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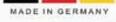






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President's Note



Dear Members and Stakeholders,

s we approach the midpoint of 2025, I am delighted to reflect on the remarkable progress and momentum we have built over the past months. It is heartening to see FHRAI continue to evolve into a vibrant, influential force for India's hospitality industry, fuelled by impactful initiatives, strategic alliances and our shared commitment to shaping a stronger, more resilient future for the sector.

I am especially pleased to inform you that the 55th FHRAI Annual Convention is scheduled to be held from 18 to 20 September 2025 at Hotel Conrad, Bengaluru. This year's theme, "FutureScape 2047: Redefining Hospitality for a New India," embodies a forward-looking vision that aligns with India's transformative journey as we approach the centenary of Independence.

As you are aware, the FHRAI Annual Convention is the most prestigious and eagerly anticipated gathering of India's tourism and hospitality industry. It brings together an extensive cross-section of influential voices—policy-makers, thought leaders, industry stalwarts and eminent personalities from both government and the private sector. I am happy to share that the Convention Organising Committee is working tirelessly to ensure the 55th annual convention will be a memorable and enriching experience for all our members and stakeholders.

On the work front, FHRAI is continuing its multifaceted activities with renewed focus. In a significant policy outreach, FHRAI submitted a comprehensive representation titled, "How Delinking of F&B Rates from Accommodation Charges Can Benefit the Government and the Industry," to all members of the GST Council, the Revenue Secretary and the finance ministers of all states. This long-standing issue has been a major challenge for our sector. Our representation makes the case for delinking F&B taxation from room tariffs, proposing a rational, equitable solution that offers greater operational flexibility to hotel restaurants—comparable to their standalone counterparts.

The submission was supported by a detailed study from FHRAI's Centre of Excellence for Research in Tourism & Hospitality (CERTH), demonstrating that delinking will not result in revenue loss but could, in fact, enhance GST collections significantly. We remain optimistic that this proposal will receive a fair and favourable review by the GST Council.

June also marked a major celebration on a global scale—the International Day of Yoga (IDY) on 21st June 2025. FHRAI was proud to organise this signature event in collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, across three prominent locations. With over 1,000 participants, the celebrations were held with grandeur and spirit, highlighting yoga's global significance as India's gift to the world. The events brought together healthcare and wellness professionals, students, travellers, and hospitality stakeholders, reaffirming our commitment to holistic health, mental well-being and cultural pride.



The 55th FHRAI Annual Convention, from 18 to 20 September 2025 in Bengaluru, will be an enriching experience for all our members and stakeholders."

At FHRAI, our focus remains firmly on advocacy, promotion and capacity building. We are actively engaging with ministries, regulatory bodies and allied sectors to ensure our members' concerns are heard at the highest levels. From tourism infrastructure and tax policy to skilling initiatives and digital outreach, we are laying the groundwork for a future-ready industry.

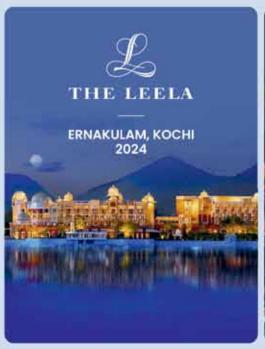
I encourage all our members to stay engaged, share their ideas and take pride in the collective milestones we are achieving. Together, let us continue to build a stronger, more vibrant hospitality ecosystem for India and the world.

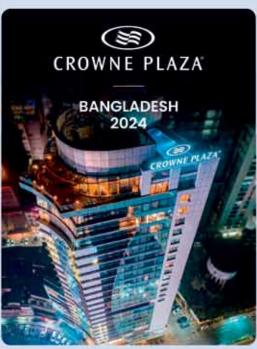
> Warm regards, **K Syama Raju** President, FHRAI

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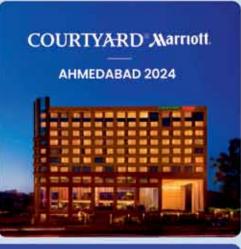






















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FHRAI to host 55th Annual Convention in B'luru

The much-awaited FHRAI's 55th convention will explore how the India's tourism and hospitality industry is poised for a transformative journey towards 2047.



Seeking MDoNER's nod for tourist circuits

FHRAI approaches MDoNER for the development of model tourist circuits in Northeast India, aiming to establish as a premier tourism destination.



Restructure GST to optimise govt revenue

Supported with in-depth research, FHRAI presents suggestions that can augment the govt's GST collection by delinking F&B rates from room tariffs.







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FHRAI leads Int'l Yoga Day celebrations

In collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, FHRAI's initiative showcased India's leadership in promoting global wellness.



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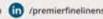


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FHRAI set to host 55th Annual Convention in B'luru

The much-awaited FHRAI's 55th convention will explore how India's tourism and hospitality industry is poised for a transformative journey towards 2047.



HRAI has announced that its 55th Annual Convention will be held at Hotel Conrad Bengaluru from 18-20 September 2025. The three-day gathering is India's premier forum for networking, knowledge-sharing and shaping the future of tourism and hospitality.

The event will focus on the theme "FutureScape 2047: Redefining Hospitality for a New India," a forwardlooking vision that reflects tourism sectors' collective aspirations and the transformative journey of India's tourism and hospitality sector as it moves towards 2047. This year's





"Our 55th Convention offers a unique opportunity to cocreate the blueprint for India's hospitality of tomorrow."

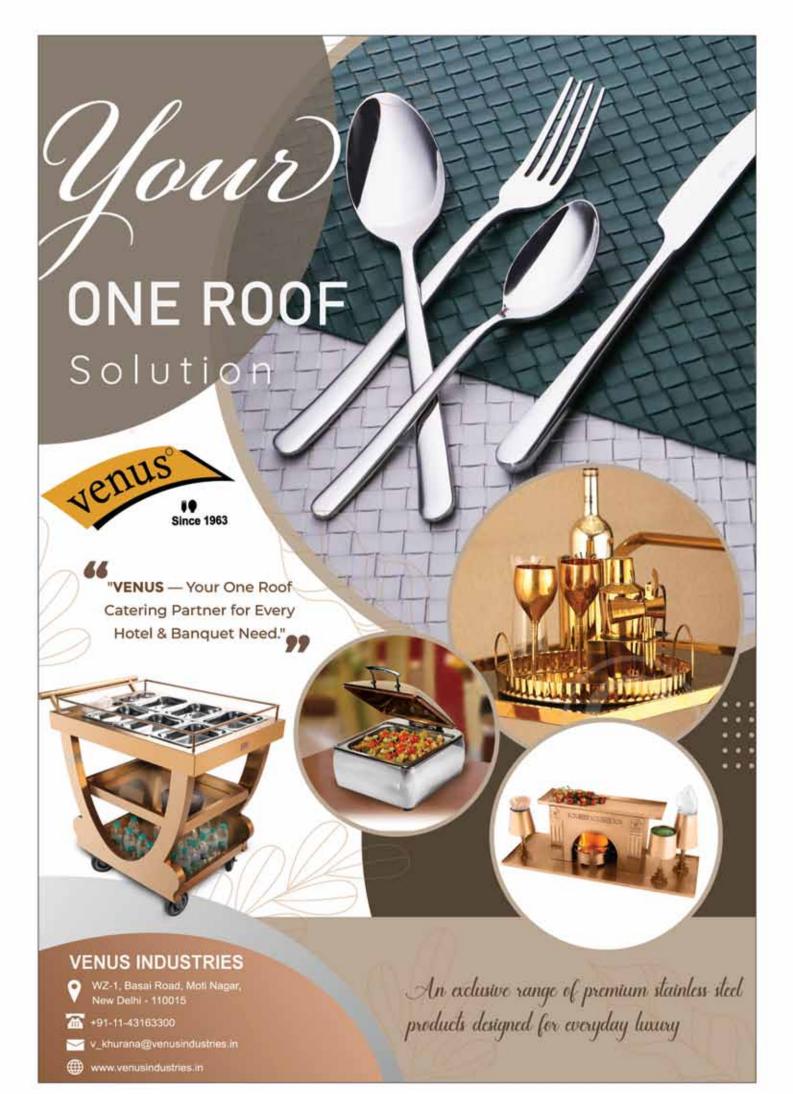
theme underscores the need to innovate, adapt and lead in an era defined by technological advancement, sustainable practices and evolving guest expectations. It calls upon industry stakeholders to reimagine hospitality through the lens of smart infrastructure, digital integration, cultural preservation and inclusive growth.

Dignitaries expected to grace the occasion, include Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah; Union Minister of Tourism

Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and several other state tourism ministers. The event will convene over 1,000 senior stakeholders, policymakers, hoteliers, entrepreneurs, investors and academicians-to explore emerging trends, foster collaborations and chart strategies for a resilient, inclusive and ecoconscious hospitality ecosystem.

"Our 55th Convention offers a unique opportunity to co-create the blueprint for India's hospitality of tomorrow," said K Syama Raju, President, FHRAI. "Bengaluru's spirit of innovation and its world-class infrastructure make it the ideal stage for these critical conversations under the banner of FutureScape 2047."

The event will feature keynote addresses, panel discussions, technical workshops and interactive forums all designed to equip participants with the insights and partnerships needed to lead India's hospitality sector into a bold new era.





Seeking MDoNER's nod for tourist circuits

FHRAI approaches MDoNER for the development of model tourist circuits in Northeast India, aiming to establish as a premier tourism destination.



n a bold move to transform Northeast India into a world-class tourism destination, FHRAI has proposed the development of model tourist circuits to the Ministry of Development of North Eastern Region (MDoNER). By fostering collaborative engagement and the region's unique cultural and natural assets, the association expressed its commitment to supporting the Government's vision of unlocking the tourism potential of the North Eastern Region.

To translate the initiative into action, FHRAI brought forth the following suggestions:

Infrastructure and connectivity development: Upgrade air, rail and

road connectivity to and within the circuit areas, especially tier-II and remote destinations. Develop lastmile connectivity solutions, such as e-rickshaws and shared cabs and build eco-friendly lodging infrastructure like boutique homestays, luxury tents and Ayurvedic resorts under the public-private partnership mode.

Capacity building and community involvement: Train local youth in hospitality, culinary arts, tourist guiding and wellness services through FHRAI-IHM and State IHMs. Encourage community-based tourism models to support local artisans, tribal farmers and cultural practitioners to create inclusive tourism growth. Promote women-led microenterprises in crafts, local cuisine, and wellness services for economic empowerment and social equity.

