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Is going local the
new mantra?



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Cover Image: freepik

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Hospitality Talk is printed, published, edited and owned by Sanjeet, printed at Modest Print Pack Pvt. Ltd., C-52, DDA Sheds, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase - I, New Delhi - 110020 and published at 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110 001

The global scene

From IHG's Staybridge Suites' debut in India to Swiss-Belhotel International continuing its expansion in Indonesia, to the first Fairmont property opening in Korea, a lot is happening across the globe.



IHG DEBUTS STAYBRIDGE SUITES IN INDIA

IHG has announced the debut of its extended-stay brand, Staybridge Suites in India with the signing of Staybridge Suites Bengaluru Thanisandra. Signed as a management agreement in partnership with NR Greenwood Construction, the hotel is expected to be operational in the first quarter of 2023. Commenting on the debut of Staybridge Suites in India, **Sudeep Jain**, Managing Director, South West Asia, IHG, said, "We are delighted to expand our portfolio in the country and introduce our global long-stay brand, Staybridge Suites, to the Indian market. The thriving corporate sector in Bengaluru and limited hospitality options for long-stay travellers present strong prospects for the success of the new hotel and will also pave the way for brand's expansion in other cities."



SWISS-BELHOTEL INTERNATIONAL CONTINUES DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA

Swiss-Belhotel International currently has a portfolio of 75 operating hotels in Indonesia and continues its expansion with seven new properties scheduled for 2023. The new properties will add on brand presence of the three-star Swiss-Belcourt brand, the four-star Swiss-Belhotel brand and the four-star Swiss-Belresort brand. These will be located across the archipelago including Kupang, Makassar, Nusa Penida - Bali, Biak, Central Java and Jakarta. Five of them will open by end of 2021, while the 316-room Swiss-Belhotel Kelapa Gading, Jakarta is due to open in 2022 and the 271-room Swiss-Belhotel Purwokerto will open in 2023.

THE RITZ-CARLTON MALDIVES, FARI ISLANDS TO OPEN IN JUNE

Set to open June 1, 2021, The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Islands resort features white sandy beaches, turquoise lagoons and coral reefs with marine life. Guest villas at The Ritz-Carlton Maldives, Fari Island are expected to range in size from one to three bedrooms, featuring the refined elegance and legendary service that define The Ritz-Carlton brand.



ACCOR LAUNCHES ALL CONNECT, NEW HYBRID MEETING CONCEPT

Accor announced it is collaborating with Microsoft to launch ALL CONNECT, a new hybrid meetings concept supported by Microsoft Teams. Launching in April 2021, the new ALL CONNECT concept will ensure Accor hotels can provide an enriched full experience. Accor's ambitious target is to achieve 100% of its hotels with meeting rooms comply with the new hybrid meetings standard by 2022.



FAIRMONT AMBASSADOR SEOUL OPENS IN YEOUIDO DISTRICT

A new cultural complex, Parc.1, has opened in Seoul's Yeouido district, combining business, shopping and leisure in one stop. The complex welcomes the first Fairmont property to Korea, Fairmont Ambassador Seoul, offering 326 spacious, contemporary guest rooms, including 16 suites with panoramic views of the Han River. Also available is an indoor swimming pool, spa, fitness centre and spaces for business events and meetings.



Growth curve

Things are looking up for the hospitality industry as top-notch hotels are busy launching new ventures & expanding their footprints pan India:

RADISSON INDIVIDUALS DEBUTS IN INDIA, FIRST HOTEL IN IMPHAL

Radisson Hotel Group has launched Radisson Individuals in India with the opening of Classic Grande Imphal. "We are excited to enter this new partnership launching Radisson Individuals in India. The hotel's strong service standards, matched by our global expertise and robust distribution will co-create unparalleled experiences for guests looking to travel to the beautiful city of Imphal," said **Zubin Saxena**, Managing Director and Vice President, Operations, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. Overlooking the majestic Baruni Twin Hills and ridges, Classic Grande Imphal, a member of Radisson Individuals features 171 uniquely designed rooms.



LEELA TO OPEN THREE MORE PROPERTIES IN 2021

The Leela Palaces and Hotels is planning on expansion this year. In a function recently held at The Leela Palace New Delhi in the capital's Chanakypuri area, **Anuraag Bhatnagar**, Chief Operating Officer, The Leela Palaces Hotels and Resorts announced that The Leela Palace Jaipur was already open. He then went on to add the three new properties slated to open this year for Leela, starting with The Leela Gandhinagar, The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru and The Leela Hyderabad. All three properties are business hotels. While the Jaipur hotel has 200 keys, The Leela Gandhinagar—slated to open its doors in April 2021—has 318 keys; The Leela Bhartiya City Bengaluru has 282 keys, and The Leela Hyderabad has 157 keys.

ROYAL ORBIT THE FERN OPENS IN JABALPUR

Concept Hospitality is now opening its third hotel in Central India with Royal Orbit The Fern, Jabalpur. With 111 luxurious and stylish rooms, Royal Orbit The Fern, Jabalpur, offers a wide range of upscale accommodation options. The hotel also offers a multi cuisine vegetarian restaurant along with extensive conference & banqueting facilities spread over three halls and three lawn areas, ideal for large weddings and events.



36TH EDITION OF AAHAR ON THE CARDS

India Trade Promotion Organisation (ITPO), organisers of AAHAR 2021, are hopeful that the 36th edition of the International Food & Hospitality Fair will be held in the near future. AAHAR is one of Asia's best-known brands in Food & Hospitality shows. The flagship B2B event has grown by leaps & bounds in recent years and is today a well-known destination for global vendors as well as sourcing professionals.

ITC HOTELS LAUNCH WELCOMHOTEL SHIMLA

Welcomhotel Shimla offers a great view of the green splendour with all 47 rooms and suites overlooking the picturesque Mashobra valley. Perfect for a leisurely family getaway in the lap of snow-capped mountains, the hotel has indoor and outdoor activities like chess, kids' play corner and guided local tours. The hotel offers 3,186 sq.ft. indoor banquet spaces and a huge 3,477 sq.ft. outdoor venue. The 'K by Kaya Kalp' spa will offer signature therapies, holistic rituals and personalised wellness experiences like Yoga and Zumba.



STERLING PALM BLISS RISHIKESH LAUNCHED

Sterling Holiday Resorts announced the launch of Sterling Palm Bliss Rishikesh, which offers 35 fully equipped rooms under Classic rooms, Premier Rooms, Privilege suites and Family suites category. Some of the highlights of the resort are the unique Panchakarma treatments and therapies, and Nadi Vigyan (pulse diagnosis) astrology available at the signature Subuthi Spa. 'Sky House' the Italian speciality rooftop restaurant featuring a large wood fired oven offering choicest of pizzas, is also one of its kind in Rishikesh. The resort is ideal for those seeking a planned wellness break and also quick adventure getaways.



SAYAJI PUNE LAUNCH LAVISH BANQUET SPACE, THE PEARL

Sayaji Hotel Pune recently celebrated the commencement of The Pearl, an all-new premium banquet place for wedding and corporate events. The Pearl by Sayaji Hotel Pune brings a rare combination of high-quality, elite and deluxe all under one roof and promises to provide grandeur for all offered customised services. This luxury banquet can house up to 150-200 guests at a time and almost 320 guests in a theatre-style seating arrangement. It is spread over 2,000 sq. ft. of carpet area and has an outside pre-function area of 800 sq. ft.

APEEJAY SURRENDRA PARK HOTELS LAUNCHES ZONE CONNECT

Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels has launched Zone Connect under its Zone by The Park portfolio. The brand has been launched with four Zone Connect hotels in Coimbatore, Goa & Port Blair. The hotels are slated to open in the first half of 2021. Zone Connect Coimbatore will have 55 rooms, an all-day dining, bar and a banquet, while Zone Connect Goa will house 49 rooms with an all-day dining, a bar, banquets. Zone Connect Port Blair will consist of 25 rooms, while Zone Connect Tirupati will have 88 rooms, all-day dining and banquets.



