

Leisure Hotels Group mulling pan-India expansion

Leisure Hotels Group (LHG), an experiential luxury resort chain in North India, has been witnessing 25% Y-O-Y growth (compared to pre-covid levels). Vibhas Prasad, Director of Leisure Hotels Group said that buoyed by their rapid growth the group is exercising their expansion strategy by launching a boutique property in Naukuchiatal in the current year and a high-end luxury property in Mussoorie within the second quarter of 2023. The brand also has plans to expand its presence to Corbett Park, Jaipur and Goa. Leisure Hotels Group's portfolio boasts of 29 hotels with both owned and managed properties.

While speaking about the growth plans, Prasad said, "LHG is the largest hotel chain operating in Uttarakhand for the last three decades. As a pioneer in the field of hospitality in Uttarakhand, we have been able to set standards and drive quality by offering good facilities and services to our guests. We are on the verge of launching a boutique property in Naukuchiatal by the end of the year and a high-end luxury property in Mussoorie in the second quarter of 2023."

Even though the group has a focus on Northern India, Prasad is bullish about exploring other regions as well. He said, "The Group's focus has remained on the hill states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand for the last couple of decades as we feel that there is still a lot of untapped potential in these two states for experiential tourism. However, over the next couple of years, we should be able to monetise the potential with new properties in these destinations and have a presence across the country. We have already started looking out to grow pan-India, especially in the leisure destinations with an asset lite model through management contracts."



Hyderabad-based Ohri's Group focuses on scaling brands



Amar Ohri

Hyderabad-based F&B brand Ohri's which has around 20 F&B brands in its portfolio is planning to expand further to other states. In an exclusive interaction with **Hospitality Biz**, Amar Ohri Executive Director, Ohri's India said that they are now in the process of identifying 3-4 brands under its vast umbrella to expand their presence pan-India. "Right now the focus of the company is to take three or four hero brands which are our signature brands and scale them further. Our vision is to now make the brand visibility national, maybe even international. We have already identified a few brands such as Qaffeine-coffee shop, Sahib's Barbeque-signature Indian barbecue, Cake Nation - bakery and Cock & Bull - Irish Tavern/bar. Our plan is to expand with these brands." Commenting on prospective locations for the expansion, Ohri said, "We are scaling our four hero brands in Hyderabad, as we feel that there is still a lot of untapped potential in this market. Probably by next year, we will plan the pan-India expansion of our four hero brands starting with Bengaluru, Pune, Mumbai and Goa. Maybe in a year or two, we would plan to expand and introduce these brands in London and Dubai."

WhatsApp hosts training programme in Hyderabad to help digitize HoReCa entrepreneurs

WhatsApp collaborated with the National Restaurants Association of India to host a training and upskilling workshop for the small and medium restaurant community. Under this collaboration, an educational workshop was held at the Indian Restaurant Conclave 2022 in Hyderabad, to educate the restaurant community on adopting technology and digital tools to reinvent their operations and cater to the evolving needs of their customers.

Telangana secures INR 500 cr F&B investment & launches TS-iPASS portal at The Indian Restaurant Conclave 2022

National Restaurant Association of India (NRAI) recently concluded its AGM and The Indian Restaurant Conclave 2022 (TIRC) at HICC in Hyderabad. Pivoting on this large scale event, the state of Telangana successfully secured investment commitment of almost INR 500 crore in a single day. The event also witnessed the launch of a single window application for the food service sector, TS-iPASS portal by the Telangana government.

Some of the key investment commitments for the state came from Wow Momo (INR 50cr), Olive Bar and Kitchen, (INR 30cr), McDonald's (INR 100cr), Impresario Group (INR 30cr), PH4 Food and Beverages (INR 10cr), Almond House (INR 67cr), Chubby Cho (INR 20cr), Alive Hyderabad (INR 30cr), Chaayos (INR 40cr), Farzi Café (INR 20cr), Azure Hospitality (INR 20cr) and Barbeque Nation (INR 50cr) etc.

The Hyderabad chapter of NRAI has played a significant role in increasing the ease of doing business (EoDB) in the state. The TS-iPASS portal which was launched at the event will ensure streamlining of licenses and faster processing through a single window and enhance the region's ease of doing business to a window of 15 days which was earlier 8 months.



Hospitality industry is 20% higher compared to pre-pandemic times: Puneet Chhatwal, IHCL



Puneet Chhatwal, MD & CEO of Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) feels that hotel rates will continue to rise on limited supply. According to Chhatwal there's a

13% increase just in September so far and cumulatively it's a rise of 78% this year. The hospitality sector, in general, has witnessed a solid demand post-pandemic at a frenetic pace. Chhatwal said that the sector is performing quite well and occupancies are holding up. 'While Q2 is seasonally the weakest so far, it's still trending close to Q1,' he added. "The rates are holding up and we are seeing a good increase in rates." Talking about the pre-pandemic era (2019-20), the hotel magnate said that the hospitality sector is trending at more than 20%, according to various reports and analysts. On company-specific growth, Chhatwal said that he is "more optimistic going forward with international travel that comes in specifically between the months of October and March."

Flipkart forays into hospitality business with hotel booking feature

Homegrown e-commerce marketplace Flipkart on Tuesday announced that it has forayed into the hospitality sector with the launch of a new hotel-booking feature — Flipkart Hotels — on its platform to bolster its offerings in the travel sector. The platform said Flipkart Hotels will allow customers to book hotel rooms across 3 lakh domestic and international hotels. Backed by Cleartrip's API, Flipkart Hotels will benefit from Cleartrip's deep understanding of travel customers and sectors.

We are excited to launch Flipkart Hotels on the Flipkart app, which will provide access to affordable hotel stays convenient for the customers. Flipkart Flight is on a steady path of growth in the travel industry since we entered this space," Adarsh Menon, Senior Vice President, Flipkart, said in a statement. "With Flipkart Hotels, we are strengthening our commitment to provide a better experience and superior service to our customers across metros and beyond tiers. With our banking partner's financial offerings, the customers will unlock great value in this segment and enhance Flipkart's capabilities as a preferred one-stop shop for the travel booking needs of Indian customers," Menon added.

Flipkart said, with the launch of hotel services, it aims to offer its customers a host of affordable benefits, including flexible travel and booking-related policies, easy EMI options, etc to make travel affordable, and budget-friendly options, among others.

