

# HRA Today



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A MONTHLY ON HOSPITALITY TRADE  
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IN THE AGE OF EXPERIENCE ECONOMY**



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# HRA Today

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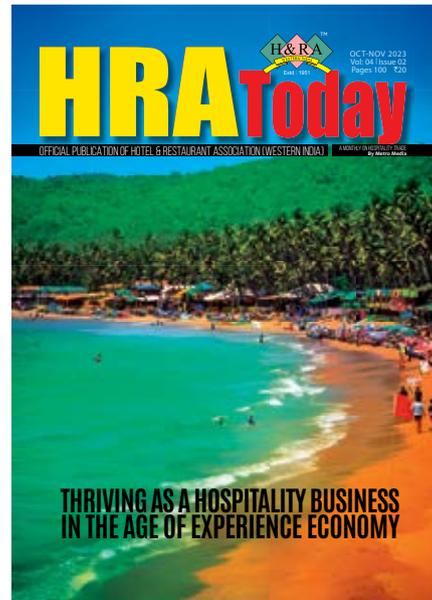
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## President's Message

**D**ear Members,  
I hope this note finds you well and in good spirits.

It is with a heavy heart that we bid farewell to a luminary of the hospitality industry, Mr PRS Oberoi, known fondly as Biki. His recent demise marks a profound loss for our industry. His visionary leadership and contributions to the Oberoi Group and the hospitality sector as a whole will be remembered and cherished. The Oberoi family's contribution to raising the standards of hospitality in India and globally is immeasurable. His father, the legendary hotelier Mr Rai Bahadur Mohan Singh Oberoi, founded the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) in 1955, a cornerstone in the industry's history. The Association has since diligently built on its rich legacy and is privileged to have played a seminal role in supporting the vibrant growth of India's tourism sector. HRAWI extends its heartfelt condolences to the Oberoi family, the Oberoi Group and the entire hospitality community during this time of profound loss.

We also mourn the passing of Subrata Roy, the Founder of Sahara Group, who departed from us on the 14th of November, 2023. On behalf of HRAWI, I extend our heartfelt condolences to the family, friends and the Sahara Group.

On a brighter note, I am delighted to applaud the Goa State Government for its progressive approach towards tourism with the introduction of the Caravan Tourism Policy. The policy aims to boost tourism in the State's hinterlands by encouraging private operators to develop caravan parks, providing tourists with an opportunity to explore the beauty of Goa beyond its well-trodden paths. We commend the Goa Government for its foresight in introducing a policy that not only promotes tourism but also addresses the need for affordable accommodations in remote areas where permanent constructions may not be permissible or feasible. This initiative will undoubtedly diversify and enrich the travel experience for tourists, promoting sustainable tourism in Goa's hinterlands.

Additionally, our Association has been actively engaged in advocating for the interests of our members. We submitted a representation to the Maharashtra Government last month, urging reconsideration of

the additional 5 per cent increase in VAT on liquor. We have impressed upon Government that the significant hike in taxes will have adverse effects on the hospitality industry, particularly on restaurants and bars and subsequently impact the State's tourism sector too. We have urged the Government to reconsider the decision in light of the concerns including the impact on tourism and the State's revenues, loss of business to hospitality establishments and the possibility of bootlegging, among others. We remain committed to supporting our members and ensuring a conducive business environment for the hospitality industry.

Also, last month, we successfully organized a comprehensive GST seminar titled 'Simplifying GST for the Hospitality Industry' at The Emerald Park in Nashik. The event brought together key stakeholders from the hospitality sector to delve into crucial aspects of the GST framework that directly impact hotel and restaurant businesses. The seminar covered various aspects of GST, including recent updates, best practices for implementation and navigating the regulatory landscape effectively. The seminar aimed to provide clarity and insights into the complexities of GST regulations, empowering our members with the necessary knowledge to navigate this crucial aspect of our business.

Furthermore, I am pleased to acknowledge the commendable performance of the hospitality industry during the recently concluded Cricket World Cup 2023. Our establishments played a pivotal role in offering exceptional services and experiences to the influx of visitors, contributing significantly to the success of this global sporting event.

As we progress into the festive season, let us continue to collaborate, innovate and strive for excellence in our endeavours. I extend my gratitude to all our members for their unwavering support and participation in our collective efforts.

Wishing you and your teams continued success and prosperity.

Warm regards,

**Mr. Pradeep Shetty**  
President - HRAWI



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# THRIVING AS A HOSPITALITY BUSINESS IN THE AGE OF EXPERIENCE ECONOMY

There is a transformative shift in modern hospitality towards the experience economy, which means more changes and trends are underway in the industry's dynamic landscape. First used by B. Joseph Pine II and James H. Gilmore in 1998, the term experience economy refers to the sale of memorable experiences to customers.

Rising middle-class populations, a surge in disposable incomes and modern audiences being dominated by millennials and Gen Z—who prefer to spend on lasting memories and experiences—is fuelling this economic shift. With the worth of this trend projected to reach a staggering \$12 billion by 2023, let us explore how hospitality businesses can rise to meet the new demands of the experienced economy.

## 1. Emerging destinations and luxury experiences

Across the globe, countries like the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Morocco are making significant investments in tourism infrastructure, captivating business and leisure travellers. These nations are at the forefront of attracting tourists with opulent and exclusive experiences. Simultaneously, in South Asia, India, Sri Lanka, and Nepal have emerged as leisure and wellness tourism hotspots.

These nations promise many experiences steeped in diverse cultural heritage, ancient traditions, spirituality, and rejuvenating Ayurveda-based wellness practices. Businesses can leverage wellness tourism, nature escapism, and exploration and tour services, providing tourists

with a chance to encounter new experiences. Powered by modern solutions designed for wellness and leisure services, delivering exceptional services that direct tourists to these luxury experiences is much easier.

## **2. Hyper-personalisation addressing individual needs**

Most modern businesses are on the quest to create personalised experiences. In the experience economy, providing a mere place to stay no longer suffices as discerning guests seek unique, exclusive and memorable encounters. To cater to these expectations, businesses are responsible for understanding and appreciating modern consumers' evolving preferences and how they differ with gender, class, race, ethnicity, spending power and working discipline. This can be achieved through meticulous analysis of guest data taken from a plethora of sources, including website chatbots, reviews, records, POS solutions, hospitality ERP systems, social media conversations and data analytics. Having the right software that captures data is of true essence.

By harnessing the power of data, businesses can not only stay ahead of the curve in delivering tailored experiences, but also create lasting impressions with their clientele. Personalisation adds an intimate approach to hospitality and lays the foundation of customer loyalty, repeat purchases and elevated guest satisfaction.

## **3. Curated experiences and tailored services**

The benefit of the rising number of hospitality solutions is that they leave a trail of data that businesses can retrieve and analyse to optimise their operations. Hospitality businesses can leverage modern technology solutions in various ways to create and deliver curated service

packages that cater to their guests' specific needs and preferences. The wealth of guest data is an excellent opportunity to curate experiences that resonate with each individual.

For example, the right solution will provide data that can provide insights into customer behaviour and trends. This helps identify popular add-ons and services that can be bundled together to create curated packages. Solutions like chatbots, mobile apps and guest service modules help businesses engage with guests before, during and after their stay, and respond to queries as fast as possible. Past purchase data helps hotels understand their most repeated customer segments and offer exclusive, VIP services and loyalty programs.

## **4. Give opportunities for immersive local experiences**

Another significant element that is born from the experience economy is the desire for immersive local experiences. According to ET TravelWorld 87% of millennials prioritise exploring new cultures over traditional activities like shopping or partying. Hospitality business owners need to know the right mix that can market their property as a local community experience. Displaying original artwork and collaborating with local artists, tour operators and event planners is a brilliant strategy in this regard. Further, offering exquisite meals using comprehensive POS solutions, hotels and restaurants can market homegrown dishes, beverages and menu combos that reflect the local community.

Taking this experience further, businesses can provide curated packages that include unique local experiences such as guided tours, cooking classes, art workshops or visits to local markets. Detailed

information and booking options can be provided through the hotel's website or mobile app.

## **5. Bridging gaps with digital connections**

In today's digital age, connecting with guests online is paramount. This entails sending personalised emails on special occasions, encouraging guests to share their experiences on official social media pages, and inviting them to tag the property. Such communications build a connection with customers beyond a business transaction, fostering loyalty and creating a sense of community that entices the customer to interact and engage more with a brand.

In this light, the increasing power of social media should not be overlooked, especially with travellers and guests heavily influenced by "social proof". Creating a strong online presence and encouraging guests to share their hospitality experience on a social network gives brands user-generated-content to reshare—potential guests then use this information when deciding their destinations, restaurants or accommodation options.

## **Unforgettable services create lasting experiences**

As the experience economy continues to gain momentum, the hospitality industry is required to move out of the traditional frame into a guest-centric service. Understanding guest preferences, personalisation and a dedication to unforgettable experiences that embracing innovation is paramount.

After all, staying attuned to their audience's evolving needs is how hospitality businesses can thrive in this new landscape. Adaptability and a commitment to exceptional service is the key to success in modern hospitality.

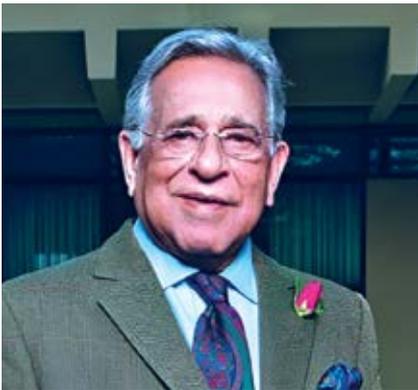
## Flashback Friday: Unveiling the legacy and influence of PRS Oberoi



At the age of 10, Biki Oberoi was enrolled in St Paul's School in Darjeeling, Bengal, in 1939, a time when his father, Mohan Singh, was venturing into the hotel business. Mohan Singh had purchased his first property, Clarkes Hotel in Shimla, in 1934, as he sought to establish himself as a hotelier. With time, he was able to learn the ropes of hospitality as a

clerk at Shimla's Cecil Hotel (now The Oberoi Cecil). Recognising his talent, the owner made him a partner in a recently acquired hotel. In 1934, when the British owner decided to sell the hotel, Mohan Singh used his savings and borrowed funds to purchase the property. By 1938, he expanded his holdings by acquiring the Grand Hotel (now The Oberoi Grand) in Calcutta.

## PRS Oberoi, Oberoi Group Chairman Emeritus and doyen of Indian hospitality, dies at 94

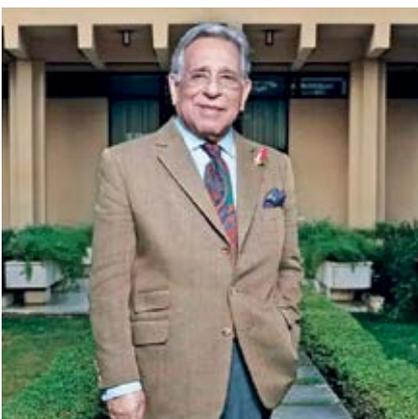


Prithvi Raj Singh Oberoi aka 'Biki', the doyen of Indian hospitality and Chairman Emeritus of the Oberoi Group passed away

this morning, November 14, Tuesday, said a spokeswoman of the Oberoi Group. He was 94 years old. In an official statement, the company said, "It is with profound grief and sorrow that we wish to inform you of the peaceful passing of our beloved leader, Mr. P.R.S. Oberoi, Chairman Emeritus earlier today. His passing is a significant loss for The Oberoi Group and the hospitality industry in India and overseas." PRS Oberoi received numerous awards

including the Padma Vibhushan (India's second highest civilian honor) in January 2008 for his exceptional service to the country, the Lifetime Achievement Award at ILTM, the '2010 Corporate Hotelier of the World award, the Lifetime Achievement Award, the Businessman of the Year 2008, the Lifetime Achievement Award at the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Awards, the Lifetime Achievement Award for Management, and others.

## HRAWI mourns the passing of hospitality icon: PRS Oberoi



The Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India) – HRAWI is deeply saddened by the passing of PRS Oberoi, the Executive Chairman of the Oberoi Group. His recent demise marks a significant loss to the hospitality industry, where his legacy of excellence and visionary leadership has left an indelible mark. Fondly

known as Biki, Mr Oberoi played an instrumental role in steering the Oberoi Group to become one of India's leading hospitality chains. Under his guidance, the Oberoi Group expanded its footprint, setting unmatched standards in luxury and service across the Oberoi Hotels & Resorts and Trident brands.

## Mr. Pradeep Shetty to take over as FHRAI President from January 1



The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) announced that its members have unanimously elected Mr. Pradeep Shetty, Director, Maharaja Hotels, Mumbai as its President. He will take charge of the office from January 1, 2024.

Prior to this, he held the position of Vice President and has been an actively engaged member of the association for more than a decade. He also serves as the President of the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI).

“In the role of President at FHRAI, I am committed to

addressing several pressing priorities with a sense of urgency. We intend to actively engage with the government for creating a more conducive and regulatory framework for the hospitality sector and the long pending request of the sector for granting infrastructure status is top of our agenda. This can be a game changer by facilitating long term loans at competitive interest rates to accelerate growth in the sector,” Mr. Shetty said in a statement.

He added that more stimulus packages and incentives are required from the government to equip the sector to achieve the ambitious target

of welcoming 100 million international tourists by 2047, which include a favourable GST regime and ease of doing business measures in hospitality.

Other challenges include music copyright matters service charges matters and anti-competitive activities by big tech companies, he added.

The Executive Committee also elected the other new office bearers of FHRAI. Mr. Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, Mr. K Nagaraju and Mr. T S Walia were elected as Vice Presidents from Hotel & Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI), The South India Hotels & Restaurants Association (SIHRA) and Hotel & Restaurant Association of Eastern India (HRAEI), respectively.

Mr. DVS Somaraju has been elected as honorary treasurer and Mr. Nirav Gandhi as the honorary secretary, while Mr. Sudesh Kumar Poddar and Mr. Amarvir Singh will serve as Jt. honorary secretary of the federation.

## Fortune Park plans to open 8-10 hotels in various Indian locations within a few months: M



Mr. Samir MC, Managing Director, Fortune Park Hotels said, “We are excited to share that this year has been fantastic for us. We are thrilled to share that we have plans to open another eight to ten hotels in diverse destinations across the country in the next few months.

## The emergence of cloud kitchens in Mumbai: Transforming the hospitality landscape



The hospitality industry has witnessed a remarkable transformation in recent years with emergence of cloud kitchens, also known as virtual restaurants or ghost kitchens. This innovative concept has revolutionised the way food is prepared, delivered, and consumed, especially in urban canters like Mumbai. As a hospitality professor, it is imperative to examine the

rise of cloud kitchens and understand the impact they have had on the traditional restaurant model, consumer preferences, and the overall culinary landscape in the city. This article explores the reasons behind the popularity of cloud kitchens in Mumbai, the advantages they offer, the challenges they face, and their potential for further growth and development.

## IHCL Plans New Skill Centres in Partnership with Head Held High Foundation



Indian Hotels Company (IHCL), India's largest hospitality company, has announced a strategic partnership with Head Held High (HHH), a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to youth transformation, women's empowerment, and economic development in rural communities across India.

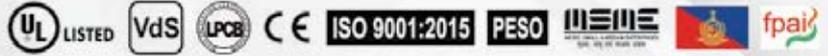
The newly established skill centers will serve as focal points for empowerment, facilitating the acquisition of essential skills that bridge the

gap between rural youth and the professional world. These centers will offer specialized training modules designed to align with the demands of today's competitive job market, ensuring that participants are well-prepared for employment upon completing the programs.

Head Held High's comprehensive efforts to reduce inequality encompass a wide range of initiatives, including needs assessments, the expansion of social protection, rural entrepreneurship, financial

inclusion, skills-based training, livelihood support, career guidance, counseling, and more.

IHCL, known as the guardian of Indian hospitality, continues its commitment to invest in the development of industry-relevant talent pools through its Paathya framework. This initiative aims to nurture and support deserving youth and their families while contributing to the overall growth of the hospitality industry.



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## Goa's New Caravan and Homestay Policies to Boost MSMEs in Tourism: A Closer Look



The recently introduced policies for bed and breakfast (B&B), caravan, and homestay accommodations in the scenic state of Goa

are expected to provide a much-needed boost to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) operating in the hospitality,

tourism, and travel sector. This assessment comes from an in-depth review of the policies conducted by myATITHI. global – a community platform committed to supporting tourism-related MSMEs. In response to the Caravan and Home Stay Policy, our founder & director, Gautam Mehra said, “This policy is a ray of hope for small businesses in hospitality, tourism, and travel. It’s not just a policy; it’s an invitation to dream bigger and a promise of support. We believe this innovative step by the Goa Government will usher in a new era of prosperity for the grassroots enterprises that make our region truly unique.”

## Ecotourism and eco-friendly hotels, a rising trend

In recent years, there has been a significant shift towards more sustainable and responsible practices in the global tourism industry, driven by increasing environmental awareness. This shift has given rise to the concepts of ecotourism and eco-friendly hotels, both of which play crucial roles in promoting responsible and environmentally conscious travel.

**Ecotourism** is a form of nature-based tourism that places a strong emphasis on reducing or eliminating the impact on the environment, benefiting local communities, and preserving natural resources. It prioritizes the protection of natural ecosystems, wildlife, and cultural heritage, fostering positive interactions between tourists and local communities. Ecotourism encourages responsible transportation, waste reduction, and energy conservation during travel. Additionally, it promotes educational opportunities for tourists to learn about the environment, conservation efforts, and the importance of sustainable practices. Given the accelerating challenges of climate change and environmental degradation, the need for ecotourism has become increasingly apparent, requiring the travel industry, policymakers, and travelers to collectively embrace this transformative approach.



**Eco-friendly hotels**, also known as green or sustainable hotels, are establishments that integrate environmental sustainability and social responsibility into their operations. These hotels adopt a holistic approach to minimize their carbon footprint, conserve natural resources, support local communities, and enhance guest experiences in an eco-conscious manner. Key features of eco-friendly hotels include:

- **Energy efficiency:** These hotels employ energy-efficient lighting, heating, and cooling systems to reduce electricity consumption.

- **Water conservation:** Eco-friendly hotels implement water-saving measures, such as low-flow toilets and showers, along with rainwater harvesting for non-potable uses.

- **Waste reduction:** They often have recycling programs, composting, and policies to reduce single-use plastics.

- **Sustainable materials:**

Eco-friendly hotels use sustainable, locally sourced materials for their construction and furnishings to minimize environmental impact.

- **Green certifications:** Many seek certifications like LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) to demonstrate their commitment to sustainability.

- **Responsible tourism:**

These hotels offer educational opportunities for guests to learn about local ecosystems, cultures, and traditions.

- **Eco-friendly amenities:**

In-room amenities, such as toiletries and linens, are typically eco-friendly, featuring biodegradable or locally sourced products. Some hotels provide guests with reusable water bottles to reduce single-use plastic waste.

- **Eco-conscious dining:**

On-site restaurants prioritize organic and locally sourced ingredients, offer vegetarian and vegan options, and focus

on minimizing food waste. Hydroponics is increasingly introduced for indoor organic farming.

• **Eco-friendly design:** The architecture and landscaping of these hotels are designed to harmonize with the natural surroundings, preserving local ecosystems and minimizing disruption to the environment.

The benefits of eco-friendly hotels include reduced environmental impact, cost savings through energy-efficient practices, an appeal to eco-conscious travelers, a positive brand image, a closer connection with nature, support for local communities, educational opportunities for

guests, and improved health and well-being due to the use of natural materials and organic products.

However, there are challenges associated with ecotourism and eco-friendly hotels, including the initial investment required for eco-friendly technologies, the need to balance guest comfort with sustainability, the task of guest education, the vulnerability of ecotourism destinations to climate change and environmental pressures, and the importance of government support, policies, and regulations to foster sustainable tourism practices.

Ecotourism and eco-friendly hotels offer hope for the travel

industry and the planet by encouraging more responsible and environmentally conscious travel. They challenge us to leave destinations better than we found them and actively contribute to their improvement. By choosing to stay in eco-friendly hotels, travelers can enjoy their vacations while minimizing their ecological footprint and supporting responsible tourism. Embracing this sustainable approach to travel and accommodations can create a future where travel is not only about exploration and relaxation but also a powerful force for environmental and social regeneration.

## Trends, growth, and future of the hospitality sector



**A**fter facing substantial challenges for two years, the hospitality sector not only managed to survive but also underwent progressive and significant transformations

through the power of technology, ensuring the highest safety standards and keeping the business afloat. The sector received crucial relief when the government extended

the Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) until March 2023, providing an additional package of INR 50,000 crores to boost the hospitality and allied sectors.

Today, the hospitality sector stands as a major contributor to India's economic growth. Let's delve into its current status – the prevailing trends, the growth it has witnessed, and its future prospects.

### **Trends, Growth, and Future of the Tourism Sector**

India's tourism and hospitality sector play a pivotal role in driving growth within the country's services sector. Tourism, a major contributor to the 'Make in India' initiative, significantly boosts the economy, generates employment opportunities, and fosters job creation. According to the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) report for FY 20, the Indian tourism sector contributed to 39 million jobs, constituting 8 percent of India's total employment. This number is expected to rise to 59 million by 2029. In terms of GDP contribution, India ranked 10th among 185 countries in 2019. The government is also actively promoting investments in the tourism sector, with India receiving 60.1 billion USD in 2016-2017.

### **Trends, Growth, and Future of the Hotel Industry**

Modern customers' expectations have evolved beyond traditional services like room service and pricing. They now seek proactive, personalized interactions and connected experiences. Many hotels have adopted sustainable practices, including the use of renewable energy, elimination of plastic usage, and recycling

initiatives. In this age of social media and heightened environmental awareness, customers are increasingly sensitive to travel norms and focus on a company's sustainability practices. The staff members have adapted and are well-prepared to address customer queries and meet their expectations. By understanding their guests deeply, from their preferences to their needs, the hotel industry has built an efficient recovery strategy, especially over the past two years.

### **Trends, Growth, and Future of the Food and Beverage Sector**

India boasts one of the world's largest millennial populations, leading to a vibrant dining culture. Upscale local bars, bakeries, cafes, and lounges have emerged, occupying a significant share of the food and beverage market. According to a report by Newshour, casual and fine dining make up 80 percent of the market share, along with local cafes and bars. If the current trend continues, the food and beverage sector is expected to grow annually at 10.4 percent, reaching 5.5 trillion by 2022. The sector faces challenges from an unorganized market, constituting 65-70 percent, which can significantly amplify its volume and growth when integrated with the organized sector. Social media engagement and delivery services were instrumental

during and post-pandemic times, keeping businesses profitable.

**Trends, Growth, and Future of E-Commerce and Luxury Retail** India's internet economy is poised for rapid growth due to increased digital interactions and widespread adoption of digital platforms. First-time online users in tier 2 and tier 3 cities have created a robust opportunity for startups and enterprises to cater to these demographics digitally. Businesses are transitioning to digitally enabled operating models, with various sectors embracing digital transformation.

E-commerce saw significant growth, with luxury segments adapting their strategies to ensure long-term growth and sustenance. Luxury businesses pivoted their products and services, embracing contactless services, digital technologies, and personalized offerings. Hotels and resorts redefined their offerings, becoming wellness centers, while luxury concierge services tailored unique experiences for affluent clients, ranging from private air ambulance charters to personalized interactions with celebrities. In conclusion, the hospitality sector faced challenges but managed to sustain and grow with the help of technology and innovation. As the world gradually reopens, the future appears promising for the sector, with continued growth and development on the horizon.

## Hospitality Sector To See A Boost As World Cup Fever Soars



**W**ith the commencement of the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023 festivities in India on October 5, the hospitality sector has witnessed a significant surge in demand. The 10 host cities have experienced a notable uptick in hotel and homestay reservations. This 45-day-long celebration is poised to yield substantial benefits for key travel and hospitality stocks.

A crucial factor driving the sector's performance is the interplay of robust demand and limited supply. Hotels stand out as primary beneficiaries of events like this, as both domestic and international tourists flood host cities, driving occupancy rates close to full capacity.

During high-stakes matches, such as India vs. Pakistan, multiple reports suggest an eight to ten-fold surge in demand. Companies like Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and Lemon Tree Hotels are well-positioned to reap the rewards of this event.

A report by Motilal Oswal highlights the improving travel trends and anticipates heightened demand for hotels in the coming quarters, especially with significant global events like the ICC Cricket Men's World Cup. The report further predicts that increased occupancy, along with sustained growth in average room rates (ARR), will contribute to strong performance for most hotel

companies in FY24. Motilal Oswal has maintained its 'Buy' rating on Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) stock, with a target price of Rs 490 per share for FY25. It has also upheld its 'Buy' rating on Lemon Tree Hotels, setting a target price of Rs 135 per share for FY25.

The shares of Indian Hotels have shown consistent growth, having surged in eight out of the last 11 trading sessions, with the stock climbing nearly 3% on October 5, the first day of the World Cup.

This marks the first time India is hosting the Cricket World Cup as the sole host. Previously, India had co-hosted the 1987, 1996, and 2011 editions with other nations. The tournament is spread across 10 stadiums in various cities, with the semi-finals taking place at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai and Eden Gardens in Kolkata. The final match is scheduled to be held at Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad.

## India G20 Presidency: A new thrust for Indian Hospitality



**T**owards the end of 2022, India's Prime Minister assumed the G20 presidency, offering the country a unique opportunity to showcase its rich regional diversity, express its political objectives, and outline its contributions to global stability. Throughout 2023, the G20 summit unfolded, with 200 meetings taking place in 50 cities,

gathering leaders and delegates from around the world. Since joining the G20 in 1999, India has steadily established itself as a significant contributor to the organization, especially during its current presidency, which allows it to highlight its vibrant cultural heritage.

