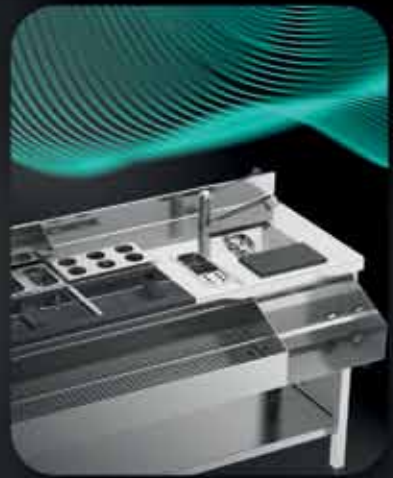
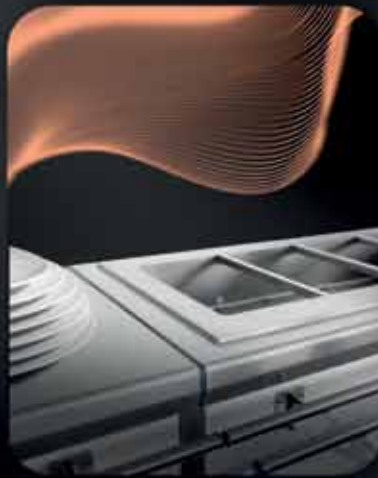


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Hotel industry's growth surge to persist into 2025



T

he year 2024 was an exciting and busy year for Hospitality in India without any exception. Hotels have seen robust operational performance and brands have shown remarkable growth in inventory. It would be fair to state that the industry is passing through a defining period, significance of which will be seen in long term.

Travel preferences are also transforming with greater emphasis on meaningful experiences. Holiday plans of pure relaxation are plans of the past. Travel itineraries of today revolve around gainful activeness ranging from religious tourism, health and wellness programmes, wildlife safaris, tranquil retreats, sporting holidays, etc., which also become treasured memories. Development of resorts and getaways in lesser-known areas are likely to find a place on the travel map very quickly so

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To meet the rising demand of this sector, it would only be prudent to address the need of developing skill at top priority.”

long as they encapsulate some form of excitement and memorable activity.

To meet the rising demand of this sector, it would only be prudent to address the need of developing skill at top priority. There seems to be a steady decline in the desire to make a career in the world of hospitality. Industry leaders need to put greater effort in addressing this at grass root levels and familiarising the young potential workforce, of the advantages of being a part of hotels and the future it holds for them. Catching them young and making hotels a happy place to work would be the way forward in harnessing and retaining talent. We do hope to see some action in this direction.

Dear Readers, thank you for your patronage and my very best wishes to you for a successful & happy 2025.

Cheers,
Sunil Ghadiok

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Cover picture credit
Anantara Jewel Bagh Jaipur Hotel



Picture credit: IHCL

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HotelTalk is published & printed by Devika Jeet on behalf of DDP Publications Pvt. Ltd. Printed at Modest Print Pack Pvt. Ltd., C-52, DDA Sheds, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-I, New Delhi-110020. Published from 72, Todarmal Road, New Delhi - 110 001.

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Generative AI top priority in 2025



Despite promising prospects of Gen AI, challenges emerge hindering full-fledged implementation in the travel industry.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

A new report released by Amadeus, ‘Navigating the Future: How Generative Artificial Intelligence is Transforming the Travel Industry,’ revealed that Generative AI remains top priority for the travel sector in 2025.

“Generative AI has the potential to transform every facet of what we do across the travel ecosystem, enhancing the passenger experience at every step of the journey,”

Sylvain Roy, Chief Technology Officer, Amadeus, said.

With inputs from 300 industry leaders, 46 per cent of respondents cited Generative AI as a ‘top priority’ in 2025. The figure rose to 61 per cent in the Asia-Pacific.

“*51% of technology leaders believe Gen AI already has a vital presence in the travel industry in their respective countries*”

Other technologies included data management (38 per cent), cloud architecture (36 per cent), non-generative AI infrastructure (34 per cent), and biometric technology (23 per cent).

More than half of travel technology leaders (51 per cent) believe Generative AI already has a vital presence in the travel industry in their respective countries, with 36 per cent expecting this presence to emerge next year. Only 2 per cent of travel technology leaders said it would take three years or more for Generative AI to have a significant presence in the sector.

Currently, 41 per cent of travel companies reported they have the budget and resources to implement Generative AI, while 87 per cent are open to working with a third-party vendor to develop Generative AI-powered applications.

The report highlighted factors hindering the roll-out of Generative AI, such as data security, lack of Generative AI training, and return of investment concerns. [HT](#)



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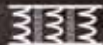
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Triad of India's economic growth

Puneet Chhatwal calls for unification of tourism, hospitality, and aviation sectors to turbocharge India's economic growth.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO, Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), has long been a vocal advocate for uniting all stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality sectors to secure the long-overdue recognition they deserve. At a recent event in the capital, he strongly endorsed the unification of tourism, hospitality, and aviation, highlighting the powerful economic potential these three sectors could unlock. "These sectors are fundamental to India's economic development, but there is a catch—unless they work in harmony, they risk missing the larger opportunity. The time has come when we bring the three sectors together—tourism, hospitality, and civil aviation," he emphasised.



However, Chhatwal's vision of a unified force goes beyond creating synergies between sectors; it is about reshaping India's growth narrative. He stressed that the government must move beyond the narrow lens of domestic and inbound tourism to fully capitalise on the unprecedented surge in demand for travel. "When we talk tourism, we get lost in domestic and inbound travel," he observed, emphasising that tourism alone cannot drive the kind of growth India needs. Hospitality is the real engine behind job creation. "The job creation is maximum in hospitality. Similarly, aviation needs to work together with these sectors. Without this coordination, we will not make the progress we seek," he explained.

Double push: Centre and state

One of Chhatwal's key critiques focused on the lukewarm support tourism and hospitality receive from both the central and state governments. He argued that the central government is falling behind, especially in terms of providing long standing infrastructure status to the



Puneet Chhatwal
MD & CEO
Indian Hotels Company Limited
(IHCL)



GST should not hinder competitiveness for hotels."

Picture credit: IHCL



hospitality sector, which could help the sector attract more investment.

Chhatwal advocated for a comprehensive policy that recognises hospitality as a critical component of the nation's infrastructure development. "If the government is making strategic investments in highways, roads, and airports, hospitality must be integrated alongside," he highlighted. "At the same time, states need to incentivise hospitality," he urged, stressing that the outdated view of hospitality as a luxury sector must be discarded. "It is a sector that drives maximum job creation," he pointed out.

Taxation: A levelled playfield

One of the key areas where Chhatwal sees room for improvement is in the taxation of the hospitality sector. He

firmly believed that the current tax structure, particularly the high GST rates, is hindering the sector's growth and competitiveness within the South Asian region. "The concept of taxing hospitality the most must go if we are to create more jobs," he said, adding, "It should have never reached a 28 per cent GST on hotels."

Chhatwal also highlighted the challenges posed by these high taxes, which place hotels at a disadvantage. He also noted that the 18 per cent GST on F&B services in hotels with room tariffs exceeding 7,500 rupees is particularly burdensome for classified hotels. Besides, he strongly advocated for a holistic approach to policy-making—one that can bring and integrates tourism, hospitality, and aviation as a unified engine for India's economic prosperity. HT



Icon reinvented legacy meets innovation

Hemendra Singh Kushalgarh on The Claridges' transformation: upgraded interiors, expanded F&B, and enhanced guest experience.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



Q: The Claridges has completely repositioned itself in the national capital. What would you like to tell us about its new revamped identity?

A: The repositioning of this iconic property in the heart of the capital has been a transformative journey, driven by our deep understanding of the evolving needs of today's luxury travellers. Our goal was to strike a perfect balance between tradition and a contemporary edge. We redefined the guest experience by upgrading the interiors while preserving the

rich heritage that defines 'The Claridges New Delhi.' We introduced modern design elements and cutting-edge technology, while maintaining the timeless charm of our signature old-world hospitality.

We have made significant enhancements to the property, including the expansion of our signature restaurant, Jade, which now accommodates 90 guests, up from 45, allowing us to host larger gatherings and offer a more refined culinary experience. Additionally, our Cinquair spa has been upgraded to provide a more luxurious space for relaxation and rejuvenation, while our rooms have undergone comprehensive renovations to ensure they remain both comfortable and exquisite. Our transformation goes beyond just structural enhancements.

Q: With this renovation, how have you tried to ramp up your revenue and take profit beyond rooms, especially in the food and beverage (F&B) segment?

A: With eight F&B outlets on the property, we have created dining experiences that appeal to a broad range of taste palettes and preferences, not just for our in-house guests but also for the local visitors in Delhi.

The diversity of our outlets—from the rustic North-Indian flavours at Dhaba to the Mediterranean allure of Sevilla—helps us cater to different segments of the market, driving footfall from outside the hotel as well.

Besides, we have introduced chef's tables, exclusive tasting menus, and special themed nights to attract food enthusiasts who

“

Housed in a beautifully restored building that showcases classic architecture, the hotel exudes historical elegance while offering all modern comforts.”



