significantly grew its top-line along with guest satisfaction scores. Gupta has also been instrumental in establishing Le Méridien Coimbatore, the newest hotel in India by Starwood Hotels & Resorts and the 100th Le Méridien hotel globally for the brand.

B MADHUSUDHAN NAIR

EAM Food & Beverage
Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal

B Madhusudhan Nair has taken up the position of EAM, F&B, at Howard Johnson Bengaluru Hebbal. Prior to this appointment, he had been associated with The Royal Orchid Hotels for around two years. Nair has also held other positions such as Assistant F&B Manager, The Leela Palace Bengaluru; and Head of Department, Food and Beverage, The Chancery Pavilion, Bengaluru.



JASWINDER NARANG

Complex General Manager

Sheraton Grand Pune
Bund Garden Hotel & Le
Méridien Mahabaleshwar
Resort & Spa

Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra is my favourite destination in India”

I enjoy travelling as it offers a great opportunity to experience varied cultures and taste scrumptious local cuisine. When it comes to domestic travel, Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra is my favourite destination in India. Internationally, Vancouver in Canada is my all-time favourite place; I also have some fond memories of travelling to Egypt and Turkey. I loved travelling to Morocco with my family, particularly to the mesmerising cities of Casablanca and Marrakech. I like taking time out to watch movies; my all-time favourite movies include classics like Ben-Hur and The Sound of Music.

**NASIR KHAN**

General Manager

Fariyas Resort Lonavala



I unwind by walking, reading books, and watching offbeat cinema”

I unwind by walking, reading books, watching offbeat cinema, listening to music, going on long drives, and at times, cooking for the family. I am passionate about learning new things in the field of hospitality. One thing about me not many people know is that I can cook some very good Indian kebabs and curries. One of my most memorable holiday moments was when I was working in Delhi and took an impromptu break and drove down to Mumbai with my wife. My favourite holiday destinations in India are Dehradun and Dharamsala.

**VIJAY KRISHNAN**

General Manager

Alila Fort Bishangarh



In India, I prefer travelling to Kochi and internationally, I prefer Dubai”

I unwind by listening to music by Eric Clapton, Stevie Wonder, and Modern Talking or just taking a walk around the fort. I am passionate about my job and the people I work with. One thing about me not many people know is that I am a huge cricket fan and keep track of all cricket records. I also enjoy travelling and one of my most memorable holiday moments was when I visited Ranthambore National Park with my wife and children where we sighted tigers. In India, I prefer travelling to Kochi and internationally, I prefer Dubai as a holiday destination.

**RISHI CHOPRA**

General Manager

Le Méridien
Mahabaleshwar
Resort & Spa

My favourite cuisine is Oriental, with Japanese food topping the list”

Travel helps in enriching one's perspective towards life. I enjoy spending time in natural surroundings. Thus, when it comes to domestic travel, I like to unwind at the beach resorts in Goa and also revel in the tranquil experiences that Kerala has to offer. I also like to travel to understand new cultures and experience local markets. Maldives remains my all-time favourite destination for its pristine waters and activities. My favourite cuisine is Oriental, with Japanese food topping the list. I also love taking time out to play chess, one hobby that has stayed with me since childhood.



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