The tourism and hospitality sector, recognized as India's fastest-growing industry, has experienced a promising resurgence following a major setback during the pandemic. These events have boosted the hotel industry not only in major metropolitan areas but also in towns with rich cultural significance and natural beauty.

The government has taken substantial steps to support the tourism and hospitality sector amid the G20 summit and Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav. Designated as the 'Visit India Year' internationally in 2023, the sector is projected to generate USD 7.6 billion in revenue during the same year. The Indian MICE market (Meetings, Incentives, Conference, Exhibition) has

traditionally contributed only about 1 percent, but with the G20 presidency, bookings have surged, positioning it for greater prominence across India's hotels.

During the summit, there was a noticeable surge in hotel room occupancy, benefiting hoteliers in major cities as well as those in Tier 2 or Tier 3 cities. India's first Global Tourism Investor's Summit (GTIS) has extensively discussed foreign investments in the country's tourism and hospitality sector. To date, 25 states have presented their investable projects with a total investment of around USD 7.7 billion. It has been highlighted that 100 percent foreign direct investment (FDI) in the travel and tourism sector is allowed under the automatic route.

The G20 summit has not only provided a boost to the hospitality sector during its course but also holds the potential for long-term growth. Hotel deals have seen a significant 140 percent increase in the first half of the year, from January to June, with

a projected USD 88 million worth of hotel deals in the second half of the year. The sector is expected to achieve a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 8.29 percent between 2023 and 2027, potentially attracting 61.3 million customers by the end of the decade. By 2028, India's tourism and hospitality sector is anticipated to generate USD 50.9 billion in visitor exports, marking a substantial increase from previous years. Foreign tourist arrivals are also projected to reach around USD 30.5 billion by 2028.

The G20 summit has fueled a remarkable surge in India's tourism and hospitality industry. World leaders, such as Rishi Sunak, have acknowledged the beauty and cultural diversity of India. The summit's tagline, 'Atithi Devo Bhava,' emphasizes the paramount significance of the Indian hospitality industry in today's world. It is evident that this year could potentially herald a golden age for India's hospitality and tourism sector.

## Four in five Indian travellers are seeking to better understand their own heritage through travel



As Hilton unveils its 2024 Trends Report, the prominent global hospitality company has identified a burgeoning cohort of Asian travelers, colloquially referred to as the 'GenerAsian traveler.' These are individuals in Asia driven by a quest for self-discovery and a profound desire

to gain a deeper understanding of their cultural and ancestral heritage through travel.

In a comprehensive global survey conducted in collaboration with Ipsos, a resounding chorus of travelers across Asia has expressed an increasing inclination toward self-exploration. In India, a remarkable 85% of respondents reported a sense of pride regarding the burgeoning popularity of their home country as a travel destination, along with the global recognition and appreciation of Asian food, design, and culture.

This shift in global preferences can be attributed to the effects of globalization, with international audiences now enjoying greater accessibility and insight into Asian culture through popular culture and social media. Simultaneously, the region has witnessed increased representation in fields such as entertainment, food and beverage, and more, making Asian traditions, innovations, designs, and cuisine more widely celebrated worldwide.

Ben George, Senior Vice President and Commercial Director, Asia Pacific, Hilton, commented, “We’re constantly monitoring the travel preferences of different generations to create tailored experiences that cater to their unique needs and desires. Fueled by a sense of pride that Asian food, design, and culture are gaining popularity globally, we know this will hold

even greater significance and interest for travelers in the upcoming year.”

He added, “In fact, our research found that 82% of Indian travelers are seeking to better understand their own heritage through travel, with 84% looking to learn more about other Asian cultures. We believe that the heart of a great trip is a great stay, and so we remain committed to delivering innovative solutions to ensure our guests can fully immerse themselves in both our hotels and their communities.”

### **Local Gastronomic Experiences a Top Priority for Indian Travelers**

Travelers have varying priorities when selecting accommodations. While some may prioritize convenience, others focus on the price point. In alignment with their travel motivations, Indian travelers are more likely than those from other surveyed countries to choose their accommodations based on access to unique local experiences. A substantial 77% of Indian respondents indicated a likelihood of doing so, compared to the 65% average across all countries surveyed in Hilton’s global study.

When it comes to the types of experiences Indian travelers seek during their journeys, 91% of respondents unequivocally ranked the exploration of local and traditional food and beverages as their top priority. A strong majority also expressed a desire to connect

with the local community during their travels (90%) and gain a deeper understanding of the destination’s local history and heritage (87%), reflecting a firm yearning for more authentic travel experiences.

Culinary experiences emerged as a common passion point across Asian respondents in Hilton’s 2024 Trends Report survey, with individuals in China, India, Japan, and Singapore all ranking food and beverage as the primary budgetary priority for their travel plans in the coming year.

Alexandra Jaritz, Senior Vice President, Brand Management, Asia Pacific, Hilton, commented, “At Hilton, we’ve noticed a growing interest in selfdiscovery and the desire for a deeper understanding of one’s heritage, which will be an even more important consideration for travelers in 2024. Interestingly, India and the United Arab Emirates surpass all other surveyed markets when it comes to reducing expenditures in other areas to prioritize travel in the next 12 months, supporting the notion of the GenerAsian traveler and their passion for exploration.”

She concluded, “From our ongoing brand innovation and dining experiences to our world-renowned hospitality, Hilton will enable guests to completely connect and immerse themselves in the destinations they choose to travel to.

## Indian alcohol beverages industry to witness margin contraction in FY2024 despite steady demand: ICRA



ICRA has projected a consistent revenue growth of 8-10 percent for its sample group of domestic alcoholic beverage (alcobev) companies in the fiscal year 2024. Following two years heavily impacted by the pandemic in FY2021 and FY2022, the Indian alcobev industry made a robust comeback in FY2023, driven by strong demand in both spirits and beer segments. The sample companies monitored by ICRA experienced a YoY revenue growth of approximately 20 percent in FY2023, reaching around INR 26 billion, surpassing pre-COVID levels. In Q1 FY2024, despite the lean season for the spirits segment, the spirits industry reported a YoY revenue increase of around 13 percent, while the beer industry experienced a slight decline of about 1 percent, despite it being the peak season, due to unseasonal rainfall.

Kinjal Shah, Vice President

and Co-Group Head of Corporate Ratings at ICRA Limited, commented, "ICRA anticipates a stable alcobev consumption, underpinned by increasing urbanization, rising disposable incomes, favorable demographics, and some states' relaxed regulatory environment. A subpar monsoon with warm weather during the ongoing El Nino conditions is expected to further boost demand, particularly for beer, in FY2024."

However, despite sustained demand, the operating profit margin (OPM) of ICRA's sample companies is projected to contract by approximately 90-140 basis points in FY2024, following a significant decline of 300 basis points in FY2023. The primary reason for this anticipated margin contraction is the high prices of key inputs in the current fiscal year, such as non-basmati rice and other grains like maize, which are used to produce extra neutral

alcohol (ENA), the base for manufacturing spirits. The impact of a subpar monsoon, the El Nino conditions, and government measures regarding grain prices are crucial factors affecting the industry's cost structure.

The costs of packaging materials, particularly glass, remain high, driven by increased soda ash prices.

However, the prices of barley, the primary raw material for beer production, have seen a correction in recent quarters and are expected to remain stable in the near to medium term. Additionally, the

availability and pricing pressures resulting from the diversion of grains for ethanol production, which is in demand due to government blending regulations, are key factors to monitor for the industry.

Shah added, "The timely increase in the selling price of alcobev products by state governments is crucial to offset rising input costs. This typically occurs on an annual basis at the beginning of a fiscal year; therefore, manufacturers must absorb any mid-year raw material price fluctuations. Several key states, including Karnataka, Haryana, Delhi, and Uttar Pradesh, have allowed the increase in prices of alcobev products for the current fiscal year. Furthermore, the expansion of the alcobev

product distribution network by the Madhya Pradesh government last year continues to provide an upside to the industry in the current year.”

While ICRA’s sample companies engaged in substantial capital expenditure, accounting for about 5 percent of revenues

in FY2023, this is expected to moderate to around 2-3 percent in FY2024 and FY2025, as major players have recently increased their capacities. Most of the ongoing capacity expansion is directed toward beer production, which is expected to materialize in the near to medium term, with

some players aiming to expand into new states and deepen their presence in existing regions. ICRA anticipates that the industry will maintain stable and healthy credit metrics, supported by strong cash flow generation and limited debt accumulation.

## Ms. V Vidyavathi, Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, addresses inaugural session of 17th CII Annual Tourism Summit



Ms. V Vidyavathi, the Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism in the Government of India, underscored the importance of recognizing tourism as a significant employment generator in a wide range of sectors. She conveyed this message during her keynote address at the 17th CII Annual Tourism Summit, held in Mumbai. Ms. Vidyavathi emphasized the need for discussions on how to achieve this goal and advocated for a genuine partnership between the industry and the government to foster tourism development.

Mr. Sheo Shekhar Shukla, the Principal Secretary of Tourism and Managing Director of the Madhya Pradesh

Tourism Board, spoke about the government’s efforts to attract investors and boost investments in tourism and hospitality. He mentioned that the government of Madhya Pradesh has identified and is offering readily available land parcels to investors at a reasonable reserve price.

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, the Chairman of the CII National Committee on Tourism and Hospitality and the MD & CEO of Indian Hotels Co Ltd., highlighted India’s immense potential, with its rich cultural heritage, geographic advantages, and stunning landscapes. He pointed out that tourism is a major service industry in India, contributing significantly to job creation

and the nation’s overall development. Mr. Chhatwal made several recommendations to the Ministry of Tourism, including granting Industry Status to the Hospitality Sector in all States and Union Territories, simplifying the approval and licensing processes, and conducting continuous branding and promotion of Incredible India worldwide.

Dr. K Nandakumar, Chairman of the CII Maharashtra State Council and CMD of Chemtrols India, emphasized the need for collaboration among all stakeholders in the tourism industry. He stressed the importance of striking a balance between economic growth and environmental sustainability to create a tourism sector that is not only economically robust but also a model of responsible and eco-friendly tourism.

The 17th CII Annual Tourism Summit’s theme was ‘Strengthening Tourism through Economic and Green Opportunities.’

## FSSAI launches the Eat Right Creativity Challenge for Millets on the occasion World Food Day 2023



On World Food Day 2023, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) launched the “Eat Right Creativity Challenge for Millets” (Shree Anna). This national-level initiative is aimed at promoting the health benefits and consumption of millets among school children, with the goal of extending these benefits to the larger community. It is one of the proactive steps taken by FSSAI during the celebration of the International Year of

Millets (IYOM) to raise public awareness about the use and nutritional benefits of millets through various means.

The competition will encompass various activities tailored to different age groups, including Poster Making (Class 3-5), Rangoli (Class 6-8), Slogan Writing (Class 9-10), and Essay Writing (Class 11-12). These activities will be conducted at both regional and national levels, all centered around the theme of millets to sensitize school children to the health benefits associated with their consumption.

Winners of the competition will receive cash prizes and certificates. A total of 160 prizes will be awarded at the regional level, and 40 prizes will be given at the national level for each of the four competitions. Registration for the competition is currently open, and schools can register

through the following portal: [<https://eatrightindia.gov.in/CreativityChallenge4/home>].

The “Eat Right Creativity Challenge” (ERCC), part of FSSAI’s Eat Right India movement, aims to harness the creative potential of students to instill healthy dietary habits. Furthermore, this competition encourages schools to create an environment of healthy and safe food, engaging, exciting, and enabling students to adopt healthy habits. So far, three ERCC events have been successfully conducted in multiple phases, each with its unique theme.

Recognizing that young people can be influential agents of change who can positively impact the community’s eating habits, the ERCC demonstrates FSSAI’s commitment to promoting health, nutrition, and sustainable dietary practices among India’s youth.

## Accommodation key to destination growth, govt working with industry to bring investment



Mr. Rakesh Verma, Additional Secretary, MOT, said, “Accommodation is one of the essential features for the development and growth of a destination. We are working with the tourism and hospitality industry on investment promotions and encouraging investments in destinations with enormous potential.

## Mr. Atul Bhalla takes over as Vice President Operations - North & West, ITC Hotels, India



In a recent reorganization, Atul Bhalla has been promoted to the position of Vice President of Operations for the North & West region of ITC Hotels. In this role, he will be instrumental in driving operational excellence across the dynamic portfolio of existing lifestyle and luxury brands within the division. He will also provide strategic support for the successful completion of upcoming projects, with a sharp focus on the brand's asset-right growth strategy.

As a key member of ITC Hotels' leadership team, Bhalla brings nearly three decades of experience in various senior management roles with ITC Hotels. With this recent leadership announcement, he assumes the title of Vice President of Operations - North & West, ITC Hotels India, based in New Delhi. His responsibilities include creating and executing a strategic roadmap in collaboration with the Divisional Chief Executive, General Managers, and functional heads to enhance stakeholder value for owned, managed, and franchise properties while further strengthening the brand's reputation.

Mr. Atul Bhalla's journey with the group began in 1998 at ITC Kakatiya, Hyderabad, and since then, he has held various senior management positions at various ITC Hotels in

Bangalore, Delhi, and Mumbai. Outside of his professional life, he enjoys spending his downtime on golf courses, working on improving his handicap, or seeking adventure off-road with his stick-shift vehicles.

Some of the notable achievements during his tenure include the successful launch of ITC Royal Bengal, the 14th luxury hotel in ITC's Indian portfolio, and overseeing the transformation of ITC Sonar, one of the largest complex operations within ITC Hotels. Atul also played a pivotal role in the pre-opening phase of ITC Grand Chola, Chennai, which is among the largest and most luxurious properties within the group. His recent expertise extends to the successful launch of the newest lifestyle brands, Storii & Mementos, from the group's portfolio.

## Challenges and aspirations: Voices from graduates and students in the hospitality industry



In the fiercely competitive hospitality industry, the persistent scarcity of fresh talent has emerged as a growing concern. To gain insights into this challenge, we engaged with recent graduates and former students from various renowned hospitality management institutes, such as the International School of Hospitality (ISH), the

Institute of Hotel Management (IHM), SGT University, the Pusa Institute of Hotel Management, and GD Goenka University.

Shilpi Gupta, an IHM Delhi alumnus from the class of 2013 with six years of industry experience, candidly shared her journey. She emphasized the industry's demanding nature,

where extended working hours often spill over into weekends, leaving little space for personal time. Despite wholehearted dedication, the lack of recognition compounds the challenges. Moreover, the high-pressure work environment and the perpetual demand for exceptional service levels contribute to stress and potential burnout.

Wamika Behl, a former ISH student currently employed at Cucina by Ducasse in Paris, expressed her passion for the industry but didn't mince words about her reservations. She stated, "I adore the hospitality field, particularly working in kitchens. It's invigorating to thrive under chaos and feel the rush. However, the hindrance lies in the lack of work-life balance in hotel careers. It's underappreciated and the compensation is inadequate. The effort and hours poured into the hospitality industry are substantial, yet it takes a toll. Your holidays are often occupied, work-life balance is scarce, and the financial rewards are limited."

Prityush Thakur, a 2021 graduate from Welcomgroup

Graduate School of Hotel Administration in Manipal, provided his perspective. He mentioned the long and strenuous hours, involving physically and mentally demanding tasks in the hotel sector. Complaining is rarely an option, and this realization often dawns too late. Graduates may find themselves burdened with substantial debts, making career transitions challenging. In contrast, careers such as cabin crew require minimal qualifications, making the hotel industry appear less enticing.

Yatin Pal, a final-year student at IHM Mumbai, remarked, "IHM laid a solid foundation, but my true fascination lies in the burgeoning culinary landscape. I aspire to explore the world as a chef and introduce people to innovative culinary experiences."

From the Pusa Institute, renowned for its agricultural and food technology programs, a student shared a unique perspective. They explained, "My dream is to engage in farm-to-table initiatives, which resonate with my passion for agriculture. The hotel industry seemed somewhat disconnected from this vision."

Another student, Sushant Sharma, a final-year hotel and management student from SGT University in Gurugram, offered his insights. "The entrepreneurial spirit has bitten nearly everyone, and even those who complete their hotel management training often embark on their entrepreneurial journeys."

It's apparent that securing leaves or vacations in the industry is no easy feat, and spending holidays or significant festivals with loved ones can be a rare privilege. Sharma further elaborated, "In this industry, your core duty is to avert crises, even though the very essence of the industry presents a substantial potential for crises."

When asked if they would reconsider entering the hotel sector if given a choice, the responses varied but remained open-minded. Many expressed a willingness to work in hotels if they offered room for innovation, sustainable practices, and a dynamic work environment. They conveyed a desire for hotels to adapt to the evolving industry landscape and embrace fresh ideas.

## Hotels in India to see 75% occupancy by 2030, investments over \$2.3 billion in 5 years



Post-Covid, the Indian hotel industry is experiencing a robust resurgence, characterized by a notable uptick in occupancy rates and increased investments.

Occupancy rates for chain-

affiliated hotels in India have surged, rising from 34 percent in FY21 to a projected 67-69 percent in FY24. It is anticipated to further grow from 66 percent in 2022 to 75 percent by 2030. This

expansion is attributed to the increasing number of tourists flocking to India and the rising demand for hotel accommodations, according to a report from Noesis, a hotel investment advisory firm.

In 2022, India welcomed 61.9 lakh foreign tourists, marking a four-fold increase from the previous year. By 2023, foreign tourist arrivals have already reached 31.3 lakh in the January to April period, representing a 166 percent surge compared to the same period in 2022. This year is expected to see approximately 1.64 crore foreign tourist arrivals, surpassing the record high of over 1.09 crore in 2019.

The number of domestic visitors in India in 2021-22 reached 2.6 crore, a substantial 98 percent YoY growth from the 1.3 crore recorded in 2020-21. Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh were the top

states in terms of domestic tourist influx, with 31.791 crore and 21.858 crore visitors, respectively.

In 2021, tourists' expenditure was divided with 6 percent from foreign visitors and 94 percent from domestic travelers. By 2028, it is estimated that the share of expenditure will shift to 11 percent from domestic travelers and 89 percent from foreign visitors.

Investments in the Indian hospitality sector are set to rise, with an expected compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 16.98 percent from 2022 to 2030. A key factor fueling this growth is the increased foreign direct investments (FDI) in the hotel and tourism sector. The sector is projected to attract over \$2.3 billion in investments over the next 2-5 years, with approximately \$400 million

expected in 2020-2023. In FY21, FDI equity inflow to the hotel and tourism industry in India amounted to around \$369 million, accounting for 2.21 percent of the FDI equity inflows into the service sector.

Other critical metrics, such as the average daily rate (ADR) and revenue per available room (RevPAR), are also forecasted to rise in the coming years following a robust post-Covid recovery. ADR is predicted to grow from Rs 6,200-6,400 in 2023 to Rs 8,000 in 2030. RevPAR is expected to increase from Rs 3,300 in FY22 to Rs 6,000 in FY30. In FY23, RevPAR in Indian hotels had surged by 89-91 percent over the previous year. Furthermore, the number of new hotel rooms added in the country in FY23 reached 1.6 lakh, marking a 33 percent increase over the previous year.

## Room for growth: Hotels expect good times to roll on



The hotel industry is making a triumphant return after what one hotelier dubbed the “dark days” that endured for nearly two and a half years during the COVID-19 pandemic. The recovery, which

began in the second half of the fiscal year 2022, has gained momentum, thanks to a surge in tourist arrivals and the hosting of numerous G20 meetings.

With the onset of cricket fever, the approaching festive season,

and the upcoming Christmas and New Year holidays, the good times are set to continue. As a result, the average occupancy rates in the country now hover around 65% across various segments and reach 70% in major metropolitan areas.

Vinutaa S, Vice President & Sector Head (Corporate Ratings) at ICRA, notes that the average room rates (ARRs) for premium hotels in India have surged to Rs 5,900-6,000 in the first half of FY24, representing a 10-15% growth compared to H1 FY23. Some

high-end hotels in leisure and gateway destinations have even witnessed higher ARRs. This growth in ARRs is supported by robust demand and relatively limited supply. Furthermore, some hotels are currently undergoing property renovations, refurbishments, and upgrades, which are expected to contribute to higher ARRs in the future.

ICRA predicts that pan-India premium hotel ARRs will likely range from Rs 6,000-6,200 for FY24, compared to Rs 5,800-5,900 in FY23, and this is anticipated to rise further to about Rs 6,200-6,300 in FY25. While occupancy rates are expected to reach the highest levels in a decade in FY24, the revenue per available room

(RevPAR) is projected to remain at a 20-25% discount compared to the peak levels of FY08.

According to Rajiv Kapoor, General Manager at Fairmont Jaipur, industry metrics are on an upward trajectory. The hotel has seen an 8% increase in average daily rates (ADR) compared to the previous year. Kapoor added, "The industry's margins are on the path to improvement, and for us, it was 50.5% last year, which increased to 51.6% this year."

Following the pandemic, domestic travel, particularly "revenge travel," has played a pivotal role in revitalizing the hotel industry. Events like the recently concluded G-20 Summit, the Indian Premier League, and the upcoming

holiday season promise to provide further impetus, as mentioned by Pradeep Shetty, President-designate of The Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India. Shetty also noted that the arrival of foreign tourists is on the rise, and the resort sector is thriving. In addition to the G-20 Summit and cricket events, the upcoming wedding season, meetings, incentives, conferences & exhibitions (MICE), and renewed interest from global tourists are expected to play their part in sustaining this upward trajectory.

## The Clarks Hotels & Resorts celebrates signing 18 new properties in 2023



The Clarks Hotels & Resorts has reached a significant milestone in its expansion journey by announcing the signing of 18 new properties since the beginning of this year. These developments align perfectly with the brand's growth strategy, underlining

their commitment to delivering exceptional hospitality experiences in India and beyond.

These recently signed properties encompass various Clarks sub-brands, including The Clarks, Villas & Suites by The Clarks, Clarks Exotica,

Clarks Inn Suites, Clarks Residences, Clarks Inn, and Clarks Inn Express. These properties are strategically located in key destinations like Kandy (Sri Lanka), Port Blair, Rishikesh, Kufri, Hyderabad, Kolar (Bangalore), Dharamshala, Bhopal, Indore, Bhilwara, Patni top, Pathankot, Rae Bareilly, Datia, Krishnagiri (Bangalore), and more, offering a diverse range of options for their esteemed guests.

Collectively, the brand has added approximately 1000 keys to their portfolio in just nine months. They've also expanded their international presence by

signing their third property in international waters and their second property in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, The Clarks Hotels & Resorts is poised to establish its presence in Eastern Europe and Asia, specifically in the Netherlands and Dubai.

In a strategic move to enhance the guest experience, the hotel company has formed a partnership with the Singapore Airlines Group.

Mr. Rahul Deb Banerjee, Vice President of The Clarks Hotels & Resorts, expressed his enthusiasm for the brand's growth, stating, "As a growing group, we have ambitious expansion plans. To expedite this journey, we are focusing on the franchise model and management agreements. With our in-house engineering and interior team, design consultancy, sales and marketing expertise,

HR capabilities, and revenue management, we are well-equipped to support our investors in building and managing properties from inception to execution. Over the past 15 years, we have witnessed remarkable growth, and we are now poised to achieve our goal of having over 150 hotels by 2023, with an average key size of 50 rooms or more.

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## Travel boom, festive cheer open jobs in hospitality



India's travel, tourism, and hospitality industry is poised to generate thousands of job opportunities in the coming months, driven by a surge in leisure travel during the festive season and a significant increase in business travel.

An estimated 70,000 to 80,000 jobs, comprising a mix of permanent and temporary positions, are expected to be created as the heightened festive demand coincides with the Cricket World Cup, featuring matches in ten different cities. This projection comes from staffing firm TeamLease.

Furthermore, this marks the first post-Covid year when the industry anticipates hotel occupancy and foot traffic to exceed pre-pandemic levels. Leading hotel chains, including ITC-backed Fortune Hotels, Lemon Tree Hotels, and Royal Orchid Hotels, are responding to this surge in demand by aggressively expanding their workforce, with plans to hire between 1,500 and 3,000 employees each over the next 6-12 months, according to top company executives.

Fortune Hotels intends to increase hiring across its chain by 8-10% compared to the

previous year when it brought on about 2,500 employees. Samir MC, Managing Director of Fortune Park Hotel, explained, "As economic activity gains momentum and we accelerate our expansion into newer locations, opening 7-8 more hotels this fiscal year, our manpower requirements are increasing." The focus is particularly on hiring for the new properties.

Lemon Tree Hotels plans to add at least 3,000 new hires over the next year to augment its workforce from the current 6,500 employees. Patu Keswani, Chairman of Lemon Tree, stated, "With the opening of our new hotels and the increase in inbound corporate and retail travel, we will need to ramp up hiring across various levels."

Regenta and Royal Orchid Hotels have similar hiring plans, aiming to bring in about 1,800 employees in this fiscal year. Since

April 2022, the group has launched 25 new properties, adding 1,050 rooms to its inventory and hiring 1,225 employees. Chander K Baljee, Chairman and Managing Director, mentioned, "We have strategically adjusted our recruitment efforts to address fluctuations. This involves the ongoing replenishment of approximately 30% of our

workforce, resulting in the recruitment of 1,800 new staff members."

Key roles in high demand include hospitality managers, event planners and coordinators, restaurant staff, logistics managers, and drivers, among others, according to Balasubramanian A, Vice President & Head of Consumer

& Ecommerce at TeamLease Staffing.

"The coinciding travel season and the Cricket World Cup matches have triggered a significant boom in hiring. The emergence of new hotel properties and larger hotels taking over smaller ones is driving substantial demand for manpower," he added.

## Chalet Hotels registers 27% revenue growth in Q2 2024



Chalet Hotels Limited (CHL), the hospitality division of K Raheja Corp, has reported its second-quarter (Q2) FY2024 results and half-yearly financial statement, showcasing robust growth in various financial performance aspects.

