

HOTELS

“I Am A Proud Hotelier”

Bobby Kamani, Managing Director of Zuri Hotels and Resorts, talks about what makes Zuri Hotels and Resorts go beyond expectations when it comes to serving the urban traveller

Two years ago, Bobby Kamani dreamed a dream - to make the Zuri Hotels a force to reckon with in the Indian hospitality industry. A couple of awards later (The Zuri Kumarakom, Kerala Resort and Spa won the Asia Spa Award for Best Resort Spa in India, 2007, and Carlson President's Award for Operational Excellence 2007, and Diani Reef Beach Resort & Spa, Kenya, won the Service Excellence Award at the Amarula Best Retreats in Africa Awards 2009), Kamani's dreams have been realised beyond his expectations. "The momentum and the respect that the brand has gained in the last two years have exceeded our expectations by miles. In a short span, we have received positive responses from a majority of hoteliers for

their hotels to be run under management contracts with us."

The USP of Zuri, he believes, is the hotel's approach to hospitality.

"Zuri's primary offering is its unique brand of hospitality that is warm, attentive and mindful of

the special profile of the guests it serves. 'Welcome back to hospitality the way it's meant to be' is our tag line. The essence of brand Zuri remains inherently different from the

usual experiences that guests are used to in the hospitality sector. We take that extra effort and go that extra mile to make the hospitality experience special for each customer. We ensure that each customer's need is tailor-made making each customer's experience unique."

With the spurt of business and budget hotels across cities, Zuri remains focussed on "affordable luxury". Kamani is not bothered by the competition.

"Budget hotels and luxury resorts serve separate needs and, hence, function on different revenue principles. There will always be a market for both because utilitarian and luxury needs are ever-present. Our target customer is the upmarket and well-travelled urbanite who understands world-class hospitality and is growing in numbers. We are investing in him and we know that it can only give us positive and growing results," he said.



TECH TAKE "We provide complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the hotel to all our customers throughout their stay. We also ensure that any given time in the hotel, assistance for any IT related queries are addressed. For MICE and business related conferences and set-ups, we have an internal team of expert engineers to take care of the requirements. We invest heavily on good quality overhead projector screens, lights, sound, microphones and other related equipment."

— Bobby Kamani

However, The Retreat, By Zuri (in Goa and Sikkim) is part of its mid-segment space. "For The Retreat, we have introduced some exciting packages for all our properties in which the price is affordable to the mid segment and also gives a lot more value additions." Their future expansions, however, will focus on the affordable luxury segment.

The Zuri Hotels and Resorts has already forayed into international markets, especially in Africa. Projects such as high-end malls with attached service apartments in every city of Africa, villa projects and numerous rose farms are in various stages of development. They are also looking forward to suitable opportunities in the Indian market; a project in Devanahalli is awaiting the feasibility study report.

As part of CSR initiatives, the hotel group has adopted green measures. "In Kumarakom, we planted trees on newly paved roads. We replaced all bulbs to CFLs and practise

rainwater harvesting at all our properties. Every stove in our kitchens has individual knobs so that only the required burners are used. The Zuri Group Global has forayed into green energy as well with the tag - 'Empowering Today, Preserving Tomorrow'. We have windmills in India that produce energy and in Kenya, we are very active in the production of geothermal projects, energy and solar energy."

Their objective is to address the needs of the urban traveller. "Highly personalised service is always our aim and Zuri seeks to stand apart with a refreshingly young and vibrant attitude. Our consumer base is equally young and vibrant and we try hard to create an upbeat environment for them that will appeal to their sensibilities. Our décor is chic and classy, stylish and unique to the architecture of the local culture. This helps our consumer identify with the place as well as assure him that we identify with his lifestyle and hence

complete the experience of warmth and belonging, two aspects without which hospitality is meaningless."

Being quite the traveller himself, Kamani loves to explore different countries, cultures and their cuisines. "Exploring different countries and cities provides a feel of their culture and the opportunity to immerse in a world removed from one's own. There is a lot for one to learn, opening up ideas and perspectives, bringing back home innovations and fresh approaches. It is a consummate opportunity for both internal and external growth. Also, I love food and hence an opportunity to experience different cuisines is always welcome." But there are some things about travel he'll rather avoid. "I hate unpacking and dread getting sick during travel," he said. But Kamani wouldn't trade this life for anything else. "I believe I was born to be an hotelier and I am a proud one today," he signed off. ✨

What Makes Zuri Different

"There are a variety of luxury brands in the market. At Zuri, what is significant is that all the hotels and resorts have clear distinguishing factors. The Platinum Collection incorporates the luxurious Diani Reef Beach Resort and Spa, Kenya, and The Zuri Kumarakom Resort & Spa, Kerala, offers world-class comfort and convenience. The Lifestyle Collection has The Zuri Whitefield Bengaluru, The Zuri Whitesands Resort & Casino, Varca, Goa, and The Liner, UK, emulates the lifestyle of clients who are patrons of certain brands. The Comfort Collection, on the other hand, offers comfortable rooms and amenities that are easy on the guests' wallets as well. The Retreat by Zuri, Benaulim, Goa and The Retreat by Zuri, Baiguney, Sikkim, are a part of this collection.

Another significant aspect of brand Zuri's offering is the signature brand of luxury spas by The Zuri Hotels & Resorts - Maya Spa, a complete wellness and health destination present in almost all Zuri properties around the world. The Maya Spas also make for the most comprehensive Ayurvedic therapy destinations with a range of special packages. With a resident Ayurvedic doctor on duty, it offers treatments in various ailments like arthritis, asthma, allergic respiratory disorders, diabetes, hypertension, headaches, gastro-intestinal disorders and more.



The Maya Spa at Zuri Kumarakom