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March-April 2024

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Puneet Chhatwal



Chekitan S Dev



Haitham Mattar



Jimi Kariuki

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Empowering hospitality with technology



Propelled by growth in infrastructure, real estate, and aviation, the Indian hospitality sector possibly delivered its best performance on record in 2023. International and domestic hotel brands continue to sign new hotels at an unprecedented pace. Exciting destinations like Lakshadweep and Dwarka have also unfolded their potential and found a place on the tourism map. India must unmask more such gems and put them on global travel agendas to fuel more travel.

On the technology front, hotels need to espouse advanced digital applications to redefine and drive processes and precision marketing. Creating more talent in the digital space should be identified as a priority, as also training existing decision makers and the senior workforce.

“

Creating more talent in the digital space should be identified as a priority, as also training existing decision makers & senior workforce”

Despite the exciting phase experienced by the hospitality and tourism industry in general, there is an underlying concern about the unabating unrest in some parts of the world that needs immediate resolution. Many industry experts, however, believe that the best is yet to come, and one does hope they are spot on.

Cheers,
Sunil Ghadiok

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THE FUTURE OF HOTELS

From high touch
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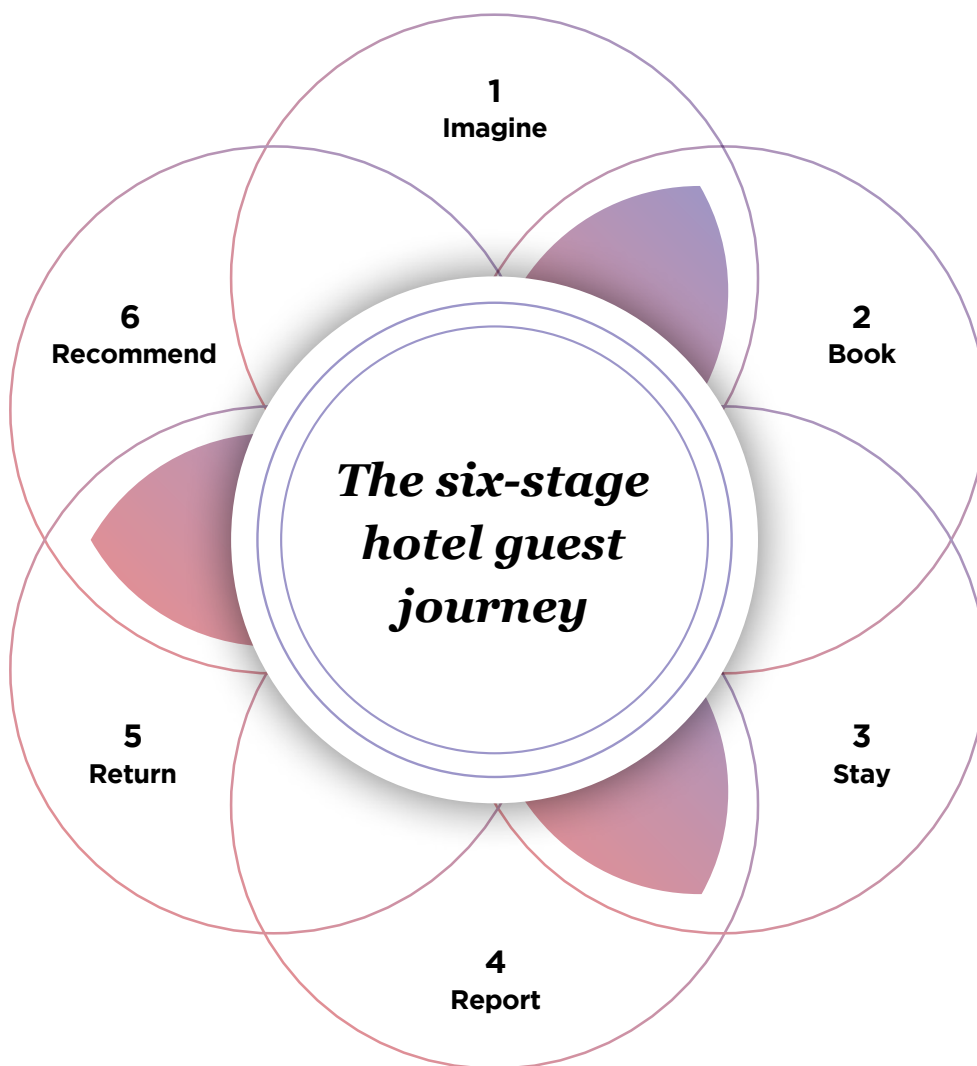


Hotels are transitioning from a ‘people serving people’ model to a high-tech, low-touch approach that emphasises digitalisation throughout the guest journey.

WORDS BY DR. CHEKITAN S DEV

Hotels have always been a high-touch, low-tech business. Today, and into the foreseeable future, hotels are moving away from the pure ‘people serving people’ model towards a more high-tech, low-touch business, and doubling down on digitalisation. In this article, I envision ways in which technology can

innovate and enhance the guest experience throughout the six-stage hotel journey: Imagine-Book-Stay-Report-Recommend-Return as shown in the figure below, with the overlapping circles representing the overlap between stages, so, for example, guests book while they stay (for in-house or off-property services) and report while they stay:





Big data will enable hotels to anticipate guests' requests and service failures to optimise each stay."

Imagine

Hotels are going to take back the Imagine part of the guests' journey from OTA, search, and social platforms by carefully curating informationally and emotionally engaging messages, beamed directly to past guests using sophisticated customer relationship management (CRM) systems via software providers like Salesforce.com, and to future guests who have clicked on, liked, or forwarded their messages on multiple legacy and social media channels. Helping guests imagine themselves in the hotel or resort via augmented reality will enable them to pre-experience their stay.

Book

With 'book direct' campaigns going into overdrive at most hotel companies, building a one-to-one relationship to enable a smart and customised 'one-click' Book capability via mobile apps is going to be more the norm than the exception. During the reservation process, and at check in, instead of agents trying to get guests to sign up for the brand's loyalty programme, they will be incentivised to have guests download their app instead. Repeated use of the app will result in more customised content using machine learning.

Stay

Self-service, a frowned upon brand standard for hotels, especially at the high end, for example: espresso machines in luxury hotels, already prevalent in several luxury hotels, is going to be much more prevalent during the Stay stage enabled by intuitive, tailored, and easy-to-use smart technology of all kinds. Geolocation technology can help pinpoint and amplify guests' social media posts and create opportunities for hotels to surprise guests by offering value-added amenities to enhance the occasion (birthday, honeymoon, anniversary, promotion and deal closing, among others) about which they are posting.



Report

Real-time guest feedback systems via instant messaging systems, attended to 24 hours, for example, a text message I received as I checked in to my stay at The Breakers Palm Beach, will become the more prevalent form of dialogue between guest and host hotel staff to report all requests, service failures and overall satisfaction. Enabling dialogue in this way will move hotel guests away from having to report their problems on social media sites, no longer having to publicly name and shame the hotel to get their attention, and instead offer them a direct, two- way and real-time private communication channel. Big data will enable hotels to anticipate guests' requests and service failures to optimise each stay.

4

Return

Well-timed, thoughtfully constructed collage of pictures and videos, including messages from staff from the prior stay to evoke memories, deeply personalised (same room, same amenities, same special food and beverage orders, some surprises) same period next time (SPNT) or 'call back' campaigns will be designed, coupled with rich three dimensional dynamic experiences placing the guests and their favourite service providers virtually in the hotel via the metaverse, will motivate guests to Return to the same place by giving them compelling reasons to do so.

5

Recommend

High value incentives to Recommend the hotel to all family, friends, and colleagues of the guest, enabled via lucrative, targeted, and easily claimed offers (no fine print) generated with the help of Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems which the guests' can upload to their LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok feeds, will be much better thought out and executed.

6

Conclusion

In one sense, the hotels of the future will be like hotels of the past: intimate, personalised, and welcoming. In another sense, everything in the hotel will be different: better, smarter, and faster, enabled by technology. HT



About the author



Professor Dev (first row left corner) with the Cornell Hotel General Managers Program 2018 class students in the Yale-Princeton Room of the Statler Hotel.

As Professor Chekitan S Dev puts it: ‘My professional activities include teaching, research and consulting, what I refer to as my three-legged stool, with each leg reinforcing the other two to keep me upright. Because I teach, I think I am a better consultant who can explain things clearly. Because I teach, I think I am a



better researcher because I focus on asking questions to which my students want answers. Because I do research, I think I am a better teacher because I have something new and interesting to share. Because I do research, I think I am a better consultant, since I’m doing work that’s creating knowledge with impact. And, because I consult, I am both a better researcher and teacher, since I get to ask questions with both intellectual and pedagogical value’.

