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IHGF Delhi Fair in its Autumn 2019 edition, had the theme ‘Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose & Recycle’. The event drove home a thought-provoking message on sustainability and responsible manufacturing.
OPINION
HOSPITALITY HOPES PINNED ON 2020?
Regional Presidents share how the hotels in their regions: west, east, south and north have fared for hospitality in 2019. They also share with us their expectations and perspective for the coming new year, 2020.

EDUCATION
SMOOTH SAIL FOR STUDENTS INTERESTED IN CRUISE LINERS
Sai International Institute of Hotel Management is a Chennai-based institution that has been training professionals for more than a decade. The institute aids students in receiving CDC, which helps open many doors for a career in cruises.

TECHNOLOGY
CLOUD SOLUTIONS ARE IN DEMAND
Zubin Bilimoria, CEO, Bingoforge, shares inputs on his company and solutions for the hospitality industry.

GUEST COLUMN
INDIA CLIMBS UP THE ADVENTURE TOURISM LADDER
Himanshu Talwar, Assistant Secretary General, FHRAI shares his view on hospitality potential in terms of adventure tourism.

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The year 2019 has been a phenomenal one in many ways for the tourism industry of India. India’s ranking has significantly improved from 65th in the year 2013 to 34th in 2019 in the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index Ranking of the World Economic Forum (WEF).

Undoubtedly, the credit goes to the strenuous efforts made by the Government of India in promoting the country as a tourist destination, and to the industry, for significantly contributing to the growth and development of the tourism and hospitality sector. We, at FHRAI, are of the firm belief that such efforts – both by the Government and industry, can bring India into the top 10 destinations in the years to come.

A country’s strength lies in the inclusive growth of the economy, and when it comes to the tourism and hospitality industry of India, domestic tourist movement plays a pivotal role. Understanding the potential of creating awareness among the domestic population about the credible tourist destinations within India, the Ministry of Tourism, introduced the Domestic Promotion and Publicity including Hospitality (DPPH) scheme.

Recently, Shri. Prahlad Singh Patel, Hon’ble Minister of State of Culture and Tourism, apprised the members of the lower house of the parliament of India, in a written reply, benefits attached to the scheme and how it is upheaving awareness about tourism products which include local religious and non-religious spots. As an industry association, we are thankful to the Ministry of Tourism, for organising various events and activities, under the scheme, to promote the tourism and hospitality sector of India.

A momentous event is scheduled in the month of December 2019 to highlight India’s Buddhist Heritage, Pilgrimage, and Culture – the International Buddhist Travel Mart. We would like to wish the organisers good luck for a successful event.

Under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, Ministry of Tourism identifies the Buddhist Circuit as one of the fifteen thematic circuits for development and has already sanctioned various projects in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Andhra Pradesh. Such activities and schemes would surely succeed in stimulating the growth of both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals, which would lead to the overall growth of the hospitality and tourism sector.

Lastly, we would like to highlight that, lately, various benefits have been extended by the Government of India to the hospitality industry, which includes a paramount decision of reduction in the Goods and Service Tax (GST). However, some concerns have been raised about the passing on of such benefits to the tourists.

We, the FHRAI, have had issued an advisory – twice, in October and November, to the associated associations, regional associated associations and to the members to sensitize them about the concern and, as a collective responsibility, ensure that the benefits should be passed onto the end-user.

With kind regards,
Rahul Lall
Secretary General, FHRAI
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**Association Partners**
BANGALORE HOTELIER FILES FIR AGAINST OYO

A Police Notice has been issued by the Halasuru Police Station directing the OYO’s Ritesh Agarwal, CEO; Rohit Srivastava, Head of South; Madhvendra Kumar, Head Business Development; Gourab De, Head Business Development & in-charge of property; and Prateek Agarwal, Manjeet Singh and Mrinmoy Chakraborty from Finance to appear before the Sub-Inspector of Police on Nov 7, 2019.

The case has been filed by Betz Fernandez, owner of Roxel Inn and has been registered by the Police vide Cr. No. 348/2019 under sections 406, 420, 120(B) r/w 34 IPC. The complainant has alleged that as per the agreement, OYO was to pay his hotel `7 lakhs per month as minimum guarantee. However, since May 2019 OYO has not fulfilled its promise and has continued to ignore Fernandez’s reminders for paying the outstanding dues. "In the beginning everything appeared like smooth sailing and, the terms and conditions of the agreed partnership were met diligently. But then, this lasted only for a few months. Gradually things changed with tweaks in the contracts that were favorable to them and now they have just completely stopped paying.

After many attempts to remind and reason with them, I am forced to take this step," says Elister Fernandez, CEO, Roxel Inn. OYO is also under investigation by the Competition Commission of India (CCI) based on the complaints filed by the Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations of India (FHRAI). Prima facie, the CCI has identified a case for investigations into OYO’s business practices under Section 26(1) of the Competition Act, 2002. "Time and again, we have expressed that the hotel industry, especially hotels in the budget segment are being exploited by OYO. Under the garb of generating more business, OYO has been arm-twisting the small and budget segment hoteliers for quite some time now."

CCI’s order to investigate OYO is a big breakthrough and the FIR registered against them by the Bangalore hotel owner is the first of many by other hoteliers across the country," says Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, President, Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) & Vice President, FHRAI. The apex hospitality body, FHRAI has asserted that the CCI has taken cognisance of its complaint based on the merit of the allegations and is hopeful that the verdict will be in favour of the hotel industry.

"The FHRAI has informed the CCI about how OYO presently leverages on the vulnerability of a hotelier and gets away with it without any consequence. Filing of a FIR is not something that any business individual takes unless they are completely cornered and are left with no choice to deal with a bully. We stand with Fernandez and will support him in this battle against the SoftBank funded Goliath. We have also issued an advisory to our members asking them to reach out to FHRAI for any unjust actions taken against them."

Corrigendum: In the article, ‘FHRAI logs out in solidarity with NRAI’ printed in the November 2019 issue of FHRAI magazine, on page No. 11 the correct designation of Pradeep Shetty, under his photograph is Jt Hony Secretary, FHRAI.
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HRAWI CONDUCTS TWO MORE FOSTAC PROGRAMMES FOR FSSAI

The Hotel and Restaurant Association of Western India (HRAWI) in association with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) conducted two more of its Food Safety Supervisory training in Advance Catering (FoSTaC) programmes in Navi Mumbai and Pune, in October. The training programmes were conducted at the E-Square Hotel, Pune and at the D. Y. Patil University School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies, Navi Mumbai.

A total of seventy-two hospitality professionals were trained and certified under the programme over the two days. “We have been conducting the programme for over two years and our Association has trained and certified 1470 hospitality professionals so far, FoSTaC is an initiative of FSSAI for reinforcing the safety and hygiene standards among the food handlers in hospitality.

We plan on continuing to host these programmes so that maximum hospitality professionals can benefit from it,” says Gurbaxish Singh Kohli, President, HRAWI.

Last month, the Association conducted two training programmes in Navi Mumbai at D. Y. Patil University School of Hospitality and Tourism Studies and Four Points by Sheraton on 20th and 21st September 2019 under the supervision of the FSSAI’s official Praveen Andrews.

The Association has successfully trained around 1470 hospitality professionals in FSSAI’s FoSTaC programme. The Hotel and Restaurant Association (Western India) is a 68 years old Association of Hotels and Restaurants in Western India. Its members include various restaurants and smaller hotels up to 5-star deluxe categories.

