

HRA Today



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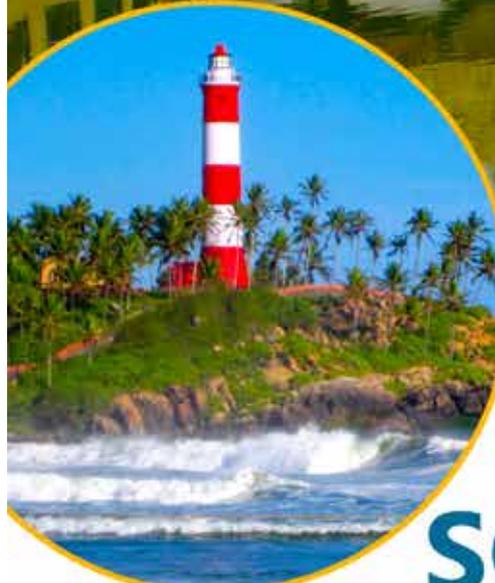
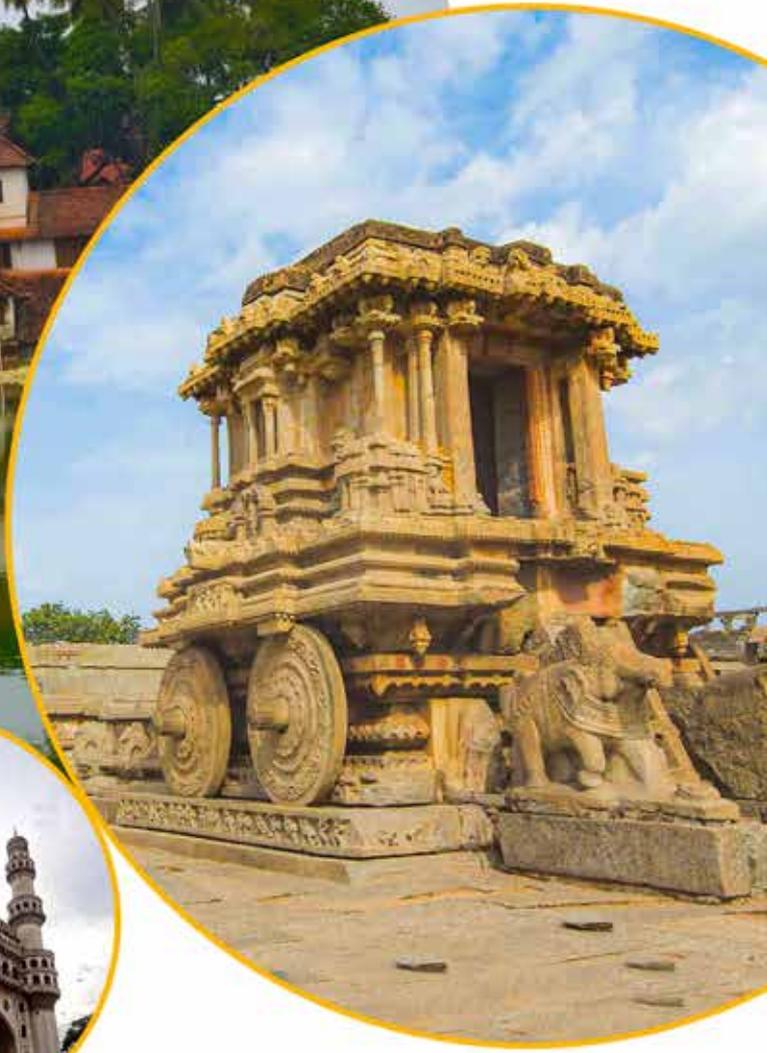
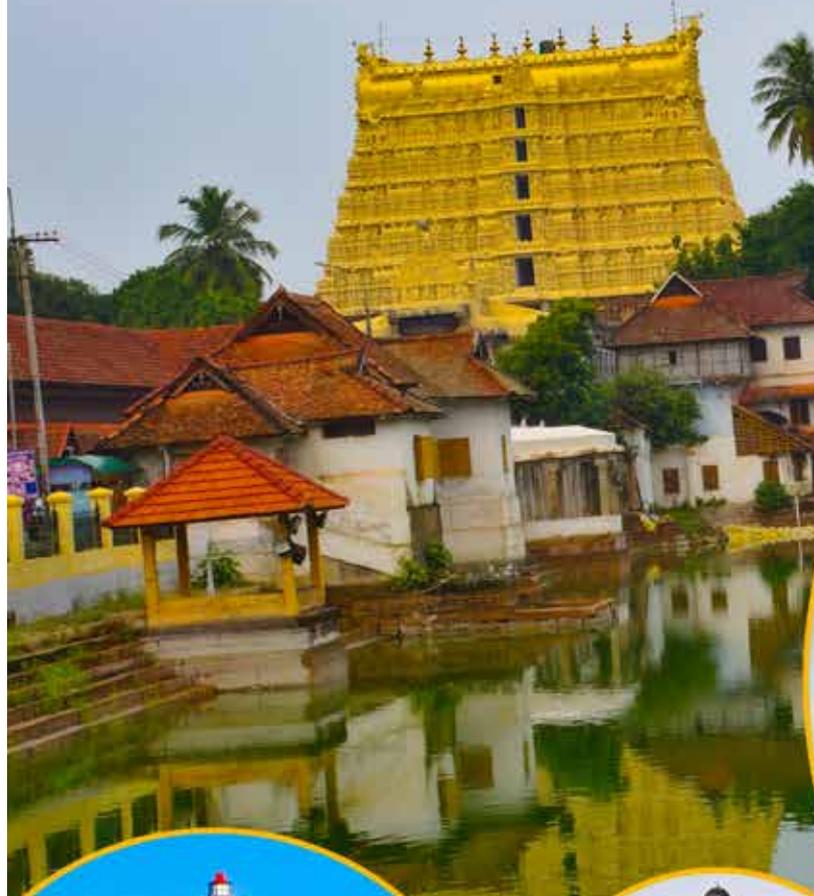
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**INCREASING CUSTOMER SUPREMACY:
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**

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INDIA
TRAVEL
EXPO**



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President's Message



Dear Fellow Members,

As we look back into 2019, though the year has been fairly good, the road ahead is going to be quite challenging.

Your Association with the apex body, FHRAI has filed a case against Online Travel Aggregators, MMT, Go-Ibibo & OYO Rooms before the Competition Commission of India (CCI). Accordingly, CCI has identified a case for Investigation into OYO's business practices under Section 26 (1) 2002. Time and again, your Association has expressed that the Hotel Industry particularly in the Budget segment is being exploited by OYO. OYO, under the garb of incremental revenue, has persistently been arm twisting the small and Budget Hotels for quite sometime.

To summarize, CCI has been informed as to how OYO presently leverages on the vulnerability of the hoteliers and gets away scot-free, without any consequences. Your Association has also issued an Advisory to all its Members asking them to reach out and inform the FHRAI for any unjust actions taken against them by OYO.

Friends, at the recently concluded Parliamentary Standing Committee Meeting held at J W Marriott, Juhu, Mumbai, the Standing Committee was appraised about

the stunted growth of the Hospitality Sector and unfortunately after a decade, was yet at an inflection point of a stunted growth. It is necessary that the Government should understand the full potential of the Hospitality and Tourism Sector and must capitalize on its huge potential. The Standing Committee was also categorically briefed that one of the major boosts that it can provide in respect of the success of the Hospitality Industry is to grant it "Industry Status" on a National Level and accordingly, compensate the various States for any national loss. Major emphasis was laid before the Committee that the Hospitality Industry needs to be made eligible for Tax Incentives and to the Infrastructure Industries under Section 80 IA of the IT Act.