In Q2 FY2024, the company's total income surged by 27 percent to INR 3.2 billion compared to the corresponding quarter of the previous year. Furthermore, the EBITDA stood at INR 1.3 billion, reflecting a substantial 48 percent growth.

The hospitality segment has also demonstrated strong growth across performance indicators during Q2 FY2024. Revenue reached INR 2.8 billion, marking a 27 percent increase compared to Q2

FY2023. EBITDA reached INR 1.2 billion, showcasing a 45 percent growth from the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

In terms of occupancy levels, Average Room Rates (ARRs), and Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR), the second quarter outperformed the same period in the previous year. Occupancy experienced a slight increase of 2 percentage points, reaching 73 percent. Meanwhile, ARR at Chalet Hotels reached INR 9,610, a 21 percent improvement over the same period in the previous year. Similarly, RevPAR reached INR 7,034, indicating a remarkable 25 percent increase from Q2 FY2023.

According to the company's financial statement, the consolidated Profit After Tax (PAT) was INR 364 million, representing a year-on-year growth of 2.3 times.

Mr. Sanjay Sethi, MD & CEO of Chalet Hotels Limited, commented on the financial results, stating, "The first half of FY24 continues to demonstrate persistence in

RevPAR growth along with maintaining an all-round healthy growth trajectory with strong flow-throughs and cash flows. In addition to a seasonally better second half, we are at the cusp of completing a few of our large capital expenditure projects, which will further enhance operating performance. The tailwinds of the sector and our strengthening balance sheet are encouraging, and we look forward to accelerating growth through valueaccretive investments."

CHL has also announced its entry into the hospitality sector in the national capital with a project in DIAL New Delhi. According to the financial statement, construction has already begun, and the company is optimistic about commencing hotel operations in FY 2026.

The CHL portfolio comprises nine operating hotels, including one with a collocated serviced residence, located in the markets of the Mumbai Metropolitan Region, Hyderabad, Bengaluru, Lonavala, and Pune.

## Adopting AI for business transformation is not yet a priority for Indian hoteliers: Reports



When the hotel industry world over is making big strides in digital transformation by leveraging advanced digital technologies, Indian industry is still lagging far behind. As per the Indian Accommodation Barometer 2023 published by Booking.com in association with Statista, a business intelligence firm, adopting Artificial Intelligence (AI) to enhance business prospects is still not a priority for the vast majority of accommodation industry stakeholders in India. The

percentage of accommodation players adopting AI tools in the Indian industry is as low as 3 percent and more than 70 percent who participated in the survey didn't seem interested in adopting such tools in the immediate future through new investment. Of those interested in AI, chain hotels are much more likely than independent hotels (8 percent vs 2 percent) to have already utilised AI, while similar shares (24 percent vs 26 percent) have it in the pipeline, the report notes.

## The big move: IHM graduates forge their own path in business in F&B



In recent years, there has been a noticeable transformation in the career choices of graduates from hospitality and culinary schools. Traditionally, these graduates would opt for careers within established hotels, restaurants, or other hospitality-related enterprises. However, an increasing number of them are now venturing into the realm of entrepreneurship, establishing their own businesses in the food and hospitality sector. This evolving trend reflects a desire for

creative autonomy, personal branding, and a distinctive approach to the world of hospitality.

Interviews with several hotel management graduates and alumni who have opted for the entrepreneurial path over conventional careers in the hospitality industry. Here's a glimpse of what they had to say:

- Gurneesh Kaur, a budding entrepreneur and a student at the Indian School of Hospitality, has embarked on

an incredible journey in the world of culinary creativity. Her story goes beyond baking cakes and crafting cookies; it's a testament to the power of passion and perseverance. Gurneesh shares her journey, stating, "During the pandemic, when faced with challenges, I decided to engage myself in something that would inspire my friends and family. I initiated with an Instagram page known as 'Creative Lucious,' where I shared my creations. Little did I know that people would love it so much that my followers would become loyal customers."

- Nishtha Pal, a student pursuing a Bachelor's in Business Administration and Hospitality Management at the Indian School of Hospitality, embarked on her journey by launching her bakery, Loma

Patisserie, and creating a range of scented candles under the brand “Felicity.” She explained her inspiration, saying, “The magic of scents evokes emotions and memories. Handcrafted candles capture moments of serenity, joy, and nostalgia.” For Nishtha, her ventures offer financial independence, a platform for creativity, and the ability to create brands that deeply resonate with people.

- Kanishq Aggarwal, a culinary student at Ecole du Cordon Bleu, India, possesses a deep fascination for spices. His exploration of the spice market led him to identify a gap in the availability of high-quality products. Consequently, he launched Amawa Spices, sourcing premium vanilla beans, saffron, and other Indian spices. Kanishq holds a global vision and aims to captivate and explore the trends in the spice market. He succinctly states, “I believe I will undoubtedly achieve it, and I prefer to continue running my own business rather than working in hotels.”

- Hiya Mittal, a student at the Indian School of Hospitality, founded “Granhola,” a platform dedicated to healthy eating. Her business is dedicated to offering a healthier alternative to traditional snacks, providing a variety of nutritious and delectable granola bars. Hiya’s ambition is crystal clear: “I aspire to expand it further in the future.”

- Vanshika Chhabra, an undergraduate culinary student at Ecole du Cordon Bleu, has transformed her Instagram presence into a home bakery named “Beyond the Blog, The Home Bakery.” She specializes in cookies and tiramisu, with her experimentation leading to a unique range of products. Chhabra reflects on her journey, stating, “I aspire to excel in the field of

bakery and patisserie, honing my skills and broadening my influence in this domain.”

- Rahul Dua, a partner at Bhawan Cafe, highlights the significance of this trend among IHM graduates. He emphasizes the growth in

the standalone restaurant industry and the challenges of effecting change within large organizations. He notes, “Adapting to change, growth, and innovation requires constant adjustment, which can be challenging in a hotel environment.” Rahul acknowledges the appeal of working in hotels but appreciates the distinct demands of entrepreneurship, where you are on the clock 24/7, 365 days a year.

In conclusion, the narratives of these hospitality management graduates turned entrepreneurs unveil a shifting paradigm within the hospitality industry. These talented individuals are forging their paths, driven by passion, creativity, and a commitment to innovation. They are addressing niche markets, exploring global trends, and reshaping the culinary landscape. Their journeys provide insights into why they have chosen entrepreneurship over traditional career paths.

## Women to manage 3 MTDC resorts in a month



Resorts managed by the Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) in Nagpur, Chhatrapati Sambhajinagar, and Palghar will be under the exclusive management of women within the next month, according to a senior official from the state-run organization. The recruitment process for this initiative, which will involve hiring six managers, twelve

mid-level employees, and thirty-five other staff members, is already in progress, as confirmed by MTDC director Shraddha Joshi Sharma in a statement to the press.

Initially, three resorts will be

operated under this women-led approach, with all

aspects of resort operations, including security and kitchen-related tasks, being managed entirely by female employees. The MTDC has developed a gender policy specifically for

its resorts to support this initiative.

This announcement was made by the MTDC director during her interaction with reporters at the 38th annual convention of the Indian Association of Tour Operators on Saturday.

## Unraveling the workforce dilemma: Hospitality's pursuit of skilled professionals



The hospitality industry, renowned for its unwavering commitment to creating memorable moments, faces a new challenge on its path to success – a significant shortage of skilled labor. This intricate challenge has deep-seated roots in recent transformative trends. According to industry estimates, a substantial 25 to 30 percent of experienced employees opted for alternative careers during the pandemic, often motivated by a firm decision to avoid returning to the hospitality sector. This shift has resulted in an evident scarcity of proficient professionals, particularly in non-metro regions.

In a telling shift, recent data from the National Testing Agency reveals a decline in candidates choosing the NCHM JEE entrance examination,

dropping from 45,000 in 2018 to 30,722 in 2019 before slightly recovering to 32,603 the following year. The occupancy rate in Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) has dropped to 40 percent, compared to previous years when candidates exceeded available positions. This drop is primarily attributed to the disruptions caused by the pandemic and the subsequent job losses in the hospitality sector. Consequently, students are now displaying reluctance to choose hospitality as their higher education pursuit. Nevertheless, amid these trials, the prevailing sentiment endures that concerted efforts can revive the industry's allure and address these concerns.

Despite experiencing a promising resurgence in the past year as travel restrictions eased, the resurgence of the hospitality sector has laid bare an underlying concern. Renowned hospitality chains, celebrated for their exceptional luxury services, have encountered challenges in maintaining their renowned standards due to a shortage of adept personnel. As the industry prepares for a

new phase of expansion, addressing this workforce gap becomes crucial to ensure the unhindered realization of its full potential.

### The Root Causes of Workforce Scarcity

The intricacies of workforce scarcity in the hospitality sector stem from a complex interplay of factors. The unparalleled uncertainty brought about by the pandemic prompted numerous skilled professionals to explore more stable career paths. Additionally, the demanding nature of roles within the hospitality sphere, often characterized by extended working hours and relatively modest compensation, has driven certain individuals to contemplate professions offering a more favorable work-life balance.

### Navigating a Course Amidst Challenges

Amid these difficulties, a glimmer of hope emerges. Positioned as a catalyst for growth and excellence, initiatives have arisen to address the industry's workforce predicament. Meticulously tailored

training programs stand as a foundational resource for those aiming to enter or advance within the hospitality sector.

These offerings span a diverse spectrum, allowing participants to learn at their own pace, anytime and anywhere, using desktop or mobile devices. Hotels can also conduct these courses from the portal as trainer-led sessions, available in local languages. The portfolio seamlessly aligns with the sector's dynamic requisites. What sets these initiatives apart is their emphasis on practical learning, ensuring graduates not only grasp theoretical concepts but also possess the capacity to adeptly apply their skills in real-world scenarios.

### **Enhancing Skills and Insight Across the Hospitality Spectrum**

Encouraging the exploration of various departments within the hospitality industry among colleagues proves pivotal in fostering a more extensive skill set and a comprehensive understanding of overall operations. Comprehensive cross-training initiatives are well-positioned to effectively bridge skill gaps while simultaneously affording colleagues the opportunity to delve into diverse career paths within the multifaceted realm of the industry.

Moreover, organizational endeavors encompassing leadership development programs and accelerated growth trajectories hold the potential to identify and nurture exceptional

talents earmarked for future management positions. This multifaceted strategy not only counteracts the prevailing scarcity of the workforce but also establishes the foundation for a versatile and adept workforce, propelling the industry toward unparalleled achievements.

### **Towards a Resilient Future: Varied Strategies**

Confronting the workforce scarcity in the hospitality sector mandates a holistic approach. Innovative strategies, reinventing work structures to emphasize worklife balance, and providing flexible work arrangements become paramount. Consider options such as part-time shifts, remote work, compressed workweeks, or job-sharing arrangements. This flexibility can attract individuals seeking equilibrium or those with personal commitments. By accommodating the diverse needs of employees, businesses can heighten job satisfaction and reduce turnover.

Simultaneously, nurturing collaborations between educational institutions and hospitality enterprises holds significant promise. Collaborative efforts play a crucial role in bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical implementation. Such partnerships foster a pipeline of industry-ready professionals ready to contribute effectively.

Embracing technology is the need of the hour. Thoroughly analyzing operational processes to identify inefficiencies and

areas for enhancement is vital. Implementing standardized procedures and protocols can streamline operations and reduce time-consuming tasks. Automating repetitive manual processes, such as inventory management, order processing, and billing, can optimize productivity and alleviate the strain on limited staff resources.

### **Paving the Path to a Skilled Future**

Investing in training is the way forward. Identifying areas where staff members can be cross-trained to handle multiple roles or tasks and then designing upskilling and cross-training programs can empower existing employees with added skills and knowledge. Internal learning platforms can provide continuous learning and self-evaluation opportunities. Integrating learning technology can heighten employee productivity in the hospitality sector.

In an ever-evolving hospitality landscape, strategies for workforce development must evolve in parallel. Ensuring the next wave of hospitality professionals is prepared to deliver extraordinary guest experiences stands as not only a strategic choice but a testament to the industry's unyielding dedication to excellence. As the sector continues to adapt, so must its approaches to empowering the workforce, guaranteeing a promising future illuminated by skilled and motivated professionals.

## We want to operate across the entire range of products and services



**L**emon Tree Hotels recently launched the largest five-star property in India, the Aurika Mumbai Skycity. In an interview with Patanjali G Keswani, the Chairman and Managing Director of Lemon Tree Hotels, ET HospitalityWorld delved into the company's move into the five-star segment, despite their strong presence in the budget and midscale market.

The Aurika Mumbai Skycity boasts 670 rooms and 20,000 square feet of banquet space. Keswani explained their strategy: "We wanted to

showcase a big box city hotel with Aurika, in order to show off the brand, the quality, the product and how it does against international and domestic brands. and then go all out for the management of upscale and upper upscale hotels, which I think is a big white space."

Lemon Tree Hotels prides itself on strong financial performance with EBITDA margins well above the industry average. Keswani pointed out that they have EBITDA margins between 15% and 20% higher than other listed players. Their focus on Aurika properties in the luxury segment aims to demonstrate their capability to excel in this space.

While Lemon Tree Hotels traditionally targeted the mid-market consumer due to their position as a mid-market hotel company, Keswani emphasized that many consumers operate across luxury to mid-market segments. He anticipates a

significant growth in luxury and upscale travel in India as GDP per capita is expected to rise, and Lemon Tree aims to capture this growth across the entire spectrum.

Lemon Tree Hotels already has a significant presence in various Indian cities, and their expansion strategy revolves around managing five-star hotels with the same efficiency as their lower-tier properties. The goal is to offer a wide range of product and service combinations, catering to a diverse customer base. When discussing the brand's expansion, Keswani mentioned that they aim to maximize their existing capital investments rather than deploying more capital. He highlighted their rapid growth with large cash investments and emphasized the opportunity for substantial growth in the next five years before increased competition arrives in the market.

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## IHCL announces its financial results for Q2 FY 2023-24



**T**he Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) has released its consolidated financial report for the second quarter ending on September 30, 2023.

Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director & CEO of IHCL, commented on the Q2 FY24 performance, stating, "Fueled by consistent double-digit growth, IHCL achieved a system-wide revenue of INR 2,687 crore, which is 1.8 times our consolidated revenue. This reflects the successful execution of our strategy to strike a balance between

## Goa's Homestay policy will create new entrepreneurs: CII



The tourism department's recent policy for homestays and caravans will help local entrepreneurs venture into new tourism services while also creating more

job opportunities, said the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). CII Goa chairman Anirudh Agrawal said that Goa "desperately needs" new policies that can

help the state differentiate itself and stand out in the global tourism space. "The homestay and caravan policies by the tourism department are a step in the right direction. The framework will be an asset to entrepreneurs looking to venture into new tourism services, something which Goa desperately needs to match its ambition of outgrowing the beach tourism tag," said Agrawal.

## Soon, green ratings for tourism sector

### ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

➤ Government has inked pact with German-based Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

➤ Businesses in accommodation, adventure tourism, transportation and



destinations to be assessed

➤ Ratings based on energy efficiency, water conservation, materials selection, indoor air quality and site planning

➤ GIZ has submitted draft report to Goa Energy Development Agency

The state government has decided to put in place a green rating system in the tourism sector to assess the environmental sustainability across various sub-sectors of tourism, namely accommodation, adventure tourism, transportation and destinations. A senior officer said the report mentions that green rating systems are focused on a variety of tourism sub-sectors which include ratings for accommodation

with focus on reducing the environmental impact of hotels, resorts, and other types of lodging, rating systems for travel and tourism services includes businesses that provide travel-related services to travellers, such as tour operators, travel agents, and on reducing the environmental impact of activities that tourists participate in, such as hiking, biking, and whitewater rafting, etc.

## Haldiram's Diwali campaign is about the tradition of gifting



The 'Tyohar ke har tohfe me, Haldiram's' campaign aims to communicate that Haldiram's has something for everyone, making it the ultimate destination for thoughtful and flavour-filled gifts for family and friends, states a press release. As part of the Diwali Campaign, Haldiram's has also taken path breaking initiatives such as a captivating visual story that highlights the essence of gifting during the festive season. The film features a fascinating arrangement where multiple choppers carrying big Gifting by Haldiram's boxes, deliver them to strategic locations across Haldiram's outlets.

## Hotel management getting image makeover with JNU degree, new curriculum



While the hospitality industry has apparently recovered from the blow dealt to it by Covid-19, interest in hospitality education seems to

be waning. Fewer students are appearing for the NCHMCT JEE which is the gateway exam for admission to Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs)

and other undergraduate and postgraduate hotel management programmes in India. For the second year, reports have highlighted the issue of seats going vacant in these institutions. According to data accessed by Careers360, for the third round of counselling, 7,466 seats in Bachelors in Hotel management (BSc) and 513 seats in Masters in Hotel Management were found vacant. Over 12,000 seats were on offer for admission through the NCHMCT JEE 2023.

## Campus placements are on a high, but compensations yet to look up



Campus placement trends are generally reflections of the health of an industry. The number and profile of companies visiting the campuses every year, the kind of positions and number of people they hire each year, and the packages they offer are all indicators of overall mood in the respective industry. In this respect, the hotel school campus placements trend this year have picked up momentum this year justifying the overall positive sentiments in the industry. The organized hotel industry in the country is on a roll in the country with hotel companies wiping out all its losses suffered during the Covid19 lockdown period and returning with record growth in revenues and profits q-o-q, and y-o-y.

## Indian Music Industry Saw 10x Growth In Last 2 Years: Piyush Goyal



Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has said the Indian music industry's royalty collections surged by ten-fold with Rs 550 crore in the last two years and the industry has grown significantly but still there is room for growth. While speaking at the copyright stakeholders' meeting in Mumbai, he urged the entire industry to unite on a common platform to enhance creativity and bolster its soft power during Amrit Kaal. During the meeting, industry representatives addressed crucial matters,

including royalty distribution, statutory licensing (primarily under Section 31(d)), single-window licensing and equitable representation on the copyright society's board. While taking note of the stakeholder's issues, Goyal emphasised on the need to respect the fair and equitable distribution of royalty as per the terms decided. Goyal spoke on the issue of having equitable representation in copyright societies with an inclusive approach to the representation of women and equal rights for smaller artists.

## Gandhi Sagar Floating Festival 2023 underway in Madhya Pradesh



Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board has started Gandhi Sagar Floating Festival 2023 at the serene waters of Chambal River near Gandhi Sagar Dam in Mandsaur district of the State. It offers an unforgettable blend of adventure and leisure for tourists from near and far. The mega event started from 27th October 2023 with interactive B2B sessions during the initial days. This year, the

event promises an array of land, water, and air activities, along with an assortment of recreational activities, indoor sports, cultural workshops, and the opportunity to indulge in a luxurious glamping experience at the tent city from 2nd November 2023 onwards. Nestled in the heart of Madhya Pradesh, this is the much-anticipated event on the State's cultural and adventure calendar.

## The Orchid Hotel, Mumbai Team's Silent Rally Promotes "SAY NO TO CRACKERS" This Diwali, Advocating for a Cleaner and Greener Celebration

Keeping up with its promise of a sustainable future for everyone, The Orchid Hotel Mumbai, organized its silent rally to spread the important message of "SAY NO TO CRACKERS" this Diwali. The event, steeped in tradition and the spirit of community, underscores the commitment of The Orchid Hotel Mumbai to raise awareness about the detrimental impact of fireworks on our environment and public health.

## **IHCL: Advocating for change: IHCL's Puneet Chhatwal pushes for 'industry' status in the hospitality sector**



**C**hhatwal emphasized that the call for industry status extends beyond the confines of IHCL, resonating with the broader spectrum of the hospitality industry. The crux of this demand lies in recognizing the sector's pivotal role in the economic landscape and the multifaceted benefits that industry status would confer. IHCL, under Chhatwal's stewardship, stands

as a net debt positive entity, boasting robust cash reserves. A noteworthy feat, especially considering the tumultuous period of zero revenue endured during the COVID-19 crisis. More significantly, IHCL emerged as a compassionate employer, abstaining from layoffs despite the economic challenges, a testament to the company's commitment to its workforce.

## **Discover Thanksgiving Magic at Hyatt Centric: A Culinary Extravaganza of Exquisite Flavors**



**A**s the holiday season approaches, immerse yourself in the enchanting allure of Thanksgiving dinner at Hyatt Centric. Indulge in a mouth-watering feast that entices with a medley of exquisite flavors and captivating aromas. At The Bengaluru Brasserie, we have meticulously curated a menu that offers a selection of tempting dishes

for the ultimate epicurean experience. From succulent Pork Ham and a traditional three-bean casserole with herb pilaf, to delightful Chicken Pepper Salami and exotic dishes like Vegetable Moussaka and classic Shepherd's Pie, our feast takes you on a culinary journey around the world. Each dish is rich, captivating, and expertly prepared.

## **Savor the Flavors of Diwali and Embark on a Delectable Culinary Journey at JW Cafe, JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar**



**T**his Diwali, experience an enchanting fusion of light, flavor, and extravagance at the exquisite JW Cafe, nestled within the opulent confines of JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar. Get ready to embark on a gastronomic odyssey that elevates the essence of the Festival of Lights to a whole new level of sophistication and grandeur. Indulge in an

unforgettable celebration that captures the true spirit of Diwali through a sumptuous Diwali Brunch on 12th November, as well as a lavish Diwali dinner available from 10th – 12th November, 2023. The culinary experts have curated dishes that showcase an array of regional Indian delicacies and global flavors, making it the perfect treat for the festive occasion.

## Kamats Legacy renowned for its authentic flavors from the five peninsular states, announced its next outlet in south Bombay

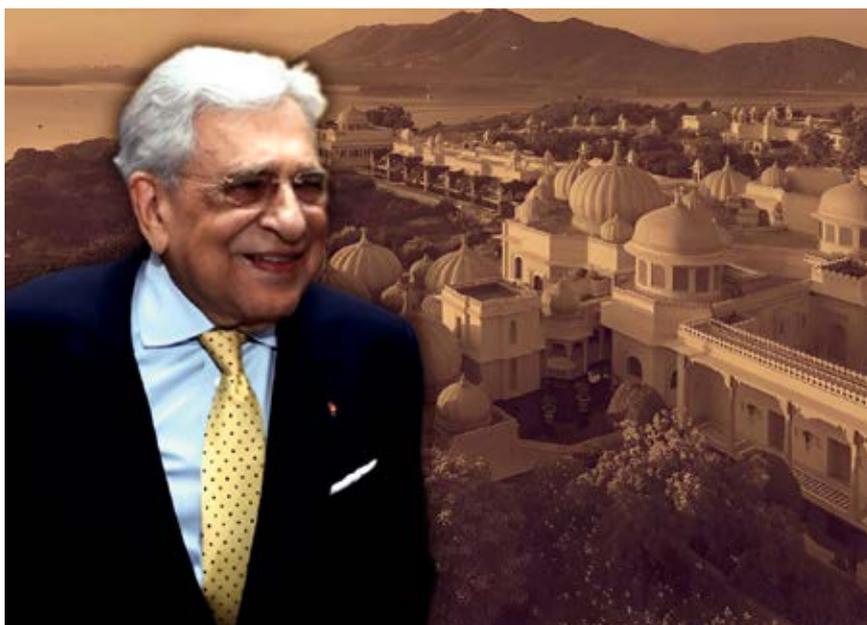


**K**amats Legacy, a culinary gem by The Vitskamats Group, is proud to mark its first anniversary and announce the

grand opening of its new outlet in the iconic South Bombay. The restaurant is renowned for its authentic menu, a harmonious

blend of flavors from the five peninsular states of our country, and is now set to expand its horizons to the heart of the city, doubling the joy for all South Indian food enthusiasts. "This anniversary is not just a celebration of our past year's success; it's a testament to the enduring love and support we have received from our patrons. As we expand soon to South Bombay this November, we aim to bring this authentic experience closer to more food enthusiasts who appreciate the taste of tradition." - Founder and CMD of The Vitskamats Group, Dr. Vikram Kamat

## Obituary: PRS Oberoi overcame 26/11 terror attack and takeover threat to redefine Indian hospitality sector



**O**beroi took over as the chairman of EIH Limited – the flagship of Oberoi Group

— following the death of Mohan Singh Oberoi, his father and the founding chairman

of The Oberoi Group, in 2002. He remained the CEO of EIH Ltd until 2013. Oberoi decided to relinquish his position as executive chairman and director of the company on May 3, 2022, and the EIH Board approved the proposal to offer Oberoi the position of 'chairman emeritus'. The Oberoi Group made rapid strides as a luxury hotel chain during the tenure of PRS Oberoi and became one of India's top three hospitality chains. Founded in 1934, the group owns and operates 32 luxury hotels and two river cruise ships in seven countries, primarily under its Oberoi Hotels & Resorts and Trident brands.

## Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels Announces Debut Property in Igatpuri



Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels is pleased to announce the official inauguration of Regenta Place Igatpuri, signifying

the prestigious hospitality chain's entry into Igatpuri, a central location within Maharashtra. Regenta Place Igatpuri represents the 14th

addition to our hotel portfolio in the state of Maharashtra, following the successful launch of Regenta Place Kolhapur. Nestled amid the picturesque Sahyadri Mountain Ranges of Maharashtra, Regenta Place Igatpuri features 50 elegantly designed rooms spread across four distinct categories, each equipped with balconies or sit-outs. Most of these well-appointed rooms offer guests a vantage view of the breathtaking mountain range and the lush green valley

## Pune 14 by Hyatt Regency Pune Presents “Fiesta de Goa” - A Celebration of Authentic Goan Flavours



Pune 14 has recently announced “Fiesta de Goa,” a culinary extravaganza celebrating the authentic flavours of Goan cuisine. Running from November 24th to December 3rd, this event promises a delectable journey through the heart of Goa, curated by the esteemed Chef Henzel and his companion chef.

The event is being hosted by Pune 14 at Hyatt Regency, and it features a buffet named “All about Authentic Goan” that pays tribute to Goa’s culinary heritage. With a menu that showcases the greatest parts of Goan cuisine via the use of local masalas, spice powders, and traditional ingredients, expect an amazing culinary experience.

