

HRAWI



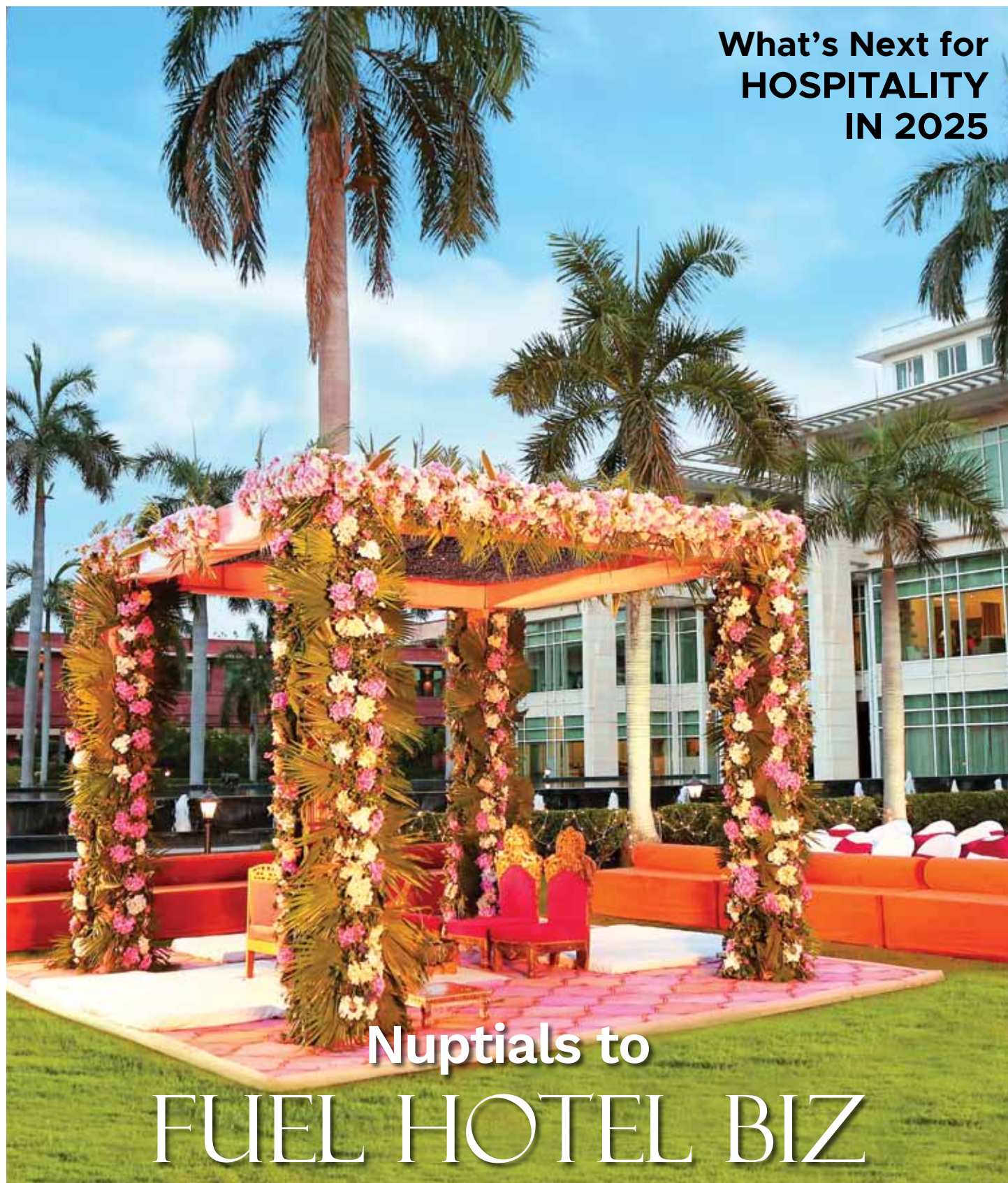
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IN 2025**



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Dear members,

As we step into 2025, the outlook for India's hospitality and tourism sector is incredibly promising, backed by robust government initiatives, growing domestic travel, and international tourism's resurgence. Alongside, several states are unveiling new tourism policies, each strategically designed to unlock the immense potential of the sector. With tourism revenues projected to reach US\$59 billion by 2028, this year presents immense opportunities to strengthen our industry further and address prevailing challenges.

In 2024, the Indian hospitality industry witnessed remarkable growth, driven by a surge in domestic tourism that boosted occupancy rates and RevPAR, signalling a strong rebound from the pandemic downturn. This upward trajectory was further supported by increased investments in tier II and III cities, making it a standout year for the sector with promising opportunities for continued expansion.

Initiatives like 'Dekho Apna Desh' and 'Swadesh Darshan 2.0' revitalised sustainable destinations, enhanced infrastructure, and set new benchmarks for tourism accessibility. Record-breaking hotel occupancy rates of 65-70 per cent in 2024 reflect the demand for quality experiences

and this momentum is expected to continue in 2025. The trend highlights the sector's adaptability and potential for value-driven growth. However, as an industry, we must continue innovating and enhancing offerings to cater to this dynamic market segment.

Destination weddings and related events are also emerging as a key growth area, with hotels increasingly catering to the demand for personalised, memorable experiences. A key driver of this growth is the banquet segment, fuelled by resurgence in wedding bookings. Rising disposable incomes and a growing preference for personalised, lavish weddings have transformed India into a popular destination for both domestic and international ceremonies. The wedding industry is redefining the concept of the 'Big Fat Indian Wedding,' making it accessible to a broader demographic.

On the international front, foreign tourist arrivals are expected to exceed 17 million in 2025, generating over US\$ 36 billion in foreign exchange. India's growing appeal in wellness, adventure and heritage tourism, supported by streamlined e-visa policies, positions the country as a top global destination.

Despite these positive trends, certain challenges persist. Licensing inefficiencies, regulatory complexities and HR shortages

remain critical bottlenecks. Many hospitality businesses face delays in openings due to only partial digitisation of licensing processes. HRAWI has been actively advocating for a unified licensing framework and streamlined procedures to enhance the ease of doing business. Additionally, addressing the 20-25 per cent vacancy rate in skilled roles requires a renewed focus on workforce up-skilling and retention initiatives.

Infrastructure development remains a priority. Enhanced last-mile connectivity and investments in regional airports, roads and rail networks will unlock the potential of tier II and III cities. These areas have already shown growth, with numerous new hotel openings in 2024.

As we look ahead, targeted government support remains vital. Recognition of hospitality as an industry across all states, tax rationalisation and a focus on sustainability through green technologies can propel our sector to greater heights. This is not only beneficial to the industry but would help India position itself as a top global tourism destination, bringing us closer to the ambitious tourism goals set for 2047. With a collective effort, we can contribute to the country's economic ambitions while creating unforgettable experiences for travellers.

Warm regards,

JIMMY SHAW, President, HRAWI

7 Better salaries must for sector

Wages have always been a concern for youths joining the hospitality sector. FHRAI made suggestions in terms of salary offerings to attract the youth of the sector.



8 India's global visibility

Experts say unlocking India's tourism potential requires a bold marketing blueprint—one that takes the world by storm.



16 Nuptial trends to drive the sector

New year, new wedding trends—unfolding fresh opportunities for tourism and hospitality. Get ready to seize the magic of 2025!

Occupancy rates to surge this year

This year, higher occupancy and surge in room rates will be a common scene driven by personalisation, and innovative guest-centric solutions.



Culinary mastery!

The structured approach to learning culinary skills amplifies culinary mastery, which is pivotal for the sector as the food and beverage segment remains a key magnet for guests.

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Trupti Pawar

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Maharashtra's CCTV decree draws criticism

HRAWI expresses privacy concerns against the Maharashtra government's directive to install AI-based CCTV in hotels.



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The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) has raised strong objections to the Maharashtra government's directive mandating AI-based CCTV systems in licensed hospitality establishments.

The order requires hotels to install real-time AI and machine-learning monitoring systems at entry points, a measure HRAWI considers costly,



PRADEEP SHETTY
Honorary Secretary, HRAWI

intrusive, and potentially ineffective. **Pradeep Shetty**, Honorary Secretary, HRAWI, emphasised the privacy implications of such surveillance, particularly for VIP patrons. He said, "Patrons visit hotels for leisure and private business. These are unguarded moments. Videotapes of such moments, data storage, and transmission involve cybersecurity risks, including exposure to ransomware or hacking." He added that it could deter customers from visiting, undermining the essence of the hospitality experience. ♦♦

Endorsing in furnishing

HRAWI partners with WOFX 2024, featuring trends and innovations in the furniture industry.