Hemendra Singh Kushalgarh
General Manager
The Claridges New Delhi

want a culinary experience rather than just a meal. These initiatives allow us to offer premium pricing and create memorable, bespoke events that drive up both revenue and repeat visits. Furthermore, we have integrated our F&B outlets into the digital space more aggressively, ensuring online reservations are seamless and promoting exclusive offers through digital marketing. This helps us capture the growing number of diners who book experiences online and prefer personalised deals.

Q: What are the key areas where you have made a strong mark?

A: What truly sets us apart is our charming blend of culture, culinary, heritage, luxury, and personalised service. Housed in a beautifully restored building that showcases classic architecture, the hotel exudes

historical elegance while offering all the modern comforts guests desire. The dedicated staff goes above and beyond to ensure every visitor feels truly valued and cared for.

With a focus on fresh, locally sourced ingredients, our eight F&B outlets cater to a wide range of tastes. For those looking to unwind, the wellness amenities, including a gym and spa, provide the perfect escape.

Located in the vibrant heart of New Delhi, The Claridges offers easy access to top attractions and business districts. Whether for social gatherings or corporate events, the hotel's elegant spaces are designed to make any occasion special. All these elements come together to create an exceptional experience for discerning travellers seeking a home away from home.

Q: Who is your competitive set? And how do you aim to ace in your competitive set?

A: In the competitive landscape of luxury hospitality, the competition takes place with leading five-star

hotels in the heart of Delhi. To distinguish ourselves from these luxury brands, we leverage our unique strengths and focus on the personalised experiences we offer to our guests. One of our key differentiators is the level of personalised service provided by our dedicated staff. At The Claridges, we take pride in anticipating our guests' needs and delivering tailored experiences that create

“*We have integrated our F&B outlets into the digital space more aggressively.*”

lasting memories. We aim to not just compete but excel in our competitive set. We are committed to ensuring that every guest who walks through our doors feels valued and cherished, making their stay with us unforgettable.

Q: What are your future plans? Where is your focus now?

A: Our focus is on sustaining and enhancing the legacy of the hotel as a premier destination in the heart of the city. Looking ahead, we are committed to elevating the guest experience through innovative offerings, personalised services, and continued investments in our facilities. Also, sustainability remains at the core of our values. We are actively implementing eco-friendly practices, ensuring we contribute positively to both our community and the environment. Overall, our plans centre on fostering a culture that prioritises excellence and guest satisfaction while continuously adapting to the evolving landscape of the hospitality industry. HT





Reimagining Kitchen experience

Tramontina is poised to firmly establish its position as a comprehensive kitchen solutions provider in the Indian market.

Brazil-based houseware major Tramontina has entered the Indian market, setting a new benchmark in the hospitality industry. Renowned globally for its professional-grade cookware and world-class knives, the 113-year-old company is a trusted name among chefs for its craftsmanship, precision, and durability.

“In Indian HoReCa kitchens, chefs are preparing a variety of cuisines under one roof, and

they need tools that can adapt to that demand,” **Aruni Mishra**, CEO, Tramontina India, said. Mishra further said, “Our legacy of craftsmanship, innovation, and quality is what we bring to this dynamic market. After years of research, we are proud to offer products that prioritise safety, durability, and functionality suited to India’s unique culinary environment.”

Certified by the National Sanitation Foundation (NSF), Tramontina’s professional



knife range meets the highest food safety and hygiene standards. It is designed specifically for the HoReCa sector and comes with a 25-year warranty.

In addition to knives, Tramontina offers toxin-free cookware in commercial kitchens. Certified cookware that is PFAS and PFOA-free ensures food remains 100 per cent free of harmful substances while delivering high functionality to meet the demands of a busy kitchen.

Tramontina’s Aeion tri-ply stainless steel range and Fusao ceramic-coated cookware are

made with toxin-free materials. Built for high-volume service, they deliver exceptional performance with aesthetics, making them ideal for Indian kitchens.

For slow, flavourful cooking, Tramontina’s pre-seasoned cast iron range is a standout. These versatile pieces can go straight from the stove to the buffet, introducing the ‘serve in your cookware’ culture to India.

With an eye on the evolving hospitality market in India, Tramontina plans to introduce a new range of categories such as enamel cast iron cookware, ideal for both cooking and buffet service.

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Unleashing potential of bleisure travel

To leverage Nagpur's growing status as business hub, **Manoj Bali** shares how Radisson Blu Hotel boosts its services to lure corporate & leisure travellers.

Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur is a contemporary business hotel located in Maharashtra's winter capital, designed to cater to the needs of business travellers. Nagpur is strategically positioned for growth and development, benefiting from its location along National Highway 7 and proximity to the city center and both global and domestic airports.

Manoj Bali, General Manager, Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur, said that the presence of three industrial zones—MIDC Hingna, Buti Bori, and Kalmeshwar—fuels economic activity, while Wadi serves as a hub for pharmaceutical companies, clearing and forwarding (CF) agents, distributors, and stockists. The Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport Nagpur (MIHAN) enhances

logistics and trade capabilities, further attracting businesses.

Delivering luxury, comfort and convenience

To capitalise on the city's growing prominence as a business hub in their country, Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur elevated their offerings and amenities to attract business and leisure travellers. Bali said, "The hotel features 92 superior rooms, 75 deluxe rooms, 24 business classrooms, 21 executive suites, and 2 presidential suites, all elegantly styled by renowned interior designers and equipped with state-of-the-art technology for maximum comfort."

Dining options at the hotel include five on-site restaurants, each



offering unique cuisines. To meet the guests’ diverse needs, Creative Kitchen-TCK serves global cuisine with an extensive buffet and à la carte selections, Indiya Oye specialises in Indian dishes, and Ni Hao focuses on Oriental cuisine. Guests can unwind at Ethyl Bar, which offers a wide range of wines, spirits, and cocktails. The Cakewalk and Tea lounge provide exquisite pastries, cakes, and a selection of teas and coffees.

For meetings and events, the hotel offers the Business Class Lounge for exclusive guest services. He added that versatile venues like summit and courtyard for conferences and social functions are all supported by modern infrastructure and Wi-Fi. The fully equipped business centre and boardrooms are perfect for confidential meetings, gatherings, and private interactions.”

Overall, Radisson Blu Hotel Nagpur combines luxury

accommodations with exceptional dining and comprehensive business facilities, making it an ideal choice for both corporate and leisure travellers.

Growth prospects of hospitality

As the fastest growing metropolis in India, Nagpur presents dynamic opportunities for the hospitality industry with its rich cultural heritage and cosmopolitan environment. Bali highlighted, “The city taps into potential markets in nearby satellite cities, such as Indore, Raipur, Chandrapur, Wardha, Devli, and Saunser, expanding its economic footprint. Nagpur is also a popular venue for international and domestic cricket, boosting tourism and local engagement. The city’s appeal extends to leisure travel destinations like Kanha National Park and Pench Tiger Reserve, promoting eco-friendly tourism.”



Nagpur presents various dynamic opportunities for the hospitality industry with its rich cultural heritage and cosmopolitan environment.”



Manoj Bali
General Manager
Radisson Blu Hotel
Nagpur





Factors fuelling Nagpur's bleisure growth

Located along National Highway 7, close to the city center, and global and domestic airports

Home to three industrial areas—MIDC Hingna, Buti Bori, and Kalmeshwar

Wadi serves as a centre for pharmaceutical companies, CF agents, distributors, and stockists

Access to nearby satellite cities like Indore, Raipur, Chandrapur, Wardha, Devli, and Saunser

Presence of regional offices for PSUs and banks, enhancing its status as a commercial centre

Multi-modal International Cargo Hub and Airport Nagpur, boosting trade potential

Close to leisure travel destinations—Kanha National Park and Pench Tiger Reserve

Besides, Nagpur's prominence in the medical sector is underscored by a significant number of renowned doctors and a burgeoning medical tourism industry. The presence of esteemed educational institutions, such as VNIT, IIM, and AIIMS positions Nagpur as an education hub, attracting students from across the country.

Bali stated, "As the second capital of Maharashtra, hosting the winter session of the state assembly in December, Nagpur plays a vital role in regional governance. Furthermore, the establishment of regional offices for public sector undertakings (PSUs) and banks enhances its status as a commercial center." Collectively, these factors indicate significant growth potential for hospitality in Nagpur city.

