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DESTINATIONS

A Guide to the world of Hospitality and Tourism

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National Tourism Award
Winner Express Inn Hotel



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Dear Friends

It's with great pride we share that Express Inn, Nashik, one of our regular partners for seven consecutive years recently won the coveted India's National Tourism Award. It was awarded The National Tourism Award – 2017-18 in the best Three Star Category Hotel across India. The award was presented on World Tourism Day. It was a double bonanza as this year India was hosting the official celebrations of World Tourism Day with the theme 'Tourism and Jobs: a better future for all'. So Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General, World Tourism Organization was also present at the National Tourism Award ceremony. The award was received by Narayan Shelar, CMD and Vikas Shelar, Director, Express Inn Group at the hands of India's Union Tourism Minister, Hon. Prahlad Singh Patel and Secretary General, World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili. The event was also graced by the presence of Vice President of India, Hon. Venkaiah Naidu.

This award was well deserved as this probably is the only hotel (I have experienced 800+ hotels spread across 46 countries) in the world that I have visited over 25 times and have always found it not only innovative, their service impeccable and par excellence quality of food. Express Inn had a successful participation at HICAP, Hong Kong. They were attending it for the first time. Representing the group were two dynamic youngsters – Vikas Shelar and Vishal Shelar who felt it was an ideal platform to understand what's happening in the hotel industry globally and the future trends.

Frankfurt, one of the world's leading financial centres, is also well known for its futuristic skyline, the busiest German airport - the main hub for Lufthansa, where major autobahns and railways intersect, Messe Frankfurt -one of the world's largest exhibition centers. But apart from that Frankfurt is also a very tourist-friendly destination with lots of arts, culture, cuisine and certainly the Christmas markets. Its an ideal MICE destination thanks to the numerous hotels with large banqueting space. To get an insight into the Frankfurt as both a tourist as well as MICE destinations we interacted with Anke Haub, Manager Tourism Marketing for India and Jutta Heinrich Director Frankfurt Convention Bureau.

IBTM World, one of the largest MICE events, is expected to again attract 15,000+ industry professionals and quality suppliers from 3000+ exotic destinations. Spread over 3 days event planners from across the globe will converge in Barcelona for business, networking and education. IBTM World provides such a platform. Apart from the regular events, exciting new additions have been added to the show floor this year - from brand new pavilions for unique venues and Chinese exhibitors, to a Wellness Zone where attendees can take a break and relax.

Fern group of hotels is on an expansion spree but unlike its counterparts which are adding hotels through acquisition, this elite group is busy expanding by exclusive management contracts. Standing tall with 71 hotels across 55 locations the group, celebrating a decade of success aims to touch 100 hotels by the end of 2020. While the hotels range from five star to three star, the group has always had a focus on MICE, banqueting and marriage segment. The recent opening of The Fern An Ecotel Hotel, Lonavala along with Amanora The Fern and The Fern Residency, Bhosari, Pune has made Fern brand have three top MICE venues in and around Pune making it ideal for Mumbaiites and corporates.

UNESCO recently announced that the cities of Mumbai and Hyderabad are joining the UNESCO network of Creative Cities. Mumbai has been designated a Creative city of film and Hyderabad a Creative city of gastronomy. This was announced coinciding with World Cities Day 2019.



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Express Inn
The Business Luxury Hotel - Nashik



The Perfect Destination For Your Business

Express Inn welcomes you to the epitome of luxury, comfort & elegance in the midst of the Wine Capital of India-Nashik. Ideal for tourists, MICE and weddings groups.

The Hotel has a wide range of room options such as **Express, Standard, Deluxe, Executive, Family, Eva Rooms, Service Apartments**

Express Inn will leave you mesmerized with its dining options : **Aster - The Coffee Shop** for exciting cuisine, **After Dark- The Bar**

For health conscious guests there is **Club X** along with its Nutrition Parlour. To detox & rejuvenate we offer **Sohum SPA**.



Express Inn
The Business Luxury Hotel- Nashik

Pathardi Phata, Mumbai Agra Road, Ambad, Nashik 422010, Maharashtra, India.

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Awards and Accolades



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New additions to IBTM World 2019



IBTM World, one of the largest MICE events, is expected to again attract 15,000+ industry professionals and quality suppliers from 3000+ exotic destinations. A preview

Spread over 3 days event planners from across the globe will converge in Barcelona for business, networking and education. IBTM World provides such a platform. Apart from the regular events, exciting new additions have been added to the show floor this year - from brand new pavilions for unique venues and Chinese exhibitors, to a Wellness Zone where attendees can take a break and relax.

This year as per the organisers IBTM World has smashed its record for pre-arranged meetings at the first stage of its bespoke appointment matching process, with meeting numbers up 6% up on last year's total at this stage. There has also been an increase year-on-year in the average number of appointments per exhibitor. Furthermore, latest figures show that 50% of Hosted buyers so far confirmed are new to the IBTM portfolio and 61% are new to IBTM World, giving exhibitors more opportunities to do business with completely new contacts.

Commenting on the news, David Thompson, Exhibition Director, said, "We're delighted to announce such strong results at this stage of the event preparation. All indicators are that we're going to have another record-breaking event in terms of the number of high-quality opportunities for our customers to do business. It's also a huge boost for our team as we enter the final stages of preparation for the event. We continue to work hard to secure the highest calibre buyers for IBTM World, and to bring new buyers to the event to give our exhibitors a wealth of potential new business opportunities. We're committed to building on the success of previous years to deliver more, even better quality meetings for our customers."

So far buyers representing 77 countries have been confirmed, with delegates from globally renowned businesses including: Google, Adobe, ICBC Bank, La Caja Seguras, BBVA France, Dell, Whirlpool, BMW, European Society of Cardiology and International Association for Enterprise Information Security.

This year IBTM World has also launched an Elite Corporate Buyers programme which will bring senior event planners from a FTSE 500 or equivalent company to the event – providing additional opportunities for exhibitors to connect with high-level event planners. Created in association with American Express Meeting & Events, a division of American Express Global Business Travel, supported by Event Marketing Association and sponsored by London & Partners and Hilton, the Elite Corporate Programme includes four sessions addressing some of the key

challenges facing senior corporate event organisers.

Created in partnership with the Association of Association Executives (AAE), the Association programme returns this year and includes eight topical sessions addressing some of the key challenges facing association event organisers. The afternoon concludes with Associations Connect, a peer-to-peer networking event, in association with ICCA.

IBTM Accelerate will feature several interactive discussions for the next generation of event planners; an 'Influencers of MICE' series led by ex-MPI president and Founder of Word of MICE Mariska Kesteloo; Future Focus – a series of sessions focusing on the future of the MICE industry, and the hotly anticipated IBTM World Tech Watch Awards which will be presented in the zone. Supporters of the new feature zone include Barcelona Convention Bureau, MPI, Word of MICE, Reed Exhibitions, La Salle Ramon Llull University, CETT-UB, Eight PR & Marketing and Reed Exhibitions UK.

Keynote Speakers

Some of the Keynote Speakers this year include Lucy Bloom, Consulting CEO, Writer and Speaker who will talk on 'Doing Business Differently'; Margarita Mayo will talk on 'Authentic Leadership: 9 Skills the Ultimate Successful Leader Needs to Develop'; John Volanthen, Cave Diver will talk on 'Achieving success in a crisis'.

IBTM World 2019 takes place from 19 – 21 November 2019 in Barcelona

Partial List of Indian Exhibitors

Company	Stand
India Tourism	L50
DESTINOS INDIA - MICE	L50
Discover India DMC	L50
JW Marriott New Delhi Aerocity	L50
Le Passage to India	L50
Meetings & Incentives World	L50
Palomino Hospitality Pvt. Ltd	L50
Top Travel & Tours (P) Ltd.	L50
Creative Travel India - DMC	M70
Distant Frontiers - MICE	L54
Grand Hyatt Goa	
Grand Hyatt Kochi Bolgatty	
Sheraton Grand Bengaluru	N30

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- » Outdoor arena of 60,000 Sq. M.
- » Parking facility for 3,000+ cars

Hyderabad is ranked as the top Indian city in Mercer's Quality of Living Rankings for five consecutive years from 2015 to 2019.