Upgrade air, rail and road connectivity to and within the circuit areas, especially tier-II and remote destinations

Create Centres of Excellence for skill development where master trainers from FHRAI-IHM and partner institutes can conduct professional training programmes tailored to tourism, hospitality and wellness sectors. Focus on stakeholder convergence and organise sectoral summits and tourism development conferences with support from MDoNER, to showcase investment opportunities.



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In collaboration with the MDoNER, the association aimed to focus on conferences, summits and capacitybuilding initiatives

Leveraging AYUSH and wellness tourism: Promote 'Heal in India' packages with North East destinations for global tourists seeking detox, rejuvenation and nature-based healing. Establish holistic wellness hubs across the North Eastern states, particularly in Sikkim, Mizoram and Meghalaya, offering authentic AY-USH therapies, herbal trails and yoga retreats. By integrating traditional practices with eco-tourism, these wellness clusters can offer immersive wellness experiences to domestic and international travellers.

Digital infrastructure: Build a comprehensive 'North East Tourism Portal' with virtual tours, online booking and itinerary builders. Support local businesses in digitising their offerings, including homestays guides, and experiences. Provide real-time



information on destinations, weather, festivals, travel alerts and encourage digital adoption at the grassroots. Encourage QR-enabled local guides and digital signage and train local stakeholders on e-commerce, social media marketing and digital payments. Promote use of augmented reality/virtual reality experiences for virtual previews of tourist spots and cultural performances.

Sustainability and green practices: Ensure the travel circuits follow sustainable tourism standards, such as waste management, water conservation and eco-construction. Introduce 'Green Destination' certifications for tourism clusters within these circuits.

With its vast network of industry stakeholders, FHRAI noted that they can play a pivotal role by bringing together government bodies, private players, local communities and tourism professionals on a unified platform. With support from MDoNER, they aimed to focus on conferences and capacity-building initiatives.





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Restructure GST to optimise govt revenue

Supported with in-depth research, FHRAI presents suggestions that can augment the govt's GST collection by delinking F&B rates from room tariffs.



alling for an intervention on the operational challenges faced by the industry, FHRAI has written to all GST Council Members, the Revenue Secretary and Finance Ministers of all states, to ensure an equitable and transparent taxation policy. The letter highlighted delinking of food and beverage (F&B) rates from accommodation charges, can be beneficial for the government and the hospitality industry.

The association highlighted to delink this dependency on the room tariff for the applicable GST rate on F&B services and enable the restaurants in hotel premises to choose between the GST rates of 18 per cent with full ITC or 5 per cent without ITC.

However, there are concerns about revenue loss to the government exchequer on account of the delinking of F&B rates of restaurants from the room tariffs of hotels. Equipped with well-researched facts, FHRAI argued that these concerns can be resolved through progressive steps that delink the F&B services from

the room tariffs. These measures will not lead to any revenue loss to the government but will increase the GST collection substantially from the hospitality sector.

FHRAI highlighted the following points for consideration by the relevant authorities:

Growing pie of luxury segment: According to Hotelivate's the Indian Hospitality Trends & Opportunities Report 2023, 17 per cent of the hotels (167 hotels) charged more than ₹7,500 in 2018 to 19 which has increased to 23 per cent of the sample set (349)



hotels) in 2022 to 2023. Moreover, there has been a sizeable increase in the number of hotels charging an average rate of ₹15,000 or more from 34 hotels in 2018 to 2019 to 100 hotels in 2022 to 2023 (200 per cent rise in the number of hotels). Another key insight from this report is that the number of hotels charging an average rate of less than ₹2,500 has seen a decline from 166 hotels in 2018 to 19 to 141 hotels in 2022 to 2023.

The same report by Hotelivate highlighted that around 33.1 per cent of the proposed future supply of additional rooms by 2027 to 2028 is taking place in the upscale and luxury segment followed by 26.3 per cent in the upper midmarket and 25.8 per cent in the midmarket.

Only 14.9 per cent of the proposed additional rooms are in the budget segment, indicating that the luxury and upscale markets in the hotel sector are expanding steadily and with a burgeoning tourism sector in recent times, the growth of this market will further multiply.

This will lead to substantial revenue enhancement for the government. These hotels will shift to a lower GST bracket in order to cater to a specific market which is defined by luxury.

Based on this, delinking of F&B rates from hotel rooms will not have any adverse impact as far as it is related to luxury and upscale hotels, which are also one of the largest contributors of GST revenue to the government.

ITC benefits: As per the list of classified hotels by the Ministry of Tourism, there are 208 hotels in the 5-star Deluxe category and 209 in the 5-star category and all of them charge a room tariff of above ₹7,500 per day. All these hotels operate multiple restaurants within their premises. As per the present provisions in the GST



Many classified hotels may increase their room rates after the delinking of F&B rates from room charges is implemented

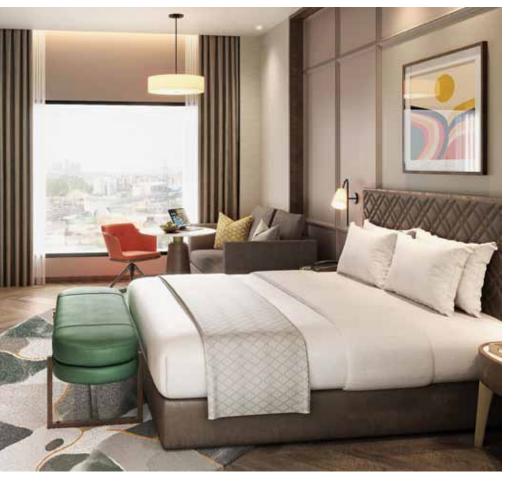
rules, the restaurants in hotel premises having a room tariff of ₹7,500 and above per unit per day are required to charge 18 per cent GST with full ITC. The major expenditure heads in the operational expenses of the hotels attract larger GST obligations, and by opting for 18 per cent GST with ITC inputs, the hotels have the advantage of setting off their GST payouts with the inputs. Therefore, it will be quite natural that all the hotels in the luxury and upper midscale segment will continue to remain with 18 per cent F&B charges, even if the F&B rates are delinked and the option

Below is a summary of FHRAI's research on classified hotels	
Average room tariff of hotels who may increase tariff after delinking	₹6,712
Average room tariff of hotels after delinking (after increase)	₹8,399
Average increase in GST collection from each room	₹706
Total increase in GST collection annually due to branded rooms increasing tariffs after delinking	₹1,75,77,29,259
Total increase in GST collection annually due to unbranded rooms increasing tariffs after delinking	₹14,64,77,43,825
Total increase in GST collection during peak demand	₹23,98,79,39,089
Total increase in GST collection due to extra bed	₹35,13,04,849
Overall increase in the GST collection	₹40,74,47,17,022
This may result in an increase in GST collection to the tune of more than 4,074 crores.	

to avail a lower tax rate is given to the hotels, because of the inherent advantage of GST inputs.

Likelihood of midscale hotels increasing room rates: The hospitality

business is highly dynamic and its prices are driven by market conditions and seasonality. Presently, there exists a big embargo on the sector in the form of 18 per cent GST for the F&B services. To avoid any compliance issues and accounting complications, hotel establishments avoid crossing the room tariff threshold of ₹7,500. If the delinking of F&B rates from room charges is implemented, it is very likely that midscale hotels may increase their room tariffs in accordance with seasonality and market dynamics and this will lead to higher GST collection for the government from room accommodation.



Possibility of standalone restaurants opting for 18% GST with ITC: Like upscale and luxury category hotels, the branded restaurants and restaurant chains also have large operational expenditures in the form of raw materials and annual maintenance costs. ITC can bring a big relief for them as it will allow them to claim credit for the input tax paid on the operational expenditures against the tax due on the food and beverages. Therefore, there is a larger possibility that out of around 5 lakhs restaurants in the country, a good number of them may move on to the higher bracket of 18 per cent GST with ITC inputs to set-off their operational costs and expenses.



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FHRAI leads nationwide Int'l Yoga Day celebrations

In collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush, FHRAI's initiative showcased India's leadership in promoting global wellness and holistic living.



s part of Yoga Sangam 2025, the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI) celebrated International Yoga Day with pan-India events across its member establishments. Spearheaded by the Ministry of Ayush, the initiative underscored India's cultural leadership and its growing global commitment to wellness, harmony, and sustainable living.

Each year, FHRAI actively collaborates with industry stakeholders to celebrate the spirit of yoga. In line Citizens turned out in large numbers reaffirming their commitment to conscious living







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The event was part of a nationwide movement across over 500,000 locations



with the Hon'ble Prime Minister's message that "Yoga is for life," the association strives to connect as many people as possible and elevate yoga on the global stage.

This year, FHRAI partnered with Atmantan Wellness Centre, Mulshi (Maharashtra); Yashoda Medicity, Indirapuram; and Jiva Ayurveda, Faridabad to organise special yoga sessions under the banner 'Yoga Sangam'. Observed on June 21, the event was part of a nationwide movement



across over 500,000 locations, making it one of the largest synchronised yoga celebrations in the world.

The session began with a live broadcast of Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address and yoga practice, joined by millions across the globe. "After 11 years, we are witnessing people doing yoga even in space. Be it the steps of the Opera House or the heights of Mount Everest, one message echoes everywhere: Yoga is for all and belongs to all. Yoga transcends boundaries, age and ability," the Prime Minister stated.

Nikhil Kapur, Founder, Atmantan Wellnes Centre, said, "It has been an absolute honour to be part of this visionary initiative by our honourable PM Narendra Modi, Ministry of AYUSH and FHRAI. As we celebrate a decade of International Day of Yoga, the theme 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health' reminds us of

the sacred link between our inner harmony and the health of our planet. At Atmantan, we remain deeply committed to the practice of Yoga as a way of life, one that is rooted in nature, sustainability and life-altering transformations. Our guests reconnect with themselves in this land of Prana, where the healing power of mindful living form the foundation of a healthy life."

Participants performed asanas and breathing exercises in unison. This was followed by a Common Yoga Protocol session conducted by certified trainers. Dr. **Upasana Arora**, Managing Director, Yashoda Group of Hospitals, remarked, "Practising yoga in a group is a truly powerful experience. Watching the Prime Minister lead the session, and knowing that millions across India and the world were participating at the same time, was deeply inspiring."





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Celebration of excellence and innovation

In recognition of their outstanding contribution to hospitality, HRAWI honours hospitality visionaries at the 5th Empowering Hospitality Conclave & Awards.



