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42nd Foundation Day Celebration of

NCHMCT

TRAILBLAZERS

Celebrating 42 Distinguished Alumni of NCHMCT-IHMs

23rd March, 2024

National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology
(An Autonomous Body Under Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India)
A-34, Sector-62, Noida-201309



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ज्ञान भूषण, भा. आ. से.

Gyan Bhushan, IES

*Sr Economic Advisor and CEO, NCHMCT
Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India*



वरिष्ठ आर्थिक सलाहकार एवं
मुख्य कार्यकारी अधिकारी
एन.सी.एच.एम.सी.टी.
भारत सरकार
पर्यटन मंत्रालय
नई दिल्ली

**Senior Economic Advisor &
CEO NCHMCT
ADDL. Secretary Level
Ministry of Tourism
Government of India
New Delhi**

Message

Dear Esteemed Alumni,

It is with great pleasure and pride that I announce the release of NCHMCT-IHMs compilation in the form of this book highlighting the achievements of our distinguished alumni not only as hospitality leaders but also as renowned chefs, trail blazing entrepreneurs and high achievers in allied service sectors. This book serves as a testament to the incredible journeys and accomplishments of our graduates, showcasing their impact and influence in the hospitality and tourism industry as a whole. As CEO of NCHMCT, I am continually inspired by the dedication and innovation demonstrated by our alumni community. Your contributions have not only elevated the reputation of our institutes but have also shaped the landscape of the hospitality sector on a global scale. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each and every one of you for your unwavering commitment to excellence. Your success stories serve as a source of motivation for current and future generations of aspiring hoteliers. I encourage you to embrace this opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni, celebrate your achievements, and inspire others to pursue their dreams. Thank you for your continued support and dedication to our institutes. Together, we will continue to strive for excellence and make a lasting impact on the world of hospitality and service sector

Gyan Bhushan, IES

Preface

Institutes of Hotel Management under NCHMCT serve as crucibles of innovation, incubating hospitality aptitude and fostering the talents that shape our hotel and service industry. Within the classrooms of our institutes, remarkable individuals emerge, destined to leave an indelible mark on global hospitality landscape. This book stands as a testament to the extraordinary accomplishments of our distinguished alumni. From deft skill sets to transformative leadership, the alumni featured within these pages exemplify the pinnacle of excellence in their respective fields. Their journeys, marked by perseverance, ingenuity, and a relentless pursuit of excellence, serve as inspiration to aspiring students and professionals alike. As we reflect on the contributions of these remarkable individuals, we gain insight into the power of IHM training to ignite change and propel progress. Their stories illuminate the transformative potential of knowledge, skills and the enduring impact of a nurturing academic environment. Through this anthology, we celebrate the achievements of our alumni community and honor their enduring legacy. We hope their stories inspire future generations to reach greater heights and continue the proud tradition of excellence that defines our collective ethos of Atithi Devo Bahava.

Dr. Priyadarshan Lakhawat

Director (Academics)

NCHMCT

NCHMCT : Introduction

National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (Society) was set up in the year 1982 by Govt. of India as an autonomous body for coordinated growth and development of hospitality management education in the country. Initially, the Council was set up in the name of National Board of Studies in Food Management, Catering & Nutrition under the administrative control of Ministry of Agriculture (Deptt. Of Food) and subsequently it was transferred to Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India in the year 1984 with renaming as National Council for Hotel Management & Catering Technology. The Council regulates academics in the field of Hospitality Education & training that is imparted at the Institutes of Hotel Management and Food Craft Institutes. NCHMCT runs courses through its more than 90 affiliated IHM colleges including 21 central Govt IHMs, 33 State Govt IHMs, 26 Private IHMs, 2 IHMs on PPP mode , 1 PSU IHM and 12 Food Craft Institutes. These institutes are spread across the country. The UG and PG degree to the successful students is awarded by JNU, New Delhi. Various Courses run by IHMs in the field of Hospitality Education range from Certificate level to post graduation level with proposed PhD from the upcoming academic session. The flagship course of NCHMCT is B.Sc Hospitality and Hotel Administration in which nearly 10,000 students are enrolled every year and these graduates form the bulk of hospitality industry manpower with the alumni occupying senior management positions in leading hospitality organizations of the country in India and abroad.



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Chef Ajay Chopra

Alma mater : IHM Goa | Pass out Batch : 1998

Chef Ajay Chopra, the renowned Indian chef, consultant, and media personality, has transformed the world of cooking with his innovative approach and exceptional talent. From hosting the popular show MasterChef India to successfully launching restaurants around the globe, he has made a lasting impact on the hospitality industry.

