

# Hotel talk

For hospitality enthusiasts

## MILLENNIAL MODE

Millennials rule the roost when it comes to hotel trends

## MATTERS OF THE ART

Hotels are taking art seriously to attract discerning travellers



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## INDIA'S IMMINENT HOSPITALITY BOOM

Indian tourism, aided by a steep growth in the hospitality industry is going to get bigger in the coming years. According to a latest report by Google and The Boston Consulting Group, the Indian travel market would grow at 11-11.5 per cent to \$48 billion by 2020. The report hints at a positive future for the hospitality sector, predicted to grow to \$13 billion by 2020 with budget and midscale hotels making up 52 per cent of the market. In fact, the budget segment boom is already in full swing as mid-market chains are opening properties not only in the metros, but also in the Tier-II and Tier-III cities.

Another reason for this growth and development is increasing demand, add with the rise in disposable income. With more Indians moving towards higher income segments, annual average leisure hotel spend per household is expected to increase by 7 per cent to \$18 by 2020, compared to \$13 in 2015. This rise would further augment, owing to increased foreign tourist arrival numbers into the country, especially with the new e-visa policies and improved air connectivity in and out of India.

To sustain this growth, there are properties coming up around the country, with even global brands making their presence felt. Indians have a flair for good stay options, not just in the country, but they are actively picking up the perfect accommodation when outside the country. While many are aware of the popular brands, others are exploring local boutique properties to experience their own kind of luxury and comfort on international shores, which proves that the hospitality sector really needs to up its ante when it comes to catering to the Indian consumer.

NISHA VERMA

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## THE LODHI, NOW A 'LEADING HOTEL OF THE WORLD'

The Lodhi, New Delhi has now come under the The Leading Hotels of the World portfolio. Sprawling over seven acres on the green edge of Lutyens Delhi, the hotel is just across the road from the Delhi Golf Course. The property was extensively renovated in 2013, with all rooms and suites featuring private balconies. The hotel is in close proximity to the Lodhi Gardens, as well as many stylish shopping precincts.



## Coco Bodu Hithi: Maldives' hidden gem

Nestled on an secluded island in the Maldives—Coco Bodu Hithi—offers 100 intimate villas in complete harmony with nature. The hotel has seven restaurants and bars offering delicacies from around the world for food connoisseurs. An over-water gym and spa allows the guest to relax with soothing treatments to pamper the mind and body.



## Surya Palace Vadodara joins the Grand Mercure family



Surya Palace Vadodara has been rebranded as the Grand Mercure Vadodara Surya Palace. In proximity to Vadodara's business district and corporate hubs, it is the first hotel under Grand Mercure to be launched in the state. It features 146 guest rooms including five suites; an all-day dining restaurant, among other facilities.



## Tree of Life opens in Varanasi on Sep 4

Tree of Life Resort & Spa, Varanasi is all set to open on September 4, 2017. The new property offers 18 Junior Suites in two acres of serene land. The resort is the perfect escape from the hustle and bustle of the holy city. It's an oasis of peace and serenity and is set to extend its hospitality to patrons.

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# OTAs falling short of hotel expectations

Online Travel Agents (OTAs) were once touted as the way of the future with the ease of reaching a wide audience and providing a way for hotels to sell rooms through a simple system. Aligned with this, talk has abounded in the hospitality industry about the threat to traditional store-front travel agents who face 'unhealthy' competition from the OTAs. But not enough is being said about the difficulties that hoteliers face while dealing with OTAs.

OTAs have deeper pockets than stand-alone hotels and travel agents because of investor funds. OTAs are cutting into their commissions and under selling, over which the hotel has no control. Having forced hotels to move from a retail model to a merchant model, OTAs dictate the price at which a hotel is sold online. OTAs also have the ability to drive a hard bargain with hotels for higher commission. A hotel's online business is also affected by OTAs' ability to position themselves higher in search engine results, usually higher than the hotel's own website, hence diverting potential business away from hotels. Beyond these, OTAs design new schemes to supposedly maximise



“ Maybe it's time that the OTA model be analysed and subjected to more legislation ”

(The author is **Lavanya Ramachandran**, Director of Marketing of Anantya Resorts. A lawyer turned hotelier, she loves to travel and occasionally write.)

visibility for hotels in their listings and to increase bookings. Schemes such as pay-at-hotel and no-prepayment necessary, are tools to make the option of booking online more attractive to potential guests.

OTAs do not assure hotels of payment for a pay-at-hotel or similar booking. A credit card may have been provided to secure the booking. Often guests enter invalid details to hold a non-committed booking. The safeguard for the hotel when they don't receive payment before check-in is the ability to charge a 'no-show fees' or a 'retention charge'. However, these are not without problems. The difficulty arises when the guest does not check in and the hotel charges the credit card for the 'no-show fees'. OTAs maintain that hotels can withdraw from them at any time. But, there comes in the reality check. With more net savvy customers, the simple reality is that a hotel cannot withdraw from an OTA and lose the possibility of visibility. Maybe it is time that OTA model be analysed and subjected to more legislation such that the benefit it offers to customers continues and the problems to hotels is eliminated.



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# Switch to #MILLENNIAL

The millennial generation has pushed the hospitality industry across the globe to change its traditional marketing ways and connect with guests on various social media platforms for greater reach and impact.

**AHANA GURUNG**

One may think that the buzz created by millennials is slightly overrated with every move of individuals aged 18-34 being monitored – What do they like? How do they travel? Where do they go? Service providers digging deep into the nitty-gritties are tweaking their offerings to make everything more millennial-friendly, and for good reason.

The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) estimates around 20 per cent of global travellers to be young, contributing a huge chunk of tourism revenue, who also tend to stay longer and interact more closely with the local communities than average tourists. Millennials are almost twice as likely than non-millennials to travel for a hobby, and explore more for



things like food and wine, entertainment, shopping and outdoor activity, according to a research by the Boston Consulting Group. By 2020, 320 million international trips are expected to be made by youth travellers each year, highlights a report by WYSE Travel Confederation, giving testimony to the fact that millennials are the demographic to be looked out for.