RAWI celebrated excellence at its 5th Empowering Hospitality Conclave & Awards on 26th June 2025 at Della Resorts & Adventures, Lonavala. Graced by Chief Guest Mohamed Farouk, Regional Director (Western Region), India Tourism Mumbai, Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, the event recognised pioneers reshaping Lonavala and Khandala's hospitality and culinary identity through innovation, sustainability and leadership.

Honouring excellence

Among the distinguished recipients was the late Subhash Thakker, the visionary pioneer behind Dukes Retreat, Khandala, recognised with the 'Lifetime Achievement Award.' Jimmy Mistry (Della Group), Creator of Sky Garden, India's first levitating fine-dining experience 150 feet above ground, was honoured with the 'Innovation in Dining Award' as well as with the 'Best Adventure Resorts Award' for Della Adventure



Park. Kishore Keswani. MD and Founder, Kailash Parbat Hotel, was acknowledged for his 'Outstanding Contribution' in the hotels category. The award for the 'Best Iconic Hotel in Lonavala' was bagged by the Farivas Resort and The Fern-An Ecotel Hotel was awarded the 'Best Hotel in Lonavala.'

Rhythm Hospitality, the innovator of the ResiTel model, was recognised as 'Best Boutique Resort in Lonavala' while Madhav Todi, Director of Triose Boutique Hotel, was awarded the 'Sustainable Hospitality

"We honour the architects of Lonavala and Khandala's hospitality renaissance."

Award.' Faisal Nafees of Radisson Resort & Spa Lonavala is a 25-year veteran, was recognised as the 'General Manager of the Year.'

Knowledge sharing sessions

The event featured four high-impact knowledge sessions, such as sustainability through the use of bio-degraders in the hospitality industry, food safety 360 degrees and how to stay FSSAI compliant.

"We honour the architects of Lonavala and Khandala's hospitality renaissance. Your pioneering spirit, whether in sustainability, adventure tourism or preserving culinary heritage, fuels Maharashtra's global appeal, " said Jimmy Shaw, President, HRAWI.



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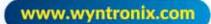
















Bolstering regional tourism

SIHRA meets Kanyakumari district collector to discuss a skill training programme and woo prospective investments to boost the region's tourism.



DDP Bureau

n a meaningful discussion with Alagu Meena, IAS, District Collector, Kanyakumari, SIHRA pushed forward the launch of a guide train-

The region's immense potential can attract investment opportunities and foster tourism and hospitality growth

ing and hospitality skill development programmes in the region.

SIHRA also deliberated on the strategies to attract tourism and hospitality investments to Kanyakumari. Highlighting the region's immense

potential, the association also explored investment opportunities and growth avenues in the district.

SIHRA further shared that the district administration showed great support and enthusiasm to fa-

cilitate the initiative. The association stated, "We are happy to share that the district collector responded very positively. We are grateful for the support and forward-thinking approach of the administration."



Building inclusive and future-ready Madurai

Hailing as a forward-looking journey, SIHRA takes part in the CII Madurai Vision 2035, a significant step outlining a 2035 roadmap for reimagining the city.



DDP Bureau

IHRA recently participated in the launch of CII Madurai Vision 2035, a landmark initiative aimed at shaping Madurai's future as a resilient, inclusive and sustainable urban centre. The vision was unveiled through a collaborative roundtable that brought together diverse stakeholders to reimagine urban infrastructure, civic innovation

> and the aspirations of the next generation.

SIHRA stated that they are honoured to be part of this forward-looking journey alongside Palanievel Thiaga Rajan, Hon'ble Minister for IT & Digital Services,

A landmark initiative aimed at shaping Madurai's future as a sustainable urban centre

thought leaders and other key industry stakeholders.

As the historic gateway to the South, Madurai continues to anchor Tamil Nadu's growth across key sectors like tourism and hospitality, information technology/Information Technology Enabled Services (ITeS), manufacturing, agro, textiles and more.



Maximising kitchen efficiency & speed

With an intelligent ecosystem, Ashish Singh stresses innovative ware washing solutions can significantly minimise resource consumption and improve hygiene practices.





aving the planet, one drop at a time—is more than just a slogan for Nor:disk. It reflects their deep commitment to sustainability, permeating every aspect of their business. Therefore, their warewashing solutions are designed to maximise water, energy and chemical efficiency while maintaining superior hygiene.

According to Ashish Singh, Regional Director, Nordisk Clean Solutions, their brand ensures aligning cutting-edge Swedish engineering with a strong environmental conscience and helps hospitality operators achieve a balance of profitability and responsibility.

Tech innovation

Nor:disk distinguishes itself in India through its award-winning Gran-







ASHISH SINGH Regional Director Nordisk Clean Solutions

ule Technology and the recently launched Aqua Power Technology. These innovations minimise the need for pre-rinsing pots, pans and utensils, thus reducing water usage by up to 90 per cent. This directly translates into cost savings, faster operations and improved hygiene.

In addition, Nor:disk's dishwashers are IoT enabled delivering remote diagnostics and performance data analytics. These smart features ensure predictive maintenance, enhanced uptime and lower total cost.

Combating challenges

Hotel kitchens in India face heavy workloads, inconsistent water quality and usage of large, tough cookware. To addresses these challenges, Singh highlighted the importance of using premium stainless-steel components, reinforced wash chambers and customised accessories designed to handle demanding operations.

Nor:disk's machines are ergonomically designed to reduce staff fatigue and are fitted with robust wash systems, ensuring spotless results even for heavily soiled utensils. He noted, "Short cycle times and high hygiene standards contribute to smooth kitchen workflows and elevated guest satisfaction, particularly in high-end hotels and banquet settings."

All-encompassing offerings

Nor:disk offers a comprehensive range of accessories, such as cassette and trolley systems, customised racks for Indian cookware and

Reducing water usage by up to 90 per cent, directly translating into cost savings

inlet/outlet tables. With the shift in demand from standalone equipment to complete integrated setups with accessories, Nor:disk has responded with modular solutions that scale with kitchen needs—from boutique hotels to large institutions.

Market engagement

India is a key strategic market for Nor:disk. Their India-specific portfolio includes models and accessories tailored to both local cookware and operational styles."We are investing in local service infrastructure, including faster spare parts, on-ground technical support and end-user training programmes," Singh opined. □

HRANI

HRANI welcomes Delhi government's licensing reform

Police licence requirement withdrawn by the Delhi government, boosting ease of doing business in the hospitality sector.



SURENDRA KUMAR JAISWAL President, HRANI & UPHRA & Vice President, FHRAI

"This is a much-needed relief for the hospitality sector. HRANI had been consistently engaging with authorities to streamline licensing procedures, and we are pleased that our efforts have borne fruit. The reform will ease operational challenges, attract investment and improve revenue potential for hotels and restaurants."



DDP Bureau

n a landmark move aimed at improving the ease of doing business, the Government of NCT of Delhi has scrapped the mandatory Police Licence (Eating House Licence) for hotels, restaurants and several other trade activities.

GARISH OBEROI

Immediate Past President and Treasurer, HRANI

"Projects delayed due to licensing bottlenecks can now take off without unnecessary hurdles. This will save time and cost for restaurateurs, especially those who were already paying excise but could not operate fully."

This significant reform is the outcome of sustained representation and continuous follow-up by the Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI), which has long advocated for the removal of outdated and overlapping regulatory requirements burdening hospitality operators in the capital.

Until now, obtaining the police NOC was a time-consuming process, delaying new projects and complicating operations. With the removal of this requirement, hospitality establishments can now focus on service excellence, expansion and job creation.

The decision, announced by Lt. Governor VK Saxena, applies to multiple sectors including guesthouses, amusement parks, swimming pools, and video game parlours, and aligns with the central government's vision of "minimum government, maximum governance."

HRANI expressed its sincere appreciation to the Delhi govern ment for this progressive step, which is set to boost investor confidence, support entrepreneurship and enhance Delhi's stature as a leading hospitality and tourism hub.

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Satyen Jain stresses Pride Hotels Group prioritises building a people-first culture, creating an environment in which every employee feels accountable and valued.



ur success has always been defined by people, not just properties. As we continue to grow across India, from bustling metros to spiritual getaways and serene leisure destinations, our journey remains anchored in one core philosophy: People First. Our belief is simple yet powerful, when you invest in people, you build an organisation that can stand the test of time, market shifts and expansion cycles.

Every individual at Pride Hotels Group is empowered to take ownership, encouraged to grow and inspired to lead. From day one, we ensure clarity of purposeeach team member knows their responsibilities through well-defined KRAs and KPIs, directly linked to the organisation's strategic goals. There is no ambiguity. Everyone is aligned, mentored and equipped to function as self-motivated professionals. This is not just about operational efficiency, it is about cultivating a culture where every person feels accountable and valued.



Defining values

At the heart of our working ethos lies the word PRIDE, not just as a brand, but as a deeply embedded value system. Professionalism in every interaction, Responsibility



"A shining example of our commitment to nurturing future leaders is our DREAM Programme."

in every action, Integrity in all decisions, Dignity in how we treat people and a relentless pursuit of Excellence in everything we do. These values are not ornamental they shape daily behaviours, guide hiring decisions and drive guest experiences. Our hotel culture reflects these principles. Across our properties, guests experience a warmth that feels personal yet professional. This consistency is the result of a clearly defined hospitality philosophy—genuinely Indian in its soul and unwavering in-service delivery. Pride Hotels is more than a hotel group; it is a place where teams are built, nurtured and celebrated.

Much of this has been possible because of the long-standing commitment of our people. We take immense pride in the fact that many of our senior leaders, general managers and corporate team members have grown with us from their early days. This kind of loyalty is rare and can only be earned by fostering an environment of trust, opportunity and recognition. Through internal promotions, leadership development programmes and structured cross-functional training, we have continually invested in our team's growth. We do not just fill roles, we shape careers.

Empowering talent

A shining example of our commitment to

impact

Satyen Jain is the CEO of Pride Hotels Group. As an active figure in India's hospitality sector, Jain has held pivotal roles, including former President of the Hotel & Restaurant Association and Vice President of FHRAI, using his expertise to shape and enhance the hospitality landscape in India. Beyond his business achievements, he has been a dedicated philanthropist, supporting education for the underprivileged through donations to schools, hostels and various institutions.



nurturing future leaders is our DREAM Programme, an intensive management training initiative designed to identify, mentor and empower high-potential talent. Fresh graduates who join us as management trainees undergo rigorous, handson exposure across various departments, understanding the intricacies of hospital-

"Our leadership development initiatives are not just about training, they are about transformation. "

> ity from the ground up. After successfully completing their training and evaluation, they are formally inducted into the Pride ecosystem as assistant managers, ready to take ownership and drive results. The DREAM Programme for three years has consistently produced agile, grounded and confident professionals who carry forward our values while infusing the organisation

with fresh perspective and energy. One of the defining features of our management style is how we approach time and task management. In an industry that never sleeps, clarity and structure are essential. Tasks are systematically aligned to department goals, which in turn support the hotel's larger business plan. Daily responsibilities are clearly mapped. Performance is tracked not reactively but proactively. Leaders do not micromanage, they coach, guide and empower. The result is a highperformance, high-accountability culture where each team member knows their role, owns it and delivers with pride.