With a prestigious gold medal from OCLD and extensive experience working at esteemed establishments, he founded Zion Hospitality through which he provides expert guidance to hotels, restaurants, and cafes. Chef Ajay Chopra's influence extends beyond his culinary ventures. On his YouTube channel, he shares the finest recipes from different regions of India, presented with a creative touch and his own unique cooking style. Through his series "The Big Daddy Chef," he encourages men to explore their culinary skills at home and create cherished family moments through food.





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Mr. Anjan Chatterjee

Alma Mater : IHM Kolkata | Pass out Batch : 1983

A successful entrepreneur in hospitality, **Mr. Chatterjee** started his career with Taj Group of Hotels in Mumbai. Then he joined ABP Group in the marketing department. In 1985, he started his own advertising agency, Situations Advertising. In 1992, he started his first restaurant named Only Fish (now Oh! Calcutta) in Mumbai. In 1995, he started the speciality Chinese restaurant brand Mainland China. Mr Anjan Chatterjee started the company's Mainland China, Mainland China Asia Kitchen. Oh! Calcutta, Sigree, Sigree Global Grill – Powai & Malad in Mumbai, Pune & Bangalore & in Kolkata, Cafe Mezzuna, Haka, Flame & Grill, Machaan, Sweet Bengal, and Mobifeast.





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Mr. Atul Bhalla

Alma Mater : IHM Hyderabad | Pass out Batch : 1989

As a key member of ITC Hotels' leadership think tank, **Mr Bhalla** Vice President Operations (West & North) —provides strategic guidance to group's portfolio. He is responsible for creating and executing a strategic road map working with the hotel General Managers and functional heads to drive stakeholders' value (for owned, managed and franchise properties) and establish brand equity. With his vast experience in Hotel Operations coupled with his knowledge and exposure in F&B makes him a true hotelier, a great leader and a consummate professional who sets high standards for himself and others.





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Chef Atul Kochhar

Alma Mater : IHM Chennai | Pass out Batch : 1990

Chef Atul Kochhar is the pioneering twice Michelin-Starred chef from Jamshedpur in India, who has changed the way people perceive and experience Indian Cuisine in the UK.

From leaving his role at The Oberoi Hotel Group in India to move to the UK in 1994, he has been at the forefront of the culinary industry for over 25 years. Taking inspiration from his native India, Chef Atul has continued to invest in researching regional dishes; his award-winning cooking a unique melting pot of traditional culinary techniques, the very best spices and ingredients from India combined with the best of British.



Mr. Chinmai Sharma

Alma Mater : IHM Jaipur | Pass out Batch : 1993

Mr. Chinmai Sharma helms Sabre Corporation , a leading software and technology provider to the global travel industry, as Global Head – Lodging, Ground & Sea for Sabre Travel Solutions.

He has been named one of the 'Top 20 Extraordinary Minds within Sales, Marketing, and Technology' by HSMAI Europe. Mr Sharma has more than two decades of global travel and hospitality experience.

His industry experience includes working across the globe with leading companies like Expedia, Wyndham, Starwood and Taj Group of Hotels. He was President – Americas for RateGain, a leading provider of SaaS solutions for travel and hospitality, where he played an important role in their growth strategy leading to a successful IPO. Mr Sharma holds a joint MBA from ESSEC Business School, Paris and Cornell Hotel School, New York.



Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi

Alma Mater : IHM Bhubaneswar | Pass out Batch : 1987

Chef Harpal Singh Sokhi is a renowned celebrity chef with his famous quote 'Namak Shamak, Namak Shamak, Daal Dete Hain' being his style statement. Known as the "Energy Chef of India", he started his career with Oberoi group of hotels and spent several years learning different international cuisines including his research on Aurveda and food. In 1993, Chef Sokhi hosted the first episode of Khana Khazana on Zee. Later, he started hosting Turban Tadka which gained him popular recognition in India. He is also one of India's top chefs on YouTube. In 2016, he participated in the dance reality show Jhalak Dikhhla ja





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Mr. Joe Manavalan

Alma Mater : IHM Bengaluru | Pass out Batch : 1988

Mr Manavalan is the co-founder of Licious, a pioneering online meat delivery company that revolutionised the meat industry in India. With a vision to provide consumers with access to high-quality meat products conveniently and affordably, he embarked on a journey that would redefine the way people purchase meat.

As the co-founder of Licious and a graduate from the Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development (OCLD), Mr Manavalan played a pivotal role in shaping the company's growth trajectory, leveraging his expertise in the culinary field and business acumen gained from IHM Bangalore. His dedication to customer satisfaction and innovation propelled Licious to become a market leader in the online meat delivery segment.