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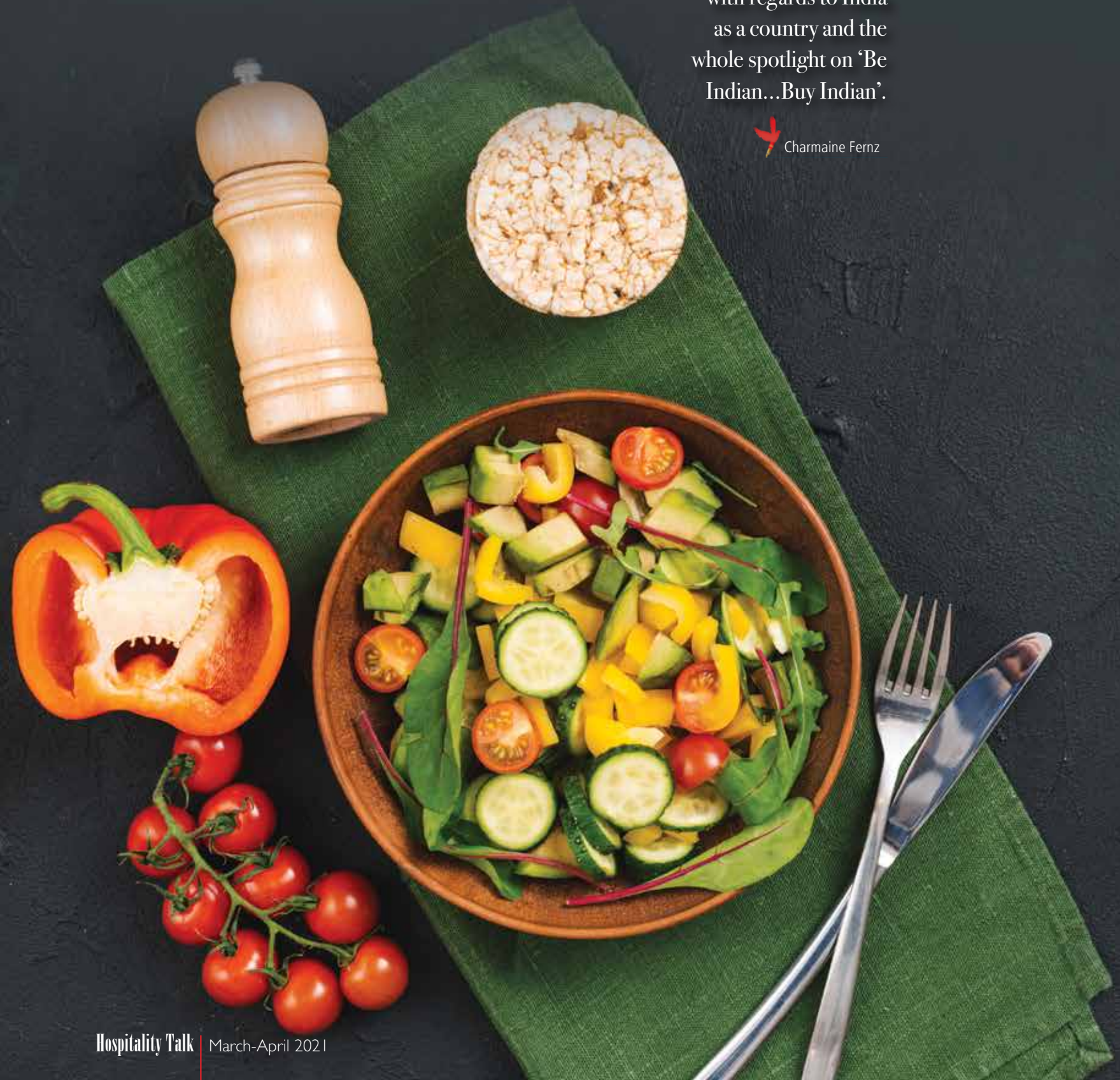
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Is going local the new mantra?

Being local is not just 'the' word but also the focus especially with regards to India as a country and the whole spotlight on 'Be Indian...Buy Indian'.



Charmaine Fernz



The new buzzword for consumers today is going local. This is followed by the much-adopted concept of being healthy which results in overall well-being of an individual. Considering current circumstances being local is not just 'the' word but also the focus especially with regards to India as a country and the whole spotlight on 'Be Indian...Buy Indian'. Taking a cue from this growing trend, we pursued the topic to understand how does the Indian hospitality industry work on its local procurement.

The concept of local procurement has been gaining prominence in the last decade or even more. However, each hospitality group has a different take as **Shailendra Kapur**, Senior Director Operations and Revenue, Best Western Hotels & Resorts explains from a global hospitality chain perspective. "We, at Best Western Hotels & Resorts every year hold a convention for its North American members as well as a Global Conference for its international offices.

During these events, attendees have the opportunity to meet with a diverse array of global / local suppliers which is a platform that enables managed and franchised hotels in the region to purchase goods and services directly from BW preferred suppliers.

Best Western engages its suppliers at the local level to support its standardisation goals. We believe in the fact that "We're partners. We work together for the end goal of our customers. When we are doing research on a product we meet with our suppliers and get their inputs on what the industry is looking at," he adds.

Sharing a similar sentiment **Phil Halanen**, Head of Sourcing & Sustainability, Wyndham Hotels & Resorts EMEA, explains, "Wyndham Hotels & Resorts operates a 'Preferred Supplier' network across the EMEA region to service the product and service needs of our hotel partners. To ensure our hotel partners have access to suppliers within their location, we work with suppliers who are directly based in our key markets, with local representatives present to assist with any requirements a hotel might have."

Putting the spotlight from a more local perspective, **Dev Mohanty**, General Manager, The Zuri Whitefield, Bengaluru, says, "As a group The Zuri Hotels and Resorts have constantly emphasised on local procurement to enable consistent supply and quality parameters. This is in line with our objectives of social responsibility to encompass development of economy through local community progression. The group averages 77 per cent sourcing of products and services through its respective local markets."

THE ADVANTAGES

Local procurement has mostly been viewed as more affordable and sustainable in nature. In a way, most local procurement programmes are established to give back to society and encourage local workforce. Kapur sharing his thoughts says, "Farm-to-table, farm-to-bottle, forage-to-table. These phrases have become nearly ubiquitous on restaurant menus as 'local' and 'sustainable' have grown from buzzwords



SHAIENDRA KAPUR
Sr Dir, Ops & Revenue
Best Western Hotels
& Resorts



Local procurement is one way for a hotel to make a difference to the local economy & reap economic and non-economic benefits for itself"

into business models. People everywhere are looking for a more locally authentic experience, starting with what they eat, leading to an increased scrutiny on the origin and procurement of their food. Restaurants can benefit from this with an opportunity to adjust their menus to provide fresher foods that draw guests. There are several advantages for chefs, general managers or purchasing managers to hop on to the local purchasing bandwagon.

While chefs and purchasing managers are becoming much more aware of the products they can best source locally, everyone has an opinion on what exactly 'local' means. One of the generally accepted definitions is from the food. There are hundreds of locally based suppliers. Not only will you save on shipping costs and have a positive impact on the environment, you may also come across unique offerings for your customers, as well.

Hospitality chains need to not just focus on what's around you, but also consider what's right underneath (or on top of) you. Growing hyper-local food on the premises—whether it's tending a garden on hotel grounds or keeping bees on the rooftop—is becoming increasingly popular. Think outside the box and inside your hotel perimeter as customers increasingly want to see the words 'house made' on the menu. Local food isn't the only thing that made the 'What's Hot' list. Locally produced beer, wine and spirits are an important way to round out your locally focused menu."

Sharing his viewpoint from a two-pronged approach, Mohanty says, we need to bifurcate the benefits to two aspects, hotel level and vendor level. Local procurement facilitates us in ensuring minimisation of lead time, bringing down inventory carrying cost, enabling an optimised operation besides quality parameters assurance for an ISO 22000 rating that we have. All vendors supply chain system is vetted by on-site visits by our procurement team. Vendors get a real-time update in terms of their demand analysis mitigating any bull whip effect in their sourcing leading to excess storage or erratic supply.

Halanen on the other hand focuses on the environmental impacts and benefits saying local procurement has many advantages – smaller supply chains result in fewer



carbon emissions and shorter lead times, purchasing in local currency is often very cost-effective and buying locally provides key support for local businesses and economies.

THE CHALLENGES

We need to understand that while the benefits may outweigh the challenges, it should not be ignored. Sharing a note of caution, Mohanty talking from different department perspectives adds, “Hotels tend to run with multiple levels of SKUs, needless to state certain products’ consumption tends to be erratic or based on break downs. This leads to vendors not being in sync to your specific requirement as new trends are based on consumption-led inventory management, thereby, minimising items availability at local vendor levels.

Sourcing then has to be done from a distributor or vendor from a different geo location. Interstate restriction of movements in the form of product and services to a local vendor can hamper the end-user as well.”

Talking from a price point and product perspective, Kapur explains, “The most critical hindrance, going with local procurement is price – buying in bulk from established suppliers secures discounts, preferential servicing and other benefits. Interfering in these arrangements to shift to local supply can be difficult and costly. Secondly, the quality, quantity and reliability of local supplies may be inadequate – or may be perceived to be so by buyers.

There is a real risk that, if the new supplier can’t meet demands, staff will be unable to source necessary



PHIL HALANEN
Head of Sourcing & Sustainability
Wyndham Hotels & Resorts



We work with suppliers based in our key markets, with local representatives present to assist with any requirements a hotel might have”

goods or services, which will impact negatively on service delivery. Finding the right supplier who delivers the quality promised and in the dedicated timeline can be a real task. Matters related to the supplier are probably the most significant challenges that purchase professionals have to face, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities.

Sometimes, there are many required products or services which are not available locally, so it may be necessary to help entrepreneurs to set up. Even where suppliers do exist, lack of information, transport and marketing networks makes it difficult for buyers to link with suppliers.

In addition to the above, there are some purchases or orders sourced which become too small to be handled by a local supplier. They may be too small a purchase or too infrequent or random to be added in a vendor catalogue.”

THE BETTER OPTION

At one point in time, most hospitality players had to outsource most of the requirements but times are changing and for the better. The question that arises then is which is the better bet – going local or outsourcing?