## The Leela Gandhinagar rings in Christmas with cake-mixing Ceremony



The Leela Gandhinagar marked the beginning of Christmas festivities with a traditional cake-mixing ceremony. The Leela Gandhinagar known for being one of the popular leisure weekend getaway destinations, the cake mixing ceremony was hosted by the infinity poolside of the hotel. The evening hosted by Executive Chef Kapil Dubey and team. Guests and patrons joined the team to mix fruits and nuts for the upcoming festive season.

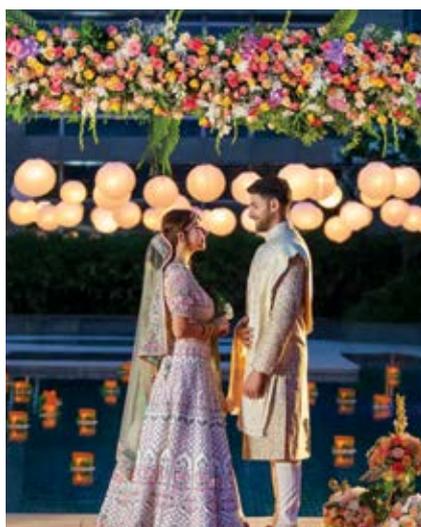
## Madhya Pradesh tourism benefitted in big way through Film Tourism Policy official



We are trying to promote shootings of films in Madhya Pradesh. Since the inception of the policy, tourism in the state has gone from place to place,” said Shukla, who is attending the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) in Panaji. Shukla underlined salient features of the Film Tourism Policy such as the “hassle-free” shooting experience in a conducive environment. Madhya Pradesh tourism sector

is benefiting in a big way after the state opened its doors for shooting movies through the film tourism policy, a senior official said here on Wednesday. Sheo Shekhar Shukla, Managing Director of Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, told PTI that filmmakers are increasingly exploring various locations in the central state for shootings after the MP Film Tourism Policy was passed in the year 2020

## Wedding trends helping in the growth of the Indian Hospitality Industry



In the ever-evolving landscape of the Indian hospitality industry, wedding trends have emerged as a powerful catalyst for growth. We have strategically embraced this wave of change. Recognizing the distinct needs of our diverse clientele, we’ve established a dedicated social cell led by a team of seasoned professionals. This specialized unit ensures that every wedding hosted at Sheraton Whitefield is

a seamless blend of luxury and tradition. Particularly noteworthy is our commitment to catering to specific cultural requirements. For weddings we boast a team of specialized chefs and Maharaja’s who navigate the intricacies of these culinary traditions. Our kitchen facilities are thoughtfully segregated, guaranteeing an authentic culinary experience tailored to each wedding’s unique cultural essence.

## IHCL announces the opening of Ginger Mumbai Airport



IHCL has announced the opening of Ginger Mumbai Airport. The 371 keys flagship Ginger hotel, strategically

located near the domestic airport will introduce the brand’s lean luxe design and service philosophy of offering

a vibrant, contemporary, and seamless hospitality experience to its guests. Speaking on the occasion, Puneet Chhatwal, managing director and chief executive officer, IHCL, said, “The opening of Ginger Mumbai Airport is a significant milestone in the transformation journey of the brand which now has over two third of its operating hotels in the upgraded new lean luxe identity.”

## World Cup Final: It's a sold-out scenario in Ahmedabad with room rates going above INR 1 lakh



As India enters the finals of the ICC World Cup in style beating New Zealand, the reservation desks of hotels in the city of Ahmedabad and

around are really working overtime answering to frantic calls for rooms from cricket enthusiasts from all over the country. Like any other city in the country, Ahmedabad also has limited supply of rooms, which is negligible to the capacity crowd

which is expected to descend to watch the final match at the highest capacity stadium in the world at 1.3 lakh capacity. However, Nirav Gandhi, Director, Hotel Express Towers, Vadodara disagrees with his spillover effect story. He refuses to buy the high demand and sold-out story. Even during the India-Pakistan match, such a “hype” was created, he says, and rooms went unsold eventually in many hotels.

## Hilton named No. 1 best place to work in the world



For the first time ever, Hilton has been named the No. 1 World's Best Workplace by Fortune magazine and Great

Place to Work. This recognition – the culmination of eight consecutive appearances on the “World's Best” list – also marks

the first time a hospitality company has achieved the top honor in this best-in-class program. Since first earning a spot on this list in 2016, Hilton has continued to build its strong culture through an unwavering focus on creating a workplace that is inclusive, offers strong growth opportunities, is driven by purpose, and provides the kind of support that empowers its 460,000 team members around the world to thrive each and every day.

## Trends and innovations in the tourism industry



The world of travel and tourism has been in a state of flux, driven by a whirlwind of changes and innovations. While the global pandemic posed significant challenges to the industry, it also served as a catalyst for transformation. As we move beyond these tumultuous times, the travel

sector is undergoing a profound metamorphosis. The turbulence of the past few years has not only tested the resilience of the tourism industry but has also sown the seeds of transformative trends and innovations that are reshaping how we explore our world.

## Sarovar Hotels & Resorts debuts in Pavagadh, Gujarat



**S**arovar Hotels & Resorts has announced its debut in the city of Pavagadh Gujarat, with the opening of Vikrama Sarovar Portico. Nestled against the backdrop of majestic Pavagadh hills and within close proximity to the sacred Maha Kalika Mata Mandir, Vikrama Sarovar Portico is designed to offer a harmonious blend

of comfort and impeccable service for pilgrims, leisure and business travelers. The hotel is also close to the popular UNESCO World Heritage Site. The hotel's architecture seamlessly merges with the rich heritage of the city, setting the stage for memorable stays that celebrates both tradition and modernity.

## “A Toast to Tradition: Goa Marriott Resort and Spa rings in the festive season with their annual cake mixing ceremony”



**G**oa Marriott Resort and Spa, a premier 5-star destination in Miramar, Panaji, Goa, hosted a magnificent Cake Mixing Soiree on October 21, 2023. Guests, including residence guests, prominent socialites, and hotel associates, embraced the festive spirit by donning aprons, gloves, and

chef hats. The mix of raisins, cherries, mixed fruits, apricots, walnuts, and cashews soaked in a variety of beverages set the stage for the grand celebration. Executive Chef Balvinder Lubana and his team showcased high-end cuisine, appetizers, and drinks, ensuring a night of indulgence.

## Hafele's New Architectural Lighting Range



**H**äfele's Loox Range has been meeting the demands

for lighting in furniture as well as the growing needs for

networking and digitalization since the last 10 years. The solutions offered within this range maximize simplicity and flexibility as well as assure high reliability. The range presents itself as a unique combination of elegant design and state-of-the-art technology making it the perfect choice for any home furniture application; be it Task Lighting for Kitchen cabinets and plinths, Decorative Lighting for Living Room Showcases, Mood Lighting for Bedroom Applications or pure Functional Lighting in Wardrobes.

## Hyatt Place Vadodara Presents ‘Sweety Da Pind’ With Celebrity Chef Sweety Singh



Vadodara! ‘Sweety Da Pind’ is a landmark food festival for us as it introduces the people of Vadodara to his vibrant flavours and one-of-a-kind Punjabi preparations for the very first time.” - Neha Kapoor, General Manager, Hyatt Place Vadodara. Hyatt Place Vadodara, the first Hyatt Place in Gujarat, is presenting a 10-day Punjabi food festival, ‘Sweety Da Pind’. Hosted in association with Celebrity Chef Sweety Singh from Delhi, this festival marks the culinary expert’s first collaboration in the city of Vadodara.

“We at Hyatt Place Vadodara always strive to provide our guests with unique dining experiences in order to further

strengthen our patronage. That being said, we extend a very warm welcome to Chef Sweety Singh at Hyatt Place

## Advani Hotels & Resorts register highest ever revenue growth



Advani Hotels & Resorts Operated Caravela Beach Resort Goa has registered highest ever revenue growth in Q2 and H1 2024. As per the un-audited financial results approved by the company board, the company has declared Q2 revenue of INR 1,792 lakhs and H1 revenue of INR 4,186 lakh. As per the financial statement, during

quarter two of fy2024f, the company’s net income has grown on a y-o-y basis by 6.97 percent. The Average Net Total Revenue Per Occupied Room per night (TrevPOR), after subtracting GST was INR 14,998 per room in the quarter ended September 30, 2023, versus INR 14,811 per night in the quarter ended September 30, 2022.

## The Bake House at Hyatt Regency Pune Unveils “Cozy Cravings”: A Wintertime Indulgence



Experience the enchantment of winter with “Cozy Cravings: A Winter Affair” at The Bake House, Hyatt Regency Pune. From November 15th to 30th, our bake heaven invites you to a unique culinary journey, where each bite is a celebration of warmth and

indulgence. “Cozy Cravings” revolves around the concept of embracing the winter coziness. Picture yourself in an ambiance filled with delightful treats, featuring a carefully curated selection of hot drinks, hearty wraps, quiches, and desserts crafted from the finest seasonal fruits.

## W Goa hosts Mainstreet Art Festival



Goa will witness the first ever Mainstreet Art Festival at W Goa's hottest award-winning venue – Rockpool on 18th November 2023. Over 50 local

brands whose roots are from Goa in the art, clothing, pet food, tarot space and lots more, will participate. This open-air extravaganza promises an

evening of artistic immersion, live music, delectable cuisine and a celebration of the arts against a backdrop of mesmerizing sunsets.

## The Spices Board expects changing food habits to drive demand for value added products globally



The lifestyle changes and exponential growth being witnessed in the ready to eat and ready to cook categories globally will push the demand for value added products in the Indian spices market, expects Spices Board of India, the agency which is entrusted with

the promotion of Indian spices in the global market. Around 50 percent of the USD 4 billion Indian spices exports currently consist of value-added products and the share of value-added products is expected to grow faster than the whole spices in coming years.

## The hospitality sector witnessed 15.1% YoY RevPAR growth in Q3, 2023: JLL



The Indian hospitality sector continued to witness Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y)

growth in performance in Q3 2023, primarily driven by the significant rise in Average

Daily Rate (ADR) of 15.6% over Q3 2022 resulting in a RevPAR growth of 15.1%. The third quarter witnessed strong growth in ADR due to multiple international events being held in key cities. The sector witnessed a marginal decline of 4.5% in RevPAR in Q3 2023, as compared to Q2 2023, according to JLL's Hotel Momentum India (HMI) Q3, 2023.

## Cricket fever boosts Indian hospitality; hotel reservations soar as World Cup returns



The ICC Cricket World Cup has sparked a notable surge in hotel and homestay bookings, particularly in cities hosting matches featuring the Indian cricket team, according to exclusive data shared with CNBC-TV18 by Make My Trip.

In an interview with CNBC-TV18, Mr. Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO of the Indian Hotels Company, shared his insights into the current and future prospects of the hotel and hospitality sector.

Mr. Chhatwal expressed optimism for the hotel sector, highlighting its potential for short-, medium-, and long-term growth. One pivotal

factor driving the sector's performance is the consistent demand that has outstripped supply, fueling the industry's growth and profitability.

Regarding the World Cup, Mr. Chhatwal noted, "There is a significant benefit in all the cities where the World Cup is being played, especially on the dates when you have favorite teams playing. There is a substantial increase in occupancy and rates."

He also revealed ambitious targets for Indian Hotels, aiming to achieve a 33% margin by 2025, demonstrating the company's commitment to financial excellence. Chhatwal

outlined plans to establish 15 exclusive Chambers, invitation-only clubs, with current membership exceeding 3,000 and expectations for continued growth.

Mr. Chhatwal shared positive industry performance news, anticipating a double-digit rate increase at the industry level during the second quarter. He expressed confidence that the trend witnessed in the past year, driven by the wedding season, festival season, and the World Cup, will continue.

Data from Make My Trip indicates an expansion in advance bookings for homestays in cities hosting the ICC Cricket World Cup, with a notable increase in bookings made well in advance (30+ days prior to check-in). Longer stays are also evident in hostels and homestays, with the average duration of stay increasing.

India is hosting the ICC Cricket World Cup after over a decade, with 48 matches across 10 venues featuring the world's top 10 cricketing nations competing for the coveted championship.



### Ministry of Tourism plans to launch its new digital platform by October 30: Rakesh Verma

Rakesh Verma, Additional Secretary Tourism, announced that the MOT is working in partnership with states to create a content management system. This

system will enable states and destinations to update information and facilitate collaboration on a new platform and will integrate information from hotels, airlines, and OTAs



# ANNAPURNA BASE CAMP TREK EXPERIENCE

## Mr. Tejinder Singh Renu

Initially, Vishal Sahni & I had planned our trek to Everest Base Camp (EBC); however, as destiny would have other plans, we ended trekking to Annapurna Base Camp (ABC). And these treks require months of physical training, wherein importantly you need to have strong legs and good stamina.

I started visiting Gym around 4 months ago with a focused training to take care of such intensive trekking in the Himalayas. Rather than jogging or running on a treadmill, the method adopted was walking at 4-5 km/hr with inclination from 9-15 degrees, so that the strength and stamina is focused for mountain climbing.

We reached Kathmandu, then to Ramechhap airport by road to catch our short distance flight to Lukla from where the trek to EBC was to start. However, to our luck, the weather at Lukla Airport was reported bad, since the last 3-4 days. Furthermore, the Lukla Airport is tagged as World's most dangerous airport hence all flights including helicopter rides were cancelled. Without wasting time, we decided to attempt ABC, and accordingly got the flight from Kathmandu to Pokhara. From Pokhara Airport by road we were dropped at a small village called Klu situated at the height of 1390 meters. And the next morning our trek started –



**Day 1** – Trek of 6 km started from Kilu (1390 mtr) to Ghandruk (1950 mtrs), it was covered in 3-4 hours, which consisted of more than 80% of steps made of uneven stones.

**Day 2** – Ghandruk (1950 mtrs) to Chhomrong (2170 mtrs) consisting of 13.3 km (almost 2500 steps down stairs, then somewhat comfortable walk up to Jhinu Danda Suspension Bridge, thereafter massive climb of 3.3 km full of stairs till Chhomrong.

**Day 3** – Chhomrong (2170 mtrs) to Bamboo (2310 mtrs) consisting of 13.6 km; again, down stairs, then a huge climb up to upper Shinuwa. Thereafter a beautiful trek passing through the jungle up to Bamboo, but again massive stairs down to reach Bamboo.

**Day 4** – Bamboo (2310 mtrs) to Deurali (3230 mtrs) consisting of 11.8 km. Extremely beautiful trek, but it was certainly very tough as you climb almost a km of altitude.

**Day 5** – Deurali (3230 mtrs) to Annapurna Base Camp (4130 mtrs) in 11.5 km. Amazingly beautiful trek; no words can express the true feelings. But again, step as almost another km of altitude is added.

**Day 6** – Annapurna Base Camp to Deurali, its coming down of 1800 meters altitude; covered this in

a marathon trek of 23.8 km in 7 hours.

**Day 7** – Deurali to Jhinu Danda Suspension Bridge, from where we got our taxi to reach Pokhara by 8 pm. The distance of 18.5 km was covered in 8 hours as rains slowed us down

In total we covered the full trek in 96.5 km with thousands of stairs & lakhs of steps of up & down mountain terrains in 7 days. It was a wonderful experience, but an extremely difficult trek especially for both of us, with age above 56.

We met almost the entire world during the trek; Europeans, Japanese, Koreans, Thailand, Chinese, Americans, but very few from India; just two small groups. Many solo young girls and many elderly ladies groups. The maximum age trekker we could meet was 78 years from the Netherlands.

We were extremely fortunate to have a view of the Annapurna Range with and without snow as it snowed heavily the night we spent at ABC. This trekking experience, I'll remember until my last breath.

.....

**Mr. Tejinder Singh Renu**

*Hotel Pritam, Nagpur & President – Nagpur Residential Hotels Association (NRHA).*



## Executive Committee (E.C.) Meeting



### **The 6th HRAWI Executive Committee (E.C.) Meeting for the F.Y. 2023-2024 was held on Friday, 20th October, 2023 at “Office of the Association”, Mumbai.**

- The President, Mr. Pradeep Shetty took the chair and welcomed the Executive Committee Members and the Ex-Presidents who were present to the meeting and introduced the new faces on the Executive Committee i.e. Special Invitees - Mr. Taljinder Singh - Senior Vice President & Brand Custodian, IHCL, Mumbai and Mr. Harkaran Sethi - General Manager, Radisson Blu, Mumbai, Co-opted Members - Mr. Rishi Mehra - Director, The Mirador, Mumbai, Mr. Sairaj Dhond - CEO, Hotel Manoshanti, Goa and Mr. Vinay Albuquerque - Director, Radisson Blu Resort, Goa and Mr. Harpreet Singh Nirh - Managing Director & CEO, Hotel Amarpreet, Aurangabad.
- Leave of absence was granted to the Members absent for the meeting.
- Minutes of the last EC meeting were approved.
- The President, Mr. Pradeep Shetty apprised EC Members on the following:
  - a) HRAWI's turn for the Presidentship and at the recent AGM he was unanimously appointed as President of FHRAI, and shall take charge from 1st January, 2024.
  - b) Draft documents on Bharat Swachata Star Rating scheme which was proposed by the Ministry, which the PMO had mandated & covered issues of cleanliness, water treatment and garbage disposal.
  - c) Meeting held on 13.10.2023 with Ms. Manisha Saxena, Director General, Ministry of Tourism Government of India wherein she had indicated that she wanted to outsource the classification work to an external agency, further the President, Mr. Pradeep Shetty requested the Executive Committee members to send their inputs on the same.
  - d) Further, apprised on the Service Charge issue that the final hearing had started where it was being argued by us that it was the right of the industry to impose Service Charge and it cannot be made voluntarily.
  - e) FIHM – 67 students in the B.Sc. Programme and 19 in Diploma in food Production program have been admitted for this academic year 2023-2024 which was a record number of admissions at FHRAI-IHM which ranked 2nd amongst 26 Private IHM's affiliated to NCHMCT, in India.
- The Chairmen of respective Sub-Committees apprised EC Members on the following:
  - a) The Chairman Legal - Mr. Pradeep Shetty apprised EC Members on the OTA's and Copyright License issues.
  - b) On behalf of Mr. Nirav Gandhi, Mr. Kunal Gujral apprised on current and upcoming FSSAI Training Programmes.
  - c) The Secretary General, Mr.



Kunal Gujral apprised EC on the Classifications and Classification conversion from April, 2023 till Date (YTD)

d) The Chairman of Newsletter and Editorial, Social Media and Academic think tank, Mr. Sandeep Talaulicar apprised EC on the below points:-

I. Currently are in search of a vendor for HRA Today magazine who would align with our specific requirements.

II. Fire Safety and Sustainability had been added in Newsletter for enhancing awareness and knowledge among our members.

III. HRAWI website was now live and accessible to everyone.

IV. Further, Coffee table book was ready and would be circulated soon.

e) Further, apprised on his Jakson Inns, Phaltan was going away from tissue paper and using handkerchief made of cotton and bamboo.

f) With regards to Academic think tank – he informed that 4 Questionnaires were prepared for General Managers, Faculties, Students and Internships and Industrial

training and feedback for the same is awaited and thereafter a Principal would write the white paper.

g) The Chairman Seminars & Business Session, Mr. Gurbir Bedi apprised EC on the Seminar on “Seminar on simplifying GST for Hotel / Restaurants” which was held on 9th October, 2023 at Hotel Emerald Park, Nashik and another Seminar on “Life, Property and Environment Safety for Hospitality Industry” which was held on 16th October 2023 at Resort Marinha Dourada, Arpora, Goa

h) The Chairman Membership, Mr. Jimmy Shaw apprised on New Membership Application for the concurrence of the Executive Committee. He further informed the Executive Committee that Ingram Micro India Private Limited had opened its Hospitality Division and had offered to come on board as partners. They were willing to offer special prices for their product, if purchased from their portfolio.

i) Mr. Harpreet Singh Nirh, the Aurangabad City Coordinator, informed the EC members

about the Industry Status which was just on paper and no real benefits were flowing from the same. Further, the Property tax benefits were only received by a few Hotels.

- On the sustainability side Mr. Rishi Mehra, Director of The Mirador, Mumbai apprised EC members that there were new schemes by the Maharashtra Government where they were allowing establishment to move to solar power if their consumption was over 100KW.

- The Honorary Treasurer, Mr. Paramjit Singh Ghai, apprised EC members the accounts & finance related matters.

- The Honorary Secretary, Mr. Jamshed P. Shaw then proposed the Vote of Thanks to all Members who attended the meeting as well as he thanked the Secretary General for organizing the meeting at “Office of the Association”, Mumbai.

Further, announced the next Executive Committee meeting which is scheduled to be held on 23rd November, 2023 at Radison Blu, International Airport, Mumbai.

## Novotel Pune introduces “NOVOLUTION” premier rooms



In celebration of its 10th anniversary, Novotel Pune, a part of Accor India, is introducing its “NOVOLUTION” Premier Rooms. These accommodations exemplify a collection of contemporary, tech-savvy living spaces thoughtfully designed to cater to the preferences of today’s discerning travelers.

These rooms make a statement with their minimalist decor, clean aesthetics, and neutral color palettes, providing an unmatched experience for cherished guests. The deluxe rooms, starting at around 290 square feet, are an excellent choice for young “bleisure” travelers, offering a vibrant and trendy atmosphere that ensures their appeal for repeat visits.

For those in pursuit of the utmost in luxury and comfort, the premier suites, spanning approximately 560 square feet, beckon. These suites feature a spacious bedroom with a king-size bed, complemented by a separate living area ideal for relaxation or entertainment. The suite bathrooms are equipped with bathtubs and rain shower facilities, ensuring a truly indulgent experience. Cutting-edge technology governs automated lighting and room controls, coupled with the added advantage of captivating city skyline views, allowing guests to revel in the tranquility of the pool while enjoying the lap of luxury.

## Lords Hotels expands presence in Maharashtra with Shrivardhan property



Lords Hotels & Resorts has recently entered into an agreement for its upcoming property under the Lords Resort brand, situated in

Shrivardhan. Shrivardhan, a coastal town located in the Konkan region of Maharashtra, is historically recognized as the town of Peshwas,

commemorating the birth of the 1st Peshwa, Balaji Vishwanath Bhat.

The hotel’s strategic location on Chikhalap Road offers guests the opportunity to explore nearby attractions, including the Siddhant Bhairav Temple, Divegar Beach, and the renowned Murud Janjira Fort, among others.

Gaurav Lords Resort will provide a range of thoughtful amenities, including spacious accommodations, a multi-cuisine dining experience, an infinity pool, a state-of-the-art conference room, and a variety of water sports and leisure activities suitable for all age groups.

## Lemon Tree Hotels unveils India's Largest inventory Hotel



Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd. proudly unveiled the newest addition to its upscale brand, Aurika Hotels & Resorts, with the inauguration of Aurika, Mumbai Skycity. This milestone marks the largest inventory hotel in India. Situated in close proximity to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (Terminal 2), this luxurious hotel offers an impressive selection of 669 thoughtfully designed rooms and suites. It also boasts an array of contemporary dining options, expansive banquet facilities, cutting-edge technology, and entertainment amenities, all delivered with world-class service.

Patanjali G. Keswani, Chairman and Managing Director of Lemon Tree Hotels, expressed his excitement about the launch, stating, "I am thrilled to announce the opening of Aurika, Mumbai Skycity, our most ambitious project to date. Nestled near Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (Terminal 2), this deluxe hotel features a remarkable 669 rooms and suites, making it the largest hotel in India in terms of room count."

"This represents our third establishment under the Aurika Hotels & Resorts brand, as well as our third presence in the dynamic city of Mumbai. I believe that this addition will effectively cater to the evolving needs of both business and leisure travelers to the City of Dreams. Furthermore, it brings us one step closer to our goal of achieving a total inventory, including operational and

upcoming properties, of over 20,000 rooms within the next four years," he added.

Aurika and Mumbai Skycity seamlessly blend Mumbai's rich cultural heritage and iconic architecture, preserving the city's historical charm while offering a contemporary and globally appealing experience. The hotel exudes understated luxury with a distinctive Mumbai essence, creating an inviting and captivating ambiance influenced by diverse cultures.

Aurika, Mumbai Skycity is committed to fostering art and culture by hosting regular events and exhibitions that showcase the works of both local and international artists. This initiative provides a platform for artistic expression and creativity, allowing guests to engage with the art community and experience unique and thought-provoking exhibitions within the hotel premises.

## Koyna dam reservoir area to be developed in water tourism



In a move aimed at promoting tourism in the backwater

region of Koyna Dam, the Maharashtra government, as announced by Chief Minister Eknath Shinde on Tuesday, has made partial amendments to the Government Secrets Act of 1923. This adjustment is intended to accelerate the sustainable and eco-friendly development of the area.

The Chief Minister stated that this decision has the potential to propel Satara district into a significant hub

for water tourism. Under this amendment, approximately 80 kilometers of the reservoir area will be opened up for tourism development, while safeguarding the dam and its immediate vicinity within a seven-kilometer radius as a restricted zone. He further disclosed that a two-kilometer zone beyond the seven-kilometer mark has been designated as a buffer zone.

## Preserving Mumbai's Pristine Shores: ITC Maratha's Nine Years of Excellence



The pristine shores of Mumbai have long been a source of solace and joy for its residents. However, the growing menace of plastic pollution and debris resulting from idol immersions not only threatens the beauty of these beaches but also endangers the marine life that inhabits these waters.

In an admirable effort to address this crisis, ITC Maratha, through its 'Swacchata Shramdaani' initiative, has made significant contributions. They organized a beach cleanup to remove debris caused by idol immersions, installed public utility dustbins, launched beautification and cleanliness drives, and initiated awareness campaigns for both guests and employees.

