

HRA Today



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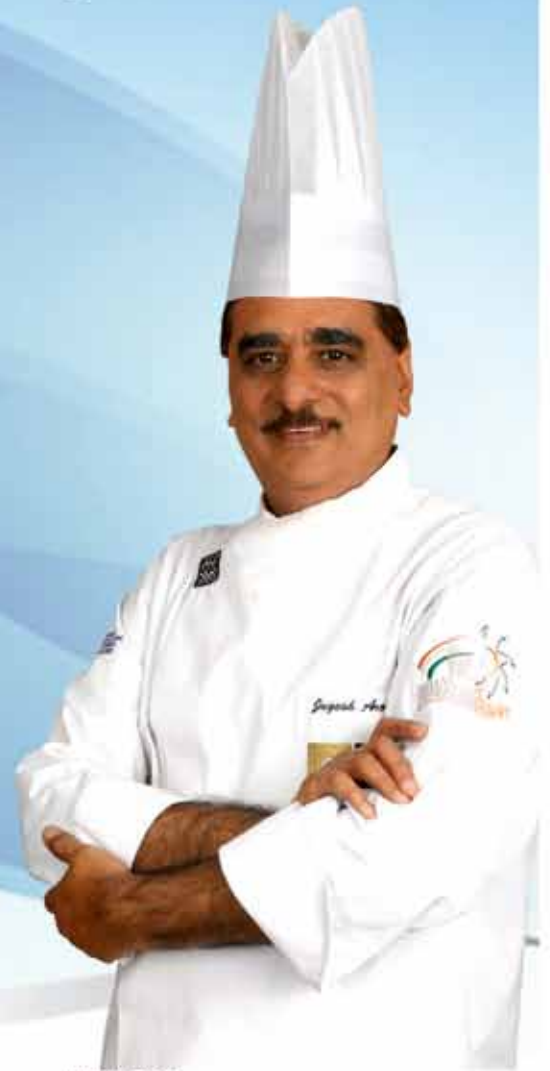
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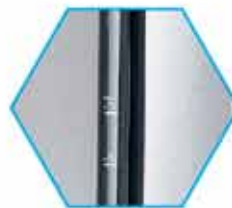
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HVS ANAROCK will utilise the strengths of both companies to provide an exceptional service to the industry. Mandeep Lamba, President of the new venture, explains how...

Cover Image

Taj Hotels Palaces Resorts Safaris

FHRAI members to meet in Delhi to decide course of action regarding OTAs

In the two weeks since the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) put the Online Travel Aggregators (OTAs) MakeMyTrip and Goibibo (Go-MMT), and hotel room aggregator OYO on notice, individual hoteliers have been approached by the OTAs for renegotiating terms.

The hotels, however, have declined to accept the offers and have demanded for the two entities to conduct business that's ethical and uniform across the country without distorting the markets and address all concerns raised by hoteliers. Hotels in all major

Indian states and cities have come together and have unanimously agreed to maintain the stance. The hotels, through their respective city and state chapters, have united under the country's apex hospitality body – FHRAI to represent their voice.

"We have sent a fresh notice to Goibibo and MakeMyTrip to immediately stop contacting individual hoteliers and offering them customised terms.

We once again are requesting them to meet us as was initially agreed,



We have intimated the hotel fraternity that no agreement has come through and to not fall prey to any prospective offers made by them that do not address their issues



indicated any intent of resolution and so, has decided to call for an internal meeting to initiate the next course of action. "We have waited for the OTAs to hold talks with us and amicably resolve the conflict, but we haven't received even a hint from them on how they wish to take things forward.

to discuss and finalise uniform and mutually acceptable terms of ethical business practices without disrupting the livelihoods of local

hoteliers. In the meanwhile, we have also intimated the hotel fraternity that no agreement has yet come through and to not fall prey to any prospective offers made by them which do not address their issues in their entirety," says **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI and Vice President, FHRAI.

The apex body has stated that Go-MMT has not

We do not wish for this internal dispute to affect the experience and expectations of guests/tourists. We are hoping that the two entities will revert to our latest notice, and in the meanwhile we have decided to convene a meeting in the capital to finalise the next course of action in case the situation remains status quo," concludes Kohli.



Hotelchamp launches new 'Autopilot' technology

Hotelchamp, an all-in-one platform for hotels to boost direct booking and build guest relationships, has introduced 'Autopilot' – a new technology set to revolutionise how hotels think about their online guest experience. Available globally, Hotelchamp's Autopilot is not a chatbot or digital concierge; it customises static hotel websites using a range of marketing techniques and tools. With a seamless integration, the result is a living, responsive and personalised experience, guiding guests through the entire direct booking process depending on their characteristics and needs. Hotelchamp's data science team has developed Autopilot using years of data and hundreds of millions of A/B test impressions



on what exactly convinces guests to book direct. Autopilot applies this knowledge against a range of factors, including real-time data from a hotel's website, GDPR-compliant visitor insights and behaviour, and best practices from amongst Hotelchamp's thousands of hotels.

"Today's hotel websites provide the same static experience for every visitor, which is bizarre given how different guests and their preferences are. The challenge has always been how to deliver that

on a website in a scalable and meaningful way. The truth is, only AI can deliver a truly adaptive website experience tailored to every single website visitor; one that brings the right information, interaction or offer to the right person and at the right time,"



says **Kristian Valk**, CEO of Hotelchamp. Hotelchamp is set to change that with the introduction of Autopilot, an Artificial Intelligence engine trained to recognise and personalise the experience of every visitor to a hotel's website.

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DY Patil partners with City & Guilds London to offer distance learning to the keen

To further its quest in providing education to one and all, DY Patil University, Navi Mumbai, has partnered with City & Guilds London to offer online distance learning graduation degree programmes in BSc Hospitality Studies and Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA), which are bachelor degree programmes approved by UGC. It has also taken the initiative of offering international diploma along with the degree through its programmes. If a candidate enrolls for a particular programme, he/she will pass out with a recognised degree from DY Patil University and

an international diploma from City & Guilds, London. Both programmes have a duration of three years and can be taken up by students who have passed the 12th grade.

The programmes have been specially designed for working professionals, higher degree aspirants, and people who wish to continue their education. The online education experience emphasises on the thought of 'Education, Anytime, Anywhere for Anyone' through webinars, live sessions, study materials, recorded videos, and one-to-one virtual sessions, designed and delivered

by more than 2000 eminent corporate experts and faculties.

