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Team BOTT

# Letter from the *Editor's Desk*

Dear Readers,

At **BOTT**, we have always stood as a strong advocate for women in tourism, amplifying their voices and celebrating their achievements. Every year, we take the opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of women in one segment of the industry, and this year, our focus is on Women in Hospitality. From front-line roles to leadership positions, women are shaping the future of hospitality with resilience, innovation, and excellence.

For this special edition, we engaged with nearly 20 remarkable women in hospitality, delving into their journeys—the challenges they faced, their key learnings, and their perspectives on the evolving role of women in the industry. Their insights serve as both an inspiration and a reminder of the need to create a more inclusive, women-friendly workplace.

In addition to this, February was an exciting and hectic month as we connected with industry leaders at OTM Mumbai and SATTE New Delhi. The energy was electric, and the industry's optimism for 2025 as a promising year for tourism was evident. With new opportunities and renewed enthusiasm, we look forward to an exciting phase of growth and collaboration.

As we celebrate International Women's Day, we extend our heartfelt wishes to all the incredible women driving change in the tourism and hospitality industry. Great things happen when women support women—and we truly believe in this, as **BOTT** itself is powered by an all-women team!

**Priyanka Saxena Ray**  
Editor, BOTT India



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**AIR INDIA TO SHIFT TOKYO OPERATIONS TO HANEDA AIRPORT**

Air India has announced a significant upgrade to its non-stop services between Delhi and Tokyo. Beginning 31 March 2025, Air India will operate its 4x weekly flights from Delhi to Tokyo's Haneda Airport (HND), replacing its existing services to Narita International Airport (NRT). Air India also announced an expanded codeshare agreement with its Star Alliance partner, All Nippon Airways (ANA).

**CRUISE PROFESSIONALS APPOINTED PREFERRED SALES AGENCY FOR CRYSTAL CRUISES IN INDIA**

Cruise Professionals is now the Preferred Sales Agency for Crystal Cruises in India. Crystal Cruises, renowned for delivering exceptional luxury experiences at sea for over three decades, underwent a significant transformation in 2022 when A&K Travel Group acquired the brand. Following an extensive refurbishment, the flagship vessels—Crystal Serenity and Crystal Symphony—were relaunched, setting new standards in luxury cruising.



**FLY91 EXPANDS TICKETING NETWORK; TIES UP WITH PAYTM**



FLY91 has entered into a strategic partnership with Paytm, India's digital payments pioneer, to strengthen its commitment to being a digital-first airline, offering a seamless experience to customers across multiple digital platforms. The partnership will enable Goa-headquartered FLY91, to facilitate passengers' access to the airline's ticketing inventory on Paytm.

**RESORTS WORLD CRUISES TRANSITIONS TO STARCRUISES & DREAM CRUISES**

Resorts World Cruises has announced the grand return of two of Asia's most iconic and legendary cruise brands – StarCruises (a refreshed take on the previous Star Cruises brand) and Dream Cruises. The Resorts World Cruises brand was used temporarily to restart cruising in Asia post Covid and will now be reverting to its original roots. The brand transition period will take approximately 3 months.




**SRILANKAN AIRLINES INTRODUCES WIRELESS IN-FLIGHT ENTERTAINMENT**

SriLankan Airlines will be introducing wireless in-flight entertainment on select narrow-body A320 aircraft, enabling passengers to seamlessly stream content on their own devices. The new technology means that passengers on certain short-haul flights can now use their smartphones, tablets or laptops to access and stream on-demand content onboard via the airline's Wi-Fi network, SkyPlus, without the need for seatback screens.

Short News



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# From Heritage to Hospitality: West Bengal's MICE Tourism Revolution

West Bengal is making a bold push to establish itself as a premier MICE destination. To understand the roadmap for this sector, BOTT spoke with **Smt. Nandini Chakraborty**, Home Secretary and Principal Secretary of the Tourism Department, West Bengal, for insights into the state's vision, investments, and future plans.

**Anjali Pokhriyal**



**West Bengal recently hosted a major MICE conclave. How was the response?**

It was phenomenal! We had over 2,025 participants from across India, along with a strong international presence. Organized in collaboration with the India Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), the West Bengal Government, and the Tourism Department, the conclave aimed to put West Bengal on the global MICE tourism map. The response from industry stakeholders, event organizers, and investors was overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing our confidence in the state's potential.

**Why is MICE tourism a priority for West Bengal?**

MICE tourism is more than just business meetings and conferences—it creates a holistic tourism ecosystem. When delegates visit for MICE events, they explore the city, experience its culture, and contribute to the local economy. West Bengal already has the necessary infrastructure, from world-class venues to a diverse tourism landscape, making it an ideal MICE destination. Our rich history, vibrant culture, and excellent connectivity further strengthen our position on the global stage.

**What makes West Bengal stand out as a tourism destination?**

West Bengal is home to breathtaking natural wonders, from the majestic Himalayas in the north to the Sundarbans in the south, both recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Its rich colonial heritage, shaped by British, Dutch, and French influences, is reflected in its architecture and historical landmarks. The cultural vibrancy of Bengal is best witnessed during Durga Puja, a UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage event that draws visitors from across the globe. Additionally, Bengali cuisine and traditional music are deeply ingrained in the region's identity, offering a sensory journey through its rich traditions.

**Sustainability is a major global tourism trend. How is Bengal integrating it?**

Sustainable tourism is a major focus, and one of our biggest successes has been the growth of the homestay industry. We have 5,300+ registered homestays, the highest in India. Many of these emerged post-COVID as travelers sought authentic, local experiences over traditional hotels.

We are also expanding river tourism, with Antara River Cruises, one of India's largest cruise operators, originating from Bengal and now connecting to Bangladesh. The goal is to create eco-friendly, immersive tourism experiences that support local communities while enhancing Bengal's appeal as a responsible travel destination. **BOTT**



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*Kerala, often called “God’s Own Country,” has been at the forefront of India’s tourism revival, setting new benchmarks with its sustainable and experiential offerings. In an exclusive interview, **Smt. Shikha Surendran**, IAS, Director of Kerala Tourism, shares insights with BOTT on the state’s strategic plans, new initiatives, and efforts to strengthen its presence in domestic and international markets.*

Anjali Pokhriyal

## SHIKHA SURENDRAN

### Kerala is not just a destination; it’s an evolving experience

#### *K*erala’s Post-Pandemic Tourism Boom

Kerala has witnessed a remarkable resurgence in tourism, with domestic arrivals surpassing pre-pandemic levels. “We are seeing a significant rise in domestic footfalls, and our focus remains on strengthening partnerships across India to sustain this growth,” says Ms. Surendran. In the first half of 2024 alone, 1,08,57,181 domestic tourists visited the state. Aggressive marketing strategies and enhanced tourism infrastructure have played a key role in this surge.

#### Expanding Beyond Backwaters

While Kerala is synonymous with its backwaters and houseboats, the state is actively promoting newer destinations, particularly in North Kerala, including Bekal, Wayanad, and Kozhikode. Infrastructure upgrades are also enhancing lesser-explored locales. “We want visitors to experience the full spectrum of Kerala—from pristine beaches and hill stations to vibrant cultural events and adventure tourism,” she emphasizes. Kerala’s recognition as the world’s second ‘Most Welcoming Region’ in Booking.com’s Annual Travellers Review Awards further solidifies its status as a must-visit destination.



#### Strengthening MICE and Wedding Tourism

Kerala is emerging as a top destination for MICE and weddings, thanks to its stunning landscapes, world-class venues, and seamless blend of tradition and modernity. A dedicated MICE travel mart is in the pipeline to bolster Kerala’s position in the business tourism segment. “The date is yet to be finalized, but the state government is committed to making MICE tourism a key growth driver,” she adds.

#### Positioning Kerala as an Adventure & Wellness Hub

Adventure tourism is another major focus, with Kerala set to host global events like the International Surfing Festival (Feb 27-28, Varkala), International Paragliding Festival (March 19-23, Vagamon), and Mountain Terrain Biking Championship (March 28-30, Wayanad). The state is also making significant strides in medical tourism by integrating government hospitals into the initiative. “We plan to introduce specialized hospitality training in government hospitals to enhance medical tourism, ensuring world-class care and experiences,” she reveals. **BOTT**



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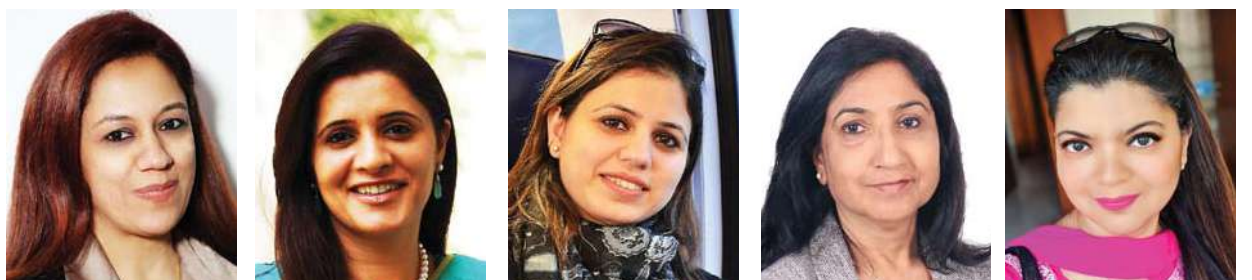
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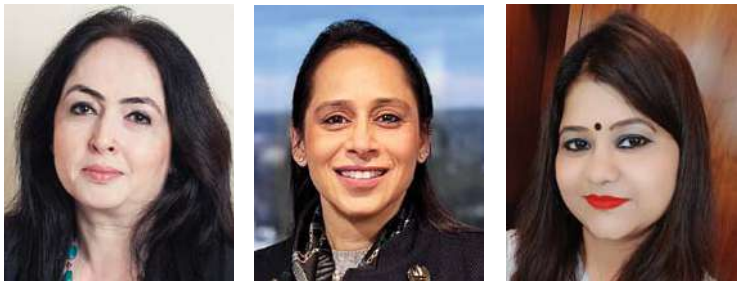
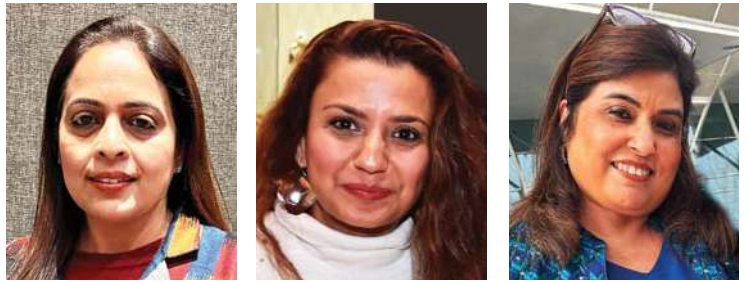


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# Celebrating Women in Hospitality

## A tribute to their Strength and Success

**T**his International Women's Day, BOTT extends heartfelt wishes to all the incredible women in the travel and tourism industry who continue to inspire, lead, and redefine success. Your resilience, dedication, and passion are shaping the future of this dynamic sector, and we celebrate your invaluable contributions.

