

Unit

2



Introduction to Hospitality Industry

Hospitality is a part of Tourism Industry, which helps in providing other services like accommodation and food to the guests. Hospitality refers to an association between the guest and the host, where the host welcomes the guest and makes sure that their stay is pleasant.

This Unit explains the basic concepts of hospitality, various types of accommodation facilities offered by Hospitality Industry and also gives a brief idea about the various Guidelines for the Classification of Hotels in India. Last two sessions of this Unit focus on front office and travel desk operations of hospitality industry.

The responsibility of the Customer Service Executive (Meet and Greet) involves making a guest feel welcome and comfortable. The CSE must have attained training in the basic aspects of hospitality starting from receiving the guests to escorting the guest to the airport. The knowledge of hospitality would empower the Executive to provide quality and standard services to their customers.

SESSION 1: TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The professionals who are working in Tourism and Hospitality Industry must possess the knowledge to understand the needs of the guests. They should work



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to fulfil their needs and help in satisfying the guests; only then, the guests will take back fond memories and share their good experience back at home.

Accommodation

Staying arrangements is one of the basic needs of tourists at the destination during their trips. It is a type of residential establishment which provide boarding and lodging to the travellers who stay away from their homes for more than a day and are in need of lodging for sleep, rest, food, safety, shelter from cold temperatures or rain, storage of luggage and access to common household functions.

Let us briefly consider the various types of accommodation which are broadly classified into primary and secondary type.

Primary Accommodation

Hotel

A commercial establishment providing lodging, meals, and other guest services, is termed as hotel. Thus, a hotel is a place where a bonafide traveller can get food and accommodation where he is in a position to pay for it and is in a fit condition to be received.

Today, hotels not only provide accommodation and meals but also offer a variety of other services as per the needs of the guest. For example, many hotels offer a health club, crèche, etc.

Types of hotels

Based on the facilities offered to the tourists, the hotels are broadly classified into the following types.

International Hotels: They are the modern western style hotels, found mostly in metro cities and at major tourist destinations and are located at prime locations in the city. These hotels are classified on the basis of internationally accepted star grading which ranges from one star to five stars. The grading is given to the hotel depending on the facilities and services which the hotel provides. The facilities which are provided by the five star are an information desk, conference centre,



travel desk, multi cuisine restaurants, banquet halls, room service, swimming pool, gymnasium, health clubs, shopping arcades, beauty parlours, entertainment or cultural programmes, etc.

Floating Hotels: These types of hotels are located on the surface of water such as the sea, river, or lake. These hotels have facilities which are similar to a regular hotel. For example: Houseboats of Kashmir and Kerala or old cruise liners which have been converted into a hotel.

Commercial Hotels: These hotels are located mostly near the business or commercial centres and mainly serve the business tourists, middle income tourists and their repeat customers. Most of these hotels are equipped with parking space, restaurants, and facilities for their business guests such as convention centres and meeting rooms.

Heritage Hotels: These are the old properties like castles, forts, palaces, and havelis belonging to royalty which have been renovated and converted into hotels. Here, tourists enjoy the majestic grandeur and splendour of the olden days. Some examples of heritage hotels are Umaid Bhawan Palace in Jodhpur, Rambagh Palace in Jaipur, Shalini Palace in Kolhapur, Lalitha Mahal in Mysuru and Sheesh Mahal in Orchha.

Resorts

Resort hotels are usually located in the mountains, on an island, or in some other exotic locations away from cities like sea side, hill stations, wildlife sanctuaries, etc. These hotels have recreational and relaxation facilities, scenery which includes indoor and outdoor games like golf, tennis, sailing, skiing and swimming, gambling, spa, etc. Resort hotels provide enjoyable and memorable guest experiences that encourage guests to repeat to the resort.



Fig. 2.1 Kerala houseboat hotel, India



Fig. 2.2 Umaid bhawan palace, Jodhpur, India



Fig. 2.3 Desert hut resort, Jaisalmer, India

Resorts can be of various types and can be classified on the basis of climate, and topography. Broadly they are divided in the following categories:

Mountain and Hill Resorts

In India, almost all mountainous and hilly areas of India are dotted with places of tourist interest. In the north are the Himalayan ranges, blessed with scenic beauty which is beyond description. Besides, there are high hills in the northeast and in and around the Nilgiris in the south. There are hill ranges of medium to low heights in the Western Ghats, Vindhya, Satpuras and the Aravallis in addition to isolated hillocks elsewhere. Hill resorts are divided into following three categories according to their altitude:

- (i) resorts at great heights (between 2,100–3,500 meters above mean sea level)
- (ii) hill resorts at medium altitudes (between 1,200 and 2,100 meters above mean sea level)
- (iii) hill resorts at low altitudes (between 800 and 1,200 meters above mean sea level)

Ski or Winter Resorts

A winter or ski resort is developed in cold locations, mostly having snow for skiing, snowboarding, and other winter sports. One can enjoy holidays in these winter resorts in India and stay in the best winter resorts that offer ultimate luxury as well as some warm cozy time with loved ones. Some examples of these are Grand Dragon (Laddakh), Avlan (Mussoorie), Solang Valley (Manali), Kasauli Resort (Kasauli) and Savoy hotel (Ooty), Auli (Uttarakhand), etc.

Beach Tourism or Sea-side Resorts

India's long coastline of over 7000 Km from Kandla in Gujarat to Kolkata in West Bengal and along the islands offers an opportunity for the promotion of beach tourism. A number of beautiful beaches of Goa and that of Kovalam in Kerala are quite popular with the

tourists. There are vast stretches of shining golden sands of beaches at Chorwad and Ahmedpur-Mandvi. The Maharashtra coast has eight small beaches from Mumbai's famous Juhu to Murud at a distance of 220 km. Goa's 105 km long coastline has as many as 40 beaches, out of which 12 are very popular with the tourists. Karnataka's beaches are at Mangalore and Karwar. The sun-swept Marina beach in Chennai (Tamil Nadu) is the world's second longest beach. It runs for a distance of 12 km from Chennai harbour in the North to Santhome Church in the South. Two beaches of Andhra Pradesh, namely Ramakrishna Mission and Rishi Konda are located in close proximity of Vishakhapatnam. Orissa's Gopalpur beach is surrounded by sand dunes. Besides Puri and Konark, Chandipur near Balasore is known for its 55 km recession of the tides each day at its head. Digha beach of West Bengal is situated on the shores of Bay of Bengal. With a total length of 6 km, it is one of the widest in the world amidst gently rolling sea and thick casuarinas forest on its two sides.

All-season Resorts

These are located at any places of natural scenic beauty with food services and amenities.

Supplementary and Secondary Accommodation

Supplementary accommodation plays a very important role in the total available tourist accommodation in a country. This type of accommodation can cater to both international as well as domestic tourist traffic. The secondary accommodations are—

Motel

The concept of motel, a kind of hotel with parking, originated in the USA perhaps in the year 1925 in San Luis Obispo, near Los Angeles. Since, the automobile trade was catching up, there was discovered a need for hotel for drivers and this was called



Fig. 2.4 Beach tourism



Fig. 2.5 Motel, USA

a motel by an architect developer, Arthur Heineman' (An extract from the article Smithsonianmag.com, December 12, 2016). Motel was meant for local motorists and foreign tourists travelling by road. Primarily designed to serve the needs of motorists, motels almost exclusively meet the demand for transit accommodation. The services provided by motels include parking, garage facilities, accommodation, restaurant facilities, public catering and recreational facilities. With a view to provide the above services to the motorists, all the motels are equipped with filling stations, repair services, accessories, garages, parking space, elevator service to the automobile entrance, restaurants, etc. The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has developed the guidelines to approve motels in India so that a set standard can be established.



Fig. 2.6 (a) Youth hostel, Mussoorie, India



Fig. 2.6 (b) Camping

Youth Hostels

Youth hostels made their first appearance in Germany in about 1900. In order to provide some sort of accommodation and services, the dormitories in the inns were equipped with cots, mattresses, sheets, and blankets.

The youth hostel can be defined as a building which offers clean, moderate, and inexpensive shelter to young travellers exploring their own country or other countries and travelling independently or in groups for holiday or educational purposes.

