



H R A NOW

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF HOTEL &
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JUNE
2015

Importance Of Eco Practices In Hospitality Industry



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President's Note

Dear Members of the HRA (WI):

The rains are here and all the Western states have received efficient rain to sooth us all from the scorching summer heat, our fellow hoteliers are gearing up for monsoon with good discounts to guest to lure them to visit their properties.

E-Tourist Visa and Tourist Visa on Arrival schemes by Government of India has seen increased tourist arrivals from different countries, hope for the coming season the government policies help us to develop good business with ease and fewer tensions.

We appreciate our fellow hoteliers celebrating Environment day this month and hope that all our members follow eco and green practices in our daily routine and standardize and involve our staff and associates to follow eco-cautious programs, and commitment to future green initiatives and eco practices.

HRA NOW this month has focused on the importance of ECO practices and Solapur the Ancient Historical and Religious city in Maharashtra.

We hope you all enjoy the rainy season, and travel with your families to the much awaited famous and favorite monsoon destination in our western states. ■

With Best Regards,

Bharat Malkani
President HRAWI

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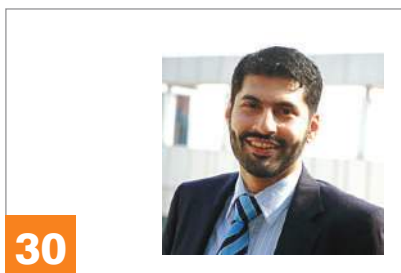
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Manage your personal energies with Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) Balancing technique



Scientists agree that we are electromagnetic in nature and when the balance is disturbed, it affects our daily lives. It will show itself in disease, imbalance, disturbing emotions, lack of ability to find a life purpose, and being unable to direct our life force energies, to name a few possible outcomes.

But how to keep this balance in today's challenging times, where we are required to evolve, progress and give birth to a new era of equality, peace, joy and oneness for ourselves and for humanity?

Balancing your Energy – Balancing your Life!

The Electro Magnetic Field (EMF) Balancing technique® is a modality functioning within the new energy dynamics and allows you to “rewire” your energy system, enabling you to contain more of the refined energies now available. This is done by activating and strengthening the Universal Calibration Lattice® (UCL), the energy field around each human. (see image)

The EMF Balancing Technique is developed and refined by Peggy Phoenix Dubro over a time span of 22 years, and now taught and **practiced in more than 70 countries**. In her book, *Elegant Empowerment*, Peggy explains how mystical experiences led her on a quest to give form to the information she received.

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As your energy refines through activating the UCL, more information about your multidimensional Self becomes available and you can access new qualities, live a more balanced life and rapidly develop your intuition.

Creating your Reality – Creating your Future

You can start making better choices in your daily life, be centered in the Now moment, and reach your potential to create a future that is appropriate for your highest good. Because each of us has different energy charges in his UCL, the outcome of an EMF session is tailor-made to meet the needs of the individual, according to his or her innate wisdom.

The EMF sessions

In the series “**Evolution of Consciousness**”, an EMF practitioner helps you in four sessions, to bring a stable balance between the head and the heart, transform your history in to a gleaming column of Wisdom and Support, Center in the Now Moment and Create possibilities in your life, by manifesting your full potential.

In the “**Masters in Practice**” series, you work with the practitioner to activate 48 energy points in four sessions, activating the qualities of Mastery within your very DNA and invites you to practice your Mastery in daily life.

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E-Tourist Visa and Tourist Visa on Arrival schemes by Government of India increases tourist arrivals



Last month, 19,139 Tourists arrived in India on e-Tourist Visa, as compared with 2,167 under the earlier Tourist Visa on Arrival (TVoA) Scheme in April 2014, registering a growth of 783.2 per cent. During January to April 2015, 94,998 Tourists arrived on e-Tourist Visa, as compared with 8,008 under the earlier TVoA Scheme last year, registering a growth of 1086.3 per cent. This high growth may be attributed to introduction of the e-Tourist Visa for 76 Countries as against coverage of the earlier TVoA scheme for 12 Countries, as per a release.

The Government of India had launched TVoA enabled by Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA), presently known as e-Tourist Visa scheme, on November 27, 2014 for 43 Countries. The scheme was extended to the citizens of Guyana and Sri Lanka in January and April this year, respectively. The e-Tourist Visa facility is extended to the nationals of 31 countries this month.

The percentage shares of top 10 source Countries who availed of the e-Tourist Visa last month were USA (31.83 per cent), Russian Federation (12.27 per cent), Australia (11.42 per cent), Germany (9.37 per cent), Republic of Korea (4.67 per cent), Ukraine (4.36 per cent), Thailand (3.56 per cent), Mexico (2.93 per cent), New Zealand (2.67 per cent), and Japan (2.37 per cent).

The percentage shares of different Airports in Tourist arrivals on e-Tourist Visa during April 2015 were New Delhi (45.69 per cent), Mumbai (18.68 per cent), Goa (10.91 per cent), Bengaluru (6.80 per cent), Chennai (6.47 per cent), Kolkata (3.29 per cent), Kochi (3.21 per cent), Hyderabad (3.07 per cent), and Thiruvananthapuram (1.88 per cent). ■

Hotel Marine Plaza Enters The “Hall Of Fame” Award Of Tripadvisor



Hotel Marine Plaza is a fashionable, luxury hotel setting international standards in hospitality and comfort. The international character of the hotel is emphasized by 'Geoffrey's', 'The Oriental Blossom' - an Award winning Chinese restaurant which serves a tempting blend of the familiar with the extraordinary, and 'The Bayview', a 24-hour Restaurant, serving light meals and tantalizing desserts against a panoramic view of the Arabian Sea. Hotel Marine Plaza has been recognised as a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence “Hall of Fame” winner. The Certificate of Excellence award celebrates excellence in hospitality and is given only to establishments that consistently achieve great traveller reviews on TripAdvisor. The ‘Hall of Fame’ was created to honour those businesses that have earned a Certificate of Excellence for five consecutive years. Winners include hotels, eateries and attractions located all over the world that have continually delivered a superior customer experience.

“Being awarded the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence five years in a row and inducted into the ‘Hall of Fame’ is a true source of pride for the entire team at Hotel Marine Plaza and we would like to thank all of our past guests who took the time to complete a review on TripAdvisor,” said Mr. Sanjeev Shekhar, General Manager, Hotel Marine Plaza. “There is no greater seal of approval than being recognised by one’s customers. With the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence based on customer reviews, the accolade is a remarkable vote of confidence to our business and our continued commitment to excellence.” “Winning the TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for five consecutive years is a remarkable feat. TripAdvisor is pleased to induct five-time award winners into the ‘Hall of Fame’,” said Marc Charron President, TripAdvisor for Business. ■

The Orchid Mumbai celebrated World Environment day



World Environment Day celebrated for the cause of environmental conservation across the world was also duly celebrated in Mumbai a variety of organisations had set up a myriad range

of activities such as paintings on walls, photo exhibitions, a bicycle rally, and plantation drive. Even the automobile industry is offered free Pollution Under Control check ups for vehicles.

The Orchid hotel Mumbai Asia's First Five Star Hotel to win the Ecotel Certification celebrated World Environment Day by organising a rally-cum-plantation drive. The Orchid is an oasis of a green eco-friendly haven right in the heart of bustling Mumbai. The first thing to greet one at the hotel is the majestic 70 foot indoor waterfall. It delights everyone even as it transports you to all things wonderful and beautiful.

More and more people today are concerned about the environment and making spaces eco friendly. The Orchid too has done its bit. The hotel has been designed, built and is maintained keeping environment issues in mind. So it is with joy that they invite all guests to celebrate not just their stay, but also to join in, bringing a much needed eco awareness in everyone's way of life. "We invite Mumbaikars from the vicinity to join us in the plantation drive at NP Thakkar Road Garden, Vile Parle East," said vice president of The Orchid, Rajesh Kumar Gupta on the World Environment Day. The rally started from Orchid hotel and reached VN Thakkar ground Vile Parle, East. Chairman and Managing director, Dr Vithal Kamat, along with the VP, Rajesh Kumar Gupta led the rally. Orchid staff carried placards with environment messages exhorting citizens to take care of Mother Earth. Later a plantation drive was also carried out at the garden. ■



International Yoga Day celebrated at Hotel Marine Plaza

June 21 was declared as the International Day of Yoga by the United Nations General Assembly on December 11,



2014. Yoga, a 6,000 year old physical, mental and spiritual practice having its origin in India, aims to transform the body and the mind. The declaration of this day came after the call for the adoption of 21 June as International Day of Yoga by PM Narendra Modi during his address to UN General Assembly on September 27, 2014 wherein he stated:

"Yoga is an invaluable gift of India's ancient tradition. It embodies unity of mind and body; thought and action; restraint and fulfillment; harmony between man and nature; a holistic approach to health and well-being. It is not about exercise but to discover the sense of oneness within yourself, the world and the nature. By changing our lifestyle and creating consciousness, it can help us deal with climate change. Let us work towards adopting an International Yoga Day."

