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Erin Juhl frames design as BRAND IDENTITY SUNIL KHEMANI on energyefficient MEP

MARRIOTT INTERNATIONAL'S MEGA PLANS FOR INDIA Rajeev Menon

SCR BO



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Smaller cities a big bet for mid-sized hotels



t is no secret that excitement never abates in our industry. As growth intensifies, it is clear that bigger advantages lie beyond our metros. This is definitely the era of the rise of India's tier II and tier III markets. India's transition from being a rural to an urbanised population is the result of harnessing of the economic potential of its smaller cities. A number of these cities are also rich in cultural heritage, historical sites and religious pilgrimage centres.

Driven by a surge in domestic and international tourism, improved infrastructure, availability of talent and low cost of living, major players are actively opening properties in smaller cities, capitalising on growth opportunities. Mergers and collaborations are driving an increase in branding of smaller properties in

66

Mergers and collaborations are driving an increase in branding of smaller properties in tier II and tier III markets."

tier II and tier III markets, bringing large chunks of room inventory onto global platforms. Examples are Series by Marriott and Garner Hotels by IHG. There exists a large inventory of mid-sized hotels in these cities, ready for conversion and branding in the mid-scale segment.

Dear Readers, while on the one hand, we are enthusiastic about the development taking place in India, we must remain conscious about the impact of headwinds due to the wars in the Middle East and Europe. We must remain wary of the challenging environment and hope for long-term peace.

Looking forward to your continued readership and constant support.

Cheers, *Sunil Ghadiok*





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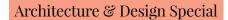
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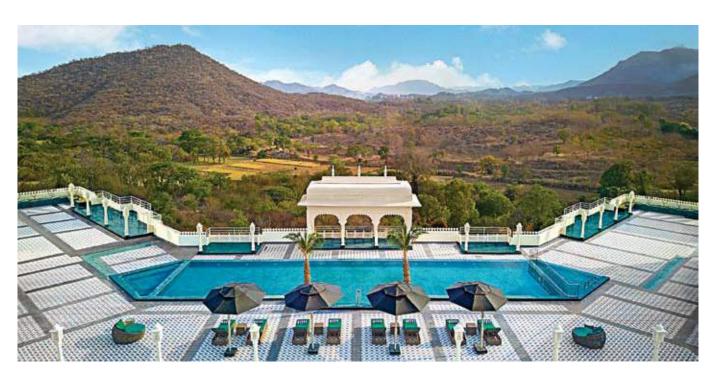
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Cover picture credit Marriott International Inc.



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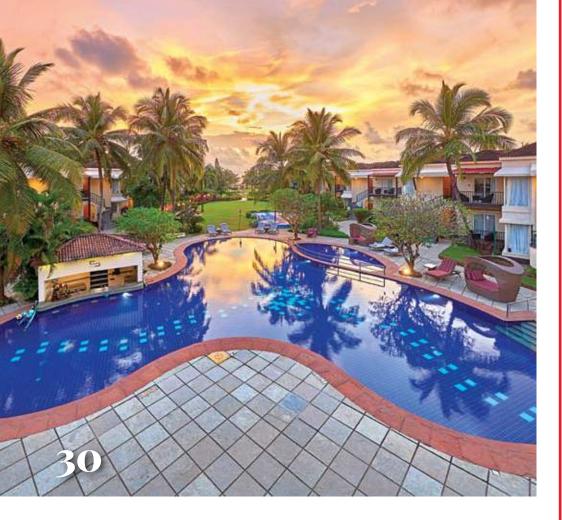
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Industry report

India hotel sector performance (May 2025)



ARRs register double-digit growth despite geopolitical tensions

Amid the heightened tensions with Pakistan, ARRs post robust YoY growth while occupancy sees a slight decline across most major markets.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

ccording to hospitality consultancy HVS Anarock, Monitor, June 2025, the average rates of the Indian hotel sector showed true resilience in May 2025. The sector remained firm and steady despite the seasonal slowdown and the heightened tensions with the neighbouring country Pakistan.

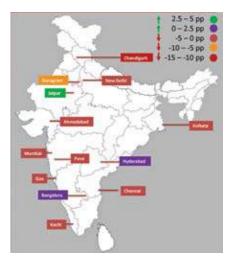
ARR trends across key Indian markets (Y-o-Y growth: May 2025)



ARR trends

The report highlighted that the sector's average rates saw robust vear-on-year (YoY) growth, with double-digit gains in several cities. Cities like Mumbai and New Delhi maintained their premium positioning, with average rates exceeding ₹10,000 and ₹8,500

Occupancy trends across key Indian markets (Y-o-Y growth: May 2025



66 The sector's average rates saw robust year-onyear growth

respectively. While Jaipur and Hyderabad saw tremendous year-onyear growth.

Occupancy trends

In terms of occupancy performance, the report revealed a noticeable year-on-year dip across most major markets. These significant declines reflect seasonal softening combined with geopolitical sentiment dampening travel demand. Chandigarh reported the sharpest decline in the range of 13-15 percentage point. The hotel market of Jaipur recorded the strongest YoY occupancy growth. HT



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INDIA SET TO BECOME Marrie Ditt's third-largest market

Aiming to double its presence from 40 to 90 locations across the country, Marriott International's growth trajectory in India is marked by ubiquitous expansion.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



s India sharpens its focus on infrastructure and tourism development, Marriott International is moving in lockstep. In an exclusive interview with HotelTALK, Rajeev Menon, President, Asia Pacific excluding China, Marriott International Inc., spoke about India's incredible tourism potential and the company's bold plans for the region. As the largest hotel chain in India, he is confident that Marriott's growth will continue to mirror India's upward trajectory. "Given our recent signings, India is set to become Marriott's third-largest market globally within the next 2-3 years. By the end of next year, we expect to have nearly 250 operational hotels in the country. We are also on track to more than double our presence from 40 to 90 locations across India. Our focus remains on getting the right distribution and being in the right places," he asserted.

Looking ahead, he is excited to celebrate Marriott International's 100th anniversary in 2027. Read on as Rajeev Menon breaks down why Marriott's India's growth strategy is all-in, bold and as bullish as it gets.

Q: What are Marriott's short-term and long-term plans for this region. Do you see any key challenges and distractions?

A: India and South Asia remain very dynamic markets. I have been saying for at least last few years that India is shining in the hospitality space as the Indian economy edges towards becoming the third largest economy in the world. There are ample opportunities, and we remain very focused from a long-term perspective in India. It is a strategic market



for us, and with all the recent signings that we have had announced in the last six months, India for Marriott in the next three years or so will become the third largest country in terms of number of operating hotels. So, I remain extremely bullish in India overall.

Q: When we talk about Marriott's expansion, there seems to be a strong focus on the mid-market segment. What is driving your move into emerging regions across India?

A: We are focused on most major hospitality segments. If you think about luxury, we have the largest portfolio of luxury hotels in comparison to any international brands operating in India. JW Marriott is by far the largest international luxury brand. Now, when you think about full service, be it Sheraton, Westin or Marriott, we have got some great brands in that space.



"Marriott International will be completing 100 years in 2027"

Series by Marriott marked its initial launch through a founding deal with Concept Hospitality Private Limited (CHPL) in India, a key growth market for Marriott. It is a new collection brand for the midscale and upscale lodging segments. It is focused on the long -term growth potential of the —secondary tertiary and fourthtier cities across the country. There is real economic activity across the country, and we are witnessing a growing emergence of travellers from smaller cities. From a long-term perspective, it is critical to have our presence here and enhance the investment we made in Concept Hospitality, which was a small equity investment with a view to grow 'Series by Marriott' across the country.

Q: What is the strategy for enhancing the portfolio in the region, specially tier II cities. Would you look at franchising and third-party management for operating smaller hotels?