HT

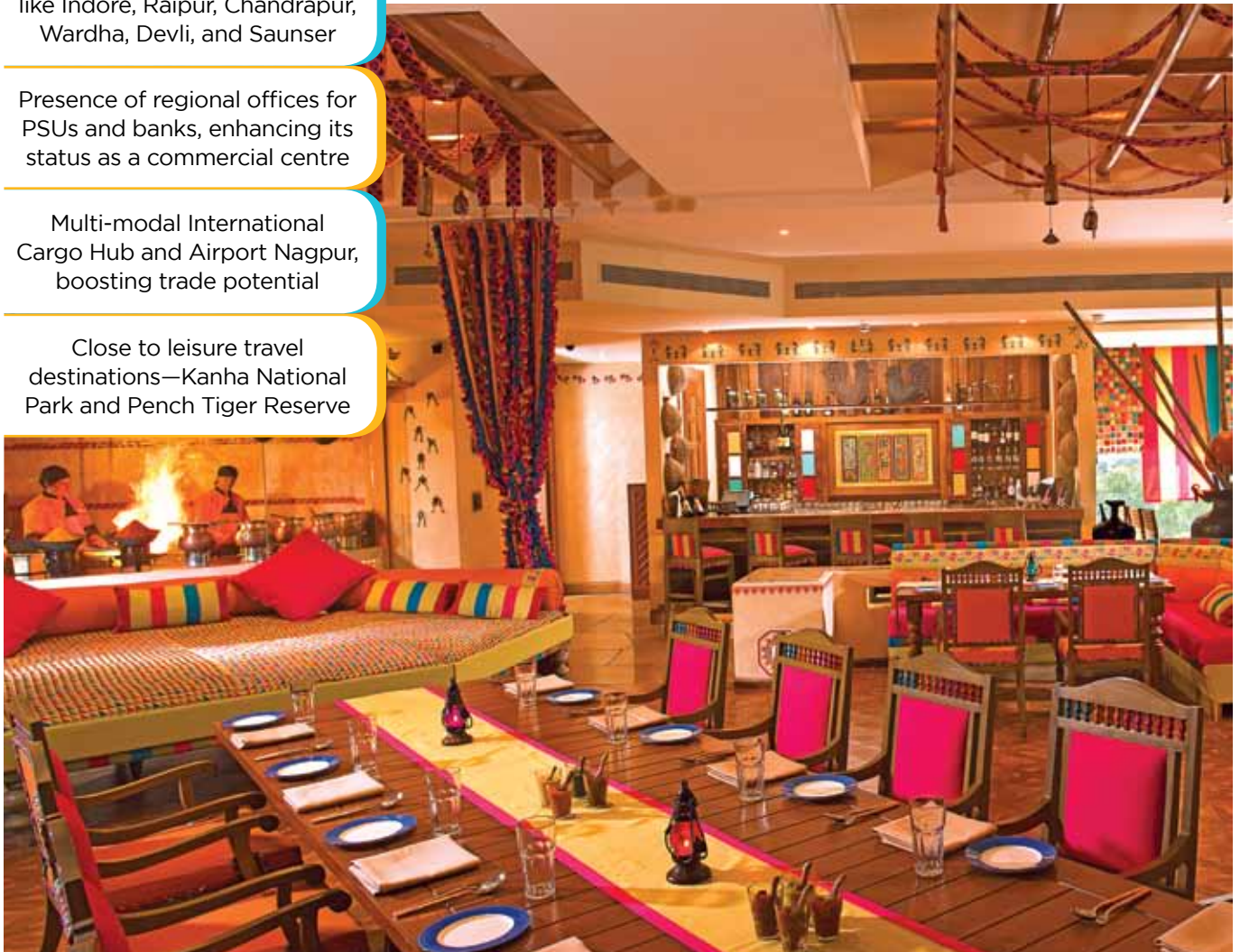
About the author

Manoj Bali currently leads Radisson Blu



Nagpur is also a popular venue for international and domestic cricket, boosting tourism and local engagement."

Hotel Nagpur. Specialising in luxury resort and hotel management, he excels in boosting sales, operational efficiency, and guest experience while maximising profitability and employee productivity.





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Why BOH and FOH are equally crucial

Tactful planning and design of BOH spaces can ensure seamless operations of FOH, which directly enhances guest service quality.

WORDS BY RAJAT RIALCH



The back-of-house (BOH) design plays a significant role in the overall design and functionality of a hotel. A well-planned BOH ensures smooth operations, allowing staff to perform their duties efficiently, which directly affects the guest experience. It reduces the circulation space, minimising the physical movement of team members and services, thereby lessening unnecessary time and energy wastage.

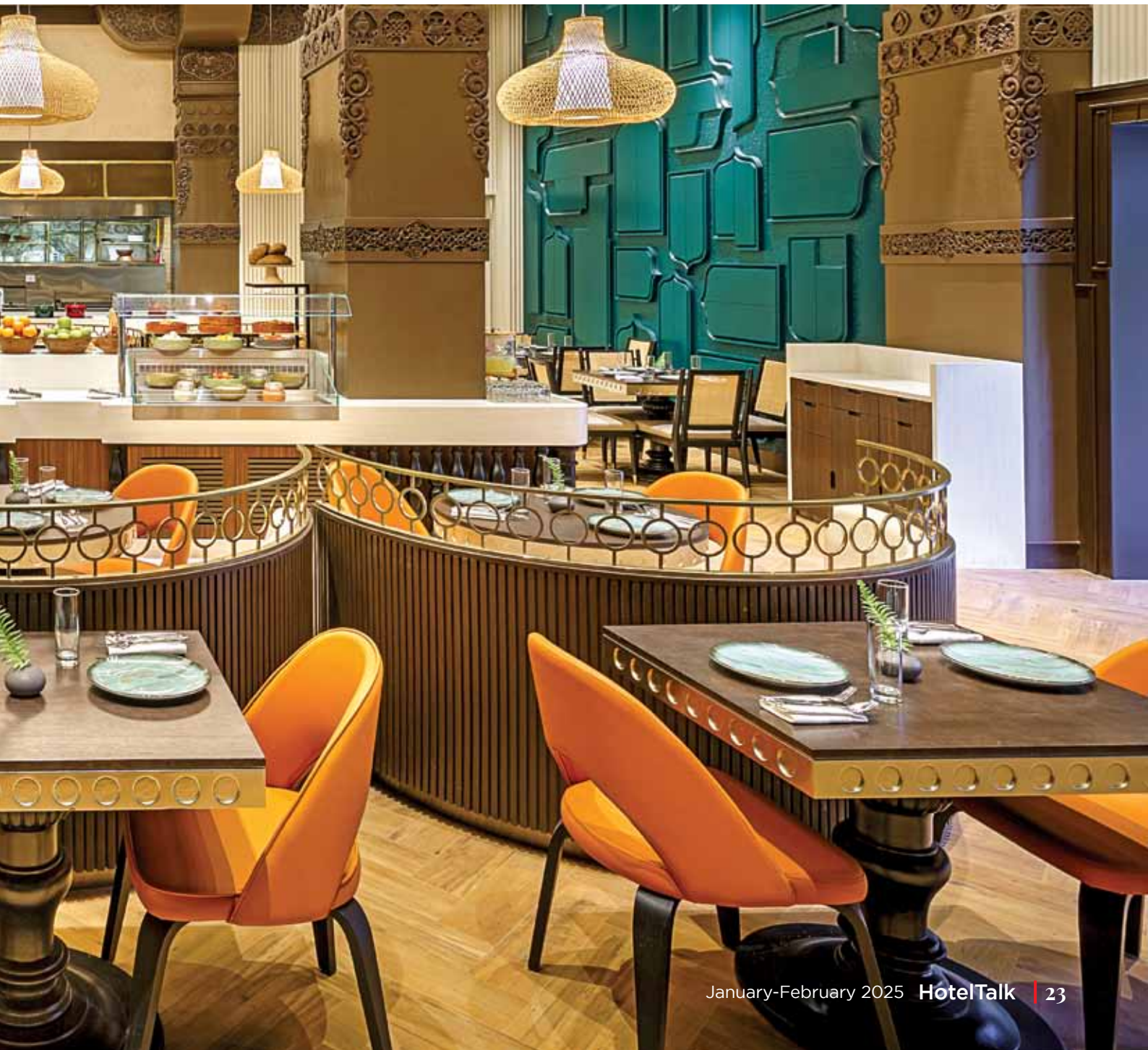
Delving into what project stage BOH designers should be roped in, **Rajat Rialch**, Founder, HPG Consulting, enlightened that designers should ideally be appointed during the early stages of a hotel project, typically after the feasibility study and conceptual

design phases. Involving BOH designers early on ensures that their expertise is integrated into the overall design, addressing operational efficiency and guest experience from the outset.

Design impacts

Thoughtful BOH design includes areas like staff entrances, changing rooms, break rooms, and offices, which contribute to the well-being and productivity of employees. Now many hotels are looking for wellbeing certifications, which is only possible with the right BOH planning.

Rialch emphasised that although guests do not see the BOH, its efficiency and functionality ensure that their needs are met promptly and effectively, enhancing



their overall experience. It is all about speed and efficiency coupled with guest service.

Further, effective BOH design enables efficient use of space and cost savings, which can be reinvested in guest-facing areas.

Rise in awareness

Despite high real estate prices, many asset owners and architects do recognise the importance of BOH. It is often the front of the house (FOH) that receives more attention due to its direct interaction with guests.

However, there is a growing awareness of the need to balance both FOH and BOH design to ensure a seamless and successful operation. Proper planning and design of BOH spaces can

lead to cost savings, better space utilisation, and improved staff satisfaction, which indirectly benefits the overall guest experience.

He pointed out, “There are only two things that can be controlled which directly adds to the operating profit—energy and staffing. An effective initial design by BOH consultants can navigate these aspects.”