Hotel Marine Plaza has taken a healthy initiative on the occasion of "International Yoga Day" to celebrate it by giving value added service offered to the guests by organizing yoga classes in their hotel for guests.

According to Mr. Sanjeev Shekhar, GM, Hotel Marine Plaza, who also practice yoga daily "Yoga disciplines the body and now it has been accepted globally. Foreigners have a keen interest in it and keeping that in mind we have started yoga classes in our hotel".

International Yoga Day is a worldwide event celebrated by the people of more than 192 countries including USA, China, Canada, etc. Yoga day is celebrated on international level by organizing activities like yoga training camps. The main intention behind celebrating this day is to let people know that regular yoga practice leads to the better mental, physical and intellectual health. It positively changes the lifestyle of people and increases their level of well-being.

Hotel Marine Plaza has taken a step to enhance the awareness about yoga benefits among its guests. ■

Mobile Request Chat Feature from Marriott Hotels — Now Available on the Marriott Mobile App

Travelers everywhere will be able to instantly connect with 500 Marriott Hotels worldwide before, during and after their stays using the new Mobile Request option on the Marriott Mobile app. Specifically designed to request services and amenities, the new feature is being introduced at 46 hotels including eight* hotels in Asia Pacific, and the entire global portfolio of Marriott Hotels, which is flagship brand of Marriott International

Mobile Request will be available to the 50 million members of Marriott Rewards, the company's loyalty program. Members who have upcoming reservations will be able to instantly communicate with their hotel in two ways. The industry-leading "Anything Else?" feature offers guests two-way chat functionality to have conversations in real time with the hosts at Marriott Hotels who can fulfill and confirm their requests. It also offers a drop-down menu with most requested services and amenities, such as extra towels and pillows. Introduction of the Mobile Request chat feature represents the broadest global communications rollout of its kind in the hotel industry.

"Some 75 percent of people travel with one or more mobile devices and the percentage is higher for younger travelers," said Matthew Carroll, vice president, Marriott Hotels. "We know today's travelers want a mobile experience built around their changing needs and desire to communicate on their terms. Mobile Request is the brand's next evolution since our introduction of mobile check-in, checkout and room ready alerts worldwide."

In testing, Mobile Request proved beneficial for guests in transit who needed to request services and amenities before their hotel arrival, such as having a car service meet them at the airport. Guests on the road can simply tap once on the Marriott Mobile app icon and be instantly connected to their hotel, rather than having

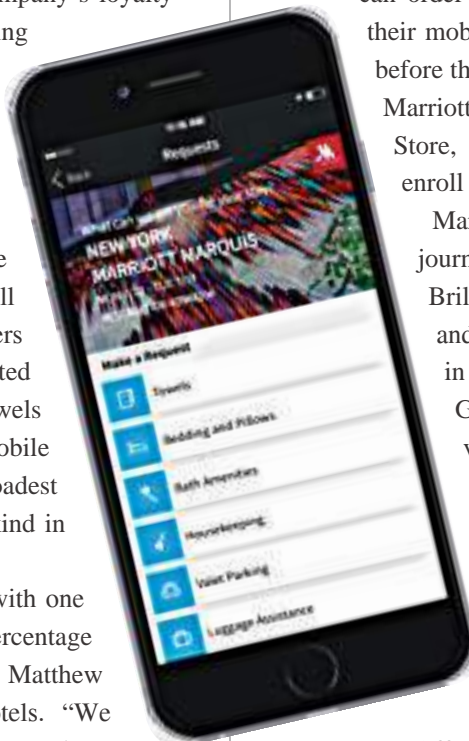


to find the hotel's phone number and punch in ten or more digits. For guests who have checked in and might be in a business meeting or in their guest room rushing to get ready for an engagement, Mobile Request gives them immediate access to hotel staff, rather than having to call or visit the front desk. Of the more than 10,000 Mobile Requests made by guests during testing, 80 percent of guests chose the "Anything Else?" two-way chat option.

With Mobile Request, Marriott Rewards members can order services and amenities directly from their mobile devices, beginning up to 72 hours before their stay. Guests can download the free Marriott Mobile app from the Apple iTunes Store, Google Play and Guests can easily enroll in Marriott Rewards at no charge.

Marriott Hotels is on a transformational journey to enable its guests to Travel Brilliantly by engaging guests, experts and influencers to join with the brand in co-creating the future state of travel. Guests and travel enthusiasts can visit www.travelbrilliantly.com to experience the countless ways Marriott Hotels continues to meet the needs of today's travelers. In addition to mobile check-in, checkout, room ready alerts and Mobile Request, Marriott Hotels is piloting keyless entry with mobile devices.

Offering innovative mobile and digital solutions is central to Marriott International's commitment to helping its guests maximize all aspects of their travel experience and have ready access to the places, people and things that matter to them most. Mobile Request will be introduced at additional Marriott International brands after the rollout for Marriott Hotels is completed as part of the company's connected guest mobile/digital strategy to engage travelers before, during and after their stays. ■





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Mr. Chinmai Sharma appointed as Chief Revenue Officer at the Taj Group of Hotels



The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) and its subsidiaries are collectively known as Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces and is recognized as one of Asia's largest and finest hotel company. Incorporated by the founder of the Tata Group, Mr. Jamsetji N. Tata, the company opened its first property, The Taj Mahal Palace Hotel, Bombay in 1903. Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces comprises 93 hotels in 55 locations across India with an additional 16 international hotels in the Maldives, Malaysia, Australia, UK, USA, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Africa and the Middle East. Spanning the length and breadth of the country, gracing important industrial towns and cities, beaches, hill stations, historical and pilgrim centres and wildlife destinations, each Taj hotel offers the luxury of service, the apogee of Indian hospitality, vantage locations, modern amenities and business facilities.

The Taj Group of Hotels has recently announced the appointment of Mr. Chinmai Sharma as Chief Revenue Officer. Mr. Chinmai is a Hotel Management graduate from the Institute of Hotel Management, Jaipur.

He holds a Diploma in Economics from the Indian Institute of Planning and Management, New Delhi and a joint MBA in Hospitality from IMHI/ESSEC Business School, Paris and Cornell Hotel School (M.M.H), New York.

Mr. Chinmai commenced his hotel career eighteen years ago with the Taj Group where he was part of the very first revenue management group ever created in the company in 1997. In this newly created role at Taj, Mr. Sharma's responsibilities would entail overseeing brand management, public relations, customer analytics, loyalty, digital strategy, global sales and revenue management.

"We are fortunate to have a leader with Chinmai's credentials and reputation returning to our Taj family and are confident that he will contribute immensely towards our goal of driving consistent revenue growth and

aligning our brands to our guest's needs. We are placing great importance on our marketing, loyalty and digital infrastructures and I am confident Chinmai's background and expertise will help us remain leaders in the market" said Rakesh Sarna, Managing Director & CEO, Taj Group.

Chinmai is a seasoned industry professional with nearly two decades of hospitality experience in the fields of Strategic Marketing, Revenue Management and Electronic Distribution. Chinmai was recently named as one of the 'Top 20 Extraordinary minds within Sales, Marketing and Technology' by Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA), Europe. Before joining Taj, Chinmai was with Starwood Capital Group, based in Paris as the Global head of Revenue, Distribution and ecommerce for Louvre Hotels Group's entire portfolio of six hotel brands with 1,100 plus hotels spread across 45 countries. Prior to Starwood Capital Group, Chinmai served five years with Wyndham Hotel Group based at their corporate office in New Jersey as Vice President Revenue Management where he was responsible for the Revenue Management process across all brands globally. Chinmai has also worked with the boutique hotel company, Joie de Vivre Hotels, in San Francisco and with the leading online travel agency Expedia.com, in Seattle ■

Taljinder Singh Newly appointed as General Manager and Area Director at the Taj Mahal Palace-Mumbai



The history of Mumbai and The Taj Mahal Palace are dramatically intertwined. The hotel is Mumbai's first harbour landmark built around 21 years before the Gateway of India and is the first licensed bar in the city of Mumbai. For more than a century, the Taj has played an intrinsic part in the life of the city, hosting Maharajas, dignitaries and eminent personalities from across the globe. It is a world leader in hospitality and a favourite

destination for discerning business and leisure travellers from all around the world.