Mr. K.B.Kachru

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out batch : 1970

Mr. K.B. Kachru is chairman emeritus and principal advisor of Radisson Hotel Group in South Asia and has played an instrumental role in building the Group's business in India since 1998. He continues to be on the governing board of the Group's South Asia business entities. Mr. Kachru is an active member of various Tourism and Hospitality Advisory Committees at the state and national levels. He is presently a member of The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), the National Tourism Committee, the Tourism & Hospitality Skill Council (THSC), and the Vice President of the Hotel Association of India (HAI). He was awarded Global recognition for his contribution to Tourism at WTM London, UK. He has been awarded lifetime achievement awards by PATWA (PATA- Berlin), HICSA- South Asia, SATTE, Today's Traveller & Hotelier INDIA.



Dr. Chef K. Damodharan

Alma Mater : IHM Chennai | Pass out Batch : 1977

Chef Kothandaraman Damodharan, fondly known as 'Chef Damu', is a star chef of Indian cooking who has multiple cooking shows, cookbooks and Guinness World Records to his name. The chef, who hails from Tamil Nadu, in India's south, is known for colossal cooking projects like preparing a 14.7-metre dosa and cooking a 6,000kg biryani. In December 2010, he set a Guinness World Record for the longest cooking marathon, which saw him whip up 617 dishes in little over 24 hours.





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Mr. Kapil Chopra

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1994

Mr. Kapil Chopra is the founder of The Postcard Hotel, a multiple award winner brand and he is also the Chairman of the Board for Eazy Diner, India's largest instant restaurant reservations app. Mr Chopra is passionate about reforming healthcare in India and mentors the country's most significant public health initiative, charitybeds.com which facilitates hospital admissions for the economically challenged sections of the society. In his last assignment, he was the President, Oberoi Hotels and Resorts and under his guidance and direction, the group, had shown the fastest growth with an exponential rise in occupancy and revenues. He was awarded "Hotelier of the Year" by Hindustan Times in 2012.





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Dr. Karthik Namasivayam

Alma Mater : IHM Chennai | Pass out Batch : 1978

Prof Karthik Namasivayam Director, School of Hospitality Business, Michigan State University has worked in the hospitality industry for over 40 years. He has held various positions including as consultant, entrepreneur, faculty, academic administration, and hospitality management jobs across three continents – Europe, Asia, and North America. His experiences include economy and luxury full-service hospitality operations. He has taught in the US, Switzerland, India, and China at the undergraduate and graduate levels and has delivered tailored Executive Education programs for national corporates. Prof Karthik a USA national has a Ph.D. from Cornell University, Ithaca.



Mr. Kaushik Roy

Alma Mater : IHM Bhopal | Pass out Batch : 1993

Mr Roy a pioneer in his field is Founder & CEO of Sky Gate Hospitality Pvt. Ltd with its brand Biryani By Kilo (BBK) being the largest Cloud Kitchen Biryani & Kebab brand in the country.

He started his career with Maurya Sheraton. In a career span of over three decades, he has been associated with various brands right from Nirulas, Pizza Express, Mars Restaurants and Ammi's Biryani to name a few. He has launched over 200 restaurants prior to his entrepreneurial journey that started in 2015.

Mr Roy has been a pioneer in the Industry, always trying out new concepts. He was a part of the team that brought in thin crust pizza for the first time in



India under the brand Pizza Express and launching the first donut outlet in India under the brand Donut Baker in Bangalore. It had been his dream to start something to promote glorious heritage of Indian food and thus he conceptualised the Biryani By Kilo to venture out on his own. Biryani By Kilo with its humble beginning in 2015 from one delivery kitchen in Gurgaon now operates more than 100 outlets in 45 cities in India with a 3000 employees team.



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Chef Kunal Kapur

Alma Mater : AIHM Chandigarh | Pass out batch : 2000

Chef Kunal Kapur is one of the most celebrated faces of Indian cuisine at present. He has been hosting several TV shows and is winner of several culinary awards. He has judged the Master Chef India edition and was honoured with “Gourmet Guru” as one of the Top 20 chefs of India.

Winner of several culinary and television awards, Chef Kunal has been recognized amongst the Best Chefs in India by India Today. He has been honored with Dr. S. Radhakrishnan National Media Network Award. The Indian Television Academy awarded him for the Best Jury/ Anchor on television for Junior Masterchef India. He is the proud recipient of the prestigious ‘Sir Edmund Hillary Fellowship 2012’ from the Government of New Zealand in the field of Food & Beverage.



Chef Manisha Bhasin

Alma Mater : IHM Bengaluru | Pass out Batch : 1987

Chef Bhasin currently serves as the Corporate Executive Chef of ITC Hotels, marking an illustrious career journey in which she consistently showcased culinary excellence and leadership prowess. Her tenure at ITC Hotels has been characterised by innovation, creativity, and an unwavering commitment to quality. As the Corporate Executive Chef, she oversees the culinary operations across the vast expanse of ITC Hotels, ensuring a harmonious blend of tradition and modernity in every dish served.

