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LEMON TREE ENTERS UPSCALE MARKET SEGMENT WITH PREMIER

Lemon Tree Hotels has entered the upscale hotel space with its new offering Lemon Tree Premier. What is the brand all about; who is the target audience and what are the plans for the brand? We find out from Rahul Pandit, President and COO.

What is the brand Lemon Tree Premier all about? How is it different from Lemon Tree in terms of décor, services, facilities et al?

Lemon Tree Premier, the new upscale 'plus brand of the Lemon Tree Group, is present in the vibrant metropolitan cities of Bengaluru, Gurgaon and Hyderabad. These hotels retain the essence of the upscale Lemon Tree brand by continuing to provide the fresh, fun and spirited experience the group is so well known for.

Lemon Tree Premier provides an enhanced product offering with deluxe cars for pickup and drop; superior room amenities; a higher share of top-of-the-line premium rooms; specialty restaurants; iMac terminals in the Business Center; a Life Fitness gym and a rejuvenating spa.

Who is the target audience for Lemon Tree Premier?

Lemon Tree Premier targets the discerning, style conscious traveler who is looking for a full range of services at a competitive price. He is a professional who is pragmatic yet aspires for the good things in life. He is today's man. Despite a full work day, he enjoys the lighter moments of life. Our target audience includes corporate travelers from senior management; senior professionals like consultants, trainers, etc. and at our leisure destinations the profile is usually senior to top management.

What was the need to bring in this brand?

While Lemon Tree Hotels – an upscale brand – addresses the needs of travelers who within a certain competitive price expect a wide range of services, there is a target segment that is looking for an elevated experience. They want more dining options, bigger rooms and higher category inventory, superior amenities, fitness centers that are world class, large open-to-sky swimming pools and service that are equivalent to the best in the industry. Lemon Tree Premier has been created to satisfy that need and cater to this segment of customers. At Lemon Tree Premier-it's everything that our customers love about the 'refreshingly different' Lemon Tree Hotels 'plus' more.

Who are the immediate competitors? What makes the brand different from its competitors?

Competitors include other upscale plus and five star players such as Vivanta by Taj, Ista, Gateway, Westin, Sarovar Premier depending on the location and the city. What sets Lemon Tree Premier apart is the refreshing 'elegance' of its interiors and the fresh, fun and spirited ambience. These are the essence of brand Lemon Tree and the reason why our customers become our brand ambassadors.

What are the expansion plans? Would you be focusing only on metros?

Lemon Tree Premier currently operates over 500 rooms across its three properties in HITEC City, Hyderabad; Leisure Valley, Gurgaon and Ulsoor Lake, Bengaluru. With projects underway in New Delhi, Mumbai, Gurgaon and Pune. Lemon Tree Premier will have an inventory of 1,500 rooms in the next 3 years.

Any introductory offers/packages?

We did have a brief period of introductory offers but most rates are negotiated by each company individually and followed on a year round basis. We will however come up with relevant weekend packages, etc. from time to time.

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