The emphasis on guest-facing areas is crucial because it directly influences the guest’s first impression and overall experiences. “It is the guest experience that dictates the design whereas in business hotels, it is the functional design and operational efficiency. Also, the importance of BOH and staff areas should not be underestimated,” Rialch stressed.



Rajat Rialch
Founder, HPG Consulting



Effective BOH design minimises circulation space and the movement of team members and services, thereby lessening time and energy wastage.”





Balancing act

Shedding light on why hotels and restaurants prioritise FOH design, he shared that it is the first impressions that matter. Luxurious, well-designed guest areas can significantly enhance a guest's experience and elevate a brand's image. Attractive guest areas are often highlighted in marketing materials and can drive bookings and sales.

However, the BOH design is equally crucial for hotels. Well-designed BOH areas ensure smoother operations, which directly impacts guest service quality. It has a positive influence on the staff's well-being. Comfortable and functional staff areas contribute to employee satisfaction and productivity, leading to better service.

Sustainable practices

Thoughtful BOH design can significantly drive sustainability and reduce waste in several ways. It enables efficient resource management—properly designed storage

and supply areas can tackle over-ordering and reduce food wastage. Incorporating energy-efficient appliances and systems in BOH areas can lower energy consumption. Dedicated recycling facilities encourage proper waste segregation and disposal.

“Installing water-efficient fixtures in BOH areas helps conserve water. Using eco-friendly building material reduce the overall environmental impact of the hotel. Overall, it can lead to cost savings, enhanced operational efficiency, and a smaller environmental footprint,” Rialch asserted.

HT

About the author

Rajat Rialch's journey from a trained chef to a leading consultant highlights his passion and vision. After working at a top consulting firm, he founded HPG Consulting in 2000, which now spans 34 countries, with notable projects in the SAARC, Middle East, and Africa. He has led HPG Consulting to work with top brands like Hyatt, Hilton, Google, and Microsoft.



Redesigning guest experiences

Beyond comfort and aesthetic elements, hotels are prioritising immersive, wellness-centric designs that resonate with guests' evolving needs.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

Rome was not built in a day, and neither is a hotel. Turning a hotel into the ‘it’ destination for travellers requires careful planning and thoughtful execution. A key element in this process is design, which plays a crucial role in shaping its unique appeal and enhancing its brand value. As travel demand continues to rise, hotels around the world are evolving their designs and interiors to create not just a comfortable stay, but an immersive journey and destination experience within their walls.

to recharge and explore while prioritising well-being. “Travellers are now seeking experiences that resonate with their individuality and lifestyle. For Gen Z, X, and Alpha, it has shifted from a luxury to an essential part of their lives,” **Pratiti Rajpal**, General Manager, Ronil Goa, a JdV by Hyatt Hotel, said, noting that immersive experiences and meaningful connections to local culture are among the top priorities for these generations.

Harish Gopalakrishnan, General Manager, The Westin Goa,



Pratiti Rajpal
General Manager
Ronil Goa, a JdV by Hyatt Hotel



Travellers, especially the younger generation, are in pursuit of spaces that reflect their values, enhance their well-being, and offer lasting memories



Gone are the days when a hotel stay was merely about a bed, breakfast, and other basic conveniences. Today’s travellers—especially the younger generation—seek more than just comfort and convenience; they are in pursuit of spaces that reflect their values, enhance their well-being, and offer lasting memories. As a result, the interior design of a hotel or resort plays a key role in shaping the guest experience, embodying both functionality and emotion.

Wellness-centric design

Post-pandemic, travel has become a balancing act—an opportunity

pointed out that hotel interiors are no longer just about aesthetics. “More than just aesthetics, the design promotes wellness and enhances comfort through features like calming lighting, soundproofing, and wellness-focused facilities. This aligns with the growing demand for spaces that rejuvenate and support well-being,” he stated. At The Westin Goa, the philosophy of blending contemporary elegance with the vibrant tropical essence of the region is evident in every corner of the property. The lobby sets the tone with its expansive layout, bright seating, and curated art pieces that reflect the local culture.



Harish Gopalakrishnan
General Manager
The Westin Goa



With modern hotel design, hotels are aiming to create an experience that feels authentic, genuine, and in complete harmony with the environment



Spaces reimagined

Gopalakrishnan shared that design is not only about looks but also about comfort, wellness, and connecting with the local environment. Every element, from furniture to layout, communicates the hotel's personality and influences guest choices. The Westin Goa's guest rooms, with their soft colour palettes, signature Heavenly Beds and Baths, and premium amenities, emphasise rejuvenation and relaxation. Wellness is seamlessly integrated into the design, with spaces like the Heavenly Spa, a serene escape in earthy tones, and the Westin WORKOUT Fitness Studio, which provides a sleek,



Manju Sharma
Managing Director
Jaypee Hotels & Resorts

motivational environment. The poolside rooms, designed to offer both indoor comfort and outdoor leisure, further enhance the guest experience by fostering a sense of tranquillity and well-being.

For **Manju Sharma**, Managing Director, Jaypee Hotels & Resorts, every texture, colour, and layout choice is a deliberate effort to inspire connection and foster memorable moments, transforming spaces into living expressions of hospitality innovation. To enhance its appeal to the new generation, the brand has embraced a design philosophy that harmoniously blends modern elegance with subtle cultural

nuances. She explained, “Travellers increasingly seek holistic experiences, so we have crafted interiors that elevate every touchpoint, from the tranquil ambiance of our wellness areas to dining spaces where Indian cuisine is reimaged with contemporary flair.”

Crafting brand identity

The interiors of a resort are an extension of its brand identity, emphasising sustainability and luxury in equal measure. “At our resort, we emphasise handcrafted, sustainable elements that embody our commitment to nature and luxury. Every detail, from the use of repurposed materials to the integration of organic design elements, reinforces our identity as a forest-inspired, eco-luxury resort,” **Ayu Tripathi**, Director, Aahana Resort, shared. She further added that guests at Aahana are not just visiting a hotel—they are being



Ayu Tripathi
Director
Aahana Resort

enveloped in an experience that feels authentic, genuine, and in complete harmony with the environment. “We have added spacious outdoor gazebos to encourage people to spend more time outside while enjoying the beauty of the surroundings,” Tripathi said. Additionally, the rooms are designed to flood with natural sunlight, and materials

like glass, wood, and stone are used to create a sense of harmony between the indoors and nature.

Hotel design plays a crucial role in defining a brand identity and setting it apart in a competitive market. Gopalakrishnan explained, “Every element, from furniture to layout, reflects the hotel’s personality and influences guest choices. Flexible spaces that cater to business travellers, families, and social interactions enhance the overall experience, fostering a sense of community. Younger generations are drawn to visually striking spaces that align with their style and are social media-ready, making interiors a key element of brand communication.” Beyond establishing brand identity, modern design aesthetics are also evolving to help new-age guests strike a balance between nature and technology, wellness and adventure, and, most importantly, the outward and inward journey.

HT



Growing appeal of branded residences

Branded residences emerge as a strategic investment opportunity to unlock revenue streams or recoup project costs.

WORDS BY NIKHIL SHAH

In recent years, the concept of ‘Branded Residences’ has gained significant momentum in the real estate market, with over 10+ inquiries surfacing in the last year alone. This model offers a unique way for developers and hotel brands to optimise their revenue streams or recover development costs, especially in markets that crave exclusivity and luxury. The concept has been steadily attracting Indian clients lately.

Understanding branded residences

Branded Residences are residential properties that are managed or co-branded by established hotel chains. These residences can either be integrated with a hotel or resort component, the preferred option by most brands, or can function as standalone residential units without any hotel affiliation.

There are two main models:

- **Hotel/resort:** The most popular model, wherein residential properties share amenities and services with a hotel or resort under the same brand.
- **Standalone residences:** Operate independently of a hotel or resort, offering the exclusivity of a branded residence



Nikhil Shah
CFA & Senior Director,
Hospitality, Capital Markets
& Investment Services

“

Branded residences work well in mixed-use developments where residential properties are coupled with hotel or resort amenities



without hotel features. Marriott, for instance, is one of the major brands in India offering this concept.

In branded residences with a hotel component, brands typically prefer that the developer finishes the hotel or resort project first before starting on the residential units. However, developers often see it differently; they usually want to focus on selling the residential units first to fund the hotel construction.

The typical difference between serviced apartments and branded residences is that branded residences are often sold to individual investors, while in serviced apartments, ownership is usually retained by the company or operator.

Additionally, in urban areas, the residents of branded residences are typically the end-users themselves, living in the units. However, in leisure or vacation destinations, these units may be grouped into a rental pool, where they are rented out when the owners are not using them.

Brand fee components

Branded residency projects come with various fee structures, primarily:

- **Sale fee:** 3 per cent to 5 per cent of the unit's topline sale value
- **Service fee:** Usually, this is put as a component of common area maintenance services (CAMS)
- **Operating fee:** If the branded residency operates similarly to a hotel, there may be an operating fee charged by the brand

Emerging trends

Initially, branded residences were predominantly seen in metro locations, such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Chennai, and Kolkata. However, even leisure destinations like Goa, Jaipur, and Lonavala have recently started to see a rise in branded villa concepts. These locations are emerging as hotspots for luxury vacation homes and retreats, giving a boost to branded villa projects.