Caravan and Camping Sites

These are very popular in some European countries as also in the United States. These are also known as open air hostels, tourist camps or camping grounds. Camping, originally practised by hikers on foot, is increasingly giving way to car camping. The

sites are usually located within the large cities in open spaces. Equipped to receive mobile accommodation in the form of caravans, the camping sites provide facilities for parking, tent-pitching, water, electricity, toilet, etc.

Bed and Breakfast (B&B) Establishments or Home-stays

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A Bed and Breakfast (B&B) is an intimate, independently run lodging establishment, where breakfast is included in the room rate. These are houses with rooms converted into overnight facilities; this can have up to 1 to 10 guest rooms. They are also known as 'Home Stays'. The owners of the B&B usually stay on the premises and are responsible for serving breakfast to the guests.

Indian Tourism's Home Stay Scheme is a golden opportunity for all those Apartment, Bungalow, or Cottage owners who can provide accommodation and food facility to domestic and international tourists. This scheme is based on India's core philosophy and tradition, Vasudhaiva Kutumbkam. This unique and profitable scheme will enable the property owners to introduce tourists to the culture, cuisine, customs and lifestyle of India. A home stay is similar in concept to that of a bed and breakfast establishment. Guests are either accommodated in the family home, or in separate quarters nearby. Nowadays, most home stays provide their guests with just as much comfort as a reputable hotel. There are a number of reasons why staying at a home stay can be preferable to staying in a hotel. These benefits are—distinctive and characterful accommodations, personalised service, local knowledge, home cooked food, celebrating festivals with local traditions, etc.

Forest Lodges

The rest houses at sanctuaries, which fill in the shortage of accommodation at such places, are called Forest Lodges. The state concerned makes land available free of cost, provides water and electricity connections and also undertake supporting construction for staff quarters, garbage and dormitory for drivers. Their location is finalised with the concerned ministry and State Forest Department. ITDC is entrusted with the responsibility for the management of all the forest lodges. These lodges are very popular among nature tourists who love wildlife as they provide a clear view of the forests to the residents from the guest rooms. Examples of forest

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lodges are Kaziranga Wildlife Sanctuary in Assam, Bharatpur Sanctuary in Rajasthan and others.

Circuit Houses

Circuit House is the accommodation for Government officers. There is one Circuit House in each city or a small town in all the States of India. They may even be called as Rest Houses. The rates charged are very minimal and differ in case of an official trip or a personal stay. The rates are different for different parts of the country.

Other Types of Accommodations

Mansion

This type of accommodation is very popular in certain European countries mostly in Austria, Italy and Germany or some of the African countries. It is a type of guesthouse or B&B, where in addition to lodging and breakfast, guests are also offered lunch and dinner. Pensions are usually family-run and cost less than other accommodation options.

Inns

Inns is a concept that was first introduced by the Roman empire. It was a place for the travellers to stay for the night, where they were provided with shelter, food and also shelter for the horses. Inns are similar to the *sarai* in India that was prevalent during that time.

Chalet

As defined by the Webster's dictionary, it is 'a wooden dwelling with sloping roof' and the floor edges go beyond the structure of the building found in Switzerland and the Alpine region. They were originally used for dairy cattle during summer season but have been converted to vacation homes for ski and hiking tourists nowadays.

Timeshare or Vacation Rentals

Another new type or segment of the hospitality industry is the timeshare hotels. These are sometimes referred to as 'Vacation-interval' hotels. Timeshare hotels are the ones in which the guests purchase the ownership



of accommodations for a specific period. These owners may also have the unit rented out by the management company that operates the hotel. In a timeshare rental, the vacation property is owned by the guest for a specific period which is same every year. During the allotted time period, the guest has access to the property. For example, if Mr. Gupta owns a two bedroom timeshare vacation home in Kerala for the last week of January, he is guaranteed a stay every year during the same time. Looking at the growth potential, The Ministry of Tourist, Government of India, has prepared guidelines for approval and classification of time share resorts. They are classified in three subgroups— 3 Star, 4 Star and 5 Star.

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Capsule Hotels

These were first opened in Osaka, Japan in 1979. These hotels serve mostly the business tourists. The rooms in the capsule are lined similar to that of a ‘double-decker’, or sleeping compartment of an AC 2 tier train. Common washrooms, vending machines and a lounge area are located on each floor. Facilities such as a bed, a television, flexible lighting, a box for valuables, etc., are provided in each capsule room.

Practical Exercises

Activity 1

Visit the luxury or star category hotels and study comparatively the facilities and services amongst them (5 star hotels, 4 star hotels and 3 star hotels, etc.).

Material required

Writing material

Procedure

- Visit the luxury hotels in your city.
- Collect information about their star rating and services.
- Prepare a file and compare their services according to the services and amenities.

Activity 2

Find out and list the five luxury hotels located at the following tourist destinations in India.

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Material required

Writing material

Procedure

The following table may be referred by the students:

| S. No. | Tourist Destination | Name of hotel |
|--------|---------------------|---|
| 1. | Delhi | Hotel Leela Palace _____ _____ _____ |
| 2. | Agra | _____ _____ _____ |
| 3. | _____ | _____ _____ _____ |

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ hotels are usually located in the natural areas like mountains, on an island, or in some other exotic location away from cities like sea side, hill stations and wildlife sanctuaries.
2. _____ are the old properties like castles, forts, palaces, and havelis belonging to royalty which have been renovated and converted into hotels.
3. 'Houseboat' type of accommodation is found in _____ and _____.
4. Capsule type of hotels are found in _____.
5. The term 'Hotel' originated in _____ century in France.

B. Subjective Questions

1. What are the primary and secondary types of accommodation?
2. Define hotels. Write the various types of hotels.



3. Write a paragraph on:
- (a) Home Stays
 - (b) Camping and Caravan sites
 - (c) Motel
 - (d) Bed and Breakfast Establishment
 - (e) Timeshare rentals

SESSION 2: CATEGORISATION OF HOTELS

Hotels are classified into various star categories on the basis of facilities, amenities and services provided by them. Comprehensive guidelines for the star classification are prepared by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India. The guidelines for this classification are revised from time to time.

Hotel classification may vary from one country to another. Guidelines for the classification of hotels in India ensure that they meet international standards in facilities and services. Although the five-star and four-star hotels in India have been able to meet international standards, some of them do not figure anywhere on the global map.

The classification is valid for a period of five years from the date of approval of the chairman of Hotel and Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee (HRACC).

The entire list of hotels classified on the basis of star category is available on the Ministry of Tourism website which is updated time to time.

This categorisation assists the tourists in selecting the hotel they would like to stay in.

HRACC

The Department of Tourism (Government of India) has set up a Hotel and Restaurant Approval and Classification Committee (HRACC) for awarding star categories to the hotel properties.

Star Categorisation

Hotels are an integral part of a tourist's visit to a place. The services offered in a hotel can make or spoil a visit completely. With the aim of providing standardised,

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world class services to the tourists, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, has introduced a voluntary scheme called E-Classification, Approval and Occupancy of Hotels, which enables hotel owners to fill out the application online for getting their hotel classified.

Five Star Deluxe Hotels

These are the most luxurious hotels. These hotels are located primarily in metropolitan cities like New Delhi and major tourist destinations like Agra, Jaipur and Goa. It is the highest level of category of hotels in India.

General Features

1. The minimum size of the room excluding bathroom should be 200 sq. feet and the size of the bathroom should be 45 sq. feet.
2. All rooms, public area with seating facilities and various guest service areas to be air-conditioned.
3. One 24 hours multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop, one speciality restaurant and 24 hours room service is must for Grade A cities and for the remaining cities, one 24 hours multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop, 24 hours room service and speciality restaurant is desirable.
4. A bar is mandatory and the license should be obtained before applying for classification.
5. Having health-fitness, swimming pool and conference facility is necessary for this category of hotel.
6. Special room and facilities for differently abled guests.
7. Telephone facility, wifi connection, business centre, parking facilities and all communication facilities are necessary.
8. Having metal detectors, X-ray machine, positioning CCTV cameras, smoke detectors, first aid kit at front desk, and fire exits are part of the safety and security.



9. Sewage treatment plant, rain water harvesting, waste management, pollution control and non-use of CFC equipment are the eco-friendly practices which this category needs to abide by.