Our cross-functional collaboration ensures that departments do not operate in silos. The front office understands F&B, sales understands housekeeping and marketing aligns with operations. This seamless synergy not only enhances the guest experience but also creates well-rounded professionals ready to take on leadership roles. Our leadership development initiatives are not just about training, they are about transformation. We identify high-potential individuals and equip them with the tools



to lead, innovate and sustain success in a fast-paced environment.

Leaving a legacy

Leadership at Pride is not about titles. It is about action, empathy and impact. It is about setting the tone from the top, staying grounded in values and making decisions that serve both people and purpose. As leaders, we believe in being accessible, authentic and future-ready. Our strategy combines vision with vigilance, expanding into new markets while preserving the essence of what makes us different.

Ultimately, the reason Pride Hotels Group has been able to scale without diluting its soul is because of the culture we have consciously built and fiercely protected. A culture that respects its people, rewards performance and nurtures longterm relationships. As we move forward, our focus remains unchanged to lead with humility, manage with clarity and grow with purpose. Because success is not just about rooms sold or properties signed, it is about the people who stay, the teams who serve and the legacy we leave behind.





Source: HVS Anarock Research; Data for Calendar Year Cover Image Courtesy: Ran Baas The Palace – THE Park Hotels

Hotel rates hold firm amid geopolitical tensions

Amid the heightened tensions with Pakistan, ARRs remain firm while occupancy rates see a slight decline across most major markets.



ccording to hospitality consultancy HVS Anarock's latest June 2025 report, the Indian hotel sector's average rates showed true resilience in May 2025. The sector remained firm and steady despite the seasonal slowdown and the heightened tensions with Pakistan.

ARR trends

The report highlighted that the sector's average rates saw robust yearon-year (Y0Y) growth, with double-

Cities like Mumbai and New Delhi maintained their premium positioning, with average rates crossing ₹10,000 and ₹8,500



digit gains in several cities. Cities like Mumbai and New Delhi maintained their premium positioning, with average rates exceeding ₹10,000 and ₹8,500, respectively. While Jaipur and Hyderabad saw tremendous YoY growth.

Occupancy trends

In terms of occupancy performance, the report revealed a noticeable YoY



dip across most major markets. These significant declines reflect seasonal softening combined with geopolitical sentiment dampening the demand for travel.

Chandigarh reported the sharpest decline in the range of 13-15 percentage point, due to the tensions between India and Pakistan. On the other hand, Jaipur recorded the strongest YoY occupancy growth.

The hold of finesse

Premium barware by Ocean Glass Company enhances perceived beverage value, allowing establishments to command higher prices.



remium barware does not just hold a drink-it create the unique identity of a space. From the weight and clarity of the crystal to the silhouette that complements the ambience, design-forward glassware enhances perceived value, guest engagement, and reinforces a property's attention to detail. It has the power to transform a simple sip into a shareable moment—and that is where real return on investment begins. With its keen eye for detail and ultra-premium quality, Ocean Glass Company commands a cult status in premium glassware segment.

What sets the brand apart is the unique blend of German technology with the artistry of Asian craftsmanship. The combination helps to create products that are functional and culturally resonant.

"Our comprehensive design philosophy covers the complete

spectrum of beverage experiences through our Master's Choice collection, featuring GRAN, The Elements, RIMS and Desire. Our award-winning credentials, cluding the iF Design Award from Germany and the Good Design Award from Japan, validate our innovation while maintaining functionality," said superior Nutchavinee Nikhomchaiprasert, Executive Director, Marketing, Ocean Glass Company.

Sips of success

Today's discerning guests want experiences that engage all their senses, and this has elevated the value of barware from a necessity to an essential component of the complete

Exceptional barware is key to memorable guest experiences





NUTCHAVINEE NIKHOMCHAIPRASERT

Executive Director. Marketing, Ocean Glass Company

bar-going experience. "What excites us most is seeing how establishments recognise that exceptional barware is an integral part of creating memorable experiences for their guests," she shared.

The brand's target strategy embraces both B2B and B2C segments. "In the B2B space, we serve premium hotels and fine-casual dining establishments, and craft cocktail bars. In the B2C segment, we target discerning consumers who appreciate quality craftsmanship and understand that exceptional glassware enhances their personal entertaining experiences," she explained.

Contrary to the common belief that top quality is reserved for the highest price category, the brand aims to offer the best value for money. "We believe that exceptional quality should not be exclusive to the highest price tiers, and hospitality professionals deserve maximum value for their investment. This philosophy allows us to make premium crystal glassware accessible without compromising on quality or design integrity," she emphasised.





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Hotels must harness tech innovation, not as a replacement for human connection, but as an enabler of personalised service, the core of true hospitality.

Digital precision meets human touch: SIHRA



Hospitality represents a confluence of innovation, intelligent automation and enhanced guest experiences."

K SYAMA RAJU President SIHRA

firmly believe that Hospitality 4.0 marks a defining chapter in the evolution of our industry. It represents a confluence of innovation, intelligent automation, and enhanced guest experiences—a synergy that is no longer a futuristic concept but an immediate necessity.

Technology today is not replacing hospitality; instead, it is redefining it. From AI-driven concierge services to contactless check-ins and data-powered personalisation, innovation is allowing hoteliers to create seamless, secure

and profoundly satisfying guest journeys. Automation in operations, meanwhile, is streamlining backend efficiency, freeing up our human resources to focus on what truly matters—warm, authentic and memorable human connections.

Yet, at the heart of Hospitality 4.0 lies a delicate balance between digital precision and human touch. While embracing smart technologies, we must ensure that empathy, culture and service excellence remain uncompromised. South India, with its rich traditions and deeprooted values of hospitality, has a unique opportunity to lead by example—fusing tradition with transformation.

At SIHRA, we encourage our members to view Hospitality 4.0 not as a disruption but as an evolution—one that empowers us to be more responsive, more sustainable and more guest-centric than ever before. The future is not just about faster service. It is about smarter service, and more importantly, meaningful hospitality.



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Technology empowers empathetic service: HRAWI



Hospitality 4.0 is our opportunity to leapfrog legacy constraints."



JIMMY SHAW President **HRAWI**

s the hospitality industry enters a new technological era, Hospitality 4.0 stands as a defining shift, driven by the convergence of innovation, automation and evolving guest expectations. It is a moment of transformation, where tradition meets intelligent systems and personalised service is delivered with digital precision.

Today's guests no longer just seek a room or a meal, they seek seamless experiences. Hospitality 4.0 recognises this demand, placing intuitive design, real-time service and personalisation at the core of every touch-point. Technologies like AI-enabled concierge services, smart room controls, contactless check-in and check-out and data-driven customer insights are rapidly redefining service delivery.

Automation has helped hoteliers in optimising resources while ensuring consistency and efficiency in operations, from inventory to housekeeping and predictive maintenance.

One of the most revolutionary shifts today is the integration of real-time language translation tools. These technologies are breaking down communication barriers and enhancing guest satisfaction across linguistic boundaries, a vital development in India's multilingual and diverse tourism landscape. In tandem, speech-to-text and text-tospeech solutions are significantly improving inclusivity by allowing staff with visual

and auditory impairments to communicate effortlessly with guests, thus enabling more inclusive workforce participation in frontline hospitality roles.

Equally significant is the emergence of robotics in hospitality operations. From automated room service delivery bots to AI-powered cleaning units, robotics is not just improving operational efficiency but also introducing a futuristic, hygiene-assured guest interface that is highly relevant in a post-pandemic world. These tools allow human staff to focus more on nuanced, personalised care that defines true hospitality.

Importantly, these changes do not replace human touch but enhance it. The heart of hospitality will always be personal. Technology enables our teams to focus more on empathetic service by relieving them of routine or repetitive tasks. A guest's journey is now shaped by databacked preferences, faster response times and curated experiences, whether through mobile apps, AI chatbots or voice-activated controls in their rooms.

For India, where tourism is growing rapidly both domestically and globally, Hospitality 4.0 is our opportunity to leapfrog legacy constraints. It is not a destination. It is an evolution.



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Hospitality 4.0 redefining excellence: HRANI



By automating routine tasks, employees can spend more time engaging with guests."

SURENDRA KUMAR JAISWAL HRANI

he hospitality industry is undergoing a significant shift, driven by rapid advances in technology. From operations to guest services, the integration of innovation and automation is reshaping how hotels and restaurant's function. This shift, often referred to as Hospitality 4.0, is not about replacing people with machines—it is about improving efficiency, enhancing service and delivering smarter experiences.

Today's guests are well-informed and digitally connected. Their expectations go beyond comfort and cleanliness. They seek speed, convenience and personalisation. Digital check-ins, mobile room keys, voice-controlled devices and AI-based chat assistants have become com-

mon in hotels and restaurants. These tools help reduce wait times, improve response accuracy and create smoother guest journey.

Automation is also helping in backend operations like managing inventory, saving energy and planning maintenance before problems arise. These tools not only cut down costs but also support sustainability, which is becoming a key focus in the hospitality industry.

Yet, technology alone cannot define hospitality. The personal warmth and human connection, the sector is known for must remain central. Innovation should support staff, not sideline them. By automating routine tasks, employees can spend more time engaging with guests. This balance of efficiency and empathy is where Hospitality 4.0 finds its true strength.

For industry stakeholders, the priorities are clear—invest in the right technologies and equip the workforce to adapt. Training and skill development are essential to ensure teams can work alongside technology and use it to deliver better service.

India's hospitality sector has a strong foundation in service. With thoughtful integration of innovation and automation, this foundation can be strengthened further, raising standards and building resilience. Hospitality 4.0 is not a passing trend—it is a necessary evolution that can attract new-age travellers and redefine excellence.

The goal is not to become fully digital, but to be intelligently connected, where technology supports service, and service continues to define the guest experience.



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Embrace innovation to drive guest experience: HRAEI



66

The advantage of Hospitality 4.0 is the ability to leverage vast amounts of data to drive change and make informed decisions."