The bulk of its members like any growth economy are made up of restaurants and budget hotels.

With membership base spread across Western India, HRAWI covers Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Goa and the Union Territories of Daman, Diu & Silvassa, and is considered to be the voice of the Hotel Industry.

The association is part of the national body of Federation of the Hotels & Restaurants Associations of India (FHRAI), located in New Delhi, which was originally founded in Mumbai in 1950 by the late J.R.D. Tata.
The ongoing tussle between internet food aggregators and restaurant owners has turned bad to worse in the last few months. "The industry is already surviving on thin margins, the deep discounting being offered by some of the aggregators indeed creates huge pressure on us," says Pranav Singh, the President HRAEI. "The adoption rates were high initially to get on to these platforms due to competitive pressure. The focus should ideally be on quality rather than discounting. Only then can restaurants and aggregator platforms jointly thrive," he added.

Initially food delivery apps were seen as a boon for small restaurants as they handle a large part of the takeaway orders of these small operators. Since the small operators benefit immensely from these delivery apps they often play to the tunes of these companies. They increase food prices as demanded by the app companies to accommodate the high commissions charged from the food delivery apps. This certainly affects the business practice in the restaurant business as it has been found that the commissions charged by the food tech companies can go up to as much as 22 per cent of the order value.

"Small restaurants in our association are somewhat affected by the growth anomaly, but there hasn’t been any large-scale protest as yet. Some of the restaurants have tried to negotiate the terms with the tech companies, while others have organised their own delivery team to fight the competition," says Sudesh Poddar, Hony Secretary, HRAEI.

However, the renowned standalone restaurants have hardly been affected by the competition because they keep attracting customers because they provide the superior ambience and impeccable service. "Most of these restaurants have spruced up their interiors and have trained their staff to offer the customers fine dining experience that can never be matched by food tech companies," says Singh.

"We encourage standalone restaurants to improve the service to compete with food tech companies. Also, they are advised not to agree to any terms and conditions of the food delivery apps that damage the fair business practices," says Poddar.
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SEMINARY ON SUSTAINABLE HOTELS ORGANISED IN LUCKNOW

Uttar Pradesh Hotel & Restaurant Association (UPHRA) the state association of Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) recently organised a workshop on Sustainable Greening of Hotels & Restaurants with Department of Food Safety and Drug Administration, Govt. of Uttar Pradesh. The workshop was held at Hotel Lineage Lucknow. Dr. Anita Bhatnagar Jain, Additional Chief Secretary, Food Safety and Drug Administration Dept. Govt. of Uttar Pradesh was the Chief Guest.

The Seminar witnessed the gracious presence of Surendra Kumar Jaiswal, President, Uttar Pradesh Hotel & Restaurant Association & Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India and Vice President- Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India, Senior Officers of FSDA Lucknow along with senior members of UPHRA, Ravi S Khanna, Treasurer, Shyam Krishnani, Organisation Secretary and Anil Vermani. The seminar was organised to sensitise members on measures of food safety and food wastage. The literatures on various measures of food safety and food wastage were also launched. Initiatives on greening of hotels and restaurants were also deliberated during the seminar. The seminar was well attended by the members.

Hotel and Restaurant Association of Northern India (HRANI) - a Northern outfit of the Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Associations of India is an apex body represents hotels & restaurants and associates of the nine North Indian States. The legendary Rai Bahadur M. S. Oberoi formed the association in 1950. Since then it has been effectively working for the cause of hospitality industry and plays an important role in developing tourism in the states, which comes under its purview. These nine states are Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, J&K, Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.
President K Syama Raju and members of the SIHRA Executive Committee visited Vietnam early this month. The purpose of this visit was to promote bilateral tourism. Both countries have a simplified visa process to facilitate travel. Incidentally 2019 is the ASEAN - India year of Tourism.
Poona Hoteliers Association, a body representing 68+ star hotels of Pune elected Sharan Shetty as President for the term 2019 - 2020 at the Annual General Meeting held at The Westin, Pune. The Poona Hoteliers Association (PHA) is a very active body in Western India. Some of the activities include monthly meetings which are beneficial to members with guest speakers followed by dinner. They keep on inviting top government officials and knowledgeable persons from the industry to have interaction, which goes a long way in strengthening the association and the knowledge of the hotelier, hospital’s, institutes & multiplexes so that, issues if any, faced by the member can be tackled in a worthwhile manner.

Sharan Shetty said, “I am thankful to the members for having elected me for the year as President. The past year has been an eventful one for the hotel industry, under the leadership of Neerav Panchamia, Immediate Past President.” He also spoke about how The Poona Hoteliers Association has been an active voice in Maharashtra in highlighting and working towards issues along with the Regional Associations and working with the government. He said, “We have also planned many activities for the members such as Educational Seminars, Training Programmes, Cricket Tournament, etc. for the year 2019-20.” The Poona Hoteliers Association further believe that the growth of this industry depends on the availability of trained manpower and to meet this demand, they hold several seminars and training programmes on operational topics for the staff and executives of the member hotels which facilitate this cause every month. The Executive Committee (Office Bearers) of the Poona Hoteliers Association (PHA) 2019-20 include Suresh Talera, President of Honour; Neerav Panchamia, Immediate Past President; Prantik Ray, Sr Vice President; Nasir Shaikh, Vice President; Aditya Malla, Hon Secretary; Shrinivas Chaphalkar, Jt Hon. Secretary; Vineet Mishra, Hon Treasurer and Prapti Deshpande, Secretary-General.

ITDC TO DEVELOP 5-STAR HOTEL AT PRAGATI MAIDAN

The government has approved transfer of 3.7 acres of land at Pragati Maidan to ITDC on a 99-year lease for ₹611 crore to set up a five-star hotel. Giving details, Prakash Javadekar, Information and Broadcasting Minister, Government of India, said India Trade Promotion Organisation, which manages Pragati Maidan, will undertake a mega project to redevelop the land into a world-class International Exhibition and Convention Centre. The implementation of the International Exhibition and Convention Centre (IECC) project is in full swing and scheduled to be completed in the year 2020-21, said an official release. The approval has been given for transfer of 3.7 acres of land at Pragati Maidan on a 99-year fixed leasehold basis at a price of ₹611 crore in favour of the special purpose vehicle (SPV), which will be formed by ITDC.
WelcomHeritage (WH), India’s largest Heritage Hotel Chain has opened WelcomHeritage Inderpura Resort, which is situated on Delhi road State highway 37B at Udaipurwati of Jhunjhunu District in Rajasthan.

Udaipurwati is known as Udaipur of Shekhawati, which was the capital of Raja Todarimal of Shekhawat Rajput clan. It is located near a very famous Shakambhari Mata Temple. Adjoining is a Kot Dam, which has a former hunting ground (Shikarbagh) of Shekhawat rulers. The resort also falls on the route from Delhi to very famous Salasar Balaji Temple. Talking about the new property, Sanjeev K Nayar, GM, WelcomHeritage shared, “The addition of this property is part of our strategy to expand and open more properties in the current financial year. Rajasthan has such abundance of cultural properties and we are extremely lucky to find few of such gems and add in our existing portfolio.”
Increasing impact of reduced GST

The GST council have reduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates for hotels to make India a more viable tourist destination. Two months after this move, members share how the decision has affected business.