A highly accomplished professional with an experience of over 45 years in the World of hotels and hospitality, Professor Dev started his career with Oberoi Hotels as a Management Trainee in 1979. Over the years he did his Masters from Institut de Management Hotelier International in Paris. Subsequently he did his Ph.D at Virginia Tech after which he became a professor at Cornell University where he has served for 36 years and earned the highest attainable academic rank. Notably he has taught over 15000 students working in over 100 countries. HT



Dr. Dev’s efforts have been recognised with numerous teaching awards, showcasing his dedication to nurturing next generation of hospitality professionals.

Professor Dev shares his views on the brave new future of hotels, in conversation with Hotel Talk.

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Advancing luxury & lifestyle

IHG is poised to capitalise on growing demand for luxury and lifestyle brands, particularly in KSA and India.

WORDS BY SHEHARA RIZLY

In the ever-evolving realm of the hospitality sector, marked by a fusion of growth, innovation, challenges, and opportunities, IHG Hotels & Resorts emerges as a symbol of advancement and inclusiveness. **Haitham Mattar**, Managing Director, India, Middle East and Africa, shared insights on their trajectory in key markets and their commitment to training, diversity, and sustainability. “We see a growth and demand for

the luxury and lifestyle brands predominantly in the GCC region. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to be our focus market. We have 168 properties in the pipeline and 50 per cent of those are in the Kingdom and a majority of those are in luxury and lifestyle space. For us, India is poised to become the next China. Presently, India ranks as the fifth largest market in terms of GDP. Analysts also forecast India to ascend to the position of the

third largest market in the world between 4-5 years. This presents significant opportunities for foreign investments. Additionally, we have heard discussions from the Minister of Tourism in India about revitalising the ‘Incredible India’ campaign. This initiative holds tremendous potential for reinvigorating tourism in India, reintroducing the country to the world stage, and creating further opportunities for IHG hotels in India,” Mattar shared.



“

We are focusing on developing and implementing diversity and inclusive training programmes.”

Haitham Mattar

MD, India, Middle East and Africa, IHG Hotels & Resorts

Training & talent acquisition

Training and talent retention pose a challenge for the hospitality industry, particularly in the Middle East. When asked how IHG Hotels & Resorts addresses this issue, he elaborated, “IHG Academy conducts programmes for General Managers, Hotel Managers, and other managerial positions. Additionally, we are focusing on developing and implementing diversity and inclusive training programmes. These programmes assist General Managers in their recruitment processes by adhering to governance that prioritises individuals from diverse backgrounds and People Of Determination (POD),


thus offering equal opportunities to individuals worldwide. In KSA, we launched Hotel Indigo with a focus on providing job training to Saudi nationals.”

Inclusivity has been a priority for IHG and over the years they have been building relationships and collaborating across all their markets to support POD, helping to develop their skills. In EMEA, they have welcomed many POD employees to their hotels in the Kingdom, while in south-west Asia they have attracted more differently-abled talent through their partnerships with NGOs.

Sustainable efforts

“Sustainability and sustainable

actions are part of IHG’s journey and long-term growth strategies. Its ten-year business plan titled, ‘Journey to tomorrow’ focusses on people, planning and the community. As part of its operations, IHG hotels use an advanced ‘IHG Green Engage’ system. It assists hotels with means to measure and manage their impact on the environment with 200 Green Solutions designed to help reduce energy, water and waste,” Mattar said.

Under IHG Green Engage system, there are four levels of certification which IHG Hotels can achieve. On achieving Level 3 certification or above, they can reduce energy use by 25 per cent, informed Mattar 

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Navigating growth

Art, science & IHCL

Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO, IHCL emphasizes the importance of balancing art and science in the company's market expansion approach.

WORDS BY **JANICE ALYOSIUS**



With a keen understanding of the delicate balance between art and science, **Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO, IHCL** unveils the tapestry of IHCL's market expansion approach, offering insights into the company's growth trajectory. "Development is an art as well as a science. It is a combination of various factors such as the type

of contracts, 'like management contract, a lease contract, an investment, a partnership, or a JV, among others,'" he pointed out. Talking about expansion and how to grow sustainably, he said, "Deciding where to expand is a science. However, the art lies in knowing the right time to accelerate and when to decelerate." Under Chhatwal's leadership, IHCL has emerged as a trailblazer

in growth. "The combination of science as well as art has led us to become the industry benchmark in growth over the past three to four years, with the highest number of signings and openings across India. And I do not foresee that changing in the years to come," he said, commenting on the success. With an ambitious pipeline comprising 85 hotels, IHCL is poised to maintain its momentum,

“

Combination of both science & art has led us to become industry benchmark in growth over the last 3-4 years.”



aiming to open a minimum of two hotels per month.

Chhatwal also provides insights into IHCL's expansion plans in Lakshadweep, highlighting the complexity of building on an island, "We are in the final stages of planning, which will soon be submitted for approval. However, construction will take three to four, or possibly even five years, given the complexity of building on an island rather than just a hotel on a site," he revealed.

About high room rates, which have led to many weddings being held abroad, Chhatwal acknowledged the shifting dynamics in the hospitality landscape. "People have accepted the current average room rates. Nevertheless, based on discussions with numerous individuals, I believe

that weddings in India are relocating to venues overseas due to the high banquet room rates in Indian hotels. However, these figures do not align with what is announced when publicly listed companies declare their results. Each company reports double-digit growth in the topline, which would not be possible if people were indeed moving out. On the contrary, as foreign travel gradually returns to pre-COVID levels, we expect these numbers to rise even further," he said.

Looking ahead, IHCL anticipates a resurgence in demand as foreign travel gradually rebounds to pre-COVID levels. This optimism underscores IHCL's unwavering commitment to innovation and adaptability in navigating evolving market dynamics.

HT





Ramping up Middle East presence

Marriott's growth in the Middle East is driven by continuous demand for its upscale hotel brands within the region.

WORDS BY SHEHARA RIZLY

Marriott International is significantly expanding its presence in the Middle East, Egypt and Turkey, with 233 hotels currently operational and around 130 projects in various stages of development. This expansion includes taking over operations of three properties— JW Marriott Hotel Marina, Hotel Boulevard, Autograph Collection, and The Heritage Hotel, Autograph Collection in Dubai and the opening of luxury resorts such as St. Regis Red Sea Resort in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Nujuma Ritz Carlton in the Red Sea, and The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort in the Sultanate of Oman.

Sandeep Walia, COO, Middle East, Marriott International, said, "Nujuma Ritz Carlton will open in Q2 2024 in the Red Sea, Kingdom

of Saudi Arabia, which would be Marriott's first Ritz Carlton Reserve in the Middle East region. Currently, the brand is present in six countries, and this marks its inaugural establishment in the Middle East."

Luxury openings

The St. Regis Red Sea Resort is the first private island to open in The Red Sea project. The destination-defining oasis features a collection of 90 appointed beachfront and overwater villas. The next destination in focus is the Sultanate of Oman as the global hotel chain opens The St. Regis Al Mouj Muscat Resort by Q2. It will feature 250 appointed guestrooms and suites. The resort's curved superyacht-style architecture and interior design, helmed by London-based SRSS Interior Design Studio, will infuse the local landscape and



Sandeep Walia
COO, Middle East
Marriott International



Nujuma Ritz Carlton opens in Q2, 2024, Marriott's first Ritz Carlton Reserve in Middle East region."



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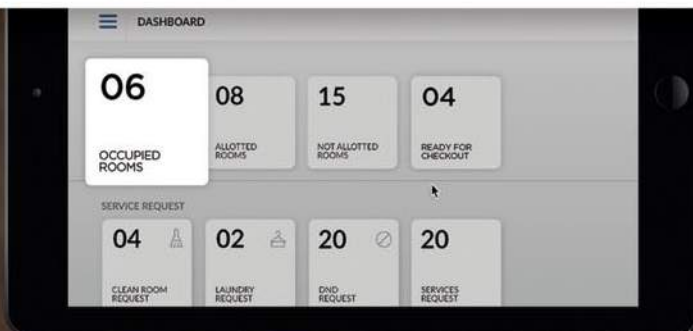
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heritage with the allure of the Gulf of Oman to offer modern waterfront living. Nine compelling culinary destinations include international brands such as Hakkasan, Em Sherif, Roberto's, Coya and Novikov Café, paired with signature brand experiences, including Karibu, a fusion of Zanzibari and Omani cuisine; Rumman, serving Greek specialities; The Stage at the St.