On a bright and sunny morning, a dedicated team of ITC Maratha volunteers gathered at Dadar Beach, equipped with gloves and trash bags, driven by a steadfast determination to make a positive impact. Their mission was crystal clear: to rid the shoreline of harmful plastic waste and debris resulting from idol immersions, thereby restoring its natural beauty.

As they meticulously combed the sands, their actions exemplified the importance of collective responsibility. Each discarded bottle cap, plastic wrapper, or piece of idol collected represented a step towards rejuvenating the beach. Several large bags of waste were removed, leaving behind a cleaner and more inviting shoreline for both locals and tourists to enjoy.

The installation of public utility dustbins plays a crucial role in maintaining cleanliness and orderliness in public spaces. These bins provide a designated place for people to dispose of their trash, reducing the risk of diseases and pest infestations while ensuring the health and safety of the community. ITC Maratha's team installed various dustbins along Ashok Nagar Business Road in Mumbai, an area prone to waste buildup due to the frequent disposal of single-use plastic and litter. In addition to installing the bins, the team diligently cleaned the surrounding area.

A beautification and cleanliness drive at Milan Park in Mumbai further demonstrated their commitment. The team undertook a thorough

cleaning of the park, relieving the burden on municipal authorities. They also planted two saplings, contributing to the park's greenery. Milan Park, a symbol of peace and harmony with nature, now radiates even greater beauty.

Creating awareness among esteemed guests was a crucial aspect of this initiative, strengthening guest relations and communication while conveying ITC Maratha's motto of "Responsible Luxury." Staff members educated guests on the importance of avoiding single-use plastic, offering them Sunya Aqua, the in-house bottled water stored in glass bottles. Guests were also encouraged to take home their favorites in Elemental Chlorine Free (ECF) boxes, which are recyclable and free of plastic.

ITC Maratha's 'Swacchata Shramdaani' initiative stands as an inspiring example of proactive environmental preservation. It underscores that the responsibility to protect our natural treasures lies not only with government agencies but also with environmentally conscious citizens. ITC Maratha has set an inspiring precedent, inviting others to join the movement of environmental consciousness. This event reaffirms the belief that when individuals and organizations unite for a common cause, they possess the power to create a cleaner, healthier planet for future generations.

## Embark on a culinary journey with The Orchid Hotel Mumbai's Four States Sunday Brunches



The Orchid Hotel Mumbai cordially invites you to savor the diverse flavors of India during its exclusive

Four States Brunch, a month-long culinary celebration that extends throughout October.

Embark on a delightful journey through the intricate tapestry of Indian cuisine as The Orchid Hotel Mumbai presents the essence of four distinct states: Maharashtra, Gujarat, Punjab, and Goa. Each Sunday in October will be dedicated to exploring the unique culinary traditions of these regions. Indulge in hearty Punjabi feasts on October 22, and immerse yourself in the coastal

delights of Goa on October 29.

The team of chefs expressed their sentiments, stating, "Food has the remarkable power to connect us with our roots and traditions. With the Four States Brunch, our goal is to take our guests on a gastronomic adventure that evokes cherished memories and creates new ones. The beauty of Indian cuisine lies in its incredible diversity, and we are thrilled to showcase the vibrant flavors of these four states."

## HRAWI Urges Maharashtra CM Eknath Shinde To Reconsider 5% VAT Hike On Liquor, Citing Threat To Tourism & Hospitality

The Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India) (HRAWI) has formally petitioned Chief Minister Eknath Shinde, urging a rollback of the recently introduced five percent increase in Value Added Tax (VAT) applied to alcoholic beverages served in bars and restaurants. The association has expressed concerns over the potentially detrimental repercussions this tax hike could have on the hospitality and tourism sectors. They cautioned that such an increase may give rise to illicit liquor activities and result in reduced government

revenues, ultimately negatively impacting the hotel industry.

Highlighting the critical role of tourism in the nation's economy, which contributes

roughly nine percent to the GDP and employs over 12 percent of the workforce, HRAWI emphasized the significance of affordable liquor prices in the tourism industry. Several states, such as Goa, Haryana, and Chandigarh, have recognized this by reducing duties and levies on liquor to stimulate sales and bolster tourism. The VAT increase in their state, as per Mr. Pradeep Shetty, the president of the association, contrasts starkly with this trend.

In a post-pandemic era marked by a surge in domestic travel, maintaining reasonable liquor prices becomes imperative for attracting customers. HRAWI has asserted that lower prices not only enhance state revenues but also encourage domestic travelers to select

Maharashtra as their preferred travel destination. The association has underscored that higher prices would inevitably lead to a downturn in restaurant business. Mr. Shetty further noted that this marks the second price increase, with the previous one stemming from a ten percent hike in excise license fees. A subsequent doubling of VAT on liquor is poised to exert a negative influence on businesses. On the flip side, reasonable liquor prices serve to promote spending, boost revenues, and heighten the overall appeal of the state as a tourist hotspot. With the hospitality industry still in the process of recovering from the pandemic's severe blow, further price hikes are likely to dampen the enthusiasm of business owners

## Facelift for temples for spiritual tourism



While the tourism department gears up to introduce spiritual tours for both domestic and international travelers, the Goa Tourism Development Corporation (GTDC) is taking steps to enhance the appearance of temples in Quepem, Sattari, Canacona, and Savordem.

Rohan Khaunte, the tourism minister, emphasized the importance of showcasing Goa's religious aspect, particularly its temples, as part of an initiative to

promote Goa as "Dakshin Kashi." While the specific temples for inclusion in the spiritual circuits have not been identified by the department, GTDC has initiated the process to renovate the facilities at significant temples, especially those in Sattari.

The corporation has initiated the appointment of a consultant to create a Detailed Project Report (DPR) for the beautification and illumination of temples in Sattari. GTDC officials estimate the consultancy cost

at approximately Rs 9 crore, with a 50-day timeframe for preparing the DPR.

In addition to the temples in Sattari, the beautification of Shantadurga Temple, Shree Betal Nagnath Temple, and Agondeshwar Temple in Canacona is also planned.

The Agondeshwar Temple in Canacona's Agonda will undergo beautification and illumination at a cost of Rs 3.7 crore, with Darashaw and Company Pvt Ltd serving as the consultant for the project.

Khaunte stated that religious heritage sites and temples have the potential to attract high-quality and high-spending tourists. To fulfill this vision, the tourism department is devising a strategy to establish spiritual circuits in Goa. The department intends to launch an advertising campaign and documentary series to attract tourists to these temples.

## Ramada by Wyndham opens in Arpora Goa



RKM Enterprises, a partnership firm headquartered in Delhi, has officially announced the opening of the Ramada by Wyndham Goa in collaboration with Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, the world's largest hotel franchising company, operating approximately 9,100 hotels in over 95 countries worldwide.

Nestled in the prime location of Arpora in North Goa, the Ramada by Wyndham Goa Arpora boasts 65 well-appointed rooms, a welcoming

lobby lounge, an all-day dining restaurant and bar, a wellness area, an inviting outdoor swimming pool, and three versatile event spaces. The hotel provides convenient access to the popular Baga and Calangute beaches, as well as various transportation options such as the Vasco railway station and the International Airports at Mopa and Dabolim.

Rakesh Mediratta, owner of M/s RKM Enterprises, expressed his enthusiasm, stating, "We are delighted to introduce the Ramada by

Wyndham Goa Arpora under the esteemed Ramada brand. Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is among the rapidly growing hotel chains in Asia, with a significant presence in key source markets for India. We take pride in this association and eagerly anticipate a successful collaboration and a promising future."

Nikhil Sharma, Market Managing Director Eurasia at Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, added, "Following the exceptional success of Ramada by Wyndham Mussoorie, we

are thrilled to partner once again with RKM Enterprises to bring the iconic Ramada by Wyndham brand to Arpora, Goa. This latest addition signifies a significant milestone in our expansion strategy for India, offering a high-quality midscale hotel in a prime location in Goa."

The inauguration of Ramada by Wyndham Goa Arpora, M/s RKM Enterprises, has also generated over 100 employment opportunities in the state of Goa.

## Goa tourism to roll out homestay, caravan policies in a month; new roadmap beyond beaches: Minister Khaunte



**A** new homestay policy geared toward immersing travelers in the heart of Goa's rich traditions and culture is set to be unveiled within the next month, according to Tourism Minister Mr. Rohan Khaunte. This policy

aligns with the state's broader vision of "Goa Tourism 2.0," which prioritizes quality over quantity and advocates for responsible and sustainable tourism practices that respect nature and local culture. The state aims to redefine Goa as

a year-round destination that extends beyond its famous beaches.

Mr. Khaunte emphasized that Goa is more than just its stunning coastline; it boasts a wealth of traditions, culture, delectable cuisine, eco-tourism opportunities, adventure, and other diverse experiences. The state seeks to present a comprehensive offering to tourists by shifting the focus from a sun, sand, and surf model to encompass spirituality, wellness, rural tourism, and more.

The new homestay policy will allow tourists to explore the hinterland of Goa, offering them an authentic experience of the region's traditions and culture. This policy will initially encompass approximately 100 houses in rural areas like Bicholim, with the expectation

of expansion. Travelers will have the opportunity to engage with local culture, traditions, festivals, cuisine, and more. The state has signed an MoU with Airbnb to facilitate these homestays, and the platform will provide capacity building and training to property owners.

Additionally, Goa is introducing a new caravan policy that permits operators to run recreational vans, providing more flexibility to travelers compared to traditional hotel stays. This policy includes plans for caravan parks equipped with utilities, sanitation services, and vehicle charging points. Mr. Khaunte pointed out that

Goa's history is exceptionally rich, with ancient temples, churches, the Saptakoteshwar Temple, waterfalls, and numerous unexplored treasures. The state's goal is to position itself as a year-round destination where visitors can find personal rejuvenation. Goa is no longer just a seasonal tourism spot.

Furthermore, Goa envisions creating civil infrastructure resembling a bow, representing the legend of Lord Parshuram, who, according to mythology, shot an arrow that moved the sea to give rise to "Goa." To make this vision a reality, cooperation between state and union ministries, particularly the Ministry of Culture and

the Ministry of Tourism, will be crucial. This project aims to become an iconic destination with a unique cultural significance.

Mr. Khaunte also noted the growing trend of digital nomads, a community spanning about 46 countries who seek quality and creative workspace in scenic locations. Goa intends to tap into this trend by seeking government support to issue digital nomad visas, attracting a new group of long-term tourists who can complement the homestay policy, contribute to the local economy, and support talent development and capacity building.

## Goa's government makes it mandatory for beach shacks to sell government staple: fish curry rice



Goa's beachside shacks are now required to serve fish curry rice, a quintessential dish of the coastal state, in addition to their offerings of various Indian and international

cuisines, as per the directive of State Tourism Minister Rohan Khaunte.

The introduction of this coconut-infused delicacy, celebrated for its zesty and

spicy flavors, into their menus is a key component of the state's new Shack Policy, designed to promote authentic Goan cuisine. Previously, the shacks along the coastline primarily featured North Indian dishes, with limited representation of Goan fare.

Under the revised guidelines, the government now mandates shacks to both "display and serve" Goan culinary delights, prominently featuring fish curry rice.

Minister Khaunte emphasized the importance of showcasing the state's diverse and delectable cuisine to tourists visiting Goa.

## 1.5 months into tourism season, govt finally invites applications for shacks

**HOW TO APPLY**

► Visit [www.goa.gov.in](http://www.goa.gov.in) Apply by: **October 27, 2023**

► Download application forms & tourism policy 2023-26 guidelines

► Fill application form

► Pay non-refundable application fee of ₹10,000

► Selection of applicants: **November 3, 2023**

If allotted a shack

► Pay a registration fee of ₹13,000

► Renew licence annually

The Tourism Department has extended an invitation to traditional shack operators to apply for the allocation of shacks along Goa's coastal belt, coming a month and a half into the current tourism season. Although the initial allotment is for a three-year period, the Tourism Department has clarified that the licenses will be valid for one year and must be renewed for subsequent years.

As per the Goa Tourism Policy 2023-26, 254 shacks in North Goa and 105 in South Goa will be established for a three-year term. Shack operators will also need to apply for deck beds and umbrellas on the beaches, in addition to the erection of the shack structures.

Out of the 359 total shacks, 34 are earmarked for applicants with one to four years of experience, while another 34 are reserved for newcomers entering the business. The remaining 291 shacks will be allocated to seasoned shack

operators with over five years of experience.

Application forms, along with the Tourism Policy 2023-26, are available on the Tourism Department's website for prospective shack applicants. According to the policy, only one shack will be allotted to each family. Applicants are required to pay a non-refundable application fee of Rs 10,000, and successful shack allottees must pay a registration fee of Rs 13,000.

The deadline for submitting applications is October 27, with the draw of lots to select applicants and determine locations scheduled for November 3.

Tourism Director Suneel Anchipaka emphasized, "Applicants should note that the number of shacks may vary based on ground conditions, GCZMA (Goa Coastal Zone Management Authority) directions, forest department approval, as well as other

public interest concerns for the tourist season 2023-24."

Shack owners and operators have expressed urgency due to the delay in the allotment process this year, with Cruz Cardozo, President of the Shack Owners' Welfare Society, emphasizing that tourists are eagerly awaiting the opening of the shacks.

Some of the terms and conditions have raised concerns, especially regarding the requirement for applicants to provide a current account, which may pose challenges for new entrants who cannot obtain a current bank account until they are allotted a shack.

Shacks will be allocated to applicants through a lottery system, but if there are fewer applicants for a particular beach stretch than the number of permitted shacks, the department will make direct allotments.

Despite the delay in the allotment process, the official tourism season is expected to run from September 1 to May 31, with shack operators responsible for dismantling all structures by June 10. However, this delay has caused shack operators to lose a month of business this year. Cardozo shifted blame to officials within the tourism department, asserting that it was not the fault of the Tourism Minister

## Unveiling Goa 2.0: The New Roadmap for Goa Tourism



Goa, often referred to as the Jewel of the Indian Ocean, celebrated for its stunning beaches, vibrant nightlife, and

warm hospitality, is poised to revolutionize its approach to tourism with an exciting new strategy. According to Mr. Rohan Khaunte, the Tourism Minister, this fresh direction seeks to position the coastal state as a year-round destination, expanding its allure “beyond its beautiful beaches.” At the heart of this innovative tourism plan is the imminent launch of a revamped homestay policy.

## Unveil the Essence of Goa with the New Homestay Policy



The novel policy is designed to guide tourists deep into the heart of Goa, allowing them to immerse themselves in the genuine traditions of the state. The concept of homestays, which has gained significant global popularity,

affords visitors an intimate glimpse into local culture, cuisine, traditions, and everyday life. By opening their homes to travelers, locals can share their customs and stories, creating an unforgettable and one-of-a-kind travel experience.

## Goa Tourism 2.0: A Fusion of Rural, Eco, and Hinterland Tourism



The minister has revealed the grand vision of Goa Tourism 2.0, which seeks to incorporate a broader array of attractions, encompassing rural tourism, ecotourism, and the hinterland. This fusion aims to unveil hitherto unseen facets of Goa’s charm

and natural beauty, inviting tourists to explore and fall in love with the state’s lush green landscapes, serene villages, and undiscovered regional treasures. This transformation also envisions the integration of a diverse array of cultural festivals, delectable culinary

adventures, spiritual retreats, and traditional homestays.

In summary, the new roadmap, with its diverse and expanded scope, is set to redefine tourism in Goa. The emphasis on homestays signifies a shift toward sustainable tourism practices, while simultaneously offering travelers an authentic Goan experience. By showcasing the lesser-known aspects of Goa, officials hope to distribute tourism more evenly throughout the year and across the state, thus ensuring a more balanced local economy and an enriched visitor experience.

## Beyond Beaches: Tourism Minister Shri Rohan Khaunte On Transforming Goa's Tourism Landscape

Goa has been renowned for its sun-drenched beaches, rich cultural heritage, and lively ambiance. However, Minister of Tourism, Shri Rohan Khaunte, is leading a transformative endeavor to redefine Goa's identity in the global tourism landscape, encouraging visitors to explore the state beyond its beaches.

Minister Mr. Khaunte reveals the strategic initiatives driving Goa into a new era of tourism. This vision transcends conventional paradigms and caters to the varied interests of today's discerning travelers. The goal is to offer not just a vacation but a profound and immersive journey to every visitor.

Goa has always been a favorite destination for tourists, but the issues of overtourism and its negative impact have been recognized.

### **What initiatives has the department introduced to combat these issues and promote ecotourism?**

Goa has historically been a top destination for both international and domestic tourists. Still, it lacked a comprehensive long-term vision. To address this, we've initiated a regional plan, which is critical for us to adapt post-COVID.

The pandemic has changed the kind of tourists we attract.



Presently, the focus is on immersive experiences and tranquility, moving away from the stereotype of Goa as a nightlife hub. Our initial move is to shift our focus towards quality rather than quantity.

Despite facing challenges related to infrastructure, such as the new MOPA airport and existing hotel inventory, Goa maintains an impressive 80% occupancy rate throughout the year. The key challenge is to consistently attract tourists, which necessitates diversifying our offerings.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we promoted Goa as an ideal destination for remote work, and it worked well. However, it's essential to reimagine our offerings. Addressing infrastructure challenges, introducing new tourism services, and celebrating cultural festivals are integral parts of our strategy. We are also delving into hinterland tourism, particularly rural tourism, with

policies promoting homestays and caravans. These initiatives aim to create sustainable models that prevent over-exploitation.

Additionally, we are exploring emerging markets beyond the traditionally dominant ones like the UK and Russia. Our rebranding efforts, international event participation, and collaborations with various governments and trade entities signal our intent to explore new horizons in the next two years, ushering in a new era of tourism.

### **Rural tourism is a significant focus for UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism. What steps has the department taken to promote rural tourism in Goa?**

The recent G20 Declaration marked a milestone, emphasizing green investments and sustainable goals. Our commitment extends to responsible and

sustainable tourism, as evident in our emphasis on clean and safe beaches and our proactive approach to streamline activities like taxi services, watersports, and beach shacks. We are working towards augmenting hinterland tourism, particularly rural tourism, with policies promoting homestays and caravans. Our primary focus is on sustainable and responsible tourism.

**Goa has always been a favored destination for international travelers. What initiatives has the department undertaken to enhance this aspect?**

In 2019, we hosted approximately 8 million tourists, with the majority being domestic and 1.2 million international visitors. Notably, international tourists are increasingly showing interest in Goa's history, heritage, spirituality, and wellness. To align with this growing interest, we have concentrated on enhancing connectivity and taken initiatives that reflect Goa's culture, such as ensuring that every beach shack serves local Goan delicacies.

Historically, connectivity has been a significant challenge, but we've made substantial progress. We've reduced flight times to destinations like Rishikesh, Haridwar, Guwahati, and Varanasi, which has facilitated a smoother flow of domestic and international tourists. Our efforts align with Prime Minister Narendra



Modi's "DEKHO APNA DESH" campaign, where we focus on improving connectivity to provide a better experience for visitors.

Moreover, we aim to boost B2B interactions and encourage the sharing of traditions and experiences between states. While destinations like Haridwar and Rishikesh attract international tourists, our goal is to draw them to places like Goa. Similarly, we want to encourage domestic tourists to explore international destinations.

Historically, the dominant sources of international tourists have been Russia and the UK. However, we are broadening our focus to include countries like Portugal, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and the UAE, which have shown promising numbers. The post-COVID scenario has seen a shift in travel preferences, with short-haul tourists now willing to undertake longer journeys.

We have also initiated discussions with the central government and our Chief Minister to explore an open skies policy and address issues related to seat sharing. A collaborative approach with international airlines could significantly enhance our global connectivity.

**How are the new tourism initiatives, including spiritual tourism, poised to impact the local community who rely on tourism positively?**

These initiatives have a profound impact on our sizeable local community, which includes around 1.5 million people. The "Goa beyond beaches" concept doesn't mean neglecting the beaches, as they continue to thrive independently. The focus is on a specific demographic—those discerning travelers seeking peace, calmness, tranquility, and immersive experiences. These individuals are distancing themselves from

conventional tourist activities and are driven by a desire to spend quality time with family, explore good restaurants, and experience the local way of life.

This target audience, which constitutes a significant portion of our rural population, holds immense potential. However, sustainable practices are paramount to prevent over-exploitation and ensure a delicate balance with our cultural ethos. The policies being formulated, including the homestay and caravan policies, aim to achieve this balance. The upcoming eco-tourism, wellness, and adventure policies, scheduled for release between October and December, further emphasize opportunities for local communities, especially in villages.

The homestay policy, which focuses on rural tourism, will offer incentives for development. Unlike the coastal belt, which may not need additional incentives,

these policies aim to empower rural areas. However, most importantly, capacity-building and skilling initiatives are essential for effective implementation. While the process requires time, the vision and clarity of thought guide these policies and ensure a sustainable and balanced approach to tourism development.

### **How has the tourism department proactively fostered spiritual tourism in Goa, both for domestic and international travelers?**

Our goal is to enhance the spiritual experience for tourists. To achieve this, we've initiated ventures like "Temple Connect," a virtual platform that connects temples to the diaspora, especially those who seek to perform pujas remotely. We've signed the first-of-its-kind MOU in the country with Temple Connect. Alongside this, efforts are being made to categorize and showcase the historical significance of

Goa's temples from the post-Portuguese era, shedding light on how they were preserved and the impact of Portuguese rule.

Discussions with spiritual leaders like Sadguru are underway, aiming to invite them to set up facilities in Goa. If successful, tourists can experience temple visits, explore churches, and then immerse themselves in rural areas under ecotourism. This could include stays in eco-friendly cottages, interactions with local communities, indulging in local cuisine, and participating in adventure activities like trails, hiking, and trekking in the lush green forests.

Furthermore, the focus is also on promoting yoga and wellness experiences to make it more organized and attract international visitors who come to Goa specifically to learn and practice yoga.

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## **Tourism department to leverage AI to improve operations, visitor experience**



The Goa Tourism Board (GTB) is embarking on a journey to revitalize the state's tourism sector by harnessing the potential of artificial intelligence and virtual reality. The tourism department aims to use digital innovations to enhance the overall experience for tourists while also leveraging technology to streamline operations and projects.

To kickstart this initiative, the tourism department plans to enlist the services of a consultant who can provide valuable support in the development of tourism initiatives and strategies, making extensive use of AI and other digital tools.

The consultant's role will involve devising and promoting digital interventions, which encompass the adoption of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and the establishment of an incubation center catering to startups in the domains of tourism, hospitality, and technology.

Additionally, the consultant will be responsible for

formulating short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategies that the GTB can implement. These strategies will be instrumental in bringing the development initiatives outlined in the Goa Tourism Master Plan to fruition, and the consultant's expertise will be crucial for evaluating and prioritizing various projects.

Furthermore, the GTB aims to enhance its online platform using AI tools, which will, in turn, facilitate smoother business operations and encourage private sector investments. The consultant's responsibilities include collaborating with the existing

single window team of the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB)

initiative to streamline approvals through a unified system. Data collection and analysis of tourist statistics will also be part of the digital transformation.

Interestingly, the department envisions the utilization of digital tools to identify revenue leakages from various tourism activities. The consultant is expected to monitor the state's tourism sector and keep a vigilant eye on issues and concerns reported by tourists, enabling the department to take corrective measures for improvement.

## Solar panels to be must for all new Calangute hotels



All forthcoming hotels and commercial enterprises in Calangute will likely be required to incorporate solar energy into their power generation systems, as the local panchayat has given

preliminary approval to establish a mandate that mandates property owners to produce a minimum of 20 percent of their power requirements through solar energy.

In addition, the Calangute panchayat intends to communicate with the Town and Country Planning (TCP) department, urging them to include a provision regarding the installation of solar panels when granting construction licenses.

Joseph Sequeira, the Sarpanch of Calangute, expressed the panchayat's openness to exploring alternative methods of generating electricity and revealed plans to include a condition in construction licenses, stipulating the installation of solar panels.

Sequeira explained, "As part of the construction license issuance, we will introduce a clause requiring all new hotels and commercial structures

with more than 25 rooms to install solar panels, ensuring that they generate a minimum of 20 percent of their power needs through solar energy.”

Calangute has been grappling with severe power issues, with the coastal village frequently experiencing power outages and load shedding, especially during the peak tourist season.

The Sarpanch’s decision to introduce this solar energy initiative stemmed from a proposal put forth by a local resident named Benedict Lobo during a gram sabha meeting. Lobo highlighted

how the burgeoning tourism industry in the coastal area has substantially increased the demand for electricity, further straining the already limited resources. He emphasized that the situation was likely to worsen in the future.

Lobo suggested, “I propose that all hotels and commercial establishments with more than 25 rooms be mandated to adopt an environmentally friendly approach by installing solar panels to generate a minimum of 20 percent of their power requirements on-site. This move will not

only significantly reduce the strain on the existing power supply but also encourage sustainable practices within our community.”

He further emphasized that the utilization of solar energy would reduce the reliance on traditional power sources and contribute to a cleaner environment. Lobo concluded by noting that this initiative would position Calangute as a forward-thinking, environmentally conscious tourist destination, thus enhancing its attractiveness to visitors.

## REGIONAL NEWS

## GUJARAT

### Lemon Tree Hotels unveils India’s Largest inventory Hotel



Lemon Tree Hotels Ltd. proudly unveiled the newest addition to its upscale brand, Aurika Hotels & Resorts, with the inauguration of Aurika, Mumbai Skycity. This milestone marks the largest inventory hotel in India. Situated in close proximity to Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (Terminal 2), this luxurious hotel offers an impressive

selection of 669 thoughtfully designed rooms and suites. It also boasts an array of contemporary dining options, expansive banquet facilities, cutting-edge technology, and entertainment amenities, all delivered with world-class service.