A: One of the key drivers of any brand's growth is distribution. When our brands are well distributed across the country, it not only strengthens brand awareness but also ensures that the right products are available to our customers wherever they travel. That is critically important to us. With a portfolio of 18



"Marriott Bonvoy has nearly 240 million members globally, including over 7 million in India"

distinct brands in India, now including Series by Marriott, we are well-positioned to cater to a diverse range of travellers, both domestic and international, who are exploring all corners of the country. India, for us, represents a strategically important market—not just for domestic travel, but also as a growing source of outbound international travel.

A key strength supporting this is our loyalty programme, Marriott Bonvoy, which has nearly 240 million members globally. In India alone, that number has grown to over 7 million, and it continues to rise at a strong pace. For us, it is critically important to offer our customers more accommodation options.

Today, across my region—Asia Pacific excluding China—nearly 74 per cent of our hotel occupancy comes from Marriott Bonvoy members. That is a true testament to the strength of our Bonvoy programme.

Q: How do you see the luxury hospitality market unfolding in India? Any emerging

trends that signal a strong future for the luxury segment?

A: Luxury holds tremendous potential in India. Historically, India has had a strong foundation in luxury hospitality, led by iconic homegrown brands that have long defined excellence. As the economy continues to grow and India moves towards becoming the world's third-largest economy, we are going to see more billionaires emerge from India than anywhere else globally. With that comes rising aspirations and an increasing demand for luxury experiences including luxury hotels. We see significant opportunity in this space, driven by domestic travel, inbound international tourism and Indian travellers exploring destinations abroad.

When you think about luxury brands, Marriott has eight of the strongest luxury brands one can think of in this space. And we are seeing growth across the board with those brands. At least, six of them are in India as we speak, from our partnership with ITC on The Luxury Collection to the Ritz-Carlton hotels that we have announced, and bringing in EDITION as a brand into India, with the first one announced with Prestige Falcon Realty Venture in Mumbai.

The one aspect that I continue to see globally, including in India, is the focus on wellness. It is now beyond a great spa or a good gym, people are extremely interested in spending more time and money on their personal health. As a result, they are looking out for experiences that help their overall wellness mental, physical and so on.

Q: Are you rethinking strategies in hotel design and operations to include the influences of Gen Z for the future?

A: We regularly publish research across key segments, whether it is Gen Z consumers, luxury travellers or Asia-based travellers, to stay ahead of evolving expectations. And we are constantly evolving, not just in terms of our physical product and the services we offer, but also in how guests engage with us. A few years ago, most bookings came through calls or travel agents. Today, the majority are made online. With the growing strength of our Marriott Bonvoy member base, we are seeing more direct bookings through our own platforms.



Q: Sustainability is a key issue today. Please tell us about Marriott's efforts in this area.

A: We remain deeply committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. We have already set clear goals for 2030 and are proud to be the largest hotel company with accredited science-based targets in place. Our teams are highly focused on delivering against these commitments and we are making solid progress. As a leader, I believe we must leave the planet in better shape than we found it. That is a belief that Marriott strongly upholds, and as a company, we are determined to do everything within our power to meet and where possible, exceed those expectations.



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Time to seek the green stamp

CB Ramkumar urges hoteliers to obtain GSTC certification for operational efficiencies & commercial benefits.

WORDS BY SURBHI SHARMA

ith an aim to encourage more hotels, especially in India, to adopt and implement sustainable practices, Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) recently launched its Certified Hotels Directory, a global listing of hotels that have been certified by GSTC-accredited bodies. The organisation believes that Indian hoteliers will see the commercial advantages of certification, as certified hotels gain algorithmic preference on leading online travel agencies (OTAs), thereby increasing their visibility as well as bookings.

However, the number of GSTCcertified hotels remains very low in India, regardless of its benefits. Revealing the shocking figures, **CB Ramkumar**, Vice Chair, GSTC, said, "Despite India's growing hospitality industry, only six Indian hotels are currently GSTC certified, compared to over 2,000 globally, most of them are from Turkey and Singapore."

The disparity, he explained, lies in the lack of strong policy support in India. Countries like Turkey and Singapore have government mandates encouraging certification, whereas tourism is a state subject in India. While the central Ministry of Tourism (MOT) can issue guidelines, implementation depends on individual states.

State initiatives

India's adoption of sustainable tourism frameworks is gradually evolving. On a positive development, some states have intensified their efforts by implementing the GSTC framework. Notable progress



is evident in states like Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh, which have incorporated certification subsidies into their tourism policies, covering up to 50 per cent of certification costs. States like Meghalaya and Madhya Pradesh are also showing keen interest. Besides, GSTC is also actively conducting training and awareness programmes with local tourism boards and officials.

Ramkumar stressed that hotels need to start their sustainability journey voluntarily before future mandates from India or feeder



CB Ramkumar Vice Chair, Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)

66 Only around Indian hotels are currently GSTC certified, compared to over 2,000 globally."

markets like Europe make certification a requirement. He also urged hoteliers to look at sustainability as a risk mitigation strategy and a business imperative, not a CSR exercise.

Tackling challenges

One major barrier is misconception many hotels equate sustainability with environmentalism alone or assume it requires heavy capital expenditure. On the contrary, GSTC defines sustainability across four pillars—sustainability management, socio-economic sustainability, cultural sustainability and environmental sustainability.

Another barrier is perception some hoteliers see sustainability as a 'nice-to-have' rather than something core to business. Ramkumar argued this mindset is flawed, citing sustainable practices are critical in reducing operational costs, improving staff retention and strengthening brand reputation.

Further, GSTC does not differentiate between business hotels, homestays or FIT-oriented properties. "All hotels should be sustainable, irrespective of size, location or segment," he asserted.

Role of OTAs

OTAs and travel platforms are becoming powerful allies in promoting sustainable travel. Their role in amplifying visibility and bookings for GSTC-certified hotels



in India is crucial, Ramkumar highlighted. He added that OTAs such as Booking.com, Agoda, Traveloka and MakeMyTrip have already adopted sustainability as a core value. Many of these platforms now encourage their hotel partners to align with GSTC-accredited sustainability standards. Some platforms like Agoda, have even sponsored training programmes for hotels across Asia to help them become more sustainable.

Fighting greenwashing

In a marketplace flooded with unverified green claims, GSTC certification offers third-party validation, setting verified properties apart from competitors. Ramkumar noted that certification is more than a label-it is a stamp of credibility backed by independent audits.

As awareness of greenwashing grows, savvy travellers are increasingly demanding authentic, sustainable experiences and started questioning vague sustainability

66 Sustainability is a risk mitigation strategy and a business imperative, not a CSR exercise."

claims. Certification helps hotels earn trust, increase bookings and avoid reputational risks.

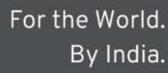
Carbon-intensive sector

Ramkumar believes that a major reason for delayed action is the underrated environmental impact of tourism. Unlike other industries like coal and steel, tourism's carbon emissions have largely 'flown under the radar.' However, with each hotel potentially emitting hundreds of tons of carbon annually, governments need to acknowledge tourism as a major carbon contributor considering India's global climate commitments.

Call to action

India's hospitality sector must act now and embrace sustainability voluntarily to stay ahead of global standards, consumer expectations and upcoming regulations. As more states and operators come onboard, GSTC hopes to see a significant rise in certified Indian hotels, driving a more responsible and future-ready tourism ecosystem. To catch up with markets like Singapore, Turkey and even Nepal, there needs to be a shift in both perception and policy. OTAs must continue promoting certified hotels, governments must offer clearer incentives.