As Halanen explains, “It very much depends on the specific needs of a hotel. Outsourcing can often be an excellent solution to some requirements but it does need to be carefully managed. The advantages of local procurement on the other hand often include access to support and customer service teams which can lead to better service. Furthermore, supporting local businesses and their input into the economy is important.”



Mohanty on the other hand feels that local procurement tends to be more assured on account of its product recall with respect to the clientele. Besides, we are in control of a lot of intrinsic processes that are best understood at local market levels. Shipping costs get mitigated and delivery timelines are managed better at our end as well.

Sharing a similar view, Kapur adds, “Procurement is often a missed opportunity to stimulate the local economy, as most hotels and tourism companies tend to deal with large – possibly distant – well-established suppliers. While changing procurement practices is neither quick nor easy, in the right circumstances it can be an effective way to gain local social licence, diversify the product, increase customer satisfaction and decrease operating costs.

Development of small and micro businesses can transform the local economy. Many such enterprises are ‘survivalists’ – operating under such constraints that entrepreneurs do not earn a decent living from them. But if they can secure new contracts, upgrade production, and invest in expansion, the businesses can thrive, which in turns creates further local linkages and growth. The potential for job creation is considerable.”

TECH-DRIVEN

Technological advancements in the hospitality industry have gone far and wide and procurement is no different. As Mohanty shares his tech insights saying, “There are various ERP systems that have been used over years in the hospitality domain. However, migration to a cloud computed mechanism with PAAS would be the way forward. Predictive technology would ascertain



DEV MOHANTY
General Manager
The Zuri Whitefield,
Bengaluru



The pandemic made us realise that SCM can easily be disrupted and it’s important to look at 90% procurement from local market”

demand on complex data that is in the repository to give a more robust outcome for the entire procurement cycle. The entire SCM will be integrated to the current hotel systems to effect simpler web and mobile-based actions. Introduction of block-chain technology shall facilitate better B2B transaction for digital records and payments.”

“The prevalence of e-commerce and e-procurement platforms has made it a lot easier for hotels to be able to purchase locally. Additionally, the ability for local suppliers to connect with hotels, through app-based technology has increased dramatically in recent years – this has meant hotels are now more aware than ever of the variety of local goods and services that are available to them,” explains Halanen.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

The concept of local procurement is the need of the hour for every hospitality player. The only fact is the methodology adopted. The ongoing pandemic has made every industry relook their strategies and hospitality is no different.

As Mohanty explains, “The pandemic made us realise that SCM can easily be disrupted and it’s important to look at 90 per cent procurement from local market. The inventories have to be depleted to consumption period of an average five-day stock scenario, therefore re-order and par-stock levels will be constantly evaluated.

The technology window will be exploited to the hilt with greater efficiency. The vendor inventories would be easily accessible thereby improving the inventory ratio’s and lead time analysis.”

Taking a greener approach, Halanen says, “Sustainability is certainly going to be fundamental to local procurement in the future. Being able to buy what a hotel needs and wants from the local area has significant advantages, not least in shortening supply chains and the associated CO2 emissions that result.

From a broader perspective, hotels that support local businesses are doing their part to ensure that there are employment opportunities in their region. A hotel is part of a wider local ecosystem and if that hotel behaves in a way that is commercially and sustainably symbiotic with its surroundings, that hotel will surely thrive.”

In a nutshell, we can conclude with Kapur’s thoughts that local procurement is one way for a hotel to make a difference to the local economy and, at the same time, reap some real economic and non-economic benefits for itself. Supporting local procurement is a way to harness the core competencies of tourism businesses for local impact, as opposed to making philanthropic gestures.

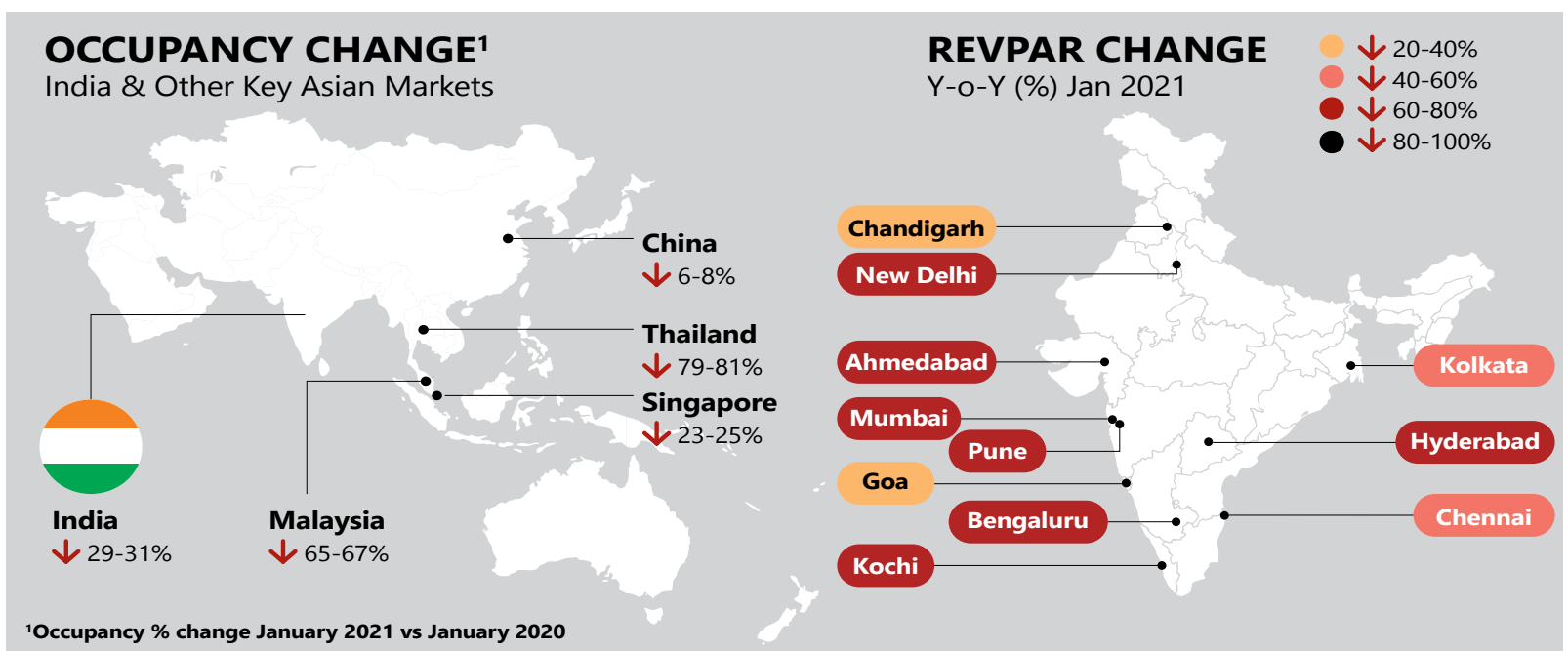
In both urban and rural areas small entrepreneurs are in urgent need of market access, capital and opportunities to upgrade, invest and expand. The tourism sector can provide a direct market, as well as advice and support, for emerging entrepreneurs. Tourism contracts can act as a spring-board for local firms to improve their overall marketability.

Goa, the top travel destination

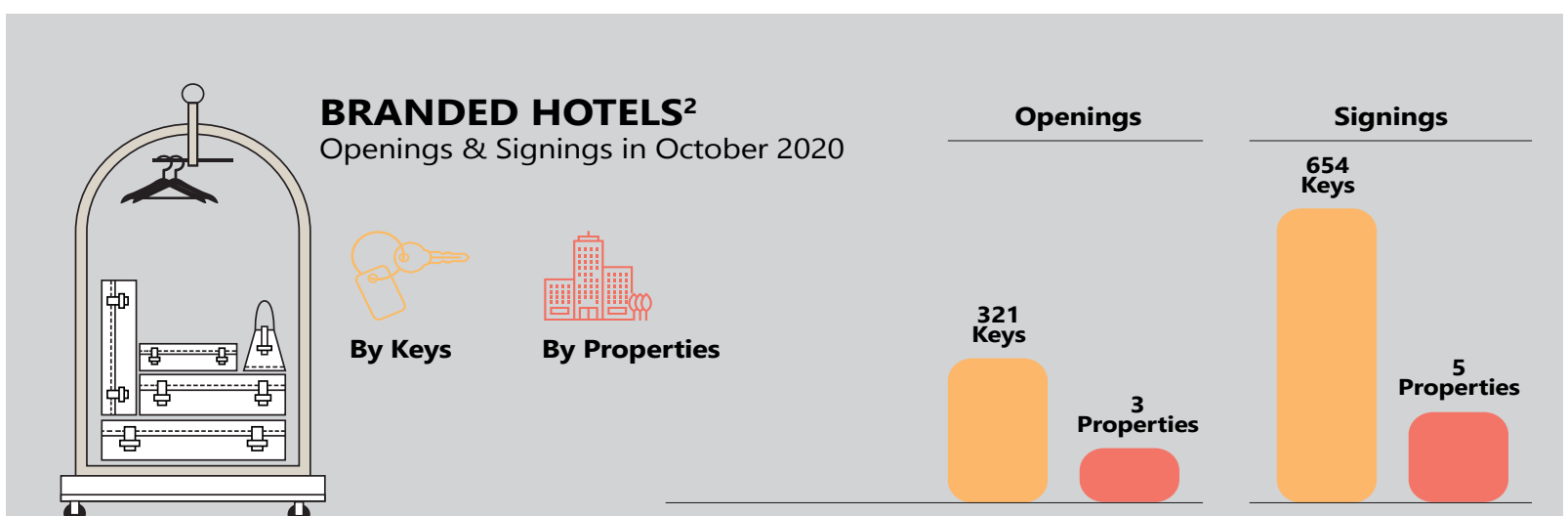
HVS ANAROCK's recent Hotels & Hospitality Overview shares stats on the India average across the hotel sector, occupancy change, RevPAR change & hotel signings.