HRAWI Bureau

Providing the best comfort to guests is every hotel's main target which calls for comfortable, sleek, and modern furniture in hotel rooms. A piece of furniture sets the tone for a homely and pleasant stay and enhances the comfort appeal of the property. The more comfort you provide, the more retained guests you will have. With the same aim, HRAWI collaborated with the World Furniture Expo (WOFX) 2024 to connect the world of advancing furniture with the hospitality sector and make way for modern and enhanced guest experiences.

HRAWI, in its efforts to promote best hospitality practices, supported WOFX 2024 as its associate partner. The two-day expo's opening ceremony, held in December 2024, saw **Trupti Pawar**, Secretary General, HRAWI in attendance at the Bombay Exhibition Center, Goregaon, Mumbai.

By working together with WOFX, HRAWI aims to promote innovation, excellence, and business growth for WOFX. As the demand for innovative and sustainable furnishing solutions grows, this partnership will play a major role in enhancing guest comfort and bringing growth for both the furniture and hotel industry. ♦♦



Industry needs competitive salaries

Salaries should be 20 to 30 percent above minimum wage in order to attract the youth of today towards hospitality career, says FHRAI.



HRAWI Bureau

F HRAI suggested hotels to offer 20 to 30 per cent above the minimum wages to candidates. This move would motivate students to consider career in hospitality over other competing industries. FHRAI as an association is actively promoting higher enrolment in hotels and restaurants. The Association also plans to make career in hospitality pose as an appealing and secure career field. Such movements encourage the aspiring young minds to diligently consider and evaluate their career graphs in the service industry.

FHRAI also suggested hotel management institutes to discourage job offers from hotels who seek to provide salaries below minimum wage to students during college placements. The Association believes that hospitality companies should also provide structured support and guidance in the form of



mentoring, skilling and an enabling environment to new career aspirants. This step would help ease out the process of transition of students from academics to industry.

The Federation advocated for regular review and revision of the curriculum to keep it relevant to the changing dynamics of the industry.

Hospitality programmes should also offer specialisation in various streams such as marketing, finance, F&B, housekeeping and catering, suggested FHRAI. Specialisation provides students with in-depth industry knowledge of the industry. It also suggests restructuring of allotment of seats for various



FHRAI as an association is actively promoting higher enrolment in hotels and restaurants

hospitality programmes to produce a balanced supply of managerial and frontline professionals during the FHRAI HR Summit held at Le Meridien, New Delhi to discuss the hiring issues in the industry. ♦♦

India must **narrate** **its story**

From infrastructure upgrades to marketing innovation, recent experts' discussions offered a roadmap for making India an irresistible destination for global travellers.



HRAWI Bureau

Inbound tourism can be the game changer for India, but achieving this requires coordinated efforts across infrastructure, marketing, and policy. Considering this, industry leaders and policymakers shared their insights on how to propel inbound tourism to new heights. "Infrastructure is the backbone of tourism. The Bharat Mandapam and Yashobhoomi are not just convention centres but symbols of India's readiness to host the world," he added," said **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, Minister of Tourism, Government of India.

He highlighted the government's achievements, including the development of world-class airports, luxury trains, and over 125 operational airports, with plans to reach 350 by 2047. However, challenges remain for the sector, which needs to



**GAJENDRA SINGH
SHEKHAWAT**

Minister of Tourism
Government of India

be addressed immediately by the government as well as by other industry stakeholders.

According to **Suman Billa**, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India the number of branded hotel rooms in cities such as Delhi remains insufficient. "We have fantastic convention capacities but lack the requisite hotel inventory to accommodate large-scale events," he said. He advocated for granting infrastructure status to the hospitality sector, enabling hoteliers to build the necessary capacity with reduced financial barriers.

Enhancing visibility

Emphasising the need for a robust marketing strategy to enhance India's global tourism appeal, **Mugdha Sinha**, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, claimed, "India is no longer just the land of snake charmers. But put 'we have' struggled to move beyond this outdated perception. Despite our incredible infrastructure, informational asymmetry hampers our visibility at global level."

Sinha suggested adopting the "Three V's" mantra— Visibility, Virality, and Visionary Marketing. Additionally, she emphasised the role of digital platforms. "Today, storytelling and social media engagement are the currencies of tourism marketing," she said.

Billa concurred, noting that while Incredible India remains a globally recognised brand, the narrative must evolve. "We need to target



both emotional and logical decision-makers. Infographics, data-driven campaigns, and targeted digital and social media marketing can make a significant impact on the ever evolving travel and tourism industry of India," he said suggesting that marketing is the need of the hour.



SUMAN BILLA
Additional Secretary,
Ministry of Tourism,
Government of India



MUGDHA SINHA
Director General,
Ministry of Tourism,
Government of India

ensure that the influx of domestic tourists does not compromise the experience for foreign visitors.

Multiplier effect

Tourism is not just an economic activity; it is a solution to many of India's challenges. "It creates jobs, uplifts local communities, and contributes to GDP. By 2047, as we aim for a US\$25 trillion economy, our global rankings should reflect our aspirations," said Shekhawat.

Sinha added that tourism serves as soft diplomacy. "Foreign tourists become brand ambassadors for India. A positive experience here translates into goodwill and influence abroad," she said. She further suggested to create experiences, which can narrate a positive story of India internationally attracting more foreign visitors.

Infra & Awareness

While infrastructure improvements are commendable, awareness remains a bottleneck. "We have built roads, flyovers, and luxury trains, but do people in the U.S. or Brazil know about them?" asked Sinha. She advised that targeted campaigns would bridge the gap between India's physical and informational infrastructure.

Billa stressed the need for a holistic approach and suggested to utilise right platforms to boost India's image. "It is not just about building airports or convention centres, but It is about creating seamless experiences, from visa processing to last-mile connectivity," he said.

"We have the assets, both natural and cultural. What we need now is strategy and execution," concluded Shekhawat at the 18th CII Annual Tourism Summit 2024. ♦♦

Overtourism

The rise of domestic tourism, driven by revenge travel post-COVID, has created an unintended challenge. "Overcrowding in domestic hotspots is pushing gobal tourists away," said Sinha. She underscored the need for strategic planning to



Are we choosing green enough?

Small practices in daily lives from eliminating plastic use to encouraging eco-friendly brands can help realise a sustainable future, advocates **Sandeep Talaulicar**.



HRAWI Bureau

The idea of a green and sustainable universe is quite achievable. By incorporating small practices into our daily routines, we can significantly reduce our reliance on single-use plastic and contribute to a cleaner and healthier environment.

Bring reusable items

Carry a reusable shopping bag, water bottle, coffee cup, and cutlery with you. This reduces the use of disposable plastic items when you are on the go. Store leftovers and pack lunch in reusable containers. Glass or stainless-steel containers as an alternative are durable and can be used repeatedly. Opt for products made from alternative materials that are eco-friendly.

Buy in bulk

Purchase items in bulk to help reduce packaging waste. Bring your own containers when shopping for grains, nuts, and snacks at grocery stores. This will reduce



SANDEEP TALAULICAR

Managing Director
Jakson Hospitality

the use of plastic bags leading to reduction in plastic waste.

Use 'Green' brands

Encourage hotel and resort chains, supermarkets and other service providers that consciously reduce plastic footprints and are green certified by giving them more business.

Avoid single-use plastics

Refuse single-use plastic items such as straws, cutlery, and condiment packets when dining out. Politely decline them or inform servers that you do not need them. Avoid plastic packaging and look for products that have minimal plastic packaging. Buy fruits and vegetables loose or choose items packed in paper, cardboard, glass, or metal instead.

Support plastic-free ideas

Choose brands and businesses that prioritise sustainability. Encourage them to offer plastic-free alternatives and provide feedback on their packaging choices.

Dispose plastic properly

Ensure that any plastic waste you generate is disposed either by recycling or waste treatment to minimise environmental impact. Additionally, encourage other to do the same. ♦♦

New standard in hospitality

Pests can bring significant challenges to hospitality businesses but these risks are manageable with a proactive strategy.



HRAWI Bureau

In the world of hospitality, every detail matters. A single pest sighting can erode trust and disrupt guest experiences. Whether managing a cosy restaurant or a luxury hotel, keeping your spaces pest-free is critical to building guest loyalty and safeguarding your reputation. Pests can bring significant challenges to hospitality businesses like health risks, reputation damage, and operational disruptions like regulatory penalties, fines, and closures. Backed by decades of expertise in pest and mosquito management, **Jitendra Gawade**, Key Account Manager, Envu, highlighted that these risks are manageable with a proactive strategy.