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'Series' shakes up mid-scale playbook

Marriott chose India as launchpad for 'Series by Marriott,' **Rahul Chaudhary** calls it a landmark moment in India's growth story.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



t was intended to be a bold, calculated move—and it proved to be one. When Marriott International announced the global launch of its new collection brand for the midscale and upscale lodging segments— Series by Marriott[™], **Rahul Chaudhary**, Managing Director, CG Corp Global and CG Hospitality Global, knew they had landed a game-changer. He shared, "Someone had to take the plunge and the fact that it came from a large regional player, in partnership with a global name, makes this a powerful and strategic move. It signals a clear recognition of the opportunity that exists in India and this part of the world."

Under the strategic agreement between Concept Hospitality Private Limited (CHPL) and Marriott, CHPL's flagship brands—The Fern, The Fern Residency and The Fern Habitat, will affiliate exclusively with Series by Marriott across India. Additionally, Marriott will make a small equity investment in CHPL.

The Fern portfolio currently comprises 84 operational properties and 31 in the pipeline, totalling 115 properties and approximately 8,000 rooms. CG Hospitality, the hospitality arm of the multi-national conglomerate CG Corp Global, holds a majority stake in CHPL. "We were a brand operating under the radar," he said, a factor that proved instrumental in sealing the deal.



Rahul Chaudhary Managing Director CG Corp Global and CG Hospitality Global

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Regional player, in partnership with a global name, makes this a powerful and strategic move."

The COVID pivot

As the demand for tourism peaked post-COVID, India's hospitality landscape witnessed an unprecedented business boom. According to Chaudhary, the India growth story is underpinned by two key drivers—improving infrastructure and a rapidly expanding aspirational middle class. This, in turn, widened the playing field for mid-segment hotels.

"As a group, we have always believed that India's mid-market hotel segment—driven by its large and growing middle class—is among the most buoyant in the world," he noted. That belief was further reinforced by the sector's post-COVID rebound, when inbound tourism declined sharply, but the domestic market remained remarkably resilient. Crediting this revival to the middle class of India, he highlighted, "It not only aspires and seeks luxury experiences and is willing to pay premium rates for them but is also increasingly ready to spend more on quality mid-market properties. We have seen clear growth and momentum in this segment."

Unlocking opportunities

In the hospitality business, long-term resilience and the patience to seize the right opportunity often determine lasting success. For CG Corp Global, holding a majority stake in CHPL has proven to be a reward worth the wait. The mid-market segment they backed early on has

Exclusive



From L-R: Kiran Andicot, Senior Vice President, Development-South Asia, Marriott International; John Toomey, Chief Commercial Officer, APEC-Marriott International; Ranju Alex, Regional Vice President, South Asia-Marriott International; Shawn Hill, Chief Development Officer, APEC-Marriott International; Rajeev Menon, President, APEC-Marriott International; Dr Binod Chaudhary, Chairman, CG Corp Global; Rahul Chaudhary, Managing Director, CG Corp Global and CG Hospitality Global; Suhail Kanampilly, Managing Director, Concept Hospitality; Avneet Bhutani, Vice President-Asset Management, APEC-Marriott International; Raymond Tan, Senior Director of Hotel Development, APEC-Marriott International

emerged as the dark horse of the industry. Chaudhary shared, "At CG Hospitality, we recognised the potential of this space as early as 2005–06. We began exploring investments in select land parcels across India. Unfortunately, many of those early efforts did not materialise as we had expected, largely due to excessive red tape and bureaucracy. By the time approvals came through, project models had shifted or become unviable." However, the brand remained engaged with the Indian hospitality



landscape. "When we acquired a majority stake in Fern Hotels in 2014, the portfolio included around 20 operational hotels and 12 in the pipeline. Today, that number has grown to 120 operational hotels with 40 more in the pipeline," he highlighted how the longterm investment aligned perfectly with their commitment to mid-market segment.

Fast forward to 2025 and 'The Fern" emerged as the perfect fit for Marriott International's vision to reach value-conscious travellers through a new, regional collection, 'Series by Marriott.' The brand not only enhances Marriott's presence in the mid-market space but also offers an expanded range of options for Marriott Bonvoy members, while opening up more affiliation opportunities for local owners.

Bold moves

With the robust infrastructure development across the country, Chaudhary sees strong potential not just in tier II cities, but also in tier III districts across India. Fuelled by rising industrial activity and growing consumer spending power, these areas are becoming increasingly attractive to hospitality stakeholders. "The growth of any region typically begins with mid-market offerings. As the fundamentals of the area improve, luxury eventually follows," he confirmed.



Chaudhary is confident that the new partnership will help accelerate the expansion further. "Our next goal is clear: 500 properties under The Fern brand and 650 under CG Hospitality as a whole," he shared.

CG Hospitality currently has a total of 185 hotels. Out of this, its subsidiary, Concept Hospitality, currently operates around 120 hotels, and they are also planning to roll out another 40 hotels. "From the 40-pipeline properties, approximately 15 are expected to go live within this year alone. It is important to note that this pipeline is rolling—we are signing deals continuously as well as expanding aggressively within the framework of our brand," he informed.

Strategic expansion

With just 25 years in the hospitality sector, Chaudhary asserted that the brand has grown to a portfolio of 195 properties across 12 countries with 12,000 keys, adding, "That is no small feat by any measure."

However, the expansion is not just about numbers, it is also about tapping into India's vast geographical potential. "There are almost 750 districts in India, and we have only tapped close to 90," he underlined. This year, The Fern will continue to be a key focus, with plans The expansion is not just about numbers, it is also about tapping into India's vast geographical potential."

to open 25 to 30 hotels and also scaling up its ambition to open 50 to 70 hotels annually. "With the combined strength and capabilities of our partnership and the brands involved, we are confident in our ability to achieve this growth," he said.

The momentum is already visible. "Just after the announcement, my partner **Suhail Kannampilly**, Managing Director, Concept Hospitality, informed me that we have signed our first deal in Gwalior. That is how fast things are moving," he opined. Chaudhary's conviction reflects the group's entrepreneurial spirit. To him, "Money is never the problem, capital follows clarity. If you will deploy it wisely, it will create value and deliver growth."



Celebrating 90 years

of The Oberoi Group

Spearheaded by OCLD alumni, GHC commemorates its 10 years of excellence while honouring **Rai Bahadur MS Oberoi**'s contribution to Indian hospitality.

WORDS BY SURBHI SHARMA

he 10th edition of the Global Hospitality Conclave (GHC), held recently at The Oberoi, New Delhi, was both a celebration of excellence and a heartfelt tribute to **Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi**, the visionary founder of The Oberoi Group. The milestone event commemorated The Oberoi Group's 90-year journey in the hospitality industry and marked a decade of GHC as a premier forum for knowledge-sharing, leadership dialogue and industry insight.

Beyond reunion

Organised by alumni of The Oberoi Centre for Learning and Development (OCLD), GHC has 66 Through his pioneering spirit, and steadfast belief in people, he built a legacy that transformed the hospitality sector of India." evolved into a dynamic platform that brings together all the hospitality leaders and professionals from various sectors. More than just a networking opportunity, the conclave has grown into a space to honour values rooted in exceptional service and continuous learning—hallmarks of the Oberoi legacy.

In his address, **Arjun Oberoi**, Executive Chairman, The Oberoi Group, said, "We are privileged to honour 90 years of excellence—an extraordinary journey that began with the vision and passion of our founder. Through his pioneering spirit and steadfast belief in people, he built a legacy that transformed Indian hospitality."

Echoing similar sentiment, **Vikram Oberoi**, CEO, The Oberoi Group, added, "The 90-year milestone is a moment of gratitude to our founder and everyone who has upheld his vision. GHC allows us to reaffirm our commitment to excellence and innovation."

Honouring the visionary

The focus of the event was the Rai Bahadur MS Oberoi Memorial Lecture, delivered by **Dr Ashwani Kumar**, former Minister of Law and Justice, who offered valuable insights into the founder's values and his transformational impact on the hospitality industry of India.