HOTEL SECTOR		Key Stats (India Average)						
		JAN 2021	M-o-M (%)	Y-o-Y (%)	JAN 2021	DEC 2020	NOV 2020	OCT 2020
	ADR	₹4,100 - ₹4,300	↓ 6-8%	ADR	↓ 31-33%	↓ 27-29%	↓ 33-35%	↓ 31-33%
	Occupancy	46% - 48%	↑ 1-2%	Occupancy	↓ 29-31%	↓ 31-33%	↓ 49-51%	↓ 47-49%
	RevPAR	₹1,900 - ₹2,100	↓ 4-6%	RevPAR	↓ 52-54%	↓ 50-52%	↓ 66-68%	↓ 64-66%

Source: HVS Research



Source: HVS Research

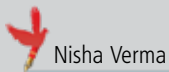


² Data collated by HVS from 15 hotel operators as of February 22, 2021

Source: HVS Research

Supporting industry

MOT Heads talk about how travel, tourism & hospitality industry is gaining momentum, various schemes being initiated by the government, and how the industry is on its way to recovery.



Nisha Verma

ARVIND SINGH Secretary, MOT

To bring more transparency and accountability, the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) has introduced an online system for receiving, processing and conveying/ granting project level approvals for hotels. The applications for approval/ classification can be filed on www.nidhi.nic.in in which is also integrated with payment gateway for online receipt of fees. The objective of the system is to ease the process of filing applications by hotels.

During several rounds of discussions and brainstorming sessions, the MOT has examined representations regarding relief measures including financial relief which

have been taken up with the concerned ministries and Departments of GOI including the Ministry of Finance.

Detailed operational guidelines for COVID safety and hygiene for hotels, restaurants, B&Bs/ Home stays and Tourism Service Providers have been formulated and issued on June 8, 2020 to facilitate smooth resumption of business. Validity of approval or certifications of hotels and other accommodation units whose project approval/re-approval and classification/re-classification have expired / were likely to expire, has been extended up to April 30, 2021.



RUPINDER BRAR Additional Director General MOT

After COVID came, one important realisation was that while FHRAI has its own members, it is also part of FAITH, which works with the MOT. However, at many places, the data is not updated, or it isn't put together. Hence, one of the most important learnings and therefore an important initiative of the MOT has been to take up NIDHI and SAATHI schemes. NIDHI, by itself is leading towards creating databases, making sure that the inventory of all kinds of hospitality units including homestays, is included the way it exists in India. This, in turn, would allow policies and plans to be made for the future, not only for the exigencies like COVID,

but even otherwise for capacity building, for improving the policies and improving decision making. Hence, I think NIDHI is an extremely important initiative from that perspective. SAATHI is a system of awareness and self-certification of hospitality units because post-COVID, it is one of the most important requirements for the traveller, to make sure that the hospitality unit, which one is staying in is observing COVID protocols. It creates a lot of confidence in the traveller. Hence, NIDHI and SAATHI have been two human-centric schemes that the MOT took upon itself to add value to the ecosystem of hospitality and restaurants.

RAKESH VERMA Joint Secretary, MOT

The MOT needs to support the industry in terms of new growth markets, putting the entire ecosystem in place, or digitalisation of different segments including attractions and destinations, because that will bring a lot of productivity gain and a lot of benefits to both the industry and the Ministry. Hence, that will remain one of the focus areas. We have received good response for SAATHI and NIDHI schemes, in terms of creating a database and providing information about hospitality units across the country. We have around 38,000 units registered on the NIDHI platform. We are talking to OTAs and other partners that we

can create a common shareable database with, so that it's a win-win proposition for everyone. Once we have this comprehensive database, it will give us a much better picture of and insights into the industry. This will help us in making those policies that can help promote hospitality and develop this industry. I think it was a long-felt need and we have been successful in making a good beginning. The MOT is also going to carry out an exhaustive survey of units. Hence, all information will get validated. It will be a very good platform for us to help the industry develop further.





Revival post-COVID

Sarovar Hotels & Resorts' Regional Heads talk about their comeback post-COVID, health & safety protocols, region-specific challenges, MICE & business travel, and future plans.



Neha Rawat



Sanjeev Shekhar

SANJEEV SHEKHAR Regional Director – West

We have 14 hotels for now and are looking at opening three more very soon. In addition to that talks are going on with six other owners in Mumbai and other parts of West India. Though our resort property is doing great in India as international travel is restricted to Maldives and Dubai, our rates in the corporate sector are not going to rise as foreigners not coming in. So we have to handle the Indian palette in our corporate hotels. We would be able to reach 70-80 per cent occupancy in the summers but the rates will really suffer. Domestic footfall is seeing an uptick in Goa. But due to the rates going down in a lot of cities where we never saw footfalls, like in Tier-2 & 3 cities, we are seeing an increase in the number of people coming to high-end hotels. Though we are a tad behind other regions because of the problems occurring in Maharashtra, we hope to overcome them very soon and come at par with the Northern and Southern regions in a couple of months once the pandemic is under control. Once the train travel opens up in Maharashtra, it's going to be game changer for the hotel industry.



Ajoy Balkrishna

AJOY BALKRISHNA Regional Director – North

Currently under the North region umbrella, we have around 47 operational hotels, and out of 50, about 8-9 are in North. Our growth in the North has been the fastest and the highest, we have mostly been focused on business destinations but in the last couple of years we have started opening in our leisure segment, and hence our leisure portfolio is growing faster. Even in the pilgrim, beach and hill areas our hotels are popping up very rapidly. The COVID-19 pandemic has made us change our strategies and adaptability is the key word now. In addition to the business segment, we have started focusing on weddings, leisure, workcations and staycations. So there are different things that we have started incorporating in our selling and stay strategies for our guests. The way things are changing now are very dynamic. It's the nimble footed, the fast one who captures business. So we are adapting to the fast paced environment. 2021 is going to be a great fight back year and we will be back to normal. Hopefully with the vaccine, by October everything will come back on track and the bounce back will be much bigger than the setback has been.



Swarup Datta

SWARUP DATTA Regional Director – South

We are recovering from the pandemic which has caused a major setback for us as we are a travel dependent industry. Due to travel restrictions hotels are seeing low occupancies. However, as travel has been restarted, we are seeing a gradual pick up in demand. So we are in the process of trying to re-establish our businesses and to drive revenue from our non-traditional sources. We have been optimising our costs, rightsizing our teams and looking for new avenues of business. Sustainability of the business on the revenue and the cost model is the prime thing, which is how a business should run. At this stage the revenue which is coming in is at lower rates because of low demand. Our hotels are highly dependent on international travel and once it opens up we will look at the MICE segment to drive occupancy. The sectors which are performing well and are dependent upon travel for their business will come to the property. So we will do our best, we will provide a safe environment at unbeatable value and we will ensure that the guests are well looked after. These will be done with proper checks and balances that we are delivering a consistent product.

Shaping careers

Eminent educationists talk about what is being done by way of fostering knowledge, innovation and entrepreneurship to position FHRAI-IHM as a premier hospitality management institute in the next few years.



Neha Rawat



ARUN KUMAR SINGH
Director
FHRAI-IHM

ESTABLISHING A PREMIER INSTITUTE

All possible efforts will be made to establish FHRAI-IHM as a premier institute of hospitality education in the next few years. We want our students to develop a positive attitude towards the hospitality industry, improve their communication skills, and acquire knowledge & skills that are most suitable for managerial and senior supervisory jobs or self-employment in hospitality & allied industries.

PLACEMENT

The placement scenario of hospitality institutes was good before COVID-19. We hope that by the time our first batch will be ready for the industry we will make our presence felt, thus leading to better placement in the industry.

POSITIONING FIHM

I started as Principal, IHM Jodhpur with an intake of 20 students then moved to IHM, Lucknow and finally IHM Mumbai, the largest & oldest and most reputed institute of hospitality management in the country. The vast experience I



have gained over the years will be utilised to position FHRAI-IHM as a leading hospitality management institute of the country. Apart from regular academic inputs our efforts will be for overall personality development / improving communication techniques among students. Research & development and inclusion of case studies to sharpen the intellectual mind of students will help in developing their self-confidence in moving ahead in their career.