JITENDRA GAWADE
Key Account Manager
Envu



Proactive pest management

As per Gawade, modern hospitality businesses can rely on the following strategies for pest management:

- **Integrated Pest Management (IPM):** This method emphasises prevention, monitoring, and targeted treatments. The key principles of IPM are certified solutions by the use of products that meet certifications like HACCP and GreenPro for safety in food-handling areas. Treatments deploy targeted tools like gel baits for cockroaches, and minimum impact on environment.
- **4D formula:** To complement professional pest control efforts, hospitality businesses can implement the 4D Formula—a tried-and-tested approach. It employs denying pest's entry, shelter, food, and destroying them.
- **Choosing right partner:** Partnering with a right Pest Control Operator (PCO) ensures reliable expert support. A professional PCO provides accountability and expertise to protect your business. Effective pest management reflects the commitment to excellence. Through preventive measures, trusted partnerships, and sustainable solutions, hotels can safeguard their reputation ensuring guests' satisfaction. ◆◆

Partnering with a right Pest Control Operator ensures expert support to protect your business

Enhancing IPM with the 4D Formula for Effective Pest Control

Data Entry
Preventing pest from accessing buildings by sealing gaps and cracks.



Deny Shelter
Keeping areas clutter-free and well-ventilated to avoid pest nesting.

Deny Food
Ensuring food is stored securely and waste is disposed of regularly.



Destroy
Utilizing traps, baits, and professional treatments to eliminate pest.

Bringing food safety to Mumbai

HRAWI, along with FSSAI, conducted its food safety training, educating hospitality professionals about importance of a good meal for customer satisfaction.



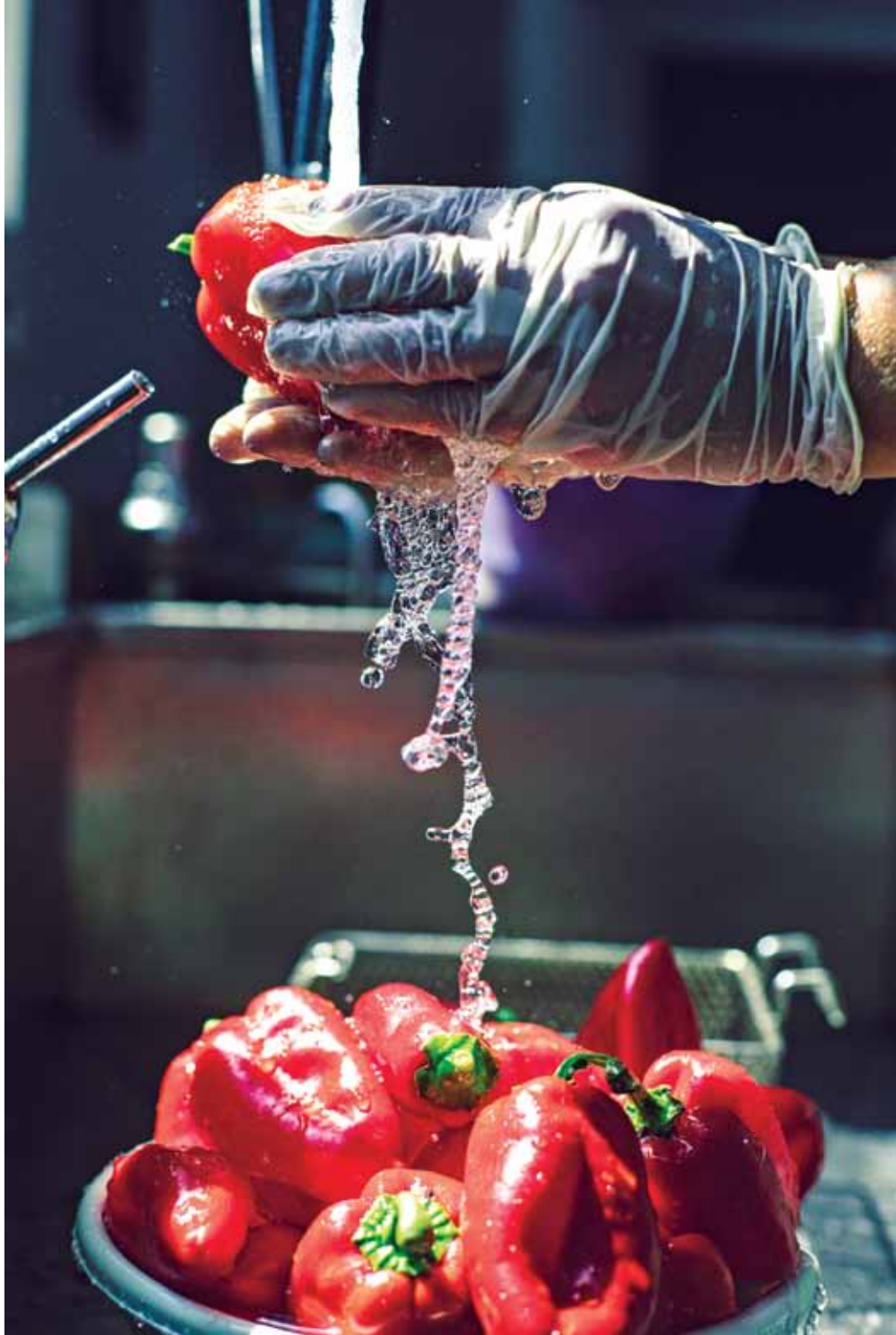
HRAWI Bureau

Food stands at the centre of every memorable experience whether in a wedding function or work conference.

It makes or breaks one's day. Consequently, food becomes one of the most important aspects of hospitality. Delivering an experience that stays with guests necessitates a tasteful and fulfilling dining. In hospitality, the dining experience influences guests' feedback and thus makes it important for hoteliers to sustain high food service and safety standards.

HRAWI conducts regular food service training programmes for aspiring students and hospitality professionals. The Association is dedicated to elevating food safety standards in the Indian hospitality industry. It ensures that hotels deliver exceptional dining while keeping health and hygiene in mind.

In this journey of elevating India's culinary industry, HRAWI successfully conducted one more comprehensive food safety and management training programme



Till date, HRAWI has coached 3,243 hospitality professionals in food safety through FSSAI's FoSTaC programme

together with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI). The training took place at the Sofitel BKC in Mumbai, with 35 hospitality professionals in attendance. The

event was graced by **Professor Praveen Andrews** as trainer along with **Chef Vividh Madhusudan Patil**.

The programme discoursed practical skills on how to implement food safety practices in operations. Participation in the Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering (FoSTaC) helped in learning key concepts of food handling, preparation, hygiene, sanitation, waste management and sustainability.

Till date, HRAWI has trained 3,243 hospitality professionals through FSSAI's FoSTaC and Management Training Programme. ♦

Building safety beyond flames

Hemant Khadse explains the role of Passive Fire Protection (PFP) in increasing building's lifecycle.



HRAWI Bureau

In the modern built environment, life safety is paramount, and fire protection stands as a cornerstone of this imperative. Passive Fire Protection (PFP) plays a critical role in safeguarding lives and property by containing the spread of fire, thus allowing occupants time to evacuate and control the situation. Unlike active fire protection systems, such as sprinklers and alarms, PFP integrates into the building's structure to ensure resilience and reliability over the building's lifecycle.

Design strategies for PFP

The strategies covered in planning of building design include dividing a building into fire-resistant compartments to prevent the spread of fire. Another strategy is utilising materials that have inherent fire-resistant properties. Structural fire protection and egress planning are some other strategies employed to prevent structural collapse and guide occupants.

Challenges of compliance

Implementing PFP comes with challenges. Fire safety codes vary across jurisdictions as per local and international requirements. High-quality fire-resistant materials and advanced design increase

construction costs, which can deter stakeholders from investing in PFP. Ensuring that PFP systems remain effective over time requires regular maintenance. Many buildings lack robust post-construction compliance mechanisms. Architects and engineers must possess specialised knowledge of safety standards. Inadequate training can lead to compromised fire safety.

Architect's role

Architects play a pivotal role in integrating PFP. Their responsibilities include holistic design approach balancing aesthetics, material selection, collaboration with engineers, fire consultants, regulatory authorities and adherence to safety standards.