Key players in the market

Several hotel brands have entered the branded residency market, including:

- Four Seasons
- Leela
- IHCL: Taj
- Marriott: JW Residences, Westin

- Hilton: Conrad, Waldorf Astoria
- Accor: Sofitel, Fairmont, Raffles
- Oberoi: Trident Residences
- Hyatt: Park Hyatt, Grand Hyatt, Andaz
- Wyndham
- Della

Branded residences typically fall within the upscale, upper upscale, and luxury segments, as lower-tier brands lack significant appeal, demand, and pricing power. Most domestic brands are not involved in this market, which is primarily dominated by international brands.

Among these, Marriott stands out as a key player in this category, offering options with and without hotel components. This flexibility enables varied project developments across different real estate markets.

Existing projects in India

The branded residency market in India is witnessing a surge with several completed projects. Some notable existing projects include:

	Project name	City	Developers	Land size	Project units	Sale price
1	Presige Leela Residences	Bengaluru	Presige Group	3 acres	88 units	16,923 psf
2	Four Seasons Private Residences	Bengaluru	Embassy Group	6.5 acres	109 units	37,420 psf
3	Trump Tower	Mumbai	Lodha	17 acres	390 units	71,377 psf
4	Trump Tower	Pune	Panchshil Realty	2.5 acres	46 units	11.8-12.38 crores
5	Leela Bhartiya	Bengaluru	Bhartiya Group	125 acres	281 units	17,877 psf
6	Embassy Boulevard	Bengaluru	Embassy Group	51 acres	170 units	9.9-30 crores
7	Trident Residences	Delhi	BI Luxury	0.5 acres	19 units	5-18 crores

Upcoming Projects

Several exciting developments are in the pipeline, showcasing the rising popularity of branded residences in India.

	Project name	City	Developers	Land size	Project units	Sale price
1	Taj Sky View	Chennai	Ampa Group	3.5 acres	123 units	6.4-19 crores
2	Westin Residences	Delhi	Whiteland Corporation	20 acres	NA	NA
3	Three Sixty West	Mumbai	Oberoi, Oasis	1.58 acres	284 units	1,00,000 psf
4	Trump Tower	Delhi	Tribeca Creators LLP	21.34 acres	262 units	11-18.88 crores
5	Leela Sky Villas	Delhi	Raheja	3 acres	120 units	NA
6	DN YOO	Odisha	DN Homes	3 acres	402 units	3.45-4.4 crores



“

Nowadays, even leisure destinations such as Goa, Jaipur, and Lonavala have started to see a rise in branded villa concepts

Benefits of branded residences

Globally, branded residential projects can command a premium of up to 30 per cent over typical residential prices. In India, while exact numbers may be difficult to ascertain, these projects serve as a catalyst for moving inventory and recovering development costs.

Branded residences are especially beneficial in mixed-use developments where residential properties are coupled with hotel or resort amenities. Even though they might not command the same premium as their global counterparts, they are still instrumental in recouping partial or full project costs.

Transformation on cards

Branded Residences are more than just a trend; they are becoming a strategic investment vehicle, especially in high-demand luxury and metro markets. For developers, partnering with a hotel brand not only boosts marketability but also helps recover project costs through increased sales velocity and premiums, even if marginal compared to the global market. As more hotel brands explore this space in India, the landscape of residential real estate is set to undergo a significant transformation, offering buyers the allure of both exclusivity and exceptional service. HT

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

Tech innovation

Unlock small hotels' growth

Small hotels need to embark on digital transformation journey to enhance guest experiences and reap revenue benefits, says **Amy Read**.

WORDS BY DEVIKA JEET

Embracing technology is a journey, not a destination. For small hotel owners, starting with simple, effective tools can lead to significant improvements in operations and guest satisfaction. By focusing on data integration, AI, and sustainability, boutique hotels can compete with larger chains. As **Amy Read**, Vice President, Innovation, Sabre Hospitality, puts it, “Get your data right, stay adaptable, and embrace innovation. Technology is advancing faster than ever, and those who build strong foundations today will lead tomorrow.”

Start small, think big

For small hotel owners, the prospect of adopting new technologies can be daunting. Read suggested, “It is crucial to begin with manageable, impactful tools. Implementing conversational chatbots can streamline customer service by handling common inquiries, allowing staff to focus on personalised guest interactions. This step can demonstrate tangible benefits of technology integration.”

Leverage e-commerce platforms

Expanding offerings beyond room bookings is

“*Implementing conversational chatbots can streamline customer service, allowing staff to focus on personalised guest interactions*”



Amy Read
Vice President-Innovation,
Sabre Hospitality



a strategic move for small hotels. E-commerce platforms enable properties to sell ancillary services such as dining experiences, spa treatments, and local tours. This diversification not only enhances the guest experience but also opens new revenue streams. The success of Techsembly, an e-commerce platform co-founded by Read, and later acquired by Sabre, exemplifies the potential of such integrations.

Focus on data integration

Understanding guest preferences is crucial for delivering personalised experiences. However, data fragmentation causes challenges. Read emphasised the importance of consolidating data to achieve a unified view of each guest. By integrating data systems, hotels can tailor their services to meet individual needs, fostering loyalty and satisfaction.

Embrace AI and automation

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation are transforming the hospitality industry. For small hotels, AI can manage tasks ranging from personalised marketing to operational efficiency. Automating routine processes reduces workload and minimises errors, enabling staff to create memorable guest experiences. AI can analyse guest data to offer personalised recommendations, enhancing the overall stay.

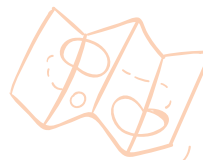
HT



Travel maximisers

What **Gen Z & Alpha**
really want?





If there is one generation that cannot get enough of travel, it is Gen Z, closely followed by Gen Alpha. With a carpe diem approach, both are driving a transformative shift in the travel industry. As they pursue travel for self-discovery and global exploration, their passion for travel is unlocking unprecedented growth and potential for the sector. In fact, Hilton's Trends Report 2025 labels Gen Alpha and Gen Z across Asia Pacific as 'avid travellers', with 92 per cent taking at least one trip in the past year.

In India, this enthusiasm is even more pronounced, with young travellers averaging two to three trips annually, and 94 per cent traveling at least once. The report also reveals

Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal, said, "The brands that will thrive in the future are those that stay attuned to the shifting dynamics of generational preferences."

Understanding new expectations

Gen Z's thirst for personalised, tech-driven experiences and Gen Alpha's appetite for immersive, interactive travel, these generations are pushing the boundaries of what is possible, challenging hotels and resorts to adapt in ways that were once unimaginable. This drives a more dynamic, diverse, and forward-thinking hospitality landscape that is poised to meet the needs of tomorrow's travellers. Talwar



These travellers are reshaping traditional ideas of luxury, affordability, and experiences, creating diverse landscape."



Kadambari Sabharwal Talwar

General Manager

Courtyard by Marriott Bengaluru Hebbal

Gen Z and Alpha are new business catalysts, driving the hospitality sector with unprecedented momentum.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI

that nine in 10 (90 per cent) Gen Alpha and Gen Z in India are likely to travel in the coming year, and 87 per cent take pride in their ability to explore new destinations.

As Gen Z, Gen Alpha, and even Gen X continue to shape the travel and hospitality landscape, brands who can anticipate and adapt to their evolving demands will be the most successful. **Kadambari Sabharwal Talwar**, General Manager,

explained, "I see the hospitality industry standing at a fascinating crossroads, navigating the unique and evolving demands of three dynamic generations—Gen X, Gen Z, and the emerging Gen Alpha. These travellers are reshaping traditional ideas of luxury, affordability, and experiences, pushing the industry to innovate in ways we have never imagined before." From family vacations to solo getaways, the



entertainment, Augmented reality (AR)/Virtual Reality (VR) integrations, and hands-on activities for kids are likely to win their hearts—and those of their parents.

Sustainability is non-negotiable

One emerging trend among next-gen travellers is the demand for sustainable and experience-driven stays. **Davinder Juj**, General Manager, Eros Hotel, New Delhi, highlighted, “They prioritise eco-friendly practices, unique cultural immersion, and personalised services, blending luxury with purpose. Hotels are now favouring greener operations and meaningful guest experiences.”

Sustainable stays top next-gen travellers’ list of preferred places or hotels. **Rajneesh Kumar**, General Manager, Courtyard by Marriott Aravali Resort, shared, “We are committed to meeting these expectations through initiatives such



They prioritise eco-friendly practices, cultural immersion, and personalised services.”



Davinder Juj
General Manager
Eros Hotel New Delhi

trends are both created and driven by these generations.

They embrace it all—budget holidays, luxury stays, business trips, and bleisure travel. Understanding their preferences and purpose is key to driving business growth.

Jean-Yves Minet, Global Brand President, Midscale & Economy, Accor, explained “Travel is about purpose and intent. Our role is to serve our guests’ intent seamlessly, ensuring convenience, comfort, and great service.”

