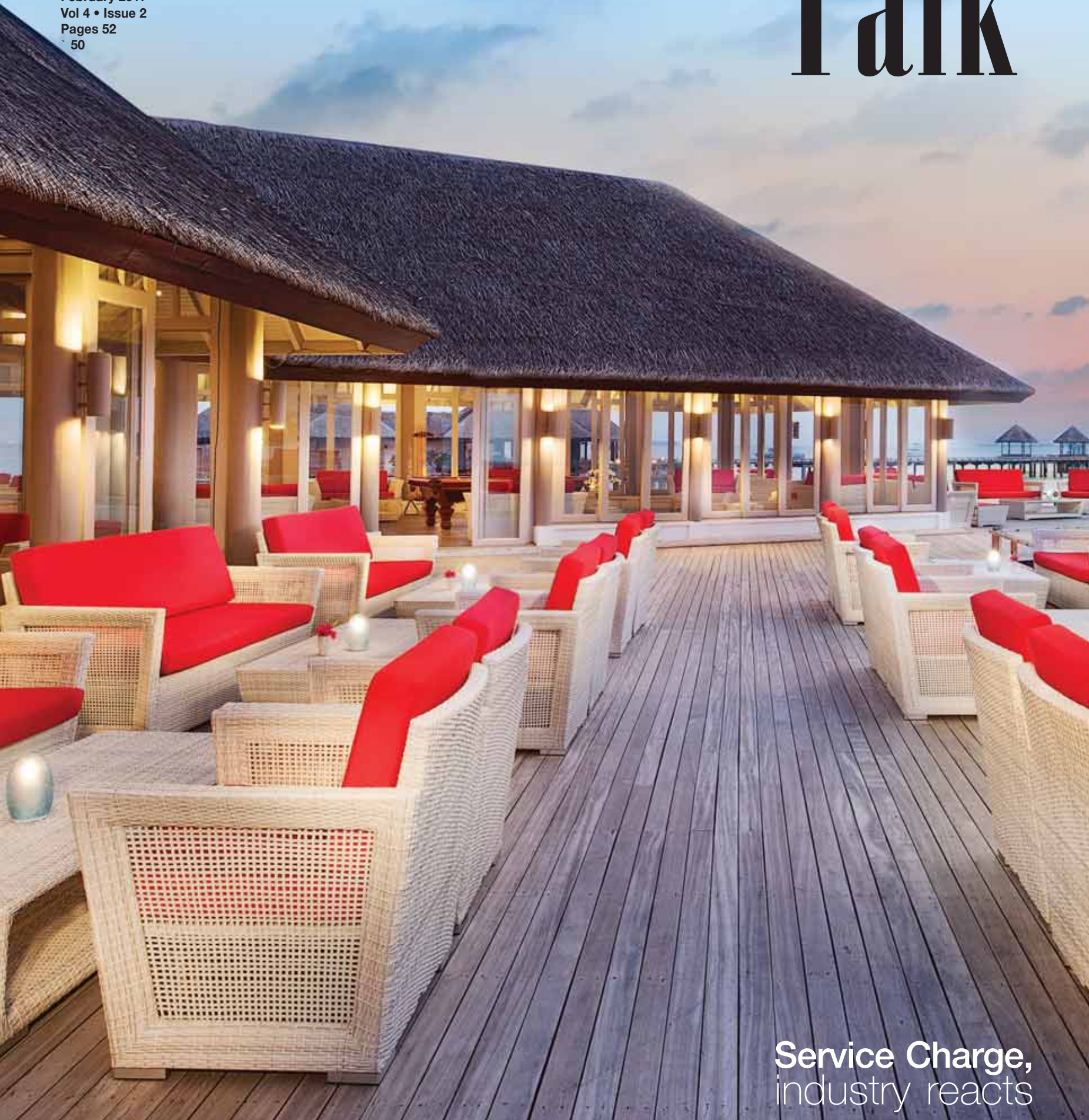


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Service Charge,
industry reacts

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Contents

- 12** **Best is yet to come**
Interview with David Kong, President and CEO, Best Western Hotels & Resorts
- 16** **The 'charge' on service charge**
Industry reacts to making service charge optional for customers
- 20** **In harmony with style**
Interview with John Gerondelis, Principal, Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart & Associates
- 26** **Key to a divine world**
Interview with Vikas Ahluwalia, Director of Operations, Keys Hotels
- 28** **Sarovar to now 'grow' with Louvre**
Spokespersons on Louvre's acquisition of a majority stake in Sarovar Hotels
- 30** **Hopes pinned on Budget 2017: Will it deliver?**
Hit hard by demonetisation, hoteliers are pinning their hopes on the Union Budget



20



28



26



34



30

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Royal Orchid Hotels acquires Amartara Hospitality

Royal Orchid Hotels, which held a 75.1 per cent stake in Amartara Hospitality, has now acquired an additional 24.9 per cent stake, making Amartara Hospitality its wholly owned subsidiary. This acquisition is a part of the settlement agreement between the two joint venture partners.



Nest N' Mist resort joins RCI network

RCI, the global leader in holiday exchange, and part of the Wyndham Worldwide family, along with Frontline G Holidays, announces an agreement to affiliate the Nest N' Mist resort in Wayanad, Kerala, to the RCI network. Located in the heart of Wayanad, the leisure hotel is the perfect getaway from the hustle and bustle of city life.

Lemon Tree Hotels looks at substantial expansion

Lemon Tree Hotels is planning to expand with 100 hotels, 12,000 rooms, and 12,000 additional staff members, by 2021. This expansion will make Lemon Tree Hotels own 25 per cent of the mid-market space in the hospitality sector.



Goa hospitality institute signs MoU with Portugal

V M Salgaocar Institute of International Hospitality Education (VMSIHE), Manora, has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Turismo de Portugal, in the presence of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of Portugal, António Costa. This MoU, which is valid for two years, focuses on a shared vision, to encourage and develop the training and qualification of human resource personnel working in the field of tourism, as well as to coordinate and execute professional training for students and faculty.

Radisson Blu Faridabad now open

Radisson Blu Faridabad, the city's first upscale hotel, opens in the north Indian state of Haryana, one of India's largest business and industrial hubs of the National Capital Region (NCR). Featuring 124 rooms, Radisson Blu Faridabad offers spacious meeting facilities with state-of-the-art technology and a pillar-less Grand Ballroom that accommodates up to 1,000 guests.



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Andaz Delhi, Aerocity, opens with 401 guestrooms

Hyatt Hotels Corporation has announced the opening of Andaz Delhi, marking the Andaz brand's first hotel in India. With a partial inventory of 401 residential-style guestrooms, including 45 suites, Andaz Delhi offers inspiring experiences through the neighbourhood's rich history and culture, enabling guests to be an intimate part of the surroundings. The hotel will also offer 129 serviced apartments, expected to open later.



Shangri-La's Eros Hotel, New Delhi, to revamp rooms & spa

Shangri-La's Eros Hotel, New Delhi, renovated its massive F&B outlets last year. Following this, the hotel plans to revamp its accommodation and spa facilities, ensuring that 2017 is a prominent year for the hotel.



AccorHotels opens first ibis in Kochi

ibis has marked its debut in Kochi with the launch of ibis Kochi City Centre that features 115 rooms, popular local tourist attractions, shopping hubs, and commercial centres within close proximity, making it the preferred hotel choice for corporate travellers and holidaymakers.



The Muse Sarovar Portico opens in Kapashera, Delhi

Sarovar Hotels has opened a new hotel in Delhi NCR, The Muse Sarovar Portico, Kapashera. This will be followed by openings in Nairobi, Ranchi, Jaisalmer, and Amritsar. With 73 elegantly-designed rooms, combining aesthetics with functionality, and an easy access to the domestic and international airports, it is a smart, efficient solution for travellers.



ITDC debuts on NSE listing

ITDC has made a debut entry on the NSE listing. The market has resulted in a surge and stocks are up over 15 per cent. The equity shares are listed and admitted to dealings on NSE. The stock touched an early high of ₹ 234, registering a jump of 10.22 per cent over its issue price. A total of 1,22,798 shares have been traded on NSE.



MTDC launches hospitality institute in Solapur

Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has opened Maharashtra Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology in Solapur district, in collaboration with the central and state governments, for bridging the demand-supply gap created within the food service sector. MTDC intends to provide food services in clean and hygienic environments, mainly in the interiors of Maharashtra. The institute aims to address critical issues by training students.

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Mövenpick Hotel Colombo now open

Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts has opened a strikingly modern property in Colombo, introducing a unique hospitality concept that brings attitude and altitude to the Sri Lankan capital. The 24-floor Mövenpick Hotel Colombo is the first international five-star property to open in the city in 25 years, a milestone that reflects the country's new-found energy and optimism. It's also the destination's first urban hotel and introduces a 'vertical experience' like no other with every floor, from the ground to the roof, offering a different themed concept, taking guests on a journey of discovery.



JW Marriott opens doors of stunning beach resort on Marco Island

JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts has opened the refurbished JW Marriott Marco Island Beach Resort in the state of Florida. Following an extensive \$320 million renovation, facilitated by ownership group Mass Mutual, the Marco Island Beach Resort, Golf Club & Spa has been converted into a JW Marriott luxury property, ushering in a new era for the illustrious resort. The 726-room JW Marriott Marco Island Beach Resort offers engaging and enriching on-property experiences that can artfully be tailored for each guest.

Renaissance Hotels arrives in Lagos

Renaissance Hotels has announced the opening of its first hotel in Sub-Saharan Africa – the Renaissance Lagos Ikeja Hotel. Located in Nigeria's commercial centre, the Renaissance Lagos Ikeja offers world-class amenities, modern aesthetics, sophisticated service, and unique programming that reflect the brand's signature approach to feed the curiosity, fuel the imagination, and excite the senses of its guests.