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Nore than a strategic model

What is driving the momentum in the mid-scale hotel segment? **Arjun Baljee** weighs in on the strength of staying truly homegrown.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



hile many drift with the current, it is the daring few who sail against it and steer success their way! In an age where alliances are currency, Royal Orchid Hotels is doubling down on independence. With a firm belief in its homegrown strength, Arjun Baljee believes that being one of the last standing India hotel brands gives them a distinct edge in the mid-segment market. "If you look at this segment specifically, most Indian brands have been acquired or absorbed. Ferns is now with Marriott, Sarovar hotels is owned by Louvre. That leaves very few Indian hotel brands of scale that are still Indianowned and Indian-run," he said. To him, it is a distinctive position to hold at time when most global chains are aggressively expanding in India through strategic alliances.

Realigning for results

With a focused restructuring strategy, the Bengaluru-based hospitality group is positioning itself as one of the few remaining Indian-owned players in the mid to upper mid-scale space. "Last year, we decided to segment our portfolio across five brands," Baljee said, "One (RE:GEN:TA) is already well-established,



Arjun Baljee President Royal Orchid Hotels

66 We are at a topline of around ₹350 crore and targeting ₹500 crore in revenue in the near term"

another (ICONIQA) is currently being launched, two sub-brands (RE:GEN:TA Z and RE:GEN:TA: Place) are gaining strong momentum, and a fifth (Crestoria)—targeted at leisure and experiential travel—is in the pipeline."

Arjun Baljee recognises that hospitality is entering a new era, driven by the evolving preferences of Gen Z travellers. As the lines between business and leisure blur, hotels are no longer just destinations—they are becoming seamless extensions of a modern, fluid lifestyle, and that's exactly how he has envisioned his latest brand -- Iconica a 291-keys category-defining hotel in Mumbai, both in scale and vision.

Baljee refers to it as 'a state of mind'. "Iconica is not confined to one format. It can be a city hotel; it can be a resort. It is about intention and identity," he explained. "When you walk into Iconica, you won't be walking into a traditional lobby—you will be walking straight into a bar. That bar becomes the heartbeat of the hotel, a vibrant community hub. We still have a front desk and all the essentials, but we want this to be a social hotel."

Crestoria, on the other hand, is envisioned as a collection of such storied, character-rich hotels across the country—properties that carry emotional and historical significance, and that require a different kind of operational mindset. "There are hotels within our current portfolio that are perfect candidates to be elevated into the Crestoria collection," he added. "But these cannot be run like standard business or leisure hotels. They demand a different kind of management bandwidth. They need to be treated





with respect—for their heritage, architecture and location."

Holding the reigns

Having his next milestones in clear sight, he noted that Royal Orchid is already within striking distance of ₹100 crore in EBITDA, having closed at ₹96.8 crore. "Right now, we are at a topline of around ₹350 crore. Mumbai alone should add another ₹100 crore and stabilise somewhere between ₹120–140 crore. Add to that the upcoming flexi-lease hotels, and we are realistically targeting ₹500 crore in revenue in the near term."

The team is advancing with a structured roadmap. Baljee explained, "This year, our target is to open 30 hotels across four brands, with a fifth—our upcoming leisure brand—set to launch soon. Once that is in place, each brand will have clearly defined custodians within the organisation, along with distinct growth targets. Whether it is through franchise, management contracts, revenue share or ownership models, we plan to explore the full spectrum of opportunities for each brand."

From the growth standpoint, he sees immense potential in the domestic market. "India has over a billion people. Even if just 300 million of them are active



travellers, that is still the size of the entire population of continental Europe. That is a massive market", he argued. According to him, the question of where the demand comes from—domestic or international is secondary. What's primary is understanding who your right customer is. "For us, that clarity exists. Our loyalty programme, which now has 500,000 members, is built for the Indian traveller. We are proud to say we are an Indian hotel brand, designed for the Indian consumer."

As a publicly listed company, he reiterated that Royal Orchid's core commitment remains to its shareholders. "Our job is to create long-term value," he said. "That does not mean we have ruled anything out. Our focus is on evolving our business and growing it sustainably."



Blending royal grandeur with modern elegance

Vimal Verma stresses Anantara's focus on meaningful and immersive experiences to solidify their brand presence in India.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

Q: Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur marks Minor Hotels' debut in India. What is your go-tomarket strategy? A: We are thrilled to bring Anantara to India for the very first time, and Jaipur felt like the perfect place to begin. Our go-to-market strategy is creating unforgettable journey bringing to life the soul of Jaipur through immersive experiences, digital presence and partnerships.

Q: How does Anantara Jaipur position itself in an already competitive luxury hospitality market like Rajasthan?

A: Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur is not just about luxurious rooms or stunning décor; it's about meaningful, immersive experiences. Besides, our location also sets us apart. We are a peaceful, palace-style retreat that feels like an escape from

This balance of serenity and accessibility makes Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur ideal for guests." the city, yet we are just a short drive from Jaipur's iconic landmarks. This balance of serenity and accessibility makes Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur ideal for guests who want the best of both worlds—cultural connection and calm luxury.

Q: With strong pre-opening interest, especially for weddings, how is the events calendar shaping up for 2025 and 2026?

A: We already have a strong calendar of wedding bookings lined up for 2025 and even some early inquiries for 2026. What drives this demand are our grand gardens and event spaces, easy connectivity to Jaipur airport and the sense of exclusivity that the hotel offers, and most importantly, the growing interest in new luxury destinations.

Q: How has the response been from the MICE segment so far? A: The MICE response has been



Vimal Verma General Manager Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur

very promising, especially from domestic corporates looking for premium venues for retreats, off-sites and launch events. Our pillarless ballroom, breakout rooms and scenic outdoor spaces offer great flexibility for events of all sizes. We are also proud to have hosted large events like GITB (Great Indian Travel Bazaar) and DDPL (Destination Wedding Planners Congress), which have put us on the map as a serious contender in the MICE and events space. To grow this segment, we are building strong partnerships with travel planners, participating in trade shows and offering tailored packages that include wellness and unique dining experiences.

Q: In what ways is the property weaving local Rajasthani culture into the guest experience beyond décor?

A: Luxury is about connection—not just comfort. Beyond our palatial look, we bring Rajasthan to life through experiences. Guests can learn traditional art, join a spice market tour, try their hand at Rajasthani cooking or enjoy folk music and dance in an intimate village-style setting. Guests can explore local art through hands-on sessions like block printing or bangle making, where they interact directly with local artisans and learn the stories behind these age-old crafts.



Where design aligns, connection flows

Erin Juhl outlines why a cohesive master plan, branding and design are critical to four-star outcomes.

breathtaking location. Custom interiors. A celebrity chef. These are elements every hospitality project hopes to include. But without a connected, cohesive process that links master planning, interior design and branding, a hospitality project with the most enviable ingredients can fall flat. Guests can sense a disconnect within minutes—and that can cost you a