Taj Mahal Palace Mumbai the Taj Group's flagship hotel has recently appointed Mr. Taljinder Singh as General Manager and Area Director. Before joining Taj Mahal Mumbai he was General Manager at the Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi for about six year. In his new role at the Taj Group of Hotels, his responsibilities would be overlooking operations at all Mumbai properties including the Taj Mahal Palace, Taj Lands End, Vivanta by Taj- President, Taj Wellington Mews and Taj Santacruz. He joined the Taj Group in 1990 as a Management Trainee and has been with the company ever since. During the two decades of his services at the Taj Group, he has held numerous key positions and scaled up from being the Assistant Lobby Manager to the General Manager. He being a focused man and the best in hospitality brings to the Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai his significant expertise which will be an asset to the all time favorite hotel on the Mumbai Shores. ■

Parveen Chander Kumar has been appointed as General Manager at the Taj Group's contemporary luxury hotel — Taj Lands End, Mumbai



Taj Lands End, Mumbai offers the best of both worlds - breathtaking views of the sea and the energy of city life. The hotel is located in the heart of Bandra, which buzzes with activity day and night. An integral part of the Taj Luxury Hotels, Taj Lands End offers some of the city's finest accommodation, dining experiences, and comprehensive conferencing and banqueting facilities. The hotel offers the ideal blend of business and leisure with easy accessibility to the Bandra-Kurla, Andheri and Worli business districts as well as the domestic and international airport. Taj Lands End Mumbai is modern, but like all Taj hotels, reflects India's warm and heartfelt traditions

of hospitality.

Taj Lands End, Mumbai has recently appointed Mr. Parveen Chander Kumar as General Manager. Mr. Kumar an alumnus of the Institute of Hotel Management, Pusa, New Delhi, has also successfully completed an E-MBA from IIM Bangalore and immersed himself into hotel operations and perfected the art of F&B service for 15 years across Taj restaurants in multiple locations including Mumbai, Delhi and Udaipur. He has joined Taj Lands End after a four year of successful service as the Deputy General Manager at the Taj Group's flagship hotel – The Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai.

Mr. Parveen Chander Kumar affectionately known as PC is very focused and reliable professional. His style of working made him what he is today Managing the Taj hotels. Having 22 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He embarked on his journey with the Taj Group in 1992 and has been an integral part of the company's legacy ever since. He began as a management trainee in the Food and Beverage function at The Taj Mahal Hotel, New Delhi and swiftly moved up the ladder. In his long association with the group, he has held diverse positions across properties including Resident Manager at The Taj Mahal Hotel, Delhi and General Manager at Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur.

Mr. Kumar is a thorough knowledgeable professional of the industry. His understated elegance coupled with a progressive and inclusive mindset towards his colleagues has won him credibility across all ranks and levels. His significant contribution to the group has made him an indispensable part of the Taj legacy. His travels to various parts of the world including Italy, Germany, UK, Dubai, and Morocco have added to his vast wealth of knowledge of the hospitality industry. ■

Suma Menon the New Director of Sales at Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad



The Eastin chain of hotels & residences offers guests a wide choice of accommodation in South East Asia, Indian and Middle Eastern regions. Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad is the company's flagship hotels in India's luxury hotel sector. Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad is a 5 star hotel located on the main SG road and is situated in an important commercial location of Ahmedabad. All 156-room consist of

superior rooms, deluxe rooms and suites. The design and style of the rooms are decorated in contemporary with a modern residential influence. Each room offers guests the comfort of luxury bedding with full amenities including a LED screen television, wired and Wi-Fi internet access along with a work desk.



Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad has recently announced the appointment of Suma Menon as their new director of sales. Ms. Suma comes to Eastin with 10 years of experience in the hospitality industry. She developed her career through a series of appointments with luxury hotels including Le Meridien Hotel Ahmedabad, The Fern, Sheraton Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa, and most recently, Four Points Sheraton where she overlooked Sales & Marketing. She has been awarded Sales Leader of the Year 2013 by Starwood Hotels and Resorts. In her new role at Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad she will focus on developing and executing sales strategies that emphasize enhanced property performance, meaningful and long-lasting client relationships and the identification of new revenue-generating opportunities.

“It is a privilege to shoulder this role and have the opportunity to work with what I view as the finest team of professionals in our industry. We are focused on continuing to make our brand the first choice for guests”. Ms. Suma Menon stated on her new appointment. “Suma will be an integral part of Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad and we are excited to have her with us. She is welcome addition to our growing sales team and we are confident that her talent and expertise will be strong advantages as we continue to optimize our sales strategies to help deliver more value to our customers and revenue to our property.” said Mr. Gaurav Taneja, General Manager, Eastin Hotel Ahmedabad. ■

Rohan Sable appointed as the General Manager, Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort

Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort a breathtaking resort by Accor, just off North Goa's bustling nightlife and beaches with unique features like a Vitality Pool, an extensive Spa with 10 treatment rooms offering various therapies from Ayurveda to Hammam, Family apartments, Restaurants, Bar, Meeting rooms, Fitness centre and kids play area. Surrounded by lush greenery, lavish contemporary rooms,



8,000 sq.ft. Convention Centre, Food & Beverage outlets serving global cuisine with a local touch. This resort is a confluence of cultural heritage and natural beauty and a perfect place for both families and business travellers seeking relaxation.

Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort has recently appointed Mr. Rohan Sable as the General Manager. He has numerous years of experience in the various hospitality disciplines, from F&B to Operations to Sales and Marketing. He won the GM of the year award in 2009 from FHRAI. A seasoned hotelier, Rohan brings with him over 16 years of experience in the hospitality industry. He started his career in sales & marketing and proved himself in a number of properties including the prominent Sarovar Hotels & Resorts, Royal Orchid Hotels and the Ascott Limited before moving to Accor. He joined Accor in February 2013 and was the General Manager of the IBIS Mumbai in his earlier role before joining Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort. In his new role Mr. Rohan will be responsible for the overall management, strategic direction and lead the hotel to continually delight guests with the Grand Mercure style and hospitality.

“Grand Mercure Goa Shrem Resort is an incredible opportunity to build our presence in this highly anticipated tourist destination. I look forward to working with a strong team to deliver world-renowned discerning and personalized Grand Mercure service to domestic and international guests.” Mr. Rohan Sable stated on his new appointment. ■

Norton Pereira appointed as General Manager at Le Meridien Mahabaleshwar Resort and Spa

Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa is located in hilly and scenic locales of Mahabaleshwar. It offers a spa, a wellness centre, a fitness centre, WiFi access is also available. Each room has an air conditioning and a minibar. At Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa one will find a 24-hour front desk, a garden and a bar. Other facilities offered at the property include a games room. The popular



Wilson Point is 2 km away, Chinaman Waterfall is 3 km and the Lingmala Waterfall and Dhobi Waterfall are both 4 km away. Pune International Airport is 129 km away. Guests can indulge in a fine-dining experience at Chingari Restaurant that serves Indian delights. Regional cuisine delicacies are served at Latest Recipe while alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages can be enjoyed at Longitude 73. Room service is available for in-room dining comforts. Le Méridien Mahabaleshwar Resort & Spa is a perfect venue for leisure and business travelers.