The Committee was also informed as to how the Hospitality and Tourism was always being given a raw deal and never given the recognition it deserves. It was again suggested that the industry needs to be recognized and mentioned in the Concurrent List. As of today, inspite of the Hon'ble PM calling it one of the important pillars to drive the economy, the Industry is not covered under any of the Three Lists. There was also no mention of it in the past

budgets. Mumbai, the city that never sleeps has another reason to live up to its name as the Maharashtra State Government has given Malls, Eateries and Multiplexes the go ahead to stay open 24x7. Your Association attended the meeting called by the State Environment, Tourism & Protocol Minister, Mr. Aditya Thackeray on 16th January, 2020 where this decision was taken and was represented by the undersigned and Mr. Dilip Datwani, Ex-Officio Member, HRAWI.

The State Environment, Tourism & Protocol Minister, Mr. Aditya Thackeray was appraised about the Hospitality Development Promotion Board (HDPB) and was requested that the same should be revived. He was also handed over a docket prepared by your Association about Ease of Doing Business, wherein, the issue of 24x7 was covered in length by formation of Tourism Zones across Mumbai. Details on the various aspects of Ease of Doing Business were briefed to the Minister, who acknowledged the same and further mentioned, that as he found the docket to be very informative, he would like to further study the same.

As we step into the year 2020, I strongly believe that it holds a lot of promise for the Tourism Industry. The Industry also expects like every year, that the forthcoming Budget will fulfill their demands, thereby, joining hands with the Hospitality Trade to create a Tourism friendly and a viable destination, keeping in mind that the policies on taxes are reformed in terms of rationalization of GST.

I wish all Members and their families, including their Team Members a Very Happy, Peaceful and Prosperous 2020.

Thank You

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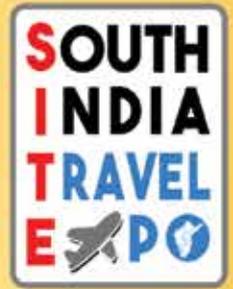
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ADVERTISE in the SITE 2020 OFFICIAL DIRECTORY

A COMPREHENSIVE HANDBOOK ON
SOUTH INDIA TOURISM

KERALA | TAMILNADU | ANDHRA PRADESH | TELANGANA | KARNATAKA | PONDICHERRY | GOA



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SIHRANews
HOSPITALITY MAGAZINE



INCREASING CUSTOMER SUPREMACY: HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

N.Vijayagopalan

The hospitality industry has been acknowledged as a major segment driving the economy of India in a significant manner. This has turned out to be an extremely competitive industry and businesses operating within it are straining every nerve to keep up with the latest trends, lest they would be left behind. Keeping pace with the wider industry has emerged as a pressing necessity for all its segments and it is one of the ways owners can help to ensure their business is delivering an excellent customer experience.

A close look at the hospitality market in India shows a few significant trends right now. The hospitality industry is a diverse one and includes everything from hotels and other accommodation types, through to restaurants, bars, travel agents and tour operators. These trends are more or less typical across the industry.

Tourists or travellers are becoming increasingly desirous of enjoying local experiences. Many of them are driven by the desire to experience a life different from their own in authentic way in the location they visit. Businesses in the hospitality industry have started to responding to this by catering to their demands. Hotels provide local products. Other options like Airbnb and farmhouse accommodation offer a more authentic guest experience. Travel agents and tour operators help travellers to take part in local activities.

There is a major shift in the care and caution exercised by travelers in the foods they consume. Till the recent past, a significant section of the hospitality industry was made up of fast food restaurants and bars selling sugary alcoholic drinks. However, the current scenario is witnessing

something of a cultural shift, with people becoming more aware of the things they are putting in their bodies, leading to a healthy food and drinks trend. For restaurants, this has meant re-vamping menus with healthier options, including gluten free, dairy free, low fat, vegetarian, vegan and organic options. The trend for healthy food and drinks extends to hotels, catering services and even holiday as well, with healthier room service options, as well as healthier drinks sold behind bars.

Customers are becoming increasingly concerned with environmental issues. It is indeed a redeeming sign that they are interested in knowing that the businesses they deal with are behaving ethically. Thanks to this, sustainability has been one of the most noticeable hospitality trends of recent times, with a growing number of hospitality businesses promoting their eco-friendliness. Examples of this range from restaurants promoting their vegetarian and vegan options, through to hotels that make use of smart light bulbs and smart heating to save energy. Within the accommodation sector, there are also decisions to be made about using more sustainable materials for things like towels and bed sheets.

Across almost all industries, the need for personalisation is a major trend, and the hospitality industry is no different. This is primarily driven by the rise of big data. Meanwhile, a growing number of hotel guests want to be treated as individuals, rather than just another anonymous customer. Personalisation is

deployed in diverse ways. For instance, within hotels returning customers are automatically provided with services similar to last time they stayed, while they are personally greeted by a member of staff upon arrival, using GPS technology and booking data.

With the rise of smart devices, hotel guests are also enabled to use their own devices and accounts on entertainment platforms. 'Smart hotel', which means a hotel that makes use of internet-enabled devices, capable of sending data to one another, is now the in-thing in hotel industry. Smart hotel designs are tied in with the idea of the 'Internet of Things' and have emerged as a more popular concept. A smart hotel might allow guests to control the heating or air conditioning from their phone, or turn on the TV by giving a voice command to a smart speaker. Smart rooms can automatically adjust things like the brightness of light bulbs, or the temperature of a radiator, in order to maintain optimal conditions.

Artificial intelligence plays a number of different roles within the hospitality industry, but the main one is to improve customer service. One example of this is AI-powered chatbots, which can be used for online customer interactions, removing lengthy waiting times and providing swift, intelligent responses to questions. There are additional uses for artificial intelligence technology too. For instance, some hotels have introduced AI and voice controlled customer service or



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tourist information hubs within their hotels. Meanwhile, AI can also be used to sort through data, automatically make adjustments to processes, and so on.

One of the most exciting hospitality trends is the emergence of robots, which are defined as machines built to carry out complex tasks, either autonomously or semi-autonomously. They are often equipped with artificial intelligence, and can help those operating in hospitality management by generating speed, cost and accuracy improvements. Some hotels have, for example, introduced a robot concierge recently, which is able to respond to human speech and answer questions. Some travel agencies



have experimented with robots to pre-qualify customers as they wait to speak to agent. The Henn-na Hotel in Nagasaki, Japan is entirely robot-staffed.

‘Bleisure’, which refers to trips that combine business travel with leisure activities, is becoming increasingly popular, especially among the millennial generation. A traveller may initially visit a location to attend a business meeting or conference, but then extend their stay to turn it into a holiday. This is one of the most interesting hospitality trends for those in the industry to respond to, as ‘Bleisure’ travellers are likely to want spontaneous services, excellent access to information and fast communication. Mobile apps are one way to achieve this, while hotels try to remove as many barriers to booking as possible. Over the past few years, virtual reality headsets have become mainstream

consumer products, bringing virtual reality technology into the mainstream. This is one of the most potentially game-changing hospitality trends, because VR technology has the capacity to digitally alter a person’s entire surroundings. This can be applied in a number of interesting ways by those in the hospitality industry. Hotels might use VR technology as part of their booking processes, allowing users to experience a highly realistic digital version of their hotel rooms before booking. Meanwhile, travel agents can use virtual tours/ 360 videos of tourist attractions to sell holidays.

Augmented reality technology is similar to virtual reality technology in many ways, but rather than creating a new digital environment for users, it is concerned with enhancing real-world environments through graphical or informational

overlays. Unlike VR technology, it also usually requires nothing other than a smartphone and an app. Augmented reality apps can be designed so that users can point their phone at a restaurant and see reviews, or opening times. Hotels and other accommodation types can also use augmented reality to provide interactive tourist information maps within their properties, or to create fun opportunities to create user generated content.

It can be seen that the hospitality industry trends discussed above are a strong pointer to the customer or the guest gaining more supremacy coming to the centre stage in the whole scheme of things, as each of these trends seeks to make their experience unique. Those in the industry are seen to keep up with the latest hospitality trends realizing the fact that if they don’t, they would fall behind competitors.