Hyatt Regency Fuzhou Cangshan debuts in southern China

The Hyatt Regency brand celebrates its debut in southern China's Fujian province with the opening of Hyatt Regency Fuzhou Cangshan. Merging traditional Chinese culture with modern conveniences, Hyatt Regency Fuzhou Cangshan strives to become the gathering place for business and leisure travellers. Hyatt Regency Fuzhou Cangshan features 226 intuitively designed rooms and suites, ranging in size from 473 square feet (44 square meters) to 2,626 square feet (244 square meters).



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Australia's newest hotel brand to debut in Sydney

The Crown Group is putting the finishing touches on its new hotel brand, Skye Hotel Suites, in Parramatta. Set to open in early 2017, the property offers 72 luxury suites overlooking Sydney, within the new 'V' by Crown Group, a 28-storey luxury residential and commercial development known as Parramatta's "Vertical Village". Offering unrivaled urban luxury for discerning guests, Skye Hotel Suites brings together the warmth and personalised service of a boutique hotel, the grandeur and amenities of a luxury hotel, the spaciousness and familiarity of a local apartment, and the relaxing escape of a resort.

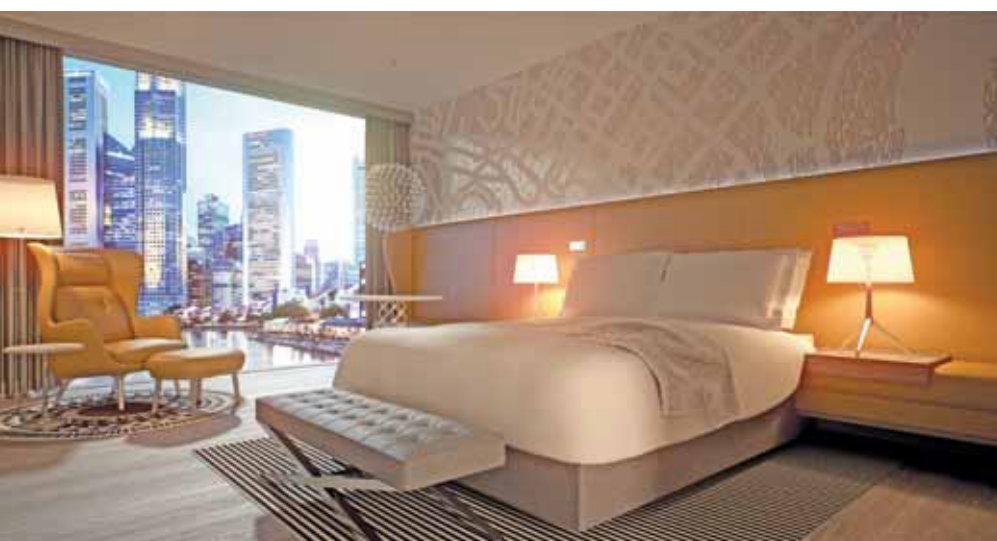


Celebrate love at Mandarin Oriental, Marrakech

Mandarin Oriental, Marrakech is offering couples an opportunity to celebrate love in one of the world's most romantic destinations, this February. By booking the hotel's Valentine's Day package, guests can indulge in a selection of special treats, including breakfast in the seclusion of their luxurious Mandarin Villa, which has its own private pool and jacuzzi. Other pleasures included in the package are spa treatments, an evening champagne set-up, and a romantic dinner at Mes'Lalla restaurant. The Valentine's Day package is priced from EUR 1200 per night.

Chiva-Som International Health Resort completes renovation

Thailand's health and wellness resort pioneer, Chiva-Som International Health Resort, has completed renovation of all Ocean Rooms and Suites in its north, central, and south wings, making them available for booking. The newly-upgraded Ocean Rooms and Suites are now Thai-contemporary and more spacious, providing the ultimate in aesthetic and eco-friendly serenity.



Carlson Rezidor, Accomable to provide accessible accommodations

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group has announced its Asia Pacific initiative of partnering with Accomable, a UK-based pioneering global platform that provides specialised information and listings on assisted travel, adapted hotels, and vacation rentals for disabled and elderly people. Useful tips, such as nearby hotel attractions, and travel information vital for all accessible travellers can also easily be obtained via their website.



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BEST

Best Western's recent re-branding exercise is an indication that it wants to be a brand to reckon with in India. **David Kong**, President and CEO, Best Western Hotels & Resorts, reveals its plans.

Hazel Jain

IS YET TO COME



David Kong

Are you looking at investing in India?

Yes, expansion in India has become a high priority for us. While the deal with Sorrel Hospitality will certainly help the membership aggressively expand throughout India, the company is always interested in discussing other opportunities and forming partnerships with hospitality and management companies.

Best Western recently launched a white-label SureStay brand.

Yes, SureStay Hotel Group is our first 'white-label' franchise concept. SureStay will operate as a separate subsidiary while plugging hotel owners into the company's infrastructure and distribution channels. With three distinctive

brands - SureStay Hotel (Premium economy), SureStay Plus Hotel (Lower midscale) and SureStay Signature Collection (Midscale soft brand) - Best Western aims to provide options for franchisees who are disillusioned by one-sided contracts that do not deliver. SureStay will allow Best Western to tap into economy and midscale segments without compromising brand image. For this, we will select hotels that will need to achieve and maintain a TripAdvisor score of 3.5 or higher and will have to adhere to the SureStay service promise.

What potential do you foresee for it in India?

The potential in India is certainly limitless, as properties that want

access to all of Best Western Hotels & Resorts' benefits will have the opportunity to take advantage of this new franchise concept. SureStay hotels will have access to Best Western Hotels & Resorts' preferred OTA commission rates, its scale and global distribution, desktop and mobile websites, and 70 years of industry expertise. Owners will be provided a cloud-based PMS and benefit from a robust digital platform featuring Google 360 virtual reality tours. The hotels will receive individualised corporate consulting to help manage reviews and social media platforms and property-level sales coaching. In addition, they will receive the support of a global sales team focused on commercial and leisure clients.



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- ✓ Fortune Perfect 3 Seasons Basmati Rice – Nurtured and perfected through systematic harvesting over 3 seasons

Reaching consumers through an extensive distribution network and catering to varying tastes and demand patterns, these are some of Adani Wilmar's highly successful and popular brands across India.



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India's A and B cities to have **BW HOTELS**

The Indian market is one that Best Western Hotels & Resorts has had interest in for quite some time. It will finally make its presence felt here, starting with three of its core brands in metros and tertiary cities.



Atul Jain

In March 2016, Best Western inked a master franchise agreement with Delhi-based Sorrel Hospitality to properly bring its brands into the market. The hotel chain is also aggressively pursuing the development of its Glo and Vib properties and will also introduce the Best Western Premier Collection brand to the market. **Atul Jain**, COO (India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka), Best Western Hotels & Resorts, reveals that Sorrel has plans to grow the Best Western portfolio in India to fifty properties, in the next ten years.

"We have just signed the master license agreement with Best Western, for this territory, for a period of twenty years. There is a lot of space in the Indian market for mid-segment hotels. Best Western now has seven brands and wants to develop them in India. All seven brands will be introduced in India over a period of time. We are talking with various developers and hopefully we will sign all the new brands. Initially, we will work with the three major brands: Best Western, Best Western Plus, and Best Western Premier. But over a period of time, we would like to see Executive Residency, and Vib and Glo," Jain says.

The company is looking at metro cities and tertiary cities – A and B class cities – because we have brands that will suit every market. This will include Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, and Pune, state capitals like Lucknow and Dehradun, and cities of Dharamsala and Jammu. Sorrel hospitality will also be offering management services. Jain adds, "We are not directly investing in the properties, but on a case-to-case basis, we can talk to the private investors who are looking for opportunities in the mid-segment hotel chains or the owners they are tying up with." The brand is open to new built-ups, brownfield projects, as well as conversions.

Speaking about Best Western's SureStay white-label brand, he says, "There is a lot of opportunity for this in India, but this will be a pure franchise model, not management. To spread brand awareness in India, we have started investing in marketing of the brand on various platforms. We have a clear strategy in place that includes trade show participation and roadshows, as well as increasing the size of our sales team over the next two years. We will soon be doing big partnerships to outsource business from India."

A Beautiful KITCHEN



Bella Cucina, a recently opened restaurant, is already being lauded for serving some of the most talked about delicacies influenced by northern and central Italy. **Amit Kumar**, Head Chef, Bella Cucina tells us more.

HT Bureau



How is Bella Cucina different from other restaurants of Delhi-NCR?

I think it is the only Italian restaurant in the five-star hotel category that talks about its kitchen. In fact, the very name, Bella Cucina, means 'A beautiful kitchen', and that is exactly what we translate into our food. We believe that what we put on the plate must look beautiful. Besides dishing out irresistible pizzas and pastas, true to the Italian culture, we also offer some beautiful salads and desserts, which are served with a twist. Our meats, too, are plated beautifully. All 3 PDRS are different from each other in terms of design and mood, making this a preferred restaurant for both corporates and families.

What are your signature offerings?

The Bella Cucina caprese, beetroot and goat cheese snow, Chilean sea bass, spinach and nut ravioli, and dropped lemon tart are some of our signature offerings.

Are international cuisines well-accepted by Indian diners?

Yes. Since an increasing number of people are now well-travelled, they are aware of the wide range of world cuisines that are available. Even the youngest of our guests know their food. This is good for us!

What are your favourite ingredients to work with and why?

I don't believe in favourite ingredients. Still, if I had to choose, they would be: Lemon (I don't know why I love it), cheese (Can't imagine cooking without it), and potatoes (They can be used in everything).