Role of regulatory authorities

In India, the construction industry and regulatory authorities have a critical role in ensuring PFP measures such as adherence to National Building Code (NBC). Right training and incentives can strengthen compliance of these measures. ♦♦



HEMANT KHADSE

CEO, East Corp Group, & Fire and Life Safety Consultant

Unlike active fire protection systems, PFP integrates into the building's structure to ensure resilience



Safety net of insurance

Ketan Assurance's expert advisors simplify insurance complexities so you can enjoy the benefits.



HRAWI Bureau

In today's unpredictable world, insurance is a vital tool for safeguarding your financial future. With same sentiment, Ketan Assurance have been guiding clients through the complexities of insurance for over 30 years. Their mission is to provide expert advice and personalised solutions to ensure you and your loved ones are protected.

Importance of insurance

Insurance offers crucial protection against life's unexpected events, such as medical emergencies, accidents, or property damage. By paying a

premium, you transfer the financial risk of these events to an insurer, preventing potentially overwhelming expenses and providing peace of mind. Insurance is essential as it helps shield you from significant financial losses, ensuring that you are not burdened by unexpected costs. With the right coverage, you can focus on your daily life without the constant worry of unforeseen setbacks. Proper insurance planning supports your financial goals and offers stability for your future, including retirement.

Ketan Assurance's rescue net

For three decades, Ketan Assurance has been dedicated to providing top-notch insurance advisory

services. Their experience allows them to offer insightful, tailored recommendations that fit your unique needs. The company strives to make insurance accessible and understandable, ensuring you receive the best solutions for your situation.

Why choose Ketan Assurance

The company's experienced advisors will help you navigate insurance options confidently. The insurer builds relationships with clients to provide customised advice and solutions. They offer clear information and honest guidance, helping you make informed decisions. Customers can completely rely on these advisors as they do not hesitate



With the right insurance, you can focus on your daily life without the constant worry of unforeseen setbacks

in providing detailed knowledge over any query raised by the client making it evident that insurance begins with a conversation. Contact Ketan Assurance to explore how they can help you achieve financial security and provide tailored insurance solutions. ♦

Get to know your

Fellow Associate Members!

Premier hand-knotted flooring



Venjara Carpets is a one-stop solution for all kinds of flooring needs located in the heart of Mumbai. They specialise in hospitality carpets ranging from hand-tufted banquet carpets to nylon and wool-blended Axminster carpeting. The company offers bedroom rugs, turf for outdoor areas and laminated and engineered wood for bedrooms. They have been providing carpets to hotels and commercial offices since 2001. The products range from 'Make in India' hand-knotted rugs to synthetic roll carpets imported from Germany, Turkey, UAE, and Indonesia. They have worked with prestigious hotels in the past such as Taj Mahal Palace, Westin, W, Deltin Resort, Shalimar Hotel, and Sun N Sand. Since 1961, Venjara has been dominating the market for hand-knotted rugs. Building on a strong base of repeat and loyal customers, the company has expanded its offerings to encompass a wide range of flooring options. Venjara Carpets offers something for every need and budget. With decades of experience and a broad product range, they are confident in their ability to meet any flooring requirement. The brand vows to deliver products that capture the soul of any space, elevating the atmosphere of every room while reflecting the ethos of its host. ♦♦

Digital growth partners




Webbie Solutions is committed to helping businesses across industries, augment their marketing efforts and gain a competitive edge through comprehensive digital marketing solutions. They work with businesses of all sizes. The company continues to improve processes and invest in modern resources to provide marketing partners with top-notch services. They excel in transforming ideas into concrete results, discerning precisely what works and when. Their dedication revolves around clients, who are at the heart of their operations. Clients drive their progress, and they aim to amplify client's Return on Investment and deliver tangible, transparent outcomes. Webbie epitomises online knowledge and innovative marketing. Leveraging diverse marketing tactics and a talented pool of professionals, they ensure you surpass your marketing objectives consistently. Since inception, the company has empowered brands with digital prowess. They leave no avenue unexplored facilitating brand's outreach to potential customers. Enterprises that are seeking to enhance search engine visibility and broaden brand recognition, choosing a marketing partner with a track record, Webbie Solutions could be their best digital growth partner. ♦♦

Wedding trends to watch in 2025



From trends to expert views, uncover how the wedding segment will steer tourism and hospitality growth in 2025

 Amita Pandey and
Surbhi Sharma

India's rich wedding traditions evolve each year, weaving fresh trends into the cultural fabric. These shifts spark new demands, compelling industry players to adapt and innovate. As 2025 unfolds, experts explore the emerging trends set to redefine the future of wedding segment.

Business Insights

Revealing an impressive contribution

of the wedding segment to Royal Orchid Hotel's revenue in 2024, **Philip Logan**, Chief Operating Officer, Royal Orchid Hotel, said "With over 1,000 weddings hosted across Royal Orchid and Regenta Hotels, the segment contributed 22 per cent of our total revenue, indicating the strong demand for premium venues and services."

Looking ahead to 2025, Logan anticipated a moderate uptick in room rates during the wedding season, driven by surging demand and inflation. "We project wedding segment to account for around 30 per cent of our overall business this



PHILIP LOGAN
Chief Operating Officer
Royal Orchid Hotel

"We project weddings to account for around 30 per cent of our overall business next year."



VIKAS SURI
VP, Operations & Development
Lords Hotels & Resorts



ABHISHEK PODDAR
CEO
Colossal Weddings & Events

“At some of our properties, weddings contribute as much as 20 to 30 per cent of total annual revenue.”

“India still lacks sufficient venues to meet the growing demand of wedding segment.”

underscoring the need for more options to cater to the country's evolving wedding landscape.

Trends in 2025

Painting an exciting picture of the evolving wedding landscape for 2025, Logan underscored, “In 2025, we anticipate a surge in personalised and experiential weddings, with themes rooted in sustainability, cultural heritage, and technology integration taking center stage. Couples are leaning towards intimate gatherings but with elevated budgets per guest, prioritising curated and memorable experiences.”

Simultaneously, Logan highlighted a steady rise in wedding budgets as clients seek out unique venues, gourmet menus, and bespoke decor. “The growing appetite for destination weddings is unmistakable. To meet this demand, we are actively expanding our portfolio,” he added. With a similar opinion of the growing allure of destination weddings, Suri concurred, “Scenic and exotic locales outside hometowns are becoming the go-to choice for many couples. Popular destinations within our group include Rajasthan's regal Udaipur and Jaipur, the sunny beaches of



year,” he added claiming that 2025 is going to see robust demand.

Emphasising the far-reaching benefits of weddings, **Vikas Suri**, Vice President, Operations & Development, Lords Hotels & Resorts, noted, “Beyond venue rentals and catering, weddings generate additional revenue through accommodations, spa treatments, and pre-wedding celebrations such as sangeet and mehendi ceremonies. At some of our properties, weddings contribute as much as 20 to 30 per cent of total annual revenue.” However, the wedding planner, **Abhishek Poddar**, CEO, Colossal Weddings & Events called for the availability of more venues as he anticipates an upward curve in the demand. “India still lacks sufficient venues to meet this growing demand,” Poddar remarked,

Goa, the lush retreats of Karjat, and the serene landscapes of Jammu.”

Highlighting the continuous demand for sustainable weddings, Suri averred, “Couples are increasingly embracing eco-friendly practices, prompting hotels to offer sustainable options like zero-waste catering, organic or locally sourced flowers, and eco-conscious decor.”

Highlighting other trends, Suri remarked, “Intimate weddings are also catching up, couples are opting for smaller guest lists and customising their ceremonies to reflect personal tastes and values. Our religious destinations such as Nathdwara, Somnath, and Dwarka have seen an increase in such enquiries.”

Recognising that today’s wedding trends are increasingly being set by the couples themselves, Poddar, said, “While some are willing to invest in extravagant celebrations, others are opting for intimate gatherings to keep costs down. The market is diverse, with clients spanning from lavish affairs to more modest affairs, though the Indian preference still leans toward luxury.”



CHETAN VOHRA
Co-Founder & Director
Weddingline

Chetan Vohra, Co-Founder & Director, Weddingline, reflected on the 2024 wedding scene, which was marked by lavish and multi-event celebrations alongside intimate affairs. “However, in 2025, there will be a growing awareness around sustainability, since weddings contribute to waste. Locally sourced products and artisans will take centre stage,” he added. Regarding budgets, Vohra noted, “Wedding budgets are a matter of personal choice—those with the means are spending, but with a emphasis on making every penny count.”

“In 2025, there will be a growing awareness around sustainability, since weddings contribute significantly to waste. Locally sourced products and artisans will take centre stage.”