Le Meridien Mahabaleshwar Resort and Spa recently announced appointment of Mr. Norton Pereira, as the General Manager. His interest in the hospitality industry can be seen from the inception of his formal education. He studied at the unmatched Institute of Hotel Management, Goa after which he pursued a MBA degree in Sales and Marketing. His passion for his job and eagerness to learn has helped him achieve good positions in the industry. He is known by his colleagues for his leadership style and his love for vintage cars and motorcycles. He is described as someone who does not dictate but someone who leads. Mr. Norton has been involved with the hospitality industry for the past sixteen years serving several brands of Starwood Hotels & Resorts such as Sheraton and Westin, with whom he has worked for more than seven years. He has also worked with brands like Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces and Park Hyatt Goa Resort and Spa. His experience will be a boost to his expertise in performing his duties with efficiency. In his new role he will be responsible for planning, preparing and executing the annual budget and business plans for the brand new Le Meridien Mahabaleshwar Resort and Spa. ■

St. Regis Hotels & Resorts Debut In India with St. Regis Mumbai

St. Regis Hotels & Resorts, part of Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide is a Combination of classic sophistication with modern sensibility. St. Regis is committed to delivering exceptional experiences at over 30 luxury hotels and resorts in the best addresses around the world. Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, latest debut in India is the 38-story St. Regis Mumbai which is

in partnership with Pallazzio Hotels & Leisure; it features 386 well-appointed guest rooms, including 60 suites. The hotel's sophisticated culinary offerings will include an all-day dining restaurant featuring a wide range of gourmet selections from around the world, four specialty restaurants, a club lounge, and three bars. Guests will be able to indulge in the legendary world renowned Bloody Mary cocktail, born at the flagship St. Regis New York hotel in the early 1900s. Located in the sophisticated Lower Parel area, less than half an hour drive from Chhatrapati Shivaji International & Domestic Airport terminals in Mumbai and a quick and easy drive across the iconic Worli Sea Link, the hotel will offer easy access to upscale restaurants and pubs, premium office space, chic boutiques and luxury real estate. Adjoining the hotel is the famous Palladium, the luxury retail shopping center in the city which houses some of the world's most celebrated luxury brands. Other leisure facilities include a swimming pool and a fitness center. For meetings and events, the hotel will offer over 5,200 square meters of unrivalled event space including a 4200-square-meter grand ballroom.

"Starwood is maintaining strong growth momentum in the region and the arrival of St Regis in Mumbai reinforces our commitment to growing our luxury portfolio in this important market," Starwood Hotels & Resorts MD India and Regional VP South Asia Dilip Puri said in a statement.

"This signing underscores our belief in the power of Starwood. Starwood's global reach and its powerful loyalty program will further strengthen our outreach to affluent travellers and elevate India's luxury hospitality landscape," said Amit Bhosale, Executive Director, ABIL Group and Director, Pallazzio Hotels & Leisure. The St. Regis Mumbai will join a growing portfolio of Starwood hotels in India where the company currently operates 43 hotels, with an additional 37 hotels in the pipeline. Starwood is India's largest luxury and upper upscale hospitality company. In addition to The St. Regis Mumbai, the company is set to debut more new hotels in the next two years including W Retreat & Spa Goa, The Westin Kolkata, Sheraton Hyderabad, Le Meridien Nagpur and Aloft New Delhi Aerocity. ■



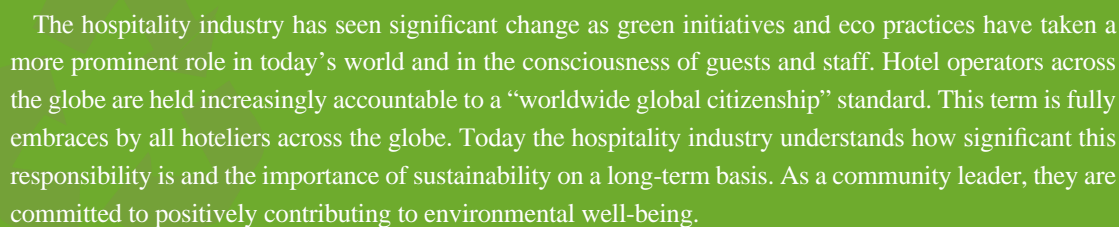


Importance Of Eco Practices In Hospitality Industry

In the modern world today, every human activity has a significant impact on the environment and companies can no longer promote growth without a commitment to preserve our resources.

Within the hotel industry, sustainable development is emerging as a critical and necessary component of corporate strategy; one that influences every aspect of its operations. A policy of sustainable development affects architecture, financial, regulatory, operational, human resources, and sales and marketing departments.

Hotels that are successfully integrating eco-friendly practices into their operations are finding ways to maintain a focus on careful stewardship of their resources, as well as attention on the people who use and work in the hotel. The sustainability initiative goes beyond such well-known ideas as reusing guest linens, recycling waste materials, and changing to compact fluorescent lamps. The strategy also includes community involvement by buying locally, supporting charities, and encouraging employees to volunteer in the community, as well as participating in global award and certification programs. In addition, leading hotels are finding that by investing time, energy and resources into improving their green credentials, there are great promotional opportunities for their stakeholders, especially their guests. Operating sustainably helps an operation to gain a competitive edge by appealing to the growing share of consumers seeking greener travel products and services. And all of this must be accomplished while maintaining a profitable operation.



The hospitality industry has seen significant change as green initiatives and eco practices have taken a more prominent role in today's world and in the consciousness of guests and staff. Hotel operators across the globe are held increasingly accountable to a "worldwide global citizenship" standard. This term is fully embraced by all hoteliers across the globe. Today the hospitality industry understands how significant this responsibility is and the importance of sustainability on a long-term basis. As a community leader, they are committed to positively contributing to environmental well-being.

Over the past few years, numerous hotels have "gone green" and practicing more sustainable methods of operating their properties. Initially, many hotels were hesitant about transitioning to more eco-

friendly practices. Budget approvals and increased capital costs can be discouraging factors, and regardless of the long-term return of investment, some property owners and hotel managers felt that going green simply wasn't feasible. Now, however, with the economy in a modest rebound, there are many hotels worldwide practicing eco practices and, perhaps to their surprise, seeing the benefits of these practices in both the short and long term.

Some green initiatives do not require a high capital cost requirement. Composting, for example, can be as simple as changing delivery agreement with local waste management company and training the team on how to manage the composting process. These steps require little or no increase in costs. Rather, it is a matter of commitment, of taking the responsibility to understand that instead of throwing things away in a waste bin, it is much more effective to implement a compost program.

The main focus of the hospitality industry in the present is on energy, water, and waste management improvements. One of the goals that are very seriously undertaken focuses on reducing energy consumption and water consumption at least by 30 percent. The significant amount of money the property will save in the long run will be as meaningful as the positive impact the initiative will have on the environment.

Some of the environment friendly practices adopted by hotels are:

- Use low energy lamps (compact fluorescent lamps) for all lighting.
- Hotels room lights and A/C are switched on only when the key is inserted.
- The interactive TV in the rooms can be used to send/receive messages and clear bills, thereby saving paper/ phone costs.
- Taps in the guest rooms, toilets, cafeteria and the kitchen contain special devices that increase force and decrease water outflow, saving nearly 50 per cent water. Recycled water is used for gardening.
- Rain-harvesting wells are





constructed which helps restore the water table.

- Bio-degradable kitchen, toilet and garden waste is decomposed in decompose pits and used as manure. Non-bio-degradable waste is segregated and sent to recycling centres.
- Laundry Paper bags are used instead of plastic.
- Recycled Garbage Bags bio-degradable.
- Water Glasses inverted and placed on a cork surface, thereby doing away with plastic covers
- Eco-friendly pens and pencils are made using recycled cardboard, reprocessed plastic and scrap wood. The eco pencils are not made of wood but of a non-toxic polymer with the use of natural fillers. Wood saver pencils are made using a shaft, which is made of biodegradable materials such as talc, gypsum and clay.
- Instead of cut flowers, potted flower bearing plants are used all over the hotel. All these plants will clean up a variety of pollutants in the atmosphere.
- Guests checking in and staying for a day are encouraged to reuse linen thus saving water and energy. It also increases the life of linen.

A Growing Field

The hospitality industry has become increasingly aware of the importance of ecological concerns since the World Travel and Tourism Council first began certifying green travel and tourism businesses in the 1990s. New hotels often incorporate eco-friendly concepts at the design stage, but older structures can also become more eco-friendly by researching ways to reduce waste and reuse or recycle items.

Green Hospitality

The Internet has enabled trade organizations and individual consumers to research a hotel's environmental sustainability policies before deciding whether to stay there, providing a clear competitive advantage to hotels that can appeal to this type of customer. The Corporate today favors environmentally friendly hotels when booking events. Although any hotel can advertise its eco-friendly policies on its own website, this type of statement will reach travellers and corporate searching for a list of recognized green hotels from which to choose. Certification as an eco-friendly hotel can help ensure that customers are aware of a hotel's commitment to environmental principles.

LEED Certification

Hotels built according to green principles can receive Leadership in Environmental Energy and Design. Existing hotels can earn LEED certification by taking steps to cut down on the use of fossil fuels, adding a renewable energy source such as solar or wind power or instituting a program to power down non-essential electrical devices in unoccupied rooms. The Energy Star Award Program is another certification available to hotels with eco-friendly energy policies.