Every year, BOTT takes pride in recognising and honouring the achievements of women in tourism by selecting a theme that highlights their impact. This year, our focus is on Women in Hospitality—an industry where women are breaking barriers and carving their path to leadership.

For this special edition, we interviewed nearly 20 women in hospitality, exploring the challenges they have faced, their key learnings, and their perspectives on the evolving role of women in the industry. We also discussed what more can be done to create a more inclusive and women-friendly work environment. Stay tuned for their inspiring stories!

*Compiled by Priyanka Saxena Ray and Gunjan Sabikhi*



# KADMBINI MITTAL

## Guidance from experienced leaders & peers is crucial

*It's important to continue creating an environment where more women can step into leadership roles with confidence. A lot can be achieved by sharing experiences, providing support, and advocating for equal opportunities, feels **Kadmbini Mittal**, Regional Vice President, Commercial, India & Southwest Asia, **Hyatt India Consultancy**.*



### Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The hospitality industry has made significant strides in empowering women, with increasing numbers of women occupying senior-level positions. However, achieving true gender equality requires sustained efforts and proactive initiatives. To encourage more women leaders, the industry can implement inclusive policies, provide training and development opportunities, and foster mentorship programs.

At Hyatt, we are committed to driving positive change. Through initiatives like 'Change Starts Here,' we aim to uplift female employees and provide opportunities for growth and development. Our efforts also include the establishment of affinity groups, such as our Women@Hyatt Diversity Business Resource Group (DBRG). This global network connects colleagues, fosters connections and collaboration, and identifies professional and individual growth opportunities for women within Hyatt.

By creating a workplace culture that values people, we can unlock the full potential of our colleagues and inspire a new generation of women leaders in hospitality. We are dedicated to creating a workplace that enables all team members to thrive and be their best selves. **BOTT**

### Challenges and Learnings

As I reflect on my 30+ year journey in the hospitality industry, I'm proud of the progress we have made in promoting women in hospitality. While challenges such as balancing professional and personal commitments have been part of the journey, they have also been opportunities for growth, learning, and resilience.

As a woman in a leadership role, I've learned that perseverance, adaptability, and a strong support network are essential to navigating this dynamic industry. One of the most valuable lessons has been the power of mentorship—guidance from experienced leaders and peers has played a crucial role in shaping my career. Additionally, self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and the confidence to take calculated risks have been key drivers of success.

It's important to continue creating an environment where more women can step into leadership roles with confidence. By sharing experiences, providing support, and advocating for equal opportunities, we can open more doors for the next generation of women in hospitality.

**By creating a workplace culture that values people, we can unlock the full potential of our colleagues and inspire a new generation of women leaders in hospitality.**



# MEENA BHATIA

## Women must take charge of their own growth

*From managing work-life balance to breaking stereotypes and advancing into leadership roles, navigating a career in hospitality requires determination and strategic planning. **Meena Bhatia**, Vice President and General Manager, **Le Meridien New Delhi**, shares her insights on the evolving role of women in the hospitality sector.*



### Overcoming Challenges & Key Learnings

As in any industry, women in hospitality face several challenges. One of the common concerns is the industry's demanding work schedules, long hours, and high-pressure environment. Some may feel that these factors disrupt work-life balance, making it difficult to manage personal and professional responsibilities. However, I firmly believe that with proper planning, flexibility, and determination, these challenges can be managed effectively.

The bigger concern, in my view, is career growth and progression. Women often find themselves questioning their advancement opportunities due to societal pressures and perceived limitations. However, I strongly believe that barriers exist only if we allow them to. We must not build fences around ourselves or limit our own potential. Instead of viewing these challenges as roadblocks, we should see them as opportunities to prove our capabilities and push forward.

### Encouraging Women in Hospitality Leadership

The hospitality industry has histor-

ically been male-dominated in leadership positions, but times are changing. Women are now taking on key roles across various departments, from operations and sales to general management and corporate leadership. However, there is still work to be done to ensure equal opportunities for women at all levels.

One of the most important steps industry leaders can take is to break the barriers of stereotyping professional roles. Women should not be confined to certain departments or job functions based on outdated gender norms. Leadership must recognize talent based on merit and capability rather than preconceived notions about what roles men and women should play.

At the same time, women must take charge of their own growth. We need to be proactive in seeking opportunities, upskilling ourselves, and demonstrating our ability to lead. Confidence, commitment, and a strong sense of purpose are crucial for career advancement. Instead of waiting for opportunities to come our way, we must create them. Success in hospitality, as in any other industry, is about merit, dedication, and the willingness to go the extra mile. **BOTT**



**Mentorship programs, leadership development initiatives, and supportive workplace cultures can play a vital role in empowering women to take on leadership positions.**





# SEEMA ROY

## Recognise your self-worth and strengths

*One of the most common challenges for women leaders in the hospitality industry—or any industry for that matter—is breaking through the glass ceiling. **Seema Roy**, Area Managing Director - South Asia, Middle East & Africa, **Preferred Hotels & Resorts** shares more...*



### Biggest Challenges and Key Learnings

As a woman in the hospitality industry, my journey has certainly had its share of challenges, but it has also been filled with invaluable learnings and opportunities for growth. Over the past decade, I have witnessed a notable shift in both the social and economic landscape, which has provided women with greater opportunities to build and elevate their careers.

I personally feel privileged not to have experienced overt workplace bias due to being a woman. I feel extremely fortunate to have had the opportunities I did, and to have worked with companies, mentors, and peers who valued capability, hard work, and commitment above all else. However, I recognize that I may be unaware of biases that exist or go unnoticed. That said, I have felt the presence of unconscious bias, particularly when interacting with senior men across the industry. Despite having merit and credible experience, senior women leaders are sometimes not taken as seriously as their male counterparts, and that needs to change.

One of the most common challenges for women leaders in the hospitality industry—or any industry for that matter—is breaking through the glass ceiling. I often find myself second-guessing my decisions, which, in hindsight, I've realized may be one of the

most ingrained biases of all.

As for my own learnings, clarity of thought, adaptability, and a willingness to learn and grow at every stage have been crucial to navigating my journey. Recognizing your own self-worth and playing to your strengths is critical.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in the hospitality industry has evolved significantly over the past decade, and this evolution is an encouraging sign of progress. As women increasingly take on managerial and leadership roles, we are seeing a shift toward greater diversity in decision-making and a broader acknowledgment of the unique perspectives that women bring to the table. This progress reflects broader social and economic changes that have empowered women to pursue careers, elevate their roles in leadership, and become more active in political and social spheres, advocating for policies that impact their industries.

The role of women in hospitality is continuing to evolve, and I'm excited about the progress we've made so far. However, there's still much work to be done. To encourage more women leaders, the industry must not only promote gender diversity in senior roles but also ensure that women are supported at every stage of their careers. **BOTT**

**The role of women in hospitality is continuing to evolve, and I'm excited about the progress we've made so far.**



# RAJANI NAIR DEB

## Women are redefining hospitality leadership

*Empowering others, especially women, to step up and lead is one of the most crucial aspects of growth in the hospitality sector today, feels **Rajani Nair Deb**, General Manager, **DoubleTree by Hilton Agra**.*



### **B**iggest Challenges and Key Learnings in the professional journey

The hospitality industry is fast-paced, ever-evolving, and full of opportunities, but stepping into leadership as a woman has meant navigating challenges with confidence and resilience. Early on, I realized that breaking stereotypes wasn't just about proving myself—it was about setting new standards for inclusion, innovation, and leadership.

One of my biggest learnings has been the power of adaptability. Hospitality thrives on change, and embracing new trends, technologies, and guest expectations has been key to staying ahead. Another crucial lesson is that leadership isn't about just holding a position—it's about inspiring teams, fostering a culture of excellence, and driving meaningful impact. Empowering others, especially women, to step up and lead has been one of the most

fulfilling aspects of my journey.

### **The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality**

Women are redefining hospitality leadership like never before—leading innovation, shaping guest experiences, and driving business growth. Today, we see more women in executive roles, setting benchmarks for success and inspiring the next generation. But there's still more to achieve.

To cultivate more women leaders, the industry needs to actively create pathways for growth—structured mentorship, leadership acceleration programs, and an inclusive workplace culture that supports both ambition and balance. Recognising talent early, providing opportunities to lead, and fostering a network of strong female role models will be key. The future of hospitality is diverse, dynamic, and led by strong, visionary women who are shaping the industry with passion and expertise. **BOTT**

**The future of hospitality is diverse, dynamic, and led by strong, visionary women who are shaping the industry with passion and expertise.**





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*The hospitality industry has seen a transformative shift in recent years, with more women stepping into leadership roles and making a lasting impact. Sarova Hotels is a testament to this change, being a gender-inclusive hotel chain proudly led by a woman. **Mita Vohra** – Board Director-Sarova Hotels & Resorts Kenya shares more...*



## MITA VOHRA

# Women aspiring to excel in hospitality should trust themselves

**By supporting and uplifting one another, we can continue to pave the way for the next generation of women leaders in hospitality. The future is bright, and women will continue to play a defining role in shaping the industry.**

### Challenges and Learnings: Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Challenges are an inevitable part of any profession, but in hospitality—a fast-paced and ever-evolving industry—they can often feel magnified. However, I have always viewed challenges as opportunities for growth. Adaptability, resilience, and an open mindset are crucial in navigating this dynamic space. One of my biggest learnings has been to embrace change rather than fear it, as every shift in the industry presents new possibilities for innovation and progress.

Leadership, especially as a woman, comes with immense responsibility. I have realized that success is never a solo journey—it is built on the strength of a team. My team is my anchor, and their trust, dedication, and shared growth have been my greatest motivators. By empowering them, I have reinforced my belief that true leadership is not just about directing but about inspiring and uplifting those around you.

### The Evolving role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality is undergoing a significant transformation. More women are breaking barriers, challenging stereotypes, and redefining leadership in the industry. However, while progress has been made, there is still work to be done in ensuring that workplaces become more inclusive and equitable. Creating mentorship programs, fostering supportive work environments, and providing equal opportunities are crucial steps toward achieving a truly balanced industry.