Millennials, with their tech-savvy and contemporary ways are changing the dynamics of the industry and service providers are scrambling to adapt and evolve. The sharing economy was one of the aspects that took the world by surprise and lifted off as a result of the millennial wave with aggregators like Air BnB cashing in. The accommodation sharing company is projected to touch as much as \$8.5 billion by 2020 in revenue. However, such consequences have compelled hotels to change their strategies to stay relevant to the changing times and many have employed an overhaul in their approach, vibe and services.

# MODE

A close-up photograph of a man and a woman smiling and posing for a photo. The man, on the left, has a beard and is wearing a straw hat, dark sunglasses, and a red and white checkered shirt. The woman, on the right, is also wearing a straw hat and dark sunglasses. They are both smiling broadly. The background is a bright blue sky with some clouds and a wooden railing, suggesting they are outdoors, possibly on a balcony or near a body of water.

Millennials, with their tech-savvy and contemporary ways are changing the dynamics of the industry and service providers are scrambling to adapt and evolve





Brands like Aloft Hotels are looking to grab a piece of the pie by upping their technology game

### TECHNOLOGY IS KING

Technology is indeed a key differentiator in the race for appealing to the millennials and plays a very crucial role. It's no surprise that you instantly recognise a millennial with their head bent down, engrossed in their smart phones. Findings from the Expedia Millennial Survey 2017 show that 94 per cent use smart phones, while another 56 per cent make use of computer tablets.

Brands like Aloft Hotels are looking to grab a piece of the pie by upping their technology game and catering to their high-tech needs, be it for business or for leisure. From a state-of-the-art work space with complimentary Wi-Fi, Aloft also offers entertainment amenities like plug-&-play docking stations and a one-stop connectivity solution for multiple electronic gadgets like PDAs, cell phones and laptops, all linked to a 42" LCD TV. **Faiz Alam Ansari**, Complex General Manager, Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park, throws more light on the requirements and says, "Understanding the needs of the millennial traveller, we also provide SPG keyless check in, where with a swipe on your smartphone, you can gain access to your room. They maintain a high preference on the availability of technology, along with easy-to-reach outlets in the rooms and a lounge or lobby area conducive to working are crucial elements as well."

Radisson Red, a new offspring of the Carlson Rezidor Group has been curated keeping in mind the ageless millennial mindset and offers a customisable experience driven by technology. The RED App lets guests avoid queues by checking in and out and using their smartphone for secure keyless entry to their rooms while guests can place an order to the in-house restaurant and



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Guests can avoid queues by checking in and out using the RED App on their smartphones

pay through the app. Guests can also request hotel services with the click of a button and a chat feature allows them to connect with other guests to see the local nightlife or share a ride to the airport.

### NEW CONCEPT, NEW PHILOSOPHY

Targeting a specific segment also entails the need of a different feel to the property to make the guest experience something out of the ordinary without compromising on the comfort and the quality. While there are some who opt for high-end luxury, a large portion of millennials prefer budget accommodation and alternate options. A relatively new concept of pod hotels (not that new in Asian countries like Japan) has entered the Indian market with the first of its kind in Mumbai. Urbanpod opened its doors from March 2017 and has been targeting millennials and business travellers with its futuristic pods, public networking spaces and economical rates. **Shalabh Mittal**, one of the brains behind Urbanpod comments, "We strongly feel that there is a sheer-necessity for such Pod Hotels in India, more so in a busy metro like Mumbai with the kind of peak passenger-traffic it witnesses, coupled with its high-rentals and its shrinking-spaces." "Whether it's hygiene, free breakfast, free Wi-Fi, area to socialise, satellite television, technology

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## Several properties are imbibing ways to make every experience at the hotel 'Instagram-worthy'

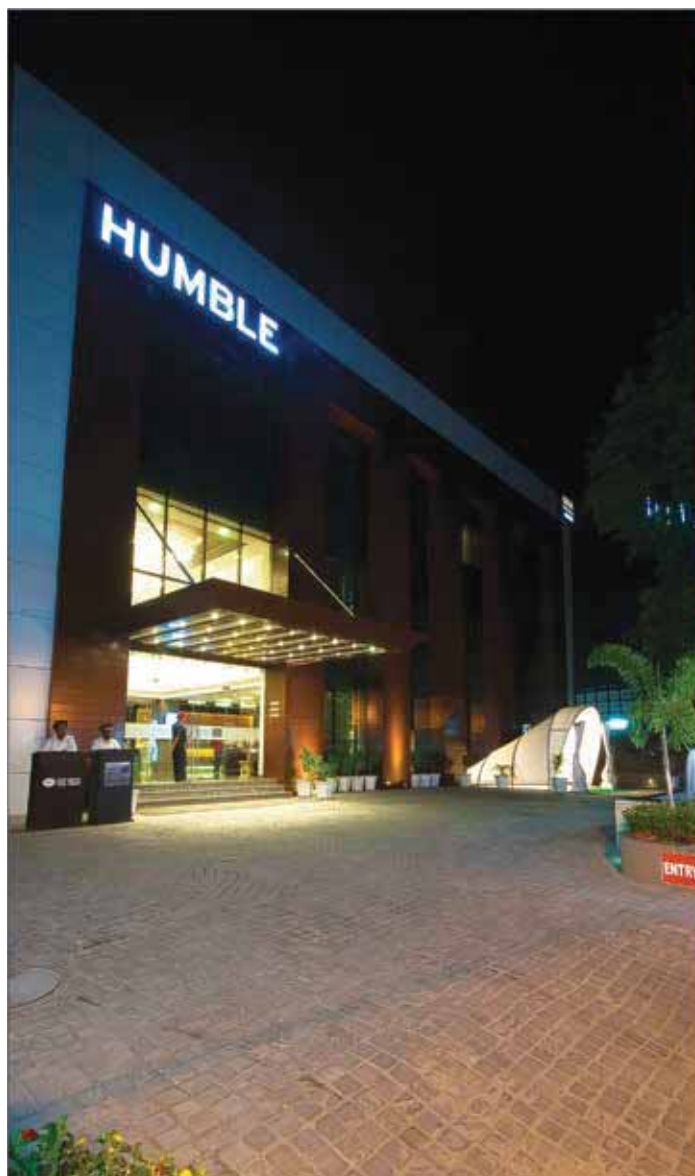
features in the pod and most importantly, the right price point, millennials are extremely value driven and avoid spending too much," adds **Hiren Gandhi**, Co-founder and Director, Urbanpod.