'Hyderabad is the second best place in the world that one should see in 2016' - 'Traveler Magazine' published by National Geographic.



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National Tourism Award Winning Hotel Provides Luxury at an Affordable Price



Narayan Shelar

Great ambiance, grand room including Eva Rooms, par excellence food, excellent sports facilities - gym, squash, billiards room, swimming pool, even a kids games room, a world class saloon + spa, India's first Playboy Lounge and an equally efficient and friendly staff makes Express Inn truly worth a National Tourism Award Winner feels **Chandragupta Amritkar**.

One of the most innovative hotels that I have ever come across is Express Inn, Nashik.

It is of the few hotels that keeps reinventing itself and every time that I visit it something new has been added. It was recently awarded The National Tourism Award – 2017-18 in the best Three Star Category Hotel across India - competing with some of the best known global brands and home grown luxury brands. "It's a feeling of great pride for me and my staff. Winning the award in our first attempt is truly a feather in our cap. My team has put in great efforts and we have always believed in giving excellent service while maintaining our standards of luxury," said Narayan Shelar, CMD, Express Inn.

And how true his words are. This probably is the only hotel (I have experienced 800 + hotels spread across 46 countries) in the world that I have visited over 25 times and have always found their service impeccable and par excellence quality of food.

Led by the dynamic youngster Vikas Shelar, Director, Express Inn, Nashik, he was also quite pleased with the award. "It's not just a pride for Express Inn but for our city Nashik and state Maharashtra. On the other hand it has also increased our responsibilities towards guest satisfaction," said Vikas.

The hotel recently added the country's first Playboy Lounge (Please note that there are plenty of Playboy Clubs but this was the first Playboy Lounge in India). As Vikas took me through the doors, I was pretty impressed by the décor of the hotel's brand new acquisition. But for a first time visitor it will but naturally



Vikas Shelar

be the glamour of Playboy as the venue displays the historic timeline taking you down the memory lane Playboy globally. "That's the whole

idea. I think Nashikites and our guests truly deserve a glamorous place where they can truly unwind, chill and relax while partying till late. Add to this amazing atmosphere with some excellent cocktails, starters and naturally good and tasty food and you have a bunch of satisfied customers," said Vikas. Playboy was



inaugurated by Nushrat Bharucha and Sachin Joshi actor and Chairman of Playboy. The adorable gig by the iconic bunny girls was an attraction and a photo op for guests.

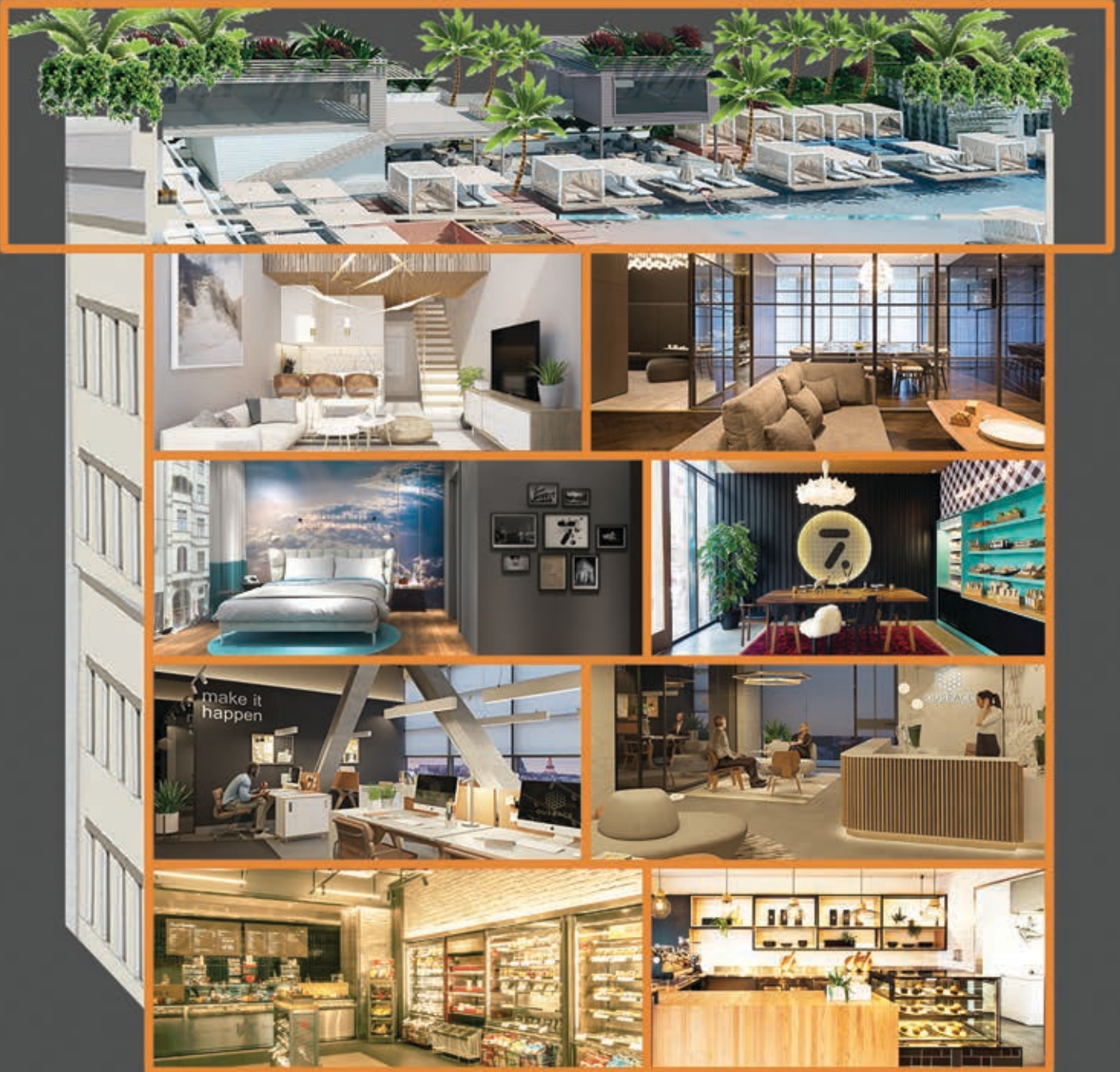
Express Inn wins National Tourism Award



Union Tourism Minister, Hon. Prahlad Singh Patel and Secretary General, World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili. The event was also graced by the presence of Vice President of India, Hon. Venkaiah Naidu.

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MIXED-USE PROJECTS ARE THE FUTURE



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Rooms

With a total of 197 rooms and suites divided into different sub-categories the hotel is able to provide state-of-the-art facilities to its guests. Apart from being economically priced for the luxury provided the hotel has a unique offering of family rooms for a family or a group of four (one of the rare five star hotels to have family rooms). "Being a holy city we understand this need for family rooms where all of them want to stay close especially during religious events," said Narayan Shelar. Another plus point for the hotel is serviced apartments, especially for expats who are more comfortable staying in fully furnished apartments with kitchen, bathroom, living room and bedrooms as they stay for long durations.



Another feather in the cap has been the introduction of Eva floors exclusively for women to provide them complete privacy and the assurance of 100% safety and security. The housekeeping staff for these rooms are all fairer sex assuring the comfort feeling to the lady guests.

Presidential Enclave

The Presidential Enclave has become an envy for many hotels including the branded ones. It has been specifically created for the top end clientele who come from across the globe and look forward for the same luxury that they get in hotels world over. Built on the top-most floor of the property the Presidential Enclave provides a sprawling view of the city on one side and the famous Pandav-Leni on the other. The Presidential Enclave floor consists of five suites, one Chairman Suite, one Presidential Suite, Freesia Lounge with a library and a Smoking Lounge.



Dinning, Banqueting and MICE

Excellent F&B has always been a forte of Express Inn. Its signature restaurants and cafe's offer all guests a wide variety of food options – Aster, a 24 hours multi-cuisine Coffee Shop,



Nashik's highest Sky Lounge - After Dark and Freesia: The Lounge, centrally located on the Presidential Enclave Floor.