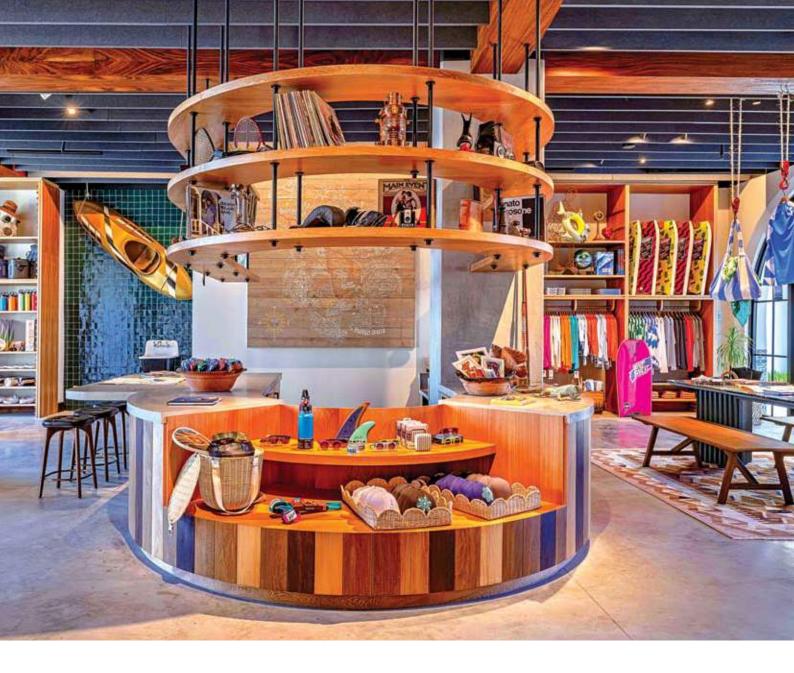
star and the recommendations that follow. These elements do not just need to be present—they need to be sequenced properly, with teams working collaboratively from the start. Ideally, the teams are all under the same firm, so that there is continued collaboration from start to final details. If that structure is not possible, it is critical to build regular and frequent touch-bases. Handoffs without discussion of key findings or imperatives often lead to costly delays and diluted experiences.

Success all begins with master planning-a term often associated with large-scale developments or city planning. But master planning is just as essential for hospitality projects of any size, from entire resorts to a single restaurant. No matter how well a dining room is designed, it won't matter if the plate arrives cold. Thoughtful master planning accounts for the practical needs of a space: staff flow, storage access (from fresh produce to towels) to ensure exceptional service and a seamless guest experience. It also clearly outlines brand aspirations and environmental context so that the creative supports the practical and business needs.

This foundational thinking lays the groundwork for brand strategists and designers to craft a compelling narrative—the special story that



Erin Juhl Design Director EDG



informs both interior design and branding. Strong master planning also uncovers unique selling points that help a project stand out in today's competitive market.

When branding and interior design evolve together, the built environment and guest experience reinforce each other—creating a stronger impact than either discipline could alone. Take, for example, the work our firm completed for Four Seasons Cabo San Lucas. Branding research revealed a story about rustic fishing huts that once dotted the coast—used by early adventureseekers who came to fish, surf and explore. This concept became the seed for an new type of concierge space. Instead of a traditional desk, the design team created an immersive environment that echoed the thrill of Baja's early adventurers—complete with a media wall for guests to share footage and a curated retail space stocked with demo gear.

Beyond experiences, a wellexecuted master plan and brand narrative ensure that the physical space reflects the hotel's core values and personality. Everything from layout to furnishings, artwork, materials and finishes can be traced back to these guiding principles resulting in a cohesive, standout space filled with "only here" moments that turn guests into loyal fans.

About the author

Erin Juhl is a design director at EDG, a global hospitality design and branding studio with offices in Marin Co., California, Dallas and Singapore. EDG has won numerous awards and recognitions in its 35-year history, recently winning 2024's Gold Key Award for the Four Seasons Resort Cabo San Lucas and Interior Design Magazine's 2023 Best of Year award for Mii amo Spa in Sedona, Arizona.

A well-executed master plan and brand narrative reflect the hotel's core values and personality



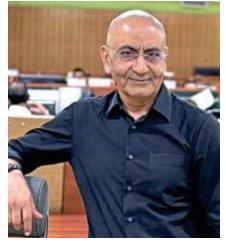
MEP design revolutionising hotel efficiency

Sunil Khemani avers strong MEP design is key for hotels to not only ensure guest comfort but also achieve energy efficiency.



s the world continues to face challenges of climate change and depletion of natural resources, it is crucial and our moral responsibility to provide energy-efficient solutions for hotels. With technological advancement and increased awareness for green buildings, good mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) design ensures not only operational functionality but also environment friendly solutions.

Integrating energy-efficient MEP equipment, such as renewable energy



Sunil Khemani Founder and Principal Consultant Aufait International Engineering Studio

systems, wastewater recycling, smart thermostats, LED lights, automatic controls, dimmable lights, low-flow fixtures and building management system, collectively help in creating energy-efficient buildings and reducing overall energy consumption. Above all, optimally sized high-side equipment is the key to achieving maximum operational efficiency.

Enhancing guest comfort

While good architectural design gives an aesthetic experience to guests, a comfortable experience comes from good MEP design. **Sunil Khemani**, Founder and Principal Consultant, Aufait International Engineering Studio, underscored, "A well-designed MEP system leads to a higher degree of comfort and safety, enhancing overall guest experience."

Some of the key focus areas are:

- Providing both cooling and heating requirements in guest rooms, as they come from various regions with different climatic conditions.
- Ensuring adequate domestic water pressure and constant temperature of the hot water supply in bathrooms.
- Installation of low-noise fan coil units (FCUs) helps create a peaceful and tranquil ambience as guests spend the majority of their time in their rooms.



- Supplying treated fresh air inside guest rooms and maintaining constant exhaust in toilets, even when the room is unoccupied, to ensure freshness and odour-free.
- Integration of a high-quality air filtration system ensures clean and fresh air, reducing allergens and improving overall indoor air quality (IAQ).
- Simple lighting controls and sufficient charging sockets in guest rooms add guest comfort and satisfaction.
- Equipment elevators with UPS supply can avoid unsafe jerks in case of frequent power failure.
- Guest room management system not only sets different moods and ambience but also helps in energy conservation, allowing personalised settings, switching to energy-saving modes when the room is unoccupied and even enabling the guest's previous room setting when he checks in the next time.
- High-speed Wi-Fi throughout a hotel is key for guest satisfaction and operational efficiency



Safety measures

Hotels are unique as they have continuous movement of guests 24 hours a day. Guests' safety and security are of utmost importance. When it comes to fire and life safety, it is important to have the right equipment in place for detection, warning and protection, giving a





sense of security to guests and staff.

When implementing a fire and life safety (FLS) system, Khemani emphasised that it should meet stricter requirements of NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) standards or the local building codes. These systems encompass elevator recall (primary and secondary), smoke control management, water sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems for detection and a public address system for timely evacuation. Additionally, IP-based CCTV/access control is also vital to ensure full safety and security and mitigates any external threats.

Green design

As resources are limited, it is a moral responsibility to reserve them for future generations. Therefore, sustainable mechanical, electrical, and plumbing (MEP) solutions, along with green initiatives, are the most important aspects of building design. It is crucial to prioritise the use of renewable energy resources like solar power and utilising recycled wastewater. These practices help reduce electricity and water consumption, directly contributing to sustainability. Besides, low-flow fixtures, LED lights and automatic controls significantly help in reducing a property's carbon footprint. Khemani stressed that avoiding the use of any equipment powered by conventional fuel can reduce Scope 1 carbon emissions.

Cost savings

An efficient mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection (MEPF) system may be slightly higher initial cost. But these systems are energyefficient, resulting in a much shorter return on investment, by reducing energy bills, fewer maintenance issues, regulatory compliances, avoiding fines and penalties and system longevity ensures extended life span. He highlighted, "In most cases, savings from baseline design for a 100-room hotel come out in the range of ₹25-30 lakh per annum, which translates to ₹175 lakh in total savings over a 10-year life cycle."

About the author

Sunil Khemani is Founder & Principal Consultant of Aufait International Engineering Studio, a multi-disciplinary MEP design and consulting firm with over 200 projects, including hotels, hospitals, retail, residential, commercial, and industrial. His key experience comprises design, execution, testing and commissioning of engineering services (HVAC, public health engineering, building automation, fire and life safety, etc) for all spectrum of buildings.

Legacy intertwines with luxury

Prithvi Singh Kanota narrates how Narain Niwas evolved from palatial home to heritage hotel, emerging as a favoured hub for weddings & events.