ECOTEL Certification

Certification by **ECOTEL** as an environmentally sensitive hotel requires a comprehensive program including energy and water conservation practices, solid waste management practices, education of employees and a public commitment to environmentally friendly hospitality. To earn a high score under the **ECOTEL** standards a hotel would have to have a system in place to train all employees in all aspects of the hotel's environmental policies. **ECOTEL** guidelines can help any hotel improve its environmental policies.

"Make a Green Choice" provides an excellent avenue for guests to reduce the hotel's environmental footprint. Upon arrival at the hotel, guests may opt out of having linens and towels replaced every day and can also choose not to have daily housekeeping service. Participating guests can be awarded with gift card or Preferred Guest Points for each day. "Make a Green Choice" forges a bond with guests and makes them partners in environmental responsibility.

A sampling of some of the hotel's other green practices and improvements includes organic and hazardous waste management; high-efficiency lighting (LEDs and CFLs); "GreenVent" technology for kitchen exhaust systems, including in the hotel's restaurant buying sustainable and environmentally preferred products; using eFolio and e-tools; printing all menus on recycled paper; and a comprehensive recycling and composting program throughout the property, which are implemented in all of the hotel's departments and in all of its guest rooms. Green initiatives can affect all aspects of a hotel. Whether it's in the front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, or meetings and conferences, there is not one department that isn't impacted by sustainable practices. Clutter-Free Meetings helps planners

and guests stay organized and productive with an open room layout and socially conscious amenities. Green features such as energy-efficient light bulbs, double-sided meeting pads, and water pitchers rather than plastic water bottles help eliminate waste and reduce consumption. Additionally, all communication with the consumer is done electronically by our use of e-tools. As a result, every department at the hotel is affected by our sustainable practices and, in turn, every department benefits.

The public is becoming distinctly more aware of sustainable practices and they have become almost second nature. Today the concept of sustainability is often looked upon as something akin to a moral obligation. Businesses have come to realize that these practices not only positively






affect long-term profits, but also influence other industry leaders to adapt similar methods of helping the environment. Now, if hotels are not following ecologically sound practices, guests are very aware of that and are likely to raise concerns. Guests appreciate visible commitments to sustainable practices, knowing that they are supporting businesses that positively impact the environment. In particular, group businesses today are increasingly focused on ensuring that their hotel implements eco practices, even to the point of including such assurances in their contractual arrangements. Companies are becoming more and more engaged in understanding a hotel's sustainability practices, and that understanding plays a significantly more important role in determining future business opportunities.

Whether it's a street clean-up or volunteering locally, the sustainable team is constantly vigilant for ways to deepen commitment. A future initiative that will benefit the associates at the hotel are carpool and transportation programming, such as rewarding associates for finding sustainable ways to get to work. Rewards will include gift certificates, cash, or even gas reimbursement. This ensures that the team is contributing to sustainable practices in their everyday lives in addition to what occurs at the property.

Not only must we be committed to eco practices to assist in preserving our natural resources, but we must continually share this information with our associates and teams so that we can properly communicate both what we are accomplishing every day and what we aim to accomplish going forward. The property's status on sustainability practices, just as we would for revenue targets or guest satisfaction. Essentially, it becomes more of an everyday conversation and second nature for our associates and team. This way of operating allows us to put sustainability practices on a par with all of the other measures of success. It's important for any property to ensure a clear level of understanding among associates for green obligations and expectations. This paired with the hotel's sense of global citizenship, involvement in eco-cautious programs and commitment to future initiatives will set the tone of importance for green initiatives and eco practices while gaining a competitive edge within the industry. ■





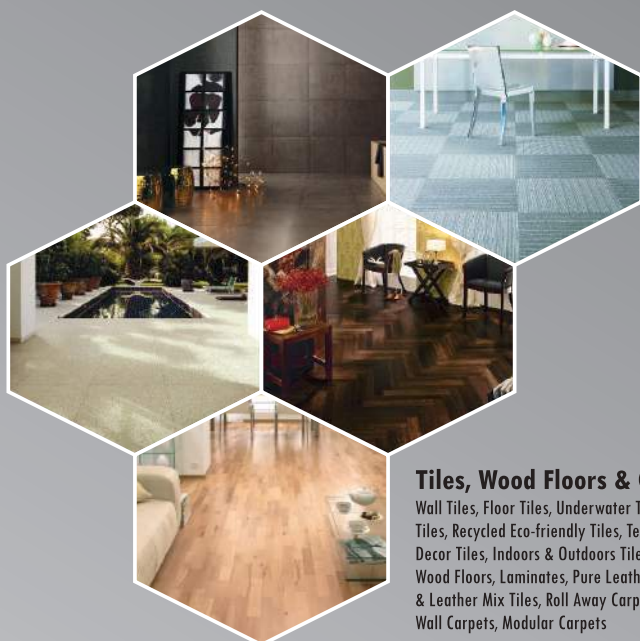
Bathrooms

Sanitary-ware, Faucets, Bath-Tubs & Whirlpool, Bathroom Accessories, Hair Dryers, Hand Dryers Personal Weighing Scales, Magnifying Mirrors, Mirror Defoggers, Soap Dispensers, Anti-Slippery Mats, Dustbins, Shower Cubicles & Accessories, Bathroom Locks, Waste Bins, Shower Curtains, Telephone



Rooms

Bedbase, Mattress, Kettle, Hospitality Tray Set, Lcd/led/plasma, Jug, Glassware, Minibar, Hanger / Coat Hanger, Safe, Ironing Board, Iron, Weighing Scale, Dustbin, Telephone, Torch, Door Locks, Radio Alarm Clocks, Vases & Accent Items



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FEATURE


BALAJI
SAROVAR PREMIERE
solapur
A SAROVAR HOTEL

**“Balaji
Sarovar Premiere,
Solapur is a contemporary upscale hotel and a Great place
to stay in Solapur which definitely beats expectations”**



Balaji Sarovar Premiere the popular 5-star hotel in Solapur located 05 Kms. from the railway station, the Interstate Bus Terminal is only 07 kms which easily connects to the other major cities. Balaji Sarovar Premiere a luxury hotel with carefully primed courtyards, houses 129 rooms including suites across an imposing 7 storied building, catering to the needs of business and leisure travellers. This luxury hotel has multiple conferencing and banqueting facilities too. To the delight of holidaymakers, the hotel has the first spa facility in the city, besides fitness centre and swimming pool. Laundry services, medical aid, travel desk, business centre and gift shop further add to the convenience of guests staying at this lavish retreat. The rooms are spacious and well set. In room dining is also very good and the Chef does a great job. Housekeeping is excellent and the overall ambience is great. Balaji Sarovar Premiere Solapur goes a long way in defining Solapur in the days to come as this is a growing city with great scope. The hotel is strategically located as the guest can travel to surrounding pilgrimage places of Akkalkot, Gangapur, Tuljapur and Pandharpur.

► Accommodation

Balaji Sarovar Premiere, Solapur has superior rooms for guests, these stylish 390 square feet rooms offer charming pool or city views, both equally splendid. Contemporary chic is the signature design. The blend of warm colours and fine upholstery makes every room inviting while well planned interiors and amenities make ones stay comfortable. The room amenities include writing desk, laundry service, electronic safe, iron with ironing board, luggage space, mini bar, parallel phone line in bathroom, Wi-Fi, data port, satellite /cable LED Television, DVD player on request, direct dialing, tea/coffee maker, bottled water, electronic/magnetic keys, temperature control, turn down service, weighing scale, hair dryer, rain shower and hand held shower plus toiletries. Guests enjoy a round-the-clock full options menu of local and global favourites in the comfort of their room at their convenience of 24x7 in room dining option.

► Food & Dinning

Balaji Sarovar Premiere Solapur serves multi-cuisine fare, guests can relish a menu of local as well as global favourites and the Choicest beverages, cocktails and snacks.

Courtyard Restaurant

Courtyard Restaurant an all day dining outlet, serves lavish buffet spreads along with delectable a la carte and multi cuisine menus which ensure there is something for everyone.



High Point

High Point at Balaji Sarovar Premiere Solapur, a lounge bar where guest can relax and enjoy their exotic mixes of mocktails and cocktails with the choicest of tasty finger foods and snacks.