Regis Bar; and The Lounge. The resort will be a glamorous setting for cherished celebrations and meetings of all sizes, including a ballroom set more than 1,350 square metres, hosting up to 940 guests.

Nujuma Ritz Carlton will be the first property from the Marriott in the Middle East and joins an exclusive collection of only six Ritz Carlton Reserves worldwide. The resort will

offer a range of luxurious amenities, including a lavish spa, swimming pools, kids' club and a variety of other leisure and entertainment offerings.

Commitment to sustainability

Walia emphasized sustainability is no longer a trend but a way of life as the UAE extends its focus on sustainability into the current year. "Sustainability is ingrained in everything we do; everyone is increasingly interested, whether they are travellers, booking agents, or operators—all are embracing it and making conscientious choices. It is not just a trend anymore; it is the path forward and here to stay, which is commendable. Last year, we partnered with Etihad for the Etihad Marriott Mangrove Forest project, planting 12,000 mangroves. This year, we aim to double that to 24,000 mangroves in the UAE alone. Currently, as many as 50 of our hotels in the UAE are Green Key sustainable hotels, and we are committed to reaching 100 per cent by the year-end." HT





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Is the best yet to come?

Indian hospitality sector shows significant shifts, spurred by infrastructural developments & new tourism avenues, promising a transformative growth trajectory in 2024.

WORDS BY JAIDEEP DANG



India's growth story in 2023 was marked by significant milestones, with infrastructure grabbing the limelight as the main catalyst. The real estate sector has been a direct benefactor of these targeted initiatives, as commercial, residential, and industrial segments displayed record-breaking performance. Buoyed by this, the hospitality sector displayed a subtle yet fundamental shift in its growth trajectory, indicated not only by standard indicators such as occupancy and ADR, but also by the emergence of new avenues of tourism, which will influence the sector in years to come.

Infrastructural growth in the country has catapulted over the last couple of years. In FY 2023, the number of airports increased from 148 with passenger traffic touching 320 million, which is a 57 per cent jump from FY 2019 volume. In the same period, the total length of national highways increased by 11 per cent, port development saw an uptick in coastal cities such as Trivandrum in Kerala and VadHAVAN in Maharashtra, and the Indian Railways crossed ₹63,000 crore in passenger traffic revenue in FY 2023 for the first time. The Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 displays the growth

map for infrastructural upgrades that envisions the emergence of multiple growth corridors, supported by strong domestic demand, widening middle-class demography, and increasing connectivity.

As a real estate services company, our expertise spans across several asset classes. In the recent past, we have witnessed the boom of the commercial, logistics and industrial sectors, which can be witnessed in record-high leasing volumes and lower vacancy rates. In 2023, India's office markets recorded leasing activity to the tune of 63 million sq ft, breaking all previous



records with the second half of the year being especially strong. The logistics and industrial sector also saw stable performance in 2023, with demand for Grade A compliant warehouses recording a vacancy rate of 6 per cent compared to the overall sector vacancy of 10.6 per cent. This performance is testimony to the robust underlying growth potential of the Indian market and

interest from hotel developers and investors. The Indian government has implemented effective tourism policies such as Swadesh Darshan and PRASAD schemes, utilising branding and marketing campaigns to tap into the tourism potential of Northeastern states and improving air connectivity to these destinations. The medical tourism sector has also experienced growth,

“*A notable trend in travel & tourism sectors is successful exploration of emerging markets, in addition to Tier I cities.*”

solidifies our position as an office and industrial hub to reckon with.

Another notable trend in the travel and tourism sectors is the successful exploration of emerging markets, in addition to Tier I cities. This can be seen prominently in Ayodhya, where the recent unveiling of the Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Temple and the opening of the Ayodhya International Airport have attracted remarkable

with 0.6 million foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in 2022, a mere 7 per cent less than 2019. Furthermore, the government’s proposal to allocate ₹2,450 crores for the development of key religious sites and increased allocations for schemes like Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY) indicates further expansion opportunities for India’s travel and tourism industry.





Supported by the performance in the above-mentioned segments, the hospitality sector claimed its own share of the growth story with the number of branded hotels signings and openings growing by 27 per cent as compared to 2022. Branded hotel penetration in India reached an all-time high of 52 per cent as of December 2023 with the midscale segment accounting for the highest share in both, signings and openings. The luxury and lifestyle segment is also growing at an accelerated rate and in tandem with complementary industries such as wellness and F&B, among others.

Hotel investments have also been on the rise as the year ended with US \$420 million in total investment value. While Tier I cities continue to take up the mantle in terms of the total transacted volume, we have also observed a keen interest among investors in Tier II cities and other emerging markets, for greenfield hotel development, buildouts, and operational hotels. Private equity/institutional capital and HNIs have emerged as the primary sources of

“
*Midscale segment
 accounted for
 the highest share
 in both, signings
 and openings.’*”



Jaideep Dang
 Managing Director
 Hotels and Hospitality
 Group, India, JLL

capital for such transactions, closely followed by real estate developers.

As we step into 2024, the hotel industry is on the verge of a momentous change. With structured government initiatives delivered through policy, budget allocations and infrastructure development, India is geared to unleash its untapped potential and burgeoning latent demand. In light of this, we infer that the hospitality sector will gain stronger momentum due to a resultant increase in newer avenues of hotel demand emerging across the country. This will be further complemented by rising disposable income, airport and complementary developments, and infrastructural upgrades, which in turn will lead to growing interest from hotel developers and investors who want to be a part of this pan-India growth story.

Given this, yes, we do believe that the best is yet to come. HT

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Fortune crosses Fifty hotels

Fortune Hotels is expanding strategically to accelerate its growth. It plans to open 17 properties nationwide in the coming years.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



The 50th property of mid-to-upscale brand Fortune Hotels opens its door in the Delhi-NCR region. Branded as Fortune Park East Delhi, it is perfectly suited for modern-day traveller seeking a well-connected locale with hassle-free access to key hubs and vantage points of the Capital. Featuring contemporary rooms and premium amenities, the hotel also offers an eclectic array of F&B outlets, including Zodiac, Neptune Bar, La Café and lounge, and the soon-to-open sky dining restaurant Nakshatra.



Samir MC
Managing Director
Fortune Hotels

“*If we compare, India to other travel destinations, we are probably one of the lowest priced.*”

Expansion beyond metros

Sharing the brand's growth plans, **Samir MC**, Managing Director, Fortune Hotels, said, “Fortune Park East Delhi is a significant value-add to our ongoing, long-term growth trajectory being our fifth operating hotel in Delhi NCR.”

He added, “We have signed 10 hotels so far and opened seven,

including Fortune Park East Delhi. We have 17 properties in the pipeline, which we aim to open in the next couple of years.”

Spiritual journeys on rise

The hotel chain operates in many pilgrimage destinations such as Madurai, Tirupati, Amritsar and Katra. He added, “We have some

more projects on cards in cities such as Ajmer and Shirdi, among others. We are exploring our brand presence in Ayodhya too.”

Calling pricing a debatable topic he said, “Your pricing must come with value. If we compare India to other travel destinations around the world, we are probably one of the lowest priced destinations.”

HT

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Unlocking new horizons

As Sarova Hotels & Resorts marks its 50th anniversary this year, **Jimi Kariuki** provides insights into brand's emphasis on India market.

WORDS BY **ARUMITA GUPTA**

Nestled in the heart of Kenya, amidst its landscapes and vibrant culture, Sarova Hotels & Resorts serves as a symbol of outstanding hospitality. With a history spanning five decades, this well-known brand has not just become a familiar name in Kenya but has also formed robust ties with the diverse and dynamic market of India.

The story began twenty years ago when Sarova decided to expand its presence into the market. **Jimi Kariuki**, Managing Director, Sarova Hotels & Resorts, fondly recalls those days, "India has held profound significance for us constituting an integral and enduring aspect of our values and relationships," he shared, reflecting on the brand's focus on the leisure segment.

"Over the years, the brand has expanded its reach by exploring incentives and forging partnerships

“

India has held profound significance for us constituting an integral & enduring aspect of our values & relationships.”



Jimi Kariuki
Managing Director
Sarova Hotels & Resorts

with companies such as Godrej and Konica. The journey was not without its challenges; however, with unwavering dedication from the team and support from individuals like Heena Munshaw, success became attainable," Kariuki explained.

As Sarova looks ahead to its 50th anniversary in April 2024, the connection with India grows stronger. The brand's focus on cities in Tier II & III aligns well with the evolving dynamics of the travel market. 