DY Patil University was established in 2002 by Padma Shri Dr DY Patil and has evolved to become a leader in nine specific constituents.

Vandana Mishra Chaturvedi, Director, School of Hospitality and Tourism, DY Patil University, says, "DY Patil University's online education platform is devoted to excellence in online programmes, e-learning, and to mounting students in the hospitality discipline who make a difference worldwide. Carrying



Vandana Mishra Chaturvedi

forward its education inheritance of over two decades, it brings its experience and latest technology in online education."

Treebo unveils new identity & brands

Treebo has unveiled a new brand identity, in line with the vision that the company adopted for itself

earlier this year. In addition to refreshing the visual identity, the company also announced a change in the naming architecture of its properties with the launch of three sub-brands

amenities associated with each of them. While there will be city and seasonality differences, Trip will typically be an entry-level brand operating in the ₹1000-1500 price range and Tryst (earlier referred to as Select) will be a premium-budget brand. However, majority of the portfolio will be categorised under Trend, which will operate in the ₹1500-2500 price range.

Trip, Trend, and Tryst. These brands will operate at different price points and will have different



More hotels join HRAWI

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India has added more members in the month of November, hailing from Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The Association, over the last several years, has taken effective steps to encourage, promote, and protect the interest of member establishments. Its significance has only grown with time among existing and potential members.

NEW MEMBER HOTELS

- Vraksh Resort**
Seoni, Madhya Pradesh
- Mint Bundela Resort**
Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh
- Brooks Manor**
Chandan Nagar, Maharashtra

Ascott expands Indian footprint with serviced residences in Goa

Ascott has secured a contract to manage two Citadines-branded serviced residences in Goa. The contract was awarded by PriParth Developers, a subsidiary of Pune-based Niche Realtors. The management agreement consolidates Ascott's foray into a new city in India, Goa, and increases its India portfolio to over 1500 units across nine properties in six cities. The 148-unit Citadines Calangute Goa will open in 2021, while the 83-unit



Citadines Candolim Goa is set to open in 2022. Located in two prime tourist locations within Goa, the upcoming properties

will comprise spacious and modern fully-furnished serviced residences ranging from 38 sqm to 90 sqm. Residents will enjoy entertainment, recreational, and business facilities along with the Ascott's signature service excellence.

Thomas Wee, Ascott's Managing Director for Middle East, Africa, Turkey and India, says, "Goa is a top tourist destination in India for both

domestic and foreign tourists. It is also popular with both Indian and MNC companies operating in India as their off-site team bonding destination. Due to improved air connectivity and consistent tourism growth, Goa airport attracts around 7.7 million passengers per annum and this number is steadily growing year-on-year. The new airport is expected to fuel more tourist traffic growth in the region because of the increase in handling capacity."

Novotel Pune Nagar Road celebrates five-year anniversary

Novotel Pune Nagar Road celebrated yet another milestone on December 5, 2018, as it completed its journey of five years in the city. To commemorate the milestone and show its sincere gratitude to the city, Novotel Pune Nagar Road hosted a gala celebration with 'Traditional Puneri' as the theme. The occasion was graced by many, including Marathi actress Ruchita Jadhav; socialite Rashmi Dalal; former Femina Miss India finalist Chahat



Dalal; Umesh Durve, Head of Jio, Maharashtra and Goa and many others.

The event was organised at their poolside restaurant Soak. In sync with the theme, the staff was dressed in traditional Maharashtrian outfits. The event also saw Maharashtrian folk dance performances and a *shankh naad*, which exuded the local fervour. All the guests on their arrival were welcomed with *kaeri panha* and relished the delectable spread of local Maharashtrian cuisine such as *gavran chicken kala rasa*, *subz Kohlapuri*, *masala bhaat*, *basundi*, and *shrikand*.

Commenting on the occasion, **Nitin Pathak**, General Manager, Novotel Pune Nagar

Road Hotel, said, "We, at Novotel Pune Nagar Road, are delighted to celebrate this momentous occasion. The past five years have been an exciting journey, as we have been widely accepted and appreciated by the lovely people and the city of Pune. We pride ourselves on providing the highest levels of quality service and achieve this by imbibing the local culture and cuisine. On behalf of everyone here at the hotel, we take this opportunity to thank our patrons for their continuous love and support over the years and for many more to come."



HRAWI certifies over 1000 professionals under FSSAI's FOSTAC programme



The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) in association with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has been conducting training sessions in food safety and hygiene for hospitality professionals in the western region. The programme, known as Food Safety Training and Certification (FOSTAC), has been specially designed for Indian Food and Beverage Operators (FBOs) to improve and maintain food quality and hygiene standards. Over the last two years, HRAWI has continually promoted and conducted FOSTAC workshops and recently crossed a milestone by successfully training and certifying 1051 hospitality professionals under the programme.

"We recently conducted five more FOSTAC programmes over the months of October and November.



Gurbaxish Singh Kohli

We are happy to announce that HRAWI's efforts backed by FSSAI's support have accomplished training and certification of 1051 personnel in food safety and hygiene, from several hotels and restaurants from across the western region. We hope to cover as many establishments as possible from the region. We thank FSSAI for equipping us with all the required resources in executing this activity," said **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI.

The latest FOSTAC programmes were conducted between October 31 and November 16 in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, and Pune. The training sessions were conducted by certified FSSAI trainers and a total of 171 hospitality professionals

personnel trained by December 31, 2018. Failing to do so will result in licences being withdrawn and new establishments will not be issued the same. FSSAI, under the leadership of **Pawan Kumar Agarwal**, its Chief

Trainings in January

HRAWI will be conducting FSSAI's Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering at Sinhgad Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Lonavala, on January 17, 2019 followed by another session at DY Patil University School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, Navi Mumbai, on January 19, 2019.

were certified through these sessions. "It is mandatory for FBOs to obtain FSSAI Supervisory Training and Certification under the FOSTAC programme. Individual establishments across the country are required to get their

Executive Officer, is making great efforts at bringing about a change in the safety and hygiene standards in the country. HRAWI urges member as well as non-member FBOs to get their personnel trained and certified at the earliest," concluded Kohli.