Exclusive incentives

Highlighting the key offerings of Royal Orchid Hotel for wedding segment, Logan informed, “We offer tailor-made and personalised packages that include venue decor, gourmet catering, exclusive bridal suites, and complimentary honeymoon stay. Our maximum capacity for hosting weddings varies by property, with our largest venue accommodating up to 2,000 guests.”

Key amenities, he noted, include state-of-the-art banquet halls,





picturesque outdoor spaces, expert event planners, and culinary masters onsite. “Our team handles every detail of the wedding logistics, from vendor coordination to guest accommodations. We also offer pre-and post-wedding activities, including rejuvenating spa services, heritage tours, and themed brunches, ensuring each celebration is truly exceptional.”

Suri emphasised, “Lagan by Lords is more than just a wedding service; it is a curated experience blending traditional Indian hospitality with the comfort of modern luxuries. To make your special day even more extraordinary, we include a 2-night, 3-day complimentary stay for the bride and groom, complete with candlelight dinners and a rejuvenating couple’s spa once during their visit.” In addition to that, Suri also apprised about the their brand’s cancellation policies.

He said, “For cancellations made more than 12 months before the event, a full refund of the

advance deposit will be provided. Cancellations between 6 to 12 months prior will incur a 20 to 30 per cent cancellation fee, deducted from the advance. For cancellations made 3 to 6 months before the event, a 50 per cent cancellation fee applies. If cancellation occurs less than 30 days before the event, no refund will be issued; however, rescheduling options may be offered based on availability and circumstances. In cases of force majeure or unforeseen events, clients are entitled to a full refund or rescheduling without penalties.”

Tech-driven weddings

Emphasising the role of technology in wedding planning in 2025, Logan, said “We harness platforms such as WhatsApp Business and Metaverse to help clients visualise setups and make informed decisions. Looking ahead to 2025, we expect AI-driven personalisation, augmented reality for decor previews, and blockchain to bring enhanced transparency

to contracts, taking wedding planning to the next level.” While, highlighting how technology is streamlining wedding management in hotels, Suri pointed out, “Our chatbots and virtual assistants handle wedding inquiries, while online visual displays of stage decor and buffet themes help clients easily choose their wedding style. We have also introduced Tablets on guest tables, allowing guests to explore food and beverage options directly from their seats.”

Poddar said, “Technology has helped a lot in managing the

DESTINATIONS IN FOCUS

- **Domestic:** Rajasthan, Goa, Mahabalipuram, Kovalam, Kochi, Karjat, Jammu, Nathdwara, Somnath, and Dwarka
- **International:** UAE, Middle East, Maldives, Thailand, and Vietnam



guest list, and logistics smoothly.” In addition to that, Vohra said, “Everything has become tech-oriented, you send out an e-invite, you send out an app and everything is on that app. So, technology has played a pivotal role in easing off the ecosystem in terms of dependability, wastage, sustainability practices.”

Wedding destinations

Experts predict that destination

weddings will upswing in 2025, with certain locations stealing the spotlight.

According to Poddar, Jaipur and Goa continue to dominate the Indian destination wedding scene. Meanwhile, emerging hotspots such as Mahabalipuram, Kovalam, and Kochi are gaining momentum, thanks to improved travel connectivity. On the international front, Thailand and Vietnam remain top picks

for Indian couples. However, Poddar noted a surge in domestic wedding demand, largely driven by better flight connectivity within India, as global travel still faces challenges due to high air fares.

Referring to the recent ‘Wed in India’ initiative by the Indian government, aimed at attracting international couples to celebrate their special day in India, Vohra remarked, “We are working to position India on the global wedding map. If you are of Indian origin, the government is encouraging you to tie the knot here. Additionally, foreign couples can take advantage of India’s rich cultural and heritage settings as stunning wedding backdrops.” On domestic front,

Trends in focus

- Sustainability
- Cultural heritage
- Technology integration
- Blockchain for transparency in contracts
- Intimate gatherings
- Destination weddings





he agreed with Poddar that for domestic travellers, Rajasthan and Goa remain perennial favourites.

However, there is a growing shift towards lesser-explored gems such as Jaisalmer and Kishangarh, and other emerging destinations within these states driven by improved connectivity and an increasing number of luxury hotels. He also noted Rajasthan's efforts to promote heritage venues and smaller princely states such as Dholpur, home to breathtaking palaces now transformed into captivating hotels—perfect for intimate weddings hosting 200 to 250 guests.

When it comes to international wedding destinations, the choice often hinges on India's wedding season and flight connectivity. Vohra explained, "For most Indian weddings, which traditionally take place between October and February or March, Europe is often off the table due to its chilly winters during these months. As a result, destinations such as the UAE and the Middle East have

stepped up, offering attractive packages and exceptional options."

He also highlighted the growing allure of the Maldives for Indian weddings. "Maldives has begun easing restrictions on certain venues for Indian rituals, which has

boosted its appeal as a wedding destination," Vohra added. These developments have made the Maldives a rising star for Indian couples seeking a destination with a blend of luxury and cultural flexibility for their special day. ♦♦

KEY OFFERINGS

Royal Orchid Hotel

- Tailor-made packages includes venue decor, gourmet catering, exclusive bridal suites, and complimentary honeymoon stays.
- Maximum capacity with largest venue accommodating up to 2,000 guests.
- Pre-and post-wedding activities, including spa services, heritage tours, and themed brunches.

Lords Hotels & Resorts

- Lagan by Lords curated specially for the wedding segment.
- 2-night, 3-day complimentary stay for the bride and groom, complete with candlelight dinners and couple spa once during their visit.
- Chatbots and virtual assistants to handle wedding inquiries
- Availability of online visual displays of stage decor and buffet themes at planning phase.
- Tablets on guest tables, allowing guests to explore food and beverage options from their seats.

4.8mn FTAs

in H1 2024; ₹3,295 cr allocated:
Ministry of Tourism



As per the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Government of India, the country has witnessed 4.8 million foreign arrivals during H1 2024. The year-end review of Ministry stated that India's tourism saw a 43.5 per cent rise in 2023, welcoming 9.24 million visitors, driven by government initiatives. In 2023 alone, the inflow of foreign tourists generated a record ₹2.3 lakh crore in Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs), reflecting a 65 per cent increase from the previous year's ₹1.39 lakh crore. Additionally, 40 projects worth ₹3295.76 crore were approved under Special Assistance to States for Capital Investment (SASCI) for the development of iconic tourist centres to global scale across 23 States.

IHCL to take its portfolio to 700 hotels by 2030

The Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) has planned a comprehensive expansion strategy for 2030. Under the plan, IHCL will expand its brandscape, deliver industry-leading margins, double its consolidated revenue with a 20 per cent return on capital employed, and grow its portfolio to 700+ hotels while building on its world-renowned service ethos.

Puneet Chhatwal, Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer, IHCL, said, "The company has surpassed its guidance by achieving a portfolio of 350 hotels, with over 200 hotels in operation and delivered ten consecutive quarters of record financial performance." Chhatwal elaborated that this plan aligns with the government's continued focus on infrastructure spend, hotel demand outpacing supply, and the rising affluence of the consumer base across the country.



ITDC

sees ₹158.83 cr turnover for
Q2 FY2024-25

India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) has released its financial results for second quarter FY24-25, revealing a total turnover of ₹158.83 crore, with a Profit Before Tax (PBT) of ₹24.97 crore and a Profit After Tax (PAT) of ₹24.43 crore. **Lokesh Kumar Aggarwal**, Director, Finance and Chief Financial Officer, ITDC, expressed satisfaction with the company's performance. He stated, "This quarter's results reflect our commitment to operational efficiency and service excellence. We remain focused on sustaining the brand's momentum, and these figures affirm our objectives in the hospitality, travel, and tourism sectors." This healthy performance highlights ITDC's resilience in the face of industry challenges. Moving ahead, it will focus on expanding its portfolio and enhancing infrastructure.

60% of India's MICE led by meetings, incentives & conferences



As per a Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE) study carried out in 2019 sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Government of India the market size of the India's MICE industry is at ₹37,576 crore. The 60 per cent of this share is attributable to Meetings, Incentives, and Conferences. The international MICE in this accounts for 22 per cent of the total market. 65 per cent are B2B events, and Meetings and Incentives form roughly 70 per cent of the entire MICE segment for 5-star properties. The MOT has now formulated a national strategy for the promotion of MICE in the country including as Haryana and Delhi NCR.

