

News monitored for: Lemon Tree Hotels



‘Listen to your heart and never fear failure’ is his motto and Keswani firmly lives by it. Passionate about his work, he believes in providing a stress-free environment to his employees to work in.”

Patu Keswani

CMD, The Lemon Tree Hotel Company

Patu Keswani is considered a thought leader in the Indian hotel industry. Ironic indeed, as he stumbled upon a career in hospitality by chance and is not a qualified hotelier. By his sheer hard work, ability to grasp, sharp mind and inherent entrepreneurial qualities, Patu Keswani, CMD, The Lemon Tree Hotel Company, has done immensely well for himself and his company.

Currently, the company has close to 40 hotels in 24 cities with around 4,300 rooms. For the future, he has plans to tap the leisure destinations, which, according to him, are witnessing increasing footfalls from global as well as domestic travellers.

Keswani joined the TATA Administrative Service (TAS) in 1983 and went on to lead operations for Taj Hotel's business hotel division. In 2000, he joined A. T. Kearney to help start up their Delhi operations. After 15 years of cumulative experience at both these companies, Keswani decided to pursue his entrepreneurial streak.

A man with progressive thinking and positive outlook, Keswani always looks at new ways to forge ahead. This IIT-Delhi and IIM-Kolkata alumnus co-founded one of the fastest growing hotel chains in India. The Lemon Tree Hotels was set up in 2002 with an aim to providing comfortable and

affordable accommodation to guests in the country. Today, the company has hotels under four brands - Lemon Tree Premier, which is an upscale brand; Lemon Tree Resorts, a leisure segment brand; Lemon Tree Hotels, a midscale brand and the economy brand Red Fox Hotels.

The initial plan was to build one or two hotels that would give Patu a good income and his employees a good salary. “The overwhelming response and feedback that we got from our customers after the opening of the first hotel was the turning point,” reminisces Keswani. “It was the big moment for me.”

Known to pioneer humanitarian initiatives, Keswani likes to do things differently. The LemonTree Hotels has been promoting diversity and inclusivity in its manpower by hiring more differently-abled people as part of its workforce. This unique staffing policy for about 10% of the company's employees has created a stir in the industry and won him appreciation. This people-friendly initiative has enabled them to bag a key spot in the Economic Times 'India's Best Companies to Work For in 2017'.

‘Listen to your heart and never fear failure’ is his motto and Keswani firmly lives by it. Passionate about his work, he believes in providing a stress-free environment to his employees to work in. When he is not working, Keswani relaxes by delving into books on history, playing a game of bridge and travelling. ■