Kanchan Nath

DVS Somaraju
Hony Treasurer
FHRAI

BOOST TO HOSPITALITY
The GST Council have reduced the Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates to make India a more viable tourist destination. The GST on the hotel room tariff from ₹1,000 to ₹7,500 is 12 per cent and for hotel room tariff above ₹7,500 it is 18 per cent. At the outset on behalf of SIHRA & FHRAI we would like to thank the government for reduction in GST, this was definitely a good move and will give a boost to the hospitality industry which it is waiting for.

DOMESTIC HOLIDAY TRAVEL HAS INCREASED
After the reduction of GST, the mid-level and small hotel segments have seen good results, a lot of positive response from the customers. They do regular residential conferences which they use for training programmes for their staff which has directly boosted the business. And we have also seen that a lot of domestic holiday travel has also increased in the past few months, in coming months we will definitely see more impact and we are very happy for this.
**GOOD FOOTFALLS OF LOCAL CLIENTS TO RESTAURANTS**

Concept Hospitality-The Fern Hotels presently manages 71 hotels in 55 locations across India, Nepal and Seychelles. Our upscale The Fern brand has quite a few hotels with room rates above ₹7,500, which attracted 28 per cent GST earlier and are now at the 18 per cent GST level. The bulk of our hotels in The Fern Residency and Beacon brands are all under ₹7,500 and now at the 12 per cent GST level.

From October onwards, we have been levying GST at these new levels and passing on the benefit of 10 per cent and six per cent reduction in GST respectively to our guests. While most of our hotels have consistently been doing room occupancies well in excess of 70-90 per cent and continue to run full even now, the GST reduction has seen good footfalls of local clients to our restaurants and banquet areas for corporate and social events. F&B departments are doing very well at most of our hotels.

**NEED TO TAKE MORE POSITIVE STEPS FOR TOURISM**

At a more macro hospitality level, all hoteliers welcome this move by the government to reduce GST levels for hotels, making India a slightly more viable destination for our overseas guests in relation to our neighboring countries in South-East Asia. Visitor numbers from October onwards will surely reflect this. We urge the government to take further initiative and rationalise the GST structure on hotels even further, to make India more competitive as an Asian destination, offering so much more than other neighbouring countries can ever offer.

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**IMPACT WILL REFLECT IN NEXT FINANCIAL YEAR**

The entire hospitality fraternity has been fighting for the reversal, reduction and restructuring the GST rates on rooms since its inception. The revised tax structure has been very significant and has reflected in with marginal increase in occupancy. As most of the traditional travel agent segment bookings were/are made much ahead of the Government’s announcement of change in tax structure, the real impact may reflect in the next financial year.

**SEGMENT MADE MORE ACCESSIBLE**

Though ad hoc and online booking segments have experienced upward trend due to the change in tax structure. Yes, the tax benefit is given to the customers as the same.

High tax structure on luxury and mid-market rooms and Food and Beverage outlets had impacted the customers and hotels to great extent, revision in the GST structure has made this segment accessible to customers.

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**Revision in the GST structure has made mid market rooms and F&B more accessible to customers**

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**We have been passing on the benefit of 10% and 6% reduction in GST respectively to our guests**
ONLY PENALISING TAX STRUCTURE REDUCED

Reduction in tax we are raving about has still not brought our tax structure at par with neighbouring countries like Thailand (seven per cent), Singapore (10 per cent), Hong Kong (three per cent). This reduction has merely brought down the penalising tax structure of 28 per cent to an acceptable level.

Leisure and group travel is more price sensitive than FITs (Free Individual Travelers). FITs mostly travel for business needs and a marginal decrease in rates will not affect their travel plans. Our hotels are business hotels, hence we have not had much of an impact from the reduction in GST on rooms rent.

YET TO SEE ANY NOTABLE IMPACT

It is too early and premature to comment on the effect of decreased taxes considering the time of implementation being October which is a festival month, where the overall business has been low across the country.

The banquet business largely operates on net prices also and has resulted in a marginal increase in the total revenues.

But the overall profitability has not seen any increase owing to the fact that the ITC benefit is not available on five per cent rates for F&B and also the steep increase in the vegetable and other perishable prices for the past two months.

The restaurant business (within hotels) have not seen any additional footfall owing to the tax reduction as they are predominantly dependent on room occupancies. No increase is seen in the local diners, too. We are yet to see any notable impact as a result of reduced GST rates.

M.Venkadasubbu
Jt Hony Secretary
FHRAI

Our hotels are business hotels; hence we have not had much of an impact of the reduction in GST

MOMENTUM TO REVPAR

The reduction in GST rates is certainly a positive step and has been working in favour of the hospitality industry, with most markets witnessing better performance in terms of Revenue Per Available Rooms (RevPAR) and Average Daily Rates (ADR).

It has given a momentum to RevPAR performance during the third quarter (July-September) of 2019. We have tried our best to pass the benefit to our customers to gain loyalty from the guests. However, the slowdown of the economy somewhat neutralised the gain as there has been a downslide in business and leisure travel. A dip in MICE expenditure is also visible even though we are in the peak winter months. Organisers of events—including weddings—are going for drastic cost cuts. The price rise of essential commodities, such as onion, is also eating up into the profit margin of low-end restaurants.

UNIFORM 12 PER CENT GST REQUIRED

The upscale hotels have benefitted from the lowering of GST rates. But, the industry is looking forward to a uniform 12 per cent GST on room rates and banquets.

This will make destinations in India—especially the eastern region—more attractive to foreign travellers bound for South East Asia. Most countries in those regions have GST rates 5-8 per cent which help them draw more leisure as well as business tourists compared to India.

Sudesh Poddar
EC member
FHRAI

The industry is looking forward to a uniform 12 per cent GST on room rates and banquets
The recently concluded IHGF Delhi Fair, in its Autumn 2019 48th edition held from October 16-20, 2019 at the India Expo Centre & Mart, drove home a thought-provoking message on sustainability and responsible manufacturing. In keeping with the theme of ‘Refuse, Reduce, Reuse, Repurpose and Recycle’, awe-inspiring colossal installations of animals, butterflies, trees, etc. at the fair venue, made from 50 tonnes of industrial waste including plastic, metal, wood and fabric, exemplified amalgamation of traditional Indian lifestyle values and practices with reimagined creativity using cast-off everyday materials.

This 48th edition of the show saw over 7000 trade visitors from 110 countries through its five days, to engage with the 3200+ exhibitors spread across 197,000 sq. mtrs. in 14 display segments. They came from all over the world with impressive numbers from USA, Europe, Australia, South America, Middle East and Asia representing brands like Bed Bath & Beyond, Anthropologie, Restoration Hardware from USA; Nuevo Living from Canada; Fischers GmbH from Germany; Rendezvous Deco and Mille et Claire from France; Magazine zum Globus and Migros from Switzerland; Parlane and Amara from UK; The Moshi, PR Home and Oscar & Clothide from Sweden and many more from different countries across the globe. Apart from the overseas buyers; leading brands across India also visited the show in good volume. It included brands like Reliance Retail, Fab India, Shoppers Stop, Westside, Pantaloons, DLF Brands, Furniturewalla, IKEA, The Good Earth Pvt. Ltd., The Wishing Chair, Sleepwell, Archies, Urban Ladder, H&M, Zorba, @Home, Nicobar, Hindware (EVOK), Paytm, Pepperfry, Flipkart, Amazon, E-bay, Oberoi Hotels, Park Plaza Hotels, Taj Hotels and Resorts, etc.