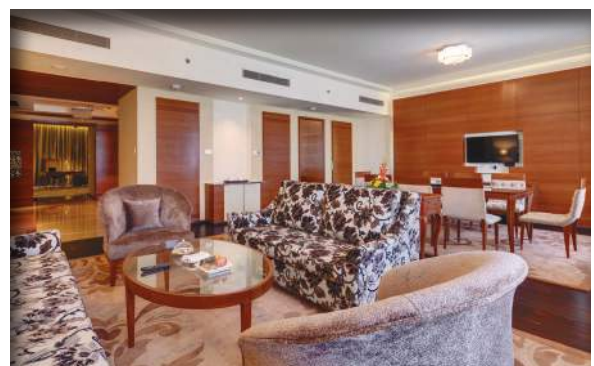
The Oriental Blossom

The Oriental Blossom is the all time favorite Chinese restaurant at the hotel that specialises in real Szechwan and Cantonese recipes handed down from generations. From its interiors and menu to its friendly service, everything is authentic at this fine dining Chinese restaurant.

► Meetings & Events

Balaji Sarovar Premiere Solapur the only hotel in Solapur having the largest banqueting in the city both indoor & outdoor, it has a full range of conferencing and banqueting facilities managed by professionals for seamless and worry-free events. All the halls namely, Prithvi, Vayu, Jal , Akash and the scenic Poolside area can accommodate 20 to 1,000 guest for any kind of meetings to large events & receptions. They are outfitted with the latest audio visual equipment, screens, video and slide-projectors and advanced audio and microphone systems. The banqueting team assists in planning, customizing and supervising any event from beginning to end, be it a grand wedding or a simple corporate meeting. Menus for coffee breaks and meals can be customized to guests needs from nationalities and taste preferences however diverse or demanding. The team is happy to fulfill any special request.

Balaji Sarovar Premiere, Solapur with well set ambience, decor, clean rooms, well appointed staff connected with many highways and good roads is an ideal stopover. Everything about the hotel is just excellent and amazing. It fulfills all needs of traveller on business, leisure or pilgrimage. ■



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Solapur

the Ancient Historical and Religious Place in

Maharashtra



Solapur is the fourth-largest district in the state of Maharashtra. It is located on the south east edge of the state and lies entirely in the Bhima and Seena basins. The present city of Solapur was considered to be spread over sixteen villages so it was called 'Solapur derived from the combination of two Devnagari words. Solapur is well-connected by road with major cities of Maharashtra as well as the adjoining State Capital of Hyderabad and important cities in Karnataka. Solapur railway station is the main hub within the city. It is an important division connecting South India to Western & North West India is located on an important junction of the North-South railway line, a good base for its industries for logistical reasons. Solapur Airport is located to the south of Solapur city. Solapur is one of the leading centres for handlooms, power looms and cotton mills due to which it is called as the Textile City. Solapur is also famous for being the leading production of tobacco.

The National Research Centre on Pomegranate (NRCP) of India is located in Solapur. The Science Centre in Kegaon (Solapur) is the third largest and prominent scientific association in Maharashtra. The Raichur- Solapur Power Transmission line of 765 kV power capacity suffices the power grid accessing need of the southern states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. The Gramadevata (Chief deity) of the city is Shri Shivyogi Siddheshwar. The "Nandidhwaj" procession on the Hindu festival of Makar Sankranti and on account of it an annual fair locally known as Gadda Yatra attracts large crowds and is associated with the marriage of Lord Siddheshwar.

Solapur is known as Dakshin Kashi a Southern holy place of India. Pandharpur in Solapur is a holy and famous pilgrimage place dedicated to God Vitthal and Goddess Rakhumai prominently worshipped among Varkari community. Another important

tourist destination is Siddheshwar Temple, the abode of Siddheshwar (Siddhameshwar) built in the 16th century. It attracts 3.5 million pilgrims yearly. Solapur is also famous for its Markandeya Temple built in 1893, the Venkateshwara Temple built in 1970, and the Rupa Bhavani temple and Shri Shankar Temple built in the 19th century. Solapur has a land based fort in the city centre. Shrine of Hazrat Saiful Mulk Chishti (rehmatullahe aleh) Hydra Sharif located at Tal, Akkalkot, Dist. Solapur Dating back to 555 A.D. Shrine of Hazrat Shaikh Nooruddin Chishti (rehmatullahe aleh) located at Akkalkot in Solapur District. It is dedicated to a Muslim saint Hazrat Nooruddin. Pilgrims visit this holy place from all around India every year for a Festive of the said saint. Hazrat Shah Zahur Dargah, located at heart of the city, is dedicated to Hazrat Shah, a Muslim saint who is believed to have performed several miracles. It is dating

Swami Samarth Maharaj Temple, Akkalkot

Akkalkot is a Holy place, situated in Solapur where Shri. Swami Samarth Maharaj resided. He is believed to be an incarnation of God Dattatreya the name of this spiritual master, popularly called Swami Samarth, is a household name in Maharashtra and the region around. As this Perfect Master chose to reside at a place called Akkalkot for 22 years where he took Mahasamadhi (left his mortal body) in 1878, he is also known as the Maharaj of Akkalkot. In his memory the temple of Akkalkot was made. Many devotees believe in him and visit the temple every year. The present temple is built around famous banyan tree. This is the same banyan tree sitting under which Shri. Swami Maharaj used to meditate and preach the followers. The temple consists of main temple, sabha mandap and accommodation. Annacchatra (free meals to devotees) is organized daily (two times in day) by temple authorities.



back to 560A.D. A festival is held here on 10th, 11th and 12th of the Safar Muslim month every year.

Vithoba Temple, Pandharpur

Pandharpur is a holy place of God Vitthal and Goddess Rukmini an important pilgrimage city on the Bhima River in Solapur district. The Vithoba temple attracts about half a million Hindu pilgrims during the major Yatra (pilgrimage) in the month of Ashadh (June-July). The worship of Vitthal in the Pandharpur temple is based mainly on the contents of the Puranas and the contributions of the Vaishnav saints of Maharashtra and Karnataka during the 13th through the 17th centuries. The Pandharpur temple covers a large area, and has six gates. The eastern gate is known as the "Namdev Gate".



Bhagwant Temple, Barshi

Barshi is a town in Solapur district. It is famous for quality toor dal (lentil) and other agriculture products produced here. Barshi is famous for the Bhagwant Temple.

Bhagwant temple is dedicated to Lord Vishnu. The uniqueness of this temple is that, this is the only one temple of Shri Vishnu all over India having Lord Vishnu's name as Bhagwant. The temple is build in Hemadpanthi style in the year 1245 A.D. There are four entries to the temple from all the four directions, but the main entry is east-facing. The idol of main deity Shri Bhagwant is in black stone having SHANKH, CHAKRA and GADA in the hands and picture of devotee king Ambrish below the right hand. Shri Laxmi is on the back of Bhagwant idol. Shivlinga is there on the forehead and marks of Footsteps of Bhrgu Rishi on the chest of the deity. Every morning at five Lord Bhagwant is woken

up with the Kakad arti adorations to the accompaniment of the sound of the cymbals. Several devotees, both men and women, attend these morning devotions. They bring the offerings of sugar, fruits, milk, curds and butter. During the Aashadi & Kartiki Ekadashi a large procession is taken out covering the town with Bhagwant riding on Garuda.

Hipparga Lake

Hipparga Lake supplies water to Solapur. This is one of the most beautiful and enchanting places to visit in Solapur. The nature has blessed the place with beautiful plants and very exotic birds. This place is a bird watcher's delight as it harbours a lot of migratory birds which are hard to spot elsewhere. One of the beautiful sites to visit in Solapur where there is natural abundance of flora and fauna with beautiful Migratory birds including Ducks, Flamingoes, Cranes, Bar Headed Geese. It is a scenic nature area with picturesque view. Kamala Bhavani

Temple, Karmala

Karmala is a town and a municipal council in Solapur district. Karmala is famous for the temple of Shri. Kamaladevi. The Kamala Bhavani Temple is built by Rao Raje Nimbalkar in 1727. It is considered to be the second seat of Tulajapur Tulaja Bhavani. Built in Hemdpanthi style, the temple has entry doors in East, South and North directions. The uniqueness of this temple architecture is, the temple is having well of 96 steps. The temple is constructed with 96 pillars. The temple top consists of 96 pictures and 96 'overyas'. Navaratra festival is celebrated with great devotion here. The annual festival (Yatra) is held during Kartik purnima to Chaturthi.

Madha

Madha is a city and a municipal council in Solapur district. Madha is famous for Rambhaji Nimbalkar who lived here and built a fort. The head-quarters of the Madha Panchayat Samiti are, however, located at Kurduwadi. Agriculture is the main source of income for the people of Madha. The principal objects of interest in the town are the fortress and the temple of Madheshwari Devi constructed by the Nimbalkars. Of the fort the wall on two sides and bastions at the four corners remain and the space is used to house the backward Class boarding conducted by the Zilla Parishad. A yearly fair is held at the temple in honour of Madheshwari Devi or the Jagdamba on the full-moon day of Ashvina (September-

October). As far as the history of Tembhurni, Kurduwadi, Madha, is concerned some medieval Hemadpanti temples and many sculptures can be noticed at these places.