SUDESH PODDARPresident

he hospitality industry, a crucial component of the global economy, is constantly changing. There is an ongoing process of the implementation of smart services and a push towards an innovative 4.0 definition, which improves the safety and overall experience for guests.

So, what exactly does the term Hospitality 4.0 mean? It is part of Industry 4.0, which refers to the fourth industrial revolution, which aims to increase automation through the use of new technologies, ultimately improving productivity and enabling new business models. Hospitality 4.0 is based on the combination of various technologies, such as connectivity, data analytics, augmented reality and artificial intelligence, which are advancing at an exponential rate.

In practical terms, Hospitality 4.0 involves applying Industry 4.0 technologies to the hospitality industry to reduce costs, improve the quality of service, and enhance

the guest experience. This entails using new technological solutions to automate and streamline processes within hospitality facilities.

The introduction of Big Data and Business Intelligence has led to the emergence of best practices that enable companies to make data-driven decisions based on a vast amount of data, which can be used to drive business growth.

The advantage of Hospitality 4.0 is the ability to leverage vast amounts of data to drive change, make informed decisions and quickly adapt to market fluctuations. This is made possible through the use of smart tools that can interact with each other automatically, easily and quickly.

Following are a few examples:

Reservation management: Managing reservations can be a complex and time-consuming task. One of the main challenges is keeping lodging availability information synchronised to avoid overbooking, double reservations or gaps in capacity.

This can be addressed by implementing management software that automates the process, making it easier, faster and more intuitive for facility staff to manage reservations operationally.

Check-in and check-out: Manual check-in and check-out processes can be far from efficient. However, various digital solutions such as self-check-in terminals and mobile apps can simplify and speed up the process. These solutions improve the customer experience and staff management, while also offering support to the facility in perfecting the reception of its guests.

Smart keys: Managing and distributing keys or cards to access accommodations can be time-consuming, staff-intensive and prone to errors. It can also be inconvenient for guests to have to restrict themselves to certain arrival times for check-in. However, with the prevalence of smartphones, it is now possible to manage the opening and closing of accommodations with a simple QR code. □



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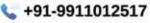






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Impact of AI in hospitality industry

To navigate AI-driven hospitality landscape, AK Singh elucidates why students need to gain hands-on understanding of AI in hotel operations.





rtificial intelligence (AI) is a significant technological upgradation in the hospitality industry, impacting various aspects of hotel operations and guest experiences. These cuttingedge technologies have taken a big leap in recent years and how best we can leverage these upgrades in our business model is a critical issue.

AI in hospitality: Benefits

AI is transforming the hospitality in-

dustry from optimising hotel operations and management to providing actionable insights, making it a vital part of modern hospitality.

Enhancing guest experience: Tech innovation, such as chatbots and virtual assistants, plays a significant role in enhancing the guest experience. These conversational AI-powered tools transform the guest experience in almost all types of hotels. There are two types of chatbots, such as rule-based and AI-powered chatbots. Rule-based chatbot provides responses from

a set of predefined programmes, good for handling common questions. They are cost-effective and are easy to use. AI chatbots leverage machine learning and natural language processing to understand and interpret guest intent and context.

Voice assistants like Alexa and Siri, can be integrated into the room amenities and provide personalised services. In Europe, few hotel chains have started using Alexa, increasing their revenue by 12 per cent, response speed improved by 30 per cent and overall delight of the guest improved by 20 per cent on an average.







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AK SINGH Principal, FHRAI - Institute of Hospitality Management

Facial recognition: This technology is used to verify guests, enhance security measures and enable fast check-in/check-out. An impactful tool to deliver personalised services and efficiently manage guest interaction and overall operational quality.

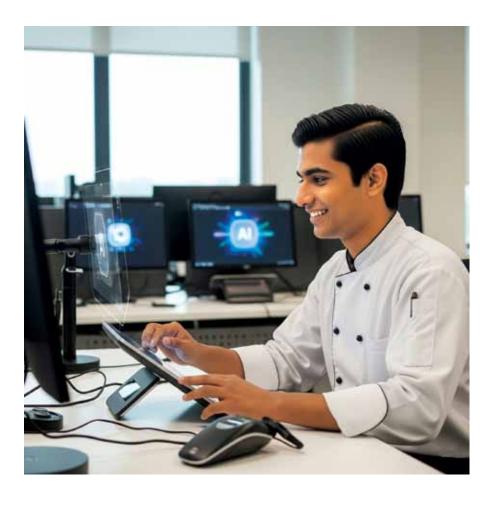
Maximising operational efficiency:

AI is used increasingly to ensure operational convenience in hospitality and allied businesses. It automates housekeeping work, including cleaning guest room and public areas. AIdriven energy management systems can optimise heating, ventilation, air conditioning system, lighting and other energy devices in real time based on occupancy.

AI in marketing and sales: Hotels frequently use AI in their dynamic pricing models, as it enables them to analyse various factors, such as demand, seasonality, local events and competitor pricing, to recommend optimal pricing for rooms, banquets, and other services that may have flexible prices. This helps business to maximise revenue and attract guests with competitive pricing. AI helps in target marketing by creating guest segments more effectively and then plan targeted market campaign.

Awareness of AI advancements

As AI technologies are increasingly being employed in hospitality, it is the prime responsibility to make budding professionals expose them



Hotels use AI in their dynamic pricing models, to maximise revenue and attract guests

to these developments in a planned but regulated manner.

Here are some steps on how AI can be exposed to the students:

Integrate AI in curriculum: Include an AI component in the existing curriculum of bachelor's in hospitality administration programme as a compulsory subject, providing insights into the technical automation and ethics of using AI tools.

Hands-on training of AI tools: Institutes need to introduce ChatGPT and other AI apps available for guest communication. They can source out different hospitality simulations for

revenue management, point of sales and sustainability.

Industrial training programme: This exposure will help students understand about AI advancements, their applications and benefits. Students will get an opportunity to get exposed to a variety of AI tools used in hotel operations, marketing and energy-saving purposes.

Multifaceted assignments through capstone projects: Institutes should expose their faculty and invite AI experts for developing student projects for handling tools for front desk, housekeeping practices, food and beverage operations and kitchen management. This initiative will give them confidence and inculcate the concept of AI-driven hospitality management and operations.

Collaborations with tech companies: It is crucial to forge partnerships with tech companies, start-ups and platforms like Google Hospitality Cloud for knowledge exchange.





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Home-grown brands fuel mid-segment growth

With a huge potential in the domestic market, **Arjun Baljee** opines that Indian hotel brands have a significant advantage in the mid-segment market.

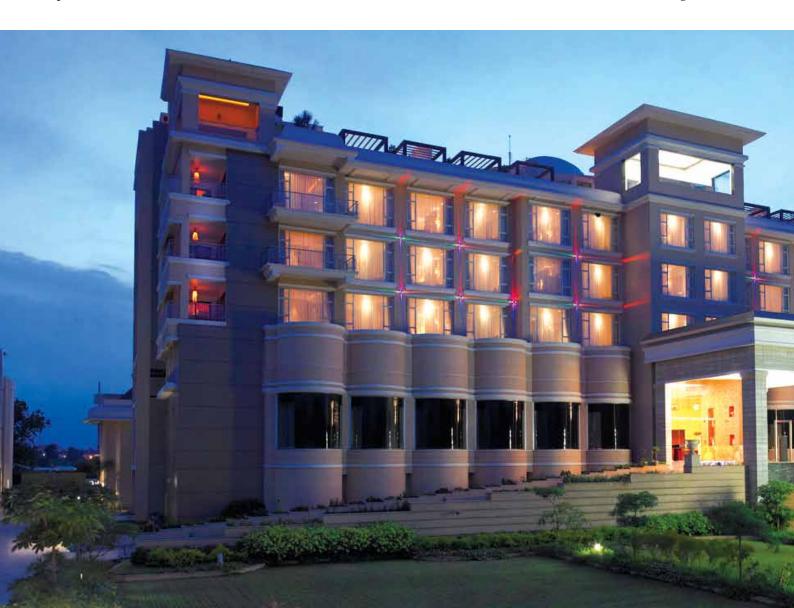


hile many drift with the current, it is the daring few who sail against it – and steer success their way! In an age where alliances are currency, Royal Orchid Hotels is doubling down on independence. With a firm belief in its homegrown strength, **Arjun Baljee** believes that being one of the last standing India hotel brands gives them a distinct edge in the midsegment market. "If you look at this segment specifically, most Indian brands have been acquired or absorbed. Ferns is now with Marriott, Sarovar hotels is owned by Louvre. That leaves very few Indian hotel brands of scale that are still Indian-

owned and Indian-run," he said. Indeed, it is a unique space to occupy when most global chains are aggressively expanding in India through strategic alliances.

Realigning for results

With a focused restructuring strategy, the Bengaluru-based hospitality group is positioning itself as one of the few remaining Indian-





ARJUN BALJEE President Royal Orchid Hotels

"We are at a topline of around ₹350 crore and targeting ₹500 crore in revenue in the near term."





owned players in the mid to upper mid-scale space. "Last year, we decided to segment our portfolio across five brands," Baljee said, "One (RE:GEN:TA) is already wellestablished, another (ICONIQA) is currently being launched, two sub-brands (RE:GEN:TA Z and RE:GEN:TA: Place) are gaining strong momentum, and a fifth (Crestoria) -targeted at leisure and experiential travel—is in the pipeline."

Baljee recognised that the hospitality industry is entering a new era, driven by the evolving preferences of Gen Z travellers. As the lines between business and leisure blur, hotels are no longer just destinations—they are becoming seamless extensions of a modern, fluid lifestyle, and that's exactly how he has envisioned his latest brand Iconica, a 291-keys category-defining hotel in Mumbai, both in scale and vision.

Crestoria, on the other hand, is envisioned as a collection of such storied, character-rich hotels across the country-properties that carry emotional and historical significance, and that require a different kind of operational mindset. "There are hotels within our current portfolio that are perfect candidates to be elevated into the Crestoria collection," he added.

Holding the reigns

Having his next milestones in clear sight, he noted that Royal Orchid is already within striking distance of ₹100 crore in EBITDA, having closed at ₹96.8 crore. "Right now, we are at a topline of around ₹350 crore. Mumbai alone should add another ₹100 crore and stabilise somewhere between ₹120-140 crore. Add to that the upcoming flexi-lease hotels, and we are realistically targeting ₹500 crore in revenue in the near term."