Elaborating on this, **TJ Joulak**, General Manager, W Goa states, "Millennials are all about living in the moment, they are always looking for what's next and new, something which the brand also believes in. Their need of knowing more and not settling for just one thing is met through our brand pillar – W Insider, which ensures extraordinary experiences for the guests and gives the right

inside knowledge of the hottest happenings in Goa. This is perfect for the millennial culture and exactly what they want in a vacation." One of the other strategic moves by W Goa include using video and digital content to tell a story that relates to them, and get influencers to talk about the experience that revolves around the property and the destination.

### DO IT FOR THE GRAM

Uploading photographs on Instagram and Facebook are the norm which is why several properties are imbibing ways to make everything 'Instagram-worthy'. Ansari points out, "Aloft Bengaluru Cessna Business Park taps this feature effectively by installing an actual, life-size Cessna aircraft hanging above the lobby. The guests watch it in awe as this unique and funky feature is not available in any other hotel." Radisson Red has an interactive digital wall at the centre of the lobby which displays social media and entertainment content. Guests are encouraged to post and interact with a touch-screen digital wall. W Goa has actively embraced this concept as well and Joulak declares it is all about sharing the exciting moments through posts or live stories. He says, "These channels are beneficial in keeping the existing guests informed about exclusive happenings at the property and enticing them to join in to create some memorable moments."



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# Hotels get SOCIAL

Unable to ignore the power of social media, hotels have started replacing traditional marketing techniques with online promotions for better visibility.

**NISHA VERMA**





with clients. While the communication method has changed, businesses still need to apply fundamental principles of marketing and promotion to communicate their messages to their target audience. What gives these digital tools an edge is the speed at which they can tap their audience and the wide reach.

### NEW MARKETING TOOL

Social media marketing modules not only inform potential customers about a property and pique their interest, but also works in boosting sales. A hotel brand which is aware of the ongoing trends can find business leads by paying heed to the right kind of conversations outside of their owned profile.

**Sandeep Raghav**, Business Development Director – South Asia, W Maldives and Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa, agrees, saying, “Social media is a fantastic tool to keep our audience updated and generate interest in W Maldives. It also allows us to get more booking enquiries from people all over the world. It is a great advertising tool to promote specific offers for specific markets as well.”

While sharing information on social media is one thing, using the medium to one's advantage is another. **S. N. Srivastava**, President & Co-founder, Clarks Inn Group of Hotels, claims that an effective use of technology has been at the forefront of all



What gives these digital tools an edge is the speed at which they can tap their audience

their initiatives. “Whether it is driving incremental sales, enhancing brand visibility or improving customer experience in properties, the company is making full use of various available social media platforms. This in turn has proved to be of tremendous value addition in increasing sales as well as brand awareness. Besides, we are also constantly upgrading our social media intervention,” he adds.

### SALES DRIVER

Over 93 per cent of travellers have confessed that



## A SEA OF GREEN OVERLOOKING THE AGRA FORT & TAJ MAHAL

View from roof top main wing (5<sup>th</sup> floor), Clarks Shiraz



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## TECH IT AND LOVE IT



"Social media is a fantastic tool to keep our audience updated."

**SANDEEP RAGHAV**  
Business Development Director – South Asia, W Maldives and Sheraton Maldives Full Moon Resort & Spa Hotel



"We are constantly upgrading our social media intervention."

**S. N. SRIVASTAVA**  
President & Co-founder  
Clarks Inn Group of Hotels



"We're very active on Facebook, Google and TripAdvisor and have high rating on Goibibo."

**RUPAK GUPTA**  
Joint MD, UP Hotels



"We even offer discounts on rooms and F&B on Facebook."

**MEERA PAHWA**  
Vice President, Marketing & Sales,  
Indiana Hotels



"Blogs or update shares are the new brochures for any product."

**SHRUTI PANDEY**  
Proprietor, Synergi Hospitality



To stay ahead in the game, marketers need to find new channels to manage their reputation and generate new leads

online reviews impact their choice of hotel, which means that there is a need to engage with these sites. Many hotels realised this early on, but while it is still necessary, it has become a minimum requirement. To stay ahead in the game, marketers need to find new channels to manage their reputation and generate new leads. **Rupak Gupta**, Joint MD, UP Hotels, asserts, "Social media increases the visibility of a hotel due to the high frequency of engagement with the concerned target market. This in turn boosts the sale directly and indirectly. We are very active on Facebook, Google and TripAdvisor and have the highest rating of 8.5 from Goibibo, whose sales are driven by indirect marketing campaigns on social media, including Google."

#### CONSTANT ENGAGEMENT

Regular promotional campaigns on social media also make a huge difference in customer engagement. Updates on F&B promotions, stay deals, spa deals, weekend offers, etc. keep the communication going

with the users and allow them to visit the property multiple times. **Meera Pahwa**, Vice President, Marketing & Sales, Indiana Hotels, shares, "We work actively to build relationships with users on Facebook and Twitter. We constantly look for opportunities to engage with potential guests who are researching for wedding destinations or leisure travel. We even offer discounts on rooms and F&B on Facebook, which prompts a lot of queries. We also update our social media platforms with the latest events and feedback from our guests to keep the users well informed."

#### TARGETING THE MILLENNIALS

Most millennials depend on the Internet and social media to make their travel plans. They are also very vocal about their opinions on such platforms and have different requirements than a business or family traveller. **Shruti Pandey**, Proprietor, Synergi Hospitality, has identified this change in the customer, and says, "Social media offers us a huge opportunity to reach the new age of travellers who





Promotions on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter get an audience far bigger than any footfall at an exhibition

are otherwise very difficult to connect to. Promotions on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn or Twitter get an audience far bigger than any footfall at an exhibition. The best part is the amount of information that can be passed on. There are unending and unlimited platforms that catch on to the information updated, and the odds of the same

resulting in sales are very high." She adds that this marketing tool is different from the traditional ones. "Social media has changed the way we market. Paper presentations and brochures are a passé now. Blogs or update shares are the new brochures for any product. With these, we are able to circulate updates to a wider community," she reveals.