Express Inn has some of the best banqueting facilities in Nashik and excellent F&B to back it. Express Royale, is ideal to handle traditional weddings and grand conferences for 800 + guests at a time. Grandeur is ideal for a corporate conference or a festive ring ceremony, high-end social get-togethers or kitty parties or any other kind of gathering upto 300 guests. On the other hand there are meeting rooms that cater to less number of guests making it a good option for short business meetings or seminar, an intimate engagement or birthday celebration. All venues are well equipped with latest technologies and gadgets.



This luxury hotel is fast becoming a wedding destination. In addition to stylish wedding accommodations, Express Inn provides free assistance from certified wedding planners who help the clients with everything from invitations to wedding cakes to decorations to memorable farewells.

The hotel has an excellent fitness center, a spa, salon, Club X which has billiards, table tennis, play station, nutrition parlour and the one and only squash court in Nashik. Another new addition was the Sohum Spa and I was pretty impressed by the massage as well as the saloon.

Unlike most hotels that outsource their transportation, Express Inn has preferred to employ their own drivers - 13 drivers for 12 vehicles. The management feels by doing this they have a control on the drivers – dressing sense, behavior etc and hence provide the best services to their guests.



Connecting with leading online portals, wedding planners, event management companies and PCO's is a regular process for Express Inn team. Banner promotion between Nashik - Mumbai - Pune as well as advertising in leading publications. The hotel has several corporate tie-ups, global tie-up with Preferred Hotels, member of associations like FHRAI, PATA, ICPB.

"Express Inn Nashik is a member of Preferred Hotels and resorts who market Express Inn for MICE in 60 countries through their Network. Having tied up with Preferred Hotels and Resorts guests who become members of iPrefer Hotel Rewards can earn points in over 600+ participating iPrefer Hotels within Preferred Hotels & Resorts. Finally I cannot miss to mention the personal touch you and your publication Global Destinations which has supported us from the start and helped us grow our business network both within India and globally," said Vikas Shelar.

The hotel has won several awards and has been for long No. 1 Hotel in Nashik as per the guest reviews by TripAdvisor. They have also been ranked No. 1 in Swachh Hotel Ranking in Nashik under Swachh Bharat Mission. They have won LTG Award at London and also won India Hospitality award (west and south) as Best Luxury Business Hotel in western India. And now the National Tourism Award.

Talking on the future plans Narayan Shelar said, "At our existing property Express Inn, Nashik we are planning a 25,000 sq.ft. i.e., G+1 along with a nice terrace. It will be basically an upscale multipurpose venue. We will soon be starting work for a five star hotel in Aurangabad with 150+ rooms. Later we plan to add more hotels across Maharashtra and beyond."



Express Inn at HICAP

Express Inn had a successful participation at HICAP, Hong Kong. They were attending it for the first time. Representing the group were two dynamic youngsters - Vikas Shelar and Vishal Shelar who felt it was an ideal platform to understand what's happening in the hotel industry globally and the future trends.

"I had earlier attended HIFI, the Indian version of HICAP and was truly looking forward to this event. And it did not disappoint us. It turned out to be an extremely good event for us as we had the pleasure of meeting some of the stalwarts of the industry. Our interaction with Dillip Rajakarier, Chief Executive Officer, Minor Hotel Group; Ho Kwon Ping, Executive Chairman, Banyan Tree Holdings; Bobby Hiranandani, Co-Chairman, Royal Group of Companies; Allen Law, Chief Executive Officer, Park Hotel Group; Shin Hui Tan, Executive Director, Park Hotel Group; Choe Peng Sum, CEO, Pan Pacific Hotels Group; Dave Baswal, CFO and COO Ovolo Hotels; Isabelle Miaja, Managing Director, Miaja Design Group were quite fruitful. We are also grateful to Chandragupta Amritkar, Editor, Global Destinations - India's leading tourism, hospitality and MICE magazine for guiding us and encouraging us to participate in spite of the ongoing protests" said Vikas Shelar.

"I found the quick link session, some of the breakout sessions quite interactive as well as informative. The quality of speakers was superb and so were the delegates who braved the ongoing protests. Kudos to the organisers. The only thing where I feel on a personal front where they can improve is having some authentic Indian vegetarian dishes," said a smiling Vishal Shelar.



Vishal Shelar

Vikas Shelar

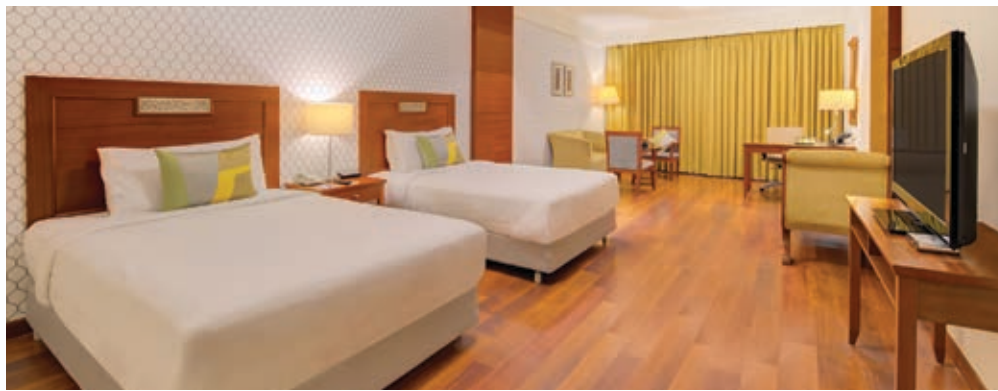
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Informative Doublebill Event tastes success again



Over 60 speakers, 12,000 business appointments, Meet-The-Corporates and Corporate Exchange, Exhibition Walkabout, Say Hi to Everyone all made this year's IT&CMA and CTW Asia Pacific 2019 a very beneficial and informative event to the buyers. **Chandragupta Amritkar** reports from Bangkok.

After quite a few years I was attending IT&CMA and CTW Asia Pacific. Arriving a day earlier I checked into Centara Grand at CentralWorld Bangkok (the expo and conference venue attached to the hotel) Centara Hotels & Resorts five-star flagship property. Early check in wasn't an issue and I was fortunate to be upgraded to a room with club access.

The 27th edition of IT&CMA and 22nd edition of CTW Asia-Pacific, Asia Pacific's Only Doublebill Event in MICE and Corporate Travel attracted quite a few buyers from across the globe including select media.

"I am delighted to welcome 345 new and returning destinations and brands along with 474 preconfirmed MICE, Association and Corporate Buyers. This year, we are also welcoming more than 10 new destinations and corporate brands. The 2019 edition features over 150 business, education and networking sessions, with 70 new programme sessions taking place across the 3 days," said Darren Ng, Managing Director, TTG Asia Media.

The event schedule, even for media, was quite packed with informative sessions including Asian MICE Cruise Conferences, ASEAN MICE Forum, Association Day Forums, CTW-Asia Pacific Conference, Meet-The-Corporates and Corporate Exchange, Exhibition Walkabout, Say Hi to Everyone, The Brand Showcase Presentations (10 sessions spread over 2 days).

Delegates, quite a few from India, expressed positive experiences across board, as a variety of business, learning and networking objectives were met through newly introduced initiatives. On the other hand participating exhibitors were extremely satisfied with the turnout of attendees and the opportunity to share their latest highlights and features they offer.

"It is a good platform to showcase India as a MICE destination to relevant buyers and we are extremely

pleased to have more prospective buyers approaching us after the Brand Presentation Showcase," commented Sudeshna Ramkumar, Assistant Director of India Tourism.

Featured destination, Japan National Tourism Organization partook the Exhibition Walkabout and shared their experience connecting with Association Buyers and Media through this session. Said, Susan Maria Ong, MICE Director, Asia Pacific, "This is the first time that IT&CMA has had this Exhibition Walkabout initiative and it was a great opportunity for us to meet more Association Buyers at one go compared to one-to-one business appointments."