(Note: Grade A cities include Delhi NCR, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad/Secunderabad.)

Five Star Hotels

These are the second highest star category of hotels. These are further divided into 5 star with alcohol service and 5 star without alcohol service. These luxurious hotels are located in the big cities. These hotels provide all the modern facilities for accommodation and recreation matching international standards in hospitality. Some examples of these top luxury (5 star and 5 star deluxe category) hotels are Taj Lake Palace (Udaipur), The Leela Palace (Udaipur), The Taj Mahal Palace (Mumbai), The Oberoi Amarvilas (Agra), Taj Falaknuma Palace (Hyderabad), The Oberoi Grand (Kolkata), Umaid Bhawan Palace (Jodhpur), etc.

General Features

1. The minimum size of the room excluding bathroom should be 200 sq. feet and bathroom should be 45 sq. feet.
2. 100 % rooms to be air-conditioned, public area with seating facilities and various guest services.
3. One 24 hours multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop, one speciality restaurant and 24 hours room service for Grade A cities and for the remaining cities one 24 hours multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop, 24 hours room service and speciality restaurant is desirable. Having a bar will not be mandatory for states in which alcohol is prohibited.
4. Health-fitness, swimming pool and conference facility is necessary for this category of hotel.
5. Special room and facilities for differently abled guests.

Four Star Hotels

These are also luxurious and comfort hotels but lesser than 5 star deluxe and 5 star hotels, and are located in the bigger and medium cities.

General Features

1. The minimum size of the room excluding bathroom should be 140 sq. feet and bathroom should be 36 sq. feet.
2. 100 % rooms should be air-conditioned, public area with seating facilities and various guest services.
3. One multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop (07:00am to 11:00pm), one speciality restaurant and 24 hours room service for Grade A cities and for the remaining cities, one multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop (07:00am to 11:00pm) and 24hours room service.
4. Special room and facilities for differently abled guests.
5. Telephone facility, wifi connection, business centre, parking facilities and all the communication facilities are necessary.
6. Having metal detectors, X-ray machine, CCTV, smoke detectors, first aid kit at front desk, and fire exits are part of the safety and security.
7. Sewage treatment plant, rain water harvesting, waste management, pollution control and non-use of CFC equipment are the eco-friendly practices which this category need to abide by.

Three Star Hotels

These are usually economy class hotels located in the bigger and smaller cities and catering to the need of budget travellers.

General Features

1. The minimum size of the room excluding bathroom should be 130 sq. feet and bathroom should be 36 sq. feet.



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2. 50% rooms should be air-conditioned, public area with seating facility, and various other guest services.
3. One multi-cuisine restaurant cum coffee shop (07:00am to 11:00pm) and 24 hours room service.
4. Special room and facilities for differently abled guests.
5. Telephone facility and parking facilities are necessary communication facilities.
6. Having metal detectors, CCTV, smoke detectors, first aid kit at front desk, and fire exits are part of the safety and security.
7. Sewage treatment plant, rain water harvesting, waste management, pollution control and non-use of CFC equipment are the eco-friendly practices which this category needs to abide by.

One and Two Star Hotels

These hotels are mostly available in the small cities and in particular areas of larger cities. Catering to the bag packer tourist traffic, these hotels provide all the basic facilities needed for general accommodation and offers low tariff. One and two Star Hotels are the lowest of the star category of hotels.

General Features

1. The minimum size of the room excluding bathroom should be 120 sq. feet and bathroom should be 30 sq. feet.
2. 25 % rooms should be air-conditioned, public area with seating facilities and various guest services are desirable.
3. Should have one dining room serving all the meals.
4. Special room and facilities for differently abled guests.
5. Communication facilities are desirable but not necessary for these two categories.
6. Having CCTV, smoke detectors, first-aid kit at front desk, fire exits are part of the safety and security.

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7. Sewage treatment plant, rain water harvesting, waste management, pollution control and non-use of CFC equipment are the eco-friendly practices which this category needs to abide by.

Heritage Hotels

Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, defines Heritage Hotels as those hotels that have been converted into hotels from palaces, castles, forts, havelis, hunting lodges and residences of any size, prior to 1950. The facade, architecture features and general construction should have the distinctive qualities and ambience in keeping with traditional ways of life of the area. The architecture of the property to be considered for the category should not normally be interfered with. Any extension, improvement, renovation, change in the existing structures should be done keeping in mind the traditional architectural styles and contraction techniques harmonising the new with old. In a Heritage Hotel, a visitor is offered rooms that have their own history, served traditional cuisine toned down to the requirements of international palates, is entertained by folk artists, can participate in activities that allow a glimpse into the heritage of the region, and can bask in an atmosphere that lives and breathes of the past. Taj Lake Palace in Udaipur and the Oberoi Cecil in Shimla are examples of heritage hotels. Heritage Hotels will be sub-classified in the following categories:

1. Heritage

As defined by the Ministry of Tourism, this covers the hotels built in or converted from the palaces, residences, havelies, castles, forts and hunting lodges built prior to 1950. The hotel should have a minimum of five rooms (ten beds).

2. Heritage Classic

This category includes the hotels built or created in palaces, residences, havelies, castles, forts, and hunting lodges built prior to 1935. The hotel should have a minimum of 15 rooms (30 beds).



3. Heritage Grand

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This category consists of hotels built or created in palaces, residences, *havelies*, castles, forts and hunting lodges. The hotel should have minimum of 15 rooms (30 beds) and should provide at least two sports facilities as given in the guidelines and provide traditional as well as continental cuisine.

Legacy Vintage Hotels

This concept has been introduced in addition to the heritage hotels as these help to recreate the era prior to 1950s. As stated by the Ministry of Tourism, 'hotels constructed with materials from heritage properties (i.e. properties or buildings which were built prior to the year 1950), provided that at least 50% of the material used to construct the hotel is sourced from heritage properties or buildings.'

These are further divided into three sub categories:

Legacy Vintage—Basic

It includes hotels which have materials sourced from structures prior to 1950. It should possess at least five rooms (ten beds). Traditional cuisine of the area is offered.

Legacy Vintage—Classic

It includes hotels which have materials sourced from structures prior to 1935. It should have minimum of 15 rooms (30 beds). Traditional cuisine of the area and a few dishes resembling continental cuisine are offered.

Legacy Vintage—Grand

It includes hotels which have materials sourced from structures prior to 1935. It should possess at least 15 rooms (30 beds). Both traditional and continental cuisines are offered to the guests along with two sport facilities as listed in the guidelines.

Luxury vs Budget Hotels

Luxury Hotels

These hotels are also called Up-Market Hotels or World Class Service Hotels according to the services offered

to their guests. Targeting the affluent segment of society, hotels in the Up-Market category offer world class products with personalised service of highest standards. The emphasis is on excellence and class. These hotels provide upscale restaurants and lounges, exquisite decor, concierge services, opulent rooms and abundant amenities. The design and interior decoration of the hotel itself reflects the standards maintained by the hotel. The guest rooms are large with exquisite decoration and furnishing. Generally, a valet is assigned to each guest room. These hotels have many speciality restaurants with full-assisted services. Top-end recreational facilities, such as golf course, tennis court, designer swimming pool with trained lifeguard, and other sports facilities, shopping arcades, beauty salons, health spas with sauna and jacuzzi, are a regular feature. These hotels are generally patronised by affluent people who care for quality and include business executives, celebrities, and high-ranking political figures. The Oberoi Udaivilas (Udaipur), Leela Palace (Delhi), Taj Rambagh Palace (Jaipur) and The Oberoi (Mumbai) are few luxury hotels in India.

Budget Hotels

These are also very popular as Economy Hotels and focus on meeting the most basic needs of guests by

providing clean, comfortable and inexpensive rooms. Also known as economy or limited service hotels, they appeal primarily to budget minded travellers and groups. The clientele of budget hotels may also include families with children, and bus tour groups of people travelling together. These hotels have clean, comfortable guest rooms, coffee shop, and a multi cuisine restaurant, telephone service in rooms, and channelled music and movies.



Fig. 2.7 Budget hotel



Practical Exercises

Activity 1

List the category-wise hotel names (at least five names in each category) and their location at different tourist destinations in India, collect pictures, and prepare a file. Do a comparative study with the hotels located in your city.