Where do you source your raw materials and ingredients from?

We use a mix of local as well as imported materials. Freshness is of utmost importance, so I try to use as much local produce as I can. That said, there are some ingredients that are unavailable in India and have to be imported.



Chefs are sometimes reluctant to alter their authentic Italian dishes, even if the customer requests it. Do you customise your dishes?

Yes, I do. I love to play with authentic dishes and create something new. So, if my guest asks for any kind of customisation, I happily do it.

How often do you do food promotions at your restaurant?

The restaurant is very new, only about two months old. Nonetheless, I am looking at two promotions in a year, in the future. These will not be region-based promotions, but something unique. You will have to wait and see for yourself.

THE 'CHARGE' ON SERVICE CHARGE

The rendering of service charge being optional for the customer has garnered mixed reactions from the industry. **HospitalityTalk** gets their take on making service charge optional.

Anupriya Bishnoi

In a Press and Information Bureau release on January 2, the Department of Consumer Affairs announced that a service charge, which a restaurant includes in the bill in addition to taxes, is optional and not mandatory. A customer can have it waived off if he/she is not happy with the service. The service charge levied by restaurants usually falls in the range of 5-20 per cent of the total bill amount. However, the National Restaurants Association of India (NRAI), one of India's biggest restaurant bodies, has said that they will not stop billing customers for service charge, any time soon. Below are the excerpts from the industry's reaction.



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- Peter Kerkar, Group Chief Executive Officer, Cox and Kings
- Rakesh Sarna, Managing Director and CEO, Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces
- Thorsten Kirschke, President - Asia Pacific, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group
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- Jean-Michel Cassé, Sr. Vice President Operations - India, AccorHotels
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- Rajeev Menon, Chief Operating Officer - APAC (ex. Greater China), Marriott International
- Rakesh Sarna, Managing Director & CEO, Taj Hotels Resorts & Palaces
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“As far as making service charge optional is concerned, I think restaurants can’t take that decision on behalf of their guests; it’s completely upto them, whether they want to or not, and is totally upon their discretion.”

RAJIV KAUL
President
The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts



“Frankly, this is a decision for the industry and the business to make. Since customers are aware that there will be a service charge, they should decide before-hand if, at all, they would like to dine there. This should not be decided later.”

DILIP PURI
Advisor, South Asia,
Marriott International



“I think the decision of making the service charge optional is totally appropriate. Customers should always have a choice of paying or not paying that charge. After all, at the end of the day, it is the customers who make us.”

AJAY BAKAYA
Executive Director
Sarovar Hotels

Rishi Puri, Vice President, Lords Hotels & Resorts, welcomes the decision by the government, as it is in the interest of the customer. “The decision will not affect hotels and restaurants that provide quality service to its patrons, but will definitely deter those entities that are sloppy with their services. This move will encourage hotels and its employees to make efforts at offering the best of their services. We, at Lords Hotels & Resorts, will continue to levy a service charge which the customer will be informed of before-hand. However, if the customer, for any reason, suffers a bad experience, the payment of this charge will rest entirely on their discretion.”

Priyank Sukhija, Owner of Teddy Boy, Warehouse Café, Open House Café, Lord of the Drinks, and others under the Sukhija Hospitality brand, believes that the decision of the Department of Consumer Affairs to make levying of service charge optional or discretionary will affect employment. “Service charge is not a way for us to earn money, but for the welfare and motivation of the staff;

and leaving it on the discretion of customers may not be fair. However, I do believe that ‘customer is boss’ and we will work a way out for the betterment of staff,” he says.

While some are quite apprehensive of the new policy, some others have either welcomed it or coped with it. **Umang Tewari**, Owner, Junkyard Café, Garam Dharam, Vault Café, and other ventures of the Big Fish group, has already removed service charge from all the restaurants under the group’s umbrella. “I do not believe in over-burdening our consumers. The customer is the king for us and we ensure we provide them the best service, without charging a single extra penny. So, we have not been affected by the government’s decision to make service charge optional,” he explains.

Anurag Katriar, Executive Director & CEO at deGustibus Hospitality, believes that, “Levying service charge is an established practice of several years and it has even been upheld in the court of law. Most of the money collected goes to the staff and is an integral part of their incomes. Discontinuation of the same, at this stage, will adversely impact millions of workers and, therefore, we plan to continue levying the service charge as before.”



NRAI, one of India’s biggest restaurant bodies, has said that they will not stop billing customers for service charge, any time soon

The future of the recent service charge policy seems to be in turmoil. **Samira Chopra**, Director, Cybiz BrightStar Restaurants, seems to be unperturbed by it, giving us a fair justification for her opinion. "At Carl's Jr., we believe that the customer is the king. As a premium burger chain, our restaurants give the best service to each and every guest, irrespective of the order. Payment of service charge should be on the complete discretion of the customer and their level of satisfaction. It should not be imposed on them. Unfortunately, many restaurants charge ten per cent or more but give only an insignificant portion of the same to their employees. The restaurants should focus on giving premium services to all their guests and let the customers decide if they want to additionally pay for the services rendered. We, at Carl's Jr., are a partial service, premium fast and casual restaurant; being neither a full service casual dining restaurant nor a self-service, quick-service restaurant, we can ideally levy service charge. While we're okay with having a low base service charge, between the ranges of two and five per cent, anything above that must purely be on the customer's discretion."

The Leela, as a group, doesn't take service charge from its guests. **Jaideep Anand**, General Manager, The Leela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, says that brands like 'Leela' believe that if they deserve a little bit of gratuity from a patron for the service they render and the

hospitality they extend, they will be happy to accept it. "I am sure, making service charge optional, is going to impact industry as a whole. I believe that people in the F&B industry work very hard, but sometimes don't get their due. Unlike Americans, we are not a nation that is happy to give 15-20 per cent as service charge. I think the youngsters working in restaurants are going to get impacted, which is sad. But according to me, service charge should not be mandatory, it should be optional."

Laurent Samandari, Founder at L'Opera, is of the view that the issue of making service charge optional is a complex one and cannot be dissociated from the level of salaries paid to the personnel and their in-hand wages. "Countries such as the United States do not even have a service charge, meaning that waiting staff, whose basic wage is comparatively low, must rely on generous tipping from patrons. There are also extreme cases such as in Hong Kong, where there is no VAT and no service tax, simply a flat ten per cent service charge. What remains true throughout the world, however, is that the hard work of personnel in the F&B industry should be valued."

He suggests that the consequence of this move could be an increase in the base prices at restaurants, to make up for the lost revenue, with some potential of losing business if many price-sensitive customers decide not to return.



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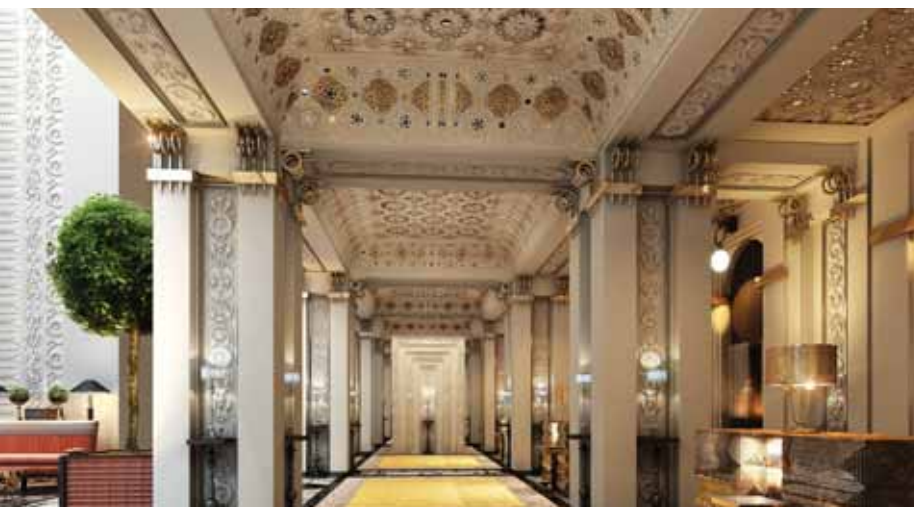
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In Harmony with Style



John Gerondelis

John Gerondelis, Principal, Smallwood, Reynolds, Stewart, Stewart & Associates, speaks about the trends in design and architecture that the industry will witness in this year.

HT Bureau

Tell us about the trends you see coming up this year.

I see a continuation in the trend of getting away from the noise of our connected lives. Guests are inundated with information and visual stimulation, like a constant 'static', seen and heard on an old, over-the-air broadcast television station, and it is our duty to provide them with a place to turn it off. This translates into simple and traditional forms being used in our treatment of design in hospitality architecture and interior spaces. People seek harmony and connection on a more personal level.

Which designs and patterns may be rendered obsolete?

We are focusing on simple, quiet designs. This is noticeable in the shift from cold greys to warm stone-hues with restorative colour palettes, to calm a fast-paced lifestyle that helps rebalance mind, body, and spirit, aptly termed – luxurious simplicity. Patterns that are organic and relate to the natural world, provide an antidote to a fast-paced lifestyle, in response to the rigours of a complex connected world.

Which projects are you presently working on?

In addition to our firm's on-going projects, such as the ITC Narmada, Ahmedabad, and

The Westin Jaipur, I am currently working on a soon-to-be announced luxury project in Agra, within view of the Taj Mahal. It is in the 200-key range, 6-star quality, and will be a true jewel. I am excited about this project as it is in a location that has direct view of the Taj Mahal and enough land to create a very special place for visitors and locals alike.

Tell us how you make your designs sustainable.