Say Hi To Everyone, the first day's opening ice breaker, was a highlight for many. "Say Hi to Everyone was a very good networking session where we got to know new buyers who were at the show this year. This new initiative is definitely a good opportunity for business," commented Walter Ng, Manager, Sales & Event Services of Setia Convention Centre.

Delegates also commended on this edition's networking sessions that saw a bevy of sponsored luncheons, coffee breaks, dinners and cocktails by participating exhibitors and sponsors such as Accor Bangkok and Hua Hin Hotels, Al Jazeera Media Network,





AP MICE Solutions by JTB, Conrad Bangkok, CWT, Marina Bay Sands, OMT Group, Philippine Tourism Promotions Board and Visit Nepal Year 2020, engage different targeted delegate segments on a captive exclusive sitting to further network and cultivate potential procurement opportunities beyond the show floor.

“Known for mountaineering, trekking and organising renowned art and music festivals, little has been talked about Nepal being one of the preferred destinations for corporate travel despite hosting various regional government and corporate conferences. The networking luncheon organised by Visit Nepal Year 2020 Secretariat during IT&CM Asia 2019 was an opportunity to showcase the country as one of the perfect MICE destination of choice and to promote Visit Nepal Year 2020 Campaign,” stated Rohini Prasad Khanal, Program Manager of Visit Nepal Year 2020 Secretariat.

The expanded Asian MICE Cruise Conference, established Association Day forums, reintroduced ASEAN MICE forums, and CTW Asia-Pacific Conference received positive reviews from delegates who attended these knowledge sessions collectively helmed by over 60 speakers.

Said Noor Ahmad Hamid, Regional Director (Asia Pacific) of ICCA, “IT&CMA has always been a great platform for sharing and having discussions with likeminded peers during the various knowledge sessions available. The lingering question of whether should CVBs and PCOs work together for greater success was addressed during one of the Association Day Forums and the attending delegates was engaging yet intriguing. Truly an eye-



opener for both delegates and panellists involved.”

Held on the last show day, the 18th Sticky Awards luncheon with the new voting and live poll format rewarded the innovative efforts of IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific delegates who stood out at the show. Strategic partners and host country Thailand took home the awards for the Stickiest Destination - Overall, Stickiest In-Booth Experience, and Stickiest Function for the Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception.

Chiruit Isarangkun Na Ayuthaya, President of Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau, was delighted to receive the awards, “I am extremely pleased that our efforts were recognised by fellow peers and it is an encouragement for us to do our best for the industry in the future. We will continue to be a strong partner for our stakeholders and the best for our industry.”

This year’s 20 winners included Korea for winning Stickiest Destination – Exhibitor Services for their professionalism and hospitality during the show and Penang Convention & Exhibition Bureau for Stickiest Destination – Marketing & Promotion and Stickiest Social Sharing for their marketing efforts. Maciej



Olbert from Luxoft won Stickiest International Corporate Buyer and Rodney Yew from Discover Holidays (Asia) took home the Stickiest International MICE Buyer title.

Inspired by Terengganu house architecture, Malaysia Convention & Exhibitor Bureau walked away with the Stickiest Destination Pavilion Design award. “We based the pavilion design by taking reference from Terengganu houses with wooden carvings. We are extremely happy that we won this award,” said Tan Lay Teng, Sales Manager – Corporate & Incentive.

Third time attending Thai MICE Buyer, Namwisate Wanwisa, Regional MICE Manager of Buffalo Tours MICE was glad at this unexpected win “It is a great honour to win the Stickiest Thai MICE Buyer as my efforts are appreciated by the organisers and exhibitors. The one-to-one appointments and networking functions provided me with valuable takeaways, and I will continue to do my best at IT&CMA and look forward to attending next year.”

Said Lynn Zeng, Head of Conferences & Events, Asian Local Search and Media Association (ALSMA) who couldn’t be more surprised at the win, “It is a great honor to be invited to IT&CMA and win the award of the Stickiest International Association Buyer. I am glad that ALSMA is acknowledged for its contribution to the industry and we will strive to do better.”

IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific 2020 will be held from 22 – 24 September 2020 at Bangkok Convention Centre.



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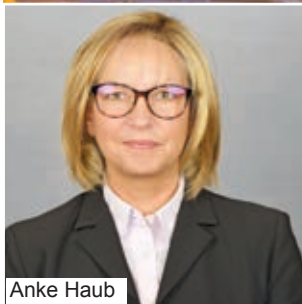
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“Frankfurt has been a centre of trade and commerce for more than 800 years”



Anke Haub



Jutta Heinrich

Frankfurt, one of the world's leading financial centres, is also well known for its futuristic skyline, the busiest German airport - the main hub for Lufthansa, where major autobahns and railways intersect, Messe Frankfurt -one of the world's largest exhibition centers. But apart from that Frankfurt is also a very tourist-friendly destination

with lots of arts, culture, cuisine and certainly the Christmas markets. Its an ideal MICE destination thanks to the numerous hotels with large banqueting space. To get an insight into the Frankfurt as both a tourist as well as MICE destinations we interacted with **Anke Haub, Manager Tourism Marketing for India and Jutta Heinrich Director Frankfurt Convention Bureau.** Excerpts

The Frankfurt Christmas Market is one of the oldest and most spectacular Christmas markets in all of Europe. What are your plans for this year?

It's true, the Frankfurt Christmas Market is one of the largest and most popular in Europe, based on visitor numbers and sheer size. Ornately decorated stalls, a massive Christmas tree at its centre and the historical backdrops of the Römerberg old town and St Paul's Square have helped to make it one of the most beautiful as well. Traditional Christmas articles like candles and Christmas tree ornaments are offered alongside more modern examples of handcraft, all of them presented right alongside countless gift other ideas for young and old. It is no secret that, here in Frankfurt, we place great emphasis on customs and traditions, a fact that is

mirrored in the market's diversified offer range.

Our Christmas market is much more than just a place to buy Christmas presents, however, over time, it has become a very popular meeting place for locals and visitors as well. Beverage stands featuring mulled wine and other wintertime favourites, food stalls and heated wooden cabins provide the ideal setting for meeting friends, family or colleagues. This social aspect helps to make the Frankfurt Christmas Market a truly memorable experience. The culinary offerings, meanwhile, include everything from rustic regional fare to international delicacies. Traditional Frankfurt specialities are of course also on the menu, like "Bethmännchen", a tasty marzipan treat, and "Quetschemännchen", small figurines made of dried plums.



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It's with great pride that we share Express Inn, Nashik, one of India's leading hotels was recently felicitated The National Tourism Award – 2017-18 in the best Three Star Category Hotel across India.

The award was presented on World Tourism Day. It was a double bonanza for us as this year India was hosting the official celebrations of World Tourism Day with the theme 'Tourism and Jobs: a better future for all'. So Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General, World Tourism Organization was also present at the National Tourism Award ceremony.

The award was received by our Chairman and Managing Director Mr. Narayan Shelar and Director Mr. Vikas Shelar at the hands of India's Union Tourism Minister, Hon. Prahlaad Singh Patel and Secretary General, World Tourism Organization, Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili. The event was also graced by the presence of Vice President of India, Hon. Venkaiah Naidu.



This has been feasible largely due to our dedication to service quality and constant product innovation. We continue with our global commitment to the cause and promotion of responsible and sustainable tourism practices in the hospitality industry.

This gives us an occasion to again thank all our staff, associates, service providers and most importantly our guests. We take this opportunity to reassure our commitment to maintain our service and quality standards.



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How diversified is your tourism product portfolio?

Frankfurt, the destination brand, consists of a number of brand modules. The metropolis on the River Main is a leading centre of trade and commerce, of congresses and trade fairs, a place featuring impressive high-rise architecture and a long and storied past. Frankfurt is also well known for its interesting art scene and its magnificent cultural landscapes (e.g., the museum embankment). And let's not forget the surrounding Rhine-Main region, which offers visitors countless opportunities for day trips or weekends away from the hustle and bustle. The possibilities are truly endless – from getting back to nature and exploring nearby wine-growing regions to visiting impressive UNESCO World Heritage Sites, it's all right here, simply waiting to be discovered.

What would you advise a first-time visitor or a business visitor to see?