Ginger unveils brand's new look at Ginger Panjim, Goa

Ginger has opened its first prototype hotel with a complete new brand identity at Panjim, Goa, after an intensive repositioning exercise. The current portfolio of the other 45-plus hotels will be repositioned reflecting the new brand identity and brand promise. Ginger will introduce the lean luxe segment, the first of its kind in India. **Puneet Chhatwal**, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, Indian Hotels Company, said, "The Ginger brand journey is aligned to Aspiration 2022 that defines a brand-scape that addresses diverse customer segments and price points. It will be



an important growth vehicle for the company and we are looking at quickly scaling up the brand to a large number of hotels across India." The new

identity of Ginger presents a co-existence of contrasts through reimagined spaces blurring the lines of work and play, bringing about a fusion

of global and local and creating experiences that are vibrant, quirky, intuitive, and smart. The redesigned spaces will bring together attractive public areas as well as spots designed for solitude, allowing a smooth transition from one to the other.

The company has received interest from the hotel development community and has signed six new hotels already in this financial year, taking the portfolio to 56 hotels. The new openings in the next two quarters will be in Madgaon, Patna, Sanand, Surat, and Visakhapatnam.



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Committee meets in Pune

The Hotel & Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) conducted its Executive Committee meeting on November 28, 2018, at Amanora The Fern, Pune.



Associations meet **MakeMyTrip**

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), along with its regional associations, met four representatives from MakeMyTrip on December 7, 2018, at the HRAWI office in Mumbai. From the northern region,

the meeting was attended by **Surendra Jaiswal**, President, HRANI and Vice President, FHRAI along with **Garish Oberoi**, Immediate Past President, FHRAI and Treasurer, HRANI. Also present at the meeting were **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**,

President, HRAWI, along with some of the Executive Committee members. The association has requested members to not negotiate with MakeMyTrip individually, as they are approaching and negotiating and trying to divide the fraternity by offering

22 per cent commission. The policy of passing additional/further discount by MakeMyTrip has also not been agreed. FHRAI and its four regional associations have asked MakeMyTrip to resolve all the concerns and revert soon.



The following points were discussed at the meeting:

- ❖ Reduction of the commission charged by OTAs to minimum with a maximum cap; the association has asked for 15-18 per cent.
- ❖ Discretionary positioning and self-rating by properties to be stopped since they have no authority to rate hotels or mention star ratings based on reviews.
- ❖ No predatory pricing and no further discount on rooms without consent of hotels. Discounting on rooms and its display will be done after the express consent of the hotel and not via the extranet because mostly it is handled by sales chiefs and not by owners or decision makers.
- ❖ The service charge on hotel room booking needs to be rephrased and given a different nomenclature to avoid taxation issues for the hotel.
- ❖ The burden of loyalty points and discounts passed to their guests needs to be borne by them from the commission and not to be passed on to hotels.
- ❖ A full break-up of pricing in case rate is displayed with full board.
- ❖ Commission needs to be levied on rooms only and the component of food should not attract any commission.
- ❖ PLBs to be given only with express agreement with hotels and not as a blanket rule. The PLB taxation needs to be borne by MakeMyTrip and not the hotel.
- ❖ Illegal hotels, apartments, B&B to be immediately delisted from the portal and only legal properties with licences to be listed online.

Food fest at The Club

The Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia (Mumbai), in cooperation with The Club, Mumbai, organised an Indonesian food festival over two days. It was inaugurated by **Ade Sukendar**, Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia in Mumbai. Dishes were cooked under the supervision of **Chef Bera Martomo** from Indonesia. The event also showcased an Indonesian cultural performance by Consulate officials.



In the 'spirit' of celebration!

Aspri Spirits recently hosted a wine evening in Mumbai to celebrate 150 years of Carpenne Malvolti Prosecco that is made in the Veneto region of Italy. The event showcased Carpenne Malvolti Prosecco Special Cuvee Brut DOC, a light, fruity wine with scents of acacia, wild strawberries, and ripe golden apple. Present at the event were **Domenico Scimone**, Global Sales & Marketing Director, Carpenne Malvolti Prosecco and **Jackie Matai**, Co-founder, Aspri Spirits.



Safety conclave in Mumbai

The Indian Merchants' Chamber, Mumbai, recently conducted a Tourism Safety & Security Conclave at their premise, with **Subodh Kumar Jaiswal**, IPS Commissioner of Police, Mumbai, as the chief guest. Also part of the panel was **Neela Lad**, Regional Director, India Tourism, Mumbai, who was representing the Ministry of Tourism.

Sharing the round-table with her were specialists from the tourism and hospitality sectors including **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI; **Farhat Jamal**, Senior Vice President – Operations, IHCL; **Karan Anand**, Head, Relationship, Cox & Kings; and **Sushil Bhatt**, CEO, Forvol International Services, along with a few other members of the IMC Chamber of Commerce & Industry. The panellists discussed various topics – safety of not just tourists, but also India's historical monuments and the staff that is employed in these two sister industries as together they are one of the biggest employment-generating industries in India.



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Prego orders an Italian feast

The Westin Mumbai Garden City, in collaboration with EazyDiner, welcomed select patrons to indulge in an Italian fare at Prego. The spread was curated by famed food critic **Vir Sanghvi**, and prepared by the in-house Italian culinary maestro, **Chef Antonello Cancedda**. This special feast told a story of an authentic Italian meal, themed around the concept of *sprezzatura* – an Italian relaxed way of life.



Hobnobbing with MTDC



HRAWI met MTDC officials at Churchgate, Mumbai, on December 15. Present at the meeting were **Gurbaxish Singh Kohli**, President, HRAWI; **Abhimanyu R Kale**, Managing Director, MTDC and **Jimmy Shaw**, Managing Director, ShawMan Software. The Ministry of Tourism has also invited the industry to participate as co-exhibitors within the Indian pavilion at ITB Berlin 2019 to be held from March 6-10.

Aspri Spirits along with AB Celestial host wine evening



Aspri Spirits along with AB Celestial hosted an exceptional wine evening on the new floatel off Mumbai's coastline, with the oldest wine brand established in Bordeaux, Barton & Guestier. The elegant evening presented an opportunity to taste the wonderful diversity of French wines and learn more about the brand, region, appellation, and its constant quality and style through **Marcos Ignacio**, Export Manager, Barton & Guestier.