Patanjali G. Keswani, Chairman and Managing Director of Lemon Tree Hotels, expressed his excitement about the launch, stating, “I am thrilled to announce the opening of Aurika, Mumbai Skycity, our most ambitious project to date. Nestled near Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport (Terminal 2), this deluxe hotel features a remarkable 669 rooms and suites, making it the largest

hotel in India in terms of room count.”

“This represents our third establishment under the Aurika Hotels & Resorts brand, as well as our third presence in the dynamic city of Mumbai. I believe that this addition will effectively cater to the evolving needs of both business and leisure travelers to the City of Dreams. Furthermore, it brings us one step closer to our goal of achieving a total inventory, including operational and upcoming properties, of over 20,000 rooms within the next four years,” he added.

Aurika and Mumbai Skycity seamlessly blend Mumbai’s rich cultural heritage and iconic architecture, preserving the city’s historical charm while

offering a contemporary and globally appealing experience. The hotel exudes understated luxury with a distinctive Mumbai essence, creating an inviting and captivating ambiance influenced by diverse cultures.

The hotel's dining options include Mirasa, an all-day

dining restaurant; Ariva, a chic bar; a cozy tea lounge; a specialty restaurant; and spacious banquet facilities, including a grand ballroom and multiple boardrooms.

Aurika, Mumbai Skycity is committed to fostering art and culture by hosting regular events and exhibitions that

showcase the works of both local and international artists. This initiative provides a platform for artistic expression and creativity, allowing guests to engage with the art community and experience unique and thought-provoking exhibitions within the hotel premises.

## Pride Hotels Group strengthens its footprint in Gujarat with the launch of Pride Resort Ambaji



Pride Hotels Group is delighted to announce the opening of Pride Resort Ambaji, a significant milestone in the group's expansion plans in Gujarat. This exquisite resort is nestled amid the stunning natural beauty of Ambaji, located in the heart of the Aravalli Range.

The property boasts meticulously designed rooms and villas, each offering the utmost in comfort. Guests can embark on a diverse culinary journey at the inhouse restaurant, which showcases both regional and international cuisine. The resort also features a sparkling swimming pool and

well-equipped banquet halls, making it an ideal choice for special events and gatherings.

Pride Hotels Group's Chairman and Managing Director, SP Jain, expressed, "Our relentless journey of expansion and unparalleled growth surges ahead with the grand unveiling of Pride Resort Ambaji, a dazzling jewel in our crown. This opulent resort epitomizes our unwavering commitment to providing a worldclass experience to our esteemed guests. With an illustrious track record of establishing our signature presence in diverse locales, the launch of Pride Resort Ambaji represents a

monumental stride in our ambitious mission. As we make our indomitable presence felt in the heart of Gujarat, we take pride in enhancing the region's hospitality landscape."

Satyen Jain, CEO of Pride Hotels Group, also shared his thoughts on the launch of Pride Resort Ambaji, stating, "The launch of Pride Resort Ambaji signifies a profound connection for us. This exceptional establishment stands as a symbol of our unwavering dedication to delivering extraordinary spiritual and hospitality experiences. Ambaji, with its inherent spiritual allure and rich cultural heritage, serves as the perfect canvas for a world-class retreat. We eagerly anticipate extending a warm welcome to our guests in this serene sanctuary, firmly believing that Pride Resort Ambaji will be an enduring haven for travelers seeking spiritual rejuvenation, tranquility, and a profound connection with the divine and natural world."

## Vadodara gets its Lemon Tree



**L**emon Tree Hotels has made an exciting announcement regarding its newest addition – Keys Select by Lemon Tree Hotels in Vadodara. This property, set to be franchised by Lemon Tree Hotels Limited, is scheduled to open in the fiscal year 2026.

Vadodara, known for its splendid palaces, rich history, and vibrant culture, is a top destination in Gujarat for those

seeking a peaceful getaway. The city boasts numerous intriguing tourist attractions and exciting activities, with a welcoming climate that makes it a year-round destination for travelers.

Keys Select by Lemon Tree Hotels in Vadodara will offer 45 well-appointed rooms, a restaurant, banquet hall, meeting room, fitness center, lounge, and various

public areas. The hotel's convenient location places it approximately 10 kilometers from Vadodara airport and just 4 kilometers from Vadodara Junction Railway Station. It is easily accessible by both public and private transportation from major cities across India.

Mr. Kapil Sharma, Executive Vice President, and Chief Finance Officer of Lemon Tree Hotels expressed his delight, stating, "We are pleased to expand our presence in Gujarat with the partnership of Gajananay Hospitality, a Partnership Firm. This addition will complement our existing portfolio of six hotels and resorts in the state, along with five more in the pipeline, as we look forward to further expanding our footprint in Gujarat."

### REGIONAL NEWS

## MADHYA PRADESH

## Madhya Pradesh Tourism shines at PATA Travel Mart 2023



**T**he Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board proudly showcased its diverse and captivating tourism offerings at the prestigious Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Travel Mart. This event provided an invaluable platform to introduce Madhya Pradesh's unique and enchanting tourist attractions to key figures within the Indian and international travel and tourism industry.

The MP Tourism Pavilion served as a focal point for highlighting the state's exceptional destinations, rich cultural heritage, and breathtaking natural beauty. Its purpose was to ignite the imaginations of travel and tourism professionals from both India and around the world, encouraging them to embark on a journey to explore "The Heart of Incredible India – Madhya Pradesh."

Madhya Pradesh, often renowned as the "Tiger State" of India, boasts an abundance of wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, including the renowned Kanha Tiger Reserve, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, Panna Tiger Reserve, Pench Tiger Reserve, Sanjay Dubri Tiger Reserve, and Satpura Tiger Reserve. The

stall presentation underscored the state's unwavering commitment to wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism practices.

Madhya Pradesh also takes pride in being home to some of India's most iconic historical monuments and seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites, such as the Khajuraho Group of Monuments, Sanchi Stupa, Bhim Betka, and many more. The exhibition provided a glimpse into the state's rich historical tapestry. Additionally, it highlighted the state's offerings in adventure and wellness, including thrilling activities such as trekking, water sports, and yoga retreats in serene settings. Major annual festivals like Jalmahotsav, Gandhi Sagar Floating Festival, and

the Mandu Festival were also featured. Dr. M

anoj Kumar Singh, Director of the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, expressed his enthusiasm for the event, stating, "MP Tourism's participation at PATA is an outstanding opportunity to engage with travel and tourism professionals and share the incredible beauty and cultural richness of Madhya Pradesh. The state is brimming with captivating tourism experiences, including culture, heritage, pilgrimage, wildlife, adventure, and vibrant annual festivals. We eagerly await the arrival of travelers from across India and the world to experience the enchantment of our state, which has something to offer to every type of tourist."

## Pench Tree Lodge and Waghoba Eco Lodge's Triumph at ICRT India Awards 2023



**P**ugdundee Safaris has long been dedicated to advancing sustainable tourism practices and championing conservation initiatives within its diverse

portfolio of wildlife lodges across India. The ICRT India Awards 2023 has recognized two of its properties, Pench Tree Lodge and Waghoba Eco

Lodge, for their outstanding contributions. These awards, presented in the categories of Nature Positive Tourism and Addressing Climate Change, underscore Pugdundee Safaris' unwavering commitment to sustainable practices that prioritize both nature conservation and climate resilience.

The ICRT India Awards, hosted annually by the International Centre for Responsible Tourism (ICRT), hold a prestigious reputation for acknowledging pioneers in sustainable tourism practices

throughout India. Pench Tree Lodge and Waghoba Eco Lodge not only met but surpassed the rigorous criteria set forth, establishing themselves as leaders in sustainable and climate-conscious tourism. The two lodges received the following honors:

A. Gold Award for Nature Positive Tourism: Pench Tree Lodge was honored with the Gold Award in the Nature Positive Tourism category, recognizing its exceptional efforts in conserving the environment and actively contributing to its regeneration

Through initiatives such as reforestation, habitat restoration, and biodiversity conservation programs, Pench Tree Lodge has demonstrated a profound commitment to leaving a positive impact on nature.

B. Silver Award for Addressing Climate Change: Waghoba Eco Lodge was presented with the Silver Award for its outstanding dedication to addressing climate change. The lodge has made significant strides in reducing its carbon footprint through sustainable practices, the adoption of

renewable energy sources, and responsible waste management.

Manav Khanduja, Director of Pugdundee Safaris, expressed his delight at the accolades, saying, "We are immensely proud of Pench Tree Lodge and Waghoba Eco Lodge for their remarkable achievements at the ICRT India Awards for the second consecutive year. These awards reflect our deep-rooted commitment to sustainable tourism practices and our determination to lead the way in preserving our planet's natural beauty while enhancing guest experiences."

## Sarovar Hotels & Resorts Unveils Golden Tulip Bhopal



Sarovar Hotels and Resorts proudly announces the grand opening of their latest upscale establishment, the

brand-new Golden Tulip Hotel, located in the lively city of Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. This marks the 11th Golden

Tulip Hotel in the Indian subcontinent, underlining Sarovar Group's commitment to expanding the presence of the Golden Tulip brand in India.

Situated in the southern part of the city, the hotel is conveniently located within 3 km of Bhopal Junction Railway station and ISBT, and just 15 km from Raja Bhoj Airport.

Golden Tulip boasts 62 well-appointed rooms and suites, featuring various categories, including Superior, Deluxe, and Executive. The hotel offers a delightful all-day dining experience at Tulipe, where guests can savor authentic Indian, European Western, and Pan Asian cuisine. Additionally, it provides an intimate banquet and conference space named Summit, capable of accommodating up to 100 guests.

The hotel's inviting and contemporary design embodies the spirit of the Golden Tulip brand, which is known for its playful, cool, and timeless atmosphere. The hotel's facilities and amenities are tailored to the preferences of modern, young travelers who seek a balance between their professional and leisure pursuits.

Ajay K Bakaya, Managing Director of Sarovar Hotels & Resorts and Director of Louvre Hotels India, expressed his excitement about the grand opening, saying, "We are

thrilled to introduce the much-anticipated Golden Tulip in Bhopal. Guests can expect an authentic experience from the brand designed to cater to the travel needs and preferences of millennials. We are confident that people will resonate with the contemporary, youthful, yet elegant and refined spirit of the Golden Tulip brand."

Pradeep Agarwal, Chairman & Managing Director of Kwality Group, also shared his enthusiasm, "We are excited to embark on this collaborative journey with the Sarovar Group. This

partnership reflects our shared commitment to excellence and an unwavering dedication to delivering unparalleled hospitality experiences. We are delighted to introduce a hotel to the city that focuses on comfort, convenience, and affordability, poised to redefine the market."

To celebrate the grand opening, Golden Tulip Bhopal is offering special introductory rates and packages starting at INR 4000, making it a compelling choice for guests to experience the hotel's charm without straining their budgets.

## U.T. Administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu Welcomes all the passengers of INAUGURAL FLIGHT SERVICES on 29-10-2023 between DIU-SURAT & DIU-AHMEDABAD

U.T. Administration of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu

*Welcomes all the passengers of*  
**INAUGURAL FLIGHT SERVICES on 29-10-2023 b/w**  
**DIU-SURAT & DIU-AHMEDABAD**

<b>FLIGHT NO. 6E7966</b> <b>AHMEDABAD-DIU</b> ORIGIN 12:55 PM - DESTINATION 02:10 PM	<b>FLIGHT NO. 6E7969</b> <b>DIU-AHMEDABAD</b> ORIGIN 05:00 PM - DESTINATION 06:15 PM
<b>FLIGHT NO. 6E7967</b> <b>DIU-SURAT</b> ORIGIN 02:30 PM - DESTINATION 03:30 PM	<b>FLIGHT NO. 6E7968</b> <b>SURAT-DIU</b> ORIGIN 03:50 PM - DESTINATION 04:40 PM

**SHRI NARENDRA MODI**  
 Hon'ble Prime Minister of India

**SHRI PRAFUL PATEL**  
 Hon'ble Administrator  
 Uts of Dadra and Nagar Haveli and  
 Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep



## PRS OBEROI (1929-2023)

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HRAWI expresses heartfelt condolences on demise of the doyen of our Hospitality Industry and Chairman Emeritus of The Oberoi Group, **Shri PRS Oberoi** on 14th November, 2023. We pray to Almighty to grant peace to his soul and strength to his bereaved family members.

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Prayer Meeting shall be held between 04:00 p.m. & 05:00 p.m. on Friday, 17th November, 2023 at Bhagwanti Oberoi Charitable Trust, Oberoi Farm, Kapashera, New Delhi

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## Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India)



## HRAWI's seminar on Life, Property and Environment Safety for Hospitality Industry" was organised at Resort Marinha Dourada, Arpora, North Goa on 16th October, 2023 at 2 p.m"



The Hotel And Restaurant Association (Western India) - HRAWI successfully hosted a seminar titled 'Life, Property and Environment Safety for the Hospitality Industry' on October 16, 2023 at Resort Marinha Dourada in Arpora, North Goa. The seminar aimed to comprehensively address safety concerns, including environmental aspects, in hotels and restaurants. The event provided invaluable insights and educated participants about the necessary safety measures required for all those present at hospitality establishments.

The initiative reflected HRAWI's commitment to promoting tourism and green investments, exploring various avenues for eco-friendly practices within the industry.

The event boasted an esteemed line-up of speakers, including Ishrat Alam, assistant director, India Tourism, Goa Ministry of Tourism as the chief guest. Alongside him were Menino Proenca, director of Resort Marinha Dourada as the guest of honour; Ashok Menon, former director, Goa Fire & Emergency Services & National Secretary, Fire & Security Association of India (FSAI), who delivered the keynote address; and Hemant Khadse, CEO of East Corp Group, serving as the Technical Speaker.

"In the vibrant landscape of the hospitality industry, safety stands as the cornerstone of our commitment. Our dedication transcends mere physical security; we are entrusted custodians of trust and guardians of

the environment. It's not just about fulfilling ethical obligations; it's about forging a sustainable future where life, property and environment safety are non-negotiable. This seminar, the second of its kind in Goa following a successful event in Mumbai, underscores the momentum gathering behind sustainability and green investments in our industry," says Pradeep Shetty, president, HRAWI.

A noteworthy highlight of the seminar was the panel discussion titled 'Luxury to Responsibility: Hospitality's Journey Towards Safety and Sustainability.' The panel featured industry experts including Ashok Joshi, director of Joshi Engineering Consultancy and chairman of Indian Plumbing Association, Goa Chapter; Devendra



Arolkar, director and board member of Mohit Minerals Ltd. and project director of Jubliant Hospitality; Bharat Kamat, chairman, IGBC, Goa & Partner, Kamat Infra Tech and Ashok Menon.

“Cognisant of our role as custodians of safety in Goa’s hospitality sector, our efforts have focused on ensuring compliance and safety hand in hand. Overcoming initial challenges, hotel owners and architects have displayed a remarkable commitment to adhering to fire safety regulations, with an impressive 80 percent compliance rate. The understanding that safety directly impacts earnings has driven this emphasis on compliance. In our designs, architects prioritize fire safety, reflecting our unwavering dedication to both compliance and the safety of our guests and properties,” says Ashok Menon, former director, Goa Fire & Emergency Services & National Secretary, Fire & Security Association of India (FSAI).

This seminar was an enlightening experience, shedding light on the evolving landscape of safety and sustainability in the hospitality sector, and empowering participants with knowledge essential for creating secure environments within their establishments.

“The emphasis is on the essence of our discussion like sustainable practices; our green thalis and turmeric-infused curries reflect our eco-conscious and healthy approach in Goa. When it comes to building green resorts, our strategy is clear, employ locally, engage with the community and focus on green and smart infrastructure. This not only cultivates a community approach but also significantly reduces operational costs. By prioritizing guest satisfaction and ensuring resort owners’ profitability, we’re not just creating eco-friendly havens but also contributing to a healthier planet,” says Bharat

Kamat, chairman, IGBC, Goa & Partner, Kamat Infra Tech.

The seminar also aligned with the Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) pledge to make all possible changes in daily life to protect the environment while also committing to continuously motivating family, friends and others about the importance of environmentally friendly habits. Mission LiFE is an India-led global movement to protect and preserve the environment, and aims to promote sustainable living and combat climate change.

“Together, let’s pioneer this transformative journey. By collaborating, learning and sharing best practices, we lay the groundwork for a prosperous tomorrow. We’re shaping an era where safety isn’t just a priority; it’s an integral part of our industry’s DNA, ensuring the flourishing of our guests, properties, and the environment,” concludes Shetty

## FSSAI - Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering in collaboration with HRAWI was conducted on 21st November, 2023 at Hotel Express Residency, Vadodara

We would like to inform you that the FSSAI - Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering in collaboration with HRAWI was conducted today i.e., 21st November, 2023 at Hotel Express Residency, Vadodara.

Inaugurated by the following:

- **Dr. Pasupathy**- Trainer, Parikshan
- **Mr. Sanjay Zalate**- General Manager, Hotel Express Tower
- **Mr. Rashid Kadri**- General Manager, Hotel Express Residency
- **Mr. Vivek Kumar Singh**- food and Beverage Manager, Hotel Express Residency
- **Mr. Sandeep Bhaud**- Assistant IT Manager, HRAWI

The same was attended by 37 participants.

Till date HRAWI has successfully trained and certified 2,834 hospitality professionals across India's Western region in FoSTaC and FSSAI's Management Training Program.



# FSSAI - We would like to inform you that the FSSAI - Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering in collaboration with HRAWI was conducted on 10th October, 2023 at The Resort, Mudh, Mumbai

Inaugurated by the following:

- **Dr. Pasupathy**- Trainer, Parikshan
- **Mr. Abhijeet Adurkar**- Hotel Manager, The Resort
- **Mr. Abdul Wahab Kazi**- Assistant Food and Beverage Manager, The Resort
- **Ms. Nishita Bardan**- Assistant Manager Trainings and Quality, Four Points by Sheraton
- **Mr. Kunal Gujral**- Secretary General, HRAWI

The same was attended by 37 participants.

Till date HRAWI has successfully trained and certified 2,797 hospitality professionals across India's Western region in FoSTaC and FSSAI's Management Training Program.



## HRAWI's GST Seminar on "Simplifying GST for Hotel/ Restaurants" was organised at "The Emerald Park", Nashik on 09th October, 2023 at 10:00 A.M.

Inaugurated by the following

1. **Mr. Sanjay Chavan**- President, Association of Bar Hotels and Restaurants, Nashik
2. **Mr. Shridhar Shetty**- General Secretary, Association of Bar Hotels and Restaurants, Nashik
3. **Mr. Dilip Kothari**- Executive Member, HRAWI
4. **Mr. Tej Takle**- Executive Member and City Co-ordinator Nashik
5. **CA Jinit Shah**- Speaker

The same was attended by 26 participants



# Hospitality Can Become Sustainable

## YES, our hospitality universe can become greener and more sustainable – Vol 2



Contributed by  
Mr. Sandeep Talaulicar  
Managing Director, Jakson Hospitality  
Operator of India's first CII IGBC Platinum  
rated and Net Zero Energy Hotel

In keeping with the same theme as Vol 1 published in our newsletter last month, I am now splitting the Green and Sustainability practices recommended in our industry into three silos. Energy, Water and Waste. Any efforts made in these verticals will take us towards savings in carbon emissions and a cleaner hospitality industry. Most importantly, it will translate into a reduction in our monthly operative expenses and higher profit margins for you. In addition, marketing and communicating your practices will enhance your guest experience. We need not change the 'world', we only need to change our 'Sphere of Influence'.

### ENERGY EFFICIENCY

The hospitality industry can improve energy efficiency through

various practices, including:

- 1. LED Lighting:** Replace traditional bulbs with energy-efficient LED lighting to reduce electricity consumption.
- 2. HVAC Systems:** Regular maintenance and programmable thermostats can help optimize heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems for energy savings up to 20%.
- 3. Energy-Efficient Appliances:** Use ENERGY STAR-rated appliances in kitchens and guest rooms to save on energy costs.
- 4. Insulation:** Proper insulation in buildings can improve temperature control and reduce the need for excessive heating or cooling.
- 5. Renewable Energy:** Consider solar panels or wind turbines to generate on-site renewable energy.

### 6. Smart Building Systems:

Implement smart technology to control and monitor energy use, such as lighting, temperature, and occupancy.

### 7. Guest Engagement:

Encourage guests to participate in energy-saving practices, like reusing towels and turning off lights when not in use.

### 8. Training and Awareness:

Educate staff on energy-efficient practices and involve them in energy-saving initiatives.

**9. Energy Audits:** Conduct regular energy audits to identify areas for improvement and track energy consumption.

**10. Add motion sensors in corridors to control lighting and key card slot switches to control room lighting.**

“YES, OUR HOSPITALITY UNIVERSE CAN BECOME GREENER AND MORE SUSTAINABLE - VOL 3

## Jakson Inns Phaltan received the India's First CII IGBC Net Zero Energy award at the CII IGBC Congress 2023 in Chennai



Creating a net-zero energy hotel involves implementing sustainable capital investment investments and practices to offset energy consumption. Some key features include:

### 1. Renewable Energy

**Sources:** Utilize solar panels, wind turbines, or other renewable energy systems to generate on-site energy. Over time we added a 475 Kw solar installation on our rooftop and land.

### 2. Energy-Efficient Design:

Employ energy-efficient building design, insulation, and lighting to reduce overall energy demand.

We also use Heat Pumps & 2 DG Sets which are installed in a

synchronised manner to offset load requirements.

We used UV resistant glass and fly ash bricks with reflective paint with high SRI coating. All this to keep the heat out so as to save on cooling the internal envelop.

### 3. Smart Building Systems:

Implement intelligent HVAC, lighting, and energy management systems to optimize energy usage.

We used VRV air conditioning units, LED lighting and efficient compressor cooling systems

### 4. Energy Monitoring:

Regularly monitor and analyse energy consumption to identify areas for improvement.

**5.Heat Recovery Wheel:**

Saves Electrical Energy by extracting internal temperature.

Residual exhaust from the laundry & air conditioning system is utilised to provide heat water in the shower system.

**6.Green Building Materials:**

Use eco-friendly materials in construction to reduce environmental impact.

**7. Waste Reduction:**

Established training to avoid Energy wastage in operations. Also installed motion detectors.

**8.Green Certification:**

Obtain certifications like CII IGBC to validate sustainability efforts.

**9. Guest Engagement:**

Encourage guests to participate in sustainable practices, such as reusing towels and limiting energy usage.

By integrating these elements and practices, we are delighted to share that Jakson Inns Phaltan received the India's First CII IGBC Net Zero Energy award at the CII IGBC Congress 2023 in Chennai.

Jakson Inns Phaltan was already the recipient of India's first CII IGBC Platinum Green Hotel rating in 2015.

These achievements further motivate us to continue our pursuit of sustainability in the hospitality industry and move towards the Net Zero Waste and Net Zero Water ratings. God bless our only Mother Earth.





**Mr. Narendra Somani**  
*Chairman & MD*  
*TGB Banquets & Hotels Ltd.*

# FROM COFFEE TO CONVENTION

The driving force behind the rapidly growing TGB Group is its Chairman and Managing Director, Narendra Somani.

The story of his success in the hospitality industry is a tale of grit and determination and an inspiration to the country's youth.

Mr. Narendra Somani was running a tea stall from 1983 to 1989 while he was studying.

After that started with a small chaat restaurant in Ahmedabad in 1989. Today, TGB is a multi-dimensional hospitality group with presence in various verticals such as deluxe Hotel, star category Hotels, club, banquets, conventions, restaurants, café and bakeries and gourmet catering. A dynamic BSE and NSE listed company headed by Mr. Somani

## **Vision**

We, at The Grand Bhagwati are committed to meeting and exceeding the expectations of our guests, through continuous dedication and perfection by our team, whom we rely upon to make it happen and are committed to their growth, development and welfare, resulting to create extraordinary value for our stakeholders.

## **A Trendsetter businessman**

Mr. Narendra Somani is known as a trendsetter in the hospitality sector. From just one Tea Stall in 1983 and chaat outlet in the 90s, today he has built a brand and an empire, TGB which is well known for its strength in catering, wedding and convention management on a mega scale. TGB is the first one to introduce a banquet centric hotel model and has converted its strength

in outdoor catering into a new model for the hospitality industry by reversing the ratio of F&B's contribution to the hotel's revenue.

Today, even top international chains are following this model.

Also as Mr. Narendra Somani is the sole promoter of Vegetarian Concept, therefore through all his hotels and outdoor catering TGB has now started to attract the young generation of the country with the concept of - **Be Vegetarian!**

At TGB, we have tried to incorporate the worldly delights in a humbly way by "Vegetarianising" the concept and further ensured to make the service impeccable for the discerning guests ensuring a delight for them.

Besides the **WOW** factor in **TGB's forte - vegetarian food**, ample effort and thinking has always gone into guest comfort, ambience, hygiene, guest friendly atmosphere and topped with friendly service makes TGB's restaurants a great place to explore and savor.

Most of the people cannot think beyond Malai Kofta, Mix vegetable and Paneer Tikka when it comes to vegetarian Cuisine, But we have Restaurants offering over 350 unique and different dishes altogether from various parts of the world. The Hotel serves Buffet

Breakfast, Lunch, dinner and a Sunday brunch show casing over 75 Vegetarian Dishes at all times. The Eggless bakery of the TGB hotel has unimaginable variety of products from several types of Breads to over 15 varieties of Regular Cakes and Over 100 Types of dessert options.

## **Contributing to the Society and Championing Causes**

TGB takes care of the education of 650 under privileged children in over 50 schools. This covers all the educational expense like fees, uniform and books. Mr. Somani wants to acquire an old school, revamp and equip it to facilitate education for many more students.

TGB every year helps with mass marriage of Sindhi Society, Apart from celebration, they provide utensils and appliances like TV. Fridge and such other household items of convenience. Long back, during the time, when Gujarat was hit by the earthquake, the group not even as big then, fed around a thousand people daily for around three months.

Those were uncertain times. But, TGB, is at your service, ready to help, anytime.