Frankfurt has the right range of offers for every target group, whether they prefer cultural pleasures, a stroll through the bustling city centre, a visit of a historical location like St Paul's Church, or a shopping spree featuring local designers and leading international labels. Visits of the riverside with its many recreational opportunities, the zoo, or the botanical gardens, are equally worthwhile.

Are there any new campaigns highlighting attractions outside of well-known spots - like any hidden gems?

One particularly worthwhile insider's tip for city visitors is the New Frankfurt Old Town. Here, situated in the heart of the city, a former architectonic eyesore has been painstakingly transformed into a historical quarter by way of an exemplary, award-winning urban reconstruction project.

Some ten years ago, only a few short steps from the time-honoured Römer City Hall, there stood a concrete nightmare, a textbook example of architectonic brutalism – the technical town hall. Today, the same site, situated between Emperors' Cathedral and the Römer, is home to historical timber-frame dwellings, winding laneways, a series of picturesque courtyards and a cosy little plaza, the so-called "Hühnermarkt". Frankfurt's new old town represents one of the most significant (re-) construction projects of contemporary times. The restoration project, which covers some 7,000 sq/m of urban space, recently received the renowned MIPIM Award in the category of "Best Urban Regeneration Project" at the International Real Estate Industry Exhibition in Cannes, France.

The story behind the New Frankfurt Old Town is indeed spectacular: In former times, Frankfurt's city centre was home to one of Germany's largest and most beautiful mediaeval timber-

frame old towns. Sadly, the site was almost completely destroyed during the air raids of the Second World War. Over the past several years, 15 faithful reconstructions of former dwellings were erected on this site, along with 20 modern buildings, which nevertheless adhere to the typical architectural style of Frankfurt's old town. Today, colourful façades representing diverse eras, ancient building emblems, timber frames, and sandstone ornaments adorn the buildings once more. Incredibly, a number of decorative elements, which had been rescued from the bombing raids of 1944, have also been returned to their original locations. Here, the past and present of the city now come together. The New Frankfurt Old Town is a true architectural gem and today serves as an impressive example of the city's continuing urban development.

How do you strike a balance between attracting high-end tourists and group tourists?

That's quite easy, as Frankfurt has something for everyone. From hostel to five-star hotel, from burgers to haute cuisine, from affordable brands to luxury labels, from speedboats to group-friendly cruises on the River Main, Frankfurt has it all!

What is the MICE potential and which are the best venues?

Conveniently located in the heart of Europe, Frankfurt is a city of great colour and diversity. It is a place where tradition meets modernity, commerce meets culture and activity meets tranquillity. Frankfurt is known to be Europe's smallest metropolis, a reputation



it has gained thanks to its international orientation. The trade fairs, the global corporations, the cultural establishments and the city's international airport all play a leading role in their respective fields and industries. Home to Europe's second-biggest airport, one of the continent's largest train stations and Germany's busiest motorway interchange, Frankfurt is easy to reach by train, plane and automobile. Congress organisers and delegates from around the world value Frankfurt's advantage of location. Looking back, Frankfurt has been a centre of trade and commerce for more than 800 years. Wherever and whenever people come together, ideas are created, improved upon, and implemented. As a result, Frankfurt is the ideal place for innovative meetings.

Frankfurt disposes over a broad selection of event venues that is truly second to none. Be it a small-scale seminar, an international congress, a stylish banquet or a fashionable social event – Frankfurt has the right location for every type of occasion. The venues on offer include Messe Frankfurt, Alte Oper Frankfurt, Gesellschaftshaus Palmengarten and Goethe University, to name just a handful.



How are you creating a bond with Indian tourists?

We have been very active on the Indian tourism market for many years and go to India at least once a year. Having maintained our contacts on the subcontinent for all this time, we have become well acquainted with the country's largest tour operators and travel agencies. Together, we put together interesting programmes, mostly combinations of city trips and excursions into the surrounding environs, such as the nearby Rheingau wine-growing region or the Odenwald with its vast forests and picturesque hiking trails.

Indian tourists love vegetarian food. How's the scene in Frankfurt?

The vast majority of Frankfurt restaurants offer at least a small selection of vegetarian dishes. Even the most traditional ones serve vegetarian specialities from Frankfurt, like the famous "Green Sauce", for example, a cold sauce served with boiled eggs and potatoes, or

"Handkäs mit Musik", small, round sour-milk cheeses marinated in oil, vinegar and chopped onions. There are of course plenty of proper vegetarian restaurants as well including quite a few Indian restaurants. One particularly popular vegetarian eatery, for example, is "Leuchtend Roter", which recently opened in Frankfurt's East End district.

Are there any festivals suitable for Indians that you would like to highlight?

Frankfurt locals party all throughout the year. They celebrate their city, their customs and traditions, art, apple wine music and life itself! Whatever the occasion, Frankfurt festivals are always cheerful, sometimes boisterous, often unusual and all of them filled with great spirit. Be it a traditional folk fair such as the Wäldchestag or the Main Festival, a mundane summer event like the Opera Square Festival or a culinary celebration such as Rheingau Wine Market, Frankfurt festivals are always worth a visit, with guests from all across the globe being cordially invited.

One of the biggest highlights of Frankfurt's calendar of events is the Museum Embankment Festival. Traditionally held on the last weekend in August, it ranks amidst Europe's largest cultural celebrations. During the festival, Frankfurt's museums remain open late into the night, offering an array of unusual exhibitions and activities. Outside, on both banks of the River Main, concerts of most every musical variety are held on open-air stages. In between, one finds countless stalls proffering finest handcraft and culinary delights from all around the world. The festival concludes

Ten good reasons for holding an event in Frankfurt

1. Frankfurt is an international traffic and transport hub that is easily accessible from all across the globe.
2. Frankfurt is the smallest metropolis in Europe, being home to only 750,000 inhabitants. It is a very compact city and easy to handle for event organizers.
3. Frankfurt's city centre is only an 11-minute train ride from the airport.
4. The city has approximately 11,500 hotel rooms within walking distance of Messe Frankfurt. In total, Frankfurt offers some 52,300 hotel beds.
5. Frankfurt is home to countless beautiful oases of green, with more than 50% of the city being made up of parks, gardens and other natural landscapes.
6. Frankfurt complies strictly with Pharmaceutical Industry Codes.
7. Frankfurt's unique museum embankment offers a range of renowned exhibition venues.
8. Frankfurt is surrounded by the scenic Rhine-Main region, which offers countless possibilities for incentives and social programmes.
9. Thanks to its key economic industries, Frankfurt is the perfect destination for events representing the following business sectors: "Chemicals/Pharmaceuticals/Life Sciences", "Financial Services", "IT and Telecommunications" as well as "Creative Industry" and "Logistics and Mobility".
10. Frankfurt has been a centre of trade and commerce for more than 800 years. Wherever and whenever people come together, ideas are created, improved upon, and implemented. As a result, Frankfurt is the ideal place for ideas.

on Sunday evening with a spectacular fireworks display replete with an accompanying musical programme.

I have heard that the Frankfurt Christmas Market is also held in Frankfurt's sister city, Birmingham.

Yes. Initially conceived as a one-time sister city partnership project, the Frankfurt Tourist+Congress Board has been organising a Frankfurt Christmas Market in Birmingham, England, since 1997. The idea behind this partnership project was to share Frankfurt's Christmas traditions with the inhabitants and guests of Birmingham. Aside from the Christmas market in Birmingham, we also organise a further Frankfurt-style Christmas market in the city of Leeds.



“Our focus is to establish the hotel as the most appropriate and best MICE hotel in the region”



When my dear friend Rajib Roy Choudhury moved in as GM, The Aananda Imperial, he talked so highly of the property and wanted me to see it in its full grandeur. My first thought was Bilaspur and that too a star quality hotel. A bit skeptical but with a view of meeting and spending some quality time with my dear old friend I proceeded to Bilaspur via Raipur.

On arrival I understood how right he was - it's truly a property with lots of opulence. I was checked into a Scott Suite (329 sq. ft.) that has a very spacious bed room with a comfortable private sit out. Since on my day of arrival the Royal suite was occupied, a day later I was moved to this amazing suite – spread over 670 sq. ft.