Keeping environs

Ensuring the safety of their women guests has now become a priority for hotels, as they take various measures to minimise the risk female guests are exposed to while staying at the property.

HRA Today Staff

Indian hotels have begun to realise that 'single woman traveller' is a fast-growing, niche segment with tremendous potential in India. Today, women are as big spenders as men have been and are willing to pay the money as long as they can see the value of it. Reaching out and catering to them is an important factor in translating marketing into sales for hotels. As a result, many hotels in India are now tailoring their offerings to suit female customers. With more and more women now travelling for work outside the comfort zone of their homes and cities, safety and security takes enormous precedence. A few hotels are

acknowledging this need and are adopting various methods to ensure good service to the guest.

Keeping an eye on every corner

Even as a single lady traveller practises extra caution while away from home, it's also the hotel's responsibility that she feel absolutely safe when at the property, and be ensured that she have ready assistance available when outdoors. Safety protocols must be in place all the time. Depending upon availability, single women travellers are allocated rooms closer to the elevator at Courtyard by Marriott Ahmedabad. The hotel's General Manager, **Rahul Raj**,

comments, "Unless requested, we do not offer interconnecting rooms to our single lady guests. We have elevators that are key card programmed; guest rooms can only be accessed by authorised personnel and guests for each floor. In case of room service ordered at night or any other assistance, lady associates attend to the guest. Also, a lady security official is always available at the hotel. All our rooms are equipped with double locks, keyholes, and secondary chain locks in the form of U-bolt, while the doors close automatically when left open at a 90-degree angle. Our hotel also follows a three-layer security system. All our entrances are guarded by trained dogs, we follow the prescribed



Rahul Raj



secure for women

“

We appoint a lady chauffeur to pick the female guest from the airport. An experienced lady associate is also present to assist the guest throughout her stay”

baggage scanning and X-ray screening mechanism, and our surveillance systems cover all hotel public areas.”

On emergencies, Raj says, “Close to 30 per cent of our associates at all levels have been trained to handle emergencies and crisis like bomb threats, attacks, fires, etc. To prevent emergencies, we have a control room which is monitored 24x7 by trained security person-

nel and we follow an hourly patrolling regime. Usually, we send a security official along with the hotel car for the guest. In situations where we are not able to offer direct assistance, we connect them to the nearest emergency authority.”

Security is priority

Indore Marriott Hotel has taken an initiative to appoint lady chauffeurs to make sure the women travellers feel comfort-

able when travelling outside the hotel. It is so far the only property in Central India that appoints lady chauffeurs. This also helps women from the local community to work and support their families. The hotel also ensures that the lady chauffeurs are given a safe environment to pursue their duty without any issue from fellow male chauffeurs and other staff members.

Devesh Rawat, General Manager, Indore Marriott Hotel, says, “When a lady traveller books a room with us, a specialist contacts her, explains the services, and responds to any queries she may have. Taking the female guest’s comfort into consideration, we appoint a lady chauffeur to pick her up from the airport. An experienced lady associate is also present



Devesh Rawat



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at the hotel to assist the guest throughout her stay. Apart from these precautions, we have installed webcams in and around the hotel premises and on every floor, which is supervised 24x7. We also have separate floors for single female travellers."

The hotel's in-house response team is capable of handling all kinds of emergencies and one member is always available at the hotel in case of crisis. The hotel is also well-equipped with life safety equipment to ensure safe passage for guests in times of crisis. **Shehnaaz**, one of the chauffeurs at Indore Marriott Hotel, says, "It is an honorable job. The lady guests generally get surprised at first when they see me and ask if I will drive the car. They, however, appreciate this effort of the hotel. The hotel also takes care of the female employees."



Vinod Pawar

In case a female guest is not at the hotel and is in distress, the hotel tries its best to help. For instance, if a lady guest needs to see a doctor, the hotel can provide a car to take her there.

Complete security

Marriott Suites Pune takes care of the smallest of details when it comes to women guests.

Vinod Pawar, Head of Loss Prevention, Marriott Suites Pune, tells us how the hotel keeps its women travellers safe. "We like to look at even the smallest aspects to ensure there is no gap left for any mishap. If they are checking in alone, we allocate a room that is closest to the lift and not a room located at the far end of the corridor. If a woman traveller is apprehensive of who is entering her room, we make sure that no male staff or male guests are allowed inside the room. We also screen calls from people who are trying to reach them and we transfer the calls only if our guests consent. Our service extends even to outside guests visiting our Oak Lounge. If they feel unsure of travelling back alone in public transport, we provide a car to drop them safely or we offer a room to stay," he says.

Four Points by Sheraton Pune also takes similar measures when it comes to their women

guests. **Vishal Pujari**, Director Corporate Affairs, Four Points by Sheraton Pune, says that the hotel prefers giving rooms that are close to the elevator and under the surveillance system, to single lady traveller. "We avoid giving them interconnecting rooms or those that are adjacent to rooms of male guests. We also try to provide housekeeping services by lady associates only. We provide a security guard for late night and early morning drops or pick-ups, and extend this to the check-in facility as well, which they can do in the room to keep their identity safe," he says. The hotel also arranges for security patrolling on the floors that house women guests during the day as well as night. One senior lady associate (Duty Manager) is also appointed on the floor during the guests' stay to ensure peace of mind.

“
If the female guests are checking in alone, we allocate a room that is closest to the lift and not a room located at the far end of the corridor
”



Vishal Pujari





‘Tier’ing into India

Ignace Bauwens will be leading Wyndham hotel group’s growth across Middle East, Eurasia, and Africa. He talks in detail about the group’s plan for the Indian market, while also sharing his opinion of the Indian hospitality space.

Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us about Wyndham’s debut as an independent public company.

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts has announced the completion of its spin-off from Wyndham Worldwide, which has been re-named Wyndham Destinations. Wyndham Hotels & Resorts is the world’s largest hotel franchisor and a leading provider of hotel management services, with a portfolio of 20 well-recognised lodging brands and nearly 9,000 franchised hotels in more than 80 countries. There is still a connection because what we do relates to what we call a blue thread, which has

our loyalty programme - Wyndham Rewards. You can redeem these points anywhere, so, with Wyndham Destinations, we still have this connection.

What are Wyndham’s plans for the Indian market?