Redefining travel with tech

Rewriting the travel playbook, Talwar described Gen Z as a digital native generation that is conscious of spending, yet unafraid to splurge on experiences that reflect their values. She elaborated, “Gen Z expects technology to enhance convenience—

they want app-based room controls, seamless check-ins, and AI-driven personalisation, making the entire travel experience more intuitive.” For Gen Z, luxury is not defined by price, but by exclusivity, personalisation, and Instagram-worthy moments.

On the other hand, Gen Alpha, still in its formative years, is already demonstrating a tech-savvy and environmentally conscious mindset. Talwar added, “As this generation grows, their demand for family-friendly, tech-enabled, and socially responsible travel options will only increase.” Hotels that offer immersive



Rajneesh Kumar
General Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Aravali
Resort



Eco-conscious stays enhance the guest experience.”

as electric vehicle charging stations, a rainwater harvesting plant, an in-house glass water bottling plant, and locally sourced ingredients. These efforts allow us to provide eco-conscious experiences that enhance the guest experience.”

Future roadmap

Today, the key to staying relevant lies in providing value—not just in monetary terms, but in the emotional, cultural, and transformative aspects of travel. “I believe the brands that will thrive in the future are those that stay attuned to these generational shifts. By integrating technology, sustainability, and personalisation, they can transcend traditional boundaries of travel,” Talwar pointed out.

She further emphasised, “The hospitality industry must embrace a multi-faceted approach to meet the evolving preferences of these generations. Hotels need to adopt agile business models that cater to



diverse needs—whether it is offering flexible pricing tiers that balance luxury with accessibility, or creating hybrid spaces where work, leisure, and community seamlessly coexist.”

The diversity of expectations is reshaping the hospitality industry in profound ways, and it is exciting to see how the sector will rise to meet these generational demands. As Talwar puts it, “The question is not whether the industry will adapt—it is how creatively the industry will rise to the challenge. And I cannot wait to see how that unfolds.”

HT

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The Lotus Palace Chettinad

Heritage meets luxury

Influenced by the Chettiar legacy, ASPHL's new heritage hotel preserves the historical essence while offering modern amenities.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU

Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels Limited (ASPHL) announced the opening of THE Lotus Palace Chettinad in Tamil Nadu, a heritage hotel under THE Park Collection brand. The architectural marvel of the hotel has been conserved and restored by ASPHL. Steeped in the Chettiar legacy, the hotel is believed to have been built in the late 17th century.

Chettinad, which translates to 'Land of the Chettiars,' is a region in southeastern Tamil Nadu that

“

The hotel emboldens our commitment to preserving India's diverse legacy

once encompassed over 96 towns and is home to numerous Chola and Pandya temples, making it one of India's most attractive heritage travel destinations.

The palace's design follows a maximalist approach, retaining the character of the original Chettinad homes while incorporating a variety of Indian and modern design elements.

Priya Paul, Chairperson, Apeejay Surrendra Park Hotels, commented, "We are bringing THE Park Spirit to this spectacular mansion, merging the age-old traditions with contemporary luxury, sought by global travellers seeking authenticity. This hotel emboldens our commitment to honouring and preserving India's diverse legacy, by carefully turning historic spaces into living stories."

The 15-room heritage palace features an eclectic mix of furniture and antique pieces. It comprises a Chettinad Thali restaurant, poolside bar lounge, library, and luxury spa, among others.

Architect **Kaushik Mukherjee** was commissioned to recreate the essence of living in an authentic Chettinad home.

HT



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How hotels are responding to multi-gen travel

Catering to needs of diverse age groups can be challenging; hotels must prioritise shared experiences to transcend generational boundaries.

WORDS BY **SOMYA DEEP**



The growing popularity of multi-generational trips, where multiple generations of a family travel together, is not only increasing but also creating new demand in the market. This growth is driven by geographically dispersed family members seeking opportunities for meaningful bonding rather than typical holidays.

According to a survey by Agoda, close to 34 per cent plan to travel with family in 2025. As the trend gains momentum, it indicates that it is more than a one-season trend. To maintain a competitive edge in the hospitality industry, hotels are now leveraging innovative approaches to bridge generational gaps and target this niche market.

Family-friendly accommodations

The most important aspect of multigenerational family travel is finding the right rooms and accommodations balancing

everyone's needs. With a thoughtful approach, hoteliers are now adapting their offerings to travellers' needs by designing more family-friendly rooms and amenities. **Gaurav Mudgal**, Managing Partner & VP, Commercial, Aamaghati Wildlife Resort, said, "We design our accommodations with multigenerational families in mind, offering spacious, eco-luxury rooms that ensure comfort for all ages. Our large suites and interconnected

rooms allow families to stay close while maintaining personal space."

Space, comfort, and convenience are essential when traveling with family. To meet this growing demand, properties are making significant investments to enhance their offerings. **Nishant Taneja**, Head, Marketing, Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort, shared, "We prioritise creating memorable experiences for families traveling across generations.



Gaurav Mudgal
Managing Partner & VP, Comm.,
Aamaghati Wildlife Resort



Nishant Taneja
Head, Marketing
Moksha Himalaya Spa Resort



Our resort offers spacious accommodations, including multi-bedroom suites, to ensure everyone stays close yet comfortable.”

Tailoring diverse needs

Families rejoice in togetherness and look forward to having shared experiences. Indian households often love to play games when with family. To offer shared experiences, hotel owners offer activities that appeal to

the entire family. **Krinal Thaker**, Manager Head, Evoke Experiences, shared, “We ensure that every family member, from grandparents to children, feels engaged and pampered. To cater to diverse interests, we offer activities, such as adventure pursuits like Skyzilla, ziplining, ATV rides, and a clubhouse for relaxation. In the evenings, we host bonfires with live guitar music, perfect for friends and family to



Hotels are leveraging innovative approaches to bridge generational gaps and target this niche market



Krinal Thaker
Manager Head
Evoke Experiences



Rikant Pittie
Co-founder
EaseMyTrip

bond. For couples, we offer romantic candlelight dinners. Our special kids’ area is designed to keep young minds entertained with various activities.”

Crafting experiences that bring everyone closer is essential. For families seeking enriching and educational journeys, eco-friendly destinations are recommended highlighting natural beauty and cultural heritage. **Rikant Pittie**, Co-founder, EaseMyTrip, said, “Our initiatives, such as Explore Bharat, offer a wide range of



options, enabling families to choose destinations that resonate with their preferences. Easy Darshan, on the other hand, showcases India’s rich cultural diversity and spiritual experiences, making it perfect for multigenerational groups.”

Understanding the unique needs of multigenerational travellers and ensuring a seamless experience for all age groups, is crucial. **Jitendra Thakur**, Director, F&B, Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan, explained that they offer a variety of options, from kid-friendly activities and play zones to relaxing spaces like Nilaya Spa for adults and seniors to unwind. Thakur added, “Our kids’ club provides interactive indoor games, arts-crafts, and workshops to keep children entertained while parents unwind. Families can enjoy outdoor adventures like nature walks or time at the swimming pool, gym, yoga sessions, and SPA treatments.”

Well-balanced packages

Aamaghati Wildlife Resort offers thoughtfully curated family packages that feature guided safaris in the Ranthambore National



Jitendra Thakur
Director, F&B
Courtyard by Marriott Pune
Chakan

Park, traditional Rajasthani dining experiences, and wellness activities. Mudgal stated, “Families can participate in eco-conscious initiatives such as tree planting and learning about local flora and fauna. They also offer customised itineraries to balance adventure and leisure, ensuring grandparents enjoy serene activities while children engage in interactive experiences, such as storytelling sessions.”

Addressing the unique challenges of travelling to remote locations like the Rann of Kutch, Gujarat, Thaker



Thoughtful packages are crucial that cater to every family member’s needs, ensuring seamless stays where each member feels valued. Space, comfort, and convenience are essential

pointed out, “Our packages are designed to meet both comfort and practical needs. At Rann Utsav-The Tent City, we take care of essentials like arranging milk for children and ensuring that the basics are always available despite the remoteness of the areas.”

Taneja emphasised that they offer exclusive packages from luxurious accommodations and curated dining experiences to activities that cater to different age groups. For instance, their “Rejuvenate Package” combines wellness sessions, guided nature walks, and indulgent meals designed to bring families together while providing opportunities for individual relaxation. Their goal is to deliver seamless, memorable stays where every family member feels cared for and valued.

Inclusive approach

Creating an inclusive experience for every family member, from the youngest to the eldest, involves



careful consideration of various factors. Mudgal claimed, “Senior guests appreciate our wheelchair-friendly pathways, peaceful reading nooks, and rejuvenating spa therapies, while younger visitors are drawn to the dedicated play area and supervised adventure zones.”

To cater to families with young children, Taneja shared, We offer babysitting services and baby-

proofed furniture upon request. We prioritise accessibility throughout our property, ensuring seamless mobility for individuals with disabilities.”

Pittie added that for elderly guests or with mobility challenges, we collaborate with hotels that offer enhanced accessibility features. These include ramps, elevators, wheelchair-friendly rooms, and other amenities to ensure a smooth experience. HT

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Nex-gen kitchen tech redefining F&B

Razi Haider discusses high-tech kitchen solutions that can significantly reduce energy and operational costs while achieving sustainability targets.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU



Razi Haider

Country Manager (India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal), ITW India (Food Equipment Group Division)



meals while maximising energy efficiency. Thanks to the combination of pressure cooking and dry steam, HOBART Pressure steam cooker (GTP) delivers the best cooking results. The GTP significantly saves time, electricity, and water.