Chef Bhasin's culinary acumen and dedication have earned her widespread recognition within

the industry. She has been a Vice Chairman at the World Association of Chefs Societies. Under her guidance, ITC Hotels has continued to set benchmarks in culinary excellence, garnering accolades and awards on both national and international platforms.





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Chef Manjit Singh Gill

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1974

With almost five decades of culinary experience behind him Chef **Manjit Gill** is a reputed professional in the Hospitality Industry held in the highest regard by its top gastronomic echelons. He has worked in the finest hotels, The Oberoi, and ITC Hotels. Conceptualized and managed the iconic brands of Indian restaurants such as Bukhara, Dumpukht, Kebab & Kurries, and Royal Vega an honestly vegetarian restaurant based on Ayurveda guidelines. As the Founder and President of the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations, made India to be a National Member of the World Association of Chef's Societies – WorldChefs.



In 2017, he was appointed as the Chairman of the World Culinary Heritage and Culture Committee by the World Association of Chefs Societies. Received Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ministry of Tourism Govt. of India for outstanding contribution to Indian culture and cuisine.

Chef Manoj Vasaikar

Alma Mater : IHM Mumbai | Pass out Batch : 1985

A culinary maestro, **Chef Vasaikar** began his journey with the best portfolio of restaurants in ITC and Oberoi. The turning point in his career came in 1990 when he was handpicked by the hospitality industry powerhouse, Camelia Punjabi and Chef Vasaikar moved to London. There, he opened the iconic Chutney Mary and Veeraswamy restaurants, the later achieving Michelin star status. Throughout his career, Chef Vasaikar conceptualized and executed the opening of some of the finest restaurants, the most notable one being the Michelin-recognized Indian Zing, a coveted recognition in the culinary world and a top hotspot for celebrities in London. In the Michelin



Guide 2020, Chef Vasaikar's restaurant was highlighted for its outstanding contributions and his ability to balance traditional and contemporary Indian cuisine. His journey reached new heights with accolades ranging from Tatler to Cobra Awards, to catering at 10 Downing Street for the Royals and the head of states.

Mr. Mohit Nirula

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1986

Mr. Mohit Nirula, Chief Operating Officer of the Oberoi Group of Hotels, is arguably one of the most loved and respected hospitality leaders in India today. He has always been a hotelier with a difference, merging his innate knack for innovation and painting outside the lines, with his “lead without leading” brand of mentorship. He joined The Oberoi Group at Oberoi School of Hotel Management and graduated with the Mr. T.R.S. Oberoi Gold Medal for Academic Excellence in 1988. Over the next 31 years, his journey with The Oberoi Group traversed eight cities and two continents, including international assignments at two of the most coveted global tourism destinations - Mauritius and Egypt. In an illustrious career he has had the opportunity to



open, renovate and re-open hotels and resorts in India and overseas. He served as Dean and Vice President of the prestigious OCLD from 2013 to 2015. He also served as CEO of Columbia Pacific Communities which presented him an opportunity to solve a large social problem in India. Under his leadership, Columbia Pacific Communities became the country's largest and most preferred senior living community operators. But, once a hotelier, always a hotelier, he returned to his first love The Oberoi Group as Chief Operating Officer. As part of his mandate, he oversees Operations, Sales, Marketing, Revenue Management, and Operations Support functions for all Oberoi and Trident hotels in seven countries. Mr. Nirula is a cricket fanatic, an avid birder, an intrepid traveller and a lover of the written word.

Lt Navdeep Singh, A C

Alma Mater : IHM Gurdaspur | Pass out Batch : 2006

Lt Navdeep was a Ghatak Platoon Commander of 15 Maratha Light Infantry regiment in the Indian Army.

He led an operation to ambush 17 well-trained and armed terrorists who infiltrated into J&K. He killed 4 of the terrorists before succumbing to fatal injury. He was posthumously conferred the highest peacetime gallantry award of India Ashoka Chakra by President of India.

Excerpt from citation for the AC

‘Leading from the front, the officer eliminated three terrorists at close range. On seeing another terrorist approaching their position, with utter



disregard to his personal safety, the officer swiftly changed his firing position. While doing so, he got hit by a bullet on his head. He nevertheless managed to eliminate the fourth terrorist. Further, he pulled an injured fellow soldier to safety and kept firing till he became unconscious due to excessive blood loss.

He displayed indomitable spirit, determination, and exceptional bravery while putting down the terrorists and making the supreme sacrifice for the nation’

Mr. Niraj Batra

Alma Mater : IHM Hyderabad | Pass out Batch : 1998

Mr Niraj Batra is currently Head of Direct and Ancillary Sales, at IndiGo, India's largest airline, which operates to 118 destinations, including 32 international destinations.