Responsible design was a key building block to my architectural education. We were trained to design in a manner that was sympathetic to the environment. What has changed over the years is our understanding and knowledge of what 'being sympathetic to the environment', means; simply translated as 'what works and what does not'. Technology and experience have helped us improve, and as they become more cost effective, our clients become more receptive to incorporating them. We are achieving more sustainable designs because our

clients are paying for more advanced technology and materials.

How does India fair with regard to design and architecture?

We first started designing projects in India in 1997. Over the past 20 years, I have seen real transformation in the quality of the developments, and most recently, in the consistent quality of the local design community. There have always been great Indian designers, but as experience expands, so are the available choices. There is continuous room for improvement and the choice of a design firm must be based on the quality of the design, not the location of the firm. I would want someone to hire me because of my talent, not my physical location.

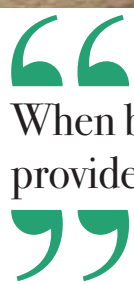
Of the hotels designed by you, which is your favourite, and why?

The Leela Palace New Delhi, without a doubt, is my favourite. The design of that hotel

“

There have always been great Indian designers, but as experience expands, so are the available choices

”



When budget concerns do arise, we lay out the options, provide our opinion, and follow the client's direction

represents a manifestation of the late Capt. Nair's vision and is the most faithfully completed design we have ever had executed. It is an intimate and elegant jewel that amazes me every time I visit.

Hotel owners and designers often lock horns on project budgets. How do you deal with it?

In our experience, budget issues arise when there is a miscommunication between parties. We are in a business that provides a service, and our client is who we serve. When we are informed of a budget and we confirm it is appropriate for the intended development, we design to the budget. We work together as a team of clients, consultants, and operators. I was in a meeting once where the owner's soon-to-be-fired interior designer

said to the owner, "We wouldn't have cost overruns if you would only agree to raise your budget!"

Clients do not always provide their budget information to the designer, and in those cases, we preface our designs with what we believe they will cost and then confirm if we are instructed to proceed. That way, we are doing all we can to avoid such misunderstandings. When budget concerns do arise, we lay out the options, provide our opinion, and follow the client's direction.

Tell us something about your inspiration.

This is a trick question, right? The short answer is- I am inspired by my clients. Being authentic and honest in creating their vision is what drives me. I have had the privilege of meeting and working for some extraordinary people and each, in their own way, has inspired me. While I am at work, the thought of having my family enjoy the spaces I create, also truly inspires me.

7TH IIHTTRC to be held in FEBRUARY



7th India International Hotel, Travel & Tourism Research Conference is being organised by Banarsidas Chandiwala Institute of Hotel Management & Catering Technology on February 17 - 18, 2017. The conference will cover related fields of respective industries through application of theory and practices from the perspective of education, business, industry, services, humanity, environment, and government. The previous conferences held at BCIMCT were well-attended by national and international delegates from India, New Zealand, Australia, Germany, Spain, UK, Taiwan, USA, Canada, South Korea, Israel, Thailand, and Malaysia. The programme will include panel discussions, workshops, as well as formal presentations, along with keynote addresses from eminent speakers, namely, Professor Philip Xie, Dean, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Macau University of Science and Technology, Taipa, Macau, China and Professor Parikshat Manhas, Director, School of Hospitality & Tourism Management (SHTM), University of Jammu, Jammu & Kashmir, India.

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Far from the madding crowd

Crowne Plaza Greater Noida seeks to be a perfect getaway for travellers from the tumult of city life. Executive Chef **Subroto Goswami** throws light on some exclusive offerings.

HT Bureau



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

At Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, we ensure that we remain ahead of our peers in terms of quality and service. Our respective offerings are:

Chao Bella- An Italian and Chinese speciality restaurant

The 94-cover restaurant also serves wide selection of wines, cocktails, mocktails, and other spirits.

Mosaic- All-day dining restaurant

With 180-covers, the place is an ideal venue. With a special children's menu available, the restaurant features a private dining area for informal meetings and corporate entertainments.

Mosaic- The pastry lounge

It is our exclusive, 34-cover delicatessen, that serves an assortment of mouth-watering snacks and delectable desserts fresh from the bakery, accompanied by a selection of exotic teas and coffee blends.

Connexions- The bar

This 70-cover bar is 'the' place to unwind. The wine cellar features an elaborate collection of popular world wines and rare malts.

Belgian Beer Café

Situated inside the hotel, the cafe serves an array of Belgian brews along with some innovative cocktails and hearty dishes.

What is the hotel's USP?

We offer 383 of the city's best designed rooms, serviced apartments, and suites. The hotel highlights endless gourmet treats from local favourites to international delights. Crowne Plaza Greater Noida offers extensive range of indoor and outdoor venues for conferences, meetings, weddings or special occasions up to 1,500 guests.

An oasis of serenity set amidst lush greenery and water bodies, the Spa offers signature body treatments, hair and beauty services. The outdoor pool is equipped with hydro-beds.

People often ask for modification to their food, which kills authenticity. Do you promote this?

We encourage authenticity with creativity. In the restaurant business, the term 'menu engineering' is required for a perfect menu to entice customers and to make them come back for more.

Tell us something about your signature dishes.

Salmon Teriyaki is our signature dish at Mosaic. This steak of salmon is grilled, and served with teriyaki sauce, vegetables tossed in olive oil, and jasmine rice as starch. The flavour of the salmon is savoured by the diner as it does not get masked by any other spice or aromatic herbs.



Subroto Goswami



Menu engineering is required to entice your customers and to make them come back for more



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The Met recently has been conferred with prestigious accolades:

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KEY TO A DIVINE WORLD

Keys Prima Hotel Temple Tree, Shirdi, being within a five-minute drive from the Sai Baba Temple, makes it a strategically situated property. **Vikas Ahluwalia**, Director of Operations, Keys Hotels, talks about the property and how religious tourism has evolved in the country.

HT Bureau



Vikas Ahluwalia



The hotel offers 100 per cent vegetarian dishes with an option for *Satvik* food for guests



What is the USP of your property?

The atmosphere at the hotel is divine and peaceful. We offer 24X7 complimentary shuttle service to and from the Sai Baba temple. The hotel has 87 ergonomic rooms, a swimming pool, and an exclusive play area for kids. It also offers 100 per cent vegetarian dishes with an option for *Satvik* food for guests who wish to fast.

Do you think religious tourism has grown over a period of time?

We do see growth in this segment as the hotel caters to guests from across the country and abroad. This has been possible due to ease of access, better connectivity, and availability of good places to stay.

What are the pros and cons of managing a property in a Tier-3 city?

It offers a lot of opportunities, especially now, when the government is taking initiatives to develop robust infrastructure, better connectivity, and enhancement of technology under the smart-cities development plan. Travellers now wish to experience lesser-known domestic

destinations, directly impacting demand. Lower operational costs and other overheads are other benefits. While there are no specific disadvantages, some of the commonly faced challenges are hiring skilled manpower and limited outsourcing service providers for laundry, cleaning, etc.

Is there anything special you offer to pilgrims?

We host guests of all age groups and backgrounds, making it inevitable for us to cater to their individual needs. Food is one of the biggest attributes of the overall experience. We have a special *ghar-ka-swad* menu, which has dishes prepared in home-style cooking, for guests who are always on the move.

A number of guests either stop over or check-out early in the morning for their onward journey. To cater to them, we have introduced 'Breakfast on-the-go', our take-away option. There is also an in-house temple for guests who would want to immerse themselves in the divine atmosphere of Shirdi.



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SAROVAR to now 'grow' with LOUVRE

Louvre Hotels Group, the second largest hotel group in Europe, has recently announced its acquisition of a majority stake in Sarovar Hotels. The European hotel group continues to roll out its international expansion plans with this, its first investment of size in the Indian subcontinent.

Anupriya Bishnoi



India, with its fast-growing economy, global tourism potential, and a significant under-penetration of branded hotel rooms, provides a new opportunity and a strategic market of more than 1.2 billion inhabitants, for the group. Louvre Hotels Group has decided to become a majority stakeholder in Sarovar Hotels, an Indian company made up of 75 hotels on the premium, mid-range and budget sectors, through three leading brands – Sarovar Premiere, Sarovar Portico, and Hometel. This acquisition by Louvre, in the major stakes of Sarovar, is yet



Pierre-Frederic Roulot



I think, in the coming years, this industry will only grow in India



subcontinent since 2007 and currently manages 22 hotels under the Golden Tulip brand.

Anil Madhok, Managing Director, Sarovar Hotels, says, "Before getting into an agreement with Louvre, we were in talks with a number of companies. We don't want to kill the brand; it is very important to us that the brand grows. We always planned to move abroad and that's why we expanded into Africa. Louvre's school of thought suited us a lot; they did not want to send their people or interfere with the running of the business, but wanted us to continue. That fit with our plan."

Pierre-Frederic Roulot, CEO, Louvre Hotels Group, looks very hopeful as far as expanding in India is concerned as this will be the group's second venture in the country after the Golden Tulip hotels.

"I personally see tremendous growth in India, as a market, for many reasons, like the size of its population, to begin with. I think, in the coming years, with the growth of the economy, this industry will only grow in India. That's why we were interested to

be in India and we started with Golden Tulip ten years ago and now want to expand; hence, we joined hands with Sarovar Hotels. We almost are the leaders in the Indian hospitality market and we want to invest again here."

Ajay Bakaya, Executive Director, Sarovar Hotels, seems happy with the kind of independence Louvre has given to their brand. "The level of independence and autonomy that we continue to have is the reason we chose Louvre. They saw a group with a strong reputation and made us believe that they would make it easier for us to take things to the next level."