ADVERTORIAL

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Lying in the heart of Marina Bay, Singapore's main dining and entertainment district, Mandarin Oriental is perfect for business and leisure travellers.

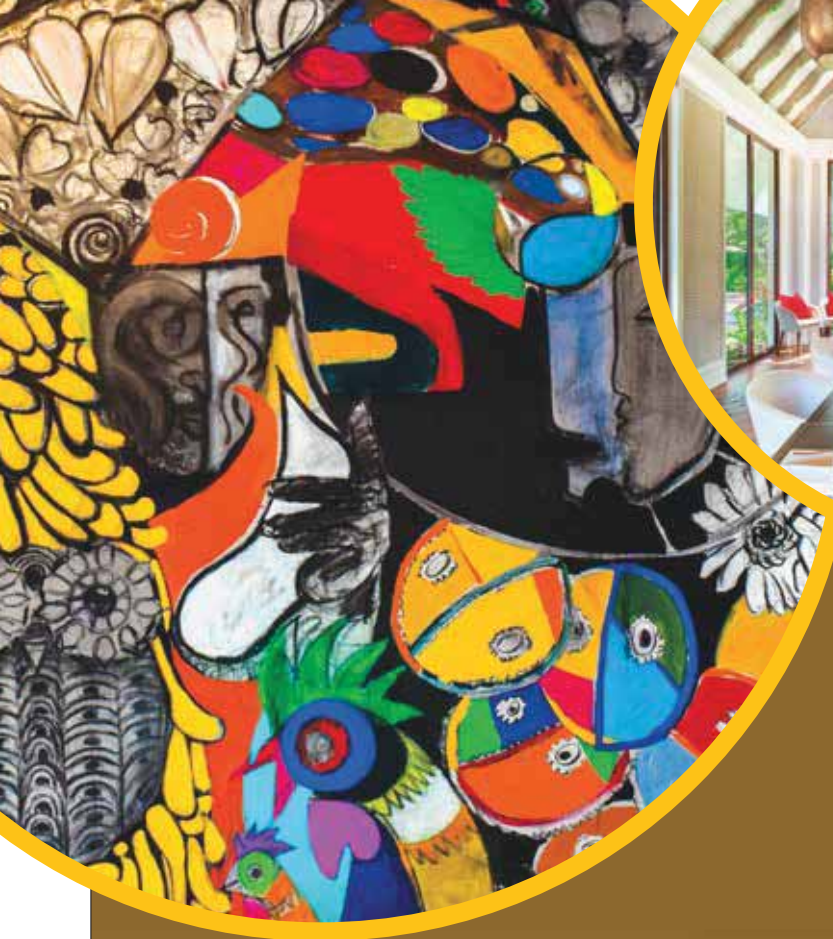
**M**ake your next holiday at Mandarin Oriental, Singapore even sweeter. Located in the heart of Marina Bay, the hotel features 527 well-appointed rooms and suites overlooking the ocean, bay or city skyline. Take advantage of the 'Sweet Suite offers' from now to December 2017 and enjoy exclusive benefits such as a complimentary airport one-way transfer, high-speed Internet and guaranteed early check-in at 7 AM. Strategically located at a prime waterfront site along Marina Bay overlooking the Singapore skyline, Mandarin Oriental, Singapore is close to the financial hub. Minutes away from Suntec Singapore International Convention & Exhibition Centre and Esplanade – Theatres on The Bay, the

hotel offers easy access to luxury boutiques and entertainment venues. Contemporary in design, yet stylish with oriental flair, all rooms are fully equipped with modern facilities and luxurious amenities. Mandarin Oriental, Singapore has five award-winning restaurants – featuring the best in Cantonese cuisine, fine Italian, delectable international buffet, Asian favourites and traditional steakhouse fares at Mortons. The hotel features a grand breakfast buffet spread at the all day dining, Melt Café with a vast selection of Indian breakfast items.

*For queries and bookings please contact  
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It's not a service that guests would demand. Still, many hotels put a special emphasis on art within their property and continue to invest in it. Its appeal, perhaps, lies in the aesthetic value it offers.

HAZEL JAIN

# Matters of the Art





## W GOA

W Goa is set in the North of Goa amidst the beautiful surroundings of Vagator Beach. It celebrates the culture of Goa, incorporating its local and foreign influences with rich colours, exotic fabrics and contemporary art pieces across the property. Each guestroom is drenched in a psychedelic look and feel with trippy hues of purples and blues creating a kaleidoscopic melding of colour throughout. Imagined by interior design house Design Wilkes and architects Eco-ID, W Goa combines the rustic and dramatic landscape of Goa with an exuberant spirit that is unique to W Hotels.

**Taieb Joulak**, General Manager, W Goa, explains, "Goa is a place that is known for having a strong art influence. At the same, it is a place that has given birth to some new-age art forms while cherishing some old contemporary forms of art. For W Goa, having installations that build a connection between its people and culture while maintaining the brands unique design was of utmost important."

The weather in Goa, however, brings with it its own set of challenges. "Goa is a place with the most unpredictable weather. We can go from three months of monsoon to sudden humidity and moisture in the air. All these conditions make it challenging to maintain such artworks. Luckily, we have made sure there is a system in place to take care of our prized possessions. We also have the artist regularly come in and study the conditions of their artworks. The installations that are exposed directly to these weather conditions have been selected and crafted keeping in mind their longevity," Joulak adds.

The artwork has been curated by Jeffrey Wilkes, the man behind the interior design house Design Wilkes that has handled W Goa and interior designer Sangeeta Mansharamani.

His favourite piece is the one in the welcome area crafted by M. Narayan featuring gutsy, raw imagery that celebrates the melting pot culture of Goa as well as the spectrum of colour one can see through divine meditation.