HIMANSHU TALWAR
Additional Director
FHRAI-IHM



TRAINING PROGRAMMES

It is indeed a matter of pride for me to support the hospitality fraternity from the perspective of policy at FHRAI and education at FHRAI-IHM. In the year 2020, when the entire country was under lockdown and hospitality establishments were shut, following the directions of FHRAI-IHM management, I organised FSSAI initiated COVID awareness training programmes through FoStAc. Around 50 such sessions were organised whereby more than 4,000 people were trained.

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH

Looking at the future of hospitality education, unprecedented events such as COVID have taught a lot to us. Though these things are beyond our control, however, industry has seen various such phases wherein there was very little hope of revival, however, on every such occasion not only we revived but thrived as well. We at FHRAI-IHM will now be focussing on making young individuals – opting for hospitality as their future – more innovative in their approach and accommodative to new technology.

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Brand signings during 2018-2020

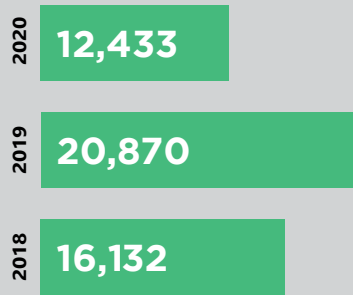
HVS ANAROCK's recent stats talk about brand signings by keys, properties signed annually by domestic & international hotel operators and brand signings by contract type.

SIGNINGS

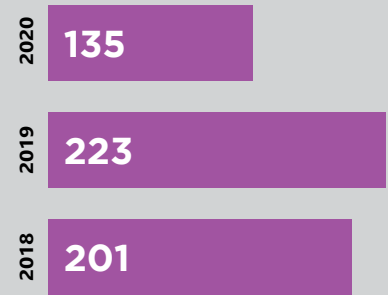
Brand signings by keys witnessed a y-o-y decline of 40% in 2020. During the year, 100 hotels with 9,757 keys entered the branded hotels market, while an additional 35 hotels with 2,676 keys were rebranded.



By Keys



By Properties

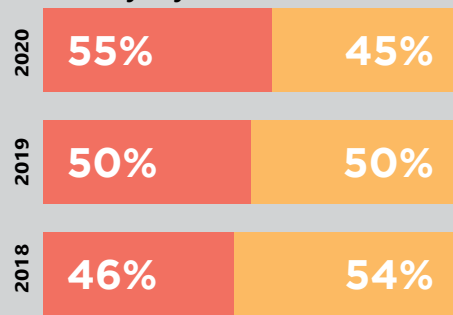


BRANDS

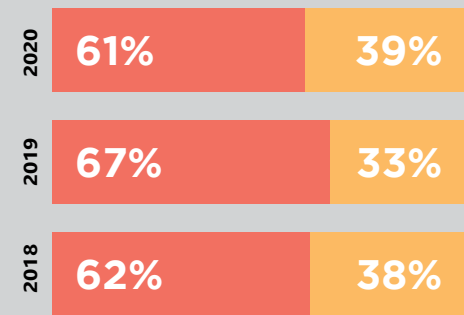
Domestic hotel operators increased their share by signing more properties (61% of the total signings by property) than their international peers, with an average key count of 82 keys during the year.



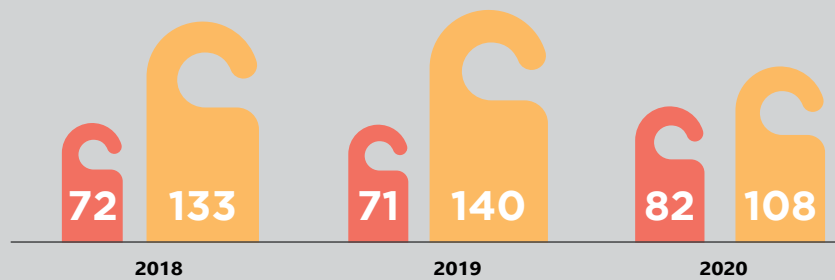
By Keys



By Properties



Average Room Count



Domestic International

*As reported by 24 hotel operators as of 31st January 2021 for CY2020 & media reports 2019 numbers have been updated as per new information reported by hotel operators

BY CONTRACT

Management contracts continued to be the preferred form of brand signings, accounting for 80% of the total signings by keys in 2020. Franchising accounted for 17% of the signings by keys in 2020.



By Keys



^ For 2020, Others has been clubbed with Leased since it accounted for less than 0.5% of the total signings

Source: HVS Research

In expansion mode

Anshu Malik, Managing Director, ARRA Hotel Group, shares what the group's two brands – ARRA and Twist – stand for, and plans of expanding into the international market by 2022.



ANSHU MALIK
Managing Director
ARRA Hotel Group



We aim to be the youngest and fastest growing chain in India”

Helmed by Anshu Malik, a passionate hotelier by choice who learnt the reins of the business under the patronage of Late Captain Nair, Chairman of the Leela Group of Hotels, the new – ARRA Hotels – promises to offer the best of modern amenities, warm hospitality and unmatched service. Sharing his plan for the company, **Anshu Malik** says, “We have signed 25 properties pan India, which are under various stages of reinvention as per our standards and will be operational by end of the year. We will operate these properties under our flagship brand – ARRA – which is our upscale brand, and Twist – which is the budget brand with a young feel. The USP of the brand, according to Malik, is the service level they offer. “We will create a niche in the market. Our motto is ‘Atithi Devo Bhava’, and with this vision, we believe that guests will experience a feel-good factor once they come and stay with us at both our brands,” he claims.

Hotels will be launched in the most exotic locations across the country, right from popular tourist places, business hubs and exotic locations to religious sites. The group, according to Malik, will be targeting all segments, including leisure, FIT, corporates, airline crew and travel agents. The company is currently on a hotel acquisition spree and will be following different models for the same – revenue sharing, sales & marketing, franchise and gross operational profit. “While 2020 wasn't a very good year for the industry, it worked for ARRA to acquire new properties. I believe that our return on investment will be much faster,” he insists.

Malik is quite upbeat about the future. “We are quite optimistic and I believe that the market will open up soon. The strategy forward will be aggressive marketing. We are acquiring as many hotels as possible, taking advantage of the situation. We want to be the market leaders in the industry and aim to be the youngest and fastest growing chain in India. We are planning to enter the international market next year,” he concludes.

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A safe experience

Family leisure & private mobility is bringing more bookings & there is demand for safe stay packages, says **Kunal Shanker**, GM, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort.



Neha Rawat

How has the hotel industry changed post the pandemic?

Amid the current scenario, hoteliers have been required to acquire additional skills or even reskill for the safety procedures. Hotel operators have relearned to study the market trends, operating costs and package pricing have been reworked to ensure that the 'safety protocols' do not make the visitors' stay awkwardly expensive.

Guests are now travelling for experiences and not just the product and service. This is one of the reasons that the hotels in India have become innovative, experiential and environment conscious.

For COVID-19 safety measures, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram has implemented IHG Clean Promise programme with SOPs on temperature check on arrival, Aarogya setu app is mandatory along with 24 hours prior self-assessment form, contactless check-in, a Guided Room Orientation Video is available as a part of luxury check-in experience, prior reservation is required in restaurants as per social distancing norms, baggage sanitation, luxury car sanitation (in case guest requests for transportation), guest masks & sanitisers are available in rooms and on request, it is mandatory to wear masks in all public areas.



KUNAL SHANKER
General Manager
InterContinental
Chennai Mahabalipuram
Resort.



An interesting trend is the growth in private room dining preference”

Has there been an uptick in leisure travel?

Campaigns like Vocal for Local have somewhere helped in building momentum for a destination like ours i.e. Mahabalipuram, we have seen an uptick of eight per cent on traditional occupancies with improved ARR, though with governing protocols and ensuring safety measures as hotel operators we have consciously worked to avoid overdrive occupancy and continue to service safe and quality experience for our guests.

What trends do you see post-COVID?

Family leisure & private mobility is bringing more bookings to InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram, there is a demand for safe & all-inclusive stay packages. Guests are looking at drivable leisure locations for short burst vacations.

Another interesting trend noticed in the resort has been the growth in private room dining preference by guests. InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram has used this trend to curate themed set meals from our signature restaurants like Tao of Peng as a part in-room dining, while at the Beach side restaurant private enclosures are built on the water's edge to create one-of-its-kind dining experience.

India hotel investment volume declines 84%

According to JLL, hotel investment volume in 2020 witnessed a 60% global decline vis-à-vis the previous year, while in India the decline in hotel investment trade was 84% in 2020 as compared to 2019.

Hotel investment volume in 2020 witnessed a 60% global decline in comparison to 2019 and in India, the decline in hotel investment trade was even sharper at 84% in 2020 as compared to 2019, according to JLL. India-wide hotel performance registered a decline in RevPAR by approx. 55% over the previous year, closing at a RevPAR of INR 1,675.

Whilst performance of business hotels has yet to fully recover, leisure markets led by domestic travellers showcased some resilience in the last quarter of 2020.