Globally renowned and strongly patronised by the international buying community, IHGF Delhi Fair has been the charismatic face for the work of millions of Indian artisans involved in making distinct world class products. The fair is being organised by the Export Promotion Council for Handicrafts (EPCH).

The 48th edition of the show saw over 7,000 trade visitors from 110 countries in five days.
Regional Presidents share how the hotels in their regions — west, east, south and north fared in 2019. They also share with us their expectations and perspective for the coming new year, 2020.

2019, NOT TOO GOOD

2019 hasn’t been a good year for hospitality in the East. There are visible signs of an economic downturn. The summer months of April, May and June, which traditionally witness brisk business in tourism and hospitality turned lukewarm this year with a slowdown in business activities. Both big and small hospitality groups suffered significant decline in revenue from operations to as much as 20 per cent in the June quarter compared to that in the same quarter in 2018.

Members attribute the revenue loss to a general slowdown in business activity and declining air travel. The first quarter had seen the softening of demand in the MICE business primarily because of the elections in April-May with no major shift in trend in July. There has been a slowdown in business and leisure travel in the last few months. The June quarter presented challenging market conditions in the form of a significant increase in domestic and outbound airfares for pre-booked customers post the closure of Jet Airways and the negative revenue impact.

OUTLOOK FOR 2020

A web-based Public Service Delivery System (PSDS) had been launched by MOT to enable all applicants seeking approval for hotel projects to track their applications online on real-time basis. Convergence is required at the central and state level between different ministries and departments, to facilitate resolution of inter-ministerial issues. Although we hear that under Union Budget 2019-20, the Govt introduced a Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) scheme like in all countries levying GST, this is yet to become a reality. The problem is again in the implementation. Announcing is one thing and actual implementation on the ground is another.

Kanchan Nath

The mindset towards the hospitality industry remains the biggest challenge, it is still given an elitist tag
2019 A GOOD YEAR
The slowdown in economic growth that we witnessed this year was a cause of worry, however the hospitality industry bucked the trend and as per information shared, it recorded an increase in RevPAR of 2.6 per cent over last year. This indicates a positive outlook for the industry.

2019 has been a good year for the hospitality industry despite factors such as the general elections and the Goods and Services Tax rates.

The inflow of tourist arrivals has increased and measures like the introduction of the e-Tourist Visa facility will only serve to boost foreign tourist arrivals. We believe that the situation will continue to improve, and we are optimistic that 2020 will see continued growth. The Government is also taking positive steps to revive the GDP.

The reduction of GST rates from 28 per cent to 18 per cent for rooms tariffs above ₹7,500 is a welcome move and will definitely have a positive impact on the occupancy rates. Corporate rate taxes have been cut, this will help improve profitability.

TRAVEL MADE EASIER
The introduction of e-Tourist Visa facilities has made travel easier and will result in increased tourist inflows. Domestic tourism is also witnessing a growth in numbers. Young millenials are keen to visit new places and also have a larger disposable income.

They look for different experiences such as adventure tourism, eating the local cuisine and also learning to cook it.

In this changing scenario the hospitality industry must be able to provide these experiences. Improved connectivity through road and air travel is playing a large part in the growth of tourism.

Smaller towns are now accessible and hotel chains are seeking to expand in these Tier-3 markets. The collapse of Jet Airways resulted in air travel becoming more expensive, especially international travel.

However, the outcome of this appears to be that we are now planning more domestic holidays and therefore domestic tourism continues to grow.

Despite some natural calamities faced by the Southern states this year, the ability and resilience to get past it has been impressive, the outlook for 2020 is indeed positive.

EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM GROWS
The industry is seeing a shift from destination-based tourism to experience-based tourism and development of niche tourism products and services for tourists. For large and small hotel-chains, there are several new opportunities to discover as domestic tourism continues to grow. The economic environment is becoming more conducive for growth in the long term.

The hospitality industry recorded an increase in RevPAR of 2.6 per cent over last year and tried to address them as quickly as possible.

Some important decisions surely came too late, especially correcting the maladies of e-Visa regime, the CRZ holdups, etc. and therefore the fruits of those decisions will only start deriving in the coming years. The reduction of GST from 28 per cent to 18 per cent applicable on room rates above ₹7,500 per night and from 18 per cent to 12 per cent for rooms having tariff between ₹2,500 – ₹7,500 was a great relief.

Moving to 2020, the reduction will provide a great fillip to the hospitality sector. Also, the significant reduction of corporate tax will strengthen the investor sentiment in the days to come.

Room night demand will grow in major business cities as well as in the leisure destinations and this demand will drive the growth in hospitality industry.
Holistic development of the identified islands, keeping the carrying capacity in mind has been accorded high priority by the government. On the other hand, there is also a need to develop the islands under the PPP mode.

The process of bidding for developing resorts within the carrying capacity on the islands has started. Speaking at the pre application conference for Eco Tourism Resorts for Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Amitabh Kant, CEO, Niti Aayog said, these are some of the most pristine islands, one of the last destinations in the world to be opened up. Therefore, they are very unique, and our objective is to develop them as high value tourism destinations. They will be built around the carrying capacity of the islands after detailed analysis. Initially in the first phase four islands will be developed in A&N and five in Lakshadweep. We have issued RFQ on the website of NITI Aayog and UT administration. We have worked very closely with the UT administration. The strategy is to take infrastructure to a very high level and create very high-value tourism destinations here. We will provide upfront clearances like CRZ / environmental clearances as well as a timeline for approvals. By the time the bidding is complete all projects will have CRZ clearance. Projects are all supported by local islanders."

On the Eco-Tourism projects in Lakshadweep, he added, “One of the projects that we are doing are water villas in Minicoy island, these are absolute coral paradises. We have increased the concession period, we feel that for the first time in India we are doing around 40 water villas over 6 hectares and land villas, 110 keys over 8.53 hectares. Our costing looks like 319 crore which will vary from developers and builders. The concession period is 66 years, the supporting infrastructure will be an airport in Minicoy island which we are proposing, and uniqueness is a very large lagoon in the area. We are also doing water villas in Suheli island in Lakshadweep; 50 keys for water villas over six hectares. Land villas will be 60 keys over 3.82 hectares, project cost is 247 crore. Over a concession period of 66 years. We will have sea planes and heli services to be introduced. Kadmat island, which is an adventure tourism destination, a unique deep dive destination, water villas with 35 keys over 6 hectares and land villas with 75 keys over 5.5 hectares will be developed here. There will be a concession period, and this has the potential to become the world’s best destination for water sports. Lakshadweep has the potential to become ten times better than Maldives.”

“Developing RESORTS in A&N"
LONG, AVES, SMITH AND SHAHEED DWEEP TO BE DEVELOPED IN A&N ISLANDS

Kant added, “In Andaman we are looking at Long island where the area is 42 hectares, about 220 keys are to be developed, the concession period is about 75 years. A protruding jetty will be constructed and approach to helipad will be there. Aves island which is a great romantic getaway, 2.75 hectares to be developed with about 50 keys. Concession period is over 50 years, with construction period of three years. This will be a very unique eco-tourism getaway. Smith and Ross island are 25 hectare, 70 keys to be developed with a 50-year concession period. There will be a civil passenger terminal at Diglipur, ready for operation which is very close to it. A floating jetty will also be constructed. Shaheed Dweep, which is known for its beautiful sunsets and unique white sandy beaches, area is 9.7 hectare, 120 keys to be developed with 75 years of concession period, the island has regular sea connectivity from Port Blair.”