87 tourism projects

worth ₹8,000 cr
proposed by states

During the 54th Annual Convention of the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI), **Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, Minister of Tourism, Government of India underscored that the Union Ministry of Tourism has invited state governments' proposals for large-scale tourism initiatives to accelerate the development of tourism infrastructure. So far, 87 proposals have been received, with a total value of ₹8,000 crore. These projects will be integrated into the ₹1 lakh crore interest-free infrastructure loan programme provided to states in 2024, significantly boosting tourism infrastructure across India.

Radisson

targets **200 properties** across India by 2027

Radisson Hotel Group plans to expand its footprint in India to 200 properties by 2027, with a focus on emerging tourist and business hubs in tier III and IV cities. **Nikhil Sharma**, Managing Director and Area Senior Vice President, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group, said, "There is a lack of quality accommodation in many tier III and IV cities, and we see ourselves playing a major role in bridging that gap." Sharma also highlighted Radisson's diversified portfolio, including boutique hotels rebranded under 'Radisson Individuals' and 'Radisson Individuals Retreats.' With over 150 operating hotels projected by next year, the group's soft branding efforts have already led to six Radisson Individuals openings this year, including the rebranding of Nainital's iconic Manu Maharani hotel. ♦♦





Higher occupancy on cards in 2025

In 2025, the hospitality sector will be defined by sustainability, personalisation, and innovative guest-centric solutions making way for higher occupancy and room rates.

 Amita Pandey

Tourism is set to soar in 2025, igniting a wave of growth across the hospitality sector and sparking transformative progress in infrastructure. The rise in domestic travel, driven by adventure-seeking millennials and Gen Z, is propelling this boom, while expanded regional connectivity through new airports and upgraded transport networks is opening

“The industry is set for growth, driven by economic momentum, government tourism initiatives, the influence of online travel agencies, and shifting traveller preferences.”



SANTOSH KUMAR
Country Manager, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Indonesia, Booking.com



anticipate positive growth. Notably, 77 per cent of accommodations recognise the value of online listings, while nearly half (49 per cent) actively leverage online platforms to expand their reach, underscoring the critical role of digital transformation in shaping the future of hospitality.

Jimmy Shaw, President, HRAWI, further solidified this optimism stating, “Hotel occupancy is poised to surge beyond 75 per cent, fuelled by growing leisure and corporate travel in tier II and III cities. Average Room Rates (ARRs) are set to climb as demand surges and guests lean toward premium, personalised experiences.” He attributed this momentum to key drivers like government initiatives—Dekho Apna Desh and Swadesh Darshan 2.0—alongside targeted marketing, streamlined e-visa policies, and enhanced infrastructure, all positioning India as a top choice for global travellers.”

The surge can also be credited to domestic and international hotel brands, eager to expand their presence in tier II and III cities, meeting the rising demand for quality accommodations in emerging markets.

However, Shaw also highlighted sector’s challenges such as licensing inefficiencies, talent shortages, and regulatory complexities that



JIMMY SHAW

President
HRAWI

“Hotel occupancy is poised to surge beyond 75%, fuelled by growing leisure and corporate travel in tier II and III cities.”

must be addressed for the smooth growth of the hospitality sector.

Projecting a similar surge in 2025, **Philip Logan**, Chief Operating Officer, Royal Orchid Hotels said, “The hospitality sector is expected to see a 7 to 8 per cent increase in room rates compared to 2024, driven by strong domestic tourism,

doors to hidden gems. Adding to the momentum, the revival of destination weddings and a surge in business and MICE events are fuelling demand for banquet halls and conference spaces, positioning the hospitality industry for a golden era of opportunity.

Santosh Kumar, Country Manager, India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, and Indonesia, Booking.com, shared a similar optimistic outlook for India’s hospitality sector in 2025. “The industry is set for growth, driven by economic momentum, government tourism initiatives, the influence of online travel agencies, and shifting traveller preferences,” he remarked. Booking.com’s ‘Indian Accommodation Barometer 2024’ report echoes this confidence, revealing that 69 per cent of hoteliers



record wedding bookings, and a surge in weekend getaways.”

Revealing the growth targets for Royal Orchid & Regenta Hotels, Logan said, “For 2025, we aim to expand our presence across emerging tier II and III cities, leveraging our loyalty programme. Regions such as Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, UP, and Northeast India are anticipated to see the highest demand due to their blend of heritage, adventure, and leisure offerings. With domestic tourism flourishing, we forecast a 5-7 per cent growth in occupancy across these markets, complemented by the rising appeal of offbeat locations.” He further added, “In 2025, we are planning to open 20+ new properties across India with a focus on blending local culture with modern amenities.”

Radisson Hotel Group also has similar vision of leveraging this growth. **Nikhil Sharma**, Managing



Director and Area Senior Vice President, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group revealed that the brand is planning to expand its footprint in India to 200 properties by 2027, with a focus on emerging tourist and business hubs in tier III and IV cities.

Segment to lead in 2025

In 2025, certain segments are likely to take the lead including midscale and budget hotels with the continued surge in domestic travel, as per Shaw.

Logan concurred “The midscale segment is set to drive industry growth in 2025 with the rise in demand for affordability among millennials and families. Its versatility in serving both leisure seekers

and business travellers makes it a cornerstone of growth. Meanwhile, upscale properties focusing on weddings and corporate events will also see robust demand, reinforcing their importance in the overall growth narrative.”

Shaw averred that the booming destination wedding and banqueting segments will give a boost to the hospitality industry. However, due to the rise in wellness enthusiasts and MICE travellers; the luxury segment too is set to grow as well.

Highlighting the rise of a unique segment, Sharma, said, “Sleep tourism is expected to grow in 2025 as people are looking to rejuvenate through restful sleep coupled with immersive in-property experiences.

“The midscale segment is set to drive industry growth in 2025 with the rise in demand for affordability.”

PHILIP LOGAN
Chief Operating Officer
Royal Orchid Hotels

Key trends in 2025

Logan said, “In 2025, offerings will shift towards personalisation and immersive experiences. Guests increasingly value curated local experiences, eco-conscious stays, and technology-driven conveniences like contactless check-ins and smart rooms. Wellness tourism, adventure packages, and culinary tours will dominate preferences. Hotels must adapt to these trends, ensuring



NIKHIL SHARMA

MD and Area Senior Vice
President, South Asia,
Radisson Hotel Group

“As we enter 2025, travellers will continue seeking eco-friendly accommodations, immersive cultural and spiritual experiences.”

flexibility, sustainability, and cultural authenticity to remain competitive.”

Agreeing to the same, Sharma, said, “As we enter 2025, travellers will continue seeking eco-friendly accommodations, immersive cultural and spiritual experiences, and wellness-centric offerings that prioritise health and relaxation.”

Highlighting how prepared the brand is for these emerging trends, Sharma revealed, “At Radisson Hotel Group, we introduced our Radisson Individuals, Radisson Individuals Retreats, Park In, and Park Inn & Suites brands to reflect local character, cultural richness, sustainability, and religious spirit.” He further added, “Properties like Rakkh Resort in Dharamshala, Palchan Hotel & Spa in Manali and Park Inn by Radisson Ayodhya support this approach.”

Overall, by 2025, the sector will thrive on innovation, personalisation, and sustainability. Hotels will leverage AI and big data to craft bespoke experiences. Eco-conscious

practices—like renewable energy, waste reduction, and local sourcing—will appeal to the traveller. Wellness, health-focused packages offering yoga, meditation will become must-haves for the mindful globetrotter

However, to believe Sharma’s observation, “The hospitality landscape is shifting as travellers move away from standardised experiences, favouring personalised and culturally immersive stays.” One-size-fits-all services are being replaced by tailored offerings that cater to individual preferences. At the same time, extravagant, unsustainable luxury is losing relevance, prompting the industry to adopt green technologies and environmentally conscious practices. He added, “Traditional business travel is on the decline, driven by virtual meetings and hybrid work models. Travellers now seek spaces that foster both productivity and relaxation, with a focus on flexibility and authentic cultural connections.” ♦♦



The Fern Hotels & Resorts
expands with

Zinc Resorts

in Karjat, Diu



The Fern Hotels & Resorts, has launched two new resorts, Villament Zinc Journey by The Fern, Karjat and Kamnath Zinc Journey by The Fern, Diu. The brand has a total of 73 properties across Maharashtra, Gujarat, Daman & Diu, operational & opening shortly. The addition of these new resorts will reinforce the brand's leadership position in these key leisure markets. Tucked away in the serene landscapes of Karjat, Villament Zinc Journey by The Fern features 20 stylishly furnished cottage rooms and suites. While, Kamnath Zinc Journey by The Fern, Diu is a serene escape located on the tranquil Nagoa beach. The resort features 18 elegantly appointed sea-view tents, each with its own veranda sit-out, thoughtfully designed to harmonise modern sophistication with traditional charm.