My biggest advice to women aspiring to excel in hospitality is to trust themselves. Confidence and self-belief are powerful drivers of success. The hospitality industry thrives on fresh ideas and innovation, and women bring unique perspectives that help shape its future. I have learned that believing in your vision is half the battle won—once you do, the right opportunities will align. **BOTT**



# ANJALI MEHRA

## Women are empathetic and can multitask better

*Highlighting the achievements of female leaders within a company or industry is essential, as it not only acknowledges their contributions but also helps break stereotypes about leadership. Recognizing women's success reinforces the idea that they can thrive in senior positions. A seasoned hospitality professional, **Anjali Mehra**, Founder of **Reefknot Consulting**, shares more...*



### Challenges and Learnings

I wanted to be a pilot I couldn't, so I did the next best thing... marry a pilot and work for an airline. From airline to hotels was a natural progression for me. My father was in the army. I never lived the same city or went to the same school for more than 2 years. Things like travel, entertainment socializing, adaptability, embracing change, and exploring places and cultures came naturally to me. So, I naturally gravitated towards hospitality. My blood group is H positive; Hospitality is the only industry I know or have ever worked in. And I wouldn't have it any other way

Challenges, make you stronger and help you strengthen your resolve. One of the most important lessons I learnt was that ups and downs are a part of life. When you are on high celebrate but don't let it go to your head and when the chips are down don't kill yourself for it. Even a butterfly rests when there is a storm.

It's ok to fail sometimes. You win some, you lose some. What is important is to stay grounded through it all.

Sometimes it's also ok to take a step back to take that leap forward.

### Evolving role of Women in Hospitality

I am a believer in balanced leadership. It's not about being a man or a woman. But more about having the competency and the right balance between domain knowledge and soft skills. I think women are far more empathetic and can multitask better than men. They are also a lot more resilient and calmer and composed during a crisis... all skills that will help them become better leaders specially in hospitality.

To have more women working in the hospitality sector, the industry must create platforms for women to champion other women...mentor, guide, support, network even just share experiences and express concerns. Sometimes you just need a sounding board, a guiding light. More and more women leaders must lead by example and share their stories and learnings with other women. **BOTT**

Offering flexible work hours, remote work opportunities, and support for work-life balance can help women advance while maintaining personal commitments.





# NIKITA RAMCHANDANI

## There is a need to expand leadership opportunities

*The hospitality industry is a dynamic and demanding space, requiring a fine balance between professional excellence and personal commitments. While challenges exist, they also serve as stepping stones for growth. Nikita Ramchandani, Multi-property Vice President – Mumbai Market, General Manager - JW Marriott Mumbai Juhu shares more...*



### Challenges and Key Learnings

Ensuring that opportunities at all levels are truly open to everyone will pave the way for a more equitable and progressive hospitality sector. After all, success should be defined by talent and capability, not by gender.

Like in many industries, hospitality presents its own set of challenges, particularly when it comes to balancing personal and professional life. The industry demands long hours, high levels of commitment, and the ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances. At times, maintaining a clear boundary between work and home can be difficult, but I've learned that flexibility is essential. Knowing when to prioritize different aspects of life is a skill that develops over time. The key is to remain self-aware, embrace adaptability, and build a strong support system that enables both personal and professional growth.

Another critical learning is that success is not just about individual achievements but about teamwork. The hospitality sector thrives on collaboration, and the most successful leaders are those who uplift their teams. Additionally, domain knowledge is an invaluable asset—understanding the nuances of the industry, staying updated with emerging trends, and continuously refining one's skill set are essential to staying ahead.

### Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality is evolving, with more recognition of the value diversity brings to the workplace. Diversity fosters innovation, enhances productivity, and creates a more balanced approach to decision-making. While hospitality has long excelled in areas like grooming, presentation, and customer engagement, there is still a need to expand leadership opportunities for women.

One way to encourage more women to step into leadership roles is by offering flexible work arrangements. Hybrid roles, flexible schedules, and support systems like childcare facilities can make it easier for women to balance their professional aspirations with their personal responsibilities. Moreover, fostering mentorship programs and leadership training can empower women to take on more prominent roles in the industry.

It is inspiring to see more women breaking barriers in non-traditional roles. The industry is evolving, and change is happening—but there is still a need to accelerate this momentum. **BOTT**



# AKANKSHA GARG

## Women supporting women is a force to be reckoned with

*Despite the increasing number of women in the industry, representation in senior leadership remains an uphill battle. Boardrooms and decision-making tables still lack gender diversity. Akanksha Garg, Founder Director & CEO (Resorts), Waxpol Hotels and Resorts shares more...*



One of the biggest hurdles has been breaking stereotypes. There's often an unconscious bias that women are naturally suited for roles in guest relations, front office, or marketing, while leadership and operational positions are perceived as male territory. But I also learned that when people see your hard work, they acknowledge and support you.

Another challenge is the demanding nature of the industry itself. Hospitality operates 24/7, and achieving work-life balance can sometimes feel impossible.

Despite the increasing number of women in the industry, representation in senior leadership remains an uphill battle. Boardrooms and decision-making tables still lack gender diversity, making it harder for women to have a strong voice in shaping policies and business strategies. Leadership is about vision, strategy, and resilience-qualities that transcend gender. Yet, breaking into these spaces requires persistence, and for me, it took years of hard work, sacrifice, and dedication to get to where I am today.

However, my journey has not been one of solitary effort. I have been incredibly fortunate to have the guidance and mentorship of industry veterans,

particularly my mentor, the late Guru Chahal, who played a crucial role in making my transition into hospitality seamless.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

Leadership is not about authority alone, but about influence, knowledge, and the ability to create meaningful change. Speaking up, advocating for myself, and ensuring my voice is heard has made all the difference. Yet, I have also learned that no journey is ever truly solo. Women supporting women is a force to be reckoned with-mentorship, collaboration, and shared wisdom can accelerate growth and open doors that once seemed out of reach.

Adaptability is another invaluable lesson. The ability to pivot, embrace innovation, and stay ahead of the curve is what keeps businesses thriving. However, at the heart of leadership lies a balance-combining empathy with strategic decision-making. Understanding team dynamics, valuing diverse perspectives, and fostering inclusivity are what truly build strong and successful teams. **BOTT**

**Women - Own your journey. Seek knowledge. Take up space. The hospitality industry is evolving, and with it, so must the opportunities for women who dare to dream, disrupt, and redefine what leadership looks like.**





When more women are seen in senior roles, it encourages aspiring professionals to aim higher. Wyndham has been at the forefront of this, ensuring that female leaders are visible, heard, and supported across all levels. **Sakshi Sehdev Dogra**, Head of Sales & Marketing Eurasia, **Wyndham Hotels & Resorts** shares more...



## SAKSHI SEHDEV DOGRA

# Fostering an environment where women are empowered to lead is crucial

### Challenges and key learnings

The hospitality industry is vibrant and rewarding, but like many sectors, it has traditionally been male-dominated, particularly in senior leadership roles. One of the key challenges has been breaking perceptions and ensuring that leadership potential is recognized on merit rather than convention. Early in my career, I often had to work harder to establish credibility, particularly in strategic and revenue-focused roles.

A major learning is delivering strong business outcomes and consistently driving impact is the best way to challenge perceptions and break barriers. Results speak louder than bias.

Another key take away has been the power of mentorship and networking. Surrounding myself with strong professional mentors and peers has provided invaluable insights, career guidance, and opportunities to grow. The hospitality sector thrives on collaboration, and fostering an inclusive, supportive work culture is essential for long-term success.

Also supporting and mentoring other women in the industry has been

deeply rewarding. Creating an inclusive and encouraging work environment is essential for long-term progress.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality has evolved significantly, with more women stepping into leadership positions and driving change across the industry. However, while the sector has made progress, true gender parity at senior levels remains a work in progress. Hospitality thrives on diversity, and fostering an environment where women are empowered to lead is crucial for the industry's growth and innovation.

At Wyndham Hotels & Resorts, diversity and inclusion are at the heart of our culture. The brand actively champions women in leadership through initiatives such as mentorship programmes, leadership development workshops, and flexible career pathways. Wyndham's commitment to fostering female talent has been instrumental in shaping my own professional journey. **BOTT**

Many women in hospitality begin in frontline or operational roles but face challenges in advancing to senior positions. Companies must create structured career roadmaps that offer professional development, skill-building, and sponsorship opportunities.



# SHREYA GURUNG

## Women today are breaking barriers &, stepping into leadership roles

*Expanding **Sumi Yashshree** from a homegrown vision to one of Northeast India's most diverse luxury hotel chains, with 20+ properties across India and internationally, has been an incredible journey—one filled with challenges, resilience, and growth. **Shreya Gurung**, CEO of **Sumi Yashshree Hotels & Resorts** shares more.*



### Biggest Challenges and Key Learnings

Today, Sumi Yashshree is rapidly expanding into Lachung, Kolkata, Vizag, and even internationally in Kanyam, with flagship brands like Sumi Nom-Nom redefining the hospitality experience. But beyond business growth, our focus remains on empowering women in the industry by providing opportunities to step into leadership roles.

At Sumi Yashshree, we believe in creating opportunities for women, ensuring that they are not just employees but decision-makers, entrepreneurs, and change-makers in hospitality. Through initiatives like the Yashshree Foundation, we support women—especially single mothers—by offering career stability and growth along with other perks.

This journey has taught me that leadership knows no gender—only vision, confidence, and persistence. Women today are breaking barriers, stepping into leadership roles, and shaping industries. If they can do it, why not me? Why not you?

To every woman with a dream—step forward, take charge, and lead with confidence. The future of hospitality belongs to those who dare to break barriers.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The hospitality industry is evolving, and women are playing an essential role in its transformation. At Sumi Yashshree, we have always believed in creating a workplace where women are not just part of the team but are given real opportunities to lead and grow. Today, our workforce proudly maintains a 50:50 ratio of women and men, reflecting our commitment to gender inclusivity.

As we expand our presence across India and beyond, with new properties in Lachung, Kolkata, Vizag, and internationally in Kanyam, we are committed to giving women a strong platform to explore, lead, and thrive in the hospitality sector. Our growth is not just about building hotels—it is about creating opportunities for women to step into leadership roles, develop their skills, and shape the industry in their way.

Women in India often juggle multiple responsibilities, making career growth more challenging. However, many are stepping beyond traditional roles and proving their ability to lead in dynamic industries like hospitality. **BOTT**

As the CEO of Sumi Yashshree, I believe that empowering women is not just an initiative; it is a necessity. Our expansion gives us the perfect opportunity to bring more women into leadership positions.



# DHANYA PILLAI

## It is crucial to create equal growth opportunities



*The hospitality industry is witnessing a positive shift as more women step into leadership roles, bringing fresh perspectives and innovative approaches to the sector. However, the journey comes with its share of challenges and learnings. Dhanya Pillai, Marketing Manager at Crowne Plaza Kochi, shares her experiences.*

### Challenges and Learnings

Throughout my journey in the hospitality industry, I have truly embraced two key strengths—communication and resilience. There have been moments when the challenges felt overwhelming, from managing high-pressure situations to balancing multiple responsibilities. However, these experiences have pushed me to grow, develop creative solutions, and build the confidence needed to navigate this dynamic industry.