WESTERN STATES

GATEWAY TO INDIA'S TOURISM



Dr. Himanshu Talwar
Assistant Secretary
General, FHRAI

India's tourism industry is on a trajectory of growth. Some of its major components are Adventure, Medical, MICE, Wellness, Religious, Film, etc. The country earned a whopping USD 27.31 billion, in 2017, in foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism, and witnessed a footfall of 10.04 million Foreign tourists in 2017. With its vast landscapes, diversified art and culture, archaeological sites, India is unique in its way and offers a plethora of options for tourists. India's western states are both culturally and geographically very diverse. For instance, the state of Gujarat is home to world heritage sites like Lothal, Dholavira, and Champaner, and also it has National parks and religious sites spread across the state. Adjacent to Gujarat is

the state of Maharashtra, which is one of the most visited states by foreigners. Capital city, Mumbai, is called the financial capital of India. The state has a rich religious heritage and profound mythological significance. It is home to famous temples of Hinduism, Jainism, and Sikhism. The state of Goa relatively smaller in size than other states, contributes significantly to its GDP through tourism earnings. Other nearby states like Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, and union territories like Daman & Diu are of equal importance to promote tourism in the region.

Despite all the strengths, there are a few areas which if re-looked into could reap marvellous results, such as: -

Development of regional touristic network at the grass-root level

by connecting villages famous for handicrafts, foods, ethnic dresses, etc.

Upgradation of infrastructure at routes famous for adventure, hiking, pilgrimage, plantations, etc.

Dissemination of information and promotion using conventional methods of marketing like hiring local guides, advertising in local language newspapers, hoardings/placards at local bus and train stations, etc.

Apart from promoting the country's tourism potential through roadshows, seminars, and social media, a more robust and strategic approach is the need of the hour to encash the untapped and untouched collective regional tourism potential.



“Better infrastructure and connectivity requisite for Goa market”

Siji Nair



R Srijith

Director of Sales & Marketing,
The Leela Goa, Cavelossim, Goa.

What is your take on the hotel industry in India?

The hotel industry is an important and emerging industry as it provides vast employment opportunities to the youth of the country. The industry is expected to grow further due to increasing leisure and corporate travel. Also destination weddings have hugely contributed to this industry. International tourist arrivals, medical tourism, MICE and incentives have all added to a robust demand for tourism in India. Attractive opportunities like availability of medical facilities, convention facilities, eco-tourism, religious tourism etc. have helped in the growth. Government policies like Swadesh Darshan scheme, golden triangle circuit, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan have also supported tourism. The country has diverse attractions on offer like beach destinations, world heritage sites and various bio geographical zones.

What have been the challenges you have faced in the Goa market?

The challenges faced in the Goa market primarily would be its connectivity into the destination, in comparison to other similar destinations like Sri Lanka, Maldives etc. Local infrastructure such as roads, tourist facilities and public transport act as a deterrent for tourists.

As a luxury hospitality brand, how do you see the Indian market evolving?

The hospitality business has been growing across India. Many Domestic and International brands have stepped into the Indian market in the luxury hospitality space. This is

testimony to the fact that the market is evolving and there are enough opportunities.

How do you think technology has changed the hotel industry?

With the advent of social media, marketing has turned digital. A strong CRM is today's mantra for integrating with clients, and technology makes this possible. Though a little late, the hotel industry is fast catching up in creating a strong presence in the digital space to provide visibility for their brands.

Over the years, you would have explored various markets in your career. How are these markets different from Goa?

Each market / destination has a different characteristic which has specific selling points and has created a niche for themselves in the market and in the minds of the discerning traveler. Goa as well has its own unique selling points which make it different in comparison to any other destination. Goa has largely been marketed as the top beach destination in the World.

How do you see the future of the hotel industry in India? What are the challenges ahead?

Increasing supply has turned the industry from a seller's market to a buyer's market. Luxury hospitality is a tangible product, therefore, communicating this through the digital medium is challenging. It is difficult for customers who are located far away to experience the product remotely, making it a challenge to market such luxury brands. Also, hoteliers have to introspect and come up with cost efficient

methods of operating, as maintaining luxury brands are extremely expensive.

What are your views on the competition prevalent in the industry? And what special strategies do you follow to cope up with market competition?

With an increase in the number of players in the business, there has been added competition. Each player is defining its own uniqueness. Competition is apparent, with the advent of foreign brands since it is now a buyer's market. We, as a luxury brand, need to constantly go back to the drawing board and reinvent ourselves by focussing on our strengths which are services and the experience we provide to our customers. We also maintain a strong database of loyal customers who have been visiting us each year for decades.

What do you think needs to be done to further promote hospitality industry in Goa?

There needs to be better infrastructure and connectivity to further promote the hospitality industry in Goa. There needs to be an improvement in air and water-ways transport. Airport, tourist and medical facilities also need to be developed for a steady growth in tourism. The government needs to take initiatives to maintain tourist spots and to provide essential facilities around them including e-visa for Regions it is presently not applicable. Increasing participation in international fairs and trade-shows is required to get more visibility and to create awareness for Goa as a destination to UK, CIS, European regions.



LUXURY HOTELS RESIST SLOWDOWN IN CONSUMER SPENDING AND DECLINING TRAVEL

Our Bureau

The story of one of the most happening sectors in India is by and large encouraging.

Though the first quarter of the current fiscal saw a slowdown in consumer spending and declining travel, luxury hotels in metro cities like Delhi/NCR, Mumbai and Bengaluru resisted the trend and continued to maintain upwardly stable room rates and occupancies this year according to industry experts.

With GST slashed from 28% to 18%, the luxury hotel market is pinning its hopes for an across the board revival in the last quarter of the calendar year. Industry experts had previously felt the 28% GST slab on luxury hotels in India made them among the most taxed in the world. According to them, luxury hotels in premier business cities such as Delhi, Mumbai and Bengaluru have maintained upwardly stable room

rates and occupancies and the GST cut on luxury hotels will further provide a fillip in guests' expenditure, which will help revenue and margins for luxury hotels in India. It is felt that investors have not shied away from the sector and are looking at buying and developing luxury hotels where hotel operating margins are better on the back of high room rates.

According to industry sources, while 2019 has had fewer full house sold out days than previous years so far and the pan India trend has been muted, a couple of places have been exceptions. While in Mumbai, Gurgaon and Bangalore the markets and demand have held up, Gurgaon and Chennai hotels saw growth over last year. Elsewhere, there has been a small decline in revenue per available room. Industry reading is that the rates have been under pressure because people have been trading down.

It is believed that the slowdown around the general elections and dry days impacted F&B operations. First quarter was difficult because of the air capacity getting affected and also because of the 28% GST rates. There was even a perception that it was cheaper to go overseas than to Indian luxury resorts in destinations like Goa.

With rationalisation of taxes in the hotel sector coupled with the other initiatives introduced to augment business growth, the industry is looking forward with optimism for the third and fourth

quarters of the financial year.

The Oberoi Group suffered a 14% decline in revenue from operations to Rs 289.63 crore for the quarter ended June from Rs 334.96 crore in the corresponding period of the previous fiscal on a standalone basis, owing to factors like declining air travel and reduction of its air catering business. However its revamped Delhi hotel and The Oberoi, Mumbai have done reasonably well according to industry insiders.

In April 2019, French multinational hospitality company Accor Hotels, announced plans of launching its uber luxury brand Raffles in India. Accor said it planned to launch two Raffles hotels one in Jaipur and the other one in Udaipur. Its two Raffles hotels and a Fairmont Mumbai in Sahar are under active construction.

Oberoi Group announced the launch of The Postcard Hotel, their new experiential luxury hospitality brand in December last year and its construction is underway for new hotels in Goa, Ranthambore, Kanha Tiger Reserve and another one on the outskirts of Kolkata.

The Imperial New Delhi- which is cited as Delhi's first luxurious grand hotel found its year to date occupancy for the current financial at par with last year. However business in terms of occupancies and footfalls has been impacted this year due to various political and economic factors according to reliable sources.