Wyndham Hotels & Resorts has 3400 rooms in India. Our pipeline is of 70 hotels in the next three to five years for Eurasia; we will double the number of rooms. That’s how confident we are in the region.

We have four brands that are active in the region - Ramada, Ramada Encore, Howard Johnson, and Days. We are looking for sites to develop 20

Hawthorn Suites by Wyndham properties for Eurasia, but mainly India.

If you look at India as a market and its evolution, the middle class is travelling more. What we need is more midscale hotels of quality. That’s why I strongly believe that the brand that will be successful in India will be Wyndham Garden. This brand has the potential for growth in this market. We are still in discussions; the product is very specific, so we are looking for the right location.

Are you targeting Tier-II and/or III cities as well?

We are absolutely looking into



Ignace Bauwens



these cities. In our pipeline of 4900 rooms over the next couple of years, there are quite a lot of Tier-II and III cities. These cities have become more important than before. India is such a huge market and the majority is domestically driven.

Where you have 8.89 million foreign arrivals, you also have 1.6 billion domestic arrivals. That is why this market is important to us.

How does your loyalty programme work?

Over the years, we have been praised for the simplicity of our loyalty programmes. During a stay in any of our brands, you earn a minimum of 1000 points or 10 points for every dollar spent.

To redeem, you need to have 15,000 points. In total, we have 58 million members. We have also launched Wyndham Rewards' best available rate discounts. People who have Wyndham Rewards can now get the best available rate.

How important is technology for Wyndham?

Two and a half years ago, our global CEO took the decision that we will be one of the first groups to move our

central reservation system to a cloud-based operation. We are the first hotel company to have done this. This is how important technology is for us.

A few years ago, people talked about the temperature of water in a hotel. Today, guests look for good connectivity, Wi-Fi, as well as ease of check-in and check-out. Also, the world is moving towards mobiles; if you look at the booking pattern of our guests, they now book through their phone, they don't sit behind their laptop anymore. Hence, we have everything cloud-based to make sure our patrons can enjoy a seamless service.

Do you think technology can replace human touch?

The human touch in the hospi-

tality industry will never go. To make life easier with technology is one thing, but the essence of hotel brands that is possible only through human touch will always make a difference. One without the other doesn't work.

How challenging is the Indian hospitality market in your opinion?

India is a growth market. Globally, we have a cyclical market and we will have ups and downs everywhere. Every hurdle in our business brings creativity, which helps us move forward. India is a growing and healthy market and has a lot of potential, that's why we are doubling our portfolio in the next few years. India, for me, is more of an opportunity than a challenge.

“ In our pipeline of 4900 rooms over the next couple of years, there are quite a lot of Tier-II and III cities. These cities have become more important than before. India is such a huge market and the majority is domestically driven ”





The Fern continues

Gujarat attracts a lot of investor interest with one of the best investment policies for tourism. It has also managed to attract the attention of **Suhail Kannampilly**, COO, The Fern Hotels & Resorts, and will continue to drive the growth story at the hospitality group.



Suhail Kannampilly

Hazel Jain

How are your hotels in Gujarat performing?

Our hotels in Gujarat have been performing well. In fact, we believe that there is scope for further improvement. The visibility we enjoy being present across the length and breadth of the state also helps. We achieved a total turnover of around ₹620 million across the state in FY2017-18, from 496 keys across eight hotels and

resorts. Our hotels in Gujarat contributed about 19 per cent of our total turnover last financial year. We are targeting a turnover of ₹830 million from 674 keys across 13 Gujarat hotels in FY2018-19. Our aim is to double the turnover contributed by our Gujarat hotels to ₹1660 million by FY2021-22. This growth shall come organically from our existing portfolio of hotels and new openings in coming years. Hence, with regard to

occupancies and ARR, we should be able to show healthy growth not just in this financial year but in coming years as well.

What is your perspective on the hospitality landscape in Gujarat?

We see a lot of potential in Gujarat as a destination. It has one of the best investment policies with respect to tourism, which helps attract investor interest as well. Gujarat shall



What kind of mix do you think works best in this market?

In Gujarat, we are present with offerings across segments – The Fern (upscale properties), The Fern Residency (midscale), and Beacon (economy segment). While we have been present with Fern-branded properties in Gujarat for more than seven years, we have recently launched Beacon properties in

What kind of demand and from where in Gujarat do you see it coming?

While we are present in leisure destinations like Gir, Madhavpur and Bhuj, we are equally catering to corporate travellers in cities like Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Mundra, Rajkot, Jamnagar and Bhavnagar, as well as spiritual tourism needs through our offerings in places like Somnath and Dwarka. We would like to

What is the reason behind having the largest concentration of hotels in this state?

Out of our total inventory of 4516 keys (which includes 2836 operational keys and 1680 keys in upcoming hotels, resorts and serviced apartments) across 85 hotels and resorts (56 operational and 29 in pipeline), we have 19 properties with 979 keys in Gujarat. It makes us one

to look westward

continue to drive our growth story at Fern Hotels and will remain a focus state for us in the years to come. The Gujarati people love to travel and Gujarat itself has a lot to offer. This year, we are even testing the market with relatively unknown locations in Gujarat like Polo Forest and Madhavpur, which is by the beach.

Jamnagar and Rajkot. We find our experience across these segments encouraging. Hence, the segments that would work best in Gujarat or for that matter elsewhere are very location-specific. However, we believe any three, four-star, or midscale properties would do well in any of the Tier-I and II cities.

have our presence in cities like Surat, Vapi, and the new industrial clusters like Sanand.

Are you planning to add more hotels in Gujarat in 2018-19?

We have already opened new properties in Dwarka (an 81-key The Fern), Bhuj (a 43-key The Fern Residency), Jamnagar (a 40-key Anaya Beacon), Rajkot (a 34-key KK Beacon), and Madhavpur. With a strong pipeline of upcoming properties in places like Polo, Junagadh, Morbi, Dhari and Little Rann of Kutch (LRK), we can further cater to the needs of the traveller across various segments.

of the leading hospitality players in the state.

Any trend prediction you expect or hope to see from Gujarat in 2019?

We believe the Gujarat growth story is intact and ever prospering. We will continue the growth momentum in the coming financial year. Gujarat has a brilliant tourism policy, one for other states to emulate. Within Gujarat, the business segment is doing exceptionally well; the leisure segment could further benefit from a relaxation on liquor restrictions. If the state does that, tourism there will completely change.



