

### Hotel occupancy rates on the rise says ICRA Report

The hotel industry remains optimistic about revenue and occupancy in 2022-23, buoyed by a strong show in the first quarter.

According to data compiled by ICRA, occupancy levels in premium hotels across the country were in the range of 56-58 per cent during the quarter, up from 40-42 per cent in FY22 and close to pre-Covid occupancy of 60-62 per cent in Q1FY20.

The average room rent (ARR) was in the range of INR 4,600-4,800 during Q1FY23, as against INR 4,200-4,400 in FY22. However, the average room rent was still at a discount of 16-18 per cent compared with pre-Covid levels.

“The hospitality industry has made a strong comeback and has been successful in recovering from the pandemic blues. The consumer sentiment has turned positive due to the overall vaccination drive, introduction of booster shots, offices reopening in full swing in some places and easing up of restrictions,” said K.B. Kachru, vice-president, Hotel Association of India and chairman emeritus & principal advisor, South Asia, Radisson Hotel Group. The recovery in hotels was primarily driven by the leisure markets such as Gulmarg, Pahalgam, Shimla, Dharmasala, Jaipur, Goa and Munnar. However, with business travel picking up, Mumbai, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune are also showing signs of improvement in occupancy.



### Hilton Introduces First Global Brand Platform “Hilton. For the Stay”

Hilton is shaking up hotel marketing and advertising with the announcement of its first global brand platform that identifies what has been missing from hotel marketing – the hotel stay.

“Hilton. For the Stay” places the hotel front and centre, elevating the role and importance of the stay at a time when lodging



advertising is a sea of sameness, featuring overused destinations, cliché walks on the beach and generic descriptions of travel.

Mark Weinstein, Chief Marketing

Officer, Hilton said, “As we enter this next era of travel, it has never been more important to consider where you stay – and Hilton is uniquely committed to making sure your stay is everything you need it to be.”

“With ‘Hilton. For the Stay,’ we are more fully connecting our external customer marketing to our purpose – staking our rightful claim that Hilton owns the Stay,” said Weinstein.

“The idea of the Stay was incredibly natural to Hilton, and yet no one else was talking about it. As others tout the generic virtues of travel, minimize the role of the hotel and the hotel team members, and romanticize the destination, through our platform and the campaign it inspires, we’re reminding travellers that ‘It Matters Where You Stay’ and boldly affirming ‘Hilton. For the Stay.’”

### FSSAI mandates logo on vegan food items

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issued a gazette notification to the effect on June 10,

also listing the regulations vegan foods have to comply



with. The move is aimed at ensuring that what is manufactured, sold and distributed as vegan food in the country is really vegan, and comes against the backdrop of an increase in demand for vegan food.

FSSAI’s regulations prohibit animal testing for any purpose, including safety evaluation, of vegan foods. “No person shall manufacture, pack, sell, offer for sale, market or otherwise distribute or import any food as vegan food unless they comply with the requirements laid down under these regulations,” reads the gazette notification of June 10.

In September 2021, the food regulator launched a logo specifically to identify vegan foods to help consumers easily identify and differentiate them from non-vegan foods.

### Cheesemaker Cremeitalia raises capital worth USD 600,000

Mumbai-based MD Food Product Limited (Cremeitalia) has raised an amount of USD 600,000 funding from Mumbai-based B L Taparia Family Office (Venktesh Investment & Trading Private Limited). This marks the first round of external investors for MD Food Product Private Limited while having received initial funding from family and friends in the last 3 years.

With this fundraising, the company plans to deploy this capital towards new product launches, entering new markets (Tier 2 and 3 cities), retail expansion from the current 242 stores to 500+, expansion of current manufacturing capacities by 4-5x, marketing and branding initiatives across multiple online stores and also performance marketing in order to grow the online presence. Cremeitalia has ambitious plans of launching new products which the founders believe will disrupt the retail consumers. With this funding, Cremeitalia will be in the position to onboard new HORECA as well as Retail clients and cater to their recurring demand for large quantities of gourmet cheese products.



### Zomato and Swiggy start restaurant dine-in pilots in Hyderabad

Restaurant aggregator and food delivery companies Zomato and Swiggy have started pilot dine-in projects in Hyderabad, offering discounts of as much as 25 percent to customers who pay their food bills through their apps.



The discounts may be substantially higher than 25 percent, depending on the restaurant, the loyalty benefits earned by a customer, the frequency of use, cashback and banking or fintech partnerships.

However, restaurants are wary of signing up for customer loyalty programmes because they will have to bear the discounts.

“Both the platforms have been reaching out to restaurants since June to join their pilots. They are routing the customer payments in dine-ins through their apps and taking a cut from the amount paid,” said a restaurant owner in Hyderabad.

Zomato’s arch-rival Swiggy stepped up efforts to capitalise on restaurant dine-ins following its acquisition of Dineout, a dining-out and restaurant tech platform with over 50,000 restaurant partners, in May. Swiggy said it plans to leverage Dineout’s offerings, including table reservations and events, and enable restaurant partners to reach more customers and expand their business.