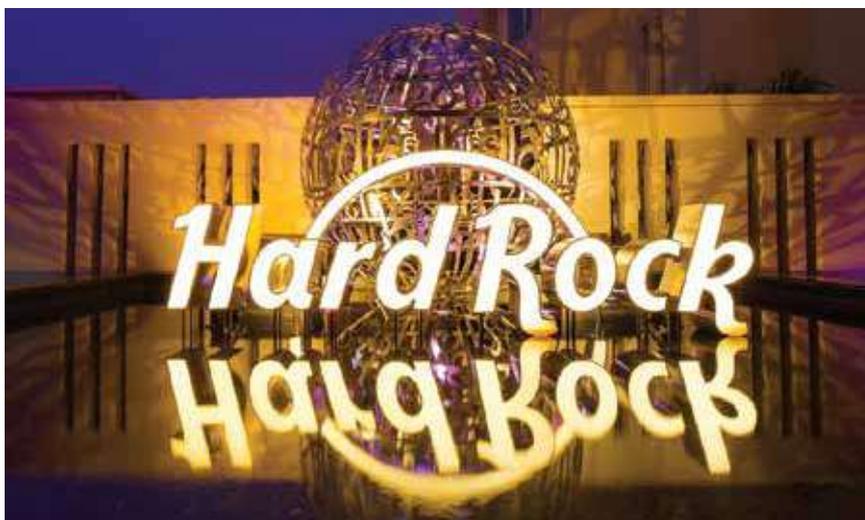


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According to industry experts, the political tensions between India and Pakistan earlier this year also resulted in advisories being issued by governments of various countries from traveling to this part of the world. The closure of the Pakistani airspace only created more fear in the minds of the travelers resulting in many cancellations from various segments.

Hard Rock Hotel Goa hosts Master Chef Challenge



Extending its International Chefs Day celebrations, Hard Rock Hotel Goa organised 'Master Chef Culinary Challenge' for band members to showcase their flair for cooking at the hotel. The event saw enthusiastic staff from kitchen and other departments battle it out for the winning title. Each contestant had to whip up one main course along with an accompaniment in a one hour mystery box challenge.

Speaking about the inaugural edition, Vikas Sharma, Vice President Operations, Hard Rock

Hotel Goa, said, "This is the first time we have hosted an event of this kind for our band members and it was indeed overwhelming to see the response received, especially from our non-kitchen staff members. The cook-off was conceptualised to give each one an opportunity to test their culinary skills based on presentation, taste, cleanliness, creativity and amount of food wastage. The team did a fabulous job adopting innovative cooking styles to bring out delectable dishes to the table. It just shows the pool of talent

and potential we have across departments. We look forward to make this an annual event to keep the enthusiasm going and live up to our motto – All Is One".

Amidst all the chopping, dicing, whisking and clatter, some of Goa's top Chefs were seen interacting with the participants and motivating the staff. Among them were Chef Sunit Sharma, Chef Bhasker Kargeti and Chef Prakhyat Bharat who were on the judging panel along with Chef Arun Vats, Executive Chef, Hard Rock Hotel Goa. The culinary team celebrated their success with Chef Navaraj Gurung winning the Master Chef title while Chef Rohit Rawat and Chef Arvind Sharma were declared 1st and 2nd runners up. In the HOD category, Dnyaneshwar Yadav from Engineering won the 1st place while Supriyo Samanta from F&B bagged the 2nd place. In the "All Staff" challenge, Sefin Mathew and Gobinda Kachari teamed up to win the second place while the F&B duo Suman Das and Vaman Parsekar clinched the first place.

Marriott International debuts in Surat with Surat Marriott Hotel

Marriott International and Auro Hotels announced their second hotel in Surat with the launch of Surat Marriott Hotel. The property is located 8 kms from the Surat Airport, and is 10 kms away from the City Centre. Designed as a premium, full-service hotel, the Surat Marriott Hotel is a blend of contemporary style, warmth and sophistication. The hotel offers 209 guestrooms giving good views of the city and Tapti River, and state-of-the-art facilities and services.



It has a banqueting space of 40,000 sq feet. The hotel is counted as an ideal choice of

venue to host large conventions, socials and weddings on a scale previously not seen in the city.

OTOAI Unanimously Elected New Office Bearers

The Outbound Tour Operators Association of India (OTOAI) has appointed a new team for its Working Committee and Executive Committee for the term 2019 – 2021. While Riaz Munshi, MD, N. Chirag has been elected as the President, Himanshu Patil, MD, Kesari Tours will continue his stint as Vice-President of the Association. Shraavan Bhalla, MD, High Flyer who was earlier in the EC will now serve as the General Secretary, OTOAI followed by Vineet Gopal who has once again entered the working committee as the Joint Secretary. The post of Treasurer has been retained by Sidharth Khanna, Partner, Khanna Enterprises.

The EC has seen women participation growing strong. While it has retained its



previous two members – Ankush Nijhawan, Managing Director of Travel Boutique Online and Adl Abdul Karim, Director, Creative Tours & Travels India, Mumbai; Arshdeep Anand, CEO, HMA Spectrum and Monia Kapoor, Proprietor, Travel O Holidays have increased the ratio of women

participation in the association. Gurdeep Gujral, Director, Gujral Tours and Travels and Mahendra Vakharia, MD, Pathfinders Holidays complete the EC count with their participation. Sanjay Datta, MD, Airborne Travels was the Election Officer of the OTOAI Elections 2019 – 2021.

Digital Experience is the Deal Breaker for Millennial Travelers of India: Travelpoort Research

The recent Global Digital Traveller Research 2019 by Travelpoort highlighted that millennials in India seek a premium digital experience across all aspects of travel. In a research which surveyed 23,000 people from 20 countries; including 2000 from India underlined that travellers in India want and expect travel providers to help them personalize their experience seamlessly.

It revealed that Indian millennial travellers were one of the world's most likely (84%, above the global average of 71%) to consider it important that an airline offers a good digital experience – for instance,

offering online check-in and gate information. Similarly, Indian millennials were the world's most likely to consider the digital experience when booking hotels (e.g. having a room key on their smartphones) – 82% in India considered it important, well above the global average of 58%. The study also finds that Indian users are looking for a value for money deal – only 5% of them

reported always going for the cheapest price (global average of 18%). To get the best deals, they will analyze travel review sites like TripAdvisor (60% in India vs 42% globally) and price comparison sites such as Kayak.com (50% in India vs 38% globally). 93% of Indian travellers also look forward to getting insights from booking sites to discover new destinations.



The Fern Hotels & Resorts opens The Fern Residency, Bhopal

The Fern Hotels & Resorts has opened The Fern Residency in Bhopal. The Fern brand is expanding in the country at a brisk pace. With the opening of The Fern Residency Bhopal, they are now present in 55 cities across the country. It is a 58-room hotel offering contemporary accommodations. The hotel offers three different categories of room viz. Winter Green, Winter Green Premium and riendly light arrangement and bathroom conveniences, tea maker, satellite TV connections and Bedside Bluetooth connection. The hotel also offers a finely-designed



world cuisine restaurant, a lounge bar, swimming pool, fitness centre, spacious banquet halls for conferences, weddings, and social occasions. The hotel is located in

the downtown ISBT area, with an easy access to the city centre and the major sightseeing attractions in town.

Bombay Brasserie reopens at Taj Cape Town with a new design, menu and bar

Ever since 1982, when it first opened its doors in fashionable Kensington, London, Bombay Brasserie has been an iconic restaurant destination, famed for its authentic, eclectic Bombay and Indian cuisine. After reimagining the Indian fine dining scene in London for over three decades, the brand expanded in two other corners of the globe – at Taj Cape Town in 2010 and at Taj Dubai in 2015.

And now, the restaurant has reopened at Taj Cape Town, with a new refreshed, expanded

and refurbished look fused with authentic Indian touches. Headed by Executive Chef David Tilly, the new Bombay Brasserie offers diverse cooking styles from all across India and adds two unique elements – an authentic Cape Town flair and flavour. Guests can also choose from an array of small plates, allowing diners to experience a fine dining interpretation of Indian street food.