Material required

Writing material, Internet, etc.

Procedure

1. Search the names of category-wise hotels from internet located at different tourist destinations.
2. Note down the location and address.
3. Collect the pictures of each hotel.
4. Paste these pictures below the details of hotels.
5. Study these hotels in comparison with the hotels of your city.
6. Make a file with the above details in the following format.

List of Luxury Hotels in India

| Star Category | Name | Location/Address |
|---------------------|-------|------------------|
| 5 Star Deluxe Hotel | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| 5 Star Hotel | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |
| | _____ | _____ |

Activity 2

Select any country other than India and study the hotel classification procedure and its criteria. Do a comparative analysis and present it to the class discussing the following points.

1. Different classification of hotels
2. Step-wise procedure of classification
3. Classification committee members
4. Mandatory services and facilities for each category
5. Validity of the classification

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Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

1. First select one country, and collect the information of its hotels.
2. List out the various points of comparison.
3. Similarly, study the basis of classification of hotels in India and list out the details.
4. Make a presentation in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Fill in the Blanks

1. _____ hotels are luxury hotels.
2. Taj Lake Palace, Udaipur is an example of _____ hotel.
3. Castles, forts, palaces, havelis converted into hotels are called _____ hotels.
4. _____ is responsible for categorisation of hotels.
5. _____ hotels are economy hotels.

B. Subjective Questions

1. Briefly explain the categorisation of a hotel property.
2. What are the guest services offered by a five star hotel?
3. What do you mean by Heritage Hotels? Explain the heritage classic, and heritage grand hotel property.
4. Differentiate between Luxury and Budget Hotels.
5. Differentiate between a 5 Star Deluxe and a 3 Star hotel based on the classification of hotels.

SESSION 3: TYPE OF ROOMS AND GUEST SERVICES

Category of Rooms

Category of rooms in hotels can be classified in the following three types:

Type A— (a) Normal Room, (b) Deluxe Room, (c) Executive Room, (d) Suite Room, (e) Deluxe Suite Room, (f) Presidential Suite Room, etc.

Type B— Air Conditioned (AC) or Non-Air conditioned (Non-AC)



Type C— Facing a particular view such as poolside (Cabana Rooms), sea, garden, mountain, etc.

Type of Rooms

Due to rapid growth and changing pattern of the hotel and hospitality industry, many changes have been made in the standard of the services offered.

Tourists have a wide range of hotels as well as different types of rooms to choose from when they decide to go on a trip. The room charges also differ based on the category of hotel chosen and room selected.



Fig. 2.8 A Hotel room

| Room Type | Basic Room Features |
|-------------------------|--|
| Deluxe Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenities such as refrigerator, stock of beverages, and a mini-bar. Bedding— One or two queen beds, or one king size bed Prominent location with highest comfort. |
| Suite Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Separate living and sleeping area, with cooking facilities. Suite rooms have one, two or three bedrooms, sometimes in addition with a parlour and a full kitchen. |
| Superior Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comfort and furnishing as in a deluxe room but less desirable location. Bedding usually one or two double beds or queen beds, or a king bed. Rate and bedding may differ from international hotel chain as compared to other properties. |
| Standard Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One or two double beds; one queen bed or two twin beds. Rooms usually do not have a view. Many such rooms may be located in the least convenient part of the hotel. |
| Economic or Budget Room | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Usually used by budget class tourists or guests Rates may be low and discounted Smaller in size than other rooms Smaller bedding in the room |

We should also keep this in mind that these terms are used differently by different hotels as luxury or standard



Fig. 2.9 Double room



Fig. 2.10 Twin room



Fig. 2.11 Triple room

hotel room types. These room types may be as following:

Single Room

A single room is for one person, and usually has a full-size bed (double bed).

Double Room

A double room usually has space for two guests, with a double bed (full-size) or queen-size bed.

Twin Room

A twin room usually has space for two guests, with two separate beds (twin or single beds).

Triple Room

A triple room can accommodate three guests, either with one double bed and a single bed, or a different combination of three.

Suite

A suite is bigger than your normal hotel room. In fancy hotels, suites could even have multiple rooms. You might also see an executive suite or a family suite.

Adjoining or Connecting Rooms

This means that two rooms are connected together by a door going from one room directly into the other. Large groups of people or families might ask to be put in adjoining rooms.

Types of Beddings inside a Hotel Room

Besides the room category, a CSE working in the travel, tourism and hospitality sector, also needs to understand the types of beds provided by a hotel so as to deal with the choices of comfort of the traveller. The main types of bedding in a hotel room are:

King Bed

It has large size mattresses, i.e. 76 inches wide and 80 inches long. These types of beds are provided only in suites or deluxe rooms.

Queen Bed

It is about 60 inches wide and 80 inches long. A room with queen beds may have either one or two beds.

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Standard Double Bed

This is 54 inches wide and 75 inches long and is usually provided in standard and economy rooms. A room may have one or two such beds.

Twin Bed

It is about 39 inches wide and 75 inches long in size and is designed for one adult. In most of the cases, a room equipped with twin beds has two beds and sometimes an extra bed may be added on the demand of guests and is chargeable.

Room Features

Here are various amenities that hotel rooms might offer to their guests. ‘Amenities’ is just another term for the features provided to the guests.

Air Conditioner

Air conditioning keeps the rooms cool in hot weather.

Heating

In cold weather, heating will keep the rooms and hotel warm.

Bathroom

This is the room where you'll find a toilet, sink and shower. Most hotel rooms have the bathroom attached.

Internet access

Wired or wireless internet access is provided by the hotels. This might be free of charge or maybe be on chargeable basis requiring a password.

Wireless Printing

This allows the guests to print from their own computers to a printer situated at a designated place in the hotel,

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which not need be connected to the printer with a wire. However, the hotel will assist in configuring the client.

Fan

Some rooms might have ceiling fans

Balcony

A balcony is a platform outside a room that's enclosed by some type of railing. Balconies are on all the floors higher than the ground level (first floor and higher).

Patio

It is a paved area outside the room on ground level that usually has an outdoor table and chairs.

Smoke-free

If rooms are smoke-free, it means that smoking is not allowed. Smoking and non-smoking are two terms used to describe if smoking is allowed or not.

Facilities in a Hotel Room

There are some terms that are often used in the tourism and hospitality industry to describe the facilities provided in a hotel room.

Complimentary means 'free'. Often hotels will serve a complimentary breakfast, included in the cost of your room, or have complimentary toiletries like shampoos and soaps in the bathroom.

Bathtub is provided in the bathroom, where people can clean themselves by taking a bath.

Shower allows people to bathe while standing. The shower head is attached overhead and this area is separated using an enclosed glass panel or shower curtains to avoid spilling water all over the bathroom while the guest bathes.

Towels are used to dry after taking a shower or bath. These are divided into face towel, hand towel, bath towel and bath mat.

Robes are provided for the guests to wear after they have taken a shower. They are also called bathrobes. These are mostly available in luxury hotels.



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Toiletries are small personal items you might use in the bathroom, such as shampoo and conditioner for washing hair, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste for brushing teeth, etc.

Hair Dryer— Most hotels will have an electric hair dryer for guests to dry their hair after a head bath. In standard hotels, hair dryers are attached to the walls with a cord. These are also called blow dryers.

Sink is used to wash hands. It has a faucet.

Soap is used to kill germs and bacteria while washing. It can be either liquid (stored in a soap dispenser) or a solid bar. Some hotels have both hand soap and body soap.

Lamp provides extra light, besides the light fixtures on the ceiling and walls. These could be placed next to the beds as reading lamps or on the study table provided in the room.

Executive desk may be provided in some rooms which would be a desk to sit and write or work on. These are sometimes called executive desks.

Kitchenette is a mini-kitchen where people can prepare basic food, usually with a microwave and sink.

Kettle— In hotels, a kettle is placed for heating water for preparing tea or coffee. Sachets of assorted teas, coffee, sugar, sugar free and milk powder along with two cups and two spoons are kept alongside the kettle.

Room Service is a service that lets the guests order food or drinks and have it delivered to their hotel room.

Turndown Service is provided in the evening time, where the bed is made ready for the guest to sleep in at night. A goodnight message or mints maybe placed beside the pillow.