As a result of the pandemic, hotels were compelled to reset their business plans. Standard operating procedures were drastically transformed with adaptation of available technology to encourage social distancing and increased focus on health safety and hygiene practices. New hotel developments slowed down, and most hotel openings were deferred by at least six months, according to JLL.

According to the STR data, Delhi's hotel market witnessed a 32% PP* (absolute percentage change) decline in occupancy and a 24.1% decline in Average Daily Rate (ADR), resulting in a 57.3% decline in RevPAR, in 2020 over 2019. Additionally, Bangalore's hospitality market witnessed a 39-pp decline in occupancy and a 23.1% decline in ADR, resulting in a 67.7% decline in RevPAR, as compared to 2019.

Brand signings in the country decreased by 38% over last year with 125 hotels and over 12,000 keys. The year saw a revival of demand firstly in the leisure destinations, with the maximum volume of signings in Tier-III cities

"The post-pandemic world is bound to see more changes. Realignment of source markets, guest preferences, physical space planning will all be more dynamic and will be discussed more often in board rooms and team meetings. Capital assistance has emerged as the focal point and will remain the need of the hour to help hotels sustain till demand picks up," says Jaideep Dang, Managing Director, Hotels & Hospitality Group, JLL India.

HOTEL INVESTMENT OUTLOOK

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the near zero cash flow environment made asset valuations very challenging also resulting in difficulty of obtaining debt financing. As a result, acquisitions were largely on hold in 2020. Hotel investment volume in India reached a record high in

2019 registering investment sales of USD 762 million. Investment activity has been on a pause since March 2020 post the nationwide lockdown. As the country gradually opened up with the unlock measures in phases since June 2020, the sentiment for evaluating hotel assets gained a little traction. The preference for assets in leisure markets increased given the strong recovery of leisure travel across the country since the third quarter of 2020.

Investors were also keen on evaluating distressed opportunities in key markets, given last years' decline in corporate travel and its slow and steady recovery has impacted operational cash flows. Given the month on month increase in hotel room demand, there are



*Exchange rate – INR to USD estimated 2020
Source: JLL



Capital assistance has emerged as the focal point and will remain the need of the hour to help hotels sustain till demand picks up”

emerging signs of investors evaluating hotel assets in the country, however valuations are at a discount to pre-COVID levels keeping in mind a slower demand and rate revival, especially for cities that are dependent on corporate and MICE segment and reduced profitability levels for the next two to three years. Investors are mostly inclined to evaluate operational assets in key markets rather than greenfield or brownfield developments.

A few developers with strong balance sheets are also actively evaluating hotel deals. This trend has also been witnessed on a global level, where private equity firms and institutional investors have large pools of opportunistic capital to deploy for funding or acquiring quality assets in major cities which may become available for the reasons highlighted earlier.

The growing

gig economy

With the only priority now being to increase the revenues, the thought of looking at gig workers is the growing trend.



Charmaine Fernz



Recent data released by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE) stated that India's unemployment rate stands at 6.9 per cent in February 2021. Though the numbers are climbing gradually but the overall scenario looks tough. In a post-pandemic world, change is the only constant as it's the 'survival of the fittest' for most companies. Current times call for companies to be innovative and forward thinking, the hospitality industry is no different. Being majorly affected by the pandemic, the industry globally is barely reviving back with a glim ray of hope amidst the so-called 'second wave'. The only priority now being to increase the revenues and get back on the growth track. In such situations, where work from home is still the norm, the

thought of looking at gig or rather (freelance) workers is the growing trend. So, the question that arises is what is a gig economy?

THE CONCEPT

As per reports, the gig economy provides employers with dependable workers when needed and subsequently, provides workers with greater control of their work schedule which translates into higher rates of job satisfaction and better services for the employers. Elaborating further **Dominic Costabir**, Director, HTI India, explains, "The gig economy is a free market system; companies hire independent freelancers (called giggers or gig workers) and pay per hour or per assignment. This concept has gained currency due to



the internet boom and app-based aggregators. In India, traditionally, this segment was largely unorganised and operated in a quasi-legal manner such as part-time house help, or even some factories paid workers per piece or unit produced. Now, due to aggregators like Ola, Uber, Swiggy, Zomato, Urban Company and Colaborate app, the organised segment is growing exponentially.” Sharing a similar view, **Rohan Deshpande**, Assistant Program Manager, Zomato, says, “This is not a new concept as the gig economy in India was an already existing space even before the term gained popularity. Today, India constitutes about 40 per cent of the freelance jobs offered globally, with 15 million skilled professionals fuelling the ever-so-increasing demand for contract-based jobs or the freelance industry. The

accent of digitisation certainly helped with the boom of the gig economy in the country.”

THE NUMBER GAME

With a growing relevance of the concept, the truth is in the number pie. According to Costabir, “We, at Colaborate ran a survey which showed that 97 per cent of people were open to gig work. While further industry reports state that the gig economy is expected to grow globally by an impressive 17.4 per cent CAGR by 2023. And finally, gig workers will outnumber traditional workers in the next 10 years. The main motivation for 70 per cent of giggers polled by FlexJobs and FreshBooks state that desire for work-life balance is of prime relevance. A Forbes report says that nearly 60 per cent giggers find their working conditions flexible compared to just 27 per cent of regular workers. Other factors for considering gig work is the flexibility to choose when to work, be their own boss, choose suitable projects and finally, reducing commute (time and money) and avoiding office politics.”

A report by Mastercard states that internationally, the gig economy is trending. An estimated 36 per cent of US workers are giggers and 33 per cent of companies extensively use gig workers. Payoneer states that gigs are more popular with age groups of 18-24 and 55-64.

Explaining further Deshpande states, “The pandemic has changed the way businesses are conducted, not only in India but globally too. Due to forced remote work culture, many companies are realising the advantage on stressed cash flow, remodelling their operations as per business continuity plans, and opting to hire freelance talent under the given market scenario. As more and more companies move away from a traditional Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 weekdays, the scope is tremendous. As more and more companies undertake business transformation to make their processes more technologically driven, the number of gig workers ought to go up significantly.”



DOMINIC COSTABIR
Director
HTI India



The gig economy is expected to grow globally by an impressive 17.4 per cent CAGR by 2023. Gig workers will outnumber traditional workers in the next 10 years”

THE INDIA POTENTIAL

The pandemic has changed the way businesses function. The forced work from home concept shed light on the fact that organisations could function with employees working remotely and the advanced technologies make everything possible. Sharing his overall perspective of the concept in Indian hospitality, **Himmat Anand**, Founder, Tree of Life Resorts, says, “By nature, the hospitality industry is hugely cyclic in nature. The leisure segment is dependent on seasonality, holiday breaks, school exams and the like. The corporate segment is dependent on its own peculiarities of weekday/ weekend travel, access to the city centre or work place and the like. Keeping these in mind, the gig concept is something which the industry has been toying with



**ROHAN
DESHPANDE**
Assistant Program
Manager
Zomato



India constitutes about 40% of the freelance jobs offered globally, with 15 million skilled professionals fuelling the ever-so-increasing demand for contract-based jobs”

for long. The pandemic has only put it in fast forward mode, given the huge pressures on the bottom line. On the flip side, the gig concept requires constant training and re-training, something which the large branded chains have still to come to terms with, given their strict and elaborate SOPs. Smaller, independently owned hotels are able to adapt and adjust more easily. Further, many of these hotels are away from cities, in rural areas, employing a lot of staff from their local surroundings. This makes it easier for them to pull such staff in and out, without the fear of losing them long-term to competition.”

Being very strongly involved in the gig concept, Costabir explains his point of view saying, “It will change the way the hospitality industry functions. In a nutshell, the entire industry will operate the way currently banquets, outdoor catering and events teams function. We will be fast and flexible, expand and contract on demand. No longer will we be restricted by human assets that are on the payroll. We will import talent on demand. There will be a greater emphasis on technology supported /enabled processes and systems. Training and orientation programmes will be quick and efficient. In short, teams will be assembled and dismantled based on demand and supply.”

Adding on to the optimism and positive prospects of the concept, Deshpande adds, “The gig economy has massive potential in the hospitality industry as it’s one industry that has the highest attrition rates at 73.8 per cent. There is always a need for employees as schedules are erratic and work weeks can be longer and more strenuous compared to other industries. The gig workers may just help fill in that void. A gig worker can solve for the high influx during seasonal demands like ‘wedding seasons’, ‘corporate retreats’ among the many others. Technology will play a big part in this with apps and websites popping up which can directly connect the two



without need for intermediaries and negotiations. Syft and Rota are some examples of apps from the US which have started this change already. Rota claims to have reduced staffing costs by 25 per cent for companies amongst the two million scheduled assignments. This is huge and India will benefit from such technology.”

THE BENEFITS

With any new change, the obvious question arising would be the advantages of the concept to the industry. The current hospitality players are looking for best opportunities to increase revenue and the gig concept does exactly that.

As Costabir asserts, “For businesses, it keeps them lean, agile and offers long-term sustainability. For guests (customers), it is competitively priced standardised products and services. The biggest advantage, when strategised well, is for giggers who comprise retired professionals, students, stay-at-home-moms and out-of-work professionals. Additionally, giggers get a lot of freedom and flexibility in terms of the company to work for, hours or days on duty, and location to work at. They can get maximum exposure and experience in shorter time across a particular industry, and even allow for migration to other verticals or industries – even simultaneously.”