Another exciting addition, further enhancing the fine dining experience, is the Bombay

Brasserie Bar, where patrons can enjoy pre-dinner drinks from an extensive range of cocktails, beers, wines and a collection of the finest whiskies and brandies. Bombay Brasserie specialises in a spectrum of flavours, fragrances and textures that epitomize Mumbai's diverse and inspirational cuisine, complemented by classic Indian recipes from around the sub-continent. The cuisine draws on from Parsi cafes, seafood restaurants, famous chaat street food and contemporary fusion creations.

London's Bombay Brasserie has been renewed under the leadership of Chef Sriram Aylur, who founded the Michelin star Quilon restaurant in London. At Taj Dubai, Bombay Brasserie is a tryst between classic and contemporary, offering culinary innovation to its discerning guests.



Tourism need to evolve as a transformation agent in the life of people: Vice President of India



M Venkiah Naidu , Vice President of India said that tourism should play an enablers role in bringing transformation in the life of people. Speaking at the National Tourism Awards function organised by Ministry of Tourism, Government of India as a chief guest in Delhi Naidu said the impact of Tourism should be looked beyond the narrow confines of foreign tourist arrivals and contribution to GDP of the economy.

The government and the private industry need to join hands in skilling people to enable them to take up jobs in the

sector so that their quality of life can be improved, Naidu said. The vice president further said that Indian travel and tourism industry should strive for service excellence by empowering local communities and also sourcing from them as far as possible. The industry should adopt judicious consumption of natural resources and focus on conservation of resources so that impact on the environment and eco system is minimal. Talking about positive side of tourism, Naidu said that it enhances the knowledge of people through interactions with different people and cultures,

etc. Tourism is one activity that brings happiness to people and spread peace in the world. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General, UNWTO was special guest on the occasion. He said that the travel world is celebrating World tourism day at a critical time when global tourism is on the rise. He said that the world is recognising the potential of the sector in generating jobs and bringing transformation in the life of people beyond the key cities. Talking about the theme of World Tourism day this year which is ‘Tourism and Jobs’, he said that key is not just to create jobs but it is also about the quality of helping people live with respect and dignity. Awards for excellence tourism sector were given on the occasion to Indian states and to private stakeholders who excelled in different parameters of tourism. Prahlad Singh Patel, Union Tourism Minister and Yogendra Tripathi , Secretary Tourism , Government of India also spoke on the occasion.

Ginger launches its 50th Hotel

Ginger Launched it’s second hotel in Surat, the city of diamonds. With the launch of this hotel, the brand touches a significant milestone of fifty operating properties pan India. Ginger Surat City Centre is strategically located in the heart of the city, a few minutes from the railway station and important commercial centres. The hotel offers 109 rooms, Café Et Cetera - the all-day diner, a



conference room and a fitness center. The hotel presents a co-existence of contrasts through dynamic spaces, seamlessly blending the lines of work and play, bringing about a fusion of global and local sensibilities. Surat, a city in Gujarat is a centre for diamond cutting and polishing and is also known as the textile hub of the nation or the Silk City of India.

PHA Christmas Charity Ball organised at Pune



The Poona Hoteliers Association (PHA) bid a fitting farewell to the eventful year 2019. The Annual PHA Christmas Charity Ball was organized at JW Marriott Hotel Pune, a member Hotel on 24th December. Members and stakeholders of PHA who turned out in the theme of red, white and green generously contributed towards the evening's collection in aid of PRC, Khirkee. The event got off to a festive start with cheers as the President, Mr Sharan Shetty welcomed all and reflected

upon the year's achievements while announcing the next season of PHAPL, the highly successful PHA Premier League. The contributions of sponsors and Members were also recognized, followed by a musical act by Pandora's Box, a popular band in the rock and blues circuit of Pune. A scrumptious spread put out creatively by the culinary team of JW Marriott Pune delighted the attendees as they soaked in the spirit with dance and merriment.

Poona Hoteliers Association is a non profit body founded in 2001 as a voice of the hospitality industry in Pune which takes

up important issues affecting Hotels with relevant local and State authorities, while also making significant contributions to society by raising awareness and funds for charitable causes while creating learning and development opportunities for staff and management of member hotels by organizing seminars, trainings and informative sessions. Their previous such fund raising/ awareness events include blood donation camps and the blockbuster PHAPL (PHA Premier League) an inter Hotel cricket tournament. PHA includes members from the hospitality fraternity as Primary members and other business partners as affiliate members, currently at approx. hundred members and the current President is Mr Sharan Shetty, Director of Hotel Shree Panchratna.

AB InBev partners with IHCL to launch a premium chain of microbreweries in India



Anheuser Busch InBev (AB InBev), the world's leading brewer recently signed an agreement with The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL), to launch a premium chain of microbreweries within its marquee hotels across

key locations in India. This partnership is worth INR 150 crores with plans to open 15 microbreweries over the next 5 years. This exclusive partnership will leverage the collective strength of the two leading companies to shape the future

of quality craft beer in India. The microbreweries will be conceptualised by ZX Ventures, their global innovation and investment team. AB InBev, with its in-house brewing expertise plans to offer the best craft beers using the finest natural ingredients.

According to the company sources, this partnership, exclusive to IHCL will be a first of its kind in the hospitality industry in India and with its diverse collection of over 500 beer brands, AB InBev will be involved in setting up on-site microbreweries at some of the big hotels; the first of which will be at Taj MG Road, Bengaluru, followed by Goa, Mumbai and Hyderabad.

Accolades for MP Tourism



The heart of
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Madhya Pradesh Tourism has been awarded with 10 National Awards in different categories such as, Best Adventure State; Excellence in Publishing in Foreign Language – Chinese Brochure; Best Tourism Promotion Publicity Material – Lonely Planet Pocket Guides; Best

Maintained & Differentlyabled Friendly Monument for Buddhist Monument at Sanchi; Best Wildlife Guide to Manoj Kumar, Panna; Best Heritage City - Orchha; Best Airport – Indore; Swachhta Award, Indore; Best Tourist Transport Operator to Radiant Travel.

These awards were presented in National Tourism Awards 2019 organised on 27th September 2019 (World Tourism Day) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi by Honorable Vice President of India M. Venkaiah Naidu in the Gracious Presence of Union Minister of State for Tourism & Culture (IC) Shri Prahlad Singh Patel, along with Secretary-General of United Nations World

Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Zurab Pololikash.

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India annually presents National Tourism Awards to various segments of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. These awards are presented to State Governments / Union Territories, classified hotels, heritage hotels, approved travel agents, tour operators, tourist transport operators, individuals and other private organisations in recognition of their performance in their respective fields. The National Tourism Awards have, over the years emerged as a prestigious recognition of achievements in the travel, tourism and hospitality sectors.

Hyatt announces expansion of New Planning Tool for Meetings and Events Across Western Europe and India



Hyatt announced the roll-out of its new planning tool Hyatt Planner Portal, a comprehensive tool for meeting planners designed to enhance the overall planning experience at Hyatt. With this solution, meeting planners can work in one tool throughout the planning process to manage meeting details, including contracts, attendee information and costs throughout planning stages. Additionally, the Hyatt Planner Portal will contain information on current, upcoming and past meetings and events, giving planners the ability to review details, access event

history and generate reports whenever needed.

As part of the Hyatt Planner Portal, Hyatt is releasing a new proprietary technology tool to help planners facilitate attendee room reservations. Once the room block is confirmed, meeting planners will receive a custom reservation link on Hyatt.com with their group name, event dates and selected hotel to share with attendees. As attendees confirm their stay, they will automatically be added to rooming lists in the Hyatt Planner Portal for planners to view. Planners will also be able to get a full view of attendees with the option to generate reports in the portal about guest arrivals, cancellations and departures. The Hyatt Planner Portal builds on Hyatt's suite

of planner-focused tools that are designed to support more seamless meeting and event experiences. In addition to the customized reservation link for attendees, the Hyatt Planner Portal will provide planners with banquet menus, event space floor plans and access to collaborative diagramming software. The tool will also be integrated with Hyatt's Event Concierge App, a platform that allows planners to make requests directly to the hotel team via a mobile app, and Group Bill, which organizes all costs into a single invoice for easy payment. The Hyatt Planner Portal is invitation-only and will be available at Hyatt branded hotels in the UK, Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland and India by the end of 2019.



