

## No rush for bookings yet but Delhi hotels to raise rates during Games

Hotels in Delhi are expected to raise room rates by 13-20% during the Commonwealth Games, which start from October, even as hoteliers are yet to see reasonable number of early reservations.

"Demands is expected to pick up closer to the event that is expected to result in many hotels being fully occupied in October"said Ajay Bakaya executive director of Sarovar Hotels, which runs brands like Sarovar Premier, Sarovar Portico and Homotel besides Carlson brands like Park Inn and Park Plaza.

Lemon Tree Hotels vice president-sales and marketing Aradhana Lal said the increase in room rates is expected to be up to 20% more than the current rates.

Several city hotels have already blocked a part of their inventory to be used by delegations and other staff through the organizing committee of the Commonwealth Games. Other rooms are expected to be occupied by families and supporters of the athletes besides the individuals associated with the games.

As per HVS India executive director Siddharth Thaker, there are an estimated 15,000 branded rooms of various star categories in the city, "On the ground, even as enquiries are coming in, there are few actual reservations that has happened for the Commonwealth Games so far"he said.

However, expectation that most hotels will be fully booked during the event could keep out other tourists. Groups tours, especially international tourists, are likely to skip Delhi during the first half of October and the likely beneficiaries could be other cities in the north India tourist circuit. This is worrying top end hotels as only a certain portion of inventory of the luxury hotels as only a certain portion of inventory of the luxury hotels will be used to host delegates, said Oberoi Hotels & Resorts president Liam Lambert. "Ironically, the corporate travelers believe everything is going to be full but we are trying to tell our corporate guests that its business as usual"he said.

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