Explaining how things in the industry become passé too



Ajay Bakaya



The level of independence and autonomy that we continue to have is the reason that we chose Louvre



soon and how innovation is the key, Bakaya says, "Right from reaching out to patrons, to offering them the kind of loyalty programmes as we do now, this merger will surely help us move forward. We will now have better use of technology and can negotiate with the OTAs across the table, better."



Anil Madhok



They wanted us to continue running the business. That fit with our plan



another milestone in the global hospitality scenario where mergers and acquisitions are striving to become a trend.

The Louvre group wishes to bring no change in the management of Sarovar Hotels, whose own team will continue to provide expertise and manage hotels under the Sarovar brand. Both hotel groups share the desire to continue developing the Sarovar Hotels brand. This powerful platform will also sustain the development of Louvre Hotels Group, which has been present in the Indian

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HOPES PINNED ON
BUDGET 2017:
WILL IT DELIVER?

Hit hard by demonetisation, hoteliers are pinning their hopes on the Union Budget.



HT Bureau

Every year, hoteliers set high expectations from the union budget, only to get disappointed in the end. Right from an infrastructural status, where hotels are eligible to get lower rates of interest on loans, to VAT, Luxury Tax, and Service Tax getting rationalised to a reasonable level, the hoteliers' demand from the budget is, after all, not irrational.

While some are not very hopeful of the government providing any concession to the hospitality industry, **Ajay Upadhyay**, General Manager, Ajit Bhawan, Jodhpur, believes that the hospitality industry in India will continue to flourish and the Government of India will keep endorsing and supporting the hotel and travel sector during the year. However, he believes that there is no tangible tax relief given to the hotel

industry at large, and the industry is anticipating a consensus on GST and its benefits.

"The government's decision to demonetise currency has affected the tourism industry tremendously. This naturally disrupts transactions, especially while catering to the international tourists. The policy is definitely boosting electronic payments, but it is causing inconvenience to those tourists who are currently holidaying in the region and not carrying cash," he explains.

Adding to this, Upadhyay says, "There is an expectation from the upcoming union budget to address long pending concerns. The state of Rajasthan has immense potential that needs to be realised through adequate government

policies and investments focused towards a better inter-state connectivity and maintenance of existing infrastructure." According to him, introducing regular airline services between Jodhpur-Jaipur-Jaisalmer-Udaipur will greatly boost tourism and allow easier access to new destinations in this region.

He is also of the view that there should be focus on in-bound tourism and that there be active promotion, internationally, through digital media. "Digital medium is highly visual, utilising a combination of imagery and videos to convey messages, and reaching out to a wider target audience, resulting in higher levels of awareness."

Vishal Singh, General Manager, Hyatt Regency Pune, isn't very hopeful of the upcoming budget.



The long-awaited GST should positively impact the hotel business, but there is an urgent need to revisit the existing laws and licensing policies that are presently not the friendliest towards operations. The roll out of GST must be aligned to benefit the sector.

GAURAV SINGH
General Manager
Courtyard by Marriott and Fairfield
by Marriott, Bangalore



Single window clearance for real estate and hotels, rationalisation of airline tax regime, multi-modal transport, and last mile connectivity will help pave the way to promote tourism and hospitality sector in the country.

PIERRE-ETIENNE DE MONTGRAND
Director of Operations
ibis & ibis Styles, India



Special allowances to set up hotels in remote cities to motivate and expand the hotel industry, introduction of more unified payment interfaces, and creating a possibility for reduction in convenience fee should be taken into account by the government.

GAURAV P SHETTY
Managing Director
Goldfinch Hotels





The present government is already quite focused on building a stronger ecosystem for the travel and hospitality industry, both internationally and domestically



He says, "Unfortunately, year after year, there isn't much that the hotel industry acquires from the budget; we hope that this year is different."

The hotel industry, apart from numerous licenses, is also burdened with various taxes. "Hopefully, these taxes would be rationalised and the GST implementation will become favourable for us. I am positive that the government's renewed focus on infrastructure improvements, and steps, such as ease of doing business & visa on arrival, will have a positive impact on the hospitality and tourism industry," he adds.

Sanzeev Bhatia, General Manager, The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa, is expecting reduction/removal of service tax. He says, "Immediate implementation of GST will be very helpful, but hotels and tourism should be kept in the minimum tax category. Government should put in more money in promotion of tourism, maintenance of monuments, and upkeep of tourist cities."

He also believes that multiplicity of taxes is a huge road-block for the hotel and tourism industry.



Enunciating this further, he says, "High taxes make India an expensive destination which affects the growth of tourism. Tourists are often confused with multiple tax rates being implemented under unfamiliar heads. I believe, making India more accessible will help boost India's appeal as an international destination and would also help Indians see more of the country, domestically."

The hospitality industry contributes nearly 7-7.5 per cent of the GDP.

The contribution from this sector is expected to more than double in the next ten years. The tourism sector is not only an employment generator, but also a major source of foreign exchange earnings for the country. **Saurabh Bakshi**, General Manager, Sheraton Grand Bangalore Hotel at Brigade Gateway, says, "Our expectation from the 2017 budget is to have a simplified tax rate in the form of lower GST across the country, on all services. With the intention of the government to develop new



the tourism sector but also infrastructure development, specifically in terms of better road and rail connectivity. This will create easier and better access to mainly Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities and will certainly impact domestic travel for the better. I also expect that no additional tax component, like cess, is added to avoid a further increase in prices.”

airports across the country, there would be a need to develop new hotels as well. We should have single window clearance to encourage entrepreneurs to set up new hotels. At present, several individual sanctions, permits, and licenses are required to be obtained from various departments.”

Another major challenge which hospitality industry professionals and others face, is inter-state road tax on personal vehicles that they invariably end up paying on transfer from one state to another. Bakshi says, “A vehicle is bought paying full tax in a particular state and then after a span of 24–36 months, when the industry professional is transferred to a new state to begin work, he/she ends up paying additional road tax in the new state. This is something that needs to be addressed on a priority, so that professionals can work smoothly and contribute towards development of the country. As individuals, we would expect that the personal income tax rates as well as corporate tax rates also be brought down.”

Since tourism is a part of the ‘Make in India’ drive, the present government is already quite focused on building a stronger ecosystem for the travel and hospitality industry, both internationally and domestically. According to **Subhabrata Roy**, General Manager, Four Points by Sheraton Navi Mumbai, Vashi, “The focus also needs to be on creating jobs and skill development to make more people employable. I expect that in the upcoming budget, there would be an increase in budgetary allocation to not only

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Open air : NO B R

The policy banning serving of alcohol in open spaces came as a storm to DLF CyberHub, Gurugram. As it dealt with the shocker, the recent amendment allowing serving of alcohol in open spaces after the payment of a 10 per cent fee, was a welcome relief. Restaurateurs tell **HT** how they dealt with the mayhem and what they hope to see in the future.

Anupriya Bishnoi



ON THE BAN

One of the biggest attractions of CyberHub is its outdoor space; that, and so many restaurants and bars at one place, at once eliminating congestion on streets and making the experience of dining more manageable. It's a model for other Indian cities to follow.

Rahul Singh, Founder & CEO- The Beer Café, feels that banning of alcohol in open spaces has not gone down well with restaurants of the millennium city. "The announcement has had a negative impact on business, as a majority of people prefer to drink in outdoor spaces. A large number of people from Delhi, who used to enjoy the open-air ambiance of CyberHub, have now started avoiding the pubs here," he says.

Hemant Nautiyal, Group General Manager, Striker Hospitality, was quite taken aback when he first heard of the new decree. He says, "The policy of not operating terraces was shocking not only for the people in the business but also for patrons. Ever since it was announced, there has been a sudden drop in footfall." With business already being hampered by demonetisation and terrace-ban, restaurant owners had to make adjustments to accommodate the modern-day crowds. "In a scenario like this, we couldn't do much, except move some seating indoors to cater to more people. But since the policy has been amended, business looks good for both terrace and open-air restaurants," he says.

While the policy initially created a storm for hotels and restaurants alike, the amendment that the government chose to make to it came as a relief to all. On a more optimistic note, **Pushendra Yadav**, Owner, Quaff, said, "Well, the good news is, the administration has decided to issue an additional license to restaurants/pubs if they want to serve alcohol in open areas, however, there are certain conditions attached to it. It's a welcome move and great for state revenue, business owners, and customers. Everyone looks like a winner here."

THE PROPOSED FUTURE

Pub owners hope to see several changes being made to the liquor policy. Talking about his expectations from it, Yadav says, "The new policy looks great at the moment; administration seems to be very understanding towards



Rahul Singh

“The whole idea of CyberHub is to create a world-class space where people come and relax”



Hemant Nautiyal

“The policy of not operating terraces was shocking not only for the people in the business but also for patrons”



What the policy states

From- Excise and Taxation Commissioner, Haryana

- The open space should not be such as is open to passer-by which means that it should be surrounded by fourwall with a provision for regulated entry/exit. The open space should not have a direct access/opening to the main road
- If the open space happens to be a rooftop/terrace/balcony, it should be surrounded by a wall/strong immovable fencing or a minimum height of six feet so that a person, whether under the influence of liquor or otherwise, may not fall down accidentally or by mischief
- The act of drinking in open space by the persons sitting therein should not be visible to the passer-by as to create a bad feeling. In addition, if the open space is visible from other nearby high places, whether within the same building or in the surroundings, the additional measures will be taken to obstruct the visibility from such high places. The licenses shall ensure that the persons using the open space do not indulge in any activity, such as throwing articles outside, which may be a cause of disturbance to the outsider/ passer-by
- No music or performance shall be allowed in the open space.
- No person less than the age of 25 years shall be allowed to enter in such open space
- The open space shall not be allowed at such places which are located in residential area
- No open space shall be allowed in the vicinity of a water pool of more than two feet depth if happens to be within the same surrounded premises
- No L-4/L-5 licenses shall be allowed more than one open space as an additional point
- The provision of open space shall not violate and be subject to the other laws/rules applicable in the state
- The open space shall be treated as an additional point and be allowed on payment of a fee of 10 % of the license fee
- While recommending case for granting additional point in an open space, the map of the open space shall be personally certified by the Deputy Excise and Taxation Commissioner of the district concerned



Pushendra Yadav



The good news is the administration's decision to issue an additional license



the business." He reckons, that if the license to operate daily business could be extended till 2 AM, Gurugram could well become the nightlife capital of India.