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

HOTELS

Name of the Establishmet	Address
Mahi Water Gate Resort & Club	Gambhira Bridge, Mahi River, Mujpur Borsad Highway, Talika Mujpur, Padra, Vadodara - 391440
Hotel Orient Regency	292-298, Maullana Shaukatali Rd, Near Super Cinema, Grant Road
Unwind Resort	Chapda - Nevari Rd, Hatpiplla, Dewas, Madhya Pradesh - 455223

RESTAURANTS

Name of the Establishmet	Address
Happy Thai	Atria Mall, Ground Floor, Dr. Annie Besant Rd, Opp. Poonam Chambers, Worli, Mumbai - 400018
Bar Bar Restaurant	F-83, 551/52/53, 1st floor, Phoneix Marketcity, L. B. S. Rd, Kurla (W), Mumbai - 400070
Modakam Pur Veg	Shop No 08, Ground floor, Kamana Co-op Hsg. Society Ltd, S . K. Bole Rd, Prabhadevi, Mumbai - 400025
Husttle Bar & Bistro	Hustle, 1st floor, Patel chambers, S. M. Haldankar Rd, Girgaon, Charni Rd - East, Mumbai - 400004

ASSOCIATES

Name Of The Establishmet	Address
LYM Technologies Pvt Ltd.	205, New Vrindavan Bldg, 2nd Floor, Vallabh Bhai Rd, Next to Shubham Hall, Vile parle - West, Mumbai - 400056



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FSSAI to popularise Rapid Food Testing Devices and Kits to redefine Food Safety in 2020

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), country's Food Regulator, will be popularising the Rapid Food Testing Devices and Kits equipped with advanced technologies to redefine Food Safety in the country. The Food Regulator had made a quick progress towards the use of advanced technologies for food testing in the past year by introducing new rapid food testing devices/kits for detection of food-borne pathogens and toxins. These devices ensure "faster, better, cheaper real-time testing of food. These are

expected to become an integral part of quality assurance/quality control programs in the food industry and also for regulatory and surveillance purposes in 2020.

FSSAI had finalized the regulations for approval of rapid testing devices, kits and methods to strengthen the food testing ecosystem in the country last

year. FSSAI has so far approved 30 rapid food testing kits/devices under these regulations. FSSAI is also providing these kits/devices to the State Governments for use by field officers and get quicker & validated results for tests conducted on different food products such as milk and edible oils, amongst others. Steps have been initiated to make these available on government eProcurement marketplace (GeM) portal so that further procurements can be made by Governments, local bodies on their own. FSSAI has already invested over INR 5 crore on this so far.

According to FSSAI, at least 10 states in India are not equipped to ensure food safety, because of scarcity of staff and food testing laboratory infrastructure. Chhattisgarh, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha, Rajasthan, West Bengal, Telangana and Uttarakhand are the worst performing states on food safety.

Conclave for FSSAI Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering for Western Region

HRAWI is organising the 45th Conclave for FSSAI Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering for Western Region at "Hotel Express Towers", Vadodara on 12th February, 2020 and the 46th Conclave at "Hotel Metropole", Ahmedabad on 13th February, 2020. It is statutorily mandatory for the individual establishments to get their personnel trained under this programme as per Section 32B.

The members of HRAWI are supposed to log in and enroll themselves online on the FSSAI-FoSTaC (Food Safety Training and Certification) portal individually, which gives comprehensive information on the course at one platform.

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FSSAI Supervisor Training Programme held at Hotel Jakson Inn, Phaltan on 12th December, 2019

The programme was attended by 36 participants. The Training Partner for the programme was Parikshan and the Trainer was Mr. Praveen Andrew.



FSSAI Supervisor Training Programme held at KEYS HOTEL THE AURES AURANGABAD on 19th November, 2019

The programme was attended by 40 participants. The Training Partner for the programme was Parikshan and the Trainer was Mr. Praveen Andrew.



FoSTaC for the Western Region held at Nashik

Food Safety Supervisor Training in Advance Catering for the Western Region was held at “Hotel Emerald Park”, Nashik on 20th November 2019. Food Safety Training & Certification Program (FoSTaC) is a training module conducted by Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), that exhibits all aspects of food and safety norms to be inculcated during the involvement of any procedure related to food handling, production, processing and its utilization.

As Per Order of FSSAI, Section 16(3)h of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India mandates proper training of persons as Food Business Operator or employees who are involved in Food Businesses or need to be in the future . It has been accorded under the Central License or State License to have at least one trained Food Safety Supervisor for a minimum of 25 food handling staff on all their premises. The nature of business can be carried only after prior certification from a recognized food training partner authorized by the FSSAI.



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APPOINTMENTS



Anand Athavale
Senior Vice President,
Sales and Marketing,
V Resorts

A professional with over 14 years of experience, Anand brings with him a wealth of expertise in the sales and marketing domain. As the director of sales and marketing at The Leela Mumbai, Anand Athavale's core responsibilities will include planning and implementing of the hotel's sales and marketing strategy, maximizing hotel's revenues, exploring business opportunities through events, setting annual budgets, forecasting, analyzing revenue reports and strategy amongst others.



Tania Thomas
Sherat Marketing
and Communications
Manager
on Grand Bengaluru
Whitefield Hotel and
Convention Center

Tania holds 10 years of experience in Marketing Communications, Public Relations and Digital and Social Media Marketing in the hospitality industry. At Sheraton Grand Bengaluru Whitefield Hotel and Convention Center, Tania is responsible for developing annual marketing communications plans, monitoring trends within the industry as well as maintaining relationship with the media. She manages marketing and public relation for Marriott's 100 property in India and the largest convention center in Bengaluru and her responsibility includes ensuring Marriott brand standards and are consistently followed in both offline and online communications.



Ashwin Mathur
Hotel Manager
Four Seasons Hotel
Mumbai

After completing his Bachelors in Hotel & Tourism Management from the Institute of Hotel Management, Bangalore, Mathur's journey with Four Seasons began in 2002 on the island of Kuda Huraa in Maldives as an Assistant Manager in Food & Beverage. In his new role, Mathur will oversee day-to-day operations of the Four Seasons Hotel, Mumbai, including managing 202 luxurious guestrooms & suites, the multi-accolade winning AER – Bar & Lounge and San:Qi: the spa; meetings & events, and will be focused on further strengthening the services and experiences that Four Seasons Hotel Mumbai offers to its guests.



Amit Rao
Executive Sous Chef
The Westin Mumbai
Garden City

Amit Rao brings with him an extensive experience of over 16 years in the hospitality industry, handling numerous specialty restaurants and working alongside Michelin Star chefs. Chef Amit began his career in 2001 at Hotel Taj President, Mumbai, now known as Vivanta by Taj, where he worked at Trattoria and learnt the nuances of Italian cuisine. In his new role, he will supervise and assist in kitchen operations, from crafting innovative menus, ensuring the customers are well attended to managing and mentoring the culinary team, amongst others.



Debarati Bose
Director of Sales and
Marketing
JW Marriott Mumbai
juhu

Debarati will play a pivotal role in driving and overseeing all aspects of sales and marketing strategies, optimizing the hotel's revenue and market share. Debarati Bose comes with a rich experience of over 12 years in the sales and marketing industry, a stickler for perfection and attention to detail, she has motivated her team at all times to achieve targets and has been responsible for business growth in her previous roles.



Himanshu Kumar
Revenue Manager
The Leela Mumbai

Himanshu will be looking after company's revenue function alongside development and implementation of right rate strategy. He will also help the brand to maintain a trajectory of growth, maximizing overall revenue and identifying new business opportunities. With over 15 years of global experience, Himanshu brings with him a vast understanding of the hospitality sector.



Massimo Verzini
 Chef
 Sorriso : The Italian
 Specialty Restaurant,
 Marriott Suites Pune

A goal-oriented individual, Massimo has demonstrated proficiency at every stint in his career. Chef Massimo has over 15 years of international experience, prior to joining Marriott Suites Pune he was working as the Chef de cuisine at Pizza Massilia, Bangkok, Thailand.