Sharing a more detailed point of view Deshpande says, “This concept has a multitude of advantages both for giggers and employers. Gig workers have the comfort to choose days/hours with without any restrictions, they can choose what kind of projects they want to take up based on their schedules, they have the ability to choose how much value they add on and hence demand the pay they think is viable for the time and effort. And finally, gig workers are not obliged to work for anyone and hence if they find creative or other differences with the employer, they are free to move to another place



HIMMAT ANAND
Founder
Tree of Life Resorts



The gig concept is something which the industry has been toying with for long. The pandemic has only put it in fast forward mode, given the huge pressures on the bottom line”

without hassle. From an employer’s perspective, they get access to highly specialised workforce who excel in their field of work. This brings more finesse to a project. They don’t have to spend money on a lot of ancillary costs like training, paid leaves, cost of space etc. More importantly, they can hire for a short time during seasonal demands to meet deadlines without going through the extensive recruitment process and permanent payroll costs.”

THE ROADBLOCKS

The adoption of any new concept always comes with a bit of scepticism especially when one cannot gauge the benefits. However, an open mind is always necessary for growth. As Costabir states, “The biggest challenge for any company considering the gig concept is their mindset – by nature, we are resistant to change and experimenting. Hospitality industry professionals too lean towards playing safe. But the industry has witnessed and adapted to tectonic shifts like Airbnb, Oyo Rooms, Zomato, Swiggy and the likes. So, hospitality has proved that it is quick to adopt change – once it happens. This time, the situation (pandemic) has forced all of us to wake up and not just adapt to changes, but initiate them too.”

Sharing a very clear and structured perspective Deshpande outlines the challenges stating, “Irregular income is a prime concern and gig workers’ financial planning needs to be very strong if they want to do this full-time. There are no benefits likes paid leave or insurance etc. Also, gig workers may feel stressed while working on a project due to higher expectations from them since they’ve been hired for a specialised task. However, for employers, the flip side is the fact that workers may not be that invested as gig workers are ‘casual workers’ and not full-time workers. There is also the pressure of drafting contractual agreements for every gig worker hired.”

THE WAY AHEAD

The growing prominence of the gig economy is here to stay. The question that arises is how well is this concept going to be milked by the hospitality industry? As Costabir concludes, new apps that connect gig workers and organisations and are popular in the West

will gain prominence. This is mainly due to the rating system and transparency, giggers will see themselves as brands – accountable and dependable. Experience exceeding five years will cease to be relevant; the maxim: “You are as good as your last gig” will gain prominence. Organisations too will be rated in real time and would need to earn gigger-friendly tags to attract better talent. They would need to pay on time, display professionalism and stick to commitments. We may debate on merits / demerits of the gig economy, but it is here to stay. The gig culture will initially eat into permanent and contractual employment share, but finally will coexist and not replace them.”



‘The best of luxury’

Madhav Sehgal, General Manager, Hyatt Delhi Residences, the latest entrant in the Aerocity district in New Delhi, shares how it will offer a new hospitality experience with its serviced apartments.



Nisha Verma

Please tell us about the Hyatt Delhi Residences, the newest Hyatt property in the city.

Located at the Aerocity, Hyatt Delhi Residences provides an all-new luxury experience. Curated for the discerning traveller, it includes 124 well-appointed apartments, divided into bedroom apartments and duplex townhouses, with spacious interiors paired with Hyatt’s signature service excellence. Residences offer the best of comfort and luxury, ensuring the guests feel at home while travelling for work.

Which market are you targeting?

Along with high income households, Hyatt Delhi Residences targets groups of people ranging from guests looking for relocation, single female travellers, corporate



MADHAV SEHGAL
General Manager
Hyatt Delhi Residences

travellers, families, expats, medical tourists, embassies and project-related businesses, or anyone who is looking for a luxurious experience at our property.

With most of the hotel brands present in the Aerocity cluster, including one of Hyatt brand as well, what would Hyatt residences offer in the area?

Hyatt Delhi Residences, being a branded residence, is perfect for travellers that are seeking more than just a hotel room. It provides the luxury of a hotel with the warmth of home, with more space and additional amenities to make the entire stay convenient, as opposed to a regular hotel. Ideal for an extended stay with family and friends, or even for work purposes, Hyatt Delhi Residences it offers a unique and chic experience to the guests. With exclusive privileges and a wide range of facilities, it provides trendy contemporary styled apartments perfect to relax or host friends, family and colleagues for a long duration. Guests can choose from all-inclusive apartments or duplex townhouses that are fully-serviced, fitted with elegant wooden flooring, practical kitchens, bathroom amenities and walk-in wardrobes, with spectacular views from the private balcony, patio and terrace.

How are you planning the promotions and marketing for the property?

Hyatt Delhi Residences, keeping in mind an ideal stay for the guests, offers various stay packages which include staycations, bed and breakfast, long stay deals and a lot more which are perfect for corporate travellers or guests that are looking to unwind and relax at the property. We are engaging with online travel partners for leisure business, whereas we have long-staying offers and deals uploaded on the hyattdelhiresidences.com website.



Hyatt Delhi Residences offers trendy apartments perfect to relax or host friends, family & colleagues for a long duration”

A good deal everyday

India is one of our key markets and we anticipate opening hundreds of stores eventually, says **Ashok Lal**, Regional Managing Director, EMA /AP for Little Caesars.

What is the USP of your brand?

Little Caesars is known for its Hot-N-Ready model and that's something we are really proud of. The brand that has been named "Best Value in America" for the past 14 years offers its signature Hot-N-Ready model to its patrons and allows customers to walk in-and-out of the outlet in 30 seconds or less with an affordable pizza that is fresh & delicious. We are committed to providing the best tasting pizzas at an all day, everyday value. In India, we also offer a delicious edge-to-edge seasoning which makes even the edge of the slice tasty.



ASHOK LAL
Regional Managing
Director, EMA /AP
Little Caesars



How has your experience in the F&B industry been so far keeping the India market in mind?

We had a great start launching our brand in Ahmedabad, India. We are very happy that customers have responded

very positively to our brand, and we are excited to continue our growth throughout India.

Do you have any upcoming plans for expansion?

We are the third-largest pizza chain in the world and while COVID has certainly limited our ability to grow as quickly as we anticipated last year, India is one of our key markets and we anticipate opening hundreds of stores eventually. We are actively seeking franchisees who are interested in becoming a multi-unit operator.



We are committed to providing the best tasting pizzas at an all day, everyday value"

Water in aluminium cans

One of our major challenges is to educate the consumers about the benefits of using aluminium cans as a packaging material, says **Amit Lahoti**, Managing Director of Ball Beverage Packaging in India.

Why have you opted for aluminium cans to package drinking water?

We are using aluminium as a packaging material as the metal is infinitely recyclable, making it a sustainable choice. Moreover, aluminium cans are a cost-effective option. They are lightweight, occupy less storage space in warehouses, and can be shipped easily to remote, far off distances, especially in a country like India.



AMIT LAHOTI
Managing Director
Ball Beverage
Packaging

How has the response been for your products?

Initially to get a kind of reassurance we did a market survey with a few beer cans and packaged drinks. The response was quite good. Our primary market comprises institutions and hotels because that is where the volumes come from, be it hotel rooms or bars or dine-in areas. We are doing all we can to ensure that hotels & institutions choose aluminium cans over other options.

As of now, what are the challenges?

While we are really excited to partner with Responsible Whatr, one of our major challenges is to educate the consumers about the benefits of using aluminium cans as a packaging material. Another challenge is to make the regulators, legislators and the government aware of the advantages of using aluminium cans for packaging. Also, educating the retailers, HoreCa and F&B experts and distributor chains is very vital.



Our primary market comprises institutions & hotels because that is where the volumes come from"



Inhabit unveils statement chairs

Neeta Kumar, furniture and interior designer, and founder of Inhabit, has unveiled a range of arresting statement chairs. Crafted with high-end materials and exhibiting innovative design, every piece is meticulously created. The timeless statement chairs have strong silhouettes and colourful tones, showcasing the brand's trademark high quality carpentry and upholstery. The furniture is magnificent, displays refinement and is chic and eye-catching. Additionally, the chairs exhibit one-of-a-kind forms, flawless workmanship and a vibrant colour palette. They have an exquisite design aesthetic, while still being functional.



Ashley recliners

Ashley Furniture Home Store has launched a collection of stylish and sturdy recliners, brought to India by Dash Square. With its metal drop-in unitised seat box, the Pranit Wall Recliner offers strength, durability, comfort and style. The reclining mechanism features infinite positions for comfort. The plush Bolzano Rocker Recliner is just what you need for your binge-watching sessions, while the polyester fabric-clad McCade Rocker Recliner with rounded sides and pillowy armrests offers on-trend looks.