Prithvi Singh Kanota Managing Director Narain Niwas Palace

arain Niwas Palace was built in 1928 by General Amar Singh, then Thakur of Kanota, Commander of the Jaipur State Forces and confidant of then Maharaja, Man Singh. The mansion was named after Amar Singh's father, Thakur Narain Singh, who had served as the Chief of Police of the Jaipur State and was also a Minister of the neighbouring princely state of Alwar.

Steeped in history

This palatial home was established as a country residence where Thakur Amar Singh would withdraw to rest and rejuvenate from the pressures of his busy administrative work and court life, and from the cares of the Kanota family's Haveli within the walled city. Until World War II, Narain Niwas Palace was surrounded by jungles.

Today, the beautiful Narain Niwas Palace is a heritage hotel, owned and operated by Thakur Amar Singh's descendants, Late Thakur Mohan Singh and later his sons, Thakur Man Singh and Thakur **Prithvi Singh** of Kanota.

The two brothers have lovingly restored the heritage building, keeping its historic essence intact and have converted this picturesque palace into a coveted destination for weddings and events. From film shootings to book readings, Narain Niwas has seen it all. The building is prominently features in International Film projects like John Madden's







66 The property is converted into a coveted destination for weddings and events The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel and Gurinder Chadda's Beecham House.

Blending modern elegance

Housing not one, not two but three of Jaipur's most popular restaurants, Narain Niwas Palace is the go-to space for the city's glitterati every evening. The hunting lodge-inspired Shikaar Bagh is a crowd favourite weekend haunt while the indigo-hued Bar Palladio is every instagrammer's dream destination in pursuit of the perfect picture. The recently launched Imperial Lancers adds elegance and an oldworld charm to the mix.

With over 45 rooms in their inventory and another beautiful property in their kitty, Castle Kanota, on the outskirts of Jaipur, the Kanota Family is living up to the standards set by their prolific ancestors.



Weddings get wellness glow up

As the wedding wellness concept gains steam, hotels craft wellness-centric services, making weddings not just memorable but rejuvenating experiences.

WORDS BY SOMYA DEEP

ndian weddings are no longer restricted to traditional attire and guest lists. With an increased awareness of mental and physical well-being, modern couples are now prioritising these aspects in their wedding planning. As this shift takes hold, the demand for wedding wellness services is experiencing a significant new wave of growth.

Today, hotel brands come up with innovative wedding wellness offerings and packages, incorporating unique elements that are deviated from the traditional wedding norms. These wellness-focused experiences not only deepen emotional connection between the couple but also create positive and relaxed atmosphere for guests before the big day. **Rajat Sethi**, General Manager, Fairmont Jaipur, affirmed, "We have observed a growing preference, especially in the lead-up to the celebrations. Many couples and their families seek relaxation, rejuvenation and mindfulness as part of their pre-wedding rituals. Whether it is spa treatments, yoga sessions or curated wellness menus, there is a clear shift towards incorporating wellbeing into the overall wedding journey."

All-inclusive services

True hospitality is about nurturing the body, mind and soul. With the growing interest of wedding wellness, hotels craft special wellness packages that are targeted towards wedding guests. Capitilising the rising trend,



There is a growing shift towards incorporating wellbeing into the overall wedding journey, creating a positive and relaxed atmosphere

Atul Upadyay, EVP, Pride Hotels Group, shared, "Our signature 'Wellness Weddings' are a unique concept aimed at nurturing the inner glow of the bride and groom through chakra healing, meditation and therapeutic spa treatments. We encourage couples to arrive a week before their big day to fully immerse themselves in these transformative experiences."

These wedding wellness services are diverse, ranging from body wraps to glow facials, designed to give the much-needed relaxation to wedding clients. Elaborating on their exclusive wellness offerings, **Faisal Nafees**, General Manager, Radisson Resort & Spa, Lonavala, said, "We have detoxifying body wraps and glow-enhancing facials for brides and grooms to unwind before the big day. Our custom spa journeys for couples, combine aromatherapy and traditional Indian healing therapies."



Rajat Sethi General Manager Fairmont Jaipur



Faisal Nafees General Manager Radisson Resort & Spa, Lonavala



Atul Upadyay EVP Pride Hotels Group



66

Thoughtful wellness packages allow hotels to create emotional value beyond conventional luxury, which help them to establish as holistic hosts in the competitive market



Their pop-up wellness lounges for family and guests offer foot reflexology, head and shoulder massages. Sleep therapy, deep tissue massages and herbal detox teas as post wedding rituals are among other services.

Sethi added, "We offer bespoke wellness experiences that can be integrated into wedding celebrations. These include stress-relief therapies for family members, guided meditation or yoga sessions, and specially designed healthy menus. Our team works closely with wedding planners and families to craft moments of calm and indulgence that complement the occasion grandeur."

Competitive edge

Wellness packages are fast emerging as one of the key business strategies to gain a competitive advantage in the booming Indian wedding market. Sethi opined, "As weddings are becoming more experiential, offering thoughtful wellness packages allow hotels to create emotional value beyond usual luxury. It helps position a hotel not just as a venue, but as a holistic host that cares for the emotional and physical well-being of its guests." To deliver real value, wellness offerings must add a unique and personalised touch to wedding celebrations. Sharing his perspectives, Nafees said, "In a competitive and dynamic market like India, such services elevate the overall value proposition of the venue. We anticipate this trend will especially gain momentum among smaller, more intimate gatherings where personalisation and guest comfort take centre stage."

No temporary trend

The emphasis on wellness in weddings is not just a luxury add-on; it becomes a necessity as people are conscious of their physical and mental well-being amidst the wedding planning process. Besides, with a broader cultural shift from niche interest into a mainstream lifestyle priority, wellness, Sethi enlightened, "Wellness is evolving from a trend into a lifestyle preference, especially among millennials and Gen Z couples. As weddings become more mindful and experience-oriented, we believe wellness will soon become an essential component of the Indian wedding landscape."

Crafting purposeful experiences

Sofitel Mumbai BKC gears up for multifaceted experiences to meet guests' diverse needs in this emerging commercial hub.

WORDS BY HAZEL JAIN



ofitel Mumbai BKC has continuously evolved to reflect modern luxury while staying true to its ethos of committed hospitality and French flair. **Manish Dayya**, General Manager, Sofitel Mumbai BKC, winner of 'Outstanding Leadership in Luxury Hospitality' award at the India Travel Awards 2024, stated, "With the rise of iconic landmarks such as the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC), Jio World Convention Centre (JWCC) and Jio World Plaza, Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) has transformed from a corporate hub into a vibrant destination for global conventions, cultural performances and luxury experiences."

New opportunities

For Sofitel Mumbai BKC, the proximity to JWCC and NMACC has opened doors to new guest segments, including global business travellers, conference delegates and cultural patrons. "Looking ahead, BKC is set to become Mumbai's definitive destination where free minds meet for business, lifestyle and leisure," Dayya shared. Besides, the hotel brand affirmed its commitment to lead with heartfelt hospitality and purposeful experiences that reflect committed luxury.

Rising trends

A notable trend, he highlighted, is the rising preference for weddings and social gatherings, especially with the development of JWCC in the vicinity. The modern Indian wedding is evolving; it is no longer limited to a single grand celebration, which includes multiple curated events. Dayya said, "At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, we have seen a steady rise in weddings where F&B takes centre stage." Also, the hotel is exploring an expansion of its inventory, which includes new restaurant concepts and best-in-class rooms that reflect evolving lifestyle preferences.

At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, we have seen a steady rise in weddings where F&B takes centre stage."