He has worked at award-winning restaurants. His experience spans over Italy, China, Singapore, Australia, and India with specialization in authentic Italian style cooking.



Sidney Dcunha
 Executive Chef
 Conrad Pune

At Conrad Pune, Dcunha will be responsible for all day to day operations of the kitchen. He comes with over 15 years of culinary experience in established hotels to pre-opening ones. Prior to joining Conrad Pune, Chef Dcunha has worked with J W Marriott Mumbai Sahar. Previous to that, he has worked with the Taj group of hotels in Mumbai, Delhi, New York, Boston and Ritz Carlton Bangalore.



Melville John
 General Manager
 DoubleTree by Hilton
 Goa- Panaji

In his new role, John will oversee the day-to-day operations of the property and will be responsible for spearheading the growth and development of DoubleTree by Hilton Goa Panaji. With over two decades of extensive experience across the globe, John brings his expertise to strategically position DoubleTree by Hilton Panaji as the destination of choice.



Mr. Amit Bhatia
 Director of Food &
 Beverage
 JW Marriott Jaipur
 Resort & Spa

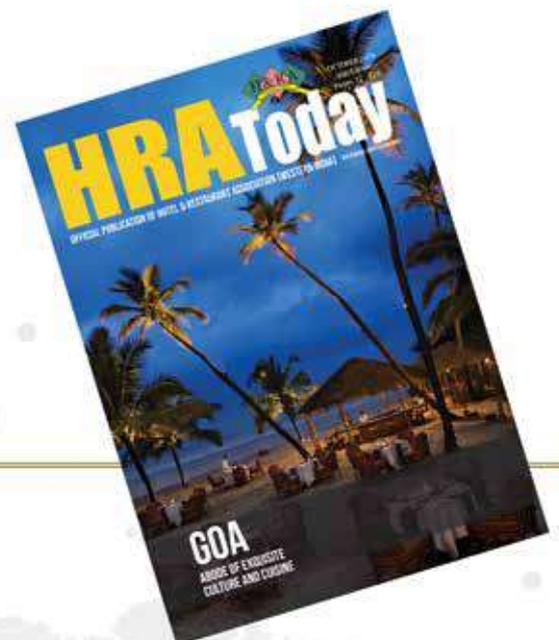
As Director of Food & Beverage at JW Marriott Jaipur, Resort & Spa, Amit Bhatia is responsible for managing the overall operations of the food and beverage department and delivering excellent guest experiences. He spearheads the property's culinary team and systematically reviews and introduces new menu options, upholds menu standards, ensures high quality service, increases food & beverage profitability, whilst keeping an eye on labor and food costs.

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EVENTS



Global Conference on Hospitality, Tourism and Sports Management

04 Jan 2020 Intercity International, Bilaspur
05 Jan 2020 Hotel Sriram International, Coimbatore
07 Jan 2020 Hotel Doon Castle UNA Smart, Dehradun
12 Jan 2020 Grand Sarovar Premiere, Mumbai
14 Jan 2020 Aurangabad
18 Jan 2020 Hotel Sonas Inn Chennai
19 Jan 2020 Treebo Grand Plaza, Hyderabad
19 Jan 2020 Hotel Krishna Sagar, Ghaziabad
22 Jan 2020 Hotel Aiswarya, Kochi

The key intention of GCHTSM is to provide an opportunity for the global participants to share their ideas and experience in person with their peers expected to join from different parts on the world. This gathering is also expected to help the delegates to establish research or business relations as well as to find international linkage for future collaborations in their career path. The conferences are organized by International Society for Scientific Research and Development (IISRD), USA. Each conference is expected to have around 500 delegates and 50 exhibitors from all over the world.



Express Food & Hospitality (39th edition)

MMRDA Grounds, Mumbai, India
22 - 24 Jan 2020

The Express Food & Hospitality (EF&H) - Mumbai is a focused B2B trade show for the fast growing food & hospitality industry with the main objective of creating bigger opportunities and successful businesses for companies and trade professionals in India. A wide range of food and delicacies bring together diverse range of buyers and visitors from different parts of the country. The platform offers Indian and International businesses a wide spectrum of opportunity to establish and network their businesses and brands among the top professionals in the country. The event is being organized by Global Fairs & Media Private Limited.



Gujarat Travel Fair

Sabarmati Riverfront, Ahmedabad, India
22 - 24 Jan 2020

This Gujarat's leading Travel & Tourism Exhibition is a grand Event of 250 Stalls divided in 4 Divisions that are State Tourism Board, International Tourism Board, B2B / DMC and B2C. "Gujarat Travel Fair" is also supported by different Government bodies, Organizations, Travel Associations and other State Tourisms.

The event is being organized by ShreeLaxmi Organizer, Vadodara.



Sula Fest

Sula Vineyards, Nashik
1, 2 Feb 2020

Sula Fest, India's first vineyard music festival is back with a two-day extravaganza of heady world music, wines, and food in the heart of the wine capital of India - Nashik. Sula Fest 2020 is the 13th edition of the music festival. This festival is slated for February 1st and 2nd, 2020 at Sula Vineyards, Nashik.

Reduction in GST Rates to Boost Hospitality Sector

Our Bureau

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had announced the decision of the GST Council to reduce GST rates on a slew of items, effective from 1 October, 2019. The key sectors which benefit from GST rate cuts are hotels, gems & jewellery, defence and automobiles.

Highlights:

- ▶ A uniform GST rate of 12 % on woven/non-woven polyethylene bags.
- ▶ GSY rates on job work in diamond industry reduced to 1.5% from 5%
- ▶ GST on cut and polished semi-precious items reduced to 0.25 per cent from 3 per cent now
- ▶ GST on hotel room tariffs of Rs.1,000 to Rs.7,500/night cut to 12% and for those above Rs.7,500 to 18%.
- ▶ The GST on caffeinated beverages has been hiked to 28% plus additional cess of 12% as against the current rate of 18 per cent.
- ▶ Tax rates for outdoor catering slashed to 5% from 18%.
- ▶ Lower 12% cess on 1,500 cc diesel, 1,200 cc petrol vehicles with capacity to carry up to 13 people.
- ▶ A uniform GST rate of 12% on woven/non-woven polyethylene bags
- ▶ Uniform GST rate of 12% on polypropylene bags and sacks used for packing of goods
- ▶ Rates for cups and plates made from leaves and hides made nil.



- ▶ The tax on almond milk has been set at 18%.
- ▶ GST rate hiked on railway wagon, coaches from 5% to 12%
- ▶ Exemption from GST/IGST being given on import of specified defence goods not being manufactured indigenously, extended up to 2024.
- ▶ Supply of goods & services to FIFA & other specified persons also exempted for U17 Women's World Cup in India
- ▶ GST rate on slide fasteners reduced from 18% to 12%,
- ▶ GST rate on marine fuel cut from 18% to 5%
- ▶ GST cut from 12% to 5% on wet grinders consisting of stone as a grinder,
- ▶ GST made from 5% to nil on dried tamarind.
- ▶ GST rates on hotel room tariffs reduced – Nil for rooms with tariff of below Rs.1,000; slashed from 18% to 12% for tariffs between Rs.1,000 to Rs.7,500; cut from 28% to 18% for tariffs of above

Rs.7,500.

The reduction is expected to give a major boost to the hospitality and tourism industry and make hotels more competitive globally. It helps many companies to focus their efforts on fresh investments in portfolio expansion, job creation and creating sustainable green hotels.

The slashing of GST rates came against the backdrop of most engines of growth faltering and GDP declining to six-year low of 5% in the April-June quarter and pressure mounting on the government to revive the economy. External factors like US-China trade war have also added to the woes.