Chetan B Sanghi, Chief Secretary, A&N, Administration further reiterated, “We have a clear direction from the centre to promote high-end tourism in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. We have had an investors meet, and we have primarily tried to tell them that Andamans is a destination for high-end tourism. We are encouraging sustainable and responsible development, comparable to the best in the world.”

He said “We are improving the connectivity by an undersea cable project connecting mainland India with A&N islands, which will be a reality by June-November 2020. This will bring best internet connectivity to Andamans. We are also introducing flights to three international destinations; we are in touch with different airlines for the same. We currently have 26 flights reaching Port Blair every day, during the tourist season which is now. We also have whole lot of helicopters, sea planes, interisland ships and ferries that are operating currently.”

“We hope this kind of investment will bring in a lot of economic and sustainable development, and also generate a lot of employment and investment in that region. We will ensure that investors get easy and early clearances, also initially 30 per cent and later 60 per cent of the local population will get employment. Today the population of Andamans is about 4 lakh people and the number of tourists is more than that its around 5 lakh. We hope that it will go up further. Port Blair airport is an international airport so we hope that with the visa facilities which will be given on arrival now, the expected tourists from abroad would only go up.”
Smooth sail for students interested in CRUISE LINERS

Sai International Institute of Hotel Management is a Chennai-based institution that has been training professionals for more than a decade. The institute aids students in receiving CDC, which helps open many doors for a career in cruises.

The year 2019 marked a significant milestone of 16 years of them being into the education industry. The institution offers an accredited course in the discipline of cruise liners. This training has been accredited By American Global Standards, USA. Sai International Institute of Hotel Management offers job-oriented cruise liner courses such as advanced course in cruise ship galley operations and culinary arts (continental Garde manger pastry) certification in housekeeping operations and services, certificate in F&B services, with STCW courses and CDC license for catering professionals and exclusive elite spa and salon training for cruise liners.

The duration of all the courses offered is one month. Being a fresher is no bar for admission into the courses, freshers are also welcomed, to join the course. The distinctive features of the courses offered by Sai international institute of hotel management include 100 per cent placement assistance in leading cruise liners (Cruise Maritime voyage, Carnival cruises, Disney cruises, P&O cruises, MSC cruises, Celebrity cruises etcetera), bank loan assistance, practical sessions, communication and soft skill training, guaranteed off campus/on campus interviews to name a few. The certification issued is valid in more than 70 countries around the globe. The institute aids in receiving CDC which can be synonymous with seamanship passport, a vital document that opens the individual to several unexplored contingencies. They aim at educating the student on the abundant opportunities in cruise liners and abolishing the myth that these are inaccessible to Indian students. The individuals are trained as per standards of cruise HRD into ideal professionals and all the necessary knowledge is being inculcated sufficing the placement needs at a very affordable cost to the individual during his/her course of study. That said, all that you require is enthusiasm and passion to learn as knowledge is the only investment in this case. There have been instances where the lack of awareness among people has been capitalised by some bodies that indulge in fraudulent activities which leads to monetary loss and unnecessary depression. In the intent of condemning such activities, Sai Institute does not dispense any sugar-coated fake promises to the students, instead it furnishes the accurate details.

“Gone are the days when there were compromises being overlooked in the standard during recruitment of cruise liner professionals, with every passing decade, the standard of the industry has been raised many folds. Hence the fittest only survive, it is the best of the fittest that succeed,” says Dr Chef Vinoth Kumar, Principal/Chief Trainer, Sai Institute, a luminary in hospitality industry with several accolades such as the youngest chef to be honoured with a doctorate, holder of 5 world records in the discipline of carving, to name a few. He firmly believes all that
knowledge is only worth when put to performance. If you have the knowledge and passion, and looking for the right fortuity, Sai International Institute of Hotel Management is the right destination. Elaborating on the trends in terms of novel ways in imparting education to students today, he said, “As per the current trends HRDs of cruise industry are looking for USPH Certification & STCW+CDC, which is onboard standards certification.

Candidate with all mandatory documents are given first priority on merit selection for cruise line jobs. Cruise liners could well be referred to as “floating paradise” for they offer all possible luxuries overboard. It has been a dream of many, perhaps the life goal of some to work in an environment that is imbued with riches and luxury. It is said that “World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.”
Cloud solutions are in demand

Zubin Bilimoria, CEO, Bingoforge, shares inputs on his company and solutions for the hospitality industry. He also shares a perspective on the plans of Bingoforge in 2020, when they are planning to expand and provide more solutions.

Kindly share the USP of your company?
Bingoforge brings over 30 years of distribution and sales expertise in the travel and hospitality domain. Our USP is to help our customers grow their business by virtue of selecting the right solutions for their business. Some of our signature solutions are the Bingo Sales CRM, BINGO Valet for digital valet parking solutions for Hotels, Digital Marketing, Hotel GDS Audits and more.

The Bingo Sales CRM has helped hotel sales teams automate their sales operations, reduce data entry work, manage and send out offer letters in under a minute, manage sales follow up as well as schedule meetings and record DSR’s on the fly. Overall automation has helped hotel partner increase sales by 36 per cent and convert an average of 12 per cent loss leads into sales. In today’s competitive marketplace these numbers speak a lot.

What are the tech trends that we are witnessing for the hotel and restaurant industry?
Cloud solutions are very much now in demand and solutions i.e. Sales CRM and BINGO Valet are solutions that are game changers for any hotel or chain. Hoteliers are opening up, enabling and trying out solutions that are easy to use as well as low on budget. However, the key focus still remains on solutions that help drive more revenue.

Kindly elaborate on the new offerings/products that you have lined up for the hospitality industry in 2020.
2020 looks very promising for us at Bingoforge, as we expand our horizons with providing more and better solutions i.e. Property Management Solutions (Cloud), Hospital Management Solutions, Point of Sale for Hotels, Restaurants and Retail, Enterprise Solutions for any industry type and size or business house.

2020 shall also see a lot more of AI based applications for the Hotel Industry from Bingoforge, many of them shall be first launch for the Industry. A very exciting year as well as complete integrated solutions for large as well as small hotel properties and chains.

Automation has helped increase sales by 36% and convert 12% loss leads into sales
Shreeji International is presenting their flagship products for the first time in India - FLAT table bases. The company is the sole distributor of the table bases in India.

**UNIQUE USP**

FLAT (based in Sydney, Australia with offices in China, UK, USA and Canada) has developed a range of over 40 award-winning table bases that automatically stabilise on uneven surfaces, no matter how many times they are moved. They have also recently introduced FLAT Equalizers. Using the same you can stabilise and align your existing tables with FLAT Equalizers. The patented hydraulic technology located in the table base, also allows users to perfectly align multiple tabletops when catering for groups.

FLAT table bases not only stop the spillages that wobbly tables cause - they also save operators time (money) setting up tables each morning, reduce customer complaints, remove the unsightly napkins from underneath bases and protect brands.