MOT to document
GI-tagged products of

Western India

Sharing an update from the Ministry of Tourism, **Dr Sagnik Chowdhury**, Deputy Director General & Regional Director (West & Central India), Ministry of Tourism, Government of India said "We plan to document GI-tagged products all across India. In the western region, we will focus on Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and the Union Territory of Daman & Diu, Dadra Nagar Haveli. We will document, photograph and develop literature on all GI-tagged products in this region. They are an indicator of our heritage and culture and will help attract tourism."

Lords Hotels & Resorts
signs 4 new properties in

Gujarat

Lords Hotels & Resorts has announced the signing of four new hotels in Gujarat, enhancing their presence in the state to a total of 28 properties. **Pushpendra Bansal**, COO, Lords Hotels & Resorts, expressed "These signings reflect the strong momentum our brand has built over the years." The new additions include Lords Inn Sanand, featuring 61 rooms, and set to open by July 2025; Lords Studio Inn Kodinar, offering 23 rooms, and set to open in October 2025; Lords Inn Una, comprising 40 rooms and set to open by December 2025; Lords Inn Gir, projected to have 44 rooms will open in 2026. With this expansion, Lords Hotels & Resorts now boasts a portfolio of 70 hotels and over 3,000 keys spanning across three countries.



MP

govt to launch
**Film Tourism
Policy 2.0**
soon



The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board actively participated in the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) held in Goa showcasing its state-of-the-art film shooting facilities and the innovative Madhya Pradesh Film Tourism Policy. During a panel discussion, **Sheo Shekhar Shukla**, Principal Secretary, Tourism and Culture Department & MD, Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, outlined the key features of the state's current Film Tourism Policy. He also revealed that Film Tourism Policy 2.0 is set to be launched soon, which will offer additional incentives to filmmakers, attract international productions, promote lesser-known tourist destinations in the state, and generate employment for local communities and youth. The revamped policy reflects the state's commitment to creating a more filmmaker-friendly environment.

ITC Hotels

opens Welcomhotel
Jabalpur in MP

ITC Hotels has opened its new property, Welcomhotel Jabalpur, in Madhya Pradesh, enhancing its presence in central India. This hotel pays homage to the Bundelkhand region and is part of the brand's strategy to grow in tier II and III cities, providing unique experiences. The hotel features over 15,000 sq ft of banquet space suitable for various events, including weddings and corporate gatherings. It combines modern amenities with traditional architecture and offers 122 rooms and suites with views of the city's natural scenery. Located near key tourist attractions such as Madan Mahal Fort and Bhedaghat, the hotel offers guided tours to local sites and access to nearby national parks. It will also serve as the perfect leisure destination as it is situated in Bargi Hills. The hotel also features a traditional thali 'WelcomSthalika' comprising local delicacies such as *chakki ka saag* and *dudhi halwa* highlighting the region's culinary heritage.



LetsGoa to connect tourists with service providers

Goa has taken a stride into the future of tourism with the launch of 'LetsGoa', an innovative digital platform enhancing travel experiences for both tourists and locals. Unveiled by **Pramod Sawant**, Chief Minister, Goa, and **Rohan A Khaunte**, Minister of Tourism, Goa, LetsGoa, is a comprehensive tool connecting tourists, locals, and service providers such as hoteliers and activity operators. It also features a Digital Tourism Card, granting discounts, rewards, and redeemable travel points. Khaunte said, "LetsGoa integrates tourism, technology, and local businesses, serving as a reliable one-stop guide for Goa's services and empowering travellers with seamless access to all their needs in the state." There are over 100 hotels and 50 activity providers already onboard. The launch included additional initiatives, such as 75 public WiFi hotspots, 11 BSNL 4G towers, and the One Map Goa GIS portal, bolstering connectivity and planning. ♦♦

Delhi & Mumbai

to rule demand & supply

Upward curve is estimated for the hotel industry in 2025 powered by domestic leisure travel and MICE momentum.



What does 2025 hold for the hospitality sector? If you are also curious about the same as a stakeholder, ICRA has some good news for you!

India's hospitality sector is set for a promising 2025, as ICRA projects a 7-9 per cent revenue growth in FY2025 and 6-8 per cent

in FY2026. Building on FY2024's strong base, the industry is poised for sustained momentum, offering optimism for stakeholders and continued sectoral resilience.

Occupancy Rates & ARR

As per ICRA, pan-India premium hotel occupancy will improve to 72-74 per cent in FY2026 from 70-72 per cent in FY2025. The Average Room Rates (ARRs) for premium hotels are projected to rise to ₹7,800-8,000 for full-year FY2025 (up 8 per

cent year-on-year) and improve further to ₹8,000-8,400 in FY2026.

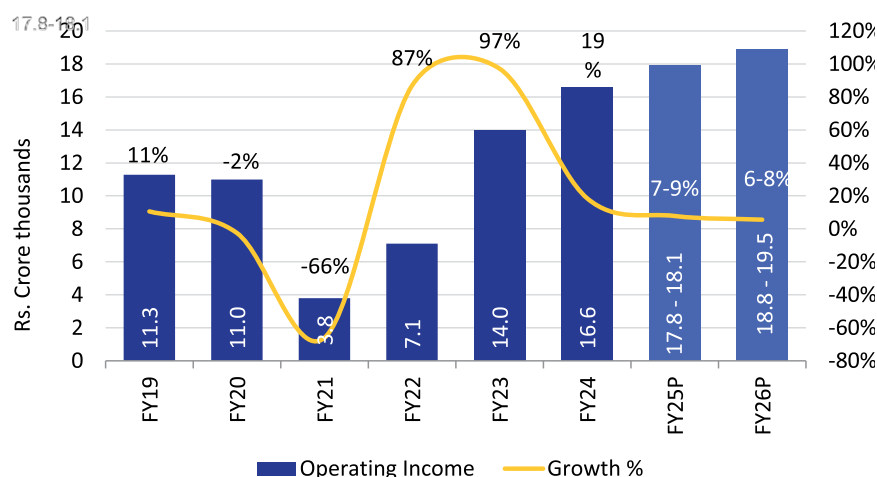
Major drivers

The industry is primarily going to be driven by domestic leisure travel, and demand from MICE, including weddings and business travel in FY2025. ICRA anticipates this trend to continue over the next 9-12 months.

Additionally, spiritual tourism and tier II cities are expected to contribute in FY2026 as well.



Exhibit: Revenue Growth Forecast for the Industry Sample Set



VINUTAA S
VP and Sector Head,
Corporate Ratings, ICRA



- Demand has remained strong in YTD FY2025 and this trend is likely to continue over the next 9-12 months.
- The margins are expected to be significantly higher than pre-Covid levels, going forward. The sample set reported more than 200% increase in accruals vis-à-vis pre-Covid levels in FY2024, and the accruals are only expected to increase further in FY2025 and FY

The demand outlook over the medium term remains healthy, supported by a confluence of factors, including improvement in infrastructure and air connectivity, favourable demographics, and anticipated growth in large-scale MICE events, with the opening of multiple new convention centres, among others.

Healthy demand amid relatively lower supply would lead to higher ARR. The healthy demand uptick has resulted in a pick-up in supply announcements and commencement of deferred projects in the last 24-30 months. "Several global brands have made their entry into India. However, supply of hotels, which is expected to grow at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 4.5 to 5 per cent at least until FY2026, would lag demand."

As per ICRA, a large part of the new supply is through management contracts and operating leases. Land availability issues currently constrain supply addition in the premium micro-markets in metro and many other larger cities.

The addition to premium hotel supply in these areas is largely on account of rebranding or property upgradation. Vinutaa also averred that the tier II cities will see a demand spike in mid-scale hotels.