Located 135 kms from Raipur airport and just 2 km from the Bilaspur railway station this four-star hotel has a spacious lobby and a large atrium. It comprises of 70 rooms that includes a Royal suite, Scott suites and premium rooms But it's their banqueting facilities that caught my attention. They have five venues for organizing conventions and a grand open lawn which can accommodate anywhere from 25 to 2000 people (Probably the only luxury MICE property in Bilaspur). The 6500 sq ft lawn Dewan offers an array of Banqueting options including product launches, dealers meet, corporate annual days, seminars, conferences, team building activities, weddings – pre and post wedding functions, birthday parties, music launches, movie promotions, musical



concerts etc. Apart from this they have multiple banquet halls ideal to host conferences, seminars as well as social events.

“With such a varied capacity ours is the best venue for all major corporates based in the city. These include Coal India Limited, NTP, Cipla, Adani Power, Jindal Steel & Power and many more,” said Rajib Roy Choudhury.

On the F&B front the hotel is able to provide a range of cuisines which include Continental, North Indian, Punjabi, Indian, Bengali etc. The all-day dining restaurant next to the lobby overlooking a lawn provides a lavish breakfast buffet and is the only restaurant in the city which offers a 24x7 F&B service. Ozone, a mezzanine bar along with a private dining room provides an extensive menu. For the Film fans or the sports buffs, the Ozone has a gigantic T.V. screen and during major events like IPL, world cup it's the place to be.

The hotel also arranged for local sightseeing and there's quite a lot to see that surprised me including High Court of Chhattisgarh which is Asia's largest court. I visited Achanakmar Wildlife Sanctuary - 50 odd kilometers away from our Hotel. The sanctuary is home to the Bengal tiger, Indian Leopard and many other species. I also visited Mahamaya Temple that is dedicated to dual Goddess Lakshmi & Saraswati. It is one of the 52 Shakti Peethas, shrines of Shakti, the divine feminine, spread across India. It's easily a 3 day destination.



Rajib Roy Choudhury

In the evening Rajib Roy Choudhury introduced me to the dynamic Sumit Vidhani, COO, The Aananda Imperial. We spoke on various topics and I was pretty impressed by his keenness on promoting his property not just at a local level but on a global platform. In an Interview with Global Destinations Rajib Roy Choudhury and Sumit Vidhani highlighted not just The Aananda Imperial but also Bilaspur as a destination. Excerpts

It was great experiencing such a lovely property. What made you make such a huge property in a town like Bilaspur?

“Dream Big” is the motto that the chairman of the group Mr. Dula Ram Vidhani firmly believes in and that is how the magnanimous The Aananda Imperial came to existence 10 years back. We take pride in considering ourselves as the fore runner in regards to the hospitality and hoteliering scenario in the region. With 70 self-contained rooms, numerous banquets and meeting



Sumit Vidhani

rooms, a grand lawn, business center, butler service, nonsmoking floors etc the property boasts of global standards with traditional flavours. The greenery that surrounds the property reflects of the environmental efforts and associations that the team and management believes and agrees upon. Observing environmental awareness days, maintaining practices like rain water harvesting, water conservation & preservation programme are few those are constantly being followed. Energy saving practices & methods



does make this unique hospitality destination an automatic choice above other star ventures in this quaint industrial town, which houses the head office of South East Central Railways; one of India's largest public sector company.

Which are the property's key target markets?

The feeder market of this region is primarily the entire country because it is exactly the central part of India and is one of the finest & fastest growing regions in the country, in terms of Engineering, Power, Mining, etc. Thus it is needless to say that the hotel targets all the three major metro's viz. Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata apart from other tier 1 cities like Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Pune, Nagpur, Ahmedabad, parts of the North eastern states from where quantum of business does follow into the region as well as the hotel. Apart from the foresaid, the hotel is well distributed on all major OTA platforms and the business conversion is about 25% of total productivity.

You have the largest assortment of meeting and event spaces in Bilaspur. So is your focus more on MICE than leisure travelers?

Our focus is to establish the hotel as the most appropriate and best MICE hotel in the region and the entire team and the management is exploring opportunities to establish the same. Having said that, we also tailor-make packages to lure leisure travelers, keeping in mind that Bilaspur and the region is extremely rich in flora & fauna, thereby generating chances of experiential tourism.

What experiences can tourist/delegates look forward to in your town?

The sightseeing experiences those can be given to tourists/delegates are manifolds. The region is the house of the aromatic small grain rice Doobraj, also the house of world famed and sought after Kosha silk. Tours in terms of archaeological relevance can



be done at Malhar and Tala, housing some of the most valuable remains of the ancient era, one of the 52 Shakti peethas in India is at Bilaspur at the Ratanpur Mahamaya Devi Temple bringing in the strong religious relevance, Achanakmar National Reserve which is famous for wildlife and tigers and Belghana forest brings in the flora-fauna relevance. The only other anti-gravity point in India is at Chattisgarh and is about 5 hours' drive from Bilaspur, a place called Ultapani is one scientific wonders in the region. The Khutaghat dam on Kharang river is the sweet water supply to Bilaspur and is a place to otherwise relax and rejuvenate... and is famous for all sorts of migratory birds on the islands and alligators in the waters. The Ratanpur Fort brings in the historical relevance which is a nature and history lover's paradise along with the very interesting British Power House, the building of which still exists reminding of the erstwhile British era along with other places like the Company Gardens, the British clubs and the Anglo Indian community trying to hold on to everything and stop the time in it's tracks. The Bilaspur railway station also hosted the Bard of Bengal and Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore at the waiting hall and endearingly showcases the poem on the wall which he scribbled at the visitor's book there.



F&B is vital. How do you take care of the gastronomy of your guests?

The Aananda Imperial has always been known for their vivid F&B offering which has always led to gastronomic excellence. Be it the traditional or the global, our master chefs have travelled miles to unearth the culinary jewels of the region, country, also across the globe to introduce the so called millennial cuisine. In line with these concepts the hotel houses a Round the clock multi cuisine eatery, serving Global cuisines apart from our very own cuisine lines from India along with one of best Buffet Breakfast available in the town, exciting Sunday Brunches are also Regular feature here. Periodic regional and international food festival keeps satiating the taste buds of the ever evolving Bilaspurians, as well one and all from across the state too.

Do you see any new trends in luxury travel and/or luxury hotels?

According to me the definition of luxury today is changing and it's best suited when one has everything at hand with the sterling association of finesse and vantage. Thus it is our firm belief that the Aananda Imperial at Bilaspur Chattisgarh, member of European Designer boutique Chain, Svenska Hotel is luxury merged with convenience and simplicity where we take care in line with tradition and culture. Our global foray into luxury is through Svenska Design Hotel affiliation and we do want to be considered in style and swag when people talks of responsible luxury....

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Fern provides three top MICE venues in and around Pune

Fern group of hotels is on an expansion spree but unlike its counterparts which are adding hotels through acquisition, this elite group is busy expanding by exclusive management contracts. Standing tall with 71 hotels across 55 locations the group, celebrating a decade of success aims to touch 100 hotels by the end of 2020. While the hotels range from five star to three star, the group has always had a focus on MICE, banqueting and marriage segment. “The MICE sector is extremely important for any city hotel as well as resorts. As a group, we have a large number of business hotels as well as resorts and in almost all our properties we have state of the art facilities to conduct meetings. In fact some of our destinations have huge indoor and outdoor facilities for marriages as well,” said Param Kannampilly, CMD, Concept Hospitality.

The recent opening of The Fern An Ecotel Hotel, Lonavala along with Amanora The Fern and The Fern Residency, Bhosari, Pune has made Fern brand have three top MICE venues in and around Pune making it ideal for Mumbaiites and corporates. In this article we focus on these three top notch hotels which are unique in their own style and have added a feather in the cap for the Fern group.