FLAT’s range of table bases are selling successfully in 35 countries spanning 6 continents and our mission is to make FLAT table bases the number 1 choice for hotel and restaurant chains.

**EXPANSION PLANS**

Shreeji International is focused on introducing ‘best in class’ products for the hospitality and food service industry in India. They have national coverage and are focussed in the short term on introducing FLAT table bases to the Indian market. As distributors of FLAT table bases, they will be introducing more table base styles to the market as the range grows (currently 40+ table base styles) and they are already experiencing high demand for the products. The products are gaining great popularity around the world and are now being used by some of the world’s largest restaurant chains.

They recognise the value that the table bases bring to their operations and customers and in future their vision is to see all table bases – FLAT.

**COMPANY BACKGROUND**

Shreeji International was established in 2015 as an importer of high-end furniture for the hospitality and food service industry. They specialise in sourcing innovative products and in bringing unique problem-solving solutions to the Indian market.

Based in Hyderabad, they are well positioned to serve their customers nationally and internationally and their team of specialists are able to provide bespoke recommendations. They are currently the sole distributor of the world renowned and multi-award-winning FLAT table bases in India.

"The patented hydraulic technology allows users to perfectly align multiple tabletops with ease"
Survey on Hotel Management Contracts

We share excerpts from a report by Manav Thadani, Founder Chairman, Hotelivate and Juie Mobar, Director, Special Projects, Hotelivate, that highlights key terms and clauses of hotel management agreements and discusses trends.

Hotel management contracts are legally binding documents signed between the owner and the operator. Getting a suitable operator onboard and signing on optimal terms is critical to a branded hotel’s success.

In the recently released 2020 Hotel Management Contract Survey – South Asia by Hotelivate, we reviewed 85 contracts/LOIs, representing around 16,200 rooms across all hotel positioning, signed in the region (primarily India, supplemented with contracts from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Pakistan) over the last two decades. This substantive report highlights the key terms and clauses of hotel management agreements, provides broad definitions, and discusses trends over time. It also offers exclusive insights by the authors who have considerable hands-on experience in operator search and management contract negotiations in the region and have published pioneering research and articles on the topic.

Given below are a few excerpts from the survey.

Excerpt I (Figure 1)

**MANAGEMENT CONTRACT TERM**

The duration of a hotel management contract is defined by an initial term and one or more renewal/extension term(s). The initial term commences from the Effective Date of the agreement (the date of signing) and continues for a certain number of years, often beginning with the first full operating year of the hotel after the Opening Date.

The average length of the initial term in South Asia is 20.7 years. The hotel management contract may be extended for pre-defined successive periods, constituting the renewal/extension term. The average length of the renewal/extension term in South Asia is 8.2 years.

Market positioning of a hotel and its initial term have a positive correlation. As one goes higher up on the positioning scale, the average length of the initial term tends to increase. This is understandable considering that operators seek greater stability (in terms of brand image and reputation) and require more time to recover their investment for upscale-luxury brands than for those operating in the budget-mid market segment.

Excerpt II (Figure 2)

**BASE MANAGEMENT FEE**

Base Management Fee is an ongoing fee, typically expressed as a percentage of total revenue of the hotel. The average stabilized base fee in South Asia is 2.35% of Gross Revenue, influenced by factors like positioning, location and size of the hotel, year of signing the contract, length of the initial term and other commercial aspects of the deal.

In addition to the above, the survey report discusses other key terms and clauses of a hotel management contract, non-traditional areas of negotiations gaining prominence, and the list of owner’s obligations during the various phases of a contract’s lifecycle. For queries, please email info@hotelivate.com.
Functional and aesthetical design

Designs by Deco Arte are an expression of form, lines and curves with an eye for detail. Amardeep Gulri, Founder and Principal, Deco-Arte, shares more on creating functional and aesthetical designs in a unique fashion.

2019, GREAT YEAR FOR US
2019 was the year of fusion; we used a lot of mixed materials including marble, metal, fabric, wood and glass. There has also been a shift from the omnipresent cool gray walls and dark stained hardwood floors towards a warmer color palette and more vibrant accent colors. The former palette will still have a place in projects of a certain style, but more and more clients are embracing the latter.

FUTURE DESIGN PHILOSOPHY
Smart interiors will be built into the very structure. Imagine a floor changing its design pattern or a wall changing its texture – the possibilities really are endless! Smart spaces have come a long way but, the future is yet to enfold the completely new technology driven designs. Consumers today are growing wary of the environment and social mark so they are more interested in sustainable design. "Bringing the outside in" will be a great demand! From landscaping to beauty, the future for eco-friendly designs looks bright.

DESIGN WILL BE INCREASINGLY DIGITAL
At Deco-Arte, we believe that as technology is improving, 3D visualisation, including advances in the augmented reality and virtual reality services can be offered, to the clients for their design decisions. Earlier, the prices for these services were very high but now, with multifold technological advances, the prices of using such technologies will go down. Ten years from now, visualisation will no longer be a luxury and will be done within fraction of time with minimal cost. It’s going to be an expected part of the design process.

ORIGINALITY WILL BE IMPORTANT
We are the design company that can provide bespoke and luxury designs. There will always be a market for people who want something that has not been seen everywhere, and that is not available to everyone, we tend to be the designing company which can provide such diversity in designs.
With the government’s positive initiative to open certain peaks for mountaineering and people looking for adventure tourism experiences, this can be an opportunity to grow tourism for hotels.
India is a diverse country brimming with numerous and unique languages, traditions and cultures. Giving all of this diversity at home is India’s variegated landscape, ranging from scenic deserts to serene bays to majestic mountains, all adding glory to the Indian panorama in their own ways. The Great Himalayan mountain range possesses some of the highest peaks in India and is also the birthplace of many mighty rivers including the Ganges and Brahmaputra. The air there might be thin and reaching the summit can be quiet a task but the effort is absolutely worth the experience.

People are finally opening up to the idea of climbing up a mountain and enjoying it. It’s true when they say the view from up there is worth the uphill struggle. The serene atmosphere in the mountains with no signs of commercialisation is pretty jolting and one finds their inner peace and stability among mother nature. The eight great mountain ranges of India are home to some of the tallest peaks in the world. Kanchenjunga and Nanda Devi are the two highest peaks of the Himalayan range under the Indian territory. These magnificent Indian mountain ranges help in managing the temperature, wind and rainfall in the country and are also home to a wide range of flora and fauna.

The Alps, snaking through a major part of Europe are extremely accessible but this inevitably leads to commercialisation. One would find that the element of pristine wilderness is lost, which in India’s case is almost entirely intact. The Himalayas are the world’s youngest mountains but are home to the world’s oldest cultures. Our mountain ranges are mostly uninhabited and the tribes who live around the peaks have preserved their culture so well that it only adds to a magical experience of its own. There is a lot of hardware lying around the Alps - apart from the cable-cars and the cafes there are a lot of aid to climbers and ramblers lying around. On the Mt Blanc range, one would be able to see lots of rusty old ladders and one may find that in popular climbing areas, the rock is covered in bolts for ‘sport climbing’. It is good to see people enjoying the environment in safety, but the sense of isolation that one is engulfed by in the Himalayas is something that can’t be found anywhere else. It’s an out of this world experience and there are quite a few people who can vouch for it.