Q: What are you focussing on to pioneer food technology in the F&B sector?

A: We are focusing on innovative technologies that enhance efficiency, sustainability, and customer satisfaction while meeting evolving market demands. HT



Q: How ITW is helping hotel kitchens adopt energy-efficient warewash innovations?

A: Costs are high for water, chemical products, and electricity. It is a relief that technology can help reduce electricity, water, and chemical consumption while still ensuring washing hygienically. Our HOBART undercounter dishwashers come with cutlery premium function. It can save up to 60 per cent of water and reduce energy demand.

Q: How are zero-waste kitchens reshaping sustainability goals in the hotel industry?

A: Zero-waste kitchens are

transforming sustainability goals in the hotel industry by aligning with eco-conscious consumer demands. They emphasise inventory management, waste management tracking systems, and circular resource management. They not only align with sustainability goals but also position as leaders in the green hospitality movement.

Q: How does technology help chefs balance nutrition, taste, and energy efficiency?

A: ITW's advanced cooking technology is designed to empower chefs with tools that enhance their ability to create nutritious, flavourful

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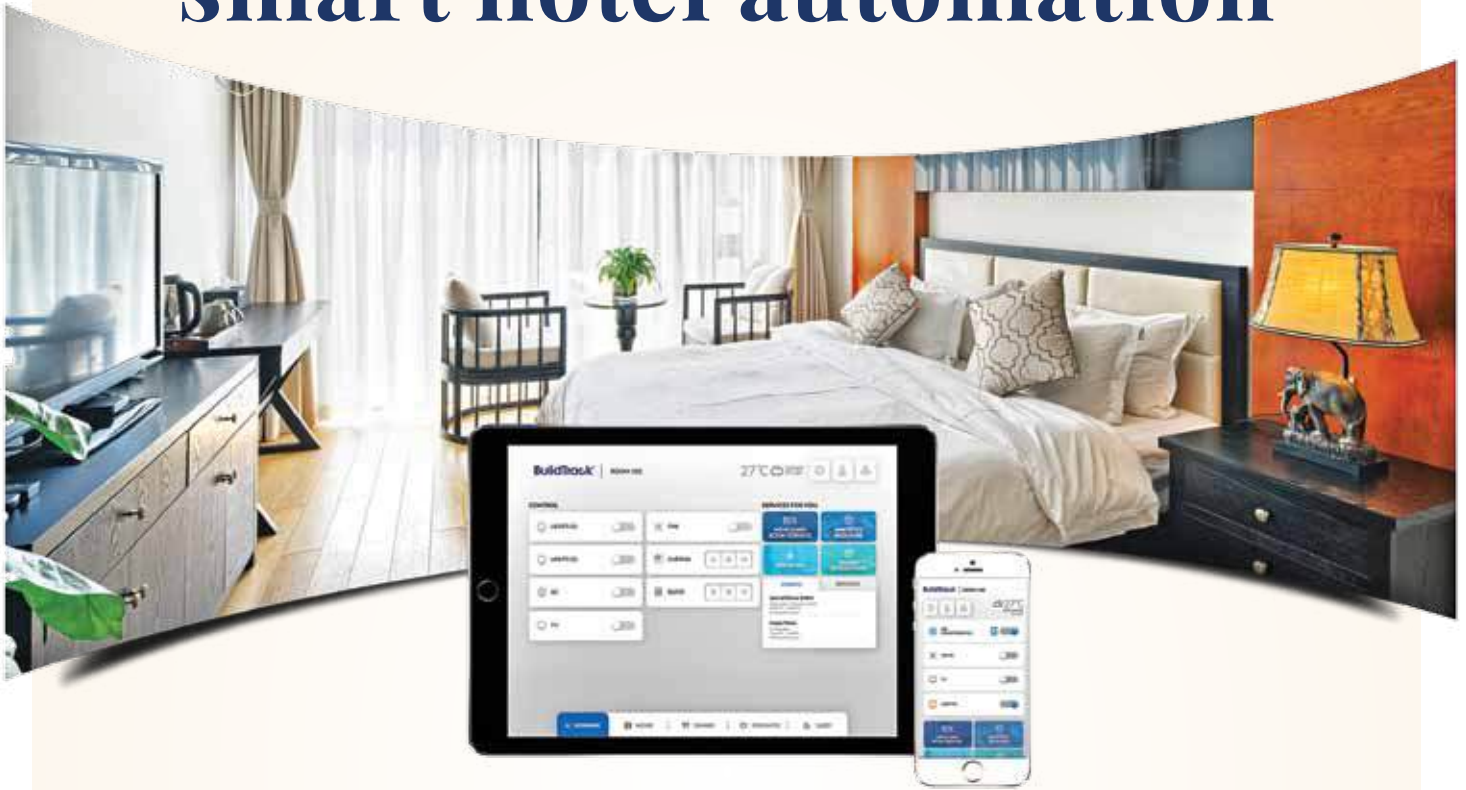
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Reimagining hospitality with smart hotel automation



With smart automation, hotels can redefine guest experience with tailored services while simultaneously saving operational costs.

Imagine checking into a hotel room where your smartphone becomes the key to comfort. Guests can adjust lighting, control the air conditioning, operate curtains, or even set the perfect mood—all with a smart keypad or voice command. BuildTrack’s smart solutions empower hotels to offer personalised services that align with guests’ preferences, creating a home-away-from-home atmosphere.

Operational efficiency

Explaining how smart automation improves operational efficiency, **Syed Sarjekhan**, Vice President, BuildTrack, said, “Our centralised control systems allow hotel staff to monitor and manage room utilities remotely, ensuring energy savings without compromising guest satisfaction. Unoccupied rooms can

automatically turn off lights and set back the HVAC temperatures, reducing costs while supporting sustainability. BuildTrack also offers sensor-based occupancy control.”

To elevate the dining and entertainment experience, BuildTrack’s systems enable guests



Syed Sarjekhan
Vice President
BuildTrack

to order room service, request housekeeping, or make restaurant reservations—all through the BuildTrack app and smart touch switches. These are monitored centrally to streamline service delivery, enhance convenience, and reduce turnaround times.

Elevating guest experience

BuildTrack’s smart touch switches and scene controls offer aesthetic appeal, seamlessly blending into premium interiors while providing cutting-edge functionality. Hotels equipped with BuildTrack solutions are capable of setting new benchmarks for guest experiences. “Embracing these innovations is the key to staying ahead in a competitive industry, ensuring guests leave with lasting impressions of comfort and care,” Sarjekhan emphasised.





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Dr Nitin Shankar Nagrale, Founder and General Secretary, Hospitality Purchasing Managers Forum (HPMF), has been instrumental in shaping the procurement landscape for the hospitality industry. At The Hospitality Procurement Managers Forum (HPMF) Convention, held in Lucknow, he strongly advocated for streamlining procurement processes and empowering procurement professionals.

Skill development

To navigate procurement-related challenges, it is crucial for professionals to stay abreast of the latest skills and developments in the industry. Nagrale shared, “We are helping the government of Uttar Pradesh to train and provide the skill set to the professionals. Even the Tourism and Hospitality Skill Council (THSC) has got involved in this initiative. We will be helping these individuals starting from the entry-level to mid-level to senior management level.” Besides, HPMF also partnered with institutions like the Indian Institute of Materials Management, Welingkar Institute and IHMs to train students. They conduct seminars for HPMF members.

He added that the HPMF Gurukul programme helps professionals to understand purchasing process, supplier relationships, and vendor management. The programme also covers the importance of harnessing technological innovation and AI.

Role of HPMF

To stay updated with industry trends, HPMF has created 60 WhatsApp groups to build informed networks. It helps connect

Fostering skill development

Imparting new skills is essential to empower professionals and steer efficiently critical procurement challenges in hospitality, avers **Dr Nitin Shankar Nagrale**.

WORDS BY HT BUREAU



professionals from different cities, allowing them to share the latest industry information. Nagrale informed that they host a website where they post news, white papers, best practices, new standard operating procedures (SOPs), and government notifications.

Conventions like HPMF, help professionals connect with buyers and suppliers from around the country and world, making it a premiere experience for them. He added, “The presentations, discussions, and displays help widen the vision of local procurement professionals who were initially reluctant to move beyond their city.”

It also focuses on local businesses and artisans, showcasing the rich cultural heritage and a plethora of Geographical Indication (GI) tagged products of UP. He shared, “It attracts investors, significantly contributing to the vision of making the state a global ecotourism hub.” Remarkably, the convention is

“

Streamline procurement processes and empower procurement professionals to drive business growth



Dr Nitin Shankar Nagrale
Founder and General Secretary
Hospitality Purchasing Managers Forum (HPMF)

a significant milestone in Uttar Pradesh’s growth story, aligning with the UP Chief Minister’s ambitious vision for the state.