Prior to IndiGo, Mr. Niraj worked with Spice Jet as Sales Manager, till the year 2009, after which he joined IndiGo as Manager - Sales Support. Ever since the start of his career with IndiGo in 2009, he has handled numerous roles and today is head of his vertical. His professional career spanning over 25 years, commenced with the Taj Group of Hotels where he worked for 5 years, as part of the front office department, at Taj Banjara, Hyderabad and the Ambassador Hotel, Delhi.



Major Padmapani Acharya, MVC

Alma Mater : IHM Bhubaneswar | Pass out Batch : 1989

A National War Hero **Major Acharya** was an officer in the Indian Army commissioned with 2 Rajputana rifles. He was awarded the second highest Indian military honor, Maha Vir Chakra posthumously for his actions during the Kargil War on 28 June 1999.

Excerpt from citation for the MVC

“Unmindful of the hail of bullets from the enemy’s position, Major Acharya crawled up to the enemy position and lobbed grenades. In this daring assault, he was seriously injured. Despite heavy injuries and unable to move, he ordered his men to leave him and charge at the enemy while he continued to fire at the enemy. The enemy position was finally over-run and the objective was captured. He, however, succumbed to his injuries after completion of the mission”





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Mr. Param kannampilly

Alma Mater : IHM Mumbai | Pass out Batch : 1974

Mr. Param Kannampilly is a Fellow of the Institute of Hospitality London as also a Fellow of the World Academy of Productive Sciences.

His name is synonymous with the birth of Ecotel concept, the hall mark of environmentally sensitive hotels in India and Asia. He is the driving force behind the phenomenal growth of The Fern Hotels and Resorts -Leading environmentally sensitive hotels. He currently manages over 100 Hotels, Resorts, Clubs and Serviced Apartments at 85 locations across India and Seychelles.

Under his leadership, The Fern Hotels and Resorts have won more than 200 national and international awards for exemplary sustainable practices

He has been associated with various Hotel Groups such as the Taj Group of Hotels, Spencer International Hotels Ltd, Fariyas Group, Leela Hotels, the Raheja Hotels and The Orchid Group of Hotels.





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Chef Parvinder S. Bali

Alma Mater : IHM Kolkata | Pass out Batch : 1993

Chef Bali graduated from OCLD in year 1995 with a gold medal and his first assignment was in The Oberoi New Delhi in pastry kitchen. He worked under numerous expat chefs to gain knowledge and skills which made him bag the gold medal at the Oberoi Culinary Olympics. He moved to ITC hotels for two years where he was the opening chef of ITC Sonar. He is also associated with culinary schools such as Mausi Sebest in Argentina, Cordon Bleu in London, Culinary Institute of America New York, where he visits as external faculty to take culinary classes for professional chefs. He also represented India



in World skills competition in Leipzig as an expert. He has authored five books in the field of culinary art. He is one of the only three chefs in India to have been professionally certified by CIA and American Culinary Federation. Chef Bali worked with Oberoi Center of Learning and Development as corporate chef for over 2 decades and has now decided to open up his own Culinary School called School of European pastry and Culinary Arts in Gurugram.



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Mr. Puneet Chhatwal

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1984

Mr. Chhatwal, M D & CEO of The Indian Hotels Company Limited (IHCL) is a global professional with close to four decades of leadership experience at highly acclaimed hotel groups in Europe, North America and India.

Mr. Chhatwal also serves as the leading voice of the industry in India in his capacity as the Chairman of the National Committee of Tourism and Hospitality, CII and President of Hotel Association of India.

Prior to this, Mr. Chhatwal was the C E O of Steigenberger Hotels AG – Deutsche Hospitality. He was also the Chief Development Officer of The Rezidor Hotel Group – Carlson Hotels Worldwide. He has received several acclaimed industry awards and he was also the First Alumnus included in the ESSEC-IMHI Hall of Honor 2014.





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Mr. Rajat Rialch

Alma Mater : IHM Bhopal | Pass out Batch : 1994

Mr Rialch is a leading hospitality consultant of global repute. He established HPG Consulting in 2000, growing it into a consultancy firm with footprints in most continents of the world. He is an MBA from IMI Delhi and advanced courses from Harvard Business school and Wharton. HPG Consulting has established its offices in 5 locations and project presence in 27 countries, with HPG expertise spans across prestigious hotel chains and tech giants, contributing to food service designs that cater from small scale to large-scale operations, including mega kitchens serving up to 200,000 meals per day. Few of the company clients include – Marriott, Four