The Government of India has opened 123 mountain peaks for foreigners who are hoping to obtain Mountaineering Visa (MX) for mountaineering and trekking. These peaks are located in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim. The Government has been trying to increase the accessibility of the peaks and provide tourists with vivid and mesmerising adventures. It is a huge and momentous step by the government in opening up better avenues in the field of adventure tourism.

Better facilities, easier accessibility and transportation, and hassle-free tourist procedures can turn this step into a leap. The hospitality industry should stretch its arms towards the remote areas and provide more tourist-friendly facilities.

India’s peaks are nature’s works of art and we should be glad we get to stride to the top of it. On the peak, looking out at the mesmerising wonders of nature lying right in front of our eyes and getting lost in them – it’s a one-of-a-kind experience and an experience that is pretty underrated. It’s time we open our eyes to what we are missing out on.

(The article has been written by Himanshu Talwar, Assistant Secretary General, FHRAI, the views expressed are the author’s personal views.)
Of beaches and temples: HPMF

Conceived in 2010, HPMF today is a global organisation with over 2600 members. As part of its 9th Annual Convention & Awards, the hospitality purchasing managers showcased a side of Kochi in a way that only they could have done.

Anupriya Bishnoi

HPMF’s 9th anniversary marked by its convention and awards was held from October 10-13 in Kochi. The three-day event witnessed over 250+ delegate participation from countries like Nepal, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and UAE. Keeping pace with technology, Hospitality Purchasing Managers’ Forum at its 9th Convention also launched its interactive website which will help navigate the users connect with the purchase managers of various hotels in one click.

Nitin Nagrale, Founder and General Secretary of HPMF, said, “We are delighted to be in Kochi and in order to help the industry in the best possible way, we are launching our first ever interactive website which will be a one-stop destination for the queries users may have.”

During the conference, delegates mingled with hospitality and F&B industry professionals where the latest trends in hospitality procurement, buyer preferences and path-breaking innovations were discussed. The other part of the conference encompassed B2B meetings with emerging and known vendors in India where they showcased their latest products and services.

The convention included intense panel discussions between the stalwarts of the industry. Talking more on the conference, Nagrale revealed that it was one of the most “challenging” conferences they have ever organised. He further said, “HPMF has been constantly helping evolve the procurement industry of the country. He said despite the challenges that befall their way, the organisation has been able to put together one of the finest conferences ever conducted, seamlessly.”

Explaining the relevance of such platforms to promote local community, Jose Dominic, CEO, CGH Earth Group, says, “I am quite surprised to see a hospitality purchase forum conference of this big level. I think such platforms have key importance in promoting local community, local suppliers and stakeholders, which in turn help to reduce the carbon footprint from the environment. Such events are ‘powerful vehicles’ in supporting the local tribe and start-ups as well.”

Kochi was shown in its full vigour and everything native to the place was exhibited in its true essence. A local trip was planned for the delegates where special attractions caught everyone’s fancy. On the last day, snake boat ride was arranged where delegates got to experience what Kerala has to offer. In short, the convention did justice in showing the true essence of the state- whether it was through the performances during the convention or through the local trips organised which was a part of the convention or through ‘Kerala Sadya’, feast of Kerala origin, which was served with over 26-course meals.

One of the main highlights of the convention was the reopening of Cochin Harbour Railway station after approximately thirteen years where pre-function gala night was conducted flawlessly. The convention concluded with award’s night where people who have contributed to this sector were awarded.

10TH EDITION
IN DUBAI

10th Convention and Awards 2020 will be held in Dubai. This will be the first time that the conference will be conducted outside of India.
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ORNATE DINNERWARE

If you are looking to pick up something exquisite and out of the ordinary for gifting this season, Ralph Lauren Home’s new collection is what you can turn to. Brought to India by Seetu Kohli Home, the high-end architecture and luxury interior design company renowned for representing some of the top-notch global luxury brands in India, the collection offers an extensive range of dinnerware, tableware and accessories. Drawing on the vision of enduring style that is signature to the world of Ralph Lauren, the collection is priceless in terms of design and style. It is crafted using the finest materials with the greatest attention to detail to create the ultimate in artisanal luxury.

CONVEYOR TOASTERS

Being the first manufacturers of conveyor toasters in India – AKASA, have made the best quality product with fine stainless-steel finish. It guarantees uniform toasting and durability, the toasters provide the optimum in features, quality and value. For uniformly colored golden-brown toast, as well as buns, English muffins, bagels, French bread, and frozen waffles. Ideal for hotels and catering as it can toast two slices at a time of small size catering to large number of visitors. It has top and bottom heating control.

STORE, COOK & BAKE

Japan has always been at the forefront of innovative technology and employing it in the average person’s daily life. One such from the land of the rising sun is the brand Asahi Kasei. Asahi Kasei, Japan’s No.1 brand, makes a grand debut in Indian kitchens with three offerings - Premium Wrap, Frying Pan Foil and Cooking Sheet. These products have been in use in Japan for 50 years now, a testament to their utility and quality. These are a boon for the health-conscious.

DINE IN STYLE

Dining rooms can be bespoke spaces that enchant you with their exquisite design shows Beyond Designs, renowned for their luxurious and elaborately designed interiors. Some of the recently designed dining rooms by Beyond Designs reiterate their penchant for creating layers of interest at every corner. Vibrant, opulent and studded with intricate details, the dining rooms compel you to stop and admire. Decorative painted ceilings; elaborately crafted dining tables with stone inlays on top; richly upholstered chairs and benches; grand chandeliers; curated gallery of artworks; gorgeous mirrors and much more.
Nagpur based, LB Industries have launched ‘Ray’ cooking spray which marks the group’s foray into the FMCG industry. Ray cooking spray with its unique dispensing mechanism, enables consumers to use the optimum amount of oil in their cooking. This results in reduced consumption of oil/ghee by approximately 80% as tested and certified by laboratories. Each can offer around 700-750 sprays.

Hand launches their new collection of carpets this winter. To quote the poet Tennyson, “The old order changeth, yielding place to new.” The most beautiful expression of this feeling is a new carpet from Hands - hand knotted or hand tufted in contemporary, transitional, and traditional designs. Featured here are two from the Lithology Collection and one from the Mineralogy Collection. The three together present just a glimpse into a range of fifteen stunning masterpieces; each customisable to any size. As Deepankar Choudhary, Director at Hands, likes to remind himself, “A carpet must do nothing less than enhance the environment it adorns and take the space to extraordinary expressions of elegance.”
CLARKS SHIRAZ LAUNCHES DIAL A DISH

Agra’s oldest and most loved five-star Hotel Clarks Shiraz recently launched ‘Dial a Dish’. As the name indicates, the people of Agra can now enjoy scrumptious and most delicious cuisine of Clarks Shiraz in the comfort of their home.

Many times, people crave for that professionally curated delightful meals but do not want to step out of their homes, this initiative is a great benefit for many such people. One can order food for birthday parties, get-togethers, kitty parties etc and enjoy the delicacies right at home. The Food at Clarks Shiraz has been the favourite of the residents of Agra since last 56 years. The hotel has now taken a step forward by reaching the doorsteps of their guests. All the packaging materials that would be used for ‘Dial a Dish’ are biodegradable. These Eco-friendly boxes are microwave friendly as well.