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Spreadable Agar Agar (Wondergel)

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- Set yoghurt
- Vanilla panna cotta
- Stirred yoghurt

Sodium Alginate

- Cosmetic
- Impression
- Molecular spherification
- Noodles
- Dental

Stabilizers

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- CrèmeDelite (Ice cream stabilizer)
- Suspension drink Stabilizer
- Milkshake Stabilizer
- Flavored Milk Stabilizer

Gellan Gum (Plant Gel)

- Suspension beverages
- Tooth paste
- Air freshener gel
- Tissue culture

Guar gum/ Modified Guar Gum

- Meat and plant based meat application
- Sauce
- Ice cream
- Personal care

TARAGUM

- Mayonnaisse
- Ice cream
- Sauce
- Fruit juice

Carrageenan (A Wholly Natural Hydrocolloid)

- Water dessert jelly / cup jelly
- Meat and plant based meat applications
- Gummy bear
- Cheese

PECTIN

- Jam
- Candy
- Toppings
- Yoghurt

Sealife (Vegan Dietary Fibre)

- Iodine fortified foods
- Food for dysphagia disorder
- Energy bar
- Palatable foods

Locust bean Gum

- Condiments
- Meat and plant based meat application
- Ice cream
- Sorbet

Xanthan Gum

- Mayonnaisse
- Sauce
- Ice cream
- Salad dressings

Carboxymethyl Cellulose(CMC)

- Ice cream
- Milk shake
- Frappe
- Cakes

Modified starch

- Sauce
- Waffles
- Soup
- Stew
- Tart

Curdian Gum

- Tofu
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- Bake stable fillings
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Leveraging sustainable luxury

ITC Grand Bharat offers lavish escape with its expansive landscape promising unparalleled hospitality and rejuvenation.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU



Nestled amidst the backdrop of the Aravalli foothills, enveloped by 300 acres of verdant landscapes, and a short drive away from New Delhi, lies the archetypal luxury retreat—ITC Grand Bharat. Home to the Jack Nicklaus Signature Golf Course, this haven promises an unparalleled experience in hospitality and rejuvenation.

“The interest in domestic travel is expected to continue into this year, which will revolve around immersive destination experiences, wellness tourism, sustainable travel, luxury escapes with focus on ‘local’ elements, workcation, and staycation, with sustainability at its core under the ‘ITC Hotels: Responsible Luxury’ umbrella, our hotels are positioned at an advantage,” **Rishi Mattu**, General Manager, ITC Grand Bharat, said.

ITC Hotels emphasise on local cuisines and will continue wherein “our guest will witness an expanded menu featuring millets-based food



Rishi Mattu
General Manager
ITC Grand Bharat

options. The focus on bleisure travel is set to grow, while wellness and self-care remain prominent trends. The retreat offers an array of leisure activities for guests to enjoy at an unhurried pace, including segway tours, cycling and badminton, among others”, Mattu highlighted.

“*ITC Grand Bharat offers array of leisure activities for guests to enjoy, including segway tours, cycling & badminton, among others.*”

Being a conference-ready hotel, it boasts multiple venues. “Following the success of the G20 4th Sherpa meet hosted at the ITC Grand Bharat—we anticipate a surge in MICE events, fostering infrastructure development and further reducing travel time from Gurgaon,” he pointed out.

HT



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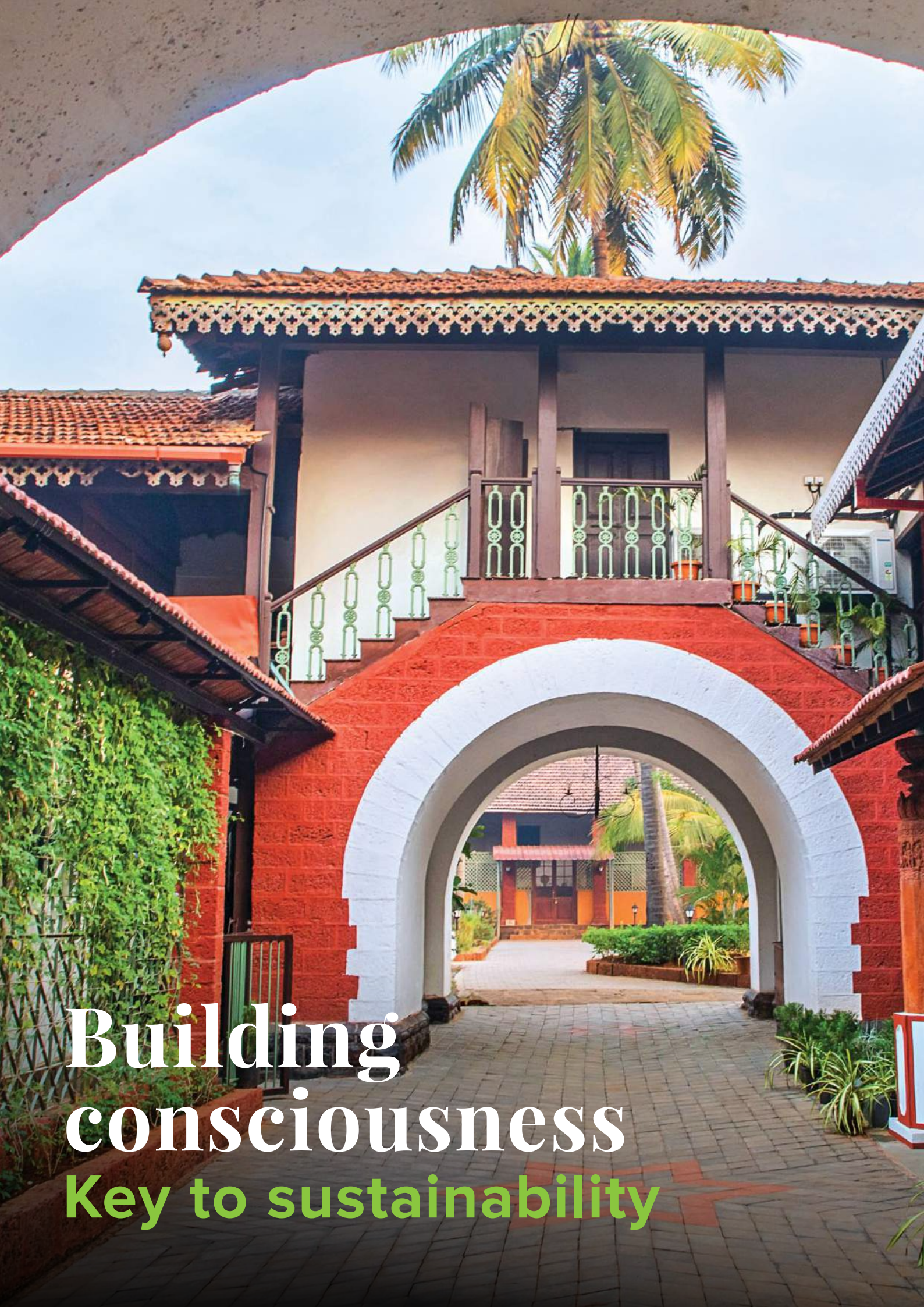
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**Building
consciousness
Key to sustainability**



There is a pressing need for significant change in industry's perspective on responsible travel, recognising it as crucial imperative for well-being of planet.

WORDS BY **SHOBA RUDRA**

For sustainability to be the focus of any business, it requires a personal awareness of the plight of our planet which is reeling under the stress of unprecedented population growth. Every industry must seek to build its own conscience, especially considering that travel and hospitality are identified as two of the most carbon-intensive businesses, contributing to about 8–10 per cent of global emissions. One is also constantly bombarded with information, matrices, verified and unverified statistics on global warming and climate change effects, some of which hover right over us.

Consider sustainability as a personal choice, a good place to begin is to ask questions from oneself, of the business one does and the life one leads on a compromised planet. A good reference point is the social media to what is happening around you, both in terms of challenges and solutions where climate change is concerned. The curious bit is you will be fed with both, and you can choose either—to know and act or live in denial. The choice is yours, of course, but the consequences are devastatingly global and often irrevocable.

Having worked around within a limited time frame, my experience and awareness in the tourism business are almost conjunct with that of my business of promoting small and boutique hotels, each with a story to tell. I began with what could be one of the first active and well-known sustainable lodges, powered by the ethos of Tiger Tops, Churhat Kothi reflected Chief Seattle's immortal words, "All things share the same breath—the beast, the trees, and

man. The air shares its spirit with all the life it supports.” This was a lesson in inclusivity, local experiences and location. Ironically many of the hotels that joined the community were somehow connected with Tiger Tops, which in the 70s and 80s gained a cult status in pioneering environmentally responsible tourism with an unwavering commitment to the community and wildlife.