Nautiyal is of the opinion that the age limit for drinking should be reduced to 18 or 21 from 25 to cater to married couples below the age of 25, and other significant designation holders of corporates. "We come across a lot of scenarios where people are working in corporates on a good designation but are still under 25. Married couples, less than the age of 25, also have to reluctantly be refused alcohol, due to the age restriction. These suggested changes will not only attract more business, but also generate additional revenue for the government."

Showing resentment toward the liquor policy, Singh says, "Government's overall objective is to prevent drinking in full view of passers-by. But here, it's obviously not a full view; we're covering the place. Even 'Ahatas' (roadside liquor vends) are not in the public view; they're usually covered."

THE HUB OF COMPETITION

Competition is of prime concern for restaurants at CyberHub. Yadav is of the opinion that while the competition is fierce, restaurants manage to entertain a plethora of customers, making CyberHub the 'It' destination of the Delhi NCR region. "It is extremely organised, be it in terms of safety of women, security, cleanliness, entertainment; everything is world-class. I would say there is no dearth of options, but at the same time, there is no dearth of customers either. So, if your



product is right, nothing can stop you from flourishing here."

According to Nautiyal, the hub is a great location for corporates as well as walk-in patrons from Delhi-NCR. "CyberHub, undoubtedly, is full of competition; but I believe that if your product is better and has quality, you will stay longer in the business, just like anywhere else in the world," says he.

"People prefer to dine and drink in an alfresco setting. After a hectic day, no one wants to be in an enclosed space. The whole idea of CyberHub is to create a world-class space where people come and relax, and spend quality time responsibly," elucidates Singh. According to him, quite a bit of the fun has gone out of CyberHub, owing to aggressive excise policy of the Haryana government.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT



Interesting food facts...

- 1 Ripe cranberries will bounce like rubber balls.
- 2 An average ear of corn has an even number of rows, usually 16.
- 3 Apples belong to the rose family, as do pears and plums.
- 4 One of the most popular pizza toppings in Brazil is green peas.
- 5 About 70% of olive oil being sold is not actually pure olive oil.
- 6 Real aged balsamic vinegar actually costs anywhere from \$75 to \$400 or more.
- 7 Store bought 100% "real" orange juice is 100% artificially flavoured.
- 8 Chocolate was once used as currency.
- 9 There is an amusement park in Tokyo that offers raw horseflesh-flavoured ice cream.
- 10 The tea bag was created by accident, as tea was

originally sent in tiny bags as samples.



Courtesy: BuzzFeed

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‘Spa’cious rooms & revenues

As per a recent report, spa revenues of New York hotels have gradually surpassed room revenues. Will the Indian hospitality industry also undergo an evolution, like its western counterpart? We ask hoteliers if other services offered by the hospitality sector can potentially beat the foundation of the room revenue setup.

HT Bureau

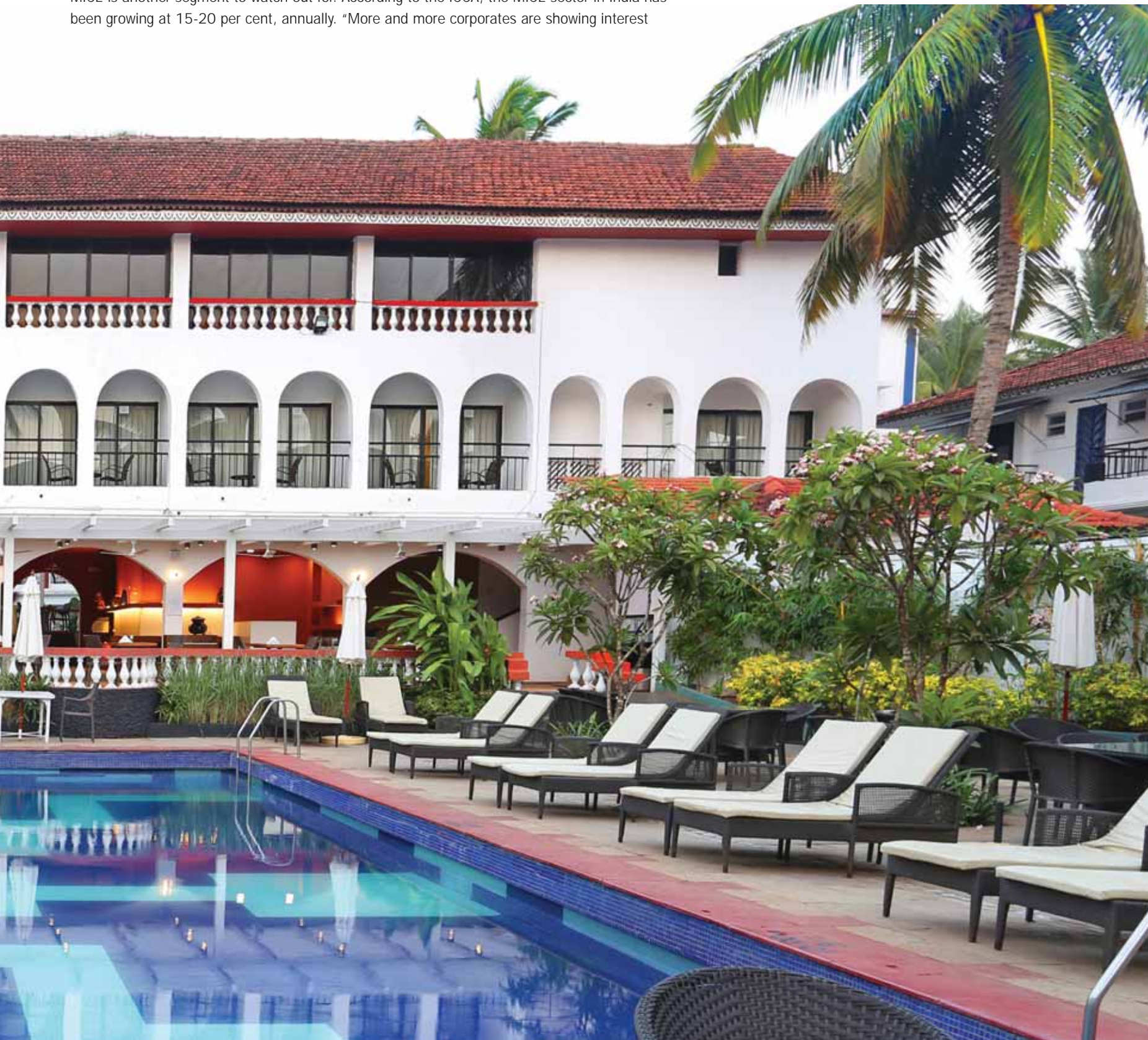


As hotel spas of New York transform from an ancillary segment to the biggest revenue generators, we keep a watchful eye on the growth of this segment, and other ancillaries, in the Indian context.

Speaking for mid-market hotel chains, **Vikramjit Singh**, President and Chief Revenue Officer, Lemon Tree Hotels, is of the view that the hotels in this segment primarily thrive on room revenues. "Ancillary revenues do not form a large part of a mid-market hotel's revenues, across the industry, because a majority of non-core services are outsourced, and therefore, do not contribute significantly to the hotel's bottom line. However, the tourism industry is certainly seeing the benefits of cross selling," he adds.

Anshu Sarin, Chief Executive Officer, Berggruen Hotels, is of the view that the western market, in contrast to its Indian counterpart, has evolved on ancillary services like spas. "We are still in our early stages, where the market is largely price-driven and room revenue is still one of the largest contributors to the top line. Having said that, the industry is evolving towards experiential and personalised services, not being restricted to room stays only," says Sarin. According to her, travelling, no longer a mundane transit from point A to point B, is another segment that provides increased opportunities for experiment. Today's millennial travellers have more expectations from their travel sojourns.

MICE is another segment to watch out for. According to the ICCA, the MICE sector in India has been growing at 15-20 per cent, annually. "More and more corporates are showing interest





“

The hospitality and wellness industry of India is only beginning to explore and exploit ancillary segments

”

in engaging with their employees outside of the office premises, and preferably out of their base city, too. On the FIT side, destination weddings continue to be popular and will only grow in the coming years,” says Sarin.

The spa category is also picking up pace. Whether it is an express, on-the-go service or an elaborate therapy, Sarin believes this category is witnessing an increase in awareness and growth. “Travellers are always on the move and want to indulge in quality retreats that allow them to enjoy their ‘me’ time. The wellness industry is expected to grow at a CAGR of approximately 30-35 per cent over the next five years, a recent FICCI-Ernst & Young study says,” elaborates Sarin.

Being in a nascent stage, the hospitality and wellness industry of India is only beginning to explore and exploit ancillary segments. **Rishi Puri**, Vice President, Lords Hotels & Resorts, says, “Unlike the hospitality industries of the west, India has a long way to go before a hotel’s

ancillary unit overshadows its room revenues. In the developed world, hospitality, as a sector, has reached its limit and is exploring newer ways to keep its consumers engaged. For western countries, spa services could definitely translate to good revenues on account of increased demand.”

