

Sinclair's portfolio to increase to 600 keys across 9 destinations

Sinclair's hotels is on a fast growth track as it records 10 per cent Y-o-Y increase in sales and 5 per cent Y-o-Y increase in profits. In an exclusive interview with TTTJ, Navin Suchanti, CEO and Managing Director, Sinclair's Hotels Ltd. talks about the opening of their new property in Ooty and the adoption of an aggressive acquisition strategy. Excerpts.

❖ RAADIA MUKADAM



Navin Suchanti



Sid Yog

Q Can you share some of the Group's expansion plans?
Sinclair's portfolio is on course to increase to around 600 keys across 9 destinations as a result of the company's new projects in the pipeline that include a luxury hill resort in Kalimpong, a quaint hill town in Darjeeling district, a tourist resort with a hotel, club and banquet complex in Burdwan, a rapidly growing urban hub 100km outside Kolkata, and a 106 room premier business hotel in Kolkata, for which the company is awaiting final sanction.

Is there some particular reason that most of your properties are located on hill stations?

Actually they are not all located in the hills. If there is a common factor on our location, I can say that they are all located in very exotic locations. For example Sinclair's Retreat Ooty is the highest located hotel in South India and from the hotel and majority of the rooms you can enjoy a wonderful view of the Blue Mountains or the Nilgiri hills as they are popularly known. Similarly Hotel Sinclair's Darjeeling is located close to the Mall and you have unbridled view of the snow capped Kanchenjunga range. Sinclair's Retreat Dooars is on a small hillock on the foothills. It overlooks the Gorumara National Park, which is located around 5 km from the property. Sinclair's Bayview is yet another exotic location, right on the

Andaman Sea in Port Blair. Hotel Sinclair's Siliguri is a city hotel – Siliguri being the gateway to the north east India.



Is this property owned and managed by your group and what was the investment that went in to building this property?

Yes, Sinclair's Retreat Ooty is owned and operated by Sinclair's with a total investment in renovating, refurbishing and re-launching the property was to the extent of ₹70 million.

Is this your first venture in South India? If so why the choice of Ooty?

Indeed Ooty property was our first venture in south India. We acquired the hotel in 1995. This was a sick unit when we acquired it but the same was turned around and was making profits. It was a well located property in Ooty and we saw the potential in the same and that's the reason we acquired it. In 2011 we decided

to completely refurbish it and re-launch the property as a modern luxury resort. Incidentally, recently we have acquired a 105

room upscale business hotel in Whitefield in Bengaluru – Savannah Sarovar Premiere. This property is a strategic fit in our business and we are now looking at expanding our cluster in south India. We are looking at acquiring properties in Chennai, Mysore, Coimbatore, Coorg, Munnar, Bandipur/Mudumalai, etc.

With the holiday season just around the corner, how are you planning to market this property?

We are a chain of six properties now. We have our own sales offices in Mumbai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Bengaluru who will market the property. We have strong relationship with travel agents and tour operators also. Additionally we will extensively use online channels to promote

and sell the property.

How many rooms, restaurants, other facilities does the property have?

The hotel has a total of 79 rooms. There are two independent bungalows which are presently being converted into very high end villas for long stay by families. In terms of dining facilities, we have Pine n' Petals – a multi-cuisine restaurant, The Portico, a small coffee shop and Altro Espresso, a stylish Spanish Bar. At the request of guests, we hold special Barbecue nights in our garden.

There is a very vibrant play and entertainment area called 'Tic Tac Toe' which has indoor badminton, pool, table tennis, a variety of board games, kids zone, video games (PSP and Wii), library, gym and a spa. We have three banquet halls and a Terrace which are ideal for hosting any type of conference, seminar, meetings, etc. There is a three level garden with a special area 'Ivy Hills Garden' for exclusive outdoor parties and evening cocktails.

What according to you is the USP of this property?

It is without doubt the best located property in Ooty. Slightly away from the hustle and bustle of the town, our location offers complete peace and tranquility. There is a sense of 'openness' in the entire property and guests can indeed 'break free'.