The community we have built as RARE India, lists all lodges and hotels from the subcontinent, where owners have developed a strong model with sustainability as a central ethos, at the same time offering world-class accommodation. Many of them have made it their personal mission to constantly innovate and shift to better systems. Large or small organisations, the vision and belief have to be spearheaded by the individual driving the change within the company, and progress



As an industry, we are in our biggest growth phase and can make the shift to mainstreaming global policies and practices.



has to be measured under a balanced, self-motivated and transparent matrix, until a policy is in place where incentives and penalties will enforce the shift towards climate-friendly businesses.

Sustainable travel means travelling responsibly considering all the data we have about the impact of our travels and business operations. There are organisations that have been quietly working towards promoting and operating sensitively, long before the global alarm bells went off. The good news is that we are in the interim zone of change, particularly in the tourism industry. I would believe we are in the beginning of the interim phase which is where both radical and continuous change happens. This is also when there is notable contribution from individuals and organisations as initiators and

catalysts. However, you will also find a lot of grey areas, with much green washing and unsubstantiated claims. In fact, many of the true practitioners continue to envision sustainability as a journey, learning and unlearning along the way. As an industry, we are in our biggest growth phase and can make the shift to mainstreaming global policies and practices.

This shift has to incorporate understanding, the scope and effects of tourism on the planet, from the obvious and often quoted to the smaller and overlooked issues. The good news is there are organisations, which have been working towards helping build such solutions. From auditing businesses and operations to the first course of action as mitigation, to impact assessment and finally towards verified and climate intelligent

offsetting. Tourism has to continue investing time, energy and resources seriously. Carbon emission and its calculation must be adopted as a serious and bonafide matrix to gauge carbon footprints and to standardise claims in the area of sustainable travel, which will soon become as important as average room revenue and categorisation. Organisations and the industry serious about their carbon footprint will have to build this into a voluntary and self-regulating exercise to mitigate and measure their emissions. Ministry of Tourism is working towards this seriously towards this goal through their campaign 'Travel for Life'. Sustainable travel is not a trend; it is a crucial mindset that questions the logic of unstoppable growth on a finite planet.

About the author

Shoba Rudra is a storyteller and marketing communications professional,



who runs a hospitality marketing platform called RARE India. This platform promotes boutique and experiential hotels. Operated by owners or hosts, these hotels are chosen based on



the key ethos—community inclusive and planet sensitive.

(The views expressed are solely of the author. The publication may or may not subscribe to the same)



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Redefining tradition

Context-centred hospitality

Designers play a vital role in creating context-centred and environmentally sensitive spaces, fostering holistic growth in the hospitality sector.

WORDS BY MITU MATHUR

Infrastucture augmentation in India has unlocked hidden locations, boosted tourism and created a demand for unique hospitality avenues. This presents opportunities for Indian communities to tap into this expanding realm. However, if not managed properly, this could disrupt the authenticity of a region. Today, visitors seek unique experiences and luxury tourism is redefined by responsive and responsible design, focusing on cultural immersion while respecting ecology.

Designing experiences

The development strategy of hotels or recreational conclaves must consider the 3Cs—Context, Culture, and Climate. Designers play a crucial role in bridging the gap between existing and proposed spaces, economic

and ecological, and surreal and tangible. They embrace the concept of ‘Heterotopias of Change’, which suggests creating transformative spaces and environments that offer an alternative experience. There is a shift from traditional design, which focusses on aesthetics, functionality, and comfort, to incorporating a deeper consideration of the impact on individuals, communities, and ecology.

Context-centred approaches

For us, an interesting opportunity presented itself with a unique contoured site at Rishikesh for a resort, offering a pristine visual connection to the river. Infusing the location’s spiritual centrality, we used Vastu as a guiding principle to design the spaces. The Spiritual Heterotopia of this resort will offer a series of terraces, highlighting activities for the congregation, arrival, Yoga, Ganga Aarti, celebration and relaxation, creating a place that encourages diversity and alternative perspectives.



Contextual heterotopia offers alternative spaces that develop unique characteristics by integrating design elements and local practices. In our project, JW Marriott Resort & Spa Shimla, we used the challenging site as an opportunity to integrate some critical traditional construction details into the concept design by Principal Designer, Smallwood Architects, ensuring a seamless methodology, minimising disruption of natural ground and maximising longevity of the built structures. Without compromising on the vision of the designer, strategies that respect the landform and existing water channels are incorporated to help the project become a sustainable model.

Green wave in hospitality design

The Northeast is gaining momentum in sustainable tourism, focusing on fragile ecosystems and environmental conservation. This development is expected to involve local communities, preserve traditions, and promote economic empowerment. At GPM, we believe in going Glocal, promoting local as the new

global. Island Heterotopia is another example of sustainable tourism, avoiding westward models that disrupt marine ecology. Lakshadweep, an island tourism destination, must adopt a sensitive approach, combining architectural practices and technological advancements to harmoniously balance progress and conservation, setting a precedent for responsible tourism.

Capacity building

Capacity building is crucial for creating environmentally responsible and socially beneficial spaces in the hospitality industry. It involves equipping architects, designers, and



Designers embrace the concept of 'Heterotopias of Change', which suggests creating transformative spaces and environments that offer an alternative experience.

stakeholders with the knowledge and skills to integrate indigenous elements into projects. Collaborative work on projects is essential for growth and change. Architects can evoke compelling narratives and translate them into memorable experiences for visitors.

At the heart of it, the key is to know that built form is constantly in dialogue with the outside world, enabling heterotopias of change in hospitality design, where spaces evolve and adapt to foster the impactful and transformative 3Es— Ecology, Economy and Equity! HT

About the author

Mitu Mathur is an award-winning architect and urban designer with an aptitude for crafting hospitality, public, institutional, housing and master planning projects. She holds the position of Director at GPM Architects and Planners.

<https://gpmindia.com/>

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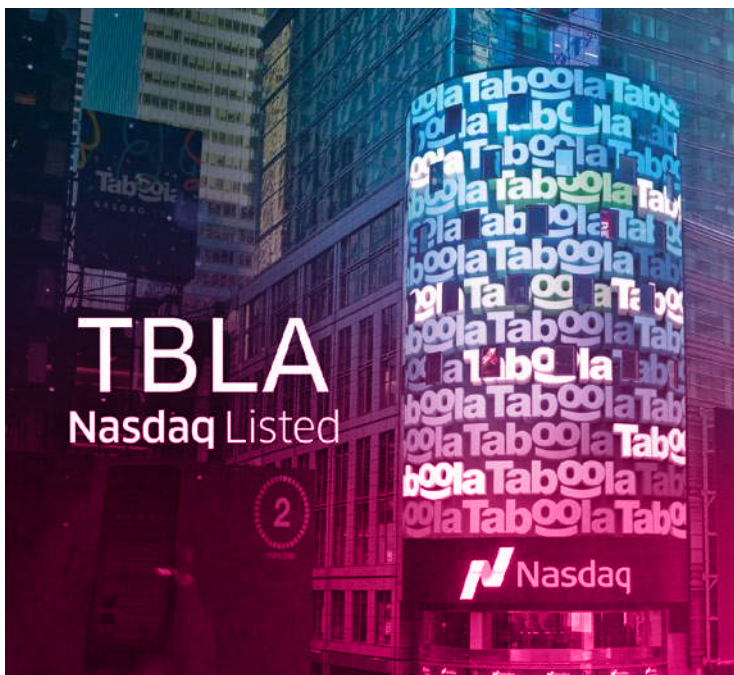
Digital transformation Key to hotel success

From navigating complexities of cookieless world to harnessing power of disruptive technologies, **Kanika Mittal** provides insights into transformative digital journey ahead for hospitality sector.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

Q: What bold strategies do you feel hotels need to adopt, to thrive in an increasingly competitive open web environment?

A: Hotels need to embrace bold strategies that focus on enhancing customer experience, leveraging data-driven insights, and embracing emerging technologies. One key strategy is to prioritise digital transformation across all aspects of the business, from booking processes to guest services. This includes investing in robust online booking systems, mobile apps for seamless guest interactions, and personalised marketing campaigns driven by data analytics. Additionally, embracing emerging technologies such as augmented reality (AR) for virtual tours, artificial intelligence (AI) for personalised recommendations and blockchain for secure transactions can differentiate hotels in this competitive landscape.



Kanika Mittal
Country Manager
Taboola India

“

Leveraging contextual targeting and AI-powered algorithms will help deliver relevant content to users without relying on third party cookies.”

Q: As we transition into a cookieless world, what innovative approaches can hotel brands take to maintain personalised experiences and targeted advertising?