One of the most rewarding aspects of my career has been the opportunity to cultivate meaningful relationships with both guests and colleagues. Hospitality is built on human connections, and I have learned that genuine engagement fosters trust, enhances teamwork, and ultimately leads to memorable guest experiences. I've also realized that leadership isn't a one-size-fits-all concept—it's about staying true to oneself, leading with empathy, and adapting to different situations.

Additionally, mentorship has played a crucial role in my professional growth. The guidance and encouragement I have received from industry leaders have helped shape my career, and in turn, I am passionate about mentoring others. Seeing young professionals, especially women, gain confidence and progress in

their careers is incredibly fulfilling.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

It's inspiring to see women making significant strides across all sectors of hospitality, from front-of-house operations to the culinary world and executive leadership roles. As the industry continues to evolve, it is crucial to create an environment where women have equal access to growth opportunities. Fostering mentorship programs, offering leadership development initiatives, and implementing flexible work policies can help support more women in advancing their careers.

Creating a workplace culture where women's voices are not only heard but also valued is essential for long-term industry progress. At Crowne Plaza Kochi, we have taken proactive steps toward this goal through our Rise program—a leadership training initiative designed to empower female employees and prepare them for senior roles. Currently, women constitute 18% of our workforce, with 4% holding leadership positions. While this is a positive step forward, we are committed to increasing these numbers and ensuring a more balanced representation at all levels. **BOTT**

With continued industry-wide efforts, supportive policies, and a strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, women in hospitality can break barriers, thrive in leadership positions, and pave the way for future generations of professionals.



*The hospitality industry thrives on passion, dedication, and skill—qualities that women bring in abundance. While challenges exist, they are not necessarily gender-based; rather, they stem from the need for balance, recognition, and equal opportunities. **Richa Sharma**, Head – Corporate Communications and PR, ITC Hotels Ltd.*



## **RICHA SHARMA**

# The hospitality industry is embracing Diversity and Inclusion

### **Challenges and Learnings**

Ours would be an impossible void to fill! Women in hospitality are the wind beneath many wings. The Challenges are not gender-based—just like our male colleagues, we too must compete for our spot under the sun. For women, the greater challenge often lies in managing home responsibilities so that work-life balance remains sorted. While women are applauded as great multi-taskers, I wonder—what choice do we really have? Over time, we have honed this skill to incredible levels of perfection. The key learnings do not vary by industry: never forget that nothing is bigger than the brand you represent. Eventually, it is always the team that wins, not the individual. Most importantly, never underestimate the strength of domain knowledge—continue to enrich your skill set and sharpen your craft.

**As we celebrate women in hospitality, it's essential to acknowledge the progress made and push for greater inclusivity in leadership roles.**

### **Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality**

Women bring immense focus to their roles. We need a level playing field across industries and women must be considered for all positions. It is heartening to see women breaking barriers in non-traditional roles—if men can be great chefs, women can be great GMs! Likewise, more men are now choosing PR and Communications, a welcome trend. The hospitality industry is embracing Diversity and Inclusion, and change is underway. We are evolving, but the momentum must accelerate. The powers that be must ensure leadership opportunities are open to all. We are equals. **BOTT**



# RUBINA SHARMA

## Women bring unique perspectives, creativity, and leadership qualities

*As the hospitality industry continues to evolve, there is growing optimism about the expanding opportunities for women leaders. By fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment, the full potential of women in hospitality can be unlocked, driving both individual and industry-wide success. **Rubina Sharma**, EAM - Rooms & Business Development, **Eros Hotel New Delhi Nehru Place** shares more...*

### *N*avigating Challenges and Embracing Growth

The hospitality industry is dynamic, fast-paced, and full of opportunities—but for women, it also presents unique challenges. My journey in this industry has been both rewarding and demanding, offering invaluable lessons that have shaped my career and personal growth.

One of the biggest challenges has been achieving a work-life balance. In an industry that operates around the clock, prioritizing self-care and maintaining equilibrium between professional and personal life is crucial. Resilience and adaptability have also been key, as the unpredictable nature of hospitality often requires quick thinking and flexibility.

Additionally, networking has played a pivotal role in my career. Building relationships with colleagues, mentors, and industry leaders has not only opened doors to new opportunities but also provided invaluable guidance and support. Another crucial lesson has been self-advocacy—learning to assert myself, celebrate my achievements, and confidently express my ideas has been instrumental in es-



tablishing my leadership in the field.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The hospitality industry has made significant strides toward gender diversity, equity, and inclusion, with more women taking on leadership roles, exploring diverse career paths, and benefiting from mentorship initiatives that foster their growth. Women are excelling beyond traditional roles, making their mark in operations, revenue management, marketing, human resources, and more. Industry leaders increasingly recognize the importance of mentorship in supporting their advancement. To further enhance women's leadership, the industry must develop structured mentorship programs, provide training and leadership development opportunities, foster inclusive workplace cultures, set measurable diversity and inclusion goals, and actively celebrate women's achievements. By taking these steps, hospitality can unlock the full potential of women leaders, ensuring a more diverse, innovative, and thriving industry. **BOTT**

To further enhance women's leadership, the industry must develop structured mentorship programs, provide training and leadership development opportunities.



# DEVIDYUTI GHOSH

## Rise above speculation and climb the ladder with perseverance

*The hospitality industry is a dynamic and fast-paced sector that demands dedication, resilience, and adaptability. While it offers immense opportunities for growth, women professionals often encounter unique challenges in their journey. Devidyuti Ghosh, Hotel Manager, Mulberry Shades Bengaluru, Nandi Hills shares more.*



### Biggest Challenges and Key Learnings

I started in the industry when the gender ratio was noticeably skewed, right from the institute I graduated from to the first hotel where I got the opportunity to intern at. That said, I was determined from the beginning to stand out and was quickly recognised for my academic excellence, eagerness to learn, and meticulous grooming.

What followed was immense learning on the job. Every day, I pushed myself to blend in with my teams by going the extra mile – working long hours, learning from other outlets after my shift, and never letting personal discomfort show, even during difficult days. But my goal remained clear, I was determined to prove to myself that I can do it.

One challenge that I'm sure many women in the industry will relate to is how our actions were scrutinized far more than our male counterparts'. At times, success was meticulously discussed or investigated, while a failure at times was predicted out of turn.

My biggest challenge and my greatest learning have been to rise above speculation, climb the ladder with per-

severance and most importantly take others along as you move ahead. If you have the right performance and the right outlook for your company, you've already paved the way forward.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

In a large way, I have noticed that women with strength have evolved, thrived, survived, and succeeded in all the roles they take on—whether in trainers or high heels! Most importantly, a woman must decide and stand by her resolve to move ahead in life while maintaining a balance between work and personal time. While this is a challenge, it is also very fulfilling, and this resolve comes from within, while the strength to fight the odds comes naturally.

The heartening part is that this industry is already making giant strides toward ensuring gender equity by sponsoring the education of women from underprivileged backgrounds, establishing specific committees for grievance redressal, and evaluating progress with target percentages of women to be hired per hotel—holding property leaders accountable for these goals. **BOTT**

I am very proud to say that it has been more than nine years for me with Marriott International, and the flexibility and support system for women here are both transparent and encouraging.



*Women have long been an integral part of the hospitality industry, bringing creativity, resilience, and exceptional leadership skills to the table. While historically underrepresented in leadership roles, their presence is steadily growing, reshaping the industry with fresh perspectives and innovative approaches. **Kavita Ghai**, Marketing Head, **The Metropolitan Hotel & Spa** shares more...*



## KAVITA GHAI

# Gender-balance is changing in our industry and is in progress

### *N*avigating Challenges and Embracing Growth

The journey so far has been one of remarkable learning and continuous evolution. I wouldn't call it a struggle, but rather a path filled with challenges that I have embraced with passion and unwavering commitment to my work. From developing, establishing, and maintaining marketing and communication strategies to aligning them with organizational objectives and overseeing the publicity of the hotel, every experience has contributed to my growth. Each challenge has been an opportunity to refine my skills, push my boundaries, and enhance my understanding of the dynamic hospitality landscape, making this journey an incredibly fulfilling and enriching one.

but I feel, their presence is much more profound than ever. They are now fearless in voicing their opinions and are building their own path to success and unprecedented growth. Not only in this sector, but women with their passion, approach, and a penchant for hard work are breaking the glass ceiling in other industries, too. Gender-balance is changing in our industry and is in progress as some traits of the female leadership emerged like determination, inclusion, ability to adapt, teamwork, innovation in the use of technology and communication and information, which contributed to positive effects on performance. Female leaders are also contributing to sustainability and diversity as a key goal. And, women are now constantly putting themselves forward for opportunities, whether leading a new project, participating in panels or conducting business meeting, etc. This has evolved significantly and industry will continue to embrace the change. **BOTT**

**Women are now constantly putting themselves forward for opportunities, whether leading a new project, participating in panels or conducting business meeting, etc.**

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

Though women are still underrepresented in the hospitality industry,



# DIVYA AGHA

## Women must be equipped with necessary skills

*The role of women in hospitality has evolved, with a growing presence in leadership positions. While progress is evident, there remains a need to expand their representation beyond traditionally female-dominated areas. Divya Agha, General Manager-Marketing and Communications shares more...*

### Challenges and Learnings

Navigating the hospitality industry as a woman has meant challenging a traditional mindset ranging from unusual working hours to gender-infused stereotypes while embracing innovation, resilience and adaptability – though, I believe this would be true for any sector.

From a marketing perspective, the key lesson has been the power of storytelling, meticulous planning, attention to detail and execution backed by data-driven insights in shaping immersive brand experiences. Basis my observations and learnings, I believe keeping pace with digital transformation while maintaining the human connection has been a crucial factor in marketing hospitality services.

At an individual level, I feel an unwavering commitment to task ownership laced by a collaborative and transparent leadership style has been my approach to work. I have tried to embrace every roadblock & triumph that has come my way, converting small opportunities into bigger wins by adopting a multifaceted approach, effective communication and adept problem-solving skills.

We are a part of a dynamic industry where it is critical to understand evolving consumer - hospitality is not just service



but the idea of curating more personalized, immersive experiences for guests. Women bring a nuanced approach to this, integrating empathy, emotional intelligence, and cultural sensitivity into marketing strategies that resonate deeply with diverse audiences.

### Evolving role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality has evolved, with a growing presence in leadership positions. While progress is evident, there remains a need to expand their representation beyond traditionally female-dominated areas.