Seasons, Taj , Oberois, Hyatt, Accor, I.H.G, Deloitte, Google, Apple, Microsoft, Amazon etc. His entrepreneurial spirit extends to the hospitality sector with investments in resorts by operating one of the experiential Resort in the foot hills in Himalayas and dining establishments which includes , restaurants, bakery, café and banquets in Delhi. Additionally, he is a keen adventurer who has rafted complete Zanskar river in Laddakh and Siang river in Arunachal Pradesh , beside climbing Mt Kun (7077 Mtr) , Mt Nun (7135mtr) Sato-panth (7075 Mtr)



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Mr. Rajeev Kapoor

Alma Mater : IHM Shimla | Pass out Batch : 2001

A seasoned hospitality professional with over 20 years of experience, **Mr. Kapoor** began his career with Grand Hyatt, and subsequently climbed the ladder with various renowned hotels across international brands, such as the Westin Sohna, resort and spa, Le Meridien Mumbai, Sheraton Surabaya hotel and Towers, Indonesia.

Prior to his current role as general manager at Fairmont Jaipur, he had served in the position of general manager of the Westin, Langkawi resort and spa. At Fairmont Jaipur, he is at the helm of a grand and experienced team which runs this modern Palace, the first Fairmont in the country and one of the most prestigious hotels in Accor's luxe portfolio in India. Mr Kapoor is a cricket enthusiast and savours time spent with his family.



Mr. Ramesh Takulia

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out batch : 1971

Mr. Ramesh Takulia has an experience spanning four decades. He has worked as General Manager of different hotels, Director (Learning and Development) for the Taj Group and established Institute of Hotel Management, in Aurangabad. He is an alumnus of IHM PUSA, University of Huddersfield UK, IHTM Salzburg, Austria, and University Of Leeds, UK. He was Lead Instructor of CHE (Certified Hospitality Educator) workshop. He was awarded “Lamp of Knowledge” award for exceptional contributions in the field of Hospitality Education and Training at international level by AHLA, USA. He received several Taj Business Excellence awards over the years.



Ms. Ranju Alex

Alma Mater : IHM Kolkata | Pass out Batch : 1993

With close to 28 years of experience in the hospitality industry, Ms Ranju Alex's hands-on leadership style, a laser sharp focus on business results and her ability to lead diverse teams are what has taken her where she is today.

Ms. Alex started her hospitality career with the Oberoi Group of hotels where she worked for 18 years. She joined Marriott International in 2010 as General Manager of the Courtyard by Marriott, Hinjewadi Pune, and moved to the Goa Marriott Resort & Spa as General Manager in 2013. In 2019, she was promoted to Market Vice President of South India & Sri Lanka.

Ms. Alex enjoys the diversity of dealing with guests, meeting individually with department heads and exploring opportunities for improvement. Extremely passionate about women empowerment and gender diversity, she is also a recipient of several noteworthy awards and acclaims.



Chef Ranveer Brar

Alma mater : : IHM Lucknow | Pass out Batch : 1999

Chef Ranveer Brar is a well recognized face in country as a television celebrity, Masterchef India judge, author, restaurateur, food film producer and benefactor. He was recognised as the youngest Executive Chef at 25 and the second chef to be featured on the Forbes Celebrity 100 list.

He co-owns restaurants in North America and is consulting for and endorsing 17 food (and food related) brands in the country..His menu curations are for varied entities ranging from the heritage Alila Bishangarh, to the Flyp @ Mtv chain of restaurants to Royal Caribbean (Voyager of the Seas). Chef Ranveer is passionate about

reviving lost / lesser known grains and rice varieties as much as reviving lost dishes and their stories. He loves travelling to get inspired. A culinary professional with 25+ years' experience in the field and with more than 12 years of experience at senior kitchen management positions (as Corporate chef ,Executive chef and Food and Beverage Director), he is always on the look out for the next challenge.





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Ms. Sangeetha Gandhi

Alma mater : IHM Bhubaneswar | Pass out Batch : 1992

Ms. Sangeetha Gandhi is currently Vice-President, the Oberoi Centre of Learning and Development (OCLD). In her capacity, she is responsible for a wide ranging management portfolio including the Management Training Programmes, Systematic Training and Education Programme and all the Learning and Development initiatives in The Oberoi Group.

Mrs Gandhi is a Post Graduate in H R M from AIMA and has a Certification in Executive Leadership from Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Her area of expertise is in behavioural skills training and leadership development. With a total work experience of almost three decades,

Ms. Gandhi started her stint with The Oberoi, Mumbai in 1993

She is a Council Member of the Delhi Chapter of WICCI- Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the hospitality sector. She is also a member of the Advising Committee for Implementation of the National Education Policy in Hospitality in India.

Ms Gandhi loves reading books of all genres and enjoys listening to Indian Classical music. She also promotes awareness campaigns on the need for Organ donation in India.