Curtains usually hang from a rod to cover a window. Curtains can be pulled open or closed to let sunlight in or keep it out.

TV with a remote control (small hand-held device used to change the channel or volume) is provided in most rooms. Some hotels have a listing of the local TV channels. Also, there are often pay-per-view channels or movies that guests are later charged for.

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Safe is a small box locked with a combination lock or key where guests can keep valuable items locked and secure.

Cot is a small bed that folds up and rolls on wheels, so it can be moved into rooms when an extra bed is needed.

Pull-out Sofa is a couch that can be pulled out into a sofa-bed.

Armchair is a more comfortable chair with rests for both the arms.

Linens is a term used for bedsheets, pillow cases to cover the pillows, a blanket or a comforter (the thick blanket on top of a bed).

Iron and Ironing Board is provided in some categories of rooms to help the guests to iron their clothes in the room itself.

Private Jacuzzi is a hot tub located somewhere inside or attached to the room. ‘Private’ is the opposite of ‘public’, and means that this Jacuzzi is just for the people in that room.

Guest Service in Hotel

Guest services include the consistent delivery of products and services which not only meets the expectations but also exceeds the expectations of guests. It focuses on providing delightful hotel experiences that may last a lifetime.

Legendary Hotelier Cesar Ritz’s view on Guest Service was:
No detail is too small and no request is too big if it is meant to satisfying a customer.

His philosophy on guest service formed the foundation for service in hotel industry. (National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology)

Food and Beverage (F&B) Services

Food and beverage department deals with providing quality food and beverages to the guests. It may be part of a full-fledged hotel or running independently. The team of food and beverage staff has to look at the receiving and seating of the guest, taking of orders, serving the order,



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clearance of the dishes and plates, settling of the bill and asking for guest feedback during the service or at the end. Food and beverage department works in close coordination with the food production department. A bar is an area where the drinks are prepared as in the view of the guest area inside the restaurant mostly. Other than hotels, food and beverage services are available on airlines, trains, cruise liners, organisation, schools, colleges, hospitals, etc.

Most of the star-ranked hotels offer multiple F&B services in their hotels, such as:

- Restaurant
- Lounge
- Coffee Shop
- Room Service
- Poolside Barbecue or Grill Service
- Banquet Service
- Bar
- Outside Catering Service

Food and Beverage Restaurant

These are the places in a hotel where food and drinks are served. There are different types of restaurants:

All Day Dining Restaurants

They are usually called Coffee Shop or Cafe in Hotels. They are usually big in size with many covers (seats), compared to other restaurants in the same hotel. The main reason why they are called All Day Dining Restaurants is because of their hours of operation, as they are open from 7 am to 11pm, whereas in 5-star hotels, they are operational for 24 hours a day. The services provided by these vary from breakfast in the morning to lunch in the afternoon and dinner in the evening.

Fine Dining Restaurants

These restaurants are characterised by their elaborate and exclusive menu with special emphasis on the high quality of food that they serve. The emphasis being on fresh ingredients and natural flavours or on the type of

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cuisine served, or both. Usually the operation of this restaurant revolves around the Head Chef or Chef De Cuisine of this outlet.

Speciality Restaurants

These restaurants usually have a type of National or Regional Character or Cuisine attached to them, for example, Italian Speciality Restaurant, Chinese Speciality Restaurant, etc. In some hotels, sometimes they also have Multi Cuisine Speciality Restaurants, which literally means that the restaurant serves cuisines from more than one country or the dishes on its menu has food specialties from many different countries.

Lounge

Lounges can be found in different hotels. Their main purpose is to offer food and drinks in a comfortable and cozy seating in relaxed surroundings. There are many kinds of lounges ranging from a lounge in a lobby, Cocktail Lounge and Cigar Lounge to Executive and Club Lounge on special floors.

Coffee Shop

It is a part of the hotel, mostly run 24 hours. It offers some snacks along with coffee.

Room Service

It is a part of the Food and Beverage Department in hotels. A menu is placed in the guestroom, as per the convenience, the guest places the order and the food is delivered to the guestroom. Room service is operational 24 hours and the variety of dishes in the menu differs from hotel to hotel.

Bar

Bar is a place where alcoholic as well as non-alcoholic drinks are served. There is usually a small snacks menu too. The service is fast and quick. There are various kinds of bars ranging from Formal Bars to Club Bars, Pubs, Pool, Bars, Wine Bars, Cocktail Bars, Beach Bar to Juice Bars and many more.



Discotheque or Nightclub

They are outlets where music and entertainment takes priority with the food and drinks. The operation is very fast and the guest numbers are large. Security is an important aspect in these operations. Music and entertainment can range from DJ to live bands playing.

Meeting and Conference Rooms

These are rooms with limited seating and have audio visual setup required for conducting meetings. They are let out to guests for conducting their meetings. The guest is charged for an entire day or on hourly basis. These are smaller than banquet halls. Food and beverage requirements maybe charged extra depending on the guest's requirement.

Banquet Halls

These are large Function Rooms which are primarily used for functions and weddings. The staffing ratio of full time staff in this section is very less as the function and wedding business can sometimes be seasonal and extra staff is usually filled in by employing part time staff. This section is the most dynamic section in Food and Beverage with the conference section, which is more physically demanding and creatively oriented.

Delicatessen

This is also called a Deli in short. It is a place where guests can buy fresh produce ranging from freshly baked bread, cold meat, fresh salads, cakes, homemade ice creams, light and healthy drinks, etc.

Others

There are many other Food and Beverage outlets ranging from Fast Food Outlets to Food Courts to Snack Bars which are usually standalone or in a shopping centre.

Functions of Food and Beverage Servers

The main functions of F&B services in a hotel are to:

- prepare tables or counters for meals
- stock the service area with supplies (for example, coffee, glassware, etc.)

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- greet customers, present menus and help the customers in selecting menu items
- inform customers about daily specials
- record orders and place them with the kitchen and bar
- pick up and serve orders
- check that the customers are enjoying their meals and correct any problems
- suggest and serve desserts and beverages
- clean and reset tables
- tabulate and present bills for payment

Food Service Menus

A menu is a detailed list of food and beverage items that are served in a restaurant along with the prices. A carefully planned and designed menu can help in increasing the sales of the dishes.

A menu is a presentation of detailed list of food items that are served in restaurant. In any food service organisation, it is a control tool to run a food service operation. If a menu is developed with careful planning following the food trends and featuring menu, it can contribute in all sectors of the hotel. A well planned menu can also ensure optimal utilisation of hotel resources.

Types of Menu

Even though menu could be offered in different ways in different food service organisations, traditionally there are two types of food menus that are offered—*À la carte* and *Table D’Hôte*. Other menus are usually adaptations of these of two types.

Table d’Hôte Menu (Table of the host)

A *table d’hôte* menu may only offer one food item from each category of the menu format and therefore offers little choice. Or it can be a menu at a set price, offering two or three courses with no choice. For example, soup, main course and dessert. The word has originated from the inns of France where the



guests ate at a common table called the host's table in the sixteenth century.

Table d'hote menus are a good example of a non-selective menu. The menu is at a fixed price with set items. It can also be a cyclical menu, e.g. changing every day and rotating through the month. The guest is seated and served at a table by the waiting staff. The various kinds of *table d' hote* menus are:

- (a) Banquet Menu
- (b) Buffet Menu
- (c) Coffee Houses Menu
- (d) Cyclical Menu

À La Carte Menu (According to card)

According to the Oxford Dictionary, early in the 19th century, it translates into 'according to the card (menu)'. A good example of a selective menu would be *À la carte* menu. This is a menu with all the dishes individually priced. Items on the menu are prepared and cooked to order. All items on the menu are listed at a different price and the guest is served at a table. The various kinds of table *À la carte* menus are:

- (a) Breakfast Menu
- (b) Luncheon Menu
- (c) Dinner Menu
- (d) Room Service Menu
- (e) Lounge Menu

Table Layouts for Dining

Once the type of menu is decided in the restaurant, the cutlery, crockery and glassware are set on the table. There are basically three types of table setting for dining in the restaurant of a hotel.

Setting Table for Formal Dining

This type of table setup is required for formal events like corporate lunch or dinner, or a wedding party. The formal dining contains multiple courses and second helpings are not offered.