Despite the apparent consolidation trend, Royal Orchid has no immediate plans to align with a foreign partner. "We are attractive to many international players given our scale and footprint," Baljee admitted, "But everything comes down to our longterm strategic intent. We know w here we are headed, and right now, that path does not involve giving up control."

As a publicly listed company, he reiterated that the core commitment of the Royal Orchid remains to its shareholders. "Our job is to create long-term value," he said. Baljee added, "That does not mean we have ruled anything out. But it also does not mean we are actively seeking anything. For now, our focus is on evolving our business and growing it sustainably."

Crafting purposeful experiences

As BKC emerges as a commerce and cultural hub, Sofitel Mumbai BKC is geared up for multifaceted experiences to meet guests' diverse needs.



Hazel Jain

ofitel Mumbai BKC has continuously evolved to reflect modern luxury while staying true to its ethos of committed hospitality and French flair. Manish Dayya, General Manager, Sofitel Mumbai BKC, winner of 'Outstanding Leadership in Luxury Hospitality' award at the India Travel Awards 2024, stated, "With the rise of iconic landmarks such as the Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre (NMACC), Jio World Convention Centre (JWCC) and Jio World Plaza, Bandra Kurla Complex (BKC) has transformed from a corporate hub into a vibrant destination for global conventions, cultural performances and luxury experiences."

New opportunities

For Sofitel Mumbai BKC, the proximity to JWCC and NMACC has opened doors to new guest segments, including global business travellers, conference delegates and cultural patrons. "Looking ahead, BKC is set to become Mumbai's definitive destination where free minds meet



for business, lifestyle and leisure," Dayya shared. Besides, the hotel brand affirmed its commitment to lead with heartfelt hospitality and purposeful experiences that reflect committed luxury.

Rising trends

A notable trend, he highlighted, is the rising preference for weddings and social gatherings, especially with the development of JWCC in the vicinity. The modern Indian wedding is evolving; it is no longer limited to a single grand celebration, which includes multiple curated events. Dayya said, "At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, we have seen a steady rise in weddings where F&B takes centre stage—a natural strength for us."

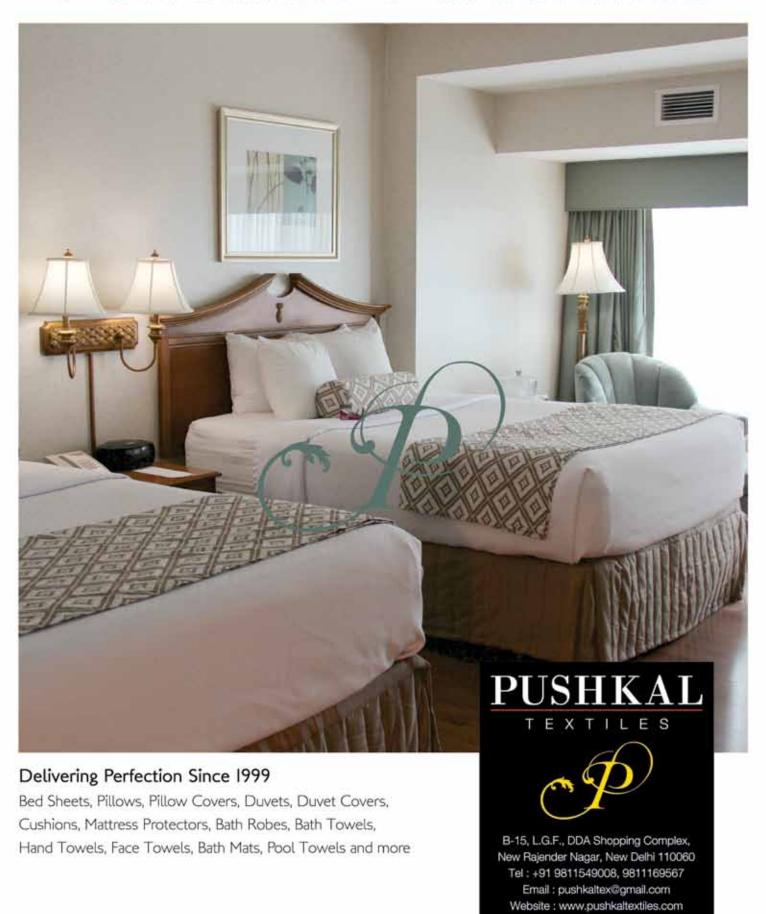
Besides, the hotel is actively exploring an expansion of its inven-



"At Sofitel Mumbai BKC, we have seen a steady rise in weddings where F&B takes centre stage."

tory, which includes the addition of state-of-the-art banqueting spaces, new restaurant concepts and bestin-class rooms that reflect evolving lifestyle preferences.

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CBD hotels reset revenue game

Hotels in Bangalore' CBD are reworking their revenue strategies to balance stability with market agility.



orporate travel has always been the driving force in Bangalore's Central Business District (CBD). With tech giants, global consulting firms and financial firms setting the pace, and a steady stream of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions) business, revenue forecasting has become relatively straightforward over the years. Building a weekday base with corporate accounts, relying on leisure on weekends and operations steady was once standard procedure.

But that model has evolved. Today, the market operates differently, demanding more dynamic strategies from hotels.

Corporate stays core

Firstly, corporate business brings structure, as long-term accounts secure weekday occupancy, drive



JYOTSNA KANWAR Director, Sales and Marketing The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore

consistent MICE revenue and bring predictability to forecasting. Hotels are now adopting a more nuanced approach—negotiating flexible corporate rates that allow for better yield during high-compression periods.

Weekend shift

Weekends, that were unpredict-

able at best, are now a mix of structured corporate and social events and short-lead leisure spikes, both of which call for different pricing approaches. This shift demands more differentiated pricing and inventory strategies.

Hotels are adapting by focusing on weekend MICE and smart category selling. The new approach is dynamic and layered, avoiding discounts and rigid rate fences.

Bleisure: A quiet winner

Today's travellers often blur the lines between business and leisure. Corporate stays regularly extend into weekends. Guests are combining meetings with personal time and hotels are responding accordingly.

For hotels, this would mean seizing an opportunity to boost both ADR and total guest spending. Business packages now come layered with lifestyle perks, spa credits, curated dining, and flexible check-in options, nudging guests to stay lon-



Instead of cutting rates, hotels leaned on high-yield MICE, reserved premium rooms for big spenders

ger or book higher room categories, encouraging extended stays and upselling to higher room categories.

Hotels in Bangalore's CBD manage revenue today by being instinctive and responsive. While balancing the reliability of corporate accounts with the volatility of leisure, structuring MICE to stabilise weekends, and keeping your pricing nimble to yield when it counts is the way forward. \Box

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Data meets downtime

As wellness gets digital upgrade, rejuvenation finds new meaning through AI-led body assessments, mindfulness apps and biofeedback tools.



ver the past decade, India's wellness industry has evolved from a niche, luxury-driven segment into a multi-dimensional space that sits at the intersection of healthcare, hospitality, and self-care. With growing awareness, changing consumer values, and the influence of digital wellness trends, 2025 is poised to be a defining year, one where wellness transitions from occasional indulgence to everyday priority.

As the definition of 'wellbeing' expands, brands, spas and hospitality players must reimagine experiences, and realign with the shifting consumer expectations.

Trends shaping wellness

One of the biggest consumer shifts is the rise of intentional wellness. Today's customers are not just seeking



MEGHA DINESH Co-Founder Meghavi Wellness Spa

feel-good services, they are looking for results-driven, personalised and goal-oriented experiences.

The demand for transparent, sustainable and scientifically backed therapies is on the rise. Spa-goers are actively researching ingredients, techniques, therapist credentials and

even environmental practices before making their decisions.

The post-pandemic period has accelerated the desire for preventative health and stress recovery. People are seeking wellness not just for relaxation, but for restoring balance, improving sleep and building resilience. This shift is pushing wellness businesses to move beyond conventional spa menus.

Another notable trend is the integration of technology into wellness. Whether through AI-led body assessments, digital mindfulness programmes or biofeedback tools that enhance therapy outcomes, tech is no longer a novelty but a necessity. Wellness brands that successfully combine ancient wisdom with modern innovation are earning greater trust and retention.

Luxury to lifestyle

Spas and wellness centres are being reimagined as everyday self-care



Untapped potential of tier II markets lies not just in their size, but in their sustainability

destinations rather than occasional splurges. Instead of one-time packages, customers are looking for continuity, monthly plans and long-term engagement models. The focus has moved from one-off pampering to routine well-being maintenance.

There is also increasing interest in natural and traditional healing modalities, including Ayurveda, sound therapy, aromatherapy, reflexology, and energy-based treatments, especially when they are delivered with

authenticity and cultural sensitivity. These are no longer seen as alternative therapies but as core wellness offerings that align with India's growing appetite for conscious living.

Tier II cities lead growth story

While metro cities remain hubs for wellness innovation, the real growth momentum is coming from tier II cities. Locations like Indore, Lucknow, Bhopal, Coimbatore and Vizag are seeing a steady rise in demand for quality wellness services, driven by increasing disposable income, aspirational lifestyle shifts, and greater exposure to global wellness trends via social and digital media.

Interestingly, consumers in these markets are not seeking budget versions of metro offerings. They expect similar standards of hygiene, professionalism and ambience but with greater emotional connection, trust and relatability. The untapped potential of tier-II markets lies not just in

their size, but in their sustainability. These consumers are more likely to stick with a wellness routine once it becomes part of their lifestyle, creating long-term value for businesses that enter with cultural awareness and consistency.

Additionally, wellness brands in these cities are often better positioned to offer a balance of traditional practices and modern formats, appealing to consumers who are proud of their roots but open to progressive wellness concepts.

The road ahead

Looking ahead, the brands that will lead India's wellness transformation will be those that combine purpose with personalisation. Whether it is a spa or a wellness resort, the emphasis will need to shift from scale to soul.

Operators and professionals across the hospitality and wellness space will have to ask tough but timely questions: Are our services



delivering measurable value? Are our teams trained to meet the emotional needs of today's customer? Are we building spaces that are mindful, inclusive and future-ready? Wellness in coming years will be defined by intentionality, accessibility and trust. Brands and businesses that recognise this evolution and design around it will not only thrive, they will lead.





CGH Earth leads with purpose

From reviving heritage homes to choosing offbeat locales, CGH Earth dares to break norms and stands true to its sustainability roots.



ndia's hospitality story would be incomplete without the mention of CGH Earth, the harbinger of sustainability in the true sense in the country. The 45-year-old hospitality chain, spread across Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Andamans, has 13 hotels and resorts, six villas and bungalows. In addition, it has one cruise experience, three healthcare clinics and one wellness retreat in its portfolio.