Malshiras

Malshiras is a town and the headquarters of Malshiras taluka in Solapur district. The places of interest in Malshiras are the temples of Someshwar and Maruti. The temple of Someshwar is an old Hemadpanti structure. A fair in honour of Saint Dnyaneshwar is held on Ashadha Shud in June-July. Another fair is held in honor of Dhuloba on Vaishakha Shud in April-May. A fair in honour of Hanuman Dev is held in Phalguna in February-March. All the fairs are attended by large number of devotees.



Mangalwedha

Mangalwedha is the birthplace of Shri Jayatirtha also called as Teekacharya. He was one of the greatest saints of the Dvaita school of Vedanta. The main places of interest in the town are the temples dedicated to Saint Damaji, Saint Chokha, Vishveshwar and Mahadeo. It also has a house in a dilapidated condition which was the residence of the last Maratha general Bapu Gokhale.

Motibaug Tank

The Motibaug Tank is also locally referred to as the Kambar Talao Lake in Solapur is a great bird watching center with the many migratory birds found flocking here in winter. This tank is filled with white and pink lotuses adding to the beauty of the place which makes it a nature's piece of heaven.

Nannaj Wild Life Sanctuary

Nannaj is a small town near Solapur. Because of the presence of certain rare inhabitants in its surroundings; there is a wild life sanctuary. Nannaj is home to the Great Indian Bustard (GIB) sanctuary. It is one of the largest birds in India and by far one of the most endangered. The Great Indian Bustard is also called as Maldhok in Marathi is one of such rarest birds of Indian Sub continent. We can find this rare species at Nannaj. The Sanctuary covers an area of 8000 sq. kms. and is easily accessible by road. There are about 350 GIB's surviving in India and around 25 of them are found in Nannaj. The Bustard though is not the only reason for one to visit this enchanting place. Nannaj presents a very unique landscape, more resembling the plains of African Savanna

Dubai and Middle East countries. Agriculture is the main source of income for the people of Sangola. Near Sangola there are some historical places such as Buddihal Bungalow which was made by the British and Golghumat Native place of Mr. M Madgulkar. Sangola, presently, has one of the finest cotton spinning, named, 'Sangola Taluka Sahakri Sooth Girni' which was awarded best spinning mill in Asia for few years. The few places of interest in Sangola are the fort and a temple of Ambika Devi.

The fort at Sangola is said to have been built by a Bijapur king. The town that grew up round the fort was so prosperous that it was once locally called the Golden Sangola or Sonyache Sangola.

Shivapuri Ashram

The serene and peaceful Shivapuri-Ashram is situated at a distance of 1.5 km from Akkalkot town in Solapur district. The place was named Shivapuri after Shivanand Yogindra Maharaj, the father of Parama Sadguru Shree. Shivanand Maharaj was the highest among Yogis. He was a Nada Brahma Yogi who exemplified the Shabda Brahma concept. Shabda Brahma means "the word that was in the beginning, which was with God, which was God and by which everything was made that was made". Visitors feel enthralled by the peace and bliss that reigns at Shivapuri, the abode of Yajnya. Shivapuri, the holy Yajnya Nagar, was founded by Parama Sadguru Shree Gajanan Maharaj who has reiterated the Eternel Vedic message in the form of

a Fivefold Path. Shivapuri is termed as Yajnya Nagar where a massive Yajnya Pillar which was erected as a symbol of Vedic Somayaga, announcing the ringing in of Satya Yuga i.e. New Era of super-science, knowledge and universal brotherhood.

Shri Dahigaun Teerth

Shri Dahigaun Teerth is a highly revered Jain shrine located at Dahigaun in Solapur District. The temple enshrines a 244 m high, black-colored idol of Bhagvan Mahavir Swami in the Padmasana posture. The walls of the temple are exquisitely garnished with beautifully ancient paintings. There are oil paintings of many Digambar Acharyas. The foot-idols of His Holiness Mahattisagarji Maharaj Saheb were installed in the temple in 1889 of the Vikram era.

than the typical tropical forests of India so it is also known as "The Indian Savanna".

Sambhaji Lake (Kambar Talav)

The original name of this lake was QAMAR Lake. This was named after daughter's name of Aurangzeb-the Mughal Emperor. But now this is known as Kambar Talav. It is also known as Sambhaji Lake. The Sambhaji Lake is a well known attraction in the city where you will see locals flocking in the evening and weekends for a fresh breath of air or just a long walk along the banks. One could also try their hand in fishing here.

Sangola

Sangola is a city and a municipal council in Solapur district. Sangola is famous for Pomegranate production. The pomegranates from Sangola are exported to US; London,



Siddheshwar Temple and Lake

Siddheshwar Temple is the temple of "Lord Shiva". The temple, situated in the middle of the lake, is picturesque; with a backdrop of the fort looming behind it. The temple was built by a yogi, Shri Siddharameshwar, who was a devotee of Sri Mallikajuna of Srisailam. He was on his way to Srisailam, when he was ordered by his guru to return to Solapur and consecrate many Shiva lingams. He duly returned to Solapur and began his work, starting from this temple. He in all, installed 68 Shiva lingams in Solapur. It is believed that Sri Siddharameshwar dug the lake himself, when all the holy rivers came and asked for permission to reside in the lake, thus making it sacred. There are a number of fish in the lake, and the locals consider it holy to feed them. The lake has been kept reasonably clean, considering the amount of food thrown into it. Apart from the main

built on flat land. The remains of this irregular and oblong shaped fort consist of a double row of ramparts on which one can walk around. The fort also houses a temple, which attracts thousands of visitors. The fort forms a backdrop for the famous Siddheshwar temple of Solapur and this temple along with an adjoining lake is visible from the top of the tallest tower.

Vatsidh Nagnath Temple, Wadwal

This is a well known temple in all over Maharashtra. Out of Nine Nath this one who mainly known as Nagnath. All religion's people come here to fulfill their promises. Faith and trust on the Nagnath is very high in people living in nearby areas. The environment of temple area is very silent which create peace of mind. There are various festival celebrate at the temple throughout the year.



lingam of lord Shiva, there are temples of various other gods in the temple complex which is considerably huge. Shri Siddharameshwar himself attained Jeeva Samadhi in the temple complex and his Samadhi draws a lot of devotional crowds at the temple.

Solapur Fort (Bhuikot Castle)

Solapur Fort also known as Bhuikot fort is an ancient Muslim fort situated in Solapur. This 14th century fort was built by Bahamani sultan during the reign of the Bijapur Sultanate of which Solapur was a part, according to many historians; it displays great technical and architectural finesse. Emperor Aurangzeb resided on this fort for a year between 1685-86 AD. Between 1795 and 1818 this fort was in the hands of the Maratha rulers Bajirao Peshwa II who lived in the fort. It is one of the few land forts, as distinct from forts built on hilltops. Hence the name 'Bhuikot' - a fort

Solapur is one of the most prominent cities in the state of Maharashtra. Solapur is not only a great city to visit, but also a fantastic place to live in. It is a place where the diverse cultures of Marathi, Kannada and Telugu seamlessly amalgamate. Solapur is known to be the ancient domain of the Shiva Yogi sect. Over the years many pilgrim centres have sprung up in this district. The people of Solapur are warm, tolerant and extremely enduring. These citizens are the reason Solapur has successfully converted from a small, non-descript town to a full-fledged commercial and tourist hub. The city is multilingual and multifaceted. The number of fairs and festivals that are organized in this region tells the true tale of the religious people who take pride in belonging to this land of pilgrimage. Each festival lasts for a couple of days and is celebrated enthusiastically. Modern Solapur offers a wide range of historical, commercial and religious places. ■

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Hotels and its love hate relationship with Return on Capital

Hotels have been in the news recently. And sadly, not for the right reasons. Taj and its CEO update us about “Turning Taj Around”, over the next two years. However this is not really a story about Taj. In fact as its corporate name – Indian Hotel Company (IHCL) reflects, I would say it’s the story that reflects the entire Indian Hotel Condition. The catch statement in quotes was “Indian Hotels to be profitable in 2 years” This may well be the case for most Indian Hotels. However, when one analyses deeply, one can see the most ostentatiously, overly, spent hotels also make profits. Yes they do, albeit at the operational level. Hotel margins are so good being asset heavy that variable costs are a very very small component of the entire cost. In fact in any hotel, the largest expense is bound to be Debt!