Debasish Bhowmik, Chief Operating Officer of Clarks Shiraz added “Today is an extremely important day for us as we are celebrating the 104th birth anniversary of our late chairman L P Gupta. He was a real visionary who was instrumental in the growth of Clarks group overall. And we have launched ‘Dial a Dish’ after several successful trials in the city and we are very excited about this as we are the only five-star in the city to take this innovative step.”

WINTER SMOKE GRILL AT YELLOW BRICK ROAD

Whether it’s a special occasion or an opportunity for all to catch up on a pleasant winter evening to unwind after a long day with friends, families and business associates; at our Iconic restaurant, Yellow Brick Road Alfresco. It will be a celebration, complete with extravagance, grills, cocktails and much more for everyone. With a truly incredible range of international and Indian grills on offer. Our patrons can celebrate the flamboyant preparations and distinctive, authentic tastes curated specially by a team of chefs. The moment you step in to this restaurant, the ambiance is sure to give you the thrills. Serene and relaxing the atmosphere of the restaurant is to awe its customers instantaneously.

Indulge in gourmet food and beverage offerings in the heart of Lutyen’s Delhi, savour authentic grills with our seasoned chefs and thoughtfully crafted culinary offerings. Soak in the lively atmosphere of this iconic restaurant as you enjoy different cuisines experiences in one venue with sparkling, Indian red and white wines, beers, mojitos, whisky and many more spirits. Relish the delicacies with dim Lighting to enhance the tranquilising effect. Freestyle attire under the starry sky accompanied with gentle breeze. Arm up around the fireplace this winter with stimulating winter drinks and cocktails. Our team of culinary experts lead by Master Chef Malik presents an array of delicacies between Classic continental sizzlers and grills, Indian sizzlers and Chinese sizzlers i.e Grilled Prawn Fantasy (Grilled prawns in lemon butter sauce with sautéed vegetables) Spicy grilled chicken breast (Black pepper flavored chicken breast with sautéed vegetables) Cottage Cheese Steak (Cottage cheese steak with tangy tomato sauce served with rice ) Vegetable Penne Sizzler (Penne in cheese sauce with vegetables) along with accompaniments. Famous sweet preparations such as Bulls Eye to satisfy the dessert cravings of everyone.
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End-to-end solutions for hospitality

Purple Hospitality Services offers a wide range of hospitality services. Ravi Chandran, CEO & Co founder, Purple Hospitality Services shares more about his company and trends in the industry.

USP OF COMPANY
Purple assists in buying, selling or leasing of hotels, resorts and restaurants on a pan-India basis. Assuring you of the best and quick deals. Purple also assists standalone properties for a brand tie-up with national/international group hotels. Chandran says, “I have over three decades of experience in the Indian hospitality sector.

We provide correct assessment of the property helpful for both the buyer and seller. We provide excellent connections leading to pan-India deals. Our expertise is in handling stressed assets. We provide clients end-to-end solutions. We also try to provide quick, fair and transparent deals.”

TRENDS IN TERMS OF BUYING, SELLING AND LEASING
Elaborating on the same Chandran adds, “Like the entire business scene in changing with the time here too we can see a change in the demography of both the buyer and seller of a hotel.

There is a vast difference from two decades ago to present, that is the owners have a great choice to offer their hotel for management as numerous brands have entered the Indian market. The last few years has seen many owners regretting giving their properties due to disruptive online aggregators which has resulted in their properties getting downgraded and are fighting to regain the lost standards.”

He states, “Huge investment made without having any future course in mind, without adhering to brand standards, many property owners unable to tie up with good brands. With the emergence of new mid-segment brands coming up, the demand for size and compact hotels is increasing. Influence of mid-segment international chain of hotels and restaurants has also opened up the market for a new experience.”

CHALLENGES TO GROWTH OF HOSPITALITY IN INDIA
On challenges he adds, “Government support in terms of ease of doing business is a major hurdle. High investment is essential with sustaining capacity for any business to overcome the initial phase. The industry is plagued with a high attrition rate and there remains a lack of investment in training of manpower. Big fish eating up all the small fish is a phenomena we have seen in retail also exist here.”

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KERRIE HANNAFORD
Vice President Commercial for Accor India & South Asia

An industry sales and marketing veteran, Hannaford has been part of the Accor family since past 15 years. After holding responsible positions at IHG and Starwood Hotels in Australia, she joined Accor in 2005. In 2013 she was promoted to Senior Vice President where her role was expanded to cover the management of Central America and the Caribbean Hotels in addition to USA and Canada. In her current position, she is working as the Area Director of Sales and Marketing at Accor New Zealand, Fiji and French Polynesia leading the sales, marketing and distribution direction for all brands and hotels within the region.

G. KAMALA VARDHANA RAO
Chairman and Managing Director India Tourism Development Corporation

A 1990 batch IAS officer of Kerala cadre, Rao is Additional Secretary, Government of India. His last assignment was as Principal Secretary, Public Works Department, Govt. of Kerala. Rao also served as the Secretary of Kerala Tourism in the year 2014-15. In a span of close to three decades, Rao has served multiple positions. He brings with him rich and diverse experience, having earlier held key posts as Principal Secretary, Public Works Department, Govt. of Kerala; Secretary, Tourism with charge of Secretary, Food and Civil Supplies, Kerala; Chairman of Indian Tobacco Board; Managing Director of SC/ST Corporation in Andhra Pradesh, among others.

RAKESH UPADHYAY
General Manager Le Meridien Hyderabad

Rakesh Upadhyay has been appointed as General Manager at Le Meridien Hyderabad. Prior to joining Le Meridien Hyderabad, he was serving as the General Manager at Courtyard by Marriott Bhopal, India. Upadhyaya is a seasoned professional with over a decade of experience in the hospitality industry. Grown with a core competency in Food and Beverage, his unique perspective on strategy, design and execution has enabled him to gain expertise across all verticals in the sector.

HARSHAD DESHMUKH
General Manager Lords Plaza, Lonavala

Lords Hotels and Resorts has appointed Harshad Deshmukh as General Manager of Lords Plaza, Lonavala. A seasoned hospitality professional Harshad Deshmukh has done his Masters in Hotel & Business Management from IHMES UK. His last assignment before joining Lords was with Holiday Inn Express, Ahmedabad as General Manager. Deshmukh will be overseeing all operational and commercial aspects of the hotel and also will be responsible to drive the hotel’s performance in the market through innovative strategies.

JAMESON SOLOMON
General Manager Swissôtel Kolkata

A seasoned professional, Solomon has more than two decades of experience in Hotel Management, Pre-opening, Strategic Planning, Client Relationship, Training & Development. An expert planner in marketing strategies with the ability to roll out and implement innovative corporate strategies, Solomon has proved himself as a versatile Business Manager over the years. He emphasizes on continuous improvement, empowerment, and teamwork to achieve operational efficiency and profitability.
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Chef Vineet Bhatia was at IHE 19

Vineet Bhatia is the multi-award winning chef and owner of the Michelin starred Resoi – Vineet Bhatia, located in London Chelsea.

He held a masterclass at IHE 19. (in pic)
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Deep Kalra, Founder and Group CEO, MakeMyTrip
Dimitris Manikis, President and MD - EMEA, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts
Federico J. Gonzalez, President and CEO, Radisson Hospitality AB
JB Singh, President and CEO, InterGlobe Hotels
Jean-Michel Cassé, COO - India and SA, AccorHotels
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