Because, if you give beyond what you can imagine, you will receive beyond what you have imagined, is the faith they live by.

# Dr. Suhas Awchat Founder, Sole Proprietor, Goa Portuguesa, Dakshin Culture Curry & Diva Maharashtracha



**D**r. Suhas Awchat is the founder of Mumbai's Globally Awarded and ISO certified triple restaurants – 'Goa Portuguesa', 'Dakshin Culture Curry' and 'Diva Maharashtra Cha'. With more than 35 years of experience Dr. Awchat is a stalwart of the hospitality he always keeps a track on his restaurants and makes sure every one of them are maintain their food and service standards & even today whichever branch of his restaurants he visits; he meets all the guests and makes them feel at home. His wife Chef Deepa Suhas Awchat is the cofounder & CEO of the chain of restaurants, which operates several restaurants across India and UAE with few in the pipeline worldwide. Together, Dr Suhas Awchat and Deepa Suhas Awchat have created a culinary empire that is synonymous with excellence, authenticity, and customer satisfaction. The restaurants they have created are not just places to eat but are also cultural landmarks that celebrate the rich heritage of Goan cuisine. They have created a range of unique Goan, Maharashtrian and South Indian spice mixes in the

name of "Goa Portuguesa Spice Mixes by Chef Deepa" which are available on Amazon India, Magsons supermarket stores in Goa, Mumbai T2, both the Goa Airports and in all Goa Portuguesa outlets.

Mr. Suhas Awchat is a highly acclaimed individual in a vast array of fields and because of his diligence and genuine interest he has been honored with awards like the "PRESIDENT'S MEDAL" for distinguish service as SP. Police Officer & Commanding Officer MUGMHG and "UDYOGSHREE-Businessman of The Year Award" and the prestigious "MAHARASHTRA RATNA"

The Goa Portuguesa Group under the leadership of Dr Suhas Awchat has successfully conducted, Food Festivals in India, abroad and In-flight services and judged many culinary contests across India. Chef Deepa has also conducted various cookery shows on various TV channels like Star TV, NDTV, CNN IBN etc. and has the honor of doing inaugural Khana Khazana show with chef Sanjeev Kapoor. She has been Interviewed & featured by various Print & Electronic Media like Business India "Upper Crust, Savvy Cook Book, Femina, Cosmopolitan, New Woman, Viva Goa etc. Apart from all this, Suhas Awchat is a passionate singer and fabulous actor who has worked in the Marathi & Bollywood movies Page 3, Corporate, etc. and list is goes on. He was a well-known model and has done various modelling assignments. Besides

running his restaurants, Dr Suhas Awchat is also involved in various philanthropic activities. He actively supports various charities and NGOs that work towards empowering women and children. With his commitment to giving back to society and their kind-hearted nature they also donate part of their profits to Muktangam . His commitment to giving back to society is a testament to his kind-hearted nature and his desire to make a positive impact on people's lives. Dr. Suhas Awchat is a renowned public figure and also an award winner of "The Best Restaurateur". He is a man of ecstasy and euphoria which has brought him great success personally and professionally. Dr. Suhas Awchat has also served as a Special Executive Magistrate. Govt. of Maharashtra. Member of Himalayan Military Institute Ministry of Defence. Govt. President of All India Human Rights Association Mumbai Member of several Govt. & Non-Govt. Organizations & Committee (MHC) Police Public Committee for Communal Harmony. Advisory Member of Traffic Police Committee-Mumbai appointment by Bombay High Court. Was awarded as TRENDSETTER OF INDIA by Lokmat Media by the hands of Governor of Maharashtra. Appointed as a Food Critique & Judge for many contests held by leading organizations & Media Journalist / Columnist / Correspondent for many Print & Electronic Media. Model, Singer and Acted in Marathi, Hindi Movies & T. V. Serials.

# Industrial Training for Hospitality Management Programme: Purpose, importance and way ahead



**Mr. Arun Singh**  
Director at FHRAI- IHM

**I**ndustrial training in any professional program is a key component that helps Students to understand the practice of principal being taught in the institute along with the constraints in its implementation in real life environment. Hospitality management education in Indian context, is about 70 years old, when Institute of catering and institutional management was started in Bharti Vidya Bhavan Mumbai by all India woman Council. In hospitality management education there are several up-gradation in the 70 years from time to time. Now there are 70+ institutes of hotel management affiliated with National Council for Hotel Management and hundreds of HM Institutes are being run or affiliated with the universities.

The concept of industrial training is an excellent effort to give first hand exposure of the industry to the students undergoing hospitality management program. Till 90s the industrial training was in summer vacations between first year / second year and second year / third year, and that was not structured at all. NCHMCT has started the concept of 20 weeks industrial training in the second year which is now 17 weeks after the semester system has been implemented. This duration of industrial exposure for the hospitality management student is probably one of the best in the world in terms of duration, knowledge, Skill, Attitude, formation, personality development and for improvement of the communication. This exposure to the hospitality management student gives them confidence and insight of the practices being observed in the hospitality industry which is quite different but advanced then theory and concepts being told in the institute.

The duration of 17 weeks on one hand, gives enough time for a student to comfortable with the environment of the hotel, learn the basics, understand the flow of operation of the industry and choose their area of specialisation is in which they

want to work grow later. Hotel industry is also a business after all therefore we cannot expect that Hotels will allow HM students for industrial training without their own benefit. We need to understand that the purpose of 17-week industrial training is exposure for the practises adopted in the industry and particularly in that property or Group and therefore it is most needed that there should be a balance between expectation of the students, expectation of the hospitality management institute from the industry and above all expectation of the industry from the training who are going them an opportunity to work in the organisation for 17 weeks. Each stakeholder needs to understand the purpose of training and extent of information are exposure needed to be shared with the students along with keeping the moral of the student high and overall, their satisfied with the environment, mentorship, learning and exposure from this stint of industrial exposure. We all need to understand that these students are future Hospitality professionals, therefore what all they will get during the industrial training in terms of attitude, behaviour, knowledge, skill and togetherness that will reflect in their further studies and their employment.

Institutes of hotel management need to carefully draft format of training assessment, so that the purpose of training and learning expected from the student on completion of the industrial exposure can be measured and in this effort "Format of Training monitoring and evaluation" is the strategic document so that Student is bound to go through the details pertaining to each department or outlet from above said purpose e.g. if a student is undergoing training in coffee shop of a hotel, he should understand the concept, essentials of the coffee shop along with menu, knowledge and execution of service in such a way that the purpose and motive behind the coffee shop must be understood to the students. In my opinion Institute should draft a proper format of industrial training report, mentioning all the essentials of the area of work that bound the train to understand the concept and write in brief about all those components which are essential for the purpose for which that outlet department has been created. I am not of the opinion that Student should submit a typed report at the end of the training, but needed a detailed format with the space to mentioned all information institute feels must for the knowledge of students and can help faculty to update their input of teaching. This format is to be designed by the institute and consultation with the industry. This will bring out all essentials of a particular outlet or a department in a planned way so that students

can easily able to understand the concept, philosophy and standard of service is being offered to the guest in the hotel. Industrial training without these kinds of guided boundaries will give absolutely free hand to the Hotels to use the trainee wherever they want to use them, especially in the banquets for work like arranging the table and chair, doing the clearance etc. Most of the time they have been placed in the department, thus limiting their exposure and kill their interest in Industrial training. Industrial training is needed to be monitored time to time by physical presence of the faculty coordinator or through online discussion with the learning and development manager at least

once in a month so that Institute also understand the way Training is being provided by the Hotels and this intervene as and when needed to give maximum exposure to the student in a planned and structured way. The interaction of the faculty coordinator with the L& D department may resolve issues and problems of the student. They are facing during the industrial exposure and it is duty of the training manager to sit with the operational manager for the departments and ensured that the training is being provided to the students as per defined path designed by the institute in consultation with the industry. In other words, training manager is a link between the industry and aspirations of the students and institute should work in interest of the organisation

as well as in this interest of the students, industrial training, being conducted in A defined manner and moral of the students along with the learning remain positive. In the 17 weeks, minimum four weeks must be given to the student to work in the department or area in which he wants to excel and choose for the future placement. It is must for them to have a deep knowledge and skill about that particular department so that they remain always positive for taking a job in the hospitality industry and motivate others who are junior to them in the institute after coming back from the training by the experience of their industrial training. It has been observed that reasonable percentage of a student lose their interest in the hospitality industry during industrial training. Therefore, it is must to handle them with care by the institute and Industry. Training manager of the hotel have important responsibility to draft the training schedule in such a way that students are not only satisfied but happy with the learning from industrial exposure and industry also get benefited by the manpower available to them almost throughout the year in the form of industrial trainees. Without a well drafted industrial training format in my opinion, it will not be possible to achieve right kind of exposure for the students that built as base for their future learning and interest for working in the hospitality industry. In last I just want to say that well exposed learning during IT is a paramount for successful enthusiastic resource for the Hospitality industry for decades.

# Are you a Compliant Hotel or A Fire Safe Hotel?



**Hemant Khadse**

CEO - East Corp Group, Fire And Life Safety Consultant

## Fire safety in hotels

Hotel fires represent a major risk to people's safety, the hotel property and business continuity throughout globe. In general, Fire safety is a relative term. If you define "fire-safe" as a zero chance of a fire, then one can never say that any hotel is fire-safe. However, we can describe hotels as relatively safer than others based on the fire protection systems that are installed and the safety practices that they follow. The amount and type of fire safety equipment in a hotel varies by the size of the building, its height and age. Many high-rise hotels are protected with fire sprinklers, but one out of four still lack them. For all hotels and motels regardless of height, only 50 percent have fire sprinklers. Some hotel owners have corporate policies to retrofit older properties with fire sprinklers, but this is not the norm. And some hotels install state-of-the-art, well-maintained fire alarm systems that render false alarm problems nil, but other owners continue to tolerate the problem. As a result, many hotel guests ignore fire alarms. The quality of fire protection also varies by region. In some areas,

building and fire officials keep their safety codes current and diligently enforce them. But code advancement and enforcement are not uniform around India. If these codes are not kept up to date and enforced by competent personnel, the quality of fire safety can suffer a great deal.

## Common Fire Hazards in Hotels

The most common fire hazards in hotels include:

- Damaged fire doors
- Incorrectly installed Fire extinguishers
- Inadequate fire protection and detection
- Firefighting equipment that is in poor condition
- Inadequate fire water and pumping systems
- Insufficient fire safety signage
- Poor fire safety procedures in laundries, kitchens, or common areas

## Fire safety compliance

Overall, the hotel industry is experiencing a strong focus on risk prevention, which is driven by the market and insurance companies. This reflects on the one hand the expectation that hotels take care of the wider scale threats, such as terrorism and natural

disasters, and on the other hand the growth that has been seen in the "compensation culture".

For the hotel industry, securing hotel safety is in the first place a matter of confronting the existing risks and threats to consumers at the local level. Generally, it is the responsibility of the hotel operator to see that his hotel is operated in full compliance with existing legislation. Furthermore, Owners are also ensures hotel inspections that are carried out by fire authorities to obtain the fire safety clearances.

Statutory and Regulatory nature compliances are mandatory and hence mostly the compliances starts and ends here by hotel owners.

Design and Installation codes and standards compliances are directives and hence are not so strictly followed and so as the operation and maintenance codes of practices.

## Beyond Compliances

Risk assessment is a better way to ensure that hazards and risks are identified and that systems, equipment, and safety procedures are used to minimise them in addition to meeting codes and compliances.

Numerous international hotel chains hire independent, third-party fire life safety consultants to incorporate fire safety into their development process and go beyond regulatory requirements.

Although your hotel may be compliant, it need not be safe!

Therefore, make sure that fire safety is built into the property and that people are aware of how to manage any fire emergency in order to prevent, prepare for, and defend it in order to minimise property damage or human loss.

*Don't let this be your only obligation!*

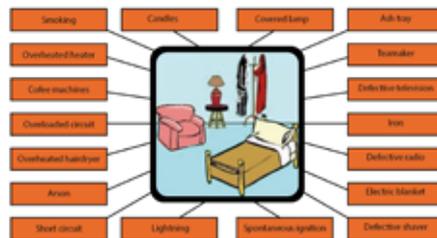


Figure 1: Potential fire hazards in guest room

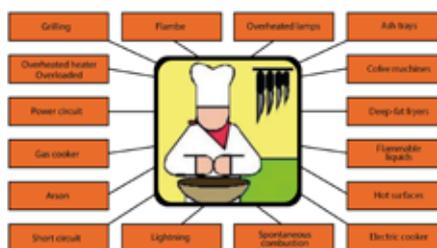
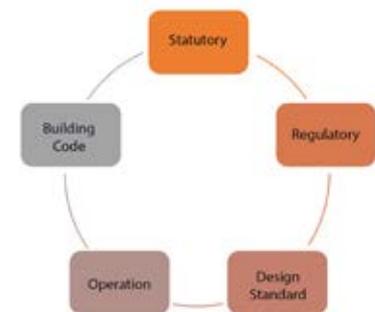
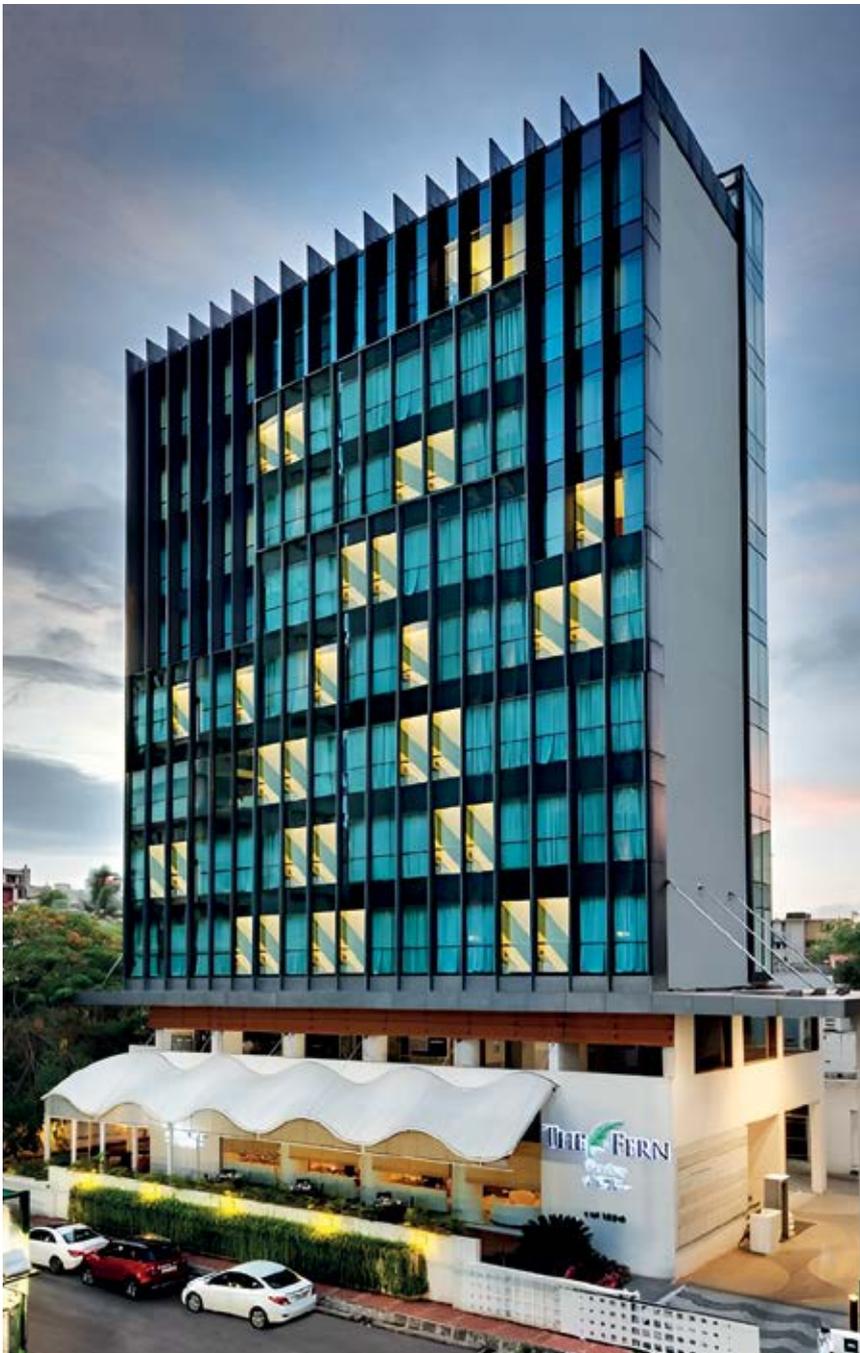


Figure 2: Potential fire hazards in the hotel kitchen



# The Fern Residency-Mumbai

THE FERN  
Residency  
The Acres | MUMBAI  
A leading environmentally sensitive hotel



The Fern Residency -Mumbai, Chembur was launched 11 years ago and was Chembur's first star category hotel. The hotel has 84 exquisitely and tastefully designed guest rooms that showcase a consistent design inspired by the Indian script. This experience is created through the integration of the letters, their form, force & rhythm into the detailing design of space across the hotel. The Fern Residency, Mumbai is a three-star classified hotel delivering all the five-star facilities, since all guests staying at Fern also have access to the all the club facilities at the adjoining "The Acres Club" which has the best sports and entertainment in Chembur. Besides the complimentary breakfast buffet and in-house dining at the Fern's Art House restaurant, high-speed internet, minibar, room service menu and 24hr room service, guests also have access to a range of recreational amenities at The Acres Club, including the tennis court, squash court, table tennis court, spa services, swimming pool, fitness centre, gaming zones and two additional multi-cuisine restaurants and one café. With a full-suite of business and recreational services, The Fern Residency, Mumbai is ideal for business travellers to Mumbai. All our staff are courteous, attentive and well trained to deliver the highest level of personalised services. The hotel is very well connected to Mumbai's important business and entertainment hubs. It is 15 minutes away from the business hub, BKC and 1 Kilometre away from Eastern Freeway that connects South Mumbai to Chembur in 17 minutes.

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY SO FAR

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**Mr. Rajesh Shetty**

*General Manager,  
The Fern Residency, Mumbai*

I started my Hospitality journey with a Fine dining restaurant in Cincinnati, Ohio as a restaurant manager. From there I moved on to being a front office GSA in Holiday Inn Express in Ohio. My first job as a General Manager was back in 2004 for Hampton Inn by Hilton, Ohio. As a General Manager, I successfully led the hotel to the top, demonstrating strong leadership skills and a proactive management style that focuses on generating revenue and optimising business performance. I also received the Special “WOW Award” from Phil

Cordell, presently Global Category Head for Hilton Lifestyle for taking the property raking from 1268 to 33 (i.e., top 5%) within 18 -20 months of taking over the property. I moved back to India in 2013 due to some personal reasons and joined the Leading environment friendly Hotel Brand “The Fern Hotels and Resort. As GM of The Fern Residency Chembur & the Acres Club I have demonstrated proficiency in data-driven decision-making and using analytics for nuanced decision-making. During my tenure, I have achieved significant milestones

and received recognition for exceptional performance. These include consistently ranking among the top five properties with the highest occupancy in the brand, year-on-year revenue and GOP growth, and being awarded as the “Best GM of the Year 2019” by The Fern Hotel and Resort.

In my career in the hospitality industry, I have learned that there are several key factors that contribute to being a successful hotelier. These factors include revenue management, controlling expenses, and most importantly mentoring and taking care of the team. I have been able to groom team members by recognizing their aptitude for specific tasks and assigning them extra responsibilities to test their performance. Cross-training team members has also been a priority, ensuring that they are versatile and capable of handling different roles. I have always believed in the mantra, “Take care of your people, and they will take care of you.” When the pandemic hit us, and most hotels were closing down, I made the decision to keep our hotel open against the advice of many. The reasons for this decision were twofold. Firstly, it is incredibly difficult to shut down operations completely and then start again when the situation improves. Secondly, I wanted to ensure the well-being of our staff and their families by providing job security during these uncertain times. Although business was difficult to come by during those two years, we focused on managing our expenses effectively. I am proud to say that we successfully achieved a positive Gross Operating Profit (GOP) for both years while ensuring the preservation of all staff jobs.

# Hilton Mumbai



## **Brief about “Hilton Mumbai”.**

**O**ur hotel is designed like a 19th century summer palace. As you see, the theme runs across the hotel- right from the cobblestoned pathway outside the main entrance and the beautiful Austrian crystal chandeliers here at the Crystal Lounge. The crystal lounge is the receiving room of this house, the Lounge Bar is the drawing-room,

cigar divan the smoking room and Imperial China is one of the dining rooms. We have a total of 171 guest rooms and suites. We also have facilities like spa, gym and swimming pool. The Brasserie is our all-day dining restaurant. We also have spacious meeting rooms and banquets to conduct important conferences, trainings or special events like weddings and anniversaries.

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY SO FAR



**Mr. Deepak Kumar**

*General Manager,  
Hilton Mumbai*

In my current role, I am responsible for the overall strategic, operational and commercial performance of

Hilton Mumbai International Airport. Prior to Joining Hilton Mumbai, I was General Manager at Holiday Inn Cochin. Prior

to my assignment at Holiday Inn Cochin, I joined Holiday Inn New Delhi International Airport in September 2015 as Executive Assistant Manager and successfully assisted in driving the hotel to achieve the prestigious 10/10 IHG winning metrics score in 2015 and 2016. With Experience spanning over 20 years, I have been influential in the operations of multiple hotels with various international brands.

My career has taught me the importance of effective communication, adaptability, and the value of a passionate and motivated team. Leadership is about leading by example, being open to learning, and staying humble. Creating a culture of excellence and continuous improvement is crucial, and I've had the privilege of working with incredible teams that have inspired me along the way.

### **Favourite food- fungus salad**

I prefer to make healthy food choices and hence my favourite food is the fungus salad. Soak dried snow fungus in cold or warm water until softened. Wash softened snow fungus very well and drain. Remove the hard bottom bits if required, and tear into small pieces. Add snow fungus in rapidly boiling

water, cook for a few minutes, add dried cut wakame, and cook for 1 minute or until soft. Drain, cool under cold water, and then drain well. Press down or squeeze to remove excess water. Combine sugar, rice vinegar, soy sauce and sesame oil in a mixing bowl. Add snow fungus, wakame, spring onion (or onion) and toasted sesame seeds, and mix well.



### **Favourite Beverage- The Bellini Martini**



Also, my favourite beverage would be The Bellini Martini. The Bellini Martini is a delicious Jacob's creek champagne absolut and peach concoction that's sweet, mellow and strong. Put about eight ice cubes into a cocktail shaker. Add the champagne, schnapps and peach nectar. Shake until chilled. Strain the mixture into a glass. Garnish with a lime twist or slice.

# Hitchki Restaurant



**I**t is a Bollywood-themed restaurant that cleverly aims to evoke nostalgic memories of a bygone age, in a contemporary, chic setting. Hitchki Resto Bar is all about nostalgia and memories. The establishment seeks to take patrons on a journey down memory lane by incorporating elements from popular culture,

movies, and events from the past. The internationally aspirational brand focuses on regional cuisine and introduces elements of contemporary pop culture into the decor, the food, and the bar offerings and introduces elements of the years gone by to the “Hitchki” experience. Each dish has a quirky touch in a way

that suits the palate and lifestyle of the current day, by way of contemporary preparation and plating, without compromising on the traditional flavors across India. One of Hitchki’s highlights is its inventive and unique cocktail menu. The bar offers an array of creative and nostalgic cocktails, often presented in quirky and engaging ways. The brand also presents its take on some of the most fervent international dishes curated in its own Hitchki style. The decor and ambiance of Hitchki are carefully designed to transport guests to a different era. You’ll find decor and elements inspired by Bollywood, retro music, and iconic personalities from the past. Hitchki often hosts live music events, DJ nights, and themed parties to enhance the overall experience. Hitchki seamlessly transforms itself from day to night, defined by international skill & service, it is sure to transverse you back in time to the ‘days of joy.’

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY SO FAR



### **Sonali Mullick**

*Head of Operations & Mixologist,  
HITCHKI Restaurant*

**I** am currently working as the Head of Operations and mixologist at HITCHKI. As far as my educational background is concerned, I possess a degree from Calcutta University along with a degree from IHM. In the year 2009, I worked as the Operations Head for the brand Manchester United as Operations Head and further looked into handling other brands like

Falafel's, Café Mangii, The United Sports Bar & Grill and Henpecked to name a few. I started off with Sands as Assistant Manager and met Shatbhi Basu, my mentor

and pride. From being the Bar Manager at Musketeers, Muscat to being the Corporate Bar Manager, I have seen it all. My forte has always been handling F&B Operations but mixing innovative cocktails and designing the bar menu has also been my passion. I believe that drink is one thing that a person can enjoy in every mood...be it shaadi or break up or just to chill. I choose my love and excitement to mix drinks, which is why when the time came to choose a career, there wasn't any doubt that I wanted to be part of this booming industry.

· HITCHKI ·

# Copper Chimney



## Brief about “Copper Chimney”

Copper Chimney, a pioneer in Indian cuisine was founded in 1972 & has been serving millions of happy patrons for more than 4 decades. During the Partition of India in 1947, Mr J K Kapur left everything behind and migrated to Bombay from undivided India. He always wanted to share with the city the culinary experience reminiscent of his years growing up near the North-West Frontier Province. In November 1972, 25 years after he first landed in this new city, his love for food took shape as the first Copper Chimney in the heart of Bombay in Worli.

The brand is considered one of the leading Indian restaurant brands from India and brings with it its secret recipes and cooking techniques, along with its in-depth understanding of the nuances of Indian flavours, ingredients and dishes, with a distinctive Copper Chimney flavour that is unique to the

brand. This year, Copper Chimney is celebrating 51 years of consistently making Indian Food Unforgettable.