DEVIKA R Senior General Manager, Sales (Southern Region), CGH Earth

Steeped in history

While the brand started its journey in Kerala, it boasts some unique properties in Tamil Nadu as well. Devika R, Senior General Manager, Sales (Southern Region), CGH Earth, shared, "We have Vishalam in Chettinad, which is an 80-year-old mansion—a father's dowry gift to his daughter that we brought back to life. The house had a tragic past, but we turned it into a home full of love. Vishalam is not just a property, it is a soulful experience. Guests often feel like they are returning to an ancestral home, welcomed by the warmth of Chettinad hospitality and the rich

"We pick places where we can contribute—be it to nature, to the local economy or to the guest experience."

aroma of local cuisine." She underlined that very corner of Vishalam reflects CGH Earth's core values—organic gardens, a tranquil pool, open lawns, and most of all, an unwavering commitment to sustainability.



The CGH Earth's strategy is to continue choosing properties that align with its ethos of sustainability and pushing local economy forward. The brand has consistently gone where few dare to tread—restoring forgotten heritage homes, choosing offbeat locales and building meaningful ecosystems around them.

"When we look at a property or destination, we do not want to be just another hotel in a crowded space. We pick places where we can contribute—be it to nature, to the local economy or to the guest experience. That is the difference CGH creates," said Devika.

Clean, green and human

While sustainability has become a



In Sanskrit, 'Saha' means all together. The concept behind CGH Earth Saha is rooted in the idea of togetherness. Nestled in stunning locations across India, CGH Earth Saha features a diverse range of unique holiday options. Depending on the property, guests can reserve an entire villa or bungalow or opt for individual rooms, providing flexibility for larger groups or couples seeking a serene retreat.

trend in the industry, CGH Earth has lived it for decades. "We started as Casino Group of Hotels, but today we call ourselves Clean, Green and Healthy. That says it all," Devika highlighted.

However, what truly sets the group apart, is its people. "Our teams do not just serve. They connect. Their eyes smile at you. They care deeply

and genuinely. That makes all the difference." she added.

New chapter unfolding

As CGH Earth expands, it is not chasing scale but refining intimacy. The group recently announced the launch of CGH Earth Saha, an exclusive collection of handpicked escapes across India. With this, the company is expanding its portfolio with intimate and private getaways that embody the essence of togetherness and personalised luxury.

"In Munnar, we have the Lockhart Tea Bungalow near tea estates. Then in Ooty, we have opened Marli Hill—a 5-bedroom sanctuary. Isla's Ridge in Palani Hills is another gem, just over an hour from Kodaikanal," she described. Pondicherry too has a new CGH Earth bungalow, steps away from the sea. "We have also got an exciting new opening in South Goa - CGH Earth Saha Mansao Curtorim and Darjeeling is next. We are not stopping. We are just becoming more thoughtful with every step," she shared.





From high-end accommodations to immersive wildlife experiences, Supriya Shri says Central India is emerging as a prominent hub for luxury wildlife tourism.



entral India is quickly emerging as the top destination for luxury wildlife tourism in India. This region, which includes Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh, is famous for its rich forests, rare animals and growing number of high-quality resorts and lodges.

Improved connectivity now allows travellers to explore new locations and pursue adventure and immersive experiences, making wildlife tourism a major attraction for tourists in India and abroad.

Sustainable wildlife tourism has a multiplier effect on the economy and environment. Luxury resorts promote the development of better local infrastructure and generate jobs for locals who can be employed as chefs, guides as well as other support staff.



Nerve centre of tourism

Central India is home to about 16 per cent of India's tigers. Kanha Tiger Reserve is famous for the barasingha (swamp deer). At Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve, the likelihood of spotting the elusive big cat is high. The Pench

"Revenue from luxury wildlife lodges has gone up by 68 per cent since 2019."

Tiger Reserve is known as the inspiration behind Rudyard Kipling's The Jungle Book. Satpura Tiger Reserve offers unique walking and boat safaris, and the Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve is one of the oldest and largest parks in Maharashtra. In Central India, the options for a memorable holiday amid indigenous flora and fauna are endless..

Modern amenities

The number of luxury hotel rooms in wildlife areas is growing fast. These resorts offer high-end experiences, permitting travellers to experience the best of both worlds. Tourists are immersed in lush green surroundings, practically next-door neighbours to their winged and fourlegged counterparts. However, the secure locations have all the comforts of modern living heightened by curated services. Notably, in 2022, there were about 1,139 branded hotel rooms. By 2025, this number is expected to reach 2,793, which is a 145 per cent increase. Revenue from luxury wildlife lodges have gone up by 68 per cent since 2019, showing that more people want high-quality, engaging experiences.



Celebration of culinary innovation

With more than 2000 leaders from hospitality, FCIC 2025 was held in Mumbai, sharing insights into India's evolving food and hospitality landscape.





he eighth edition of the Food Connoisseurs India Convention-West India Edition (FCIC) 2025, an initiative by Industry Live, brought together more than 2000 gastronomic visionaries, industry leaders and hospitality innovators. Held recently in Mumbai, Bombay Exhibition Centre as the 'Hospitality Partner,' the event witnessed more than 45 esteemed speakers and 10 insightful sessions.

The convention opened with a keynote session by Chef Hemant Oberoi, who emphasised the artistry and emotion behind food. Industry experts, including Chef Vineet Manocha, Chef Michael Swamy, Shatbhi Basu, Ashish Dev Kapur and Anisha Anand, shared powerful insights at the event.

Key highlights

The main highlights of the event included a fireside chat with

Aurum Foods and Food Connoisseurs India Awards. The awards recognised culinary excellence and innovation, where more than 170 awards were given to honour the best in the industry.

Partnerships

This year's convention was 'Supported by the FHRAI, with the Indian Culinary Forum joining as



"The event witnessed a celebration of the HoReCa sector's dynamic evolution in West India."

the 'Supporting Association'. Other partners included Everpure (Water Filtration Partner), Sbooch (Lifestyle Beverage Partner), Celcius Logistics (Associate Partner), Tribe Kombucha (Lanyard Partner), Kaapi Machines (Coffee Innovation Partner) and Indo Impex (Innovative Packaging Partner). Also, Zee Business as the Telecast Partner and Radio City as the Radio Partner, ensured that the reach of FCIC extended beyond the venue. Additionally, Samsara joined as the 'Curiosity Partner'. The media coverage was enhanced by the support of The World of Hospitality and Hospitality Lexis, among others.



Tales in a coupe

Double Up at Hilton Manyata Bengaluru launches 'She Tales,' a new menu inspired by the creativity and personal stories of its all-women bar team.



oody is not just a cocktail—it is a story stirred in finesse. Inspired by warmth, resilience and memory, Woody is one of the cocktails on the new menu called 'She Tales' by Double Up at Hilton Manyata Bengaluru. Taking tales beyond mixology, the all-women team of Double Up craft a unique cocktail experience where each bespoke cocktail expresses a personal journey, a passion or a piece of identity. Through flavour

and form, these women are not just serving drinks—they celebrate the spirit of storytelling.

Manish Garg, General Manager, Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn Bengaluru Embassy Manyata Business Park, said, "We saw an opportunity to let their voices shine through bespoke cocktails that reflect their journeys and passions. It was not just about crafting drinks, it was about creating a meaningful experience that celebrates women's artistry and individuality in hospitality."

The cocktail menu seamlessly blends brand storytelling, DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) values and commercial impact. "While it supports our brand purpose and positions us as an inclusive, forwardthinking space, it is more than a campaign. It is a long-term operational shift that empowers our team and differentiates Double Up in a competitive market," he stressed, further adding that by elevating experiences, it drives revenue as well as enhances guest engagement through emotional connection and authenticity.

Reshaping the mould

Working in a traditionally maledominated space, the all-women team shows what's possible when



MANISH GARG GM, Hilton and Hilton Garden Inn Bengaluru Embassy Manyata Business Park

"It is a long-term operational shift that differentiates Double Up in a competitive market."



talent is nurtured and heard. Mahak Gupta, the mixologist at the bar, shared, "It feels like we are not just making drinks but breaking barriers and creating a welcoming,

inspiring environment for future women bartenders. It is empowering and energising at the same time."

She agreed there is a stereotype that women cannot handle highvolume bars or do not know 'serious' cocktails but with 'She Tales' her team is proving that their creativity, technique and storytelling are second to none. "Guests see our passion and expertise firsthand, helping change perceptions about women behind the bar," she asserted.



As mixology moves beyond technique to storytelling and personal expression, women are bringing fresh perspectives, emotional depth and creativity that challenge conventions. "We are redefining the bar as a space for connection, not just consumption," Gupta said. "By sharing our stories through cocktails, we are shaping a more inclusive, expressive and guest-focused experience that truly resonates."

The change is being embraced by guests too, who are excited to raise a toast to 'girl power' and the spirited narratives behind each creation. She shared, "Women guests tell us they feel more comfortable approaching the bar, asking questions and trying new things."



An oasis of sustainable luxury

At the Aahana resort in Jim Corbett, wilderness, wellness and wholeness of nature converge in a sanctuary of serenity and sustainability.



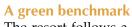
im Corbett National Park in Uttrakhand has always held a coveted spot on every travel enthusiast's wish list. Nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas, it has long drawn work-worn travellers with its abundant wildlife and serene landscapes – offering solace and serotonin (happiness hormone) as generously as sunlight. Translating to 'the first rays of sunlight', Aahana Resort opened doors 13 years ago with an aim to offer an unadulterated forest experience where mornings begin with call of hornbills and evenings dissolve into natural tranquility and stillness.

Nature is new luxury

Spanning across 13.5 acres, the resort has redefined the meaning of sustainable luxury in the hospitality industry. Through years of dedicated effort, over 4,500 trees have been planted, transforming barren land into a thriving manmade forest teeming with diverse flora and fauna.

Nature leads the narrative, seamlessly woven with thoughtful touches of luxury. The rooms are designed to harmonise with the environment, including exclusive private pool villas with personal, temperaturecontrolled plunge pools and sundrenched decks. Blending comfort with innovation, each villa features hydrotherapy loungers and air spa systems, turning every swim into a





The resort follows a holistic triple bottom line philosophy-balancing people, planet, and profit through innovative, sustainable practices. Embracing a circular economy model, the resort converts compostable waste into renewable energy via an advanced biogas plant, expands solar infrastructure across the property, and operates efficient vermi-composting systems. This commitment is reflected in its daily operations, which include plastic-free dining, local sourcing initiatives, and strict vendor compliance to minimize







waste. It has also been recognized by the Uttarakhand Government for its pioneering Root Zone Sewage Treatment Plant.