Manish Dayya, General Manager, Sofitel Mumbai BKC, receiving 'Outstanding Leadership in Luxury Hospitality' at India Travel Awards 2024



Delhi hotels & restaurants exempt from police NOCs

To foster ease of doing business, hotels and restaurants are excluded from obtaining police licence to operate in Delhi.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

n a significant move, Delhi Lieutenant Governor VK Saxena has removed the requirement for hotels and restaurants to obtain licences or no-objection certificates (NOCs) from the Delhi Police for operations in the national capital. The reform is in line with the Government of India's motto of 'Minimum Government and Maximum Governance' and 'Ease of Doing Business' policy.

As per the official order, to meet the challenges of an evolving economy and make it more robust, the decision has been made to eliminate the requirement for multiple

66 *This vital reform will create a more conducive environment for growth and employment in the capital* regulations. The initiative will help reduce multiple licensing procedures, being followed in different states/union territories, and simplify licensing procedures.

Notably, progressive states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa have already repealed the requirement of licenses for hotel operations from the police.

Meanwhile, HRANI said that this landmark decision is the outcome of continuous representations and sustained follow-up by HRANI on behalf of the hospitality industry of Delhi. The association welcomed the proindustry initiative by the Government of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi, noting such a decision will significantly enhance ease of doing business in the hospitality sector. It will create a more conducive environment that will strengthen growth, investment and employment in the capital.

HRANI expressed gratitude to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Hon'ble LG and Hon'ble Chief Minister of Delhi for acknowledging industry concerns and supporting this vital reform. Media Partner Hotel TALK



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D-arc BUILD ends on high note in B'luru

D-arc BUILD2025 culminates in resounding success, drawing more than 100 top brands from the design and construction sector.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU



ndia's premier exhibition for the design, architecture, building and construction industry, D-arc BUILD Bengaluru 2025, held at BIEC, was a huge success with an overwhelming response from the hospitality industry. The three-day exhibition welcomed more than 15,000 visitors, featured 100+ top national and international brands and hosted 10+ conferences with the support of leading industry associations, including IIA Karnataka Chapter, National Real Estate Development Council, Indian Society of Landscape Architects and Hospitality Purchasing Managers Forum.

Organised by Zion Exhibitions, the exhibition brought together architects, designers, builders, 66 The Maestro Award-South Region, honours 22 industry leaders out of 500+ nominations, celebrating excellence in design and architecture



GREEN BUILDING CRITERIA TUSSKER SOIL HEAPS EXISTING AT SITE VOLT/ G GARV

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engineers, developers and brands from across the country. It offered a great platform for business networking, product launches and discussions on the future of design and construction.

Awards and recognitions

One of the major highlights was the Maestro Award-South Region, where 22 industry leaders were honoured

out of 500+ nominations and 17+ categories, celebrating excellence in design and architecture. Additionally, the Next Gen competition recognised 3 rising stars selected from over 50+ nominations, spotlighting the future of the industry.

Art and creativity

The show also featured the vibrant and lively D-arc Design Street,

a unique space dedicated to art installations and creative expressions, adding an inspiring visual dimension to the exhibition.

With such strong participation, zeal and enthusiasm and positive engagement, D-arc BUILD Bengaluru has once again proved to be one of India's most important platforms for the architecture, design and contruction community. HT

Here are the upcoming events

D-arc BUILD Delhi 29-31 August 2025 Pragati Maidan

D-arc BUILD Mumbai 17 -19 April 2026 NESCO

D-arc BUILD Bengaluru 5-7 June 2026 BIFC



HoReCa expo Innovation in food & hospitality

The event provides a powerful platform not only for business opportunities but also to explore the latest industry trends.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

ndia HoReCa Expo 2025, India's leading hospitality and foodservice trade event, took place from 2-4 July 2025, at CODISSIA Trade Fair Complex, Coimbatore. The three-day event served as a premier platform to explore the latest trends, innovations and solutions in the hotel, restaurant, catering and allied sectors.

Organisers said that the main aim of the event is to facilitate a networking platform for businesses, create new business opportunities and launch cutting-edge solutions related to the food service and processing sectors. To drive visitor engagement, the expo provided a dynamic platform for live demonstrations & product launches With over 7000 visitors registered on the first day, the event featured over 300 exhibitors showcasing a broad range of products and services related to HoReCa industry. These products included commercial kitchen and cooking equipment, food processing machinery, packaging systems, dairy-related technologies, cafe and bakery appliances, refrigeration units, display counters, cleaning and hygiene solutions and cold storage infrastructure.

Besides, the event also saw insightful workshops led by experts covering key topics, such as cost and waste management, product presentation, bakery operations and the evolving role of procurement. To engage the visitors and drive excitement, the expo provided a dynamic platform for live demonstrations, product launches and interactive sessions.

Expressing immense satisfaction and delight, one of the sellers at HoReCa Expo, said, "We had a great time meeting our valued dealers and new customers, who showed interest and enthusiasm in our offerings." He added that the event also provided buyers with an excellent opportunity to explore our world-class frontof-house solutions that are locally manufactured, quick to service and thoughtfully designed for Indian hospitality needs.











Discover the future of hospitality

The 8th edition of IHE 2025 will be held from 3–6 August in Greater Noida.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

ver the years, IHE has grown in both size and stature to become a marquee event for professionals in the hospitality industry. With a stellar line-up of panel discussions, key decisionmakers, and top-tier exhibitors, IHE 2025 is set to be an unmissable platform for industry insights and business opportunities, taking place from 3–6 August at the India Expo Centre & Mart, Greater Noida. Entering into its 8th edition, the exhibition stands out as bigger, sharper and more impactful than ever. For hoteliers, restaurateurs, architects, interior designers, chefs and all stakeholders driving hospitality innovation, it serves as a dynamic marketplace of ideas and opportunities. With live product demonstrations, chef masterclasses, panel discussions and product launches, IHE 2025 stands as the pinnacle of hospitality excellence.

What sets IHE 2025 apart is the depth and diversity of its exhibitor categories. More than 1,000 exhibitors from India and around the world will be showcasing solutions across food & beverage, hotel technology, interiors, kitchenware, wellness, housekeeping and more. The

Strategic B2B matchmaking at IHE 2025 connects decisionmakers with the right brands

pavilions are curated for all hospitality needs from F&B and tableware to hospitality tech, cleaning solutions, and spa innovations. From the finest wines and spirits and wellness solutions to smart foodservice innovations and luxury furnishings, every aisle presents a new possibility, all under one show.

Designed with a focus on time and priorities, IHE 2025 will feature strategic B2B matchmaking—connecting decision-makers with the most relevant brands and solutions. With over 25,000 industry professionals expected to attend, the event presents unmatched opportunities for networking and business growth.

How high-end mattresses influence hotel ROI

Sunil Datta stresses investing in highperformance mattresses can unlock longterm gains, enhancing both operational efficiency and profit margins over time.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

uality mattresses play a significant role in the hospitality industry, as guests key requirement is comfort. Therefore, hoteliers must invest in the right mattress to provide a good night's sleep and enhance overall guest satisfaction. The initial cost of high-quality mattresses may seem overwhelming, but they can yield long-term benefits in terms of return on investment (ROI).

Strategic investment

Mattress quality is no longer just an operational choice; it is a strategic investment. It can directly influence not only your brand reputation but also booking conversions.

- Drives hotel revenue: Comfortable and hygienic mattresses reduce complaints, which can boost guest satisfaction and hotel revenue.
- Reduces operational hassles: Durable mattresses require fewer replacements and less maintenance, ensuring operational efficiency.
- **Builds guest loyalty:** Highquality mattresses make a lasting impression, increasing repeat bookings and brand loyalty.

Why a preferred choice

Trusted by global and domestic hospitality leaders, Eclipse International offers a range of premium hotel mattresses that are built for both guest comfort and operational efficiency.