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Chef Sanjeev Kapoor

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1984

Chef Sanjeev Kapoor a celebrity Chef and a household name in India became the youngest Executive Chef of Centaur Hotel in Mumbai in the year 1992. A man largely perceived to be the most recognisable face in Indian hospitality industry is a recipient of Padam Shri and several awards including National Award of 'Best Chef of India' by the Government of India . Ranked 31st in Reader's Digest list of '100 of India's most trusted persons' and 34th in the Forbes list of 'top 100 Indian celebrities, Chef Kapoor has been a Judge for Master Chef India Season 3 and 4





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Sanjit Rodrigues, IAS

Alma mater : IHM Goa | Pass out Batch : 1995

Mr. Rodrigues's journey in the hospitality and tourism sector is a testament to his unwavering commitment to service and excellence. Armed with a degree from IHM Goa, Mr Rodrigues embarked on a career that saw him holding pivotal roles in government tourism departments. His leadership and strategic vision have been instrumental in driving tourism growth and infrastructure development in various regions. His initiatives to promote sustainable tourism practices and enhance visitor experiences have garnered widespread acclaim and recognition. His efforts have not only boosted tourism economies



but also fostered cultural exchange and mutual understanding. Mr Rodrigues's dedication to public service and his passion for promoting the hospitality industry as a force for positive change continue to inspire policymakers and industry stakeholders alike. Today, Mr Rodrigues serves as Commissioner at The Corporation of The City of Panaji, which is the oldest civic institution of India.



अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Saurabh Kalra

Alma Mater : IHM Ahmedabad | Pass out Batch :2002

Mr. Saurabh Kalra, Managing Director of McDonald's India (South and west India) has an experience in the Quick Service Restaurant(QSR) industry which spans over two decades, with a track record of establishing and successfully scaling multiple successful business units. In his current role, he is spearheading the overall business strategy, driving the company's long-term success while continuing to remain deeply involved in day-to-day operations. Mr Kalra was instrumental in launching and growing McCafe and the Experience of The Future (EOTF) restaurants in India. He was an active participant



in crafting the 2022 Vision and has been playing a key role in operationalizing Vision 2027. He is leading the execution of McDonald's velocity growth plan, providing a blueprint for strong sales and profitability across all brand levels.



अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Shashank Warty

Alma Mater : IHM Mumbai | Pass out Batch : 1968

With an experience of over four decades in luxury hospitality including Sr Vice President IHCL, Area Vice President Leela Hotels and Group Director Jaypee group **Mr. Shashank Warty** has a diverse understanding of Business development and Corporate affairs. He is a visionary and strategic leader with a proven track record in India's top luxury hospitality conglomerates in managing operations, pre-opening & start-up, training and project development. He is dedicated to maintaining a reputation built on quality, service, and uncompromising ethics. In his successful professional tenure he has chaired New Delhi Luxury Hotelier Forum as a President for consecutive three years





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Ms. Shirin Batliwala

Alma Mater : IHM Mumbai | Pass out Batch : 1969

Ms. Shirin Batliwala, the first lady F&B manager of a five star hotel and first woman to become General Manager of a large hotel started her journey in the industry with Taj Hotels and in 1980 she moved to Hotel Taj President as the F&B Manager, setting up the Trattoria and Gulzar restaurants, and the hugely popular Library Bar. She set up and then open the Taj Bengal as the General Manager, a post she held for eight years. She came back to Mumbai in 1997 as the Hotel President's General Manager with additional charge of Taj properties in Aurangabad, Indore and Nashik. Her last hotel as the GM was the place where she started her career, the Taj Mahal Hotel Bombay.





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Simarjeet Singh

Alma Mater : AIHM Chandigarh | Pass out batch : 1999

Mr. Simarjeet Singh is a well known motivational speaker and a life coach. With over 1.3 million subscribers on You Tube and 50 million plus views of his inspirational videos, Mr. Simerjeet Singh, renowned International Motivational speaker, has touched many lives across the globe. Mr Singh has been motivating millions of professionals and youths through workshops, keynotes, videos and podcasts. In 2019, Mr Simerjeet Singh was recognised with the prestigious “Global Excellence Award” (GEA) in Motivational Speaking





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Chef Sudhakar N Rao

Alma Mater : IHM Hyderabad | Pass out Batch : 1989

Founder Director of Culinary Academy of India a prestigious Chef Training Institute in Hyderabad, **Chef Sudhakar** is a highly awarded culinary professional, chef-instructor and mentor. He has trained over 1000 budding chefs who are working in 5 continents of the world as a Culinary Trainer since 1996.

Chef Sudhakar is a World Record Holder for the Maximum Number of Cakes Displayed at One time at a Single Venue. He is also a Guinness Book Record Holder for the Highest Number of International Breads Displayed at a Single Venue. He also hosts a reality cookery show- CHEF NUMBER ONE on a leading TV Channel.