A discourse alone, might not be enough, we ought to invest in mentorship and leadership development programmes that equip women with necessary skills, networks, and confidence to advance. Implementing an agile work culture that support women at various stages of their careers, pay transparency, equal promotion opportunities and inclusive hiring practices can help remove structural barriers for an environment where talent is recognized and nurtured regardless of gender. A culture of equity and inclusion is essential – across industries, not just in hospitality. **BOTT**

As organisations embrace diversity, they will not only empower women for leadership but also end up helping at a larger level and for the long-term success.



Women in hospitality are breaking barriers, moving beyond traditional roles, and taking the lead in key operational and strategic positions. The industry is witnessing a shift where more women are stepping into prominent roles. **Simmi Sood** – Director PR & Marketing, **Radisson Blu Airport Hotel New Delhi** shares more...



## SIMMI SOOD

# Hospitality marketing is about building strong, lasting connections

## Biggest Challenges & Key Learnings:

Hospitality is an industry driven by dynamism, creativity, and the seamless integration of technology and AI to meet ever-evolving guest expectations. As a PR and Marcom professional, one of the biggest challenges I've faced is ensuring that every campaign, initiative, and strategy not only delivers measurable results but also fosters authentic engagement.

Embracing AI-driven personalisation, digital innovations, and smart automation has been pivotal in crafting meaningful guest experiences while preserving the human essence of hospitality. Striking the right balance between data-driven marketing and emotional storytelling—while aligning with evolving technology—has been a continuous learning process.

Over the years, I've realised that success in hospitality marketing isn't just about numbers or innovation—it's about building strong, lasting connections. Resilience, adaptability, and a guest-first approach have been my key takeaways. By leading with a clear vision and leveraging AI, digital tools,

and creative storytelling, I have been able to turn challenges into opportunities, driving brand affinity, guest engagement, and impactful communication

## Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

Women in hospitality are breaking barriers, moving beyond traditional roles, and taking the lead in key operational and strategic positions. The industry is witnessing a shift where more women are stepping into leadership, driving innovation, and shaping brand narratives.

To accelerate this evolution, the industry must invest in mentorship. It must guide young talent through structured mentorship can help more women navigate their growth. workplace policies need to be redefined encouraging flexibility, especially for working mothers, so that it allows more women to thrive in leadership roles. One must challenge stereotypes. Women are not just great at guest relations; they are exceptional strategists, decision-makers, and visionaries. **BOTT**

Creating leadership pathways beyond traditional roles is key. As more women step forward, we are not just reshaping hospitality—we are making it more inclusive, dynamic, and forward-thinking.





# AKANKSHA LAMBA

## Leadership isn't just about managing teams but inspiring them

*The hospitality industry is dynamic and ever-evolving. While it presents challenges for all professionals, we've seen women navigate unique hurdles, particularly in stepping into leadership roles in what has traditionally been a male-dominated space. Akanksha Lamba, Co-Founder and Senior Vice President – Operations, The Postcard Hotel shares more.*



### *N*avigating Challenges and Embracing Growth

Over the years, I've seen the industry evolve significantly, with organisations—especially in the luxury sector—prioritising diversity, inclusivity, and work-life balance. However, in less structured environments, women may still face challenges in career progression due to personal commitments.

One of my biggest takeaways has been adaptability. Hospitality thrives on change—guest expectations evolve, digital transformation accelerates, and market dynamics shift constantly. Staying ahead requires agility, continuous learning, and a willingness to embrace innovation.

Another key lesson has been the importance of relationships. Whether with colleagues, partners, or guests, meaningful connections are at the heart of this industry. Leadership isn't just about managing teams but inspiring them, leading with empathy, and fostering a culture of excellence.

Most importantly, success in hospitality extends beyond delivering exceptional service. It requires a deep understanding of people, creativity, and attention to detail—qualities many

women naturally bring to the table. It's inspiring to see more women stepping into leadership roles, bringing fresh perspectives and innovation. My journey has shown that while challenges exist, they can be overcome with resilience and a commitment to growth.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality has expanded beyond traditional guest-facing positions, with many now leading in strategy, operations, and brand management. More women are excelling as general managers, revenue heads, and even founders of hotel brands. While progress is encouraging, there's still room to achieve true gender balance at the top.

From my experience, one of the biggest challenges is ensuring women have the right opportunities to grow into leadership roles. Work-life balance remains key—flexible policies and parental support help retain top talent. Fair pay, unbiased hiring, and clear promotion pathways are equally important. Leadership development programs also play a crucial role in helping women advance and take on more strategic responsibilities. **BOTT**

**I believe a diverse leadership team strengthens the industry, driving innovation and creating a more inclusive, guest-centric approach. As more women rise into leadership, hospitality will continue to evolve for the better.**



*The hospitality industry is evolving, and inclusivity is becoming a key focus for many organizations. With more companies implementing diversity and inclusion policies, the future looks promising for women professionals. **Akansha Vij**, Sales Marketing and PR Manager, **WelcomHeritage** shares more...*



## AKANSHA VIJ

# Women bring unique perspectives that enrich guest experience



### Overcoming Challenges & Key Learnings

My journey in hospitality industry has been incredibly enriching and I'm fortunate to be part of a brand like WelcomHeritage that values and celebrates India's rich heritage while offering exceptional hospitality experiences. Of course, like any career, there have been challenges, but I've always viewed them as opportunities for growth.

One of the biggest learnings has been the importance of adaptability and resilience. The hospitality industry, especially at WelcomHeritage with its unique blend of heritage and modern luxury, is dynamic and requires a proactive approach. I've learned the power of building strong relationships, both within the company and with our guests. Sharing experiences and offering support creates a powerful sense of community, something WelcomHeritage fosters beautifully.

This industry thrives on passion and dedication, and as women, we bring unique perspectives and strengths that enrich the guest experi-

ence, particularly at a brand like WelcomHeritage where authenticity and cultural immersion are paramount.

### The Evolving Role of Women in Hospitality

The role of women in hospitality is undeniably expanding, and we are seeing a significant shift towards greater representation in leadership. This evolution is driven by a growing recognition of the diverse skills and perspectives women bring to the table. We are natural collaborators, communicators, and problem-solvers, all essential qualities in hospitality. I'm proud to be part of WelcomHeritage, that truly embodies this positive change. We have a significant number of departments, including key leadership roles, headed by women. This demonstrates the brand's commitment to empowering women and recognizing their capabilities.

Furthermore, we are witnessing a significant increase in the number of women General Managers in hotels across the industry, which was a rare scenario earlier. This is a testament to the progress being made.. **BOTT**



**By building upon existing initiatives and fostering supportive environments, we can ensure even greater opportunities for women to excel, lead, and redefine hospitality for the future.**





# DEEPTI KAMRA

## Career advancements should be based on merit

*The hospitality industry is a dynamic, fast-evolving space that demands resilience, adaptability, and leadership. While women are increasingly making their mark, the journey to leadership comes with its own set of challenges. **Deepti Kamra, Hotel Manager, Citadines Paras Square Gurugram,** shares her insights on overcoming challenges, key learnings and more.*



### Evolving role of Women in Hospitality

Women are increasingly making their presence felt in the hospitality industry, stepping into leadership roles across operations, sales, marketing, and management. The industry is recognizing the value of diversity, and women bring unique strengths such as strong communication skills, emotional intelligence, and a customer-centric approach. These qualities are essential in creating exceptional guest experiences and driving business success.

To encourage more women leaders, the industry must take proactive steps in providing equal opportunities for growth and advancement. Leadership training programs, mentorship initiatives, and structured career progression paths should be implemented to build the skills and confidence needed for senior roles.

It is also crucial to break traditional stereotypes and eliminate biases that may limit women's professional growth. Employers must ensure that promotions and career advancements are based on merit rather than gender. Creating an inclusive and supportive work environment, offering flexible work arrangements, and highlighting success stories of women leaders can inspire the next generation of female professionals. **BOTT**

### Challenges and Learnings

One of the biggest challenges I faced was breaking stereotypes and establishing my leadership in a traditionally male-dominated industry. Hospitality is fast-paced and demanding, requiring not only technical expertise but also strong leadership, confidence, and resilience. Early in my career, I had to work twice as hard to prove my capabilities, demonstrating that leadership is about talent and dedication, not gender.

One of the most valuable lessons I have learned is the power of networking and mentorship. Having strong professional relationships and learning from experienced leaders has played a crucial role in my growth. Additionally, leading with empathy and fostering a collaborative environment have been instrumental in building strong, motivated teams.

Another key learning has been to embrace challenges as opportunities. The hospitality industry is constantly evolving, and adaptability is key. Staying curious, continuously upgrading skills, and having the courage to speak up and take initiative are essential for long-term success.

By fostering a workplace culture that values diversity, equity, and inclusion, the hospitality industry can continue to break barriers and create a future where more women rise to leadership positions.



# NEETI SHARMA

## A trailblazing Woman redefining Global Tourism and Hospitality

*Neeti Sharma, the esteemed Director of **Intrepid Marketing and Communications** and **All Known Marketers**, is a trailblazer in the realm of global tourism representation. Based in Mumbai, she spearheads the promotion of a diverse portfolio of tourism brands, esteemed hospitality establishments, dynamic destination management companies (DMCs), and renowned tourism boards across the world. With an unwavering commitment to excellence, an inspiring vision, and remarkable leadership prowess, Neeti has masterfully charted a path of success, elevating brands and shaping industry narratives with finesse.*

**Shreya Shimpi**



**Looking back on your journey so far, what inspired you to enter the travel industry, and how has it shaped you as a professional?**

Growing up near the airport, I was always mesmerized by planes flying overhead—it felt like a glimpse into a world I wanted to be part of. I'd often daydream about that life, and over time, with family members in the industry, my curiosity turned into passion. Plus, my love for geography made choosing travel feel like the most natural path for me.

**Reflecting on 2024, what would you say were the three highlights of the year for you—personally or professionally?**

On a personal level, my biggest highlight has been my son's graduation, he's all grown up now, and I can finally stop being the worrying mom. Professionally, the most fulfilling experience has been managing such diverse portfolios, keeping us constantly engaged. I'm truly grateful for that. These two moments, without a doubt, have been the most rewarding so far.