A: In a cookieless world, hotel brands can maintain personalised experiences and targeted advertising by shifting towards first party data collection and technologies such as Taboola. Leveraging contextual targeting and AI-powered algorithms will help deliver relevant content to users without relying on third party cookies. To succeed in this digital marketing landscape, data is your best friend. We empower brands with a wealth of actionable data and insights through the marketplace of its audience. Leveraging our unique and finely-tuned contextual segments, proprietary audience segments, and industry-leading data partner audiences, hotels have access to a comprehensive array of targeting options. Additionally, seamlessly

on boarding first party data with Advertiser 1P Audiences for unparalleled precision in reaching one’s desired audience and make it work in cookieless environment of the future.

Q: What disruptive technologies or concepts do you believe have the potential to revolutionise the way hotels engage with guests?

A: Disruptive technologies like voice assistants, Internet of Things (IoT) devices, and virtual reality (VR) have the potential to revolutionise how hotels engage with guests. Voice-controlled smart assistants can streamline guest requests and provide personalised recommendations. IoT devices can enhance room automation and enable predictive maintenance, improving operational efficiency and guest satisfaction. VR technology can offer immersive experiences like virtual tours and remote concierge services, enhancing the overall guest experience.



Q: How do you envision the role of artificial intelligence and machine learning, evolving within the hospitality sector?

A: Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) are poised to play a significant role in the evolution of the hospitality sector. AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants can handle routine inquiries, freeing up staff to focus on more complex guest needs. ML algorithms can analyze large data sets to predict guest preferences, optimise pricing strategies, and personalise marketing campaigns. Additionally, AI-driven predictive analytics can anticipate demand fluctuations and optimise inventory management, leading to cost savings and improved revenue generation.

Q: In the Indian market, how can hotels leverage digital platforms to effectively reach and engage with diverse cultural audiences?

A: In the Indian market, hotels can leverage digital platforms to effectively reach and engage with diverse cultural audiences by tailoring content and marketing strategies to specific demographic segments. This involves understanding unique preferences and behaviour patterns of different audience groups and creating targeted campaigns that resonate with their cultural values and interests. We offer solutions for content distribution and audience targeting across 101 million daily active users in India, covering

a majority of premium publishers and many others across lifestyle, news and tech, including unparalleled reach in vernacular mediums as well. This would help hotels tap into Tier II and III audiences as well.

Q: Given your organisations expertise in driving audience engagement, what innovative strategies do you recommend for hotels in India to enhance their content marketing efforts?

A: To enhance content marketing efforts, hotels in India can adopt strategies that are not intrusive and gel well with the mindset of a consumer looking for a relaxed holiday experience. Our advertising solutions seamlessly blend into the user experience, making it less intrusive and more engaging. From eye-catching thumbnails to compelling headlines, we help distribute beautiful imagery when the attention spans are high and not distracted. This approach not only enhances user engagement but also drives higher click-through rates and conversions. HT

About the author

Kanika Mittal, Country Manager for Taboola India, brings a wealth of expertise aimed at driving growth and executing strategic initiatives with precision. She is also responsible for leading contextual marketing excellence through Generative AI and Creative Solutions. A market leader, Taboola is well-positioned to assist hotels in reaching a broad and engaged audience with its brand safe solutions and Generative AI capabilities.

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New experience centre showcases cutting-edge solutions

Ozone reveals Experience Centre that invites customers to envision future of home & commercial spaces, aligning with its strategic vision.

WORDS BY JANICE ALYOSIUS

Ozone Overseas leads in immersive experiences and holistic solutions. **Abhishek Aggarwal**, President, Strategy, Ozone Overseas emphasises that the company designs products that connect with modern needs, going beyond just hardware.

“Our new Experience Centre invites customers to envision the future of home and commercial spaces, aligning with our strategic vision,” stated Aggarwal.

The company caters to the diverse needs of the hotel sector with products such as revolving glass door systems, automatic sliding doors, hinges, wardrobe sliding system, shower cubicle fittings and railing accessories, among others. Ozone also provides security



“

From framed solutions to wardrobe and kitchen accessories, Ozone is at the forefront of integrating functionality with design aesthetics.



solutions for homes, offices, hotels and commercial establishments. This includes home and office safes, hotel safes, digital door locks, main door locks, smart cameras and smart plugs, among others.

Ozone’s commitment to excellence is evident in its product portfolio. The company is not merely adapting to trends but setting them. From framed solutions to wardrobe and kitchen accessories, Ozone is at the forefront of integrating

functionality with design aesthetics. With recent launches spanning shower enclosures to office and kitchen accessories, the brand continues to broaden its offerings, catering to diverse consumer needs.

Ozone envisions itself as an integral partner in the growth trajectory of infrastructure, homes, and hospitality spaces. The brand’s indigenous product line is in tandem with its philosophy of ‘making in India’ for the world.

HT

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Prologic First is enthusiastic about its rapid growth and committed to expanding software solutions for hospitality, aiming for excellence.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

Prologic First has positioned itself as a frontrunner in hotel management software solutions, serving more than 2,500 clients spanning across over 40 countries. Its dedication to delivering superior services is evident in its widespread presence and ongoing efforts to elevate customer experiences on a global scale.

“As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance our offerings, we are continuously working to expand our portfolio and bring more hotels into our network. Our roadmap involves strategic collaborations with establishments that align with our values and standards. By forging relationships with new partners, we aim to enrich the experiences of our customers and extend our reach to more destinations,” said **Amit Sharda**, COO, Prologic First.

Highlighting the brand’s focus in India, Sharda underscores their primary emphasis on 3 to 5-star hotels. However, he emphasises that the versatility of their cloud solutions enables them to cater



to a diverse spectrum of hotels, including budget, economy, city, and luxury establishments. With an inclusive approach, Prologic First extends its services to every type of hotel, leveraging the diverse solutions their cloud platform offers for each category.

The brand has garnered enthusiastic reviews from customers for its Hotel Guest Service Management Software, @yourWISH. This innovative and multifunctional technology solution plays a vital role in enhancing guest satisfaction. Specifically designed to manage guest requests and incidents, it tracks down each call from initiation to closure. A notable demonstration of the technology embedded in this application is the recent introduction of ChatBOT and the Guest Facing Web APP.

HT



Amit Sharda
COO
Prologic First

“*As part of our ongoing efforts to enhance our offerings, we are continuously working to bring more hotels into our network.*”

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Qatar quintessentially exotic

Packing ‘journey of a lifetime’ into a miniscule yet magnificent stopover, the luxury line-up of hospitality offerings and exciting events make it a year-round tourist destination.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

S mashing the conventional boundaries of space and scale, Qatar is consistently redefining luxury travel itinerary of all budgets. Offering a rich kaleidoscope of culture, heritage, luxe hotels and colossal skyline, the country is pulling all stops to become the top tourist destination in the Middle East.

Keeping heritage at the heart of its cities with camel racetracks, spice souks, while foregrounding its futuristic approach with technology, innovation and spectacular architecture, it is stopover that is sure to leave you spellbound.

Taking the excitement a notch up, Visit Qatar and Qatar Airways recently announced the launch of ‘Stopover Flight Packages in Doha’ to promote Qatar as premier tourist destination in a joint effort. In a press conference chaired by His Excellency

Saad bin Ali Al Kharji, Chairman, Qatar Tourism, and **Engr Badr Mohammed Al Meer**, CEO, Qatar Airways Group, ‘The ‘Stopover in Qatar’ package was unveiled.

Al Kharji said, “It is imperative to highlight that last year, the number of travellers and hotel room nights for stopovers in Qatar more than doubled compared to 2022 as a direct result of Qatar Airways flying to over 177 international destinations. January 2024, witnessed another remarkable achievement with over 700,000 visitors, setting a new monthly record, we are continuing this growth, with the aim of welcoming six million annual visitors by 2030.”

Qatar sees India as its key source market, standing second to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. **Philip Dickinson**, Tourism Marketing and Promotion Sector, Qatar Tourism, shared, “We welcomed 420,000 visitors from India in 2023,

A premium getaway



Visit Qatar and Destination Qatar's stopover packages offer five exciting options at over 100 hotels for travellers embarking on their journey on Qatar Airways' network of over 170 destinations. All stopover packages include 24-hour check-in facilities, so guests can make the most of their time in Qatar and can be tailored to add-on options, including airport assistance, transfers and a range of tours and experiences to enhance their stay, such as city and desert tours.