While guests can always opt for a safari adventure into the Jim Corbett National park, the resort offers a wide range of engaging activities for those who choose to spend time in the resort. Depending on the season and availability, guests can enjoy a mixology masterclass using forest-inspired ingredients, explore the resort's organic gardens, follow scenic bicycle trails around the property, or take a guided tour with an in-house naturalist to discover the

Over 4,500 trees have been planted, transforming barren land into a thriving manmade forest

region's flora and fauna. For families and groups, both outdoor and indoor games such basketball, badminton, carrom, ludo, etc., ensure quality time and fun.

Over the years, the resort has gained traction as a most soughafter wedding destination. The natural surrounding strike a chord with Indian families seeking celebrations rooted in tradition. From haldi ceremony in the garden to cocktail mehendi evening by the pool, the resort's team goes the extra mile to curate each event in the most memorable way.





Leisure travel to reach US\$15 tn by 2040

BCG report stresses that India has the potential to emerge as a dominant force in the global leisure travel market.



eisure travel is set to triple in value by 2040, growing from US\$5 trillion today to US\$15 trillion, according to a new report by Boston Consulting Group (BCG). The BCG's report, Unpacking the \$15 Trillion Opportunity in Leisure Travel, is based on a survey of nearly 5,000 travellers across

11 countries, conducted by BCG's Center for Customer Insight, plus an analysis of travel patterns in 68 markets. While international leisure travel value is expected to triple, it is not international jet-setting fuelling the boom. The real engine is closer to home: domestic leisure travel is projected to generate nearly US\$12 trillion by 2040, while regional travel is set to triple to more than US\$2 trillion. International travel will grow

the fastest but still hold the smallest share—reaching US\$1.4 trillion.

Meanwhile, the next wave of travellers is increasingly coming from emerging markets like China, India, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam - outpacing traditional tourism heavyweights like the US, UK and Germany.

"India is poised to become one of the most dynamic leisure travel markets globally. With domestic leisure travel spend projected to grow at 12

per cent annually and international spend at 10 per cent through 2040, Indian travellers are increasingly exploring both their own country and the world. There is a clear shift observed in the travel industry led by younger generations-Millennials and Gen Z—who are not only traveling more, but also seeking experiences that blend value, personalisation and purpose," said Nitima Malhotra, Partner, BCG.

Key Indian findings

- Younger generations in India are 22 per cent more likely to anticipate taking more trips in the next year and also have a higher intent to spend more on travel
- Indian travellers prefer nature, city, beach and cultural destinations (58 per cent), with a higher interest in spiritual (10 per cent) than other countries
- Indian travellers primarily take

"59 per cent of Indians use AI tools, while 80 per cent say human touch remains important."

- trips to relax (15 per cent), explore (13 per cent), and escape (11 per cent) with more focus on religion (6 per cent) than other countries
- 28 per cent of Indian travellers typically take trips with a partner or spouse and 23 per cent with immediate family; only 9 per cent travel alone
- Indian travellers are most influenced by activities (18 per cent) and ease of travel (17 per cent) with lower emphasis on cost and family/friends

- Most Indians plan to combine business with leisure travel; millennials are most likely to do so (35 per cent)
- 81 per cent of Indian travellers have combined business with leisure travel at least once
- 59 per cent of Indians use AI tools, while 80 per cent say human touch remains important

AI-New Travel Agent

Travellers—especially those from emerging markets-are turning to AI for their trip plans.

Many consumers in China (65 per cent), India (59 per cent), Indonesia (58 per cent) and Vietnam (51 per cent) report that they are using AIpowered tools and chatbots to plan and book trips.

But 79 to 85 per cent of travellers from these same markets also say that human touch points remain important.



Products & Services



Evoking beauty and harmony

Mira Living's latest collection features a wide array of decorative items that offer a touch of sophistication and glamour to a space. The range evokes beauty, harmony and functionality, characterised by opulent materials, intricate embroidery and the brand's signature Vases & Table Lamps. The collection underscores the brand's commitment to manifesting exemplary design with aesthetic sensibility.



Soie Lumière by UDC Homes transforms traditional wallpaper into high-design, tactile surfaces bringing the richness of couture to interior spaces. Inspired by the delicate radiance of silk and the finesse of global heritage techniques, each wallpaper in this collection is a unique creation. Hand-painted chinoiserie, 3D embroidery, pearls and a range of artisanal surface treatments come together on lush backdrops of mulberry silk, club linen and soft metallics.





Into the sublime

Much like a 'story in progress,' Due collection – an exclusive partnership between Poltrona Frau and Ceccotti Collezioni, moves into the all-important sleeping space. An intimate place where the Italian masters fuse their expertise to create discreet perfection. The collection reinterprets the timeless elegance of certain bourgeois interiors with a touch of a contemporaneity that enhances the quality of the materials, the sublime virtuosity of the cabinetmaking and meticulous attention to detail.



Vintage-inspired sophistication

Crafted with precision and engineered for lasting beauty, GRAFF's 26 signature finishes are designed to elevate everyday spaces into luxurious expressions of art and beauty. These finishes go beyond surface treatment—offering depth, character and a nod to vintage-inspired sophistication. Built with customisation at its core, each design strikes a perfect balance between classic form and contemporary function.

Geometric design

Prerna Mohan Design Studio's latest bespoke sofa showcases a hexagon pattern design. It draws inspiration from nature's most efficient shape 'hexagon' often seen in honeycombs and crystal formations. The geometric form is more than just form; it evokes motion. With its solid wood frame and sculptural armrests, the piece pairs architectural clarity with understated comfort.





Pour to perfection

Hong Kong Hip Series by Lucaris draws inspiration from the pulsating energy of the city, which seamlessly blends Eastern and Western cultures. Meticulously crafted from lead-free crystal, these stemware pieces elevate the visual appeal of any table setting. Ensuring an experience that is as trendy as it is timeless, the collection embodies the modern, edgy silhouette that is ideal for wine enthusiasts.

Movements



Aman Dhoundiyal General Manager, Hilton Garden Inn, Mumbai International Airport

Hilton Garden Inn Mumbai International Airport has appointed Aman Dhoundiyal as its new General Manager. With nearly 20 years of experience across marquee brands, such as Marriott, InterContinental and The Oberoi, Dhoundiyal brings operational acumen and people-first leadership to his new role.



Ashwin Sharma Cluster Director, MarCom, Fairmont & Raffles

Ashwin Sharma has been appointed as the Cluster Director of Marketing and Communications at Fairmont & Raffles. Sharma will lead integrated marketing and communication efforts across both Fairmont and Raffles Jaipur. He will focus on enhancing brand presence and guest engagement.



Austine Fernandes Director, Human Resources, The Fern Hotels & Resorts

Austine Fernandes has been promoted to Director of Human Resources at The Fern Hotels & Resorts. Associated with the brand for over 8 years, Fernandes has consistently demonstrated exceptional leadership. He will oversee critical verticals from workplace culture to performance management and employee engagement.



Devendra Kumar Director. Human Resources Crowne Plaza Today New Delhi

Crowne Plaza Today New Delhi Okhla has announced the promotion of Devendra Kumar to the position of Director of Human Resources. His promotion reflects his consistent dedication, leadership and deep expertise in HR operations and strategy. Under his leadership, the brand aims to further strengthen its human capital.



Neha Kapoor General Manager Hyatt Place Gurgaon

Hyatt Place Gurgaon has announced Neha Kapoor as its new General Manager. With more than 21 years of expertise, her strategic insight and peoplecentric ideals will drive the hotel's ongoing expansion. Her appointment reflects Hyatt's commitment to developing internal talent in leadership roles.



Raiib Das General Manager, Operations The Fern Hotels & Resorts

Rajib Das has been promoted to General Manager of Operations at The Fern Hotels & Resorts. Das will oversee operations for five hotels in Maharashtra under The Fern brand. With over 24 years of industry experience, Rajib brings core expertise in hotel operations, F&B management, guest experience and cost optimisation.



PRERNA MOHAN DESIGN STUDIO

HOSPITALITY INTERIOR DESIGN

GUEST BEDROOM MOODBOARD.

Blue Oasis

The "Blue Oasis" bedroom is designed to be a restful retreat with a sophisticated ambiance. The thoughtful combination of colors, patterns, and textures creates a space that is both stylish and serene. The blend of classic wallpaper, modern lighting, and comfortable textiles makes this bedroom a perfect sanctuary for unwinding and rejuvenation.





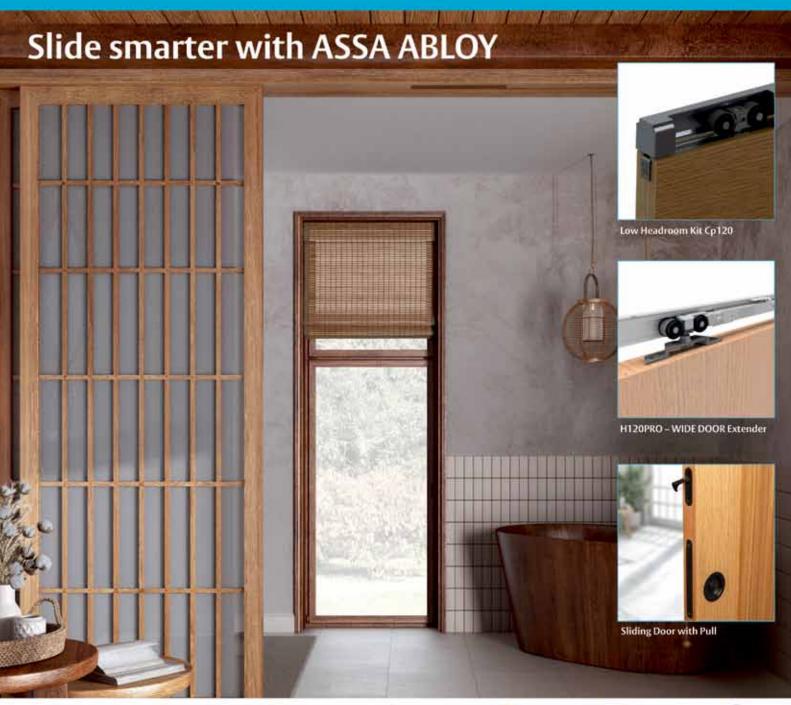




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