In India, the concept of spa has evolved over the years and has today become widely accepted, at least in the urban society. However, it exceeding room revenues, at least in the near future, is not foreseeable, and the same applies to other ancillary services in hospitality. “Presently, even the F&B units are simply looking at setting off operational expenses, rather than revenue generation. However, with increasing disposable incomes, this scenario is gradually changing and may eventually become a driver for growth,” adds Puri.

Pradeep Kalra, Senior VP- Sales & Marketing, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts, provides us a

different point of view. "With changing and increasingly hectic lifestyles, more and more guests are looking at spa experiences as a necessity, rather than an indulgence. In some instances, especially those resorts offering ayurvedic clinical treatments, the revenue derived may exceed that derived from rooms," says he.

Kalra also believes that there are many instances across various cities in the country where revenues from F&B, including banquets, have surpassed room revenues.

According to **Raj Rana**, Chief Executive Officer, South Asia, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group, the Indian hospitality landscape continues to see room revenue as the dominant contributor to top line revenue growth. "As India steps up its efforts to promote itself as a MICE destination, we have seen demand in that area increase substantially. Hotels now have more meeting spaces which include both corporate and social events," he explains.

Talking about food and beverage revenue, he is of the view that it will continue to gain traction, becoming a major contributor to a hotel's total revenue, with consumers being both hotel and city guests. "In India, it is evident that demographics are changing. With a rise in disposable incomes and a shifting trend of people eating out, the consequential revenue from F&B increases," he opines.

"Our Radisson Blu hotel properties in India typically have spas. These services continue to be patronised by guests and we continue to see a significant increase in the revenue stream. However, the growth in this segment still falls behind major contributions of rooms and F&B. In operating our hotels, market expectations and emerging trends are closely monitored to ensure that we move ahead of the curve and meet the market needs by augmenting our offerings."

Food and beverage services have also become a key driver in the prospective revenue growth model across various hotels in India. Over the years, the average return from

rooms has reduced and hotels have been able to develop food and beverage services.

Sonica Malhotra, Managing Director, MBD Steigenberger, says, "Leading hotels are now adopting newer methodologies to create strong dining options, thus churning higher revenue contributions. F&B loyalty programs, new cuisine trends, and food festivals are curated to maintain

their top line." She also believes that a huge chunk of hotel revenue is derived via MICE. Various trends shaping the Indian MICE industry that caters to diverse sectors are contributing to a double-digit growth, boosting overall revenues. Her final verdict is, "There's a considerable shift in the mix of revenues and the contribution of F&B services has grown at a considerably healthy pace."



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<p>Technology SHOW</p> <p>September 2-3, 2017 (Sat - Sun) Delhi NCR</p>	<p>Business SHOW <i>Beyond M.I.C.E</i></p> <p>December 2-3, 2017 (Sat - Sun) Delhi NCR</p>

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HOSPITALITY'S 'FAMILY GET-TOGETHER'

The Global Hospitality Conclave 2017 was held on Saturday, January 7, 2017, at The Leela Ambience Gurugram Hotel & Residences. The Global Hospitality

Conclave is an initiative organised by the alumni of the erstwhile Oberoi School of Hotel Management (OSHM), now The Oberoi Centre for Learning & Development (OCLD). The alumni includes stalwarts

like Rajiv Kaul, President, Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts; Ajay Bakaya, Executive Director, Sarovar Hotels and Resorts; and Rattan Keswani, Deputy Managing Director, Lemon Tree Hotels.



The world of hospitality, like many other businesses, is imperatively moving towards an era of extensive collaborations and partnerships. Every day, the rules of the game are being re-written in response to a transitioning and evolving market, and new paradigms are being set to accommodate newer players with new outlooks.

The conclave touched upon the trends and opportunities in the current hospitality landscape of the country and the world at large. It also recognised new priorities, and arrived at potential gateways and drivers of growth, in the coming years.

Rajiv Kaul, President, The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts, says, "This is a conclave for the alumni and what we were keen to do, besides social networking, was to add a component of knowledge. GHC is always exciting and filled with noted speakers and industry leaders who discuss topical issues. It promises to be engaging and illuminating."

Dilip Puri, Advisor, South West Asia, Marriott International, says, "The conclave is now in its fourth year. I have been in the committee since we started it. It's great to see others from different

geographies and batches, in different businesses now. Most of it is about networking and meeting old friends and sharing ideas. You can also see some amazing panel discussions; I think this conclave keeps the feeling of our institution alive in us."

Talking about the importance of the GHC for him, **Jaideep Anand**, General Manager, TheLeela Ambience Convention Hotel, Delhi, says, "For me, GHC is a family getting together. We know everyone who is present here. It's a meeting of the minds but more of the hearts. It's the old family members who get together every year."







The Leela Ambience Gurugram





Cook in style

Franke has launched its next-generation, DCT enabled, built-in wellness ovens. With patented 'Dynamic Cooking Technology', that offers superior performance, reduced energy consumption, and complete safety, this revolutionising product has a capacity of up to 77 litres, removable full-glass inner door, and an LCD display. Innovative and user-friendly, the oven is equipped with two exclusive cooking programmes – Complete Menu and Wellness, to offer variation in cooking styles.



Feeling the winter heat

Maharaja Whiteline, Groupe SEB India, has recently unveiled its new room heater, Vecto Heat Convecter, to keep you comfortable this winter. This room heater has a power of 2000 watts, with two heat and fan settings, to ensure convenient temperature control. Vecto is light weight, and assures quick and long lasting warmth in the chilly winter.

The lean meal

GAIA has launched Crunchy Muesli – Amaranth, a nutritiously satisfying meal-in-a-bowl that is not only time-friendly but also saves you from eating something potentially fattening throughout the day. GAIA Crunchy Muesli – Amaranth is the ideal breakfast choice for the health-conscious.



Spruce up your salad

Cremica brings to you English Mustard Sauce and Kasundi Mustard Sauce to spice up your favourite snacks. If you are not in the mood to use regular mayonnaise and ketchup, a dash of these sauces will spice up a bland salad and make healthy eating more appealing.

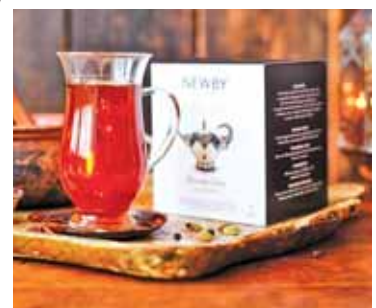
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Just your cup of tea

Newby Teas has launched their latest product, Silken Pyramids, a perfect collection of autumnal warmers. Unlike traditional mass-market tea brands that use leaf-dust tea bags, Newby's biodegradable pyramid-shaped pockets contain whole leaf tea. They are individually sealed in multi-layer foil sachets at the company's preservation and packing facility in Kolkata. Silken Pyramids can also be bought online through various e-commerce websites.



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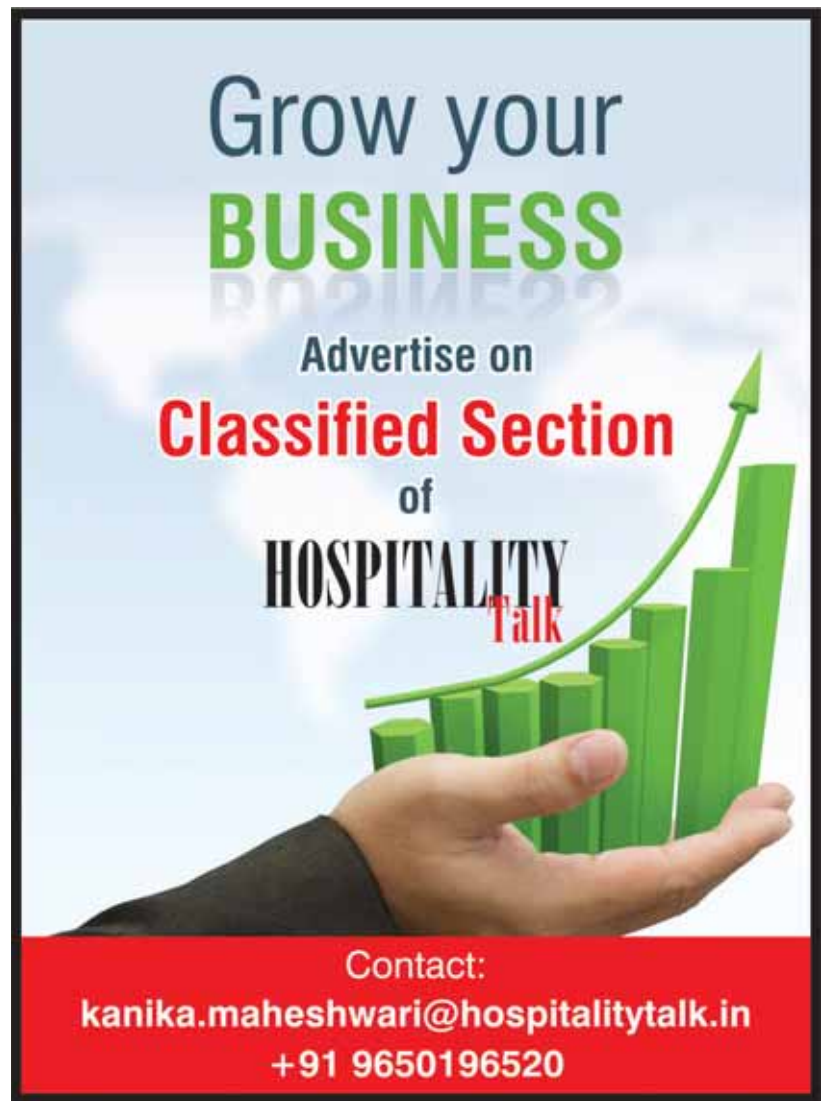
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Mattress Doubler



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				2 inch	✓	✓	✓	✗
				3 inch	✓	✓	✓	✓

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MOVEMENTS

GREESH BINDRA

Regional General Manager
(North & West India)
South West Asia Hotels, IHG

IHG has appointed **Greesh Bindra** as the Regional General Manager (RGM) of North & West India hotels in South West Asia. In this role, Greesh will further contribute to IHG's growth in the northern Indian markets. Being based in Crowne Plaza Greater Noida, he will oversee the performance of the company's thirteen hotels within the region. Greesh has been with IHG for almost fifteen years now.