ICRA: Growth at 9-10%

The main concerns of hospitality players remain fund availability and other case-specific factors stemming from heightened competition in the property micro-market, poor revenue management, delayed projected commissioning, and overleveraged capex/acquisitions of the past.

The Indian hotel industry witnessed its highest ever 10-year occupancy in FY2018 and its revenue per available room (RevPAR) was higher by 17 per cent compared to the 10-year low, witnessed in FY2014. Similarly, the pan India average room rate (ARR) which stood at ₹5,800 in FY2018 was also the highest since FY2014.

Commenting further, **Pavethra Ponniah**, Vice President and Sector Head - Corporate Sector Ratings, ICRA, says, "The ARR's have slowly but steadily started to improve on a pan India basis as more cities witnessed a modest uptick in ARR's; ARR's are estimated at an average ₹5,500, up by one to two per cent for H1 FY2019. Further, this improvement in ARR's has been aided by healthy occupancy improvement. The pan India RevPAR's were ₹3,500 during H1 FY2019 (₹3,400 in H1 FY2018) and also registered a modest growth. RevPAR improvement continued to be driven by uptick in ARR's and occupancies. All key markets witnessed improvement in RevPAR and all-India occupancy at 64 per cent was higher by two per cent. The Y-O-Y growth in RevPAR was around 4-4.5 per cent. Going forward, given the muted pan India room supply on one hand and robust demand for rooms on the other, occupancy is expected to be healthy and will drive ARR recovery. ICRA expects a five to six per cent growth in RevPAR in FY2019, the highest since FY2012."

FTAs into India slowed down from April 2018 onwards due to the Nipah virus scare and diversion of traffic to other global events such as the soccer world cup in Russia. While the FTA growth picked up in August 2018, the Kerala floods impacted FTA growth in September 2018 and October 2018. Kerala witnessed FTAs decline in Q2 (-4.6%) and Q3 CY2018 (-13.6%). In addition, there was general weakness in the global ITAs during Q3 CY2018. As for the domestic demand momentum, it has remained strong; the domestic revenue passenger kilometre (RPKM), a proxy for domestic travel grew by a robust 20.3 per cent Y-o-Y in YTD October CY2018 at 10.5 million passengers. Domestic demand in FY2019 will continue to be driven by increased air connectivity and a higher appetite for domestic leisure travel.

On the supply side, the supply of room is likely to lag demand over the medium-term and grow at a subdued CAGR of 3.6 per cent over the next five years (FY19-23). The number of premium rooms across 12 key cities is likely to go up from 82,800 in FY2018 to 98,900 by FY2023, with ICRA research tracking about 16,100 premium rooms under construction and to be launched over the next five years. This low supply growth is expected to be the backbone for the current upcycle, as demand is expected to grow at a much faster rate.

Industry revenues (ICRA's sample of 12 companies) which

have remained subdued over the previous few quarters, despite the pan India improvement in RevPAR, due to multifarious issues such as demonetisation, liquor ban along the highways, the GST rollout, and certain company-specific events such as renovations, revived strongly during Q2 FY2019. Quarterly revenue was at a seven-year high in Q2 FY2019 with the same growing by 12 per cent over Q2 FY2018; the operating profit margin (OPM) was at a six-year Q2 high at 11.8 per cent.

ICRA expects revenue improvement and margin expansion for the industry. CAGR growth is expected to be 9-10 per cent over the next four years, with 10-12 per cent during FY2019. Margins are likely to expand due to operating leverage, with return of stronger revenue growth. Interest and debt cover are likely to improve gradually over the medium-term but Return on Capital Employed (RoCE) is expected to remain at sub-cost of capital at least till FY2020. RoCE is expected to improve upwards of 15 per cent in FY2023, from 6.3 per cent in FY2018 to nine per cent in FY2019.

Adds Ponniah, "Poised in the first few years of the upcycle, ICRA expects the current industry upcycle to continue over the next three to four years and ICRA's outlook continues to be stable. The stable outlook will be driven by robust domestic demand and a muted supply."

“
The ARR's have slowly but steadily started to improve on a pan India basis as more cities witnessed a modest uptick in ARR's
”



Pavethra Ponniah

The future looks **bright!**

Mandeep Lamba recently took over as the President of HVS ANAROCK, South Asia. He talks to us about the new responsibilities he'll shoulder and his plan for the newly-formed brand.

Anupriya Bishnoi

Tell us about your new role at HVS ANAROCK.

I have taken over as the President of HVS ANAROCK (South Asia). ANAROCK Property Consultants recently partnered with HVS, and as a new business vertical of the ANAROCK group, HVS ANAROCK will focus on brokerage, feasibility studies, operator searches, appraisals, executive search, and other hospitality sector consulting and advisory services throughout South Asia. My new role will be to help build and grow what has already been an iconic brand in India.

HVS is well-known in the country and has one of the best

the undisputed leader in the hospitality consulting world.

What makes HVS ANAROCK tick?

Both the partners are extremely strong. ANAROCK is a substantial real estate consulting company and HVS is a global leader. So, with the two companies coming together, there couldn't be a better merger of opportunities in the real estate and hospitality sectors.

The strength of the two companies merged together is going to be substantial.

What kind of trends do you foresee for 2019?

The hospitality industry is evolving both in India and

renewed interest from global investors as the performance of this sector has shown consistent improvement and there's enough reason to believe that we are heading towards a bull run.

We are also going to see the transaction space getting occupied over the next couple of years and of course, we are going to see lots of new entries in terms of new players and investment in the boutique luxury sector.

“

My job is to bring together the strength of both companies and take HVS to a much higher level, making it the undisputed leader in the hospitality consulting world

”

equities in terms of branding. ANAROCK is relatively new in the real estate consulting and advisory space. It's listed among the top 50 real estate companies in India.

My job is to bring together the strength of both these companies and take HVS to a much higher level, making it

globally. I think, one of the biggest shifts observed post the Marriott and Starwood merger has been consolidation in a big way. I see this going forward as a trend, globally.

More and more mergers and takeovers are going to happen. In India, I see



APPOINTMENTS



★**Varun Sahani**
Vice President - Operations
Kamat Group of Hotels

Kamat Group of Hotels has appointed Varun Sahani as Vice President - Operations for the group. A seasoned professional, Sahani has over two decades of experience in the realm of hospitality operations and sales.