“Goa is a place that is known for having a strong art influence

TAIEB JOULAK  
General Manager  
W Goa

”







“For historic hotels like ours, art is an important element to showcase the valuable heritage

VIJAY WANCHOO  
Senior Executive VP & GM  
The Imperial New Delhi

”

## THE IMPERIAL, NEW DELHI

Earning the moniker of being India's 'Museum Hotel', The Imperial, New Delhi is all about period art, which fits ever so perfectly with the essence that this unique property exudes. The hotel's relationship with art is a long-standing one. Since its inception, over 70 years ago, it has not only been a repository of art, but also a home to many famous artists. The Imperial, New Delhi has carefully preserved its collection of original engravings and lithographs and has added steadily to it over this period.

With a lofty history that very few hotels can boast of, The Imperial's love affair with Indian history is a long-standing one. Here, guests can literally dine in an art gallery. It is perhaps the only museum hotel of its kind. Each floor of the hotel is dedicated to an artist whose original works adorn the walls of the rooms and the corridors. Care has been taken to recreate the room décor and ambience of the period of British Raj. The rooms offer a choice of marble or parquet flooring with artistic borders and exquisite Persian hand-knotted carpets. Each room also has unique antique pieces of furniture and paintings from the hotel's art collection.

The Imperial, New Delhi proudly displays a priceless art collection of the 'British Art on India' that includes the works of great artists who worked in India in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century and produced etchings, wood engravings, lithographs, aquatints and mezzotints based on sketches of landscapes, architecture, topography and life and times of India. The hotel has three main art galleries and a collection of life-size oil paintings of the princely rulers of India.

No area of the hotel has been left deprived of the magical influence of art – its presence is felt in the ballroom, the rooms, the public spaces, and of course the lobby. **Vijay Wanchoo**, Senior Executive VP & GM, The Imperial, New Delhi, talks about why the hotel chose this theme. "Art adds to the sheer splendour and luxury of any hotel. For historic hotels like ours, art is an important element to showcase the valuable heritage while it contributes to the repertoire and enhances The Imperial experience. Art is heavily showcased on each floor of our hotel and is an intrinsic part of our heritage—on every level of Imperial's sprawling four-





storey structure, in every public area, in lobby, stairwells and canopies, adorning fountains and furniture, covering walls, keeping vigil from ceilings, cosying up in restaurants, accompanying you in royal carriages, in rooms graced with four-poster beds," he says.

The grandiose architecture of any art-based hotel is duly complemented with thematic or historic art that it has preserved, restored and displayed. This hotel also has curated art tours for the residents accompanied with high tea at ₹2,500.

All the artworks and lithographs displayed across the hotel have been preserved and collected by the owners. Some have been sourced from the London Museum of Art and some have been their own collection acquired through years. Of course, such exuberance comes at a fee. Wanchoo reveals, "The regular maintenance is a big challenge in terms of handling but we have yearly restoration works conducted across the hotel for keeping each artwork absolutely immaculate in its form and finish. Also, we have a special department handled by a Director-level person who is responsible for the maintenance of the artworks and lithographs, and has been doing this beautifully over the years."

His favourite piece is a painting of the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary at the Delhi Durbar, at the entrance of the hotel's 1911 restaurant. The Imperial, New Delhi is all about period art so contemporary art will not find space here.



## LN Garden Hotel, Guangzhou

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## GRAND HYATT MUMBAI

Hyatt International's flagship property in South Asia, the Grand Hyatt Mumbai houses one of the finest collections of commissioned art in a public space. Together with curator Rajeev Sethi who is noted internationally for his innovative contribution to preserving and celebrating South Asia's rich cultural heritage, Grand Hyatt Mumbai brings together Mumbai's known artistes and upcoming talent with crafts people from around the country, to celebrate and reinterpret the Shiva myth. The art is conceived as homage to the mythic and contemporary presence of Shiva. The complex showcases over 100 commissioned artworks by both established and upcoming artists such as Jitish Kallat, Hema Upadhyay, Chintan Upadhyay, Nalini Malani, Atul and Anju Dodiya, Tanuja Rane, Krishnamachari Bose, Sudershan Shetty, Prabhakar and JyoteeKolte, Yogesh Rawal, Jaideep Mehrotra, Sunil Gawde, Riyas Komu, Daroz, Bhupinder and Mohan Malviya amongst others.



“

Art has been an intrinsic element of the design philosophy and origin of the hotel

SUNJAE SHARMA  
Area Vice President & General Manager  
Grand Hyatt Mumbai

”

Sunjae Sharma, Area Vice President & General Manager, Grand Hyatt Mumbai, says that art at the hotel is not a mere object of admiration but a part of its origin. “Each of the distinct art installations have a story to tell, a story that brings to life the legacy of Mumbai and India in an array of forms. Art has been an intrinsic element of the design philosophy and origin of the hotel,” he says.

From the unique portrayal of Bollywood to the magnificent Shiva Shakti structures, the pièce de résistance at the lobby level to the enchanting yoga dakshinas, they all lend grandeur. “The dabbawala installations and the basti are a beautiful depiction of Mumbai and are much admired by our guests. It is our endeavor to bring to the guests the extraordinary spirit of Mumbai. These thoughtfully curated artworks are synonymous with our philosophy of living grand and therefore imbibed in the DNA of the hotel,” adds Sharma.

The art at the hotel is inspired by the three great archaeological sites of Mumbai, dedicated to Lord Shiva. The art also reflects the mythological and everyday life of the metropolis through a contemporary prism, reinterpreting the sacred and the profane, resonating with the timeless and the ephemeral. Sharma reveals, “We are extremely careful about their upkeep. Our deep-cleaning specialists from the housekeeping team make it look like an easy task. However, this does warrant for use of special equipments and products to maintain our state-of-art installations. My favourite piece is the 'Basti – The urban landscape', dedicated to the diverse culture of Mumbai.”