FAIZ ALAM ANSARI

Complex General Manager
Sheraton Bengaluru Whitefield
and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna
Business Park

Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park has announced the appointment of **Faiz Alam Ansari** as Complex General Manager for Sheraton Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Centre and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park. With over 20 years of experience, Faiz is driven by a quest for excellence. He moves to the new role from that of a Hotel Manager at The Westin Gurgaon, New Delhi.



CHRISTOPH GIRSCH

Resident Manager
The Chedi Mumbai

Christoph Girsch, former Executive Assistant Manager in charge of hotel operations at The Chedi Muscat in Oman, has joined The Chedi Mumbai, as their Resident Manager. His role requires him to interact with a large multilingual and multicultural team, participate in marketing-related events on behalf of the property, and meet topline budget expectations. His experience in various aspects of hotel operations and administration will raise the bar for luxury hospitality in India's most dynamic city.

GIULIO D'ALBERTO

General Manager
The Chedi Mumbai

The 316-room Chedi Mumbai, GHM's highly anticipated hotel opening for 2017, will come under the leadership of Italy-born **Giulio D'Alberto**. His first encounter with GHM was in 2007 and he returned to the GHM group in 2012, where he was assisting with pre-opening task force activities for new hotels. Before taking on this exciting project in Mumbai, he was with the Ahn Luh team for the Qiandao Lake project.





JAY LADWA

Assistant Manager (Marketing)
Lords Hotels & Resorts

Jay Ladwa has been appointed as the new Assistant Manager (Marketing) at Lords Hotels and Resorts. An experienced professional in brand solutions and marketing, he will assist the hospitality group in the overall development and implementation of marketing strategies. His core functions will be to engage with each of its properties across the country, and ideate and execute marketing strategies that drive revenue growth and brand visibility across the chain.



MADHU JOSHI

Director of Marketing
AccorHotels India

AccorHotels has announced the appointment of **Madhu Joshi** as the Director of Marketing for AccorHotels, India. In her new role, Madhu will be responsible for providing marketing leadership for AccorHotels' growing portfolio of brands operating across a fast expanding network in the country. Madhu will be replacing Siddhartha Umashanker who leaves the group after five years of distinguished contribution.



AJITH NAIR

Director of Sales and Marketing
Novotel Imagica Khopoli

Ajith Nair has been appointed as the Director of Sales and Marketing for Novotel Imagica Khopoli. In this role, Ajith will be responsible for leading and further improving all aspects of the sales and marketing communications, promoting brand strategies, and providing the best of the Novotel Imagica hospitality experience to guests. A master in people management and client servicing, Ajith's deep understanding of the hospitality industry is critical to his new role.



ROHIT CHOPRA

Regional Director of Sales
AccorHotels India

AccorHotels has announced the appointment of **Rohit Chopra** as the Regional Director of Sales for AccorHotels, India. Rohit will be responsible for expanding the proposed sales structure in the country by developing various global sales offices in India. He will also contribute to the group's global sales network, goals and objectives, and drive promotion of their unique brands and sales and marketing programmes.

MOVEMENTS

GAURAV SHIVA
General Manager
Grand Mercure
Bangalore



I enjoy travelling to destinations such as Europe, Middle East and America”

For me, the best way to unwind is to ride my bike. I am also passionate about my work. When I'm involved with a project, I strive to do my best to achieve success. I wanted to be a doctor but ended up being a hotelier, though I love every minute of it. My most memorable trip was to San Francisco, Napa Valley, and Sonoma Valley. I also wish to travel to Ladakh. Outside India, I enjoy travelling to destinations such as Europe, Middle East, and America. If I were a spice, I would be a green peppercorn- docile from the outside but fiery from the inside.



RUBIN CHERIAN
General Manager
ibis HyderabadHITEC City



I plan to turn my dream of owning a superbike into a reality someday”

I was fascinated with motorbikes ever since I was young and have always dreamt of owning a superbike. As I grew up, my passion for bikes only grew stronger and today, I ride a Classic Desert Storm. The sight of the long road ahead with the wind blowing on my face washes away all the worries and transports me to a calmer place. While I haven't done too many long road trips, riding all the way to a distant destination like Ladakh is on my bucket list. I also plan to turn my dream of owning a superbike into a reality someday.



NARENDRA PRABHU
General Manager
Signature Club Resort,
Bengaluru



When it comes to food, I enjoy South Indian cuisine”

When I get stressed, I play a game or two of badminton, which relaxes me. Another thing I am passionate about is learning. It is a never-ending process and influences a person's life in a positive way. I also love to explore. When I was younger, I lived in Ooty and got a chance to explore remote places in and around the town. I also got an opportunity to explore Sydney where I did my post-graduation. When it comes to food, I enjoy South Indian cuisine, more specifically Chettinad biryani and Kovai-style chilly chicken.



AASHIMA SHARMA
General Manager
Park Hyatt Chennai



When I have time to myself, I indulge in a short dance session”

Half an hour of meditation does wonders for me. On days when I have time to myself, I also tend to indulge in a short dance session, keeping my love for dance alive. Travelling also fascinates me. Driving through the scenic city of Cairns and indulging in the experience of the Great Barrier Reef have been special vacations. In food, I love Japanese cuisine. If I were asked to be a spice, I would be a cinnamon because it's sweet yet hot with loads of flavour and not to forget, cuts away the fat.





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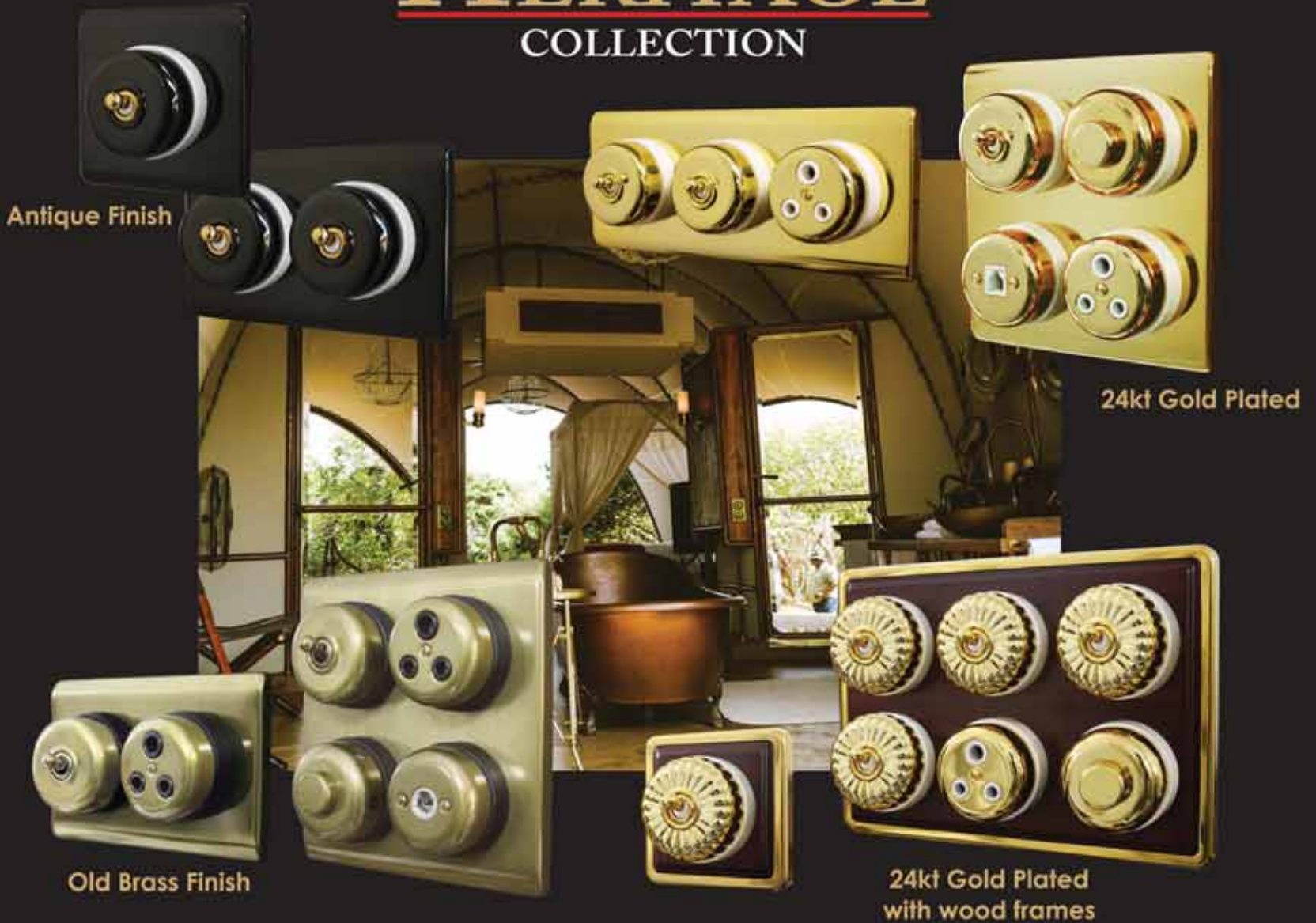


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