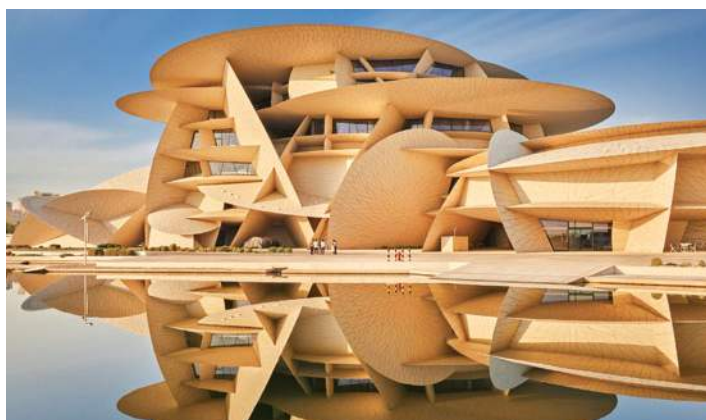


Philip Dickinson

Tourism Marketing & Promotion
Sector, Qatar Tourism



Our focus is on segments such as Leisure (holidays and VFR), MICE, Weddings, Cruise & Bleisure



an increase of 50 per cent on 2022 making it our second largest source market.” With improved direct connectivity and flight frequency, it aims to attract more Indian travellers. He added, “We are appealing to a lot of Indian travellers, as we are a short flight away. We have Qatar Airways, IndiGo, Air India, Vistara and newly announced Akasa Air—all flying directly from India. So, perhaps not so much demographic rather segments such as Leisure (holidays and VFR), MICE, Weddings, Cruise and Bleisure—either Point to Point or Stopover.”

With its diverse offerings, travellers are surely in for a fulfilling experience that is exciting as well as exceptional. As Dickinson asserts that the tourist attractions are just ‘too many to mention’. “There are amazing new waterparks like the recently opened Meryal Waterpark and Desert Falls Water and Adventure Park; theme parks such as Winter Wonderland and Doha Quests. One can also indulge in a range of hotels options, culinary outlets, shopping malls, world class museums, beach clubs and desert adventures to name a few.”

The year-round calendar of events is dotted with sporting events, concerts, food festivals and shopping extravaganzas. So, it does not matter how short or long your stay is, you discover a new side to Qatar each time.

HT

Showcasing forward-looking products



Rajendra Mittal
Founder & Director, Mittal International

Incorporating intelligent technology with sustainability objectives, the top-tier exhibitors at AAHAR '24 provide high-quality solutions for food & hospitality sector.

WORDS BY **AMITA PANDEY**

We have been participating in the AAHAR exposition for the past 35 years, showcasing kitchen equipment for hotels and other institutions. This year, we are once again gearing up to exhibit a wide range of imported products, including ice-cube machines, Italian coffee machines, and ovens, among others. We are equipped to offer economically priced products tailored to the Indian market. Our USP lies in providing products that align with the evolving needs of the Indian market and importing advanced equipment from international manufacturers accordingly.



Chakradhar Rao
CEO
Nestin Ventures

This year, our stall at AAHAR will be themed 'Sustainable Goodfoodmood'. The stall would showcase latest designs and interactive sessions, where clients can experience the softness and quality of our eco-friendly materials. Our latest range of premium napkins, the Bio Dunisoft napkins, stand out through a unique combination of innovation and design excellence. They are made from fossil-free, renewable materials and are home compostable. Our R&D team has developed a revolutionary process that reduces water and energy consumption during production, further minimising our environmental footprint.



Mohit Sharma
CEO
Romio Technologies

This year we are excited about the theme at AAHAR 2024, which will be more on the visual and live experience of the products. The stalls will be designed so that visitors get an idea of smooth billing and how a display of products, videos and images influences customer purchases. Our latest product includes a self-checkout point-of-sale kiosk, which serves as a lifeline for QSRs by reducing counter billing queues during rush hours. Not only are we focusing on new products, but also upgrading existing PoS products to the latest configuration.



Veena Arora
Vice President
Product Procurement
Ozone

Ozone will be showcasing new systems and products at AAHAR 2024. For instance, we have a new stainless steel premium range in the Shower Enclosure category. The Stealth Series is another new product that has captured the attention of architects and interior designers alike. It assists in creating a modern look with a clear seamless view. Along with this, we also have slim profile doors, a new safes and locks range, Kube Line, and more product development in the wardrobe category as well. Our products are innovative. They appeal to customers not just in India but across the world.



Ramesh Shah
President
King Metal Works

King Metal Works will promote new products and brands while educating clients on the right products to use at AAHAR 2024. The company will maintain a white and blue colour theme for the stalls aligning with the brand logo's colours. Our new offerings stand out from competitors due to their suitability for clientele in the hospitality sector. They are unique and do not face immediate competition. King Metal Works' focuses on the introduction of new products for meeting the hospitality clients' needs, as they are always seeking new tabletop products to enhance their offerings and attract customers.

HT

Steering job market amidst challenges

Hospitality industry is witnessing dynamic hiring trends influenced by seasonal fluctuations and global events, emphasizing the need for flexibility.

WORDS BY SAKSHI SINGH

Tourism and allied sectors such as hospitality make up around 3 per cent of India's GDP. For perspective, the share of tourism in France's GDP is 8 per cent and for Thailand the figure is 18 per cent. India has substantial progress to make, but the recent trend indicates positive developments in the sector. The rise in domestic travellers and the changing global tourism scenario after COVID is creating a robust demand for jobs in the hospitality sector. While the growing number of job opportunities is positive for the many individuals aspiring to work in hospitality, it is crucial to grasp the intricacies of this demand.

According to TeamLease, the industry's employment landscape has been equally dynamic, marked by a notable increase in

“

In peak travel seasons, job applications increase, while economic downturns are likely to decrease the number of applicants.”



Vijay E Gaikwad
Director, HR
Meluha The Fern
An Ecotel Hotel



apprentice and trainee recruitment. It has soared by 54 per cent CAGR over the past two years. This period has seen a staggering 271 per cent rise in overall hiring within the hospitality sector. The resurgence of tourism has played a pivotal role in this employment boom, with food & beverage (F&B) roles experiencing a 37 per cent increase, housekeeping positions rising by 22 per cent, and more specialized, higher-level positions witnessing an 8 to 10 per cent upturn.

The sector's job market is highly dynamic, with the number of CVs received fluctuating in response to various factors. "The specific volume of CVs can vary based on several factors, including the region, time of year, and

global events impacting travel and tourism," said **Vijay E. Gaikwad**, Director, Human Resources, Meluha The Fern An Ecotel Hotel.

He pointed out, "For instance, during peak travel seasons, there is a surge in job applications, while external factors such as economic downturns can lead to a reduction in the number of applicants."

Hotels require skilled employees in most departments ranging from front of house, housekeeping, culinary, and administrative roles. The diversity in job roles reflects the multi-faceted nature of hospitality services, which require a wide range of skills and expertise to cater to the





“

Most college students lack commitment and communication skills, crucial for job interviews in the hotel sector.”



Clifford Dsilva
GM, HR
The Orchid
Hotel, Mumbai

diverse needs of guests. Some departments, however, are witnessing faster growth and need a higher quantity of people.

A decade ago, people could expect to get hired with little specific skillset and learn on the job. Times have changed presently, and managers are looking for well-rounded individuals who can contribute to various aspects of hospitality services. “HR is looking for a variety of skills when a person is interviewed. The first and foremost requirement is his/her proficiency in the field for which he/she is being considered. For instance, if he/she is looking for a front office position, he/she needs to have an idea about the same,” Gaikwad said. Similar requirements were highlighted by Dsilva. “The hotels are actively seeking candidates with honed skills specific to each department, a results-oriented approach, and stability,” Dsilva explained.

Despite upbeat sentiments, a critical challenge, staring the hospitality sector in the face, is the gap between academic training and industry requirements. Industry experts suggest college graduates need to gain a level of industry know-how along with a suite of soft skills to be ready for the hospitality sector. “In my perspective, most college students lack commitment, communication skills, and a solid understanding of the code of conduct, which they should address before attending a job interview,” Dsilva said.

HT



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Stepping into luxury

Rosabagh has unveiled Reve Royale, a maximal furniture collection. True to the brand's aesthetic semantics, it brings classic opulence harking back to Victorian splendour, which is orchestrated in a contemporary mood board. It comprises furniture, accents, chandeliers, décor and more.