**What is your long-term vision for Intrepid Marketing and Communications? Could you share a major initiative or change you've been proud to lead?**

We've come to realize that success isn't just driven by owners or directors; it's a collective effort where every individual plays a crucial role. Our vision is to make this a people-first company, empowering our team with the right balance of responsibility and freedom to deliver their best work. For 2025, our focus is clear: quality over scale. We're not solely aiming to be the biggest, but we are committed to being known for our hard work, loyalty, trust, and, above all,





## QUICK SHOTS

- Your Birthday / Sun Sign – *November 26, Sagittarius*
- Mountains or Beaches – *Only Mountains and Beaches*
- Favourite Holiday Destination – *Morocco*
- Best travel hack – *Always ask for a meal which is different and you will be served first in the aircraft.*
- Window/ Aisle seat – *Window*
- Favourite Cuisine – *Japanese*
- Favourite Quote – *If destiny throws you down, just dust your shoulders and stand up once again!*
- Hobbies – *Dance and reading. I am a trained Kathak dancer.*
- Travel souvenirs - love them or leave them – *Love them*
- Best advice for a first-time traveller – *Just enjoy the experience rather than just taking pictures and immerse yourself in the destination/resort you are because this is what you will remember till you die.*

delivering real returns on investment.

### **If you could pick one dream destination to visit in 2025, where would it be, and why does it captivate you?**

My dream destination encompasses all the countries that our company represents, especially Japan, and I'm fortunate to have already visited most of them. As we continue to expand our reach, my travels also keep growing. It's not just a dream—these countries, along with the world-class hospitality brands we collaborate with, are some of the most aspirational destinations on every traveller's bucket list. In many ways, I'm just like others who aspire to visit these incredible places. And once I've been, I always find myself wanting to return time and time again.

### **Travel comes with its ups and downs—could you share one of your most memorable trips, both one that exceeded expectations and one that didn't go as planned?**

My most cherished travel memory is my first trip with my son when he was just 5 months old. It was an adventure in every sense. We took him on a cruise, went on a jungle safari, and experienced so many incredible activities. It wasn't easy, but it was deeply rewarding because not many parents would embark on such a journey with a baby that young. One of the most unforgettable moments was strolling along The Walking Street in Pattaya with him in a pram, an experience both funny and memorable. That trip was filled with unique moments that I will treasure forever.

### **The travel industry has its challenges. What do you find to be the biggest obstacles, and if given the chance, what one change would you make to improve the industry?**

Firstly, I think the travel industry needs to relax a bit. What I mean by that is, while there's a lot of global attention focused on India right now, and it's certainly an exciting time, I believe many in the industry are living in a bubble, assuming this growth will be permanent. The reality is, it won't last forever. What we really need to do is equip ourselves with the right tools and strategies for sustainable growth. Instead of just scrambling to grab as much business as possible, we should focus on doing quality work. It's also crucial for everyone in the industry – from owners to employees – to adopt a long-term perspective. It shouldn't just be about short-term commercial gains; it's about building a foundation for lasting success.

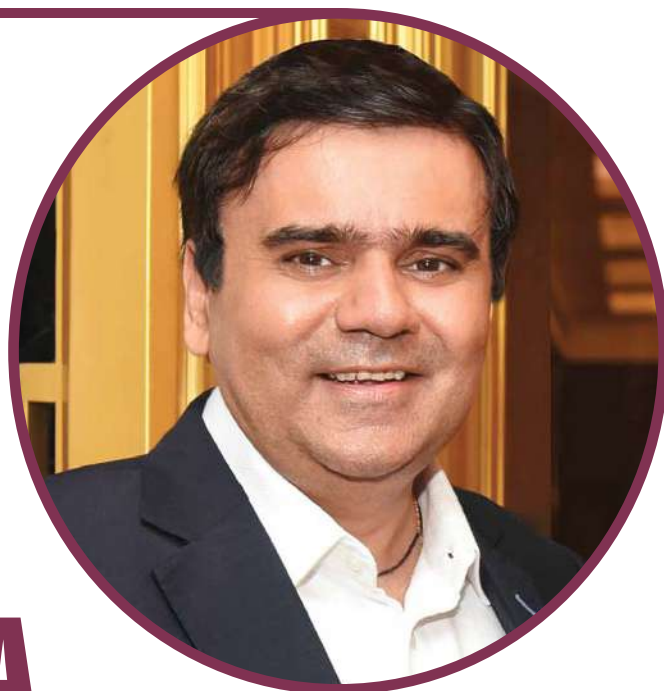
### **Could you tell us a bit about your family and share one cherished childhood memory that still makes you smile?**

I have many wonderful childhood memories, but the one I hold closest to my heart is something my grandfather told me when I was about three. He said, "One day, you're going to be flying a lot in planes because you love them so much." Looking back now, it feels like his words truly came to life, as I travel quite often. That memory has always stayed with me, and it's incredible to see how his manifestation for me became a reality. **BOTT**



*Travel is no longer just a luxury—it's a way of life. As people shift their focus from material possessions to meaningful experiences, the global tourism industry is witnessing unprecedented growth. At SATTE 2025, **Pranav Kapadia**, Founder & Director of **Global Destinations**, shared his insights on emerging travel trends, rising destinations, and the future of the industry.*

**Anjali Pokhriyal**



## PRANAV KAPADIA

# Travellers are increasingly seeking niche and experiential destinations

*T* **Travel is no longer a luxury – it has become a priority for many. What are your thoughts on this shift?**

Absolutely! Travel is now a necessity rather than a luxury. Previously, cost concerns held people back, but with air travel becoming more affordable, the middle class is increasingly well-informed about global destinations. The aspiration to explore is growing, and we've seen tremendous expansion across all our offerings. The past two years, in particular, have been transformative for the industry.

**Can you share insights into the new and emerging destinations that are gaining traction?**

Certainly! We've always focused on introducing new destinations. When we began promoting Fiji in 2010, few Indian travellers considered it. Today, it's an aspirational choice, with travellers extending their stays from just two or three nights to an average of seven or eight. Similarly, we pioneered Latin America's presence in India and introduced Vietnam before direct flights made it easily accessible. Japan is another promising market. We recently worked on a project in Gaido with Alone E Together, which is gaining traction. East Africa is also evolving—we've partnered with premium lodges in Kenya and Tanzania, showcasing the region beyond traditional

wildlife tourism.

**Which travel segments are experiencing the most growth?**

Demand is surging across multiple segments. For Fiji, honeymooners and high-net-worth individuals dominate, but family travel is also rising. Vietnam has seen a significant boost from improved connectivity, with 150–200 flights per week from India, fuelling MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism, along with luxury and adventure travel.

Luxury travel, family vacations, business trips, and group tourism continue to grow, with travellers increasingly seeking niche and experiential destinations.

**How are destinations ensuring safety and comfort for Solo Women travellers?**

Solo female travel has evolved significantly. Earlier, women primarily travelled with family or spouses, but now many explore the world solo or in groups. Destinations are adapting with enhanced safety measures, women-only tours, and curated experiences focused on wellness, shopping, and leisure. While safety concerns exist everywhere, most destinations have become highly accommodating. Shopping remains a priority, but wellness retreats and cultural experiences are also gaining popularity. **BOTT**



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# The Israel Ministry of Tourism invites Indian travellers to explore the country

*The Hon'ble Minister of Tourism of The State of Israel, Haim Katz, recently concluded a pivotal visit to India with an aim to strengthen tourism ties between the two nations. It included a series of strategic meetings with industry stakeholders and networking events to engage with travel trade. He also interacted with the media and shared his thoughts.*

**Shreya Shimpi**



Around 9,600 Indian tourists visited Israel between January and December 2024. The country received 961,700 tourists globally in 2024. The ministry recently launched an e-visa service for Indian tourists, especially families and multi-generational holidayers in January. This innovative digital solution simplifies the application process, making document submissions hassle-free through the official portal. It also integrates well with Israel's Entry Travel Authorization (ETA) system

"The India market has a huge potential and we have a lot to offer which gives travellers the value for money. We have breath-taking landscapes, holy places, beautiful traditions, delectable cuisines which makes Israel an amazing country. Everyone who comes to Israel becomes an ambassador for Israel," said the Hon'ble Minister of Tourism of The State of Israel.

He added, "We are looking at changing the marketing strategy for Israel by promoting it in the specific language of that country. The way we sell Israel to the States is different than how we sell it in India. Forty per cent of the tourism in Israel comes from the United States which is above a million. We don't need to sell Israel to the States as we have above one million ambassadors and they sell us. It is very safe in Israel. France, Great Britain and Germany are among our top five source markets and Philippines is the sixth." **BOTT**





# Thailand on track to surpass its 2.3 million Indian tourist target by end of 2025

In an exclusive conversation with **BOTT**, **Jakkaphon Tangsutthitham**, Vice Minister for Tourism and Sports, Thailand, shared exciting insights into the country's thriving tourism sector in 2024 and the ambitious vision for 2025. With India emerging as a key market, Thailand is rolling out strategic initiatives to further enhance its appeal among Indian travellers.

**Pallavi Sharma**

**T**

## Thailand's tourism boom in 2024

2024 was a landmark year for Thailand's tourism industry, welcoming over 35 million international visitors. Among them, Indian travellers stood out, with arrivals surpassing 2.1 million, making India the third-largest source market. As Thailand sets an ambitious target of 40 million international tourists in 2025, it is particularly focused on increasing Indian arrivals to 2.3 million.

To make travel more convenient, Thailand has implemented a visa-free policy for Indian tourists, allowing a stay of up to 60 days. Strengthening air connectivity has also been a priority, with weekly flight seat capacity between India and Thailand expanding from under 30,000 to over 40,000.

## Exciting strategies for Indian travellers in 2025

Thailand is taking a dynamic approach to attract luxury and niche travellers from India, focusing on curated experiences such as wellness retreats, golf vacations, Michelin-starred gastronomy, women-centric travel, and extravagant celebrations like weddings. The promotion of offbeat destinations such as Chiang Mai, Khao Yai, and Khao Lak is also high on the agenda.

A key initiative, "ASEAN + India Shoppers in Thailand 2025," will transform the country into a premier shopping and cultural hotspot. Running from March to May 2025, this campaign aligns with Thailand's "5 Must-Do Experiences" initiative, which highlights

authentic Thai craftsmanship, culinary delights, and unique local products.

## Visa-Free travel and growth prospects

Thailand's visa-free policy for Indian travellers has been made permanent, showcasing the country's long-term commitment to fostering tourism from India. With extended stays of up to 60 days and enhanced travel infrastructure, Thailand is well on track to surpass its 2.3 million Indian tourist target by the end of 2025.

## Strengthening engagement with Indian Travel Trade

Thailand is actively promoting emerging destinations such as Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Rayong, Koh Yao Noi, and Khao Lak, catering to both leisure and MICE travellers. Roadshows across Indian cities, joint promotional campaigns with the travel trade, and collaborations with Indian media remain key focus areas.