This is why, there would definitely be profits at an EBITDA level, however when one takes finance costs, the profit evaporates. This one line called “Interest and Finance Costs” is every hotelier’s proverbial enemy. The hotels, they make money. But the question is “Do Its Owners?”

At some level this trend of hotels losing money has been accelerated by the rise of management contracts. Where hotel brands do not care about project costs and returns since that’s really the owners problem. They are keeping the customers and guests happy, simply at the owner’s expense. Who’s unable to keep his banks and financiers happy at all? This is what are scaring financiers and bankers. Both Equity and Debt away from hoteliers. Since 2008, since the fallen angel also called “FCCB” (Foreign Currency Convertible Debentures for the uninitiated) fell from its high status, no new investments of Equity have come into hotels. No new Private equity investors have come forward to fund hotels. In fact those already invested have till now been completely unable to exit.

Some have always been attracted to this sector, for its well, Shoo Shaa (glamour). Who isn’t attracted to pomp, style and luxury? Very few realize the “White Elephant” nature of this business. Being a highly (and I do mean

highly) capital intensive business, with even 100 room budget hotel costing 30 crores, without adding the land costs, money gets burned very fast. Add to this the fact that once a hotel is made, the meters continuously running. 80 percent of running hotels essentially fixed costs. Whether full or empty, the lobby lights, air conditioning and staff are all there. One guest or a 100, the costs are practically the same. That’s precisely why hotels need to be cautious.

The current barrage of hotels for sale is nothing more than out of pocket owners stressed by the hotel’s inadequacy of return on capital and not profits at unit level. It all seems so fundamental now. Hindsight is always 20-20. Sadly its owners (and all whom are otherwise very smart people) having made crores through intelligence in other business’s, now losing money in hotels. Perhaps getting enamored by the pomp, glory, luxury and allure of foreign companies, rather than truly understanding the reality behind its numbers.

The Allen Smith current CEO of Four Seasons in an article in HotelsMag mentioned his priority was in ensuring adequate Return on Investment to his owners of Four Seasons through various means. When a brand like Four Seasons, which gets “The” highest rates in the entire industry, talks about inadequate returns, it’s vital that all hoteliers take notice and really introspect into the project and running costs. Why, Where and what are they spending on. Does it only build the brand (who’s only managing the property with no skin in the game?) or does it really add value to help generate returns for the owner? Does it meet owner’s objectives? Or those of the brand who’s managing?

Until hoteliers (New and Old) learn and think about Return on Capital, they will continue to struggle, suffer and flounder with no one to blame, but ourselves. ■

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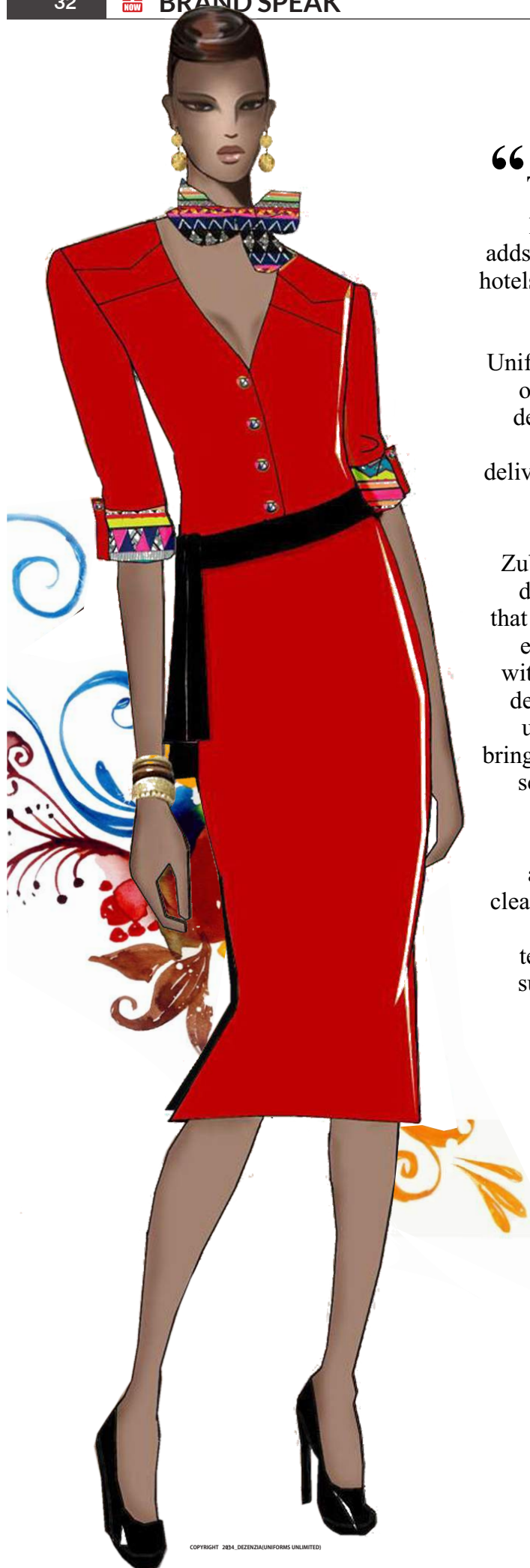
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Today, there is a growing trend of Designer uniforms for the hospitality & corporate sector. A stylish yet practical uniform adds value & unifies the complete experience of hospitality. Most hotels, corporates and institutions do have fine uniforms but there is yet so much richness in our culture that a Designer with a holistic approach can offer. Zubin Mehta – MD & CEO – Uniforms Unlimited, heads his designer brand “Dezenzia” and is one such designer with the holistic approach towards uniform design. Besides being well known for his manufacturing skills, Zubin has also made a mark in the hospitality world by delivering stunning concepts of uniforms for niche hotels, resorts and corporates. His uniforms are now being flaunted by the clients as their brand differentiator.

Zubin in his designs imbibes the value of a region / culture into design by repackaging the couture into finely styled garments that enhance the image of the client to the highest standards. His endeavor has always been focused on amalgamating top style with highly practical attire. This is a huge challenge for fashion designers persay, but Zubin having the thorough knowledge of uniforms and a state-of-art facility to back his experience can bring about this fusion with ease. Modern travellers are extremely selective of hotels & especially seek advice on the experience shared by others in internet and word of mouth.

Today a guest looks closely for classy interiors, bathrooms, amenities provided & even at the uniforms, whether they are clean, finely tailored & intricately designed. The uniform speaks volumes about the organization. Zubin emphasizes on the textures of fabrics used, the princess lines on the uniform, the subtle detail of embroidery and pleats that turn a uniform into

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Ice-boy

Ice boy have been into manufacturing Ice Cube Machines since 1991 and brings a wide range of Ice Cube Making Machines and Crushers. These machines and crushers come in different capacities. Their machines cater to restaurants, Bars and Hotels. Ice Boy uses German innovation and technology to make their machines the most technically advanced machines in the world. They are not only attractively designed but are low in maintenance and easy to operate. With more than two decades of exporting Ice Cube Machines and Crushers, Ice-Boy has been both a Local and a Global Player. Ice-Boy has grown and adapted to the market and consumer needs, to manufacture products with maximum quality and dependability. Ice boy uses the Wave System and the Centrifugal System to provide the most beautiful Bullet shaped ice and Solid Round Ice. With its primary focus on Ice Cube Machines and Crushers, Ice boy has always laid great emphasis on Customer Satisfaction. It is because of valued customers that Ice boy has strived to make its targets achievable, quality better and services prompt. They always look forward to bring a positive change in their outlook and products for complete satisfaction of consumers.

In India many people have been importing ice machines with plastic interiors, irreparable parts & later face maintenance problems. On the contrary, Ice boy manufacture good quality Ice cube machines and crushers with stainless steel in all four layers. Ice boy also provides customers with an option of Combi Cool units that are both Air and Water cooled which provide greater output using very less water. Their machines come with a unique OPD (Optical Production Display) system, which helps in monitoring the production of ice cubes. The machines also run low on power and water. They have a special fully insulated Ice producing System. Ice boy Ice Machines are fully automatic with Automatic Flushing and Cleaning of system after every cycle. Their Experience & Expertise in this field brings forth a fully automatic Ice Cube Machine that is easy, safe and economical to use. Attractively designed these machines have a host of other specialties that make consumers happy and wanting to come back for more.

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