He joined The Orchid Mumbai, Asia's first five-star Ecotel hotel, in 2015 as General Manager. Prior to that, he held senior level management and operations positions with The Lalit, Clarks Inn, and Jaypee Greens Golf & Spa Resort. In his new role, Sahani will spearhead the operations, marketing and sales, revenue management, and strategic growth initiatives.



★**Rohit Joshi**
Hotel Manager
InterContinental Marine Drive

Rohit Joshi has been appointed as Hotel Manager at the InterContinental Marine Drive, Mumbai. Having been with the company for two years, Joshi has earlier donned the hat of Director F&B at InterContinental. As Hotel

Manger he will now handle a larger portfolio of duties. Besides functioning as the hotel's primary strategist, he will be responsible for its financial performance and ensure delivery of return on investment. With his F&B experience, he will ensure that all the food outlets at the InterContinental continue to increase guest footfalls by continually upgrading the standards of their cuisine and bar.



★**Anmol Ahluwalia**
General Manager
Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa and Taj
Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa

Anmol Ahluwalia has been promoted as General Manager - North Goa, in charge of Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa and Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. He has almost two decades of experience in luxury hospitality.

Over the years he has had a rich and varied experience and spearheaded the housekeeping and accommodations for various hotels across IHCL, including Taj Fort Aguada Resort & Spa (Goa), Taj Bengal (Kolkata), Taj Chandigarh, Taj Lands End (Mumbai), and Vivanta Panaji (Goa) before being appointed as GM of Taj Wellington Mews (Mumbai) in 2015.



★**Ranju Singh**
Complex General Manager
Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and
Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel

Ranju Singh has been appointed as Complex General Manager for Novotel Goa Shrem Hotel and Novotel Goa Resort & Spa Hotel. A seasoned hotelier, Singh brings with him over 25 years of rich

hospitality experience with several brands including Taj and Hyatt Hotels. Prior to joining AccorHotels, he was the General Manager at Taj Holiday Village Resort & Spa, Goa. In the new role, Singh will be responsible for overall management, strategic direction, and leading the two established properties while continuing to delight guests.





★**Trupti Mishra**
Director of Rooms
Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel

Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel has appointed Trupti Mishra as the Director of Rooms. She brings in a wealth of knowledge and experience within the hospitality landscape. At Novotel, her responsibility will be to ensure smooth operation of guest services and also deliver hospitality services efficiently and productively. In her 11-year-long stint in the hospitality industry, Mishra has been associated with renowned brands like Hyatt Regency, Le Méridien, Novotel Imagica, and Oakwood Premier across different cities of India. She also has a five-year experience with cruise liners. In the new role, she will coordinate the organisation and administrative functions in all areas of the rooms division.



★**Vikas Vichare**
Executive Chef
W Goa

W Goa, the 122-room new-age hotel on Vagator Beach, is set to give tourists a whole new dimension to its culinary scene with the appointment of Vikas Vichare as the Executive Chef. He brings with him 15 years of experience in kitchens across India. After completing his kitchen management training, Vichare began his career at The Oberoi Udaivilas in 2003. Thereafter, he honed his skill with renowned hospitality brands, his most recent stint being as Sous Chef at The Oberoi, New Delhi. He has worked with some of the country's most acclaimed chefs. In the new role, Vichare will also work outside the kitchen in developing new recipes, planning menus, following a food budget, etc.

★**Roopal Tiwari**
Talent & Culture Manager
Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel

Roopal Tiwari has been appointed as Talent & Culture Manager at Novotel Pune Nagar Road Hotel. She represents an internal-grown talent of AccorHotels with more than five years of significant association with the brand, having grown from Management Trainee to heading the department. She has previously worked with ibis Pune Hinjawadi and ibis Viman Nagar, Pune. A post graduate in human resources from Pune, she has an experience of five years in the hospitality sector. In the new role, Tiwari will help maintain management guidelines by preparing, updating, and recommending Human Resource policies and procedures.



★**Shakti Bhushan Srivastava**
Rooms Division Manager
Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan

Courtyard by Marriott Pune Chakan has appointed Shakti Bhushan Srivastava as the Rooms Division Manager. He completed his bachelor's degree in Travel and Tourism Management from University of Lucknow. With an experience of more than 15 years in front office and rooms division, Srivastava has a comprehensive skill set and knowledge in room operations. His career spans over 15 years, where he has worked with many leading properties including Le Méridien Pune, Radisson MBD Noida, Micros Fidelio, Sheraton Bengaluru at Brigade Gateway, Le Méridien Kochi, Four Points by Sheraton Vizag, Novotel Visakhapatnam, and Grand Mercure Mysuru.



Made of steel

The new Black Steel range by Asko is Häfele's collection of ovens crafted with a sophisticated glass door which is integrated within a one-piece seamless frame. They come with an extra-large capacity of up to 73 litres (in a standard size of 60 cm x 60 cm) and 50 litres (in a standard size of 60 cm x 45 cm), making them some of the most spacious in the market. The sustainable materials used in the new range together with exceptional finishing and intuitive interfaces impart an elegant appearance to the appliances. The advanced 6.1 TFT full-colour display screens ensure that the most



frequently used functions are immediately accessible. The Asko Black Steel range includes the combi-steam oven, the combi-microwave oven, the solo microwave oven, and the warming drawer to offer full flexibility in cooking.



Make eyes turn!

HOUE, a Danish brand of outdoor furniture, is now available in India. HOUE is known to combine comfort with design, striving to meet a high standard of craftsmanship. The collection available at World Bazaar includes outdoor chairs and tables, as well as lounge seating made from a mixture of natural and man-made materials like powder-coated metal, bamboo, and plastic lamellas to achieve the simplicity and practicality needed for a creative outdoor space. HOUE is driven by affordable luxury as a philosophy, by choosing the right materials and solutions. The brand draws from a proud heritage of Scandinavian design and craftsmanship with mass appeal.