## Major Developments and Upcoming Attractions

The "Amazing Thailand Grand Tourism and Sports Year 2025" will be packed with year-round tourism festivals, elite sporting events, and exclusive travel privileges. In addition to boosting its tourism infrastructure, Thailand is also set to host world-class concerts, music festivals, and immersive cultural experiences. For the Indian travel industry, Thailand has rolled out an incentive scheme for MICE travel, wedding groups, and corporate events. **BOTT**





For nearly 35 years, **Sun Siyam Resorts** has been a pioneer in Maldivian hospitality, delivering unparalleled luxury, warmth, and cultural richness to its guests. As the brand celebrates this significant milestone, **BOTT** speaks with **Claudia Klingbeil**, Director of PR & Communications, to explore Sun Siyam Resorts' journey, expansion, and future vision.

**Pallavi Sharma**



# SUN SIYAM RESORTS

## A legacy of Maldivian Hospitality

**C**an you tell us about Sun Siyam Resorts and its journey over the years?

Sun Siyam Resorts is a proudly Maldivian brand, founded by Ahmed Siyam Mohamed. We have been in the hospitality industry for nearly 35 years and are currently celebrating this milestone anniversary. We are a family-founded company, and many of our team members come from the same family, ensuring a strong, connected work culture. At present, we operate five resorts in the Maldives and one in Sri Lanka.

**How has the year 2025 started for Sun Siyam Resorts in terms of occupancy and business trends?**

The year has started on a very positive note for us. In the first quarter of 2025, our properties have witnessed nearly 90% occupancy. This is an excellent performance, considering that January and February are high season months in the Maldives. While summer generally sees a dip in international travel, our global market reach ensures steady occupancy levels throughout the year.

**How are you promoting Sun Siyam Resorts in India?**

India has always been a key market for us. It used to be our third-largest source market, but it has now dropped to fifth or sixth place. Our goal is to bring Indian travellers back to the Maldives. We are investing heavily in PR, marketing, and B2B partnerships to rebuild this segment. We want Indian travellers to rediscover the Maldives, not just as a honeymoon destination but as a versatile holiday spot for families, groups of friends, and even milestone celebrations.

**How does Sun Siyam Resorts cater to Indian travellers?**

We understand the preferences of Indian travellers and have tailored our offerings accordingly. For instance, we celebrate Holi at our resorts, host celebrity chefs, and organize special events featuring DJs, sports personalities, and entertainers who resonate with Indian guests. Our properties offer a diverse culinary experience, including Indian cuisine, ensuring that guests feel at home while experiencing the beauty of the Maldives. **BOTT**



# TAIWAN TOURISM

## hosts Destination Seminar and Networking Event in Mumbai

*Taiwan Tourism* hosted a Destination Seminar and Networking Event on 24th February 2025 at The Hilton Mumbai International Airport. The event was attended by the recently appointed **TTA SG Director, Paul Shih**, members of TTA, Chun Yu Chang, Director General, Taipei Economic and Cultural Centre in Mumbai, key members of Mumbai's travel trade fraternity and the travel media. He shared his thoughts in an exclusive chat with **BOTT**.

**Shreya Shimpi**



### *T*he year 2024

Last year, from January to November 2024 we received almost 34,000 visitors from India to Taiwan. This is more than twenty per cent from the same period in 2023. Mirroring the same positive trend, India's outbound market increased close to ten per cent, which is a double boost for Taiwan. It is important for our industry to focus on the Indian outbound market. This market has been there from before Covid but there was a short suspension due to the pandemic. Since last year, we rejoined this market and have experienced a positive growth.

### Visa for Taiwan

We plan to run more marketing campaigns and cultural initiatives and promote our streamlined visa processing because we know that our Indian friends place great emphasis on visas.

We are also working with our Ministry of Foreign Affairs to ensure a smooth streamlining of the visa process. Our Indian friends can use the e-visa, which they can apply directly online if they have an Australia, Canada, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, any of the EU and Schengen countries, the UK, or the US visa or resident or PR card. They can get the e-visa even if the resident card or visa has expired less than 10 years before the date of arrival in Taiwan. You can directly apply from TTA Singapore office for group visas of more than 5 pax and incentive groups.

### Target markets

We are primarily focussing on the MICE market. For the incentive trip from the India market, this month Asian Paints brought eight hundred members to Taiwan. Such groups help us promote Taiwan through word-of-mouth based on their good experiences. **BOTT**



# Cordelia Cruises

## Transforming India's Cruise tourism landscape

*With an aim to make cruising more accessible, **Cordelia Cruises** has played a pivotal role in reshaping perceptions about this mode of travel. In an exclusive conversation with **BOTT**, **Jurgen Bailom**, President & CEO of Waterways Leisure Tourism, shares insights on Cordelia Cruises' journey, its impact on Indian travellers, and the future of cruise tourism in the country.*

**Pallavi Sharma**



*H*ow has the response to Cordelia Cruises been from the Indian market?

It has been fantastic! We've already taken more than 3 lakh people to Lakshadweep and hosted over 6-7 lakh guests in total. The response has been overwhelming, especially because we tailor the experience to Indian preferences. Our guests love the entertainment—Bollywood nights, Punjabi weddings, special holiday celebrations like Diwali and Navratri, and of course, cricket screenings. Our food offerings are extensive, with the best chefs on board catering to Indian tastes, including veg, non-veg, and regional specialties.

**How significant is MICE's contribution for Cordelia Cruises?**

MICE is a huge part of our business nearly 30%. We host major corporates like Tata, Asian Paints, and Mahindra. Groups can range from 200 to 2,000 guests. Some companies even charter the entire ship. Weddings have also become a big trend for us, especially after high-profile weddings like the Ambani wedding. We ensure every detail is perfect, from a mandap set against a sunset backdrop to customized Indian ceremonies. The ship becomes a floating venue for grand celebrations.

**What are some unique trends among Indian travellers that have shaped your offerings over time?**

Indians are still new to cruising, so there has been a lot of education involved. Initially, people asked if they needed to know how to swim or if they could cook in their rooms! But once they experience the comfort, they realise how convenient it is. No passport or visa is needed for domestic cruises, and there's no worry about food preferences or language barriers. We ensure that every aspect of the cruise feels like home—whether it's masala chai at 5 AM, vegetarian meals, or a staff that speaks multiple Indian languages.

**Are there any new itineraries or destinations planned for 2025?**

In 2025, we're introducing new routes to Singapore, Sri Lanka, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, and Pondicherry. We're also adding two ports in Gujarat, including Porbandar. We are working closely with the Indian government as they develop 27 new ports across the country. Our long-term goal is to expand into Kolkata and other regions as well. **BOTT**



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**Luberon** is located in the South of France in the Provence Alpes Cote d Azur region. It is best known for its quaint villages, lavender fields, delectable cuisine and wine from Provence. **Franck Delahaye**, Director of Luberon Tourism was recently in India on a sales mission in Mumbai on February 25, 2025, during which he interacted with the key tourism stakeholders and media in Mumbai. travel agents and the press in Mumbai.

**Shreya Shimpi**

## Experience the timeless charm and unmatched beauty of Luberon



**A**s a destination, Luberon offers a quality tourism where it is well worth taking things slowly and soaking up every magical moment in the area: a cycle outing, a small farmers' market, a village square with shady old growth trees, an evening under the stars at an open-air concert or a hike through breath-taking.

Sharing his thoughts on the year gone by, Franck said, "Year 2024 was a great year as we were among the top five French destinations. This destination is very popular as we in the centre of the Provence area. Seventy per cent of our clients are from foreign countries. We have a huge market in the US, after which we have European countries and then people from Asia. We have luxury hotels and we place more importance on quality than quantity. Though we have had few Indian tourists, they have been very nice clients.

Talking about the objective of his current visit to India he shared, "We are working mostly in the B2B space. We are meeting tour operators and travel agencies specialising in luxury clients and repeat clients who wish to go deeper into the French products and wish the experience the way of life in Provence. Indian people love this area for two main reasons. Firstly, it is the quality of villages. In France, we have an association called 'The Most beautiful villages of France' and Luberon has seven such villages. Secondly, the landscapes are breathtaking. We have one regional nature park classified as a UNESCO Global Biosphere and Geopark Reserve. We are very famous for lavender. This is the only place in Europe where you find the fine lavender." **BOTT**



# Odisha Travel Bazaar 2025 showcases state's tourism potential on a global stage

*The 6<sup>th</sup> Odisha Travel Bazaar 2025, held in Bhubaneswar from February 24-26, brought together global tourism stakeholders to explore Odisha's rich cultural, heritage, and adventure tourism potential. Organized by the Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, in collaboration with FICCI, the event served as a dynamic platform for fostering business collaborations, featuring insightful discussions, FAM trips, and over 3,000 B2B meetings.*

**Anjali Pokhriyal**



Odisha, renowned for its rich cultural heritage and diverse tourism offerings, recently hosted the 6th edition of the Odisha Travel Bazaar from February 24-26, 2025, in Bhubaneswar. Organized by the Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, in partnership with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), the event brought together industry leaders, travel experts, and tour operators from around the world to explore the state's immense tourism potential.

A key highlight of the event was an exclusive half-day Familiarization (FAM) trip for foreign tour operators, taking them to some of Bhubaneswar's most iconic landmarks, including the Shanti Stupa, Mukteshwar Temple,

Rajarani Temple, and Ekamra Kshetra. This immersive experience showcased Odisha's rich cultural and spiritual heritage.

The event was inaugurated by Hon'ble Union Minister for Tourism and Culture, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, who underscored Odisha's uniqueness as a tourism destination. Highlighting the state's globally renowned temples, vibrant cultural traditions, exquisite crafts, classical dance forms, and delectable cuisine, he emphasized the need to showcase Odisha's tourism content on national platforms to establish its identity in the global market. "Enhancing the tourism experience and expanding offerings are key to driving growth," he stated.







Odisha's Deputy Chief Minister, Smt. Pravatī Parida, addressed the gathering, stressing the importance of private sector participation in the tourism sector. She acknowledged that Odisha's tourism potential remains largely untapped and urged private enterprises to contribute to its development. "Tourism growth will generate more jobs, stimulate the economy, and propel Odisha towards becoming a developed state," she remarked. She also reiterated the government's commitment to sustainable tourism that benefits local communities while preserving the environment.

Shri Manoj Ahuja, Chief Secretary of Odisha, highlighted tourism's pivotal role in the state's economic development. He emphasized the importance of private sector investments in driving growth and assured that the government is focused on creating a conducive environment for investment through infrastructure development and policy support.

J.K. Mohanty, Co-Chair of the FICCI Tourism Committee and Lifetime Chairman of HRAO, proposed that from next year, travel agents and tour operators be invited to stay in Odisha for at least seven nights. "This extended stay will provide them with a more immersive experience, allowing them to explore Odisha's diverse attractions and gain a deeper understanding of its rich cultural heritage," he said.

