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■ THE BIG INTERVIEW

# AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES FOR REJUVENATION

**Sumant Jaidka, Senior Vice President, Operations, Lemon Tree,** which has won several awards over the years in hospitality, talks about his hotel's unique offerings in the Aerocity ecosystem. Excerpts from an interview:

**How has Lemon Tree leveraged its location in Aerocity, New Delhi, and what are the infrastructure advantages of this location?**

Lemon Tree Hotels has its twin properties (Lemon Tree Premier & Red Fox) at Delhi Aerocity, with a combined inventory of just under 500 rooms, and we were the first ones to open its hotels in the exclusive hospitality district near Indira Gandhi International Airport.

Strategically located between Delhi and Gurugram, and a stone's throw from both airports, these two hotels offer elegant rooms, comprehensive meeting and conference facilities as well as specialty restaurants to cater to both business and leisure travellers.

Guests can unwind at any of Lemon Tree's popular restaurants including Citrus Café, the 24x7 coffee shop, and the Republic of Noodles, the award-winning pan-Asian restaurant. They can rejuvenate at Fresco — the spa — or at the fresh, green outdoor area with a revitalising swimming pool, a vertical garden, loungers and cabanas.

Red Fox Hotel, an economy business hotel, welcomes guests with its fresh bold interiors and delights, unbeatable value and world-class safety measures. This hotel has 207 smart rooms with hi-speed Wi-Fi and essential amenities. Guests can choose to relax at Clever Fox Café, a 24x7 casual restaurant, or go for an

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invigorating workout at the well-equipped fitness center.  
 The location of Delhi Aerocity is at the perfect cusp of both the domestic and international airports and is in proximity to the entertainment centres of Delhi like Vasant Vihar, Diplomatic Enclave, Chanakyapuri and the commercial hub of Gurgaon.

**What are some of the unique features of the hotel? How do you position yourself vis-à-vis other hotels in the vicinity?**

Lemon Tree Premier, Delhi Airport, offers an extensive array of facilities and personalised service with a Guest Relations Officer to help you with your business needs. Pamper your body and soul at the Fresco spa or take a refreshing dip in the swimming pool. You can hit the 24x7 Life Fitness equipped Fitness Centre with a personal trainer for an invigorating workout.

When it comes to local attractions and sightseeing, you can always avail of our transport facilities with an option of premium sedan cars. We also have a 24x7 Business Center with iMac terminals and free WiFi, an array of restaurants & Bar.

The hotel employs people from different sections of society – Ecosoc/ orphans/ acid survivors/ divorcees/ autistic people/ people with down syndrome and those who are orthopedically challenged – this separates us from others.

**What kind of dining experiences does the hotel provide, and what are some of the most popular F&B offerings?**

Lemon Tree has some popular restaurants including the Citrus Café, the 24x7 coffee shop, and the Republic of Noodles, the award-winning pan-Asian restaurant.

Republic of Noodles, Lemon Tree's celebrated Pan-Asian restaurant, showcases the best cuisine from Southeast Asia including Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, Cambodia, Indonesia and Myanmar. The expansive dining area and the elegant bar enhance the dining experience. The restaurant's à la carte menu features individually curated classic and contemporary dishes for lunch and dinner. The drinks menu offers popular international and domestic brands as well as exciting cocktails.



Image Source: www.lemontreehotels.com



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**How is the hotel looking at increasing its business in the post-Covid phase?**

Covid-19 has affected every sector across the globe and the hotel industry is among the hardest hit. Research suggests that recovery to pre-Covid-19 levels could take until 2023 or later. Like other industries, hospitality will also see both subtle and substantial shifts in the post-pandemic era.

As international travel will still take a little more time to pick up, the focus is on domestic travel. Apart from the rooms, we have started to focus on F&B revenues also. Banqueting is the key as social functions are on the rise.

We have intensified hygiene measures to ensure the safety of our external and internal guests. We have associated ourselves with Diversey with Rest Assured programme for our room and public area hygiene. Contactless elements are in demand whether it is the digital menu or self-check-in check out.

**Can you shed light on your journey? What inspired you to join hospitality?**

As a youngster, I was fascinated by the entire gamut of services in the hospitality sector. While visiting or staying at any hotel, I was curious about what went on behind the scenes, how the entire machinery worked like clockwork.

This took me to the Salzburg School of Hotel Management, Austria, from where I graduated. I have previously been with The Taj Group of Hotels, Hilton, Maurya Sheraton, Crowne Plaza and Hyatt Regency.

At Lemon Tree Hotels, the positive atmosphere, the way we empower people across the board to take decisions that are best suited to the need of the hour and recognising them for their efforts are the motivation for youngsters to join the brand. Moreover, our work with opportunity-deprived individuals, and physically and mentally challenged people makes one proud of the brand that takes up social causes not for CSR but as a matter of policy.