Spray it with Ray

Ray Cooking Spray has been re-launched by Nagpur-based LB Consumer Goods, making it the group's entry into the FMCG industry. The USP of Ray Cooking Spray is that it offers optimum amount of oil through a spray nozzle for cooking purposes. This helps in cutting down excess oil in the diet, without sacrificing on the taste. It also makes it easier to grease the utensils for baking purposes. While the earlier version contained propellants and emulsifiers, this time all preservatives have been removed so that the customer gets pure refined oil. At the same time, the nozzle design has also been revamped making it leak-proof and unmovable. This helps to secure the oil and manage its use in a better manner. The tin can has now been replaced with a high-quality food grade aluminium can. This is the first time in India that clean aerosol technology has been used without any gases or propellants.



In the chamber!

Alto-Shaam, the global manufacturer of commercial ovens for foodservice and retail operations, has announced a new range of Vector multi-cook ovens that feature the patented 'Structured Air' technology. The multi-cook ovens comprise the compact Vector H-Series countertop model with a 533 mm footprint and vent-less operation. It is available with two, three, or four oven chambers. The



larger Vector F-Series three and four-chamber ovens can accommodate both GN 2/1 and GN 1/1 pans, and have the ability to combine oven chambers to cook taller food items such as turkeys or roasts.

Right out of the chimney!

Faber is back with its new concept of chimney without filter, which is a low-maintenance product that does not need regular cleaning. The filter-less hood makes less noise, removing the scope of disturbance while cooking. It is made of black tempered



glass that gives the hood more strength than ordinary glass. The chimney also has a metal blower; operating cost of the blower is low and it provides clean air without any danger of oil droplets or residue.

Do away with stress

OSIM India has introduced the uLove chair, one of the most pampering and technologically-advanced massage chairs. Equipped with three complementing elements to deliver an exceptional experience that tantalises and satisfies all the senses, this majestic chair is unique in its own way. It massages from mind to body, head to toe, for deeper mental relaxation in just 15 minutes. This beautiful chair has the most innovative massage technology that provides an intelligent and precise massage, based on human body contours.



What a faucet!

GRAFF, the worldwide manufacturer of innovative faucets and shower systems, presents CAMDEN, a collection of faucets and accessories. A strong hallmark of the CAMDEN collection is the silhouette - the harmonious form of the faucet body recalls the imperious shapes of chess figures. The object is not made from a forged brass bar, rather a solid brass block, internally emptied. With this, the spout of the faucet is more full-bodied and gives the whole element a unique importance and proportion.



Storing just got easier

Discover the seamless minimalist look and the sophisticated technologies laden into the all new Azzano built-in refrigerators by Häfele. Catering to the Indian consumption pattern, these refrigerators have a larger dedicated space for storing fresh meat, fruits, vegetables, and herbs in the fridge section as compared to the freezer. The Azzano fridge-freezer combined model (HRC300NF) can be installed separately or can be combined with the Azzano full fridge larder (RF3005) to collectively achieve a storage capacity of 600 litres. The Azzano refrigerators are built to blend seamlessly with the kitchen cabinetry. The built-in sensors continuously observe daily refrigeration habits and smartly adapt and regulate the temperatures within various refrigerator zones accordingly, while the digital displays conveniently help you check up on the exact temperature level your refrigerator is operating at.





CAJETAN ARAUJO
General Manager | W Goa

Music has always been a keen area of interest for me. I love to strum away tunes on my guitar, including my Martin and Fender telecaster. Apart from music, biking expeditions also keep me going. Cruising along the coast of Goa, be it the South on a warm, sunny day or the North of Goa for an exciting taste of adventure is the ideal

way to de-stress for me. I am also a photography enthusiast, with a preference for abstract and old-fashioned black and white photography. One of my most memorable holiday moments would have to be a road trip I took from the North of California, traversing all the way down South and into Mexico.

“ I love to strum away tunes on my Martin and Fender telecaster ”

ARJUN RAJ KHER
Brand Head | HITCHKI

I love to catch up on some good reads when I have the time. Also, the most convenient way to de-stress for me is a good session of work-out at the gym. I am extremely passionate about my work and the brands that I work on, and am constantly working towards taking each one

to the next level. People call me a workaholic, but I am just pursuing my passion. Not many know that I am a professionally-trained voice-over artist. One of my most memorable holiday moments was my first ever trip to Thailand with my friends.

“ I am a professionally-trained voice-over artist ”



DEVESH SARAF
Director | Triumph Realty

I love going for a recreational jog while listening to my favourite tunes. The things that I'm extremely passionate about are sustainable social impact, such as renewable energy projects; people and diversity - how different cultures co-exist; and understanding different perspectives for exchanging

ideas and opinions. One thing about me not many people know is that I can sail a catamaran in the sea. I enjoy travelling and my most memorable holiday was when I completed a three-hour ski journey between two ski villages in Austria, within five days of starting to learn how to ski!

“ Not many people know that I can sail a catamaran in the sea ”

International quality
and finish



Anti-jamming
feature



Food Grade



Complete range with
all sizes and depth

**SERVE THE RICH
TASTE WITH**

Zänuff[®]
FOOD SERVICE PRODUCTS



Profitable Hospitality Businesses have one thing in common...

PANASONIC BIG CAPACITY COOKERS



CONSISTENTLY GOOD PERFORMANCE



NO SHOCKS IN YOUR KITCHEN



NO SUPERVISION. NO MESS



OPEN UP ANYTIME



IDEAL FOR COUNTERS



SR-932D

COOKS UPTO
2 KGS
OF RICE /
3.2 L



SR-942D (SS)

COOKS UPTO
2.5 KGS
OF RICE /
4.2 L



SR-972D

COOKS UPTO
4.5 KGS
OF RICE /
7.2 L



COMMERCIAL RICE COOKERS

The Panasonic Commercial Rice Cooker comes in various capacities which can cook from 2 Kgs to 4.5 Kgs of Rice. Due to their durability and attention to safety Panasonic has earned the certificate for Electrical Equipment (IECEE) CB Scheme for these Cookers.

IDEAL FOR BUFFETS



SR-WA22H(5S)

- Can also be used in Buffet for Steaming or Reheating - Idli, Idiyappam, Vegetables and more.
- Double Steaming Basket

SUPER MIXER GRINDER



MX-AC300

- SS304 Rust Proof Stainless Steel Jar
- 550 Watts Powerful Motor

MEAT GRINDER



MK-MG1000 / MK-MG1500

- 1000 Watts / 1500 Watts
- 3 Types of Blades (Rough / Mid / Fine)
- Rotary switch with reverse function

*Terms & conditions apply.