The Fern An Ecotel Hotel, Lonavala



Ramesh Kumar Gupta

Driving from Mumbai, The Fern Lonavala is less than 100 kms and takes around 2.5 hours. It's a luxurious hotel spread over 2 acres, off the Western Express Highway of serenity and just behind the famous Valvan Dam. It boasts of elegant restaurants, fully equipped bar, 24 x 7 coffee shop, spa, gymnasium children play area, conference rooms, banquet halls, lawn and a swimming



pool with Jacuzzi and certainly a range of room types. “We are one of the largest wedding and MICE destination in Lonavala. We have several event locations and at any given time we can cater to almost 1500 guests if all our venues are used simultaneously. Our lawn and poolside location is bound to be the biggest attraction for any wedding related activity in Lonavala,” said Ramesh Kumar Gupta, General Manager, The Fern Lonavala.

Though I was able to only spend a couple of hours and Ramesh Gupta was able to take me on a tour, I had to appreciate the way the structure and facilities have turned out. Having just opened a



couple of months back with only half the inventory available the hotel looked quite full with elders, couple and children (who were relishing the pool in the hot weather).

The hotel has a range of room from Winter Green to the luxurious suites providing city and green landscape views. With an 81 inventory the rooms are quite spacious ranging from 333 sq ft to 678 sq ft. On the F&B side the hotel offers an array of exquisite and exciting local and international cuisines. With 128 covers the Glass Café is the hotels all dining restaurant. The lunch that we had along with the desserts was just superb. The chef prepared an excellent pasta some tasty starters and the main dish including the dal makhani. They also have an in-house Resto Bar Leaf and Stalk.

“Apart from this we also plan to have a roof top restaurant. This will be an unique attraction for the city folk. Also at lobby level we will have a dhabha type restaurants especially for those who are crossing Lonavala and want to have some dhabha type food,” Ramesh Gupta.

The hotel will not only attract leisure guests but for MICE guests too there is a lot to see in Lonavala. Some notable attractions include Lonavala Lake - Valvan and Shirotta reservoirs; Pawna Lake considered an excellent place for photographers; Tiger's Leap is a natural landscape at a height of over 650 m; The Lohagad Fort (Iron Fort) is located 10 km away from Lonavala and was built in 1564 ; The Bushy Dam ; Tungarli Lake is an artificial reservoir with a small lake and dam; Rajmachi Point; The Bhaja Caves were built by the Buddhist nuns around 200 BC.

Amanora The Fern Hotels & Club

Pune truly has some of the best brands be it Conrad, Taj, Marriott Suites, JW Marriott, Westin, Lemon Tree, Hyatt Regency, Novotel, Oakwood, Radisson etc, but surprisingly Amanora The Fern has been able to maintain number 1 position among 333 Hotels in Pune (as per Tripadvisor). And believe it





Amit Kumar Sharma

or not the hotel has just 26 rooms. “It is somewhat an understatement when you refer to our property as a 26 room hotel. What is inherently missing from the statement is, that it is a value addition to a premium Township that is on the cutting edge of the smart city concept and ecofriendly practices. It is an ancient architectural elegance that is different



from the modern properties and endears any visitor. I realized, in this particular case, less rooms means every in-house guest can be given a far more personalized service that any regular size hotel would find difficult if not impossible. So from the day one, our training curriculum built in the ethos that every guest is a VIP and it is our utmost responsibility to make him/ her feel so. Obviously discerning guests rated us highly. Moreover, whenever we had an opportunity to host any corporate or an individual event, we went out of way to assist the organizers in every way. We made sure that our marvelous ambience provided the perfect backdrop for their treasured event. This brought us tremendous word of mouth publicity. It goes to the credit of my entire team from managers to every associate of our team who identified with the vision and performed accordingly,” said an emphatic but smiling Amit Kumar Sharma, General Manager, Amanora The Fern.

Amanora The Fern Hotel and Club is located strategically in East Pune, within 15 minutes of driving distance to Koregaon Park, Magarpatta software Park, Eon Free IT Park, World Trade Centre Kharadi and Hadapsar Industrial Estate. This makes it a perfect venue to host corporate events from board meetings for select few to annual day celebrations for up to three thousand pax. The large Open Air Banqueting space and Amphitheatre make it a unique hotel in Pune.

The hotels 26 guestrooms and suites (yes suites and luxurious ones) offer the winning combination of comfort and indulgence while contributing to the environment. The hotel has some of the most energy efficient hotel rooms that’s to the groups award-winning energy management programme.

The Vista – A multi cuisine coffee shop located on lobby level provides all day dining for its guests. The breakfast is quite exhaustive while ala carte options are quite good. One of the major reasons for success in banquets has been the excellent quality of food.

Apart from this the hotel has a world class gym, a large swimming pool and various games for adults and kids. Great ambience with greenery and water bodies make it a must destination.

The Fern Residency, Bhosari, Pune

The third hotel is strategically located in Bhosari adjacent to the NH 50 (Pune - Nasik National Highway) goes through Bhosari. Bhosari has a large MIDC and is considered a major hub of Industrial area in Pune. The Hotel has 40 well-appointed rooms and is ideal for executive business travelers, catering to mid and budget segment. The lobby is stunning with a very nice atrium.

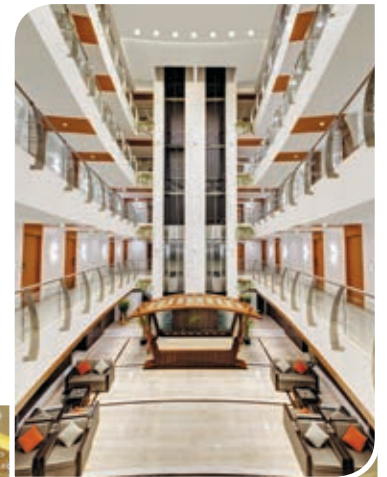


Rajib Das

The Ten Café a multi – cuisine Coffee shop & Restaurant at lobby level. It’s a 48 covers coffee shop spread across 1300 sq ft. Apart from this on the roof top is a small but really well done bar - AZU BAR.

The Hotels also offers leading banquet and meeting halls catering to all types of events. “We have two MICE venues – Senate and AZU Banquet Hall. AZU Banquet at The Fern Residency MIDC Pune is a perfect place for Wedding, conferences and other corporate event services. While we get major business from MIDC Bhosari, thanks to our close proximity to PCMC (Pimpri-Chinchwad Municipal Corporation), we are able to attract corporates from that area too. We offer the latest meeting and AV equipment, and a dedicated area for dining and pre-function needs,” said Rajib Das, General Manager, The Fern Residency MIDC Pune.

Located close to the hotel is Dighi Hills (2.0 km) and Tinmukhi Mata Mandir (2.1 km), its also a family friendly hotel.



Hotel Express Inn, Thane: On an expansion spree

Having been to Express Inn Nashik (which recently won the National Tourism Award) several times it was my first occasion to stay at Hotel Express Inn – Thane. Spread over 5 acres of land this is a surprise packet as its located on one of the busiest triangle just on the outskirts of Mumbai – with one road leading to Mumbai the other to Gujarat and the third to Thane via Ghodbundar.

Though it may sound like a transit hotel it's truly a full-fledged resort with a spacious lobby and equally spacious rooms including a couch and a table and all required amenities. I thought it would be an excellent hotel for Staycation for Mumbai. Among the rooms the Royale Spacious Suite and Deluxe Rooms are most popular.

On the F&B side the hotel truly serves extraordinary food. They have five F&B outlets (apart from in room dining) and each one is equally popular. Kansar, the Kathiyawadi thali restaurant serving authentic Kathiyawadi and Gujrati cuisine is certainly one of the best in Mumbai region. The restaurant serves delicious Kathiyawadi and Gujrati thali enclosed in the ambiance and environment of Gujarati traditions. They have different dishes as part of their thali on different days. Along with that Jain cuisine is also served at the Kansar.

Waves is the hotels multi cuisine lounge and bar offering a wide variety of dishes. Relations the multi cuisine restaurant is an exclusive non-smoking restaurant offering numerous cuisines including North Indian and Chinese. The ambiance and setting of the restaurant is perfectly designed for families. Seasons - The coffee shop is ideal to enjoy a quick bite right from South Indian dishes to Italian Pizza. There is also an open air restaurant that has live music with singers (alcohol is also served).