The event also saw participation from key officials, including Mr. Balwant Singh, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Department of Tourism, Government of Odisha, who outlined

the government's vision for tourism in the state, and Mr. Samarth Verma, Director, Department of Tourism, who provided insights into the progress made in strengthening the sector.

Notable industry leaders such as Gagan Sarangi, Chairman of the IATO Odisha Chapter, Dov Kalmann, Chief Storyteller of Terra-nova Representations (Israel), and Kashmira Thaker of Horizon Holidays shared their perspectives on Odisha's tourism potential, from its natural beauty to its cultural treasures. Adding to the event's vibrancy, celebrity chef Ranveer Brar praised Odisha's rich and diverse cuisine.

On Day 2 of the Odisha Travel Bazaar, adventure tourism took centre stage. Mugdha Sinha, Director General, Ministry of Tourism, highlighted that adventure tourism is not just about thrill-seeking but also about responsible travel, environmental conservation, and local economic empowerment. She commended Odisha's alignment with India's vision for diverse tourism experiences and its emergence as a key adventure tourism destination.

In addition to these discussions, the event witnessed the launch of the "Explore Odisha Quiz" and the Odisha Tourism Tagline Competition, engaging participants in promoting the state's tourism potential. With over 3,000 pre-scheduled B2B meetings, the event provided a unique platform for networking and collaboration, further strengthening Odisha's position in the global tourism landscape. **BOTT**



# SalamAir looking at consolidating its business in India

*In an exclusive chat with **BOTT**, **Sajid Khan**, Country Manager-India, **SalamAir** shares his insights about business in the previous year, newly launched destinations and the vision for 2025.*

**Shreya Shimpi**



SalamAir is a low-cost carrier of the Sultanate of Oman. We have eight online destinations in India. We have been operating online destinations in India for over two years. Last year, we added four more destinations going up to eight destinations. We fly to Delhi, Lucknow, Jaipur, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chennai and Calicut. We have a lot of options available for passengers and they can decide what to buy from our services giving them the option to use our services as per their need. It is a very flexible airline. We are doing extremely well from India right now and our business is increasing specially to Middle East. We have now started new destinations which we are promoting and we look forward to a very exciting 2025.

## **Business and performance in 2024**

SalamAir has seen remarkable growth in 2024. We launched four new destinations, had new aircrafts come in and we

have consolidated our business. We are looking at consolidating our business in India so 2025 you will be hearing some news related to that. We intend to further strengthen our traffic numbers from India and increase it because of the extra frequencies that we have launched with the four new destinations. We also want to start exploring destinations which are inorganic. For example, everyone goes to Middle East, we also have destinations like Almaty and Istanbul but we might have a change in that and have another destination.

## **Vision for 2025**

We want people to recognise SalamAir as the first low-cost carrier of Oman. We have been very quiet but we are doing extremely well and taking a lot of numbers from India. We want people to think of Salam Air when travelling to Middle East or going to Turkey. We also fly to Bangkok. We are hoping 2025 onwards, SalamAir becomes a very common name. **BOTT**





**Winifred D'souza**  
Founder's

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# UTEN

Empowering Travel Fraternity

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GSTIN No.: 27AUFFU9746E1ZS



**Satyaprakash Gupta**  
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9820165612



At present UTEN has more than 8000 Travel Agents & Tour Operators, Hoteliers, DMC Suppliers, Cruise Liners, Forex Partners & Visa Partners pan India who deal in both Outbound & Inbound destinations. Travel Trade Partners under UTEN is growing day by day.

Since the start of UTEN on a regular interval we conduct online & offline Travel & Tourism Training & Presentations, Knowledge Sessions for our UTEN members by taking State Tourism Boards, International Tourism Boards, Cruise Liners, DMC Suppliers, Hoteliers, Forex Companies & Visa Service Providers. UTEN also conducts & organizes regularly a partial paid educational fam ( recce ) trips for our UTEN members on different destinations, hotels, resorts, attractions, theme parks, etc..etc.. for both domestic & international sectors.



UTEN Founder Teams Mr.Satyaprakash Gupta & Ms.Winifred Dsouza has an experience of more than 17 years in Travel & Tourism Industry which helps UTEN Suppliers & Hoteliers in doing networking during the time of this travel trade expo shows where they connect the right suppliers/hoteliers/forex/visa partners.

Till the date UTEN has conducted more than 200 Online & Offline Training, Presentations, Knowledge Sessions, Educational Fam Trips for which the list is also enclosed with this profile along with UTEN Events List till the date has been concluded.

UTEN works with a motto of Empowering Travel Fraternity.

Media Partner



Today's start-ups companies may become tomorrow's reputed firm

Today's reputed firm was yesterday's start up companies or beginners

With this concept we started UTEN in the year 2018 and registered it as GST compliance LLP company.

Agents from Travel & Tourism who register with us, we refer to them as UTENian's

We have UTENian's as new as 4 months old and as old as more than 30 years.



UTEN has organized online & offline events with Ministry Of Tourism ( MOT ), Cruise liners like MSC Cruise with Visit & Offline Training Sessions, Offline Australia Tourism Board Destination Presentations, Costa Cruise Visits with offline training sessions, Offline training and presentations with AVIAREPS India on the product which they represents like UTAH in USA, Brussels Tourisms, Budget Car Rental, Offline & Online Training Sessions with TBO, Online Sessions with One Above DMC, NCL Cruise Offline Presentations through PSA Guidelines Travels in Mumbai, India and many more such online & offline training & presentations session organized by UTEN for their members.





# RANGOTSAV

*Celebrating the Vibrant Festival of Colours in Braj Region.*



Holi, a vibrant festival, is celebrated grandly in Uttar Pradesh's Braj region. Known as Rangotsav, the festivities in Mathura, Vrindavan, Barsana, and Nandgaon span ten days, honouring the love of Lord Krishna and Radha with colours symbolizing joy and devotion.

A highlight of the celebrations is the famous Lathmar Holi of Barsana and Nandgaon, where women playfully chase men with sticks, re-enacting Krishna's legendary visit to Radha's village. Vrindavan's Banke Bihari Temple opens with Phoolon ki Holi, showering devotees with flowers, while Mathura's Dwarkadhish Temple hosts grand processions and Rasleela performances.

A significant addition is Widow's Holi in Vrindavan, breaking societal taboos and promoting inclusion. Another unique tradition is Laddoo Holi, where devotees joyfully throw sweets.

Beyond colours, Rangotsav features folk music, Krishna-centric performances, and festive delicacies like thandai and gujiya. The Braj region becomes a vibrant canvas of love and spirituality, making it a truly divine experience.



**Uttar Pradesh  
Tourism App.**





## EXPLORING THE SACRED **TEMPLES** OF VRINDAVAN

# A JOURNEY OF **DEVOTION**

Vrindavan, a sacred town in Uttar Pradesh, holds deep spiritual significance as the childhood abode of Lord Krishna. Rooted in Hindu scriptures, it attracts millions of pilgrims seeking a deep spiritual experience. One of the most revered temples is the Banke Bihari Temple, where unique traditions prevent prolonged eye contact with the deity due to Krishna's powerful gaze. The temple resonates with ecstatic devotion and devotional music.

The ISKCON Temple, built in 1975, is a hub for Gaudiya Vaishnavism, housing idols of Krishna and Balaram. Melodious kirtans and spiritual discourses make it a centre for learning and devotion.

The Prem Mandir, built of white marble, features intricate carvings, light displays, and animated depictions of Krishna's pastimes, offering a mesmerizing experience.

The ancient Radha Raman Temple, established in 1542, houses a self-manifested Krishna idol. The Madan Mohan Temple, one of the oldest, provides a tranquil setting for meditation. Vrindavan's temples offer a transformative journey into Krishna consciousness.



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## APPOINTMENTS

### WELCOMHERITAGE

WelcomHeritage has appointed **Ashutosh Chhibba** as its Chief Executive Officer (CEO). With over 30 years of exemplary experience in the hospitality industry, Chhibba is set to lead WelcomHeritage into an exciting new era of growth, innovation, and operational excellence. His international experience includes overseeing the launch and operations of the legendary restaurant Dum Pukht in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where he demonstrated his ability to adapt and deliver excellence in diverse global markets.



### BRAND USA

Brand USA has appointed **Leah Chandler**, CDME, as its new Chief Marketing Officer, effective March 17. With over 20 years of experience in branding, advertising, and destination marketing within the travel and tourism industry, Chandler will lead Brand USA's global marketing strategy. She will spearhead efforts to inspire international travel to the United States through innovative campaigns and by elevating the country's presence as a premier global destination.



### TAJ CORBETT RESORT & SPA

Jim Corbett's Taj Corbett Resort & Spa has appointed **Nivedan Kukreti** as its new General Manager. With an impressive 21 years of experience, Kukreti is known for his visionary approach and strategic solutions. In his new role, he aims to position Taj Corbett Resort & Spa as a premier destination for luxury, nature, and wellness tourism by blending exceptional hospitality with local experiences.

### KANDIMA MALDIVES

Kandima Maldives has appointed **Dermot Birchall** as its new General Manager. With over 20 years of experience across leading luxury resorts and five-star hotels in Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, Birchall brings a dynamic leadership style and a strong track record in driving operational excellence, guest satisfaction, and commercial success.



### NOVOTEL HYDERABAD CONVENTION CENTRE AND HICC

Novotel Hyderabad Convention Centre and Hyderabad International Convention Centre (HICC) have appointed **Prasanna Venkatesh** as their new Director of Operations. In this role, Prasanna will focus on enhancing operational efficiencies, implementing sustainability initiatives, and elevating service standards to reinforce the property's reputation as a leading destination for business, leisure, and events.



### RAMADA BY WYNDHAM JAIPUR NORTH

Ramada by Wyndham Jaipur North has appointed **Nandan Nishant** as its new General Manager. In this role, Nishant will oversee the hotel's staff and operations, sales, marketing, client relationship management, corporate liaison, P&L, and cost management.

### ALILA FORT BISHANGARH

Alila Fort Bishangarh has appointed **Manas Tiwari** as its new Director of Operations. A seasoned hospitality professional with 17 years of industry experience, Tiwari is set to bring his innovative leadership and guest-centric approach to the iconic property. His most recent role involved spearheading the pre-opening operations at Hyatt Regency Ghaziabad, highlighting his ability to manage high-profile projects and mentor dynamic teams.



### CONFEDERATION OF INDIAN INDUSTRY

**Rikant Pittie**, CEO & Co-founder of EaseMyTrip, has been appointed as the Chairman of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Delhi State for 2025-26. This marks the first time in history that the co-founder of a unicorn company has been appointed as Chairman of CII Delhi State. Previously, as Vice Chairman of CII Delhi State, Pittie actively engaged with key stakeholders, including state and national governments, and represented Delhi's industries on global platforms.







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