The table setup looks as follows (Fig. 2.12):

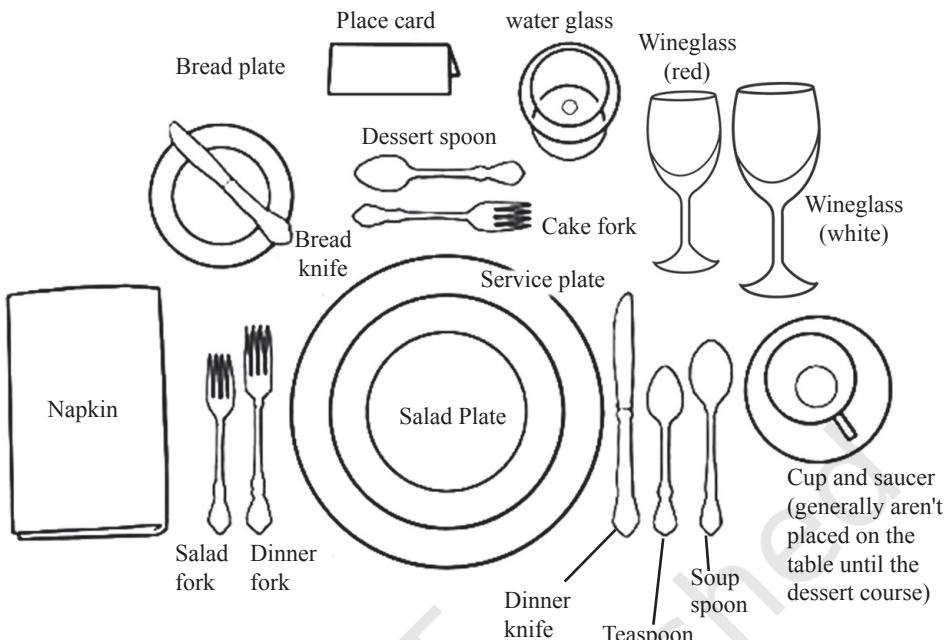


Fig. 2.12 Table layout for formal dining

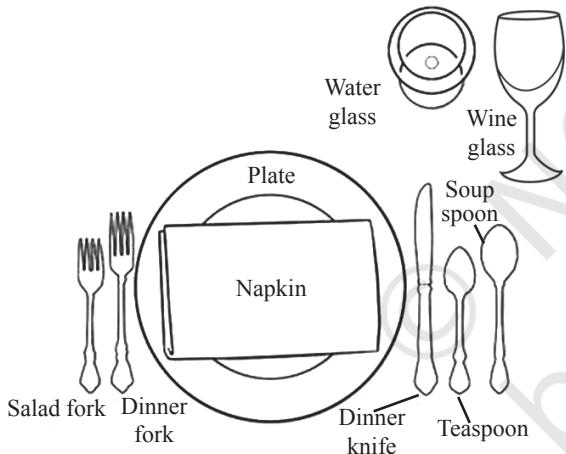


Fig. 2.13 Table Layout for casual dining

Setting Table for Casual Dining

This table setup is required for informal events like holiday parties and family gatherings. Casual dining can contain multiple courses and service staff offers or serves second rounds of helping when a guest requests for it. This table setup appears as shown in Fig. 2.13.

Setting a Buffet Table

This set up is required for catering to large groups of people. Buffet table setting can be done in numerous ways depending upon the size and shape of the place, the menu, and the number of guests (Fig. 2.14.)

- The food items are placed in a sequence from lightest to heaviest, starters to desserts, or coolest to warmest.
- Cutlery is placed on the guest tables.
- Glasses, cups, and saucers are placed on a separate table to avoid congestion.
- Table decoration pieces are placed such that they do not interfere with the food items.

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- Plates are stacked not more than 15 plates per stack.
- Paper napkins are placed between the plates.

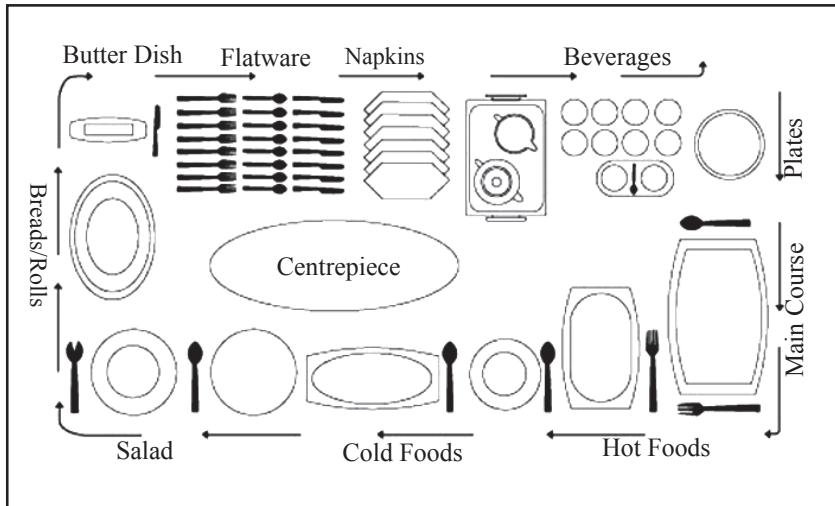


Fig. 2.14 Table layout for buffet

Types of Meal Plans and Tariffs

The term 'Meal Plan' refers to the meal types that will be included in the guest's room rate and services. This plan includes the number and size of portions that will be served per person. The various kinds of meal plans used in the hotel and hospitality industry are:

1. **European Plan (EP)**— Room Tariff + Morning Tea (No meal included)
2. **Continental Plan (CP)**— Room Tariff + Continental Breakfast
3. **Modified American Plan (MAP)**— Room Tariff + Breakfast + Lunch or dinner (options available)
4. **American Plan (AP)**— Room Tariff + Breakfast + Lunch + Dinner
5. **Modified American Plan (MAP)**— Room Tariff + Breakfast + Lunch/Dinner
6. **Bermuda Plan (BP)**— Room Tariff +Breakfast only

Apart from the above meal plans, some other terms are also used in hotel industry, i.e. FAP—Full American Plan which means breakfast, lunch and dinner, CPAI—Continental Plan All Inclusive (breakfast) and APAI— American Plan All Inclusive (Breakfast, dinner and lunch).

Practical Exercises

Activity 1

Visit and collect the tariff brochures of luxury hotels located in your city and compare the rates and services offered to their guests.

Material Required

Writing material, collected tariff brochures of hotels, etc.

Procedure

1. Divide students into groups of five students each.
2. Visits the nearby hotels located in your city.
3. Each group will collect five tariff brochures of hotels.
4. Study and note the plans and tariff rates of hotels.
5. Present the report in the class.

Activity 2

Collect and compare the menus of restaurants near your home.

Material Required

Writing material, collected menus of different hotels, etc.

Procedure

1. Divide students into groups of five students each.
2. Visit the nearby hotels located in your city.
3. Each group will collect five menu cards of different hotels.
4. Study and note the plans and tariff rates of hotels.
5. Present the study in the class.

Check Your Progress

A. Multiple Choice Questions

1. 'Modified American Plan' includes _____.
 (a) Two meals of the day + Room rent
 (b) One meal of the day + Room rent
 (c) Room Tariff + Breakfast + Lunch/Dinner
 (d) Only Room
2. 'American Plan' includes _____.
 (a) three daily meals included with room rates
 (b) Room Tariff + Breakfast + Lunch + Dinner
 (c) only Breakfast
 (d) only Dinner
3. 'Cabana' means _____.
 (a) Studio room
 (b) Twin rooms



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- (c) Triple rooms
(d) a room attached to the swimming pool ride for changing or resting
4. Food or beverages served in guest room is known as _____.
(a) Full service
(b) Room service
(c) Service station
(d) None of these

B. Subjective Questions

1. How many types of rooms are available for guests in a luxury hotel?
2. Write the different types of meal plans offered to the guests by the five star hotels.
3. What are the facilities provided to the guests inside the hotel rooms?
4. List all the different types of food and beverage outlets in a hotel and briefly explain each of them.