“Our menu has been designed by very famous celebrity Chef Rakesh Talwar who is the owner of 10 restaurants, some in Mumbai and some in the Far East making us a popular venue for MICE and weddings. We are also a family friendly hotel with a separate kid's zone,” said Vishal Shelar, Director, Shelar Properties.

On the MICE front the hotel offers plenty of venues. Infact the hotel has created a niche for itself as far as banquets and weddings are concerned. The amazing spacious lawn with greenery all around is a perfect destination for marriage, reception, exhibition, an open convention, a corporate event or just a gathering. The lawn offers an open environment to make the event a grand success. The Roof Top Terrace is the perfect destination for personal get-togethers, marriage receptions, birthday parties or

any professional gathering in natural setting with a cool breeze. It has the capacity to accommodate 100 to 400 guests. Banquet hall-Chambers, offers a splendid decor and can accommodate up to 400 guests. Unlike most hotels this hotel has lots of parking space.

The hotel has huge expansion plans. “As land is not an issue for us, on the adjacent plot we plan to build a luxurious hotel with 140 keys that will



Vishal Shelar



be spread over two towers. This will include a premium floor with a presidential suite – on similar lines to our National Award winning hotel Express Inn, Nashik. It will also have a lobby lounge an around the clock coffee shop, board room, banquet with a capacity of 1000 pax, a full-fledged spa with steam, sauna and massage facilities, a fitness center, a salon, indoor and outdoor games and also a swimming pool. We are also planning to have a playboy beer garden and a separate waiting lounge for our guest travelling abroad,” said Vishal Shelar.

To gain more knowledge on what additions can be done for the resort as well as seeking investments Vishal Shelar recently attended HICAP in Hong Kong. “I would like to thank your publication Global Destinations and our CMD, Narayan Shelar for giving me on opportunity in taking part in HICAP. It was indeed a fantastic experience meeting and interacting with hoteliers from across the globe. I also got a chance to listen from leading speakers from our industry. I sincerely look forward to attend more such events in near future,” said Vishal Shelar.



UNESCO network of Creative Cities: 5 Indian Cities

UNESCO designates Mumbai as a member of UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) in the field of FILM and Hyderabad in the field of GASTRONOMY

UNESCO recently announced that the cities of Mumbai and Hyderabad are joining the UNESCO network of Creative Cities. Mumbai has been designated a Creative city of film and Hyderabad a Creative city of gastronomy. This was announced coinciding with World Cities Day 2019. Culture Minister for India Prahlad Singh Patel has congratulated the people of Mumbai and Hyderabad for this unique distinction.

“Hyderabad deserved the accolade not just for the varied range of dishes that it has to offer, but also for its use of home-grown ingredients and its cooking techniques. Hyderabad, known for Biryani and its incredible range of food, a city where Biryani is not just another cuisine but a way of life along with some exotic food items like kababs, food habits by adopting famous culinary dishes from all over the world right from Pre-Islamic Kakatiya cuisines (12th century) have interacted in an incredible fashion with the arrival of Turks in 15th century, followed by Mughal influences in the 17th century and Nizam era to till now. For over 400 years, we are not only adopting but improvising according

Sustainable Development.

They also pledge to develop hubs of creativity and innovation and broaden opportunities for creators and professionals in the cultural sector.

UNESCO New Delhi Director Eric Falt said, "I would like to offer my warm congratulations to both cities. I hope this will strengthen the development of hubs of creativity and innovation, which will contribute to the sustainable development plans of Mumbai and Hyderabad."

The 7 categories for recognition under UCCN are as follows- Crafts and Folk Arts, Design, Film, Gastronomy, Music, Media Arts and Literature.

Why Creativity? Why Cities?

Urban areas are today's principal breeding grounds for the development of new strategies, policies and initiatives aimed at making culture and creativity a driving force for sustainable development and urban regeneration through the stimulation of



to the taste of foodies world over. In a simple terms, Hyderabad is home for Multi cuisine,” said Ashok Satapathy, Asst. Vice President- Operations, Siesta Hitech, Hyderabad.

There are now 246 cities worldwide committing with UNESCO to place culture and creativity at the centre of their development strategies and to share their best practices. “All over the world, these cities, each in its way, make culture the pillar, not an accessory, of their strategy,” said UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay. “This favours political and social innovation and is particularly important for the young generations.”

By joining the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), cities commit to sharing their best practices and developing partnerships involving the public and private sectors as well as civil society in order to strengthen the creation, production, distribution and dissemination of cultural activities, goods and services.

The member cities that form part of the Network come from all continents and regions with different income levels and populations. They work together towards a common mission: placing creativity and the creative economy at the core of their urban development plans to make cities safe, resilient, inclusive and sustainable, in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for

growth and innovation and the promotion of social cohesion, citizen well-being and inter-cultural dialogue. In this way cities respond to the major challenges with which they are confronted, such as the economic crisis, environmental impacts, demographic growth and social tensions.

Not to mention that cities are today home to more than half the world's population and three quarters of its economic activity, including a large share of the creative economy.

It is first and foremost at local level that culture and creativity are lived and practised on a daily basis. It is therefore by stimulating cultural industries, supporting creation, promoting citizen and cultural participation and approaching the public sphere with a new perspective that public authorities, in cooperation with the private sector and civil society, can make the difference and support a more sustainable urban development suited to the practical needs of the local population.

UNESCO network of Creative Cities - India

- Jaipur-Crafts and Folk Arts(2015)
- Varanasi-Creative city of Music (2015)
- Chennai-Creative city of Music(2017)
- Mumbai - Creative city of film (2019)
- Hyderabad - Creative city of gastronomy (2019)

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How nice it would be if your car can be charged in 3 minutes and it can run for 300 km in a single charge. The feasibility is not far.



As per WHO air pollution causes 2 million premature deaths worldwide and more than 50% are from developing world. So companies across the globe are thriving for better air quality through cleaner fuels.

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One company in India has taken the lead globally to develop a clean fuel

eSmart Technology, based in Mumbai has developed a technology to convert sludge into high calorific value fluid with minimum value of diesel and pure carbon from which a rechargeable battery could be made to run the vehicle. This sludge is around 12% of the refined oil and that gives us enough raw material stock.

How it works

This sludge is nothing but Hydrocarbon and we have been able to separate this sludge into hydrogen and carbon, whereby hydrogen comes in vapour form, hydrogen becomes pure refined oil product and the carbon in powder form with 5 micron size particles. The oil does not have any carbon and carbon does not have any oil. We are planning to utilise by depositing that on a film and make a capacitor which would act as a battery and this battery can be charged very fast as capacitor charging can be done instantly.

We have made a pilot plant which can convert 3 tons per day of tar sand into usable product. We are in the process of making 100 such plants which will give us total of 300 tons per day production. One ton of production will fetch us at least \$ 1000 per tons if we sell our raw material that is liquid valuation at about \$ 1 per liter in India and if we convert it to a rechargeable battery the value could go up to \$ 7000 per ton. Therefore, it will give us a production of \$ 21000 per day, per machine and with 100 such machines it will give us \$ 2 million a day production that is around \$ 600 million per year revenue.

Considering the above revenue with a unique technology without pollution and green technology, we can think of 20 times earnings and therefore which is valued at about \$ 12 billion.



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Canada and Venezuela – Excellent Partners

Tar sands or oil sands are a type of unconventional deposits of petroleum, which can be upgraded to synthetic crude oil. These occur naturally and are composed of a mixture of sand, clay and water that is saturated with an extremely viscous and dense form of petroleum.

Canada and Venezuela are the major hubs for tar sand. In smaller quantities they are also found in Kazakhstan and Russia.

Today tar sand / sludge from refineries are available in India for around Rs.15 a liter and if you go abroad it is Rs.3 per liter. The reason the price is lower, as there is no useable product that could be manufactured from sludge, whereas in India at least coke can be made. In Canada tar sand is available at Rs.3 a liter however, it is not useable and the cost of cleaning of that is more than the cost of the finished product. Our R&D team after many months of research has come out with excellent solutions. With our technology, we can utilize this tar sand and the stock of 3 billion barrels available for which these countries governments are looking for a solution.



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*Opening Shortly