Looking ahead

Nagrale envisioned HPMF as a global platform for purchasing professionals, connecting them with international experts, and fostering

cross-border collaborations. He also emphasised bridging the gap between buyers and suppliers by creating a platform for open dialogue and supporting local businesses and artisans to contribute to India’s economic growth. He also stressed the importance of recognising and empowering women leaders in the hospitality industry.

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Touch of Victorian era

Rosabagh's Duke in Love collection captures the essence of the gilded Victorian era. This range is a visual symphony of romance and grandeur, featuring poly silk jacquard cushions and beddings in rich jewel tones with gold accents. The collection adds a layer of sophistication, which is ideal for creating a regal setting in your living room or bedroom.



Curated vintage charm



Craftsmanship of storytelling

The MuseVERSE toy collection by MuseMART's features whimsical characters, such as the gatekeeper, mystic, explorer, and ruler. The Channapatna toy collection brings imagination to life. Each figure is crafted from locally sourced 'phool' wood, showcasing traditional craftsmanship and storytelling.



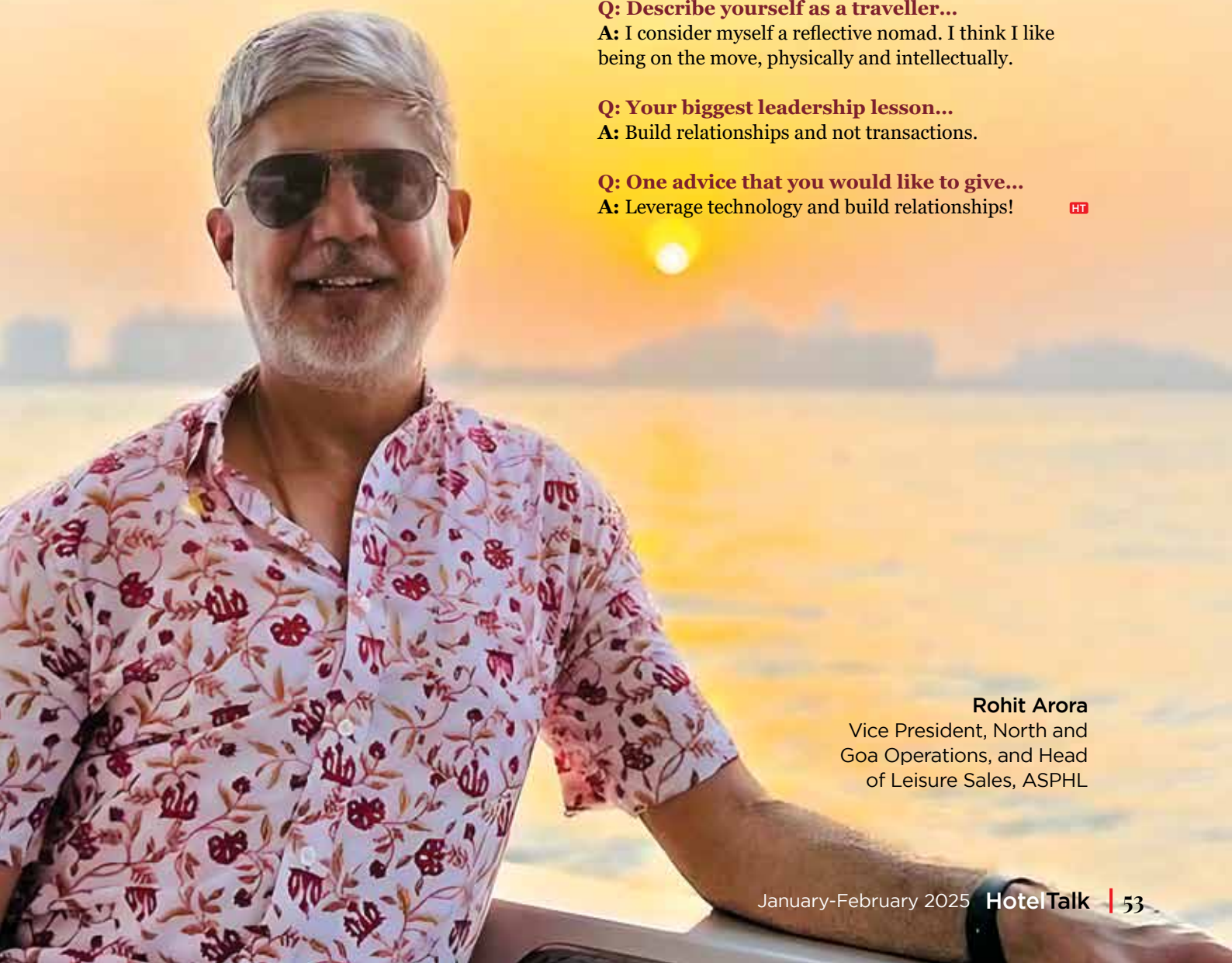
Aesthetic appeal of wilderness

Beyond Dreams' Kuruka 2.0 Fabric Collection, is inspired by the vibrant culture and untamed beauty of Kenya's Masai Mara. It features bold tribal motifs and earthy tones, blending African wilderness with contemporary elegance. Ideal for pairing with Kuruka's sculpted furniture, these fabrics evoke the raw beauty of the savannah and turn your space into a sanctuary of art and culture.

A reflective nomad

From dazzling Dubai to vibrant Madrid, **Rohit Arora** seeks destinations where the outer world engages in a dialogue with the inner one.

WORDS BY LIPLA NEGI



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

A: Bhagavad Gita, The Road Less Travelled by M. Scott Peck, and What Got You Here Won't Get You There by Marshall Gold Smith.

Q: Your favourite holiday destination...

A: Madrid has my heart—great museums, amazing architecture, vibrant nightlife & is a shopper's paradise.

Q: Your last holiday was...

A: It was Dubai with my family. It was a short getaway after a long time to unplug and relax together.

Q: One change that you would like to industry...

A: To inspire the younger generation to join hospitality, we must showcase the creativity and excitement behind the hard work.

Q: A hospitality trend you want to bring back...

A: Handwritten notes—the amount of personalisation it shows is unmatched.

Q: Your travel essentials...

A: A good book to read, headphones, and earplugs.

Q: Describe yourself as a traveller...

A: I consider myself a reflective nomad. I think I like being on the move, physically and intellectually.

Q: Your biggest leadership lesson...

A: Build relationships and not transactions.

Q: One advice that you would like to give...

A: Leverage technology and build relationships!

HT

Rohit Arora

Vice President, North and Goa Operations, and Head of Leisure Sales, ASPHL

Movements



Shyam Kumar
General Manager
DoubleTree by Hilton
Bengaluru

Shyam Kumar has joined as the General Manager of DoubleTree by Hilton Bengaluru Whitefield. Kumar brings with him over two decades of experience in managing luxury and upscale hotels. He focuses on the hotel's growth, performance, making it the preferred destination for weddings and leisure travellers.



Vivek Braganza
Director, Operations
Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq
Thalassa Sea & Spa

Vivek Braganza has been appointed as the new Director of Operations for Sales and Marketing at Sofitel Bahrain Zallaq Thalassa Sea & Spa. He will oversee all hotel operations, including accommodations, F&B, spa services, and recreational activities. He will also spearhead sales and marketing strategies.



Susmita Khare
Group Head, HR &
Training, Encalm
Hospitality

Encalm announced the appointment of Susmita Khare as the Group Head of HR and Training. With over 27 years of experience, Khare brings expertise and passion to people-centric organisational development. She will be focusing on employee engagement, culture building, and leadership training.



Vinayak M Prabhavalkar
Director, Sales and
Marketing, Novotel
Goa Panjim

Vinayak M Prabhavalkar has joined as the Director of Sales and Marketing at the Novotel Goa Panjim. In his new role, he will focus on the hotel's market visibility, long-term client relationships, and sales and marketing initiatives. His collaborative leadership style will be key driver of the hotel's continued success.



Abdeali Zoomkawala
Director, Operations
The Khyber Himalayan
Resort & Spa, Gulmarg

Abdeali Zoomkawala has been appointed as the Director of Operations at The Khyber Himalayan Resort & Spa, Gulmarg. He has extensive experience in hotel management, pre-opening operations, and strategic leadership roles. He said, "We will strive to keep the flag flying high with world-class services."



Shabad Ahuja
Director, F&B
The Lodhi, New Delhi

The Lodhi, New Delhi has appointed Shabad Ahuja as its new Director of Food and Beverages. Bringing over 15 years of experience in hospitality, he will oversee food and beverage operations. He will lead a talented team to deliver exceptional dining experiences while optimising financial performance.



Ekta Kanchan
Director, Marcomm
The Westin Mumbai
Powai Lake

The Westin Mumbai Powai Lake and Lakeside Chalet-Marriott Executive Apartments has appointed Ekta Kanchan as the Director of Marketing and Communications. She brings over 12 years of broad experience in hospitality, F&B marketing, alcohol, beverage industries, and operational knowledge..



Yashraj Ranade
Chef De Cuisine
JW Marriott Mumbai

JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu has appointed Yashraj Ranade as the new Chef De Cuisine at Dashanzi. In his new role, Yashraj's passion and expertise will not only enhance the restaurant's sophisticated culinary experiences but will also complement it with his own innovative flair, adding visual appeal to the flavours.



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