SESSION 4: FUNCTIONS AND SERVICES OF FRONT OFFICE

Front Office Department Manager heads the team of staff working on various activities and responsibilities, in the front office department. Few prominent activities that the front office staff is involved in, are:

Reservations

Reservation is the part of Front Office Department. Hotel bookings are made through this section. A large hotel chain may have its own centralised reservation system which is a single point where all reservations of the chain are made, while independent hotels may subscribe to an international reservation system that is open to any hotel who subscribes to it. The main functions are to:

1. book rooms in advance.
2. handle all the cancellation and revisit as per the reservation made by the guests from different sources and modes.

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3. process and confirm reservation request.
4. forecast future room reservation status.
5. update room availability chart.
6. maximise the sale of rooms.
7. gather maximum information from the guests for making reservation.
8. maintain good and healthy relations with the sales and marketing department to maximise the revenue of the hotel.

Reception

It is located at the lobby level of the hotel. It also allocates the rooms and establishes the rates for different types of guest. The person of the section is called Receptionist. The main work of this section is registration. Other functions of this section are to:

1. warmly receive all the arrival guests and to welcome them.
2. complete registration formalities and perform the procedure of check-in and check-out of the guest.
3. co-ordinate closely with housekeeping department for clearance of department room, room change and UR (Under Repaired) rooms.
4. issue VIP amenities voucher to the food and beverage service.
5. assign or allocate rooms to the guest.
6. co-ordinate closely with the bell desk for luggage handling and room keys.
7. create guest folios and settling guest account are the most important job responsibilities of the receptionist.

Guest Registration

Guest registration refers to recording the guest's information for official purposes. At the time of reservation, the front office staff asks the guests to enter their personal information on the Guest registration Card (GRC). Registration activity is mandatory for



both—the guests with reserved accommodation as well as for the walk-in guests. During registration, the guest is required to enter important information on the GRC such as, Guest Name, Address, Contact details, Organisation, Arrived details, Passport and Visa Details- Date of Issue and Date of Expiry, Place of Issue, Visa Type, Payment Option – Cash, Card, or Cheque, Guest signature, etc. It is the responsibility of the Front Office staff not to reveal the guest information to unauthorised persons.

Telecommunications

The telecommunication department is responsible for all communication within the hotel as well as outside the hotel. The following points mark the importance of this department:

1. guests can make local as well as international calls directly from their respective rooms.
2. charges or the amount are directly posted to the guest folios.
3. facilities given to the guest by the hotel like wake up calls, do not disturb (DND), interconnecting phones, calls waiting, etc., are handled by telecommunication department.

Accounts

It mainly includes a Front Office Cashier and a Night Auditor. The cashier is responsible for handling guest payments. This person reports to the Accounts Manager rather than the Front Office Manager.

The Night Auditor performs the duties of front desk reception as well as accounting partly during the night shift and needs to report to the heads of departments, front office, and accounting.

Front Office Cashier

This section of the front office is located at the front desk. Front Office Cashier, working in this section is responsible for updating guest bills, keeping up to date cash and credit transactions of the guests and get them settled before the guest departure. Front office cashier

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ensures timely collection of all the guest bills from different outlets and posts them in respective folios if the Front Office is not computerised.

Concierge

The concierge staff is responsible for assisting guests by booking tours, making theatre and restaurant reservations, etc., along with taking care of their security, lodging and arrangements of their visit to entertainment set ups like theatre. This staff also provides information about the City Events as well as about the tourist places and provide guide maps to the guest. This department helps the guests to book tickets for sightseeing, reserve restaurants for the guests, and books movie tickets for the guest.

Bell Desk

It is located at either side of the lobby. This desk is responsible for handling the guest luggage during arrival and departure. The bell desk section also handles the payment by the guests for various services availed at the hotel, delivers guest mail and messages to the concerned guest room. The important functions of this section are to:

1. co-ordinate the movement of guests' luggage and baggage during the check-in and check-out of the guests.
2. distribute daily newspaper and magazines to the guest rooms.
3. be responsible for creating reports for guest Errand Card, left luggage procedure, and scanty baggage procedure.

Lobby

It is an area which is located at the entrance of a hotel building with sitting arrangement for guest's visitors to meet and wait. It is synonym to the word 'Foyer', which means a wide passage or large hall just inside the entrance of a public building. The dimension and design of this area rely upon the size and design of the



building. Basically, lobby area must be furnished with all the necessary things.

Examples— Lobby desk, Bell desk, GRE/GRO, Reception desk, Cash counter, Rest room, Business centre, Safety lockers, etc.

Telephone Operator

This is a separate section under front office department which is located on the back side of the hotel. They are connected to the front desk and cannot be seen by the guest. A telephone operator is an employee in this section, responsible for handling all the incoming and outgoing guest calls and hotel calls. The telephone operator is responsible for posting all the charges incurred by the guests and the hotel employees while making calls.

Business Centre

Modern technology has changed the pace of information system. People can do their job in a home country while staying in far-away countries. The role of fax, photocopying and secretarial work is deemed important to provide these types of services to the guest. There may be demand from the guest to translate and interpret services as well as for hiring of laptops, computers, and portable telephones in their rooms. The responsibility of such type of services comes under business services. The arrangement of meeting rooms and conferences is also one of the duties of business centre staff. If the hotel has many non-English speaking guests, then bilingual secretaries may be required in the business centre.

Hotel Room Status

This is a responsibility of the housekeeping department to inform the room status to the front desk in a hotel. During the guest's stay, the housekeeping status of the guestroom changes several times. The various terms defined are typical of the room status terminology of the lodging industry. Not every room status will occur for each guestroom during every stay.

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The following terminologies are used for room status in a hotel:

Occupied: A guest is currently registered to the room.

Vacant and Ready: The room has been cleaned and inspected and is ready for an arriving guest.

Complimentary: The room is occupied, but the guest is assessed no charge for its use.

Stay Over: The guest is not expected to check out today and will remain at least one more night.

On-change: The guest has departed, but the room has not yet been cleaned and readied for re-sale.

Do Not Disturb: The guest has requested not to be disturbed.

Sleep-out: A guest is registered to the room, but the bed has not been used.

Skipper: The guest has left the hotel without making arrangements to settle his or her account.

Sleeper: The guest has settled his or her account and left the hotel, but the front office staff has failed to properly update the room's status.

Vacant and ready: The room has been cleaned and inspected and is ready for an arriving guest.

Out-of-order: The room cannot be assigned to a guest. A room may be out-of-order for a variety of reasons including the need for maintenance, refurbishing, and extensive cleaning.

Double Lock: The guest room door is locked from inside and outside two times so that no one can enter.

Lockout: The room has been locked so that the guest cannot re-enter until a hotel official clears him or her.

DNCO (Did Not Check Out): The guest made arrangements to settle his or her account (and thus is not a skipper), but has left without informing the front office.

Due out: The room is expected to become vacant after the following day's checkout time.

Checkout: The guest has settled his or her account, returned the room keys, and left the hotel.



Late Checkout: The guest has requested and is being allowed to check out later than the hotel's standard check-out time.

Procedures for Booking Hotel Rooms

Hotel rooms can be booked by either personal contact or through some travel agent. There are various modes of room reservation in a standard hotel.

Mode of Reservation

These are the means by which a guest makes the reservation of rooms in a hotel. The reservation may come from the guests directly or through any other organisation but the medium through which they reach the hotel are different. Following are some of the modes of reservation:

Letter

It is a written request for reservation, which may have been sent through post, courier or hand delivered. It is the most common method for advance booking. Reservations made through letter, delivered through post or courier, are time consuming. Fax or Email are more efficient and fast methods used today for this purpose.

Telephone

This is a faster way of getting confirmation and is handled directly by the reservation staff. During the telephone conversation with the guest, the reservation assistant takes down all the necessary details on the reservation forms.

Fax (Facsimile)

It is the most common method as it is cheaper than telephonic conversation and allows transmission in written form, better than telex; as it allows graphic form to be transmitted over telephone lines making it more authenticated and better.

E-Mail or Internet (Computer)

With the fast advancement of internet in the world, today most of the hotels allow reservation online on

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internet through their website. Even reservations sent on E-mail are accepted.

CRS (Central Reservation System)

There are many private service providers providing CRS services thus allowing direct reservation access to travel agents, clients or instant basis through their own networks. All hotels have their own CRS system.