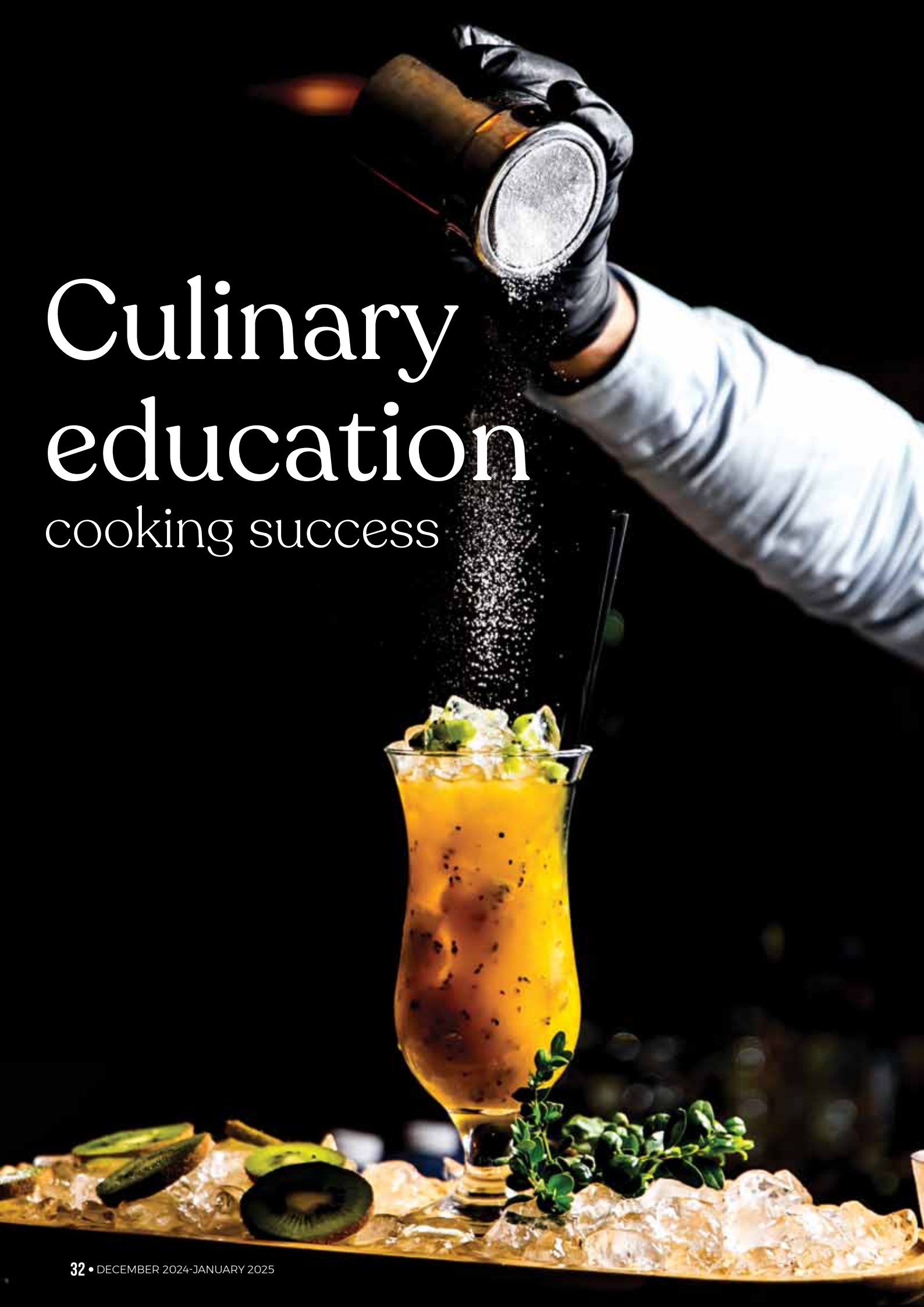
It was also observed that the air traffic in tier II cities has witnessed a CAGR of 10 per cent between FY2016 to FY2024 and has been higher than the 6 per cent CAGR seen in the top six cities during the same period. This healthy traffic inflow into tier II cities augurs well for the growing hotel demand in smaller cities. ♦

"Land availability issues will challenge supply addition in the premium micro-markets in metros and larger cities."

Foreign tourist arrivals are yet to recover to pre-COVID levels, and the improvement would depend on the global macroeconomic environment.

Vinutaa S, Vice President and Sector Head, Corporate Ratings, ICRA, said "Demand is expected to remain strong across markets in Q4 FY2025 and FY2026. Hotel-specific metrics would, however, depend on location, competition and other property-related dynamics. Mumbai and NCR, are likely to report higher occupancy of 75 per cent for FY2025-26. The sharp rise in ARRs of premium hotels will result in spillover of demand to mid-scale hotels." Additionally, NCR and Mumbai will also generate 42 per cent of the supply pipeline until FY2026.





Culinary education

cooking success

As hospitality industry is evolving, the food and beverage segment remain a vital player in attracting customers, which could be elevated by mastering the art of culinary expertise.



HRAWI Bureau

The hospitality sector's heartbeat is food, pulsating with flavour and warmth. As the hospitality industry continues to evolve, culinary mastery takes center stage. Quality and diversity on the plate shape the reputation of hotels and restaurants. However, the critical question in this regard is— how to achieve such mastery?

To craft unforgettable dining experiences, structured culinary education and programmes is of paramount importance. It transforms aspiring chefs into skilled artisans, infusing authenticity, hygiene, and safety into every bite. With each expertly prepared dish, the hospitality industry's growth is nourished, leaving a lasting impression on the palates and memories of guests, and fuelling an unwavering passion for culinary excellence.

Technical mastery

At the heart of culinary education is the cultivation of technical proficiency. Students gain hands-on experience in crucial skills like knife techniques, cooking methods, and kitchen management. This practical training ensures that graduates can execute recipes with precision and efficiency.

Fostering culinary innovation

Focus on culinary education encourages students to explore their creativity and experiment with flavours, and techniques. By nurturing an environment of innovation, programmes help students develop their unique culinary style and identity.

Understanding business side

A comprehensive culinary education

extends beyond the kitchen, equipping students with vital business knowledge. Courses in menu planning, cost control, and restaurant management prepare graduates to handle the commercial aspects of the culinary world, ensuring they can manage and sustain a successful food enterprise.

The global perspective helps chefs develop a deep appreciation for diverse food cultures, enabling them to craft menus that appeal to a broad audience

Global perspective

Exposure to a variety of cuisines is a key component of culinary programmes. This global perspective helps chefs develop a deep appreciation for diverse food cultures, enabling them to craft menus that appeal to a broad audience.

Professional growth

Culinary education often includes

opportunities for internships, externships, and networking. These experiences provide students with practical, real-world experience and valuable connections within the industry, and helping them build a robust network of industry contacts.

Sustainable practices

An increasing number of culinary programmes are integrating ethical and sustainable practices into their curriculum. Students learn about responsible sourcing, reducing food waste, and minimising environmental impact, preparing them to contribute positively to the industry and promote sustainable practices in their professional lives.

Holistic approach

Culinary education is more than a learning process of cooking. It fosters a holistic approach to gastronomy, blending technical skills with creativity, business acumen, and ethical considerations. This training empowers chefs not only to create dishes but also to make meaningful contributions to the culinary world.

By nurturing a range of skills— from innovative cooking techniques to business savvy and ethical practices—culinary programmes are shaping the next generation of culinary leaders. ♦



Emerging roles in hospitality

Government initiatives make way for fresh job roles that are set to dominate employment landscape in hotels this year.



And Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD), which boost infrastructure and religious tourism of our country, the industry is witnessing a transformation in how services are delivered to guests. Technological innovations are also influencing workforce needs accordingly. Focusing on emerging skill sets, **Dhriti Prasanna Mahanta**, VP & Business Head, TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship, highlights the top job roles that will define hospitality in 2025.

Roles in high demand

As per him, at the entry-level, the roles in high demand comprise assistant chef, commis (junior) chef, and duty manager for guest services. Kitchen helper, demi (junior) chef de partie and food and beverage service staff are other popular roles. Other in-demand roles set to surge in 2025 include facility staff manager who oversees operations of facilities, meet and greet officer, chef de partie who leads a specific section of the kitchen, barista executive, manager of beverages and cafeteria supervisor, who manages daily operations of in-house cafeteria. ♦



The Indian hospitality industry is set to encounter new in-demand job roles that will lead the way in 2025. The demand for skilled workers in the sector

in 2021 to US\$500 billion by 2028, signifying greater opportunities for businesses. Alongside, the sector is set to create thousands of jobs, particularly in hospitality services and management roles.

Initiatives for new roles

By virtue of government initiatives such as Swadesh Darshan and Pilgrimage Rejuvenation

Technological innovations are enhancing guest experiences, which is influencing workforce needs accordingly

continues to rise as the sector adapts to new user preferences. TeamLease Degree Apprenticeship shared that the sector would grow from US\$175 to 180 billion



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