The performance of the economy in the first quarter of the current fiscal has prompted the government to take measures to boost growth and lift business sentiment. Finance Minister has announced four set of measures to put economy on fast track.



dineout

Dineout launched two customised tech solutions for the F&B industry

Dineout, India's largest dining out and restaurant tech platform launched two customized products for the F&B industry – Dine-in and inResto 2.0 - as part of their expanding product portfolio. The launches were announced during its partner celebration event – Connexus 2019. 'inResto 2.0' is an innovative software for the Restaurant industry which integrates a CRM with a Point Of Sale to provide an end-to-end solution to the daily challenges faced by restaurants. inResto 2.0 will help restaurateurs to recognize their diners and their ordering patterns which will enable them to run customised loyalty programs as well as collect real time feedback from diners. Currently the brand has close to 8,000 restaurants using inResto who will be upgraded to inResto 2.0. Dine-in is a digital menu solution that supports variable and dynamic pricing utilizing data analytics and artificial intelligence. Dine-in is integrated with the POS system which enables restaurants to identify what consumers are ordering and offers food and drink recommendations to them accordingly in real-time. The digital menu reduces the table turnaround time, hence increasing efficiency, better service and more consumers for the restaurants.



UB ventures into alternate beer category with new craft-styled product

United Breweries Ltd has ventured into alternate beer category with the launch of the Kingfisher Ultra Witbier - the first non-lager beer from the house of Kingfisher. According to the company, craft-styled beer is brewed with the authentic Belgian wheat beer recipe, offering a refreshing, light and sessionable taste and with an ABV of lower than 5%, the beer is a rich blend of all natural extracts of orange and coriander, spices sourced from Belgium and new world aromatic hops sourced from USA. The new product is available in 3 SKUs, a 330ml bottle, a 500ml can and a 650ml bottle, priced at Rs 110, Rs 150 and Rs 185 respectively in Karnataka state. The new offering is packaged with a blend of old school and modern graphic design, and the wheatish label is inspired by the product's key ingredient. It is available across Karnataka and Goa. It will soon be available in Maharashtra, Delhi and Haryana.



White Owl launches Spike strong-craft beer brewed to German standards

White Owl, a premium beer brand in India has launched Spike – India's first strong-craft beer, across the country; finally bringing the worlds of craft beer & strong beer into the same bottle in India, according to a company press note. According to the company, brewed using German purity standards, the new brand – despite packing a whopping 7.9% ABV is a smooth and flavourful craft beer with hints of banana and clove.

The company has plans to make Spike & strong craft beer a menu staple at restaurants & bars across the country. The brand has been launched across Mumbai, Pune, Bengaluru, Goa and Delhi in bottles (325 ML & 650 ML) and cans (500 ML).

Elior launches El Chef, a digital initiative for food at the workplace

Elior India, claimed to be India's largest pure play food services company launched El Chef - a new to industry, pioneering digital initiative for food at the workplace. The new platform allows employees to create their favourite menus, monitor order updates and history, check out weekly menus and plan meals based on their specific needs. Information about allergens, the total calorie value of the meal, and e-invoices are also readily available on the platform. In addition to this, all modern payment gateways like online wallets, credit/debit card and UPI are enabled on this interface to allow users a seamless transaction experience without any promotional interventions.





Cocotrait launches range of chocolates packed using cocoa husk paper

Cocotrait has launched its range of chocolates packed using cocoa husk paper which is up-cycled, plastic & paper free, recyclable, biodegradable and compostable. According to the company, the chocolate bars are packed using their cocoa husk paper which is upcycled, plastic and paper free, recyclable, biodegradable and compostable. The company stated that it was the first chocolate brand to follow with such an approach where the inner side of the packaging has mandala art templates, greetings, emergency contacts, habit tracker and so on, all of which make the wrapper reusable. QR and barcodes have been used to educate consumers by providing relevant information and reduce usage of space in our packaging material. The wrapper design is printed at V-Excel Educational Trust aiming to support and foster inclusion and independence of individuals with special needs. According to the company, the sustainable ingredients use organic cocoa beans of Indian origin, most of it from Kerala, which uses traditional non-refined organic khandsari or muscovado sugar.



Sunfeast launches Veda Marie Light with goodness of 5 natural ingredients

Sunfeast, a popular biscuit brand from the house of ITC Foods launched Veda Marie Light biscuit enriched with five natural ingredients namely, tulsi, ginger, cardamom, ashwagandha and mulethi. This offering is the latest addition to the portfolio that currently consists of Marie Light Rich Taste, Marie Light Oats, Marie Light Orange and Marie Light Vita variants. The 75g pack is priced at Rs 10 and 250g family pack is priced at Rs 30. The new offering comes in a stay-fresh pack (two individual inner packs inside one pack) which ensures lesser breakage, convenience of storage and keeps the product fresh for a long time even after the seal of the outer pack is broken in convenient pack size, according to a press release issued by the company.



ITC launches Bingo! Starters, a range made from dal known as pulse chips

ITC has launched its new snacking range 'Bingo! Starters' for the millennials. These pulse chips, the first variant under the brand offer crispy and scrumptious baked chips made from pulses (dal). This snack has a fusion of spices and pulses. According to a press note released by the company, pulse chips score high on health benefits as the chips are baked and made of pulses which are a good source of protein and fibre. The release says combining functional snacking with great taste, the brand is the ideal 'Kalyug ka Snack,' a snack for today's generation. The chips are available in four flavours with each one comprising different types of pulses – Masala (Chana Dal), Peppery (Urad Dal), Minty (Moong Dal) and Chatpata (Masoor Dal). Recognising the potential of guiltless snacking options, the new product is the first offering from the brand which according the press release aspires to appeal to the emerging snacking need of the Gen Z. Youth icon Ranveer Singh will be endorsing the brand.



Aadvik Foods launches raw camel milk powder adding to 40 SKUs portfolio

Aadvik Foods, India's first brand in camel milk industry launched raw camel milk powder. With this launch, the company adds to its product portfolio consisting of 40 SKUs including frozen camel milk, freeze-dried camel milk powder, camel milk chocolates, and camel milk-based skincare solutions. Available for pre-order now, the raw camel milk powder is available exclusively through the company's website. Since its inception, pasteurised camel milk powder has been one of the company's marquee offerings. According to the company, raw camel milk powder is created using a unique freeze-drying process and thus all the naturally occurring properties of the camel milk remain intact in this powder.

The Changing Face of Hospitality Sector

Over the years, the hospitality industry has evolved into a stable, undisturbed market in which steady progress has been witnessed. There is consistent revenue growth in this sector, year in and year out. Hospitality giants keep on getting bigger, widening their breadth, tightening their hold on the global market. The next five years hold the possibility for continued growth. The hospitality horizon has been witnessing exciting developments.

The advent of Airbnb has proved a milestone. Airbnb has transformed the sector by opening up private homes as private accommodations. Over the years, the company amassed more than 6 million listings in about 191 countries. This has paved way for an improvised environment for startups that seek a slice of the booming market for private accommodations by helping to fill in the gaps.

Another rising focus is on the millennial sector of travellers. According to a study by the Cornell Center for Hospitality Research, millennials are expected to represent 50% of all travellers to the USA by the year 2025. There is an increasing tendency in the hospitality sector with high-end hotels arranging excursions that give guests insight about the locale's culture and traditions, cuisine, and even arts and crafts. Hotels impress them through hassle-free transactions and ultramodern amenities, all at reasonable prices.

The technological shift which has been witnessed in every sector is being witnessed in the hospitality sector as well. An increased tech-savvy customer base has forced many technological changes being incorporated into the hospitality sector. Improvised connectivity options and developing mobile technology have transformed the check-in process drastically. There are some hotel chains that use smart phones to unlock a hotel room door. Digital monetary transactions through mobile phones have taken the front seat nowadays and several applications tailored for these functions are available in plenty.

With an emerging health-conscious customer, hoteliers tend to capitalize more on this trend nowadays. Customers increasingly tend to choose hotels based on their health and fitness amenities, pools and spas. Accommodations with innovative wellness options and healthier food choices are increasingly preferred. This has also increased the concern for eco-friendly spaces, and eco-friendly practices have become a norm and this is sure to witness major shifts in the hospitality practices for the coming years over the globe.



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To walk the ancient streets that run
across cultures, beliefs and ideas,
to open wide the mind and watch
the colours seep into each other and
let the courtyard of the world
make us human, all over again.

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