“  
Surrounded by  
beauty, one feels  
transported into a  
different place in time

VIKAS SHARMA  
Director of Operations  
The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore

”

## THE RITZ-CARLTON, BANGALORE

Showcasing an aesthetical line-up of art with over 1,250 art pieces throughout the property, The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore, features the work of artists such as the master of life-size figurative Robert St. Croix, the renowned sculptor Alexandra Gestin, the legendary Cuban sculptor Manuel Carbonell, the hotel's home-bound landscape artist Paresch Maity, and the celebrated Indian abstract painter Revati Sharma Singh. **Vikas Sharma**, Director of Operations, The Ritz-Carlton, Bangalore, says, "Bringing art out of galleries and into hotel spaces helps us reach a wider audience. In turn, it also adds that special something to our guests' viewing pleasures and enhances their stay experience with us. Surrounded by beauty, one automatically feels transported into a different place in time. It adds a certain appeal to the hotel interiors, and helps our staff in their storytelling during guest interaction." The hotel staff takes guests on an art appreciation tour in the hotel on request. His personal favourite is the sculpture of Pablo Picasso sitting on the porch welcoming the guests.







**Facilities offered:**

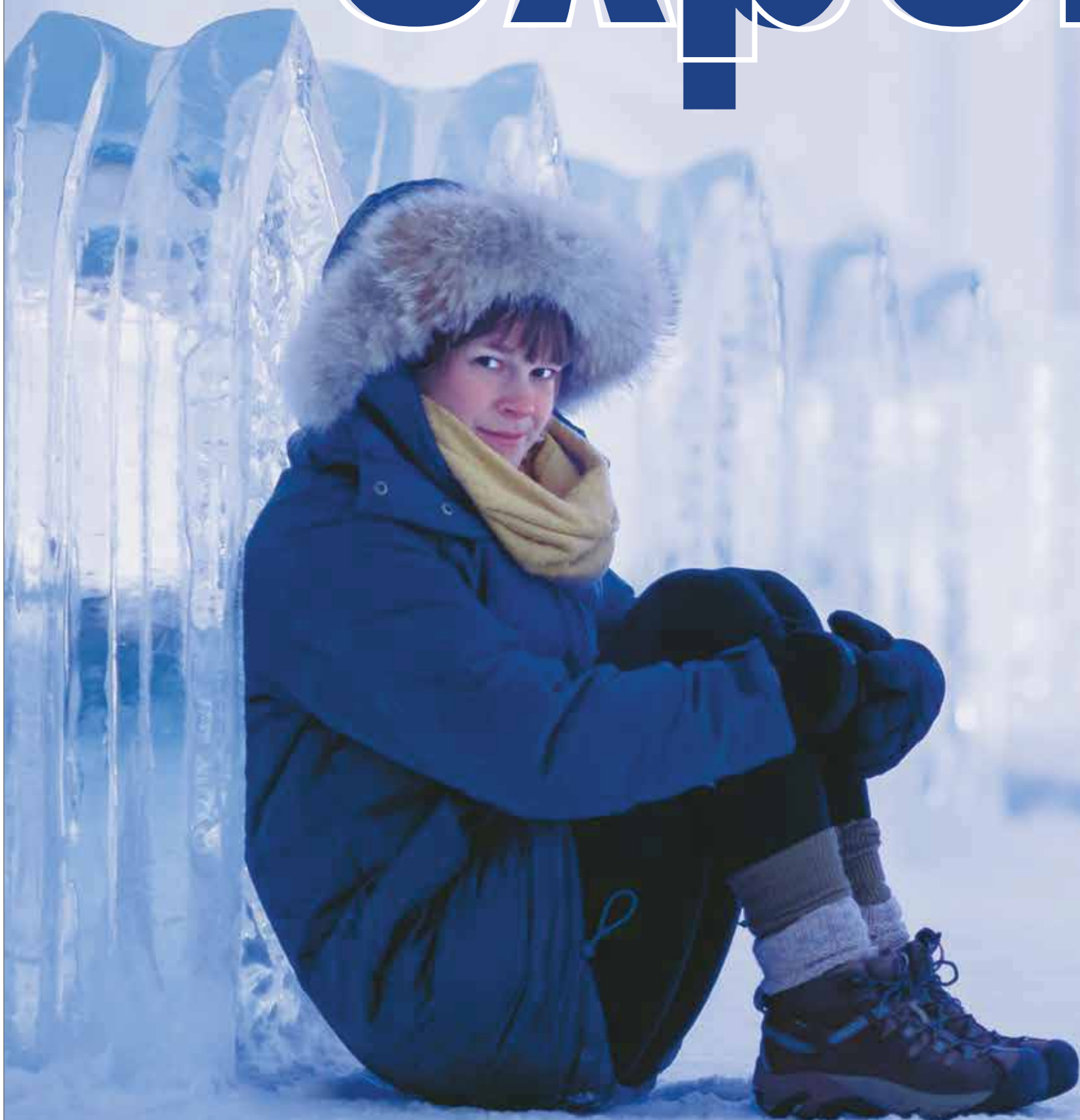
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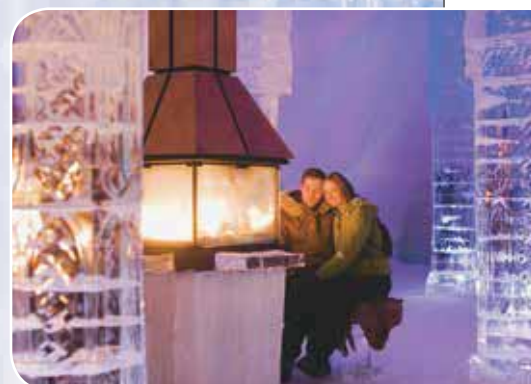
The rapid pace of experiential travel has got hotels and resorts catering to more than just the regular hospitality demands of guests. They are now offering unique stays and experiences for keeps.

**ANKITA SAXENA**

## FROZEN TALES

An annual phenomena, Hôtel de Glace or the 'Ice Hotel' is straight out of a fairy tale. Located just a few miles from Quebec City, the Hôtel de Glace is the only Ice Hotel in Canada and North America. This fairytale-esque hotel has been hosting guests for 15 years now and every year it presents a new feature. With 44 rooms and theme suites, all made of ice, the hotel offers several ways to experience the incomparable thrill of spending a night inside it. With its larger than life snow vaults and breath-taking crystalline ice sculptures, Hôtel de Glace impresses with its dazzling decor. Guests can grab a drink at the Ice Bar; spend time in the outdoor spas and sauna, and then head to the room where the walls, the ceiling, chandeliers and the bed too, is made of ice. Every year an individual masterpiece is brought to life according to the fantasy of a different architect as this accommodation melts away every spring.