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Ms. Sunita Kudle

Alma Mater : IHM Hyderabad | Pass out Batch : 1997

Having started her career with ITDC, Ms Sunita had the good fortune of serving three Indian Prime Ministers and two Royals and world leaders as their personal valet. She joined ITC Hotels in 2001 and was a key part of the Management Teams of ITC Grand Maratha ITC Maurya.

Since 2010, she has become a social entrepreneur and runs her own multi award winning Eco Home Stay, La Villa Bethany and a brand of Boutique properties & Villas under LVB Experiences in and around Mussoorie. LVB a bench mark for water conservation and green practices, works extensively in the field of empowering local



mountain youth and also works very closely with multiple women centric NGOs in Uttarakhand. In 2012, LVB was ranked no 2 in the World by Virgin Atlantic Responsible Travel as the Best accommodation for Local Communities and is currently ranked as the 4th Best Home Stay in Asia by TripAdvisor. Ms Kundle is also the Secretary of KEEN which is at the forefront of waste management in the town of Mussoorie and Landour employing 180 people, primarily women from underprivileged backgrounds. In 2022 the National Achiever's Recognition Forum, awarded her with the prestigious Women Entrepreneur Award.



अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Sunjae Sharma

Alma Mater : IHM Bhubaneswar | Pass out batch : 1989

Mr Sunjae Sharma is a prominent figure in the hospitality industry, serving as the Managing Director for India & Southwest Asia at Hyatt Hotels Corporation. With extensive experience and a deep understanding of the region's hospitality landscape, Mr Sharma has played a pivotal role in shaping Hyatt's presence and growth trajectory in India and Southwest Asia. Under his leadership, Hyatt has achieved remarkable success, expanding its portfolio of properties and setting new standards for luxury and service excellence.



Dr. Swarup Sinha

Alma Mater : IHM Chennai | Pass out Batch : 1991

Dr. Swarup Sinha is the Head of 'ITC Hospitality Management Institute', the Learning Institute of ITC Ltd. - Hotels Division. He is a Hospitality and Tourism Professional with over three decades of experience in both operations and education.

Dr. Sinha is inquisitive about new developments in the field of hospitality education, that allows him to cultivate new skills and abilities with actionable insights to elevate service standards and business success. He has made significant contribution in seamlessly bridging the gap between academia and industry.

His role focusses on developing the future leaders of the hospitality industry and his commitment to excellence is evident in his dedication to fostering the next generation of hospitality leaders with his unwavering support for professional developmental initiatives.

Dr. Sinha's journey began with a profound passion for hospitality, leading him to earn a Ph.D. in Management Studies. Since then, he has dedicated his career to unravelling the complexities of the hospitality sector, with a keen focus on sustainable practices and innovative guest experiences.





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Virag Joshi

Alma mater : : IHM Lucknow | Pass out Batch : 1983

Mr Joshi is currently the President & CEO at Devyani International Limited. He is a top management professional with over three decades of hospitality industry experience with high energy level, attitude for continuous improvement, resourceful at developing procedures, service standards, operational policies. He is associated with RJ Corp as President & CEO- handling three international brands- Pizza Hut, KFC and Costa Coffee across India, Nepal, and Nigeria. Mr Joshi is an outstanding corporate planner and strategist with experience of handling the entire operations and committed to ensuring highest level of customer service at all times.





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Virender S. Datta

Alma Mater : IHM PUSA | Pass out Batch : 1965

Mr. Datta has 50 years of versatile experience in Hotel & Hospitality Industry through assignments in India and overseas. Starting with Oberoi School of Hotel Administration (now OCLD), have held diverse and challenging job positions including Executive Chef, General Manager of Hotels, Vice president Operations- ITC Hotels, Founder President of Fortune Park Hotels, the wholly owned subsidiary of ITC Hotels Limited and other corporate assignments. He is currently the Founder chairman of IICA, International Institute of Culinary Arts, New Delhi. Mr Datta is also the founder president Pusa Institute of Hotel Management Alumni Association (PHIMAA)





अतुल्य! भारत
Incredible India

Mr. Zubin Songadwala

Alma Mater : IHM Mumbai | Pass out Batch : 1989

Mr. Songadwala is the Vice President, Operations for the South and East regions of ITC Hotels. He reflects ITC Hotels' commitment to excellence and its dedication to fostering top-tier talent within the organization.

An alumnus of IHM Mumbai and a graduate of the ITC Hotel Management Institute, he has been entrusted with the critical responsibility of overseeing ITC Hotels' operations in the southern and eastern regions of India. His career trajectory within ITC Hotels has been nothing short of impressive, starting from his early days at ITC Windsor in Bangalore and progressing through various senior management positions at ITC Hotels in Agra, Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai.