Statement sculptures from Beyond Designs

Beyond Designs Home has unveiled a collection of statement sculptures that introduce a dose of heritage and hand-crafted glory into modern homes. Hand-crafted in solid wood, the elephant sculpture on a base displays a weather-worn appeal, while twin parrots in sizes big and small, are finished in gold and mounted on sleek wooden bases. Exquisitely hand-crafted in solid wood, the majestic prancing horse is mounted on a contemporary base.



EtreLuxe unveils Ratio kitchen by Dada

EtreLuxe has unveiled the new Ratio kitchen by Dada. Designed by Vincent Van Duysen, the Ratio kitchen has been enriched with new modularity and materials. Metal grids act as base for floor units, wall units, columns, hoods and accessories. It features slatted doors and internal lighting which integrates the handles with profiles of the same thickness resulting in a decorative frame that gives rhythm to its structure. The Ratio kitchen uses refined woods such as Thermo Oak, and sophisticated natural stones like the new Breccia Capraia, which, with its splendid dark-coloured streaks lends each worktop, backrest or shelf an exclusive appeal.

Form IV

Statement about ownership and other particulars about newspaper Hospitality Talk to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February

1. Place of publication : 72 Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001
2. Periodicity of its publication : Bi-Monthly
3. Printer's Name : SanJeet
Nationality : Indian
Address : 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001
4. Publisher's Name : SanJeet
Nationality : Indian
Address : 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001
5. Editor's Name : SanJeet
Nationality : Indian
Address : 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110001
6. Name and address : SanJeet
of individuals who own : 72, Todarmal Road,
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‘An exceptional executive’

Known for his leadership on difficult national & global issues, **Arne Sorenson** steered Marriott to make significant progress on diversity, equity and inclusion, environmental sustainability and human trafficking awareness.

Arne M. Sorenson, President and CEO of Marriott International, unexpectedly passed away on February 15, 2021. In May 2019, the company announced that Sorenson had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. On February 2, 2021, Marriott shared the news that Sorenson would temporarily reduce his schedule to facilitate more demanding treatment for pancreatic cancer.

Born Oct. 13, 1958, Sorenson started his career as a lawyer with the Washington-based firm Latham and Watkins. He met then-Chief Executive J.W. Marriott Jr. while representing the company in a shareholder case and joined the firm four years later, in 1996. Sorenson became the third CEO in Marriott's history in 2012, and the first without the Marriott surname. A visionary leader, he put the company on a strong growth trajectory that included the \$13-billion acquisition of Starwood Hotels & Resorts in 2016, a deal that added well-known brands such as St. Regis and Sheraton to Marriott's portfolio and cemented its status as the world's largest hotelier. His leadership led to a rapid international expansion that included acquisitions in Canada and South Africa, as well as the creation of boutique brands — such as Moxy Hotels,

known for its casual bistros and large communal spaces — aimed at millennial travellers. During his tenure as CEO, Sorenson was tireless in driving the company's progress, creating opportunities for associates, growth for owners and franchisees and results for the company's shareholders. “We think we have about 730,000 people that wear our name badge every day,” Sorenson said during a 2019 speech. “What we aspire to is that every one of those associates, no matter how senior or junior their job is, deserves to be treated with the kind of dignity that every human being deserves. They deserve to be able to grow in their job if they want to grow in their job. They deserve to be able to take pride in their work. If they take pride in their work, they're going to deliver something that's even better for our guests and customers.”

Known for his leadership on difficult national and global issues, Sorenson steered Marriott to make significant progress on diversity, equity and inclusion, environmental sustainability and human trafficking awareness.

“Arne was an exceptional executive – but more than that – he was an exceptional human being,” said J.W. Marriott, Jr., Executive Chairman and Chairman of the Board. “Arne loved every aspect of this business and relished time spent touring our hotels and meeting associates around the world. He had an uncanny ability to anticipate where the hospitality industry was headed and position Marriott for growth. But the roles he relished the most were as husband, father, brother and friend. On behalf of the Board and Marriott's hundreds of thousands of associates around the world, we extend our heartfelt condolences to Arne's wife and four children. We share your heartbreak, and we will miss Arne deeply.”

When Sorenson stepped back from full-time management in early February, the company tapped two veteran Marriott executives, Stephanie Linnartz, Group President, Consumer Operations, Technology and Emerging Businesses, and Tony Capuano, Group President, Global Development, Design and Operations Services, to share responsibility for overseeing the day-to-day operations of the company's business units and corporate functions, in addition to maintaining their current responsibilities.



“

If associates take pride in their work, they're going to deliver something that's even better for our guests and customers”

ARNE SORENSON



< SHARAD PURI

Cluster General Manager
Sheraton Grand Bengaluru
 Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel & Convention Center and Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park has appointed Sharad Puri as Cluster General Manager. Puri will oversee the complete operations and management of the hotels.



< NIKITA RAMCHANDANI

General Manager
JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu
 Ramchandani is the first lady General Manager to lead the iconic hotel in the Maximum City. She has previously led the Operations discipline for the 135-hotels Marriott International portfolio as the Senior Area Director of Operations.



AMIT MATHURI >

General Manager
The Fern Residency, Jamnagar
 Mathuri brings with him an experience of 13 years in the hospitality industry. He has been associated with Concept Hospitality since the last eight years. Most recently he was Operations Manager at The Fern Kesarval Hotel & Spa, Goa



SUNIL KUMAR >

General Manager
The Westin Goa
 As the General Manager of The Westin Goa, with focus on health and wellness, Kumar will bring forth his beliefs in personal well-being to offer an enriching experience for everyone who walks in through the doors of the luxury resort.



< AJAY KANOJIA

General Manager
Sayaji Hotels Pune
 An industry veteran with almost 15 years, Kanojia has experience in the luxury and upscale hotel segment. In his new role, he will be responsible for delivering high levels of customer service and successful positioning of the hotel.



REEMA DIWAN

Director Design and Technical Services
Accor Gurugram, Haryana
 Diwan will lead the planning, design and construction of projects under Accor and will be responsible for designing high-impact guest experiences. Her forte is putting together an integrated, 360-degree approach to hospitality.



REEMA WADAJKAR >

Director of Events
Hyatt Regency Pune Hotel & Residences
 Wadajkar brings with her over 12 years of experience in the industry, specialising in weddings. She will be overseeing key sectors including business development, brand building, contract management, to name a few.



< AMIT KOCHAREKAR

Executive Chef
The Resort, Mumbai
 With over 17 years of culinary experience, Kocharekar holds an excellent track record of managing budgets and resources to facilitate streamlined operations. He has an impressive career spanning stints at the Renaissance hotel, The Oberoi hotel, and JW Marriott.



DEBOPRIYO GUHA >

Director of Sales
DoubleTree by Hilton Pune - Chinchwad
 Guha comes with strong experience in the hospitality industry spanning over 12 years. In his new role, he will be responsible for driving all the Sales related actions taken and implemented at DoubleTree by Hilton Pune.



< RANJIT PATIL

Executive Housekeeper
Oakwood Premier Prestige Bangalore
 With more than 12 years of experience in the luxury hospitality sector, Patil will be at the helm of all administrative affairs of all housekeeping and laundry facilities while ensuring a secure, safe and hygienic environment.





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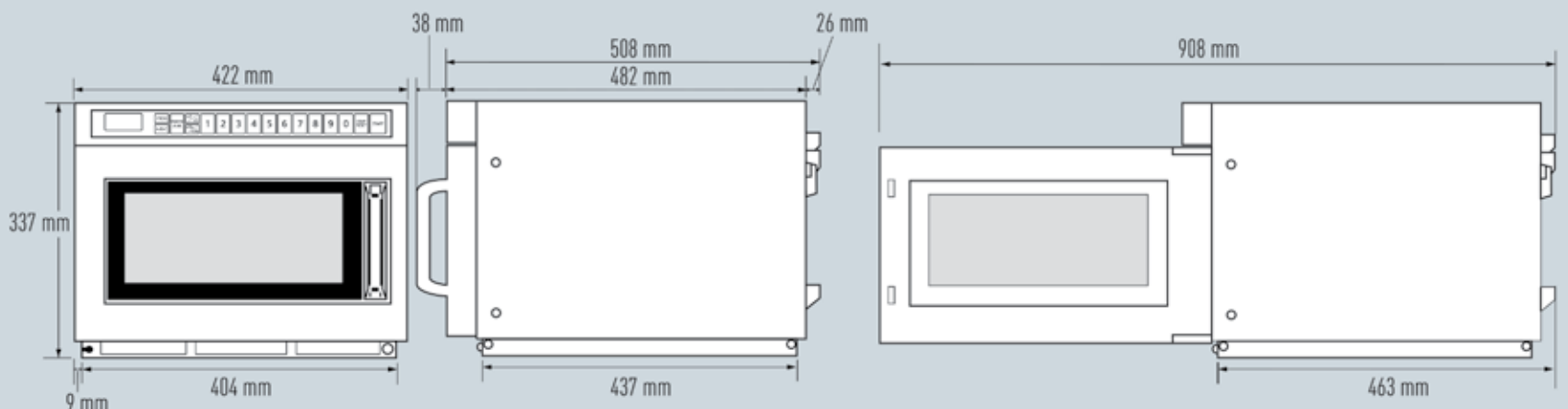
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