Guests can drop in for this unique luxurious experience between January and March for a visit or spend a night in this work of art. Hôtel de Glace is not just about extraordinary accommodation; one can enjoy various activities near the hotel. Guests can discover America's largest winter playground with more than 35 snow slides or be transported to the atmosphere of Polynesia with a temperature of 30 degree Celsius at a unique indoor water park. One can enjoy large wave pool, more than 14 slides, a family pool, a multi-activity adventure river, a double surf wave and 12 private cabanas. For those who wish to relax and rejuvenate their body and mind, hop in to the 6000 sq. ft. Valcartier Spa which offers various baths and an indoor and outdoor pool. Young and old alike can keep themselves entertained in the gaming arcade while those who wish to undertake excursions can go for dog sledding to enjoy the snowy trails of the nearby forest. **Pooja Sabharwal**, Account Director, Destination Canada, says, "The stay packages start at \$199. The Ice Hotel is a must see experience for Indians travelling to Canada and we market it through travel agents and also directly to consumers through various mediums."



“

We market the Ice Hotel through travel agents and also directly to consumers through various mediums

”

**POOJA SABHARWAL**  
Account Director  
Destination Canada





## A JUNGLE DIARY

A stay at Hamiltons Tented Camp promises a unique 'Out of Africa' extraordinary wilderness experience in luxury canvas tents, best suited for couples searching for that peaceful sojourn in the wild. Situated in the world-renowned Kruger National Park, Hamiltons Tented Camp allows indulgence in pure luxury with its tented safari experience combined with the sounds and aromas of the African flora. Built entirely of canvas, amidst age-old Jackalberry and Sausage trees with high wooden platforms linking six elevated tents, Hamiltons treats guests to stunning views of the Nwatswitsonto River and offers the opportunity to enjoy spectacular wildlife and birdlife sightings.

Resplendent with early 19<sup>th</sup> century nostalgia, from its old steamer trunks and pith helmets to its antique bathroom basins and hurricane lanterns, Hamiltons is a tribute to the generation whose vision has resulted in the conservation of one of Africa's prime wilderness areas, without compromising on modern-day comforts and luxuries. Hamiltons not only represents a little slice of history, it also guarantees a private Bushveld escape, unfettered by unnecessary modern interruptions and authentic in every way. Dine as you would have in the 1900s, as Hamiltons Tented Camp ensures, whatever the occasion, meals are a classy affair. **Cindy Sheedy Walker**, Chief Executive Officer, Extraordinary Sales and Marketing, explains that the lodge is specifically suited for the honeymoon market as it is intimate, romantic and luxurious. "We welcome at least 45 couples from India per year and are targeting to grow this number." She further adds that Hamiltons maintains a strong relationship with the Indian travel trade and this product is available with local travel agent or through the websites. "An ideal honeymoon package would be to combine a two night stay at Hamiltons Tented Camp with three nights in Cape Town and two nights in Victoria Falls. Guests can fly into either Hoedspruit Airport or Skukuza Airport," says Walker.



“

We welcome at least 45 couples from India per year and are targeting to grow this number ”

CINDY SHEEDY WALKER  
Chief Executive Officer, Extraordinary Sales and Marketing  
Hamiltons Tented Camps



## HOLISTIC HOLIDAY

Named after the famous 16<sup>th</sup> century Portuguese fortifications of Melaka, A'Famosa Resort is surrounded by rolling hills and lush countryside. Visible from the North-South Highway in Malaysia, A'Famosa Resort is a short distance away from the historical town of Melaka. Located just an hour's drive from Kuala Lumpur International Airport, the Resort is a one-stop venue for business and pleasure, also boasting an international championship golf course at the Resort.

"A'Famosa Resort is an integrated resort where we have something for everyone. As far as Indian visitors are concerned, we are looking at individual travellers, families, honeymooners and even MICE travellers to visit the resort. We have already had many Indians visit the destination but with our new outlets for shopping within the resort, we are hoping that a larger number of Indians will visit the destination in the upcoming year," says **Wan CF**, Sales Manager-Travel & Tours. One can choose from a selection of standard and superior rooms or suites. Those looking for exclusivity can enjoy luxuriously designed Condotel and private villas as well.



“We're looking at individual travellers, families, honeymooners and even MICE travellers to visit us”

**WAN CF**  
Sales Manager-Travel & Tours  
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## CORE IN CONSERVATION

With sustainability at its core, Serena Hotels make sure that their clients get first-hand experience of being meaningful to the ecology. The brand has two properties in the OL Pejeta Conservancy— Sweetwaters Serena Camp and the OL Pejeta House. Guests at these two properties can learn the conservation efforts for the northern white rhino, which are protected in this conservancy. They can also visit the rhinos at the rhino sanctuary along with other activities such as game drives and a visit to the chimpanzee sanctuary.

The effort has made many guests lifelong volunteers of conserving the rare wild. One such influencer is a six-year-old UK boy, who has even come up with a plan to save the world's rarest rhinos from extinction. Partnering with Fauna & Flora International, he is raising funds through his project – 'RhinosUp' for OL Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya, which is home to the last three northern white rhinos on the planet.

**Rosemari Mugambi**, Regional Sales & Marketing Director, Serena Hotels, says, "Apart from making sure that we offer a very high standard of product, service and facility, we are very particular about making sure that our client actually gets the authentic African experience. At OL Pejeta Conservancy we have beautiful tented camp—Sweetwaters Serena Camp, as well as a private house—OL Pejeta House, which carry out a lot of conservation efforts. Owing to this, we are able to enable our visitors to learn about the message of conservation. Responsible tourism is very important to Serena Hotels and we make sure that we do whatever we can in terms of not just being different but also in terms of education."



“

Responsible tourism is very important to Serena Hotels and we make sure that we do whatever we can, not just to be different but also to educate our guests”

”

ROSEMARI MUGAMBI  
Regional Sales & Marketing Director  
Serena Hotels



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# Stays abound

Outbound Marketing has an array of hospitality clients to cater to every kind of traveller in destinations that are popular as well as exotic. Here are the brands that they can pick from:



## MELIÁ HOTELS INTERNATIONAL

The Spanish brand Meliá Hotels International boasts over 370 hotels across over 40 countries and four continents. It remains a leader owing to its diversified business model, the consistent growth plan supported by strategic alliances with major investors and its commitment to responsible tourism.