## Favourite food- Amritsari Paneer Tikka:

Amritsar, a city historically famous for its street food culture, is the inspiration behind this rustic, roasted paneer preparation characteristic smoky aroma. tandoor with a characteristic smoky aroma.



## Favourite Beverage: Mint Lemonade

Instructions:

In a blender, combine fresh lemon juice, mint leaves, sugar, and 1 cup of cold water. Blend until the mint leaves are finely chopped. Strain the mixture into a pitcher to remove mint bits. Add the remaining 3 cups of cold water to the pitcher and stir well. Refrigerate the lemonade for at least 1 hour to chill. Serve over ice and garnish with mint leaves.

## PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL JOURNEY SO FAR



**Mr. Reetesh Shukla**

*Vice president,  
Copper Chimney*

**M**y professional journey, cultivated across diverse formats and geographies within the hospitality and consulting industry, has laid the foundation for this significant leadership position. Spanning various corners of the globe, I have orchestrated the success of high-volume food retail businesses, steering renowned brands to prominence in both India and UK market. My responsibilities have encompassed directing operations and sales for global retail giants, showcasing my adept management of different business models, from company-owned enterprises to franchise business growth overseeing an array of retail store formats, ranging from expansive outlets to nimble kiosks.

In the realms of Quick Service Restaurants (QSR) and Casual Dine formats, my leadership has

consistently yielded sustainable revenue and profit growth, with an unwavering focus on cultivating a superior customer experience, both internally and externally.

My professional pursuits extend to pivotal roles in business solution projects, collaborating with esteemed clients such as HUL, Mondelez, McCain, Nando's, Dairy Queen, and many others. Through these engagements, I have successfully delivered cohesive strategies and implemented projects that transcend geographical boundaries.

Working with K Hospitality has allowed me manage portfolio of Indian cuisine formats (Copper Chimney + Bombay Brasserie + Josh ) and steer them with sustainable business growth. Currently, leading Copper Chimney, an iconic brand as Vice-President with an objective to drive business growth, venturing into new and established markets and scaling the brand to unprecedented heights.

Throughout my career, my commitment has been steadfastly directed toward crafting positive customer experiences. This commitment finds expression in my proficiency in retail operation management, meticulous business planning and execution, comprehensive training and development initiatives, strategic financial budgeting, nuanced business analytics, astute strategic planning, and judicious resource utilization.

### **Personal Journey:**

Beyond the boardrooms and strategic deliberations, my personal journey intertwines

seamlessly with my professional narrative. The challenges surmounted and triumphs celebrated have not only sculpted my professional identity but have also played an integral role in shaping my character.

From the nascent days at Cafe Coffee Day, where the foundations of my industry knowledge were laid, to the enriching experience at SSP in the UK, each juncture served as a crucible for personal and professional growth. The years at Technopak ignited a passion for innovation and adaptability, underscoring my dedication to staying ahead of industry trends.

As the General Manager at Compass, I learned the art of cultivating high-performing teams—a skill that has become synonymous with my leadership style. The move to K Hospitality marked a paradigm shift, propelling me into a role to steer an iconic brand trajectory towards unprecedented heights. Presently, as the Vice-president of Copper Chimney, my focus remains on expanding the brand into diverse geographies, a testament to my enduring commitment to excellence.

The fusion of my personal and professional experiences has instilled in me a profound understanding of the industry, the global market, and the indispensable human element that propels organizational success.

As I chart the course ahead, the confluence of my professional and personal journeys continues to inspire a relentless pursuit of excellence, innovation, and growth, affirming my commitment to shaping the future of the food retail and hospitality industry.

# APPOINTMENTS



**Chandrashekhar Belose**  
Corporate Chief Engineer  
Pride Hotels Group

**B**elose has an extensive career spanning over 26 years in the hospitality engineering sector with a wealth of experience. He has worked with prestigious establishments such as Novotel Hotels, Hilton Hotels Mumbai, Ibis Hotels, Inox Cinema, and Sun N Sand Hotels Mumbai. His most recent role was as Chief Engineer at Novotel Juhu Mumbai. In his new role, Belose will be entrusted with leading sustainability initiatives across the Pride Hotels Group portfolio.



**Flavius Chettiar**  
Director - Food and Beverage  
The Westin Mumbai Garden City

**C**hettiar brings with him over 14 years of extensive experience in the hospitality industry, having worked with some of the country's most prestigious luxury brands. Chettiar's career in the hospitality industry began with Oberoi Hotels and Resorts in Mumbai, where he laid the foundation for his passion for food and beverage. He graduated from the highly regarded Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development (OCLD) in 2011, further enhancing his skills and knowledge in the field.



**Jayesh Wadher**  
Corporate Human Resource  
Manager  
Pride Hotels

**W**adher has a track record spanning over two decades in Human Resources within the hospitality sector. Prior to joining Pride Hotels Group, he served in notable positions across several esteemed hotel chains. Most recently, he was part of Accor Group of Hotels. His extensive experience also includes tenures at The Lalit Mumbai, Radisson Blu Resort, Novotel Goa, The Deltin Hotel, and Pan India Paryatan Ltd, the parent company of Essel World and Water Kingdom.



**Rajdeep Rana**  
Director of Culinary  
Westin Pune Koregaon Park

**R**ajdeep Rana has a long exposure to hospitality industry with an illustrious culinary journey spanning over 19 years. His culinary odyssey commenced with humble beginnings, and he worked for prestigious establishments such as Hyatt and Taj. His recent tenure was at Hyatt Regency Osaka, Japan.



**Bhagwan Balani**  
General Manager  
ITC Maratha Hotel,  
Mumbai

**B**alani is a seasoned luxury hospitality operator with over 28 years of industry experience. An alumnus of Bharati Vidyapeeth Institute of Catering & Management & Welinkar Institute of Management, Bhagwan has led multiple luxury hotels as General Manager for the last 10 years, having worked with the Leela, Hyatt and Hilton group in the past.



**Prabin CB**  
Director of Revenue  
Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai

**P**rabin CB has a proven track record in the luxury hospitality sector. His career includes key positions in renowned luxury hotels and resorts across India, such as Hilton Chennai and Westin Hyderabad. He was honoured with the Covid Warrior Award for the year 2021 from the International Hospitality Council in London.



**Meena Rewari**  
Director of Sales & Marketing  
JW Marriott Mumbai Sahar

Meena Rewari has a career spanning over two decades, with track record as a sales growth leader and business development strategist. Her most recent role was as Director of sales & marketing at Park Hyatt Chennai. Rewari's extensive experience also encompasses prestigious hotels such as Hyatt Regency Delhi, The Oberoi New Delhi, The Park New Delhi and Park Hyatt Chennai.



**Chandrayi Basuthakur**  
Director – National Sales  
Sarovar Hotels and Resorts

Chandrayi Basuthakur has a career spanning over two decades in the hospitality industry with a track record in prestigious hospitality brands such as The Oberoi, Taj Hotels, Hyatt, The Claridges, Shangri-La, and Intercontinental. In her most recent assignment, Chandrayi Basuthakur spearheaded the Sales division at Orchid Hotels and Resorts, based out of Delhi.

## HRAWI MEMBER LIST SURGES

Hotel and Restaurant Association (Western India) continues to expand its membership base across the western reaches of India. In the recent past, the Association has added hotels, restaurants, and other affiliates from Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh among other states. The Association's continued efforts and support for the hospitality industry in the regions under its ambit have helped its membership base grow exponentially.



HOTELS		
	Name of the establishment	Address
1	The Leela Gandhinagar	Sector-14 Airspace, Above Railway Station, Near K Road, Gandhinagar, Gujarat - 382014
2	Park Inn by Radisson, Surat	Near Sanjeev Kumar Auditorium, SBC Corner, Pal, Adajan, Surat, Gujarat - 395009
3	Taj Cidade De Goa, Horizon	Vainguinim Beach, Dona Paula, North Goa - 403004.
4	Celebrations Inn, Shirdi	Gat No 76/3 Nimgao Village Korhale, Grampanchayat, Rahata, Shirdi, Ahmednagar, Maharashtra - 423107.
5	Taj Gandhinagar Resort & Spa	Gram Bharti Cross Road, Limbodra, Mahudi Road, Gujarat 382721
RESTAURANT		
	Name of the establishment	Address
1	Hitchki	R City Mall, Hitchki, Ground Floor, Lal Bahadur Shastri Marg, Ghatkopar West, Mumbai, Maharashtra 400086
2	Kimaya Veg Restaurant	S. No. 127, Karve Rd, Jhala, Kothrud, Pune, Maharashtra- 411038
3	The Brewery	The Distillery R1, Museum Square, Alembic City, Alembic Road, Vadodara - 390003.
ASSOCIATES		
	Name of the establishment	Address
1	Ingram Micro India Pvt Limited	5th Floor, Empire Plaza, Building A, LBS Marg, Vikhroli West, Maharashtra Mumbai 400083.

## TOUCH OF CLASS HOSPITALITY LTD



Dr. Ananth Vaidyanathan is the CEO of Touch of Class, overseeing three in-house brands: V Lounge & Deck, Memories to Cherish, and Jasmine Lawns. If you're considering venturing into the restaurant business, it's crucial to recognize the challenges involved. From selecting an optimal location to designing the space, crafting a menu, hiring skilled staff, and executing targeted marketing strategies—each step demands careful consideration. Navigating the legal landscape, acquiring licenses, and addressing formalities with government entities are critical aspects that require meticulous attention.

At Touch of Class, we specialize in simplifying this complex journey for our clients. With a commitment to excellence, we offer a comprehensive solution for restaurant licensing on a Pan India basis. Trust us to guide you through the intricacies of establishing your restaurant, ensuring a smooth and comfortable experience. Your success is our priority, and we are dedicated to making your entrepreneurial vision a reality.

[www.touhofclasshospitalityltd.com](http://www.touhofclasshospitalityltd.com)

## WINGS DESIGN STUDIO



Wings the Design Studio stands as Pune's premier, award-winning Architecture and Interior Design company, showcasing its expertise through diverse national and international projects. Renowned for its involvement in designing Hotels, Restaurants, Lounge Bars, Resorts, Offices, Hospitals, Food Malls, Supermarkets, and Residences, the studio has marked its presence on both national and international landscapes.

Proudly expanding its reach globally, Wings the Design Studio is committed to 'Endless Growth,' driven by its core values of Innovation, Accountability, Energy, and a Knowledge-Based approach. These principles serve as the foundation for the company's relentless pursuit of achievement and continual growth at every stage of its development.

Comprising a dynamic team of Architects and Interior Designers, Wings the Design Studio caters to a diverse range of architectural and interior design services. Through a commitment to excellence, the studio has established itself as a guiding force in the realm of design, ensuring its clients experience innovation, quality, and sophistication in every project.

For further inquiry, kindly connect Mr. with Amit Gandhi on 9922964901 Or Email at [Studiowings45@gmail.com](mailto:Studiowings45@gmail.com)

[www.punearchitect.com](http://www.punearchitect.com)

## GOLDMINE PROJECT CONSULTANT AND SERVICES LLP



Ketan Sheth, Director & Principal Designer of Goldmine Project Consultant & his better half Manisha Sheth, both complement each other in their uniqueness & have associated with this industry for 33years and they continue to strive to deliver the same uncompromising quality that has helped cement their company's reputation as one of the leading Interior Designers & Architectural firm in India.

Goldmine Project Consultant specializes in design-build projects and offers systematic and meticulous work to meet its project's unique needs and handles Turnkey Projects along with the highest level of professionalism and efficiency by a core set of experts from the industry under one roof.

'Energizing Spaces and making your living beautiful' is at the centre of Ketan Sheth's design philosophy.

Through an exploration of practicality, uniqueness, design functionality, and an intuitive blend of various design aspects, he curates a wealth of experiences that he passionately invests in every space he works with.

[www.goldmine99.com](http://www.goldmine99.com)

## VIRA INTERNATIONAL PLACEMENTS PVT LTD



Vira International is a leading recruitment agency specializing in the hospitality industry. Founded in 1991, the company has a proven track record of providing quality recruitment services to clients around the world. With a focus on recruiting staff from India to countries such as the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, UAE, and the Middle East, Vira International has an extensive network of contacts and a deep understanding of the hospitality industry. The company's team of experienced consultants has over 30 years of experience in the field and is dedicated to finding the best and brightest candidates for each job. Vira International also offers a range of other services, such as pre-employment screening, visa processing, and relocation assistance, to ensure a smooth and successful recruitment process.

[www.virainternational.com](http://www.virainternational.com)

## SAI CELEBRATIONS INN



PRAY, MEDITATE, REJUVENATE, SMILE, LIVE, LOVE, LAUGH, REPEAT – SAI CELEBRATIONS INN - Shirdi is a boutique 30 room Hotel, having a mix of WOW, FAB and DELIGHT Rooms crafted with contemporary interiors and share the commonness of luxurious amenities and detailed hospitality from Celebrations Hospitality Group - Mumbai CELES - The Restaurant serves you North Indian and Chinese cuisine from the 3-decade old Celebrations Group, Mumbai.

MATKI - Take Away and Delivery - serves you the decades old Culinary delights in hand made Matkis and contemporary packing having branches in Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. DHYANA - The Meditation Room is the perfect place for those who want to mediate and wander in the thoughts of EVERYONES GREAT SAI BABA! Sai Celebrations Inn exudes a musing atmosphere. The Property also boasts of having Sai Tirth (The Devotional Theme Park) and Wet N Joy (Water Park), as its immediate neighbors providing the only hustling entertainment around Shirdi.



GUT No, 76/3/4/5/6/3 Near Water Park, Village-Nimgaon, Korhale, Shirdi, Maharashtra - 423107

☎ +91-2423-241555 / 242555/ 09324398841  
🌐 [www.celebrationshotels.com](http://www.celebrationshotels.com)  
✉ [info@celebrationshospitality.com](mailto:info@celebrationshospitality.com)

## TAJ CIDADE DE GOA HORIZON, GOA



Welcome to your newest luxury destination in the heart of Goa, a sprawling modern complex adjacent to Taj Cidade de Goa Heritage. Perched on a forested hillside with mesmerizing sea views, our resort offers 299 well-appointed rooms, the J Wellness Circle for rejuvenation, and two pools, including an infinity pool on the rooftop.

Indulge in four eclectic restaurants and bars, each offering panoramic sea views: BLD, an all-day dining multi-cuisine restaurant; The Banyan, inspired by a 200-year-old banyan tree; C2C, a specialty restaurant offering coastal cuisine; and DPB, the rooftop bar, which sets the scene for unforgettable moments with amazing vistas.

The hotel features one of the state's largest conference and convention facilities, including pillarless halls and ample breakout spaces. A resplendent collage of tropical beauty and refined elegance, no matter what your heart desires, our luxury premises ensure plenty to make each moment of your stay exceptional.



Vanguinim Beach, Dona Paula, Panaji, Goa 403004

☎ +91 832-245 4545 / +91 832- 665 9234  
🌐 [www.tajhotels.com](http://www.tajhotels.com)  
✉ [reservations.tcdghorizon@tajhotels.com](mailto:reservations.tcdghorizon@tajhotels.com)

## THE BREWERY (BRAND OWNED BY PURE LIVING LIFESTYLES PVT LTD)



The Brewery marks the pioneering venture as the first Non-Alcoholic Brewery opening its doors in Gujarat. This venue represents a unique addition to Baroda, offering live entertainment spanning a diverse range, including live musicians, interactive games, comedy shows, live screenings of sporting events, corporate gatherings, and an array of engaging activities.

In addition to our diverse entertainment offerings, we are proud to introduce a delectable menu featuring a variety of foods, notably delicious pizzas, tapas, and an assortment of culinary delights not currently available in any other restaurants across the town.



The Brewery, R1 Museum Sq, Alembic City, Gorwa, Vadodara 390003

☎ +91 90 99 56 00 60  
🌐 [www.thebrewery.co.in](http://www.thebrewery.co.in)  
✉ [info@thebrewery.co.in](mailto:info@thebrewery.co.in)

## HITCHKI RESTAURANT



It is a Bollywood-themed restaurant that cleverly aims to evoke nostalgic memories of a bygone age, in a contemporary, chic setting. Hitchki Resto Bar is all about nostalgia and memories. The establishment seeks to take patrons on a journey down memory lane by incorporating elements from popular culture, movies, and events from the past. The internationally aspirational brand focuses on regional cuisine and introduces elements of contemporary pop culture into the decor, the food, and the bar offerings and introduces elements of the years gone by to the "Hitchki" experience. Each dish has a quirky touch in a way that suits the palate and lifestyle of the current day, by way of contemporary preparation and plating, without compromising on the traditional flavors across India. One of Hitchki's highlights is its inventive and unique cocktail menu.



Hitchki Restaurant, Ground floor, LBS Marg, Ghatkopar (West), Mumbai - 400086

☎ +91 82919 32808

🌐 [www.hitchki.co](http://www.hitchki.co)

## INGRAM MICRO INDIA PVT. LTD.



Ingram Micro is an US based global technology organization and is business behind the world's brands with the ability to reach nearly 90 percent of the world's population. Our diverse solutions portfolio includes advanced and specialty solutions, cloud, mobility, and commercial/consumer technologies, while enabling a global circular economy with full-service IT Asset Disposal and reverse logistics and repair services. Leveraging investments in technical, financial, and marketing resources, Ingram Micro helps customers run their businesses better and grow their technology practices faster.

'Hospitality Vertical' at Ingram Micro serves as 'technology aggregator' for upcoming and operational hotels taking end-to-end responsibility of implementation of Information Technology, cyber security, audio-video and physical security infrastructure. We have curated few customized technology solutions specifically for hospitality industry targeting mid and high-end hotels segment. Also being OEM agnostic, we offer you complete freedom of selecting OEM and technology of choice.



5th Floor, Empire Plaza, Building A, LBS Marg, Vikhroli West, Mumbai 400083. Maharashtra India.

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✉ [in-partnercommunication@ingrammicro.com](mailto:in-partnercommunication@ingrammicro.com)

## PARK INN BY RADISSON, SURAT



Explore Surat, a dynamic coastal city in western India's Gujarat state, while staying at our stylish hotel in a business district by the Tapi River. Our 90 rooms boast city views and offer easy access to shopping malls, restaurants, and many cultural and religious landmarks. Stay only 11 kilometres from the Surat International Airport. Park Inn by Radisson Surat is also accessible from Mumbai National Highway 48, making it easily reachable by car or bus from Mumbai and Ahmedabad. Whether on a business trip or visiting for leisure, you'll find everything you need for a great stay, including on-site dining venues and meeting rooms.

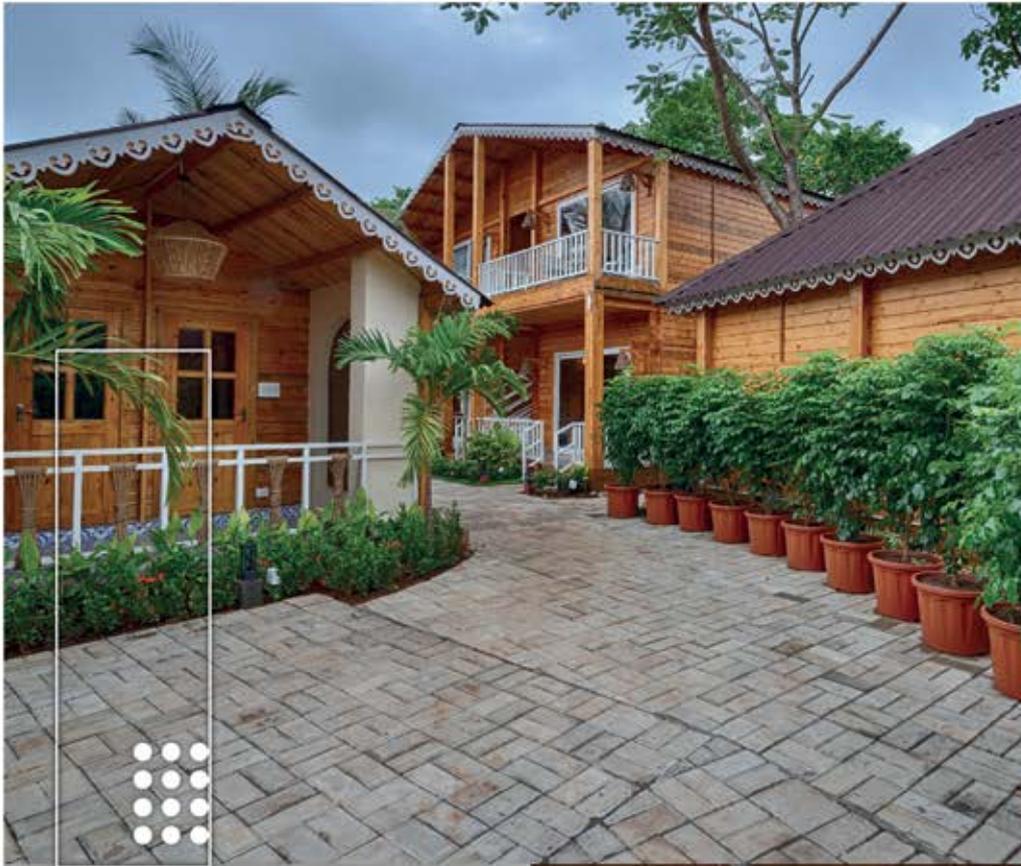


Near Sanjeev Kumar Auditorium, SBC corner, Pal, Adajan, Surat, Gujarat-395009

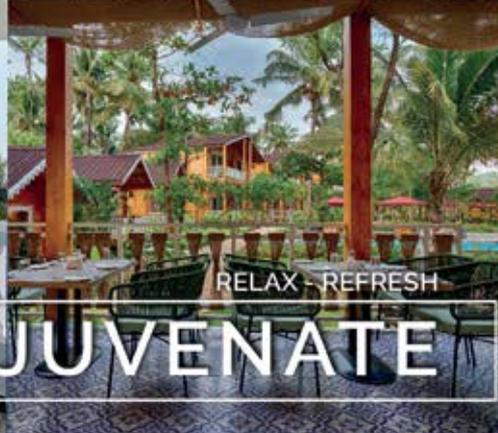
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✉ [info@parkinn.com](mailto:info@parkinn.com)



STONE WOOD  
HOTELS & RESORTS



RELAX - REFRESH  
**REJUVENATE**

## STONE WOOD HOTELS & RESORTS

### ABOUT US

Spread across unique locations, boasting sprawling beaches with golden sands, Stone Wood Hotels & Resorts promises a value-for-money vacation experience. Our more than a decade of experience in the hotel industry distinguishes us. Stone Wood provides unique stay experiences to its valued visitors and attempts to meet the needs of all types of travellers, including families, groups of friends, and even single travellers. We provide our services through top-tier resorts in excellent beachfront locales such as Morjim, Siolim, Vagator, and Mandrem in Goa, as well as calm stays in Gokarna and Udaipur.

Our modern and fully equipped hotels & resorts are what make our guests return time and time again to our properties. The team at Stone Wood Hotels & Resorts is truly passionate about hospitality and driven to deliver immaculate guest experiences. Our success flows from our core values; creating exceptional outcomes for our owners, guests, staff, and shareholders.

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- ANTARES BEACH RESORT
- STONE WOOD BEACH RESORT
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- ARALEA BEACH RESORT
- AZALEA BY STONE WOOD

#### KARNATAKA

- STONE WOOD NATURE RESORT
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#### HIMACHAL PRADESH

- STONE WOOD MOUNTAIN RESORT

#### RAJASTHAN

- MAAN VILAS BY STONE WOOD

## OFTA (OFFICE OF THE ASSOCIATION) SPEAKS



**Mr. Sandeep Bhaud**  
*Assistant IT Manager*

I am a Bachelor of Commerce from Bhavans College, Mumbai. Prior to joining the Association, I have worked in Bhalja & Co., Jetking Computers and Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Ltd.

I joined the Hotel and Restaurant Association (Western India) in June, 2016 as a Sales & Marketing Executive. During my journey with HRAWI, I have managed and multitasked many roles and responsibilities. My current role as an Asst. I.T. Manager includes maintaining all systems on site and making sure the best I.T. practices are followed, Vendor Management, Designing and any DTP Tasks required from time to time. I am also responsible for the successful execution of Seminars, Trainings, Executive Committee Meetings and Annual Conventions & Front Office Management.

Being a team player, good I.T. skills, designing skills and effective time management are the key skills required for my role. As I continue to excel in this role, I remain dedicated to pushing the boundaries with my hard work. I look forward to achieving greater milestones in the years to come.

I would like to thank The Secretary General, Mr. Kunal Gujral – Secretary General and the Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Hemanshu Chauhan along with the Office Bearers for their constant support and guidance over the years.

I am very proud to be a part of HRAWI Team and thank all the Members for their continued support!



**Ms. Manasi V. Parab**  
*Admin Assistant, HRAWI*

I am delighted to share with you my journey with the Hotel and Restaurant Association (Western India) began in February 2022 as an Admin Assistant. Prior to joining HRAWI, I was in the Real Estate Sales and later also served as a supervisor at the UIDAI office.

My role at HRAWI involves Planning and Executing Trainings, Business Sessions and Seminars for the benefit of the Members.

Planning of Seminars involves coordinating with properties for venue detailing, engaging with speakers and panellists, sponsors, designing of collaterals, and liaising with delegates to ensure maximum participation and benefit. We at HRAWI have successfully organized numerous Seminars & Trainings on topics such as Fire Safety, GST, Revenue Management. across

various States and UT in the Western Region. Also, we have organized Food Safety Trainings and trained 2,834 participants YTD.

As an Admin Assistant, the key skills I have developed at HRAWI are effective communication, strong co-ordination, and impeccable time management.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to The Secretary General, Mr. Kunal Gujral, and the Assistant Secretary General, Mr. Hemanshu Chauhan, for their unwavering encouragement and support, which has played a pivotal role in the accomplishment of my tasks and developing my profile.

Being a part of the HRAWI team fills me with immense pride, and I express my gratitude to all the Members for their continued support.