- **Dual-comfort designs:** Mattresses like Eclipse Royal Grand feature dual-comfort technologies, offering seasonal adaptability for a peaceful sleep experience year-round.
- **Hospitality-grade durability:** Each mattress is built with a reinforced pocketed spring core, ensuring long-lasting support and minimal motion transfer.
- Customisation for hotel needs: Tailored solutions for hotels, include size flexibility, branding options and specifications to match different room categories.



Sunil Datta President, Institutional Sales (India & Subcontinents) Eclipse Mattress



Fabric-finish wallpaper

UDC Homes unveiled Soie Lumière, a fabric-based wallpaper collection that combines hand-embellished textiles with refined craftsmanship. The collection stands out for transforming traditional wallpaper into highdesign, tactile surfaces that bring the richness of couture to interior spaces. Crafted on premium silks, linens and woven textiles, each design is handfinished and fully customisable.

Modern luxury vibes

Stylish & comfortable 🕞

Vana Chair by Intent Made is a dynamic yet delicate chair with the entire frame crafted of metal. It sports a handle at the back for a better grip. The product is ideal for a dining space. It allows you to personalise the upholstery to best suit the colour tone of your home.

Vintage-inspired collection

GRAFF launched its latest offerings—26 signature finishes designed to elevate everyday spaces into luxurious expressions of personal style. The brand's curated palette ranges from finishes like Polished Chrome and Brushed Nickel to contemporary tones such as Architectural Black and Polished Gold. Among the most eye-catching options is Rose Gold with a modern finish.





Geometric design

Prerna Mohan Design Studio's latest bespoke sofa showcases a hexagon pattern design. It draws inspiration from nature's most efficient shape 'hexagon' often seen in honeycombs and crystal formations. The geometric form is more than just form; it evokes motion. With its solid wood frame and sculptural armrests, the piece pairs architectural clarity with understated comfort.

Play of form & function

Hong Kong Hip Series by Lucaris draws inspiration from the pulsating energy of the city, which seamlessly blends eastern and western cultures. Meticulously crafted from lead-free crystal, these stemware pieces elevate the visual appeal of table setting. The collection can be used in a lavish dinner party or an intimate gathering.





Touch of elegance

Mira Living launched a range of contemporary home decor accessories that evoke beauty, harmony and functionality. They are characterised by opulent materials and intricate embroidery and the brand's signature vases and table Lamps. The collection features a wide array of decorative items that are perfect for adding a touch of sophistication and glamour to your space.

Weaving multisensory experiences

Beyond visual drama, Kalatmak Spatial Systems crafts design that appeal five senses, forging meaningful connection with environment.



WORDS BY HT BUREAU

here is an invisible yet critical shift across the hospitality industry today. When you walk into space and sense something changes, you cannot always explain it, but you feel it. That is where the design role comes into play and does its job quietly, not grabbing attention, just guiding mood and even posture.

Responsive design

As the industry enters the era of Hospitality 3.0, design is evolving into something more fluid and responsive. Guests are now looking for emotional cues, spatial empathy and a quiet intuitiveness in how a space receives them. A room that adjusts to guests' light preferences, a courtyard that invites both solitude and social connection or a lobby that 66 Guests are now looking for emotional cues and spatial empathy in design

serves as a co-working hub—these are no longer futuristic concepts, but they are becoming the new baseline.

Why is this important? Because nearly 50 per cent of the human brain processes visual information.

Sensory appeal

This evolution is not just about visual drama. It is about designing for all senses. Imagine curated art and lighting, ambient acoustics, textural contrasts like velvet against stone and signature scents that leave an imprint long after checkout. The integration of technology is subtle yet strategic, incorporating elements like smart lighting, responsive climate control and AI-driven personalisation systems, offering convenience wrapped in "invisible luxury."

At Kalatmak, translating a designer's philosophy into tangible, multi-sensory environments, is where they bring their expertise to the table. To build environments that feel effortless, even when every inch has been thought through.

Off the map, into the story

A self-proclaimed cultural sponge, **Rahool Macarius** is drawn to the kind of stories that rarely make it into guidebooks.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

Rahool Macarius Market Managing Director, Eurasia Wyndham Hotels & Resorts

Q: A book that influenced your career journey...

A: No book has influenced my career as deeply as real-life experiences have.

Q: Your favourite holiday destination... A: Sorrento, Italy, is a place where life moves at a slower pace.

Q: Your last holiday was... A: Nairobi, Kenya, offers a unique experience of being close to the wild.

Q: One change you'd like to bring to the industry...

A: To focus more on supporting the emotional well-being and professional growth of frontline staff.

Q: A hospitality trend you'd like to see return... A: The charm of a handwritten note.

Q: Your travel essentials...

A: Noise-cancelling headphones, a journal to capture my thoughts, a mobile and one item of clothing.

Q: Describe yourself as a traveller...

A: I am a cultural sponge, endlessly curious and always drawn to stories you won't find in any guidebook.

Q: Your biggest leadership lesson...

A: Leadership is less about the spotlight and more about how you carry yourself in the quiet moments.

Q: One piece of advice for young hoteliers...

A: Hospitality is like a beloved sport or hobby. The more passion you pour into it, the more your skills flourish.

Movements



Cyrus Madan Director, Development, India & South Asia Accor

Accor appointed Cyrus Madan as its new Director of Development, India & South Asia. With nearly three decades of experience in hospitality, Madan brings his deep understanding of the industry and a strategic vision to his new role. He has also held leadership positions across renowned hospitality brands.



Anoop Pandey Vice President and General Manager The Leela Palace Jaipur

The Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts has appointed Anoop Pandey as Vice President and General Manager of The Leela Palace Jaipur. He will lead the team in elevating guest experiences, positioning the palace on the global luxury map and deepening The Leela's cultural resonance in the region.



Deepak Verma Cluster Director, Sales & Marketing Andaz Delhi, by Hyatt

Andaz Delhi, by Hyatt has appointed Deepak Verma as the new Cluster Director of Sales & Marketing (Andaz Delhi, by Hyatt and Hyatt Delhi Residences). Verma will oversee the overall sales and marketing strategy, with a focus on enhancing guest experiences and reinforcing Andaz Delhi's position as a leading lifestyle hotel.



Dia Rajdev Director, Events Grand Hyatt Gurgaon

Dia Rajdev has been appointed as the Director of Events at the Grand Hyatt Gurgaon. Rajdev brings over 15 years of hospitality experience across leading luxury brands, including The Ritz-Carlton, Four Seasons and Westin. He will help elevate the benchmark for luxury experiences in the NCR region.



Elvis Pereira Director, Food & Beverage The Westin Goa

The Westin Goa has appointed Elvis Pereira as the Director of Food & Beverage. With a career spanning 17 years in the hospitality industry, he will focus on strategic growth, innovative concepts and operational excellence across all F&B outlets, ensuring guests experience the very best in service and cuisine.



Nipu Kalita Assistant GM, Sales, Mayfair Spring Valley Resort, Guwahati



Shreya Sharma Multi Property Director, Marketing, Sheraton Grand Whitefield, Bengaluru

Shreya Sharma has been appointed as the Multi Property Director of Marketing for Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel and Convention Centre, Marriott Executive Apartments UB City and The Artiste Kochi. Shreya has consistently shown her ability in devising effective communication strategies.



Chef Guru Choephel Pastry Sous Chef, The Ye Old Bakery, The Claridges New Delhi

To boost its sales leadership and deepen its footprint in the region, Mayfair Spring Valley Resort, Guwahati, has appointed Nipu Kalita as Assistant General Manager of Sales. Backed by over 13 years of experience, his appointment marks a push toward market expansion and guest outreach in Northeast India.

The Ye Old Bakery at The Claridges New Delhi has appointed celebrated pastry artisan Chef Guru Choephel as its new Pastry Sous Chef. With over a decade of experience in hospitality, Chef Choephel aims to bring a fresh perspective to classic offerings by blending traditional favourites with modern touches.







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