## THE MEYDAN HOTEL

Nestled just a stone's throw away from the Dubai Mall and Burj Khalifa, The Meydan Hotel remains Dubai's ultimate luxury address. Perfect for families, couples, as well as MICE, the property offers 284 rooms and suites, and over 60,000 sqm of flexible meetings and events spaces.

## BAB AL SHAMS RESORT & SPA

Just a 45-minute drive from the city of Dubai, Bab Al Shams Resort & Spa has 115 rooms and suites with authentic Arabic design. The modern-day leisure destination overlooks the desert and offers a variety of activities for patrons including two outdoor



temperature-controlled swimming pools, various sports games.

## CORINTHIA HOTELS

Founded by the Pisani family of Malta, Corinthia Hotels is located at some of the most interesting cities around the world, including London, Budapest, St. Petersburg, Prague, Lisbon, Tripoli, Khartoum and Malta.

## NILAMANI HOTELS

Nilamani Hotels offers a selection of fresh lifestyle experiences. While the Camakila Legian is a jewel nestled along a 500-metre stretch of golden sand on Seminyak beach in Bali; the Sakala Resort Bali sits proudly on one of Bali's best stretches of sand on the Nusa Dua Peninsula. The Tanjung Benoa Beach Resort Bali offers 185 rooms with views of manicured gardens and the outdoor swimming pools.



## ONYX HOSPITALITY GROUP

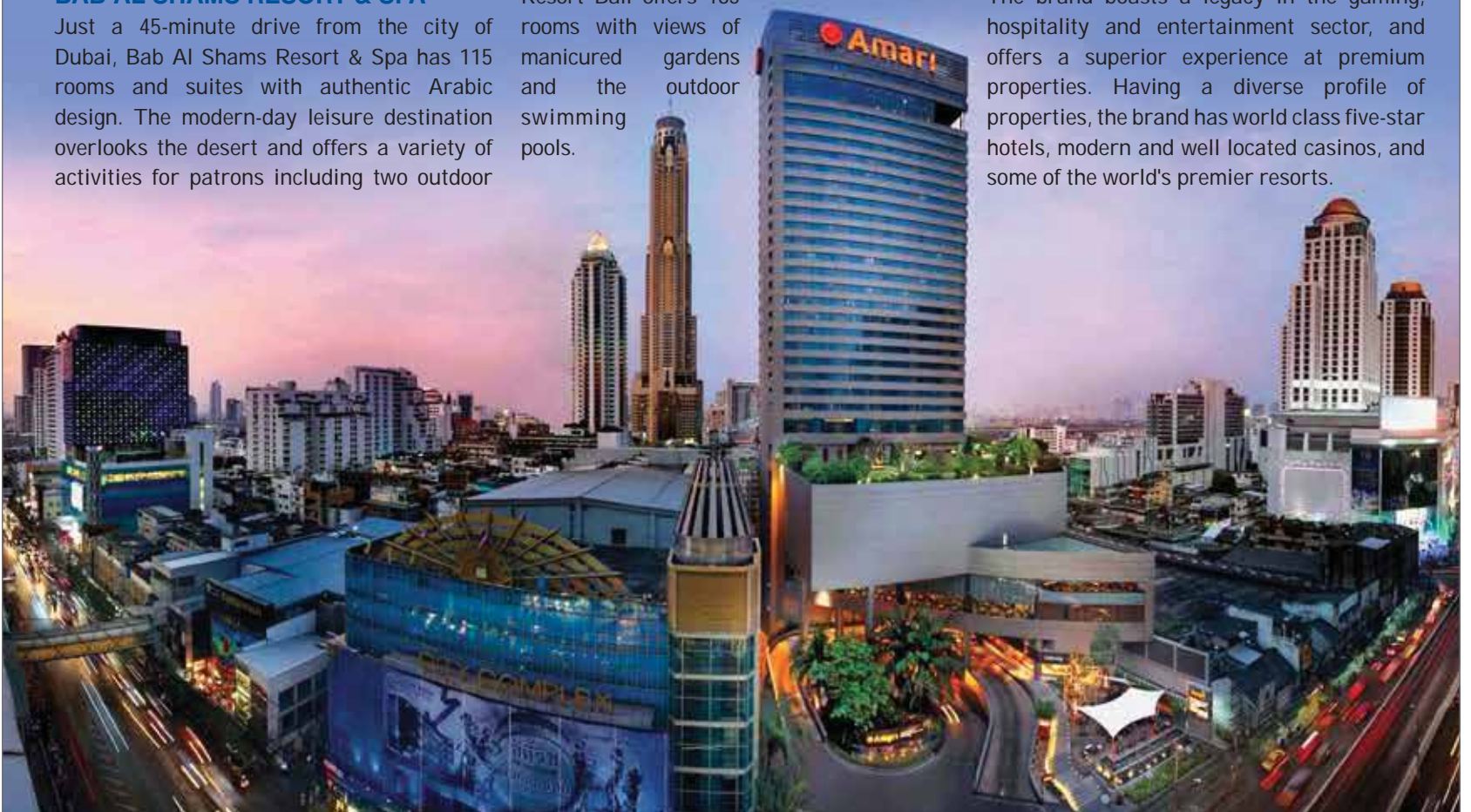
ONYX Hospitality Group has more than 42 operational properties across Asia and is managing popular brands like Amari, OZO, Mosaic Collection, Shama, Saffron & Oriental Residences Bangkok.

## ROTANA HOTELS & RESORTS

Rotana Hotels & Resorts makes to the list of every long haul itinerary and its properties provide many services and facilities that suit every kind of traveller. The team puts a special emphasis on events management and luxurious spaces for events.

## SUN INTERNATIONAL

Get the best of African experience and service with Sun International's various offerings. The brand boasts a legacy in the gaming, hospitality and entertainment sector, and offers a superior experience at premium properties. Having a diverse profile of properties, the brand has world class five-star hotels, modern and well located casinos, and some of the world's premier resorts.







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