An oasis of
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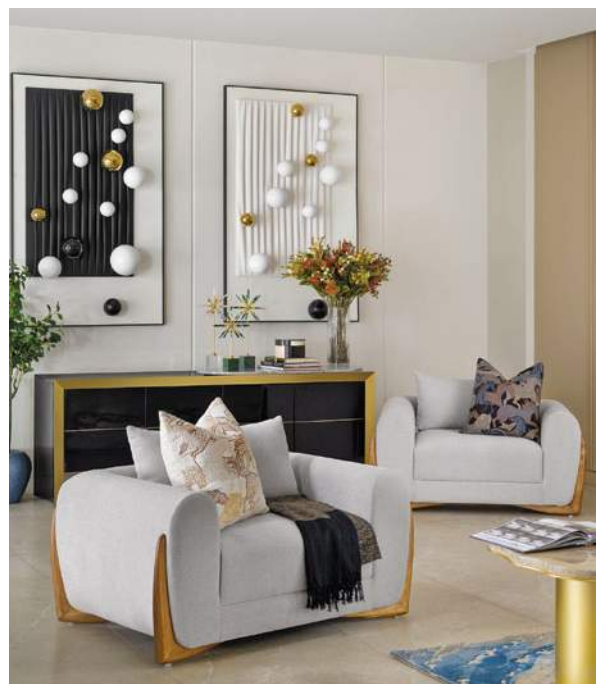
Beauty meets durability

Kohler has forayed into the kitchen sink market in India with the launch of Cairn Kitchen Sinks—Crafted from Neoroc. The sinks are built to endure the demands of daily use, combining a beautiful design and a rich matte colour palette with the most durable material.



Dive into design

Indesign has opened a new store by the name of Dimensions by Indesign. Divided into distinct sections, the space showcases a diverse range of concepts catering to different areas such as the bedroom, living room, bar, and foyer.





Customisation at its finest

Memuraa has announced its exquisite presence in the world of interior aesthetics. Born from a fervent desire to bring the most vivid imaginations and designs to life on the canvas of walls, Memuraa stands as a testament to the marriage of art, innovation, and customisation.

Embrace opulence

Designers Resource has introduced exquisite range of fabrics, delicately infused with the enchanting allure of Pantone's 2024 colour of the year—a soft peach palette. This collection boasts sumptuous textures and embraces the latest design trends, offering an unparalleled sense of opulence.



Elevating shower experience

GRAFF has launched a comprehensive shower collection, Aqua-sense. The Aqua-Sense range combines a shower system that defines the concept of home wellness with a true sensual experience created through the mix of water, colours, and sounds. The system is well equipped with hand-shower and adjustable side body-sprays.

REDEFINING hospitality attire

Dezenzia, a brand specialising in creating uniforms for hotels, focusses on quality fabrics, elegant designs & intricate details.



In the hospitality industry, the attire of staff plays a pivotal role in shaping the overall guest experience. Recognising this crucial aspect, **Zubin Mehta**, Managing Director, Uniforms Unlimited, has embarked on an innovative venture: the designer brand Dezenzia.

Specialising in crafting uniforms tailored for hotels, resorts, and spas, Dezenzia stands out for its unique approach that seamlessly blends

aesthetics with practicality. Mehta's philosophy revolves around the belief that well-crafted uniforms not only serve as functional attire but also evoke a sense of connection to the establishments they represent.

With a keen eye for detail and an unwavering commitment to

quality, Dezenzia places high emphasis on the finest fabrics, elegant lines, and intricate embellishments, elevating uniforms to the realm of couture garments. It goes beyond mere aesthetics by incorporating the values and essence of different regions and cultures into its designs, thereby enhancing the image of its clients to the highest standards.

HT

Advertorial

Encouraging learning in hospitality

ISH collaborates with IGH for industry-academic partnerships. The collaboration aims to enhance students' learning experiences.

The Indian School of Hospitality (ISH) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with InterGlobe Hotels (IGH) to cultivate industry-academic partnerships for enriching students' learning experiences and fostering innovation within the hospitality sector.

"This partnership with IGH is a strategic evolution for the ISH, building upon our foundation of excellence in hospitality education. By joining hands with IGH, we are amplifying our commitment to industry-integrated learning, introducing a new

dimension of practical expertise and insights directly from the forefront of the hospitality sector," said Kunal Vasudeva, Co-founder & Managing Director, ISH.



As per the MoU, the ISH and IGH will collaborate to form an academic consortium that will leverage IGH's vast resources, including department heads and subject matter experts, to conduct master classes.

These master classes will deliver students with valuable insights and enhance their understanding of industry-specific nuances. The classes will also emphasise critical areas such as hotel development, projects, asset management, hotel finance, legal, and human resources, empowering them with practical knowledge and skills essential for success in the hospitality industry.

HT



Tekla Maira
Regional Director
of Sales, India
Banyan Group &
Director of Sales, India,
Luxury and Lifestyle, Accor

Journey to Relaxation

A self-confessed beach girl, **Tekla Maira's** essential travel companions are books, good food and happy conversations.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

Q: Relaxation or exploration - how do you like to indulge when vacationing?

A: I enjoy reading Indian authors such as Manju Kapoor. Gayatri Devi's memoirs *A Princess Remembers* has influenced me a lot.

Q: Your favourite holiday destination?

A: Bali is my favourite holiday destination, but my best holidays are spent at home, cooking, and devoting time to my family, and our two dogs.

Q: How do you pick a destination and try to make the most out of it?

A: I spent a few days in Phuket just chilling on the beach with no agenda, a book to read, happy conversations, and good food. I am a beach girl, as I love the expanse of the sea!

Q: How do you plan your weekends or does the work spill over?

A: I am not a great planner when it comes

to weekends, but I love shopping and indulge in some retail therapy any time. As for work life balance I try hard and dedicate time to catch up on unfinished tasks to start the week fresh.

Q: One change that you would like to bring to the industry?

A: Let us make sure we stay connected and tailor our services for our guests. While automation is here to stay, I hope we can preserve some of the old-world practices.

Q: How do you maintain your energy and fitness levels?

A: Blessed with great genes, I continue to enjoy gyming three times a week, incorporating cardio workouts and watching soaps on my bike or cross trainer!

Q: Crisis management - what has been the biggest leadership lesson?

A: Stay calm and focused and I believe everything falls into place. HT

Movements



Sarah Stephanos
AGM, Marketing & Corp. Communications, Chalet Hotels

Chalet Hotels has appointed Sarah Stephanos as AGM of Marketing and Corporate Communications. Prior to joining Chalet Hotels, Stephanos held influential positions with various boutique hotels. She also donned the entrepreneurial hat and skillfully introduced digital transformation in a range of companies.



Susan Ninan
Cluster Director, Marketing, Marriott Hotels, India

SAMHI Hospitality has appointed Shana Susan Ninan as the Cluster Director of Marketing for their 17 Marriott hotels in India. She will oversee marketing communication activities, lead public relations initiatives, formulate digital or print marketing strategies, ensure seamless brand integration.



Saahil Sheokand
Commercial Director, DoubleTree by Hilton Gurgaon-New Delhi NCR

Saahil Sheokand has been appointed as Commercial Director, DoubleTree by Hilton Gurgaon-New Delhi NCR. In this role, he will oversee the implementation of the hotel's commercial brand strategy across various areas such as room sales, event sales, public relations, marketing, communications and reservations.



Zakwan Ahmed
Director, Sales, Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives

Zakwan Ahmed has joined Kuda Villingili Resort Maldives as Director, Sales. Ahmed has 15 years of experience in the Maldivian hospitality industry. He will play a pivotal role in overseeing sales operations, managing relationships with key partners and travel agencies and negotiating contracts, among others.



Malvika Sahay
Director, Operations The Westin Mumbai Garden City

Malvika Sahay has been appointed as Director, Operations at The Westin Mumbai Garden City. With an extensive background in the industry, Sahay brings a wealth of experience to her new role. In her new capacity, Sahay will oversee the day-to-day operations of The Westin Mumbai Garden City.



Jacob John Paul
Director, HR, InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort

Jacob John Paul has joined InterContinental Chennai Mahabalipuram Resort as the Director, Human Resource. Paul is well-known for previously spearheading people strategies at Crowne Plaza, Chennai. He made substantial contributions to IHG Hotels & Resorts during his two-year stint.



Vaibhav Gautam
Director, F&B, Pride Plaza Hotel Aerocity, New Delhi

Pride Plaza Hotel Aerocity, New Delhi has appointed Vaibhav Gautam as the Director, F&B. Boasting a robust background, Gautam brings an extensive proficiency from his previous roles as Manager, F&B and Associate Director at hotels such as Sofitel Mumbai BKC and The Khyber Himalayan Resorts & Spa.

Form - IV

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

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6. Name and address of individuals who own the newspaper and partners or shareholders holding more than one percent of the total capital: DDP Publications Pvt. Ltd. Shareholders: 1. SanJeet, 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi-1. 2. Sumati Jeet, 72, Todarmal Road, ND-1. 3. Devika Jeet, 72, Todarmal Road, ND-1.

I, Devika Jeet, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Date: 01/03/2024

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Signature of the Publisher

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