Duties and Responsibilities of Front Office Assistant

1. Perform Check-in and Check-out Procedures

Check-in Process

This is a critical process, since a lot of vital information is exchanged between the guest and the hotel staff during this process, irrespective of the mode of check-in process, i.e. manual or computerised. The manual process starts when a guest either walks-in (without reservation) or one with prior reservation walks into the hotel looking for desired or requested accommodation, i.e., depending upon the availability of rooms, the walk-in guest is assigned a room whereas the guest with prior reservation is usually assigned the room for which he has requested.

Check-out Process

Check-out point is the last contact that a guest will have with the property and the experience at this point will determine the kind of impression the guest will carry with him/her. In other words, if it is smooth, the guest will carry pleasant memories. Thus, to make this process more efficient and error proof, you shall divide it into three parts:

- (a) Guest vacating the room;
- (b) Guest settling the bill; and
- (c) Guest departing.

Guest vacating the room usually depends upon the hotel's check-out time. Usually the check-out time is 12 noon. Sometimes depending on the availability of the

room and the type of client, the check-out time can be extended for the guest on special request.

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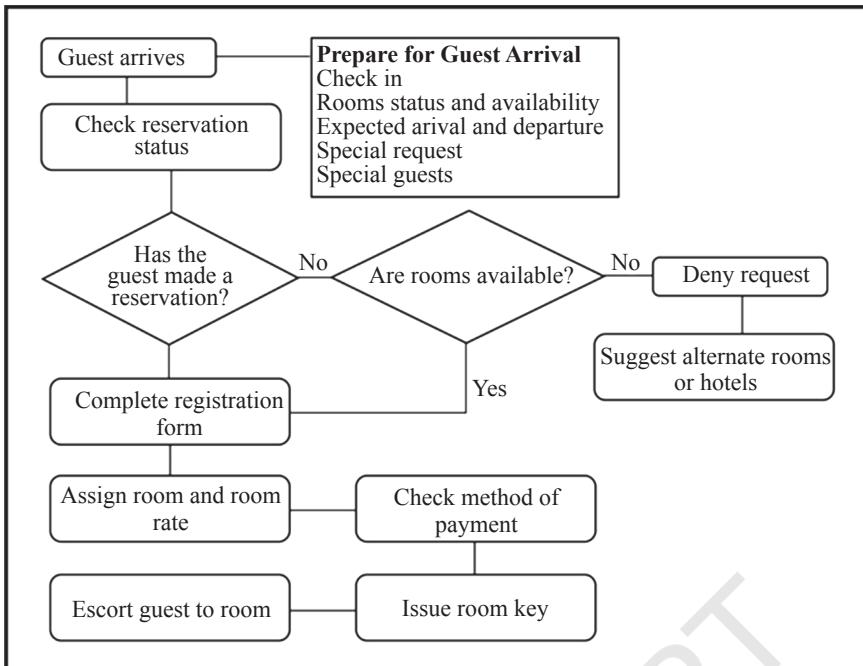


Fig.2.15 Check-in and check-out procedures in a hotel

2. Welcoming and Greeting a Guest at Front Office

Front office is the visible department of a hotel where guests interact firstly, so it is important to give warm welcome and greeting to the guest because the first impression should be memorable for a guest. An unwelcoming or reluctant behaviour of the Front Office Staff leaves a very bad impression on the guest and spoils the image of the hotel. This may even adversely affect the hotel's revenue since it will lose repeat customers. So, the hotel staff should extend a warm welcome to the guest and may even offer a bouquet or a *teeka* on the forehead, especially for customers who have travelled long way and would be tired. Offer seating, tea or coffee in the lobby area in case of little time required for preparing hotel room for the guests.

First Impression

- Friendly Welcome— “Hi, Welcome to India/ Delhi/Bhopal” or “Good afternoon, Welcome

to Taj Palace. Is this your first time visiting our city?"

- Stand Up— Get off the chair and be presentable (put on ironed shirt and be well dressed)
- Make Eye Contact— Eye contact produces the feelings of caring, trustworthiness and likability.
- Smile— Do not look sad. Instead, smile because when we smile, it creates a spark that triggers the brain's pleasure centre. That's why a smile is said to be contagious.

Use Right Words

Here are some harsh versus polite hospitality words. For example:

| Harsh | Polite | Reasoning |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| 'No' | Find a solution | 'No' gives no space for discussion and gives a feeling of snubbing |
| 'We can't do that' | 'Please allow me to figure out a solution' | Gives an impression of earnestness to help |
| 'We're sold out' | 'Tonight our hotel is fully committed, can I offer to help you find nearby accommodations?' | It helps the client to feel safe and assured |
| 'Are you checking out/in' | 'Good Morning/Afternoon, How may I assist you?' | To begin with a greeting feels welcoming |
| 'I don't know' | 'Please allow me to find out this for you' | Makes the client feel valued and respected |
| 'I don't work in that department' | 'I'm happy to help you find the right person to better answer your question' | Shows integrity and gives a feeling of not being misled |
| 'It's our policy' | 'Let me see how I can help you with this' | Conveys the flexibility of the services of the hotel |
| 'You can't do that; | 'Here are some alternative suggestions for you to...' | It makes the client feel accommodating |
| 'No Problem' | 'It's my pleasure' | Exudes warmth and personal touch |
| 'It's not my fault' | 'On behalf of ___ and our hotel, I sincerely apologise....' | Gives the feeling of sincerity and appeasement |



Try to Offer Best and More

NOTES

Here are seven things more to offer to the customers:

- Anticipate their needs with questions.
- Give directions.
- Offer coupons and discounts to local attractions.
- Make a welcome guidebook with local favourites, restaurant, banks, ATM, post office, grocery store and more.
- Free drink coupons, gift basket, anniversary cake, birthday card, more towels or room amenities—make them feel extra special.
- Candy bar with guests' name on it.
- Complimentary upgrades, free breakfast, additional night stay completed.

Empower Yourself

For this, follow the given steps:

- Successfully resolve a guest issue
- Take on a new initiative
- Ask for additional tasks on your own
- Share ideas on how to improve a process at your hotel
- Suggest ways to save energy, payroll and other expenses
- Don't be afraid to, sometimes, challenge the status quo
- Do something that will make a guest super happy.
- Challenge yourself to do better.

Practical Exercises

Activity 1

Visit a hotel nearby as a guest and observe the various activities being carried out at the front office.

Material Required

Writing material

Procedure

1. The students can visit in pairs or can visit individually along with guardians.
2. Observe the activities going on at the front desk.

NOTES

3. Make notes of the visit.
4. Prepare a report of about 250 words describing what all you observed and compare it with what all you have read about in this session.

Activity 2

From your visit in Activity 1, try to recollect and draw the layout of the lobby of the hotel. Label the various sections in the lobby.

Material required

Writing material

Procedure

1. Take your notebook and draw a neat layout using a pencil and scale.
2. Layout need not be of proper dimensions.
3. Label the various sections of the lobby using a pen.

Check Your Progress

A. Multiple Choice Questions

1. The concierge is under which department?
 - (a) Security
 - (b) Division
 - (c) Accounting Rooms
 - (d) Front Office
2. The person handling the guest luggage is known as _____.
 - (a) Bell boy
 - (b) Night auditor
 - (c) Room attendant
 - (d) Front office attendant
3. Mr. X checks into room 207 for a one-night stay. Early the next morning, Mr. X leaves the hotel without paying the bill. When checking the 4pm housekeeping report, the front desk finds room 207 listed as vacant and ready for sale and realises that the guest was a _____.
 - (a) Due out
 - (b) Sleeper
 - (c) Skipper
 - (d) Sleep out
4. DNCO stands for _____.
 - (a) Did Not Collect Order
 - (b) Did Not Check Order
 - (c) Did Not Confirm Order
 - (d) Did Not Check Out



NOTES

5. Which of the following Front Office Forms typically contains personal guest data, the length of stay, and the method of settlement?
 - (a) Room rack slip
 - (b) Registration card
 - (c) Information rack slip
 - (d) Credit card voucher
6. Arranging local sightseeing and airport pick-up facilities for the tourists by the hotel are the functions of _____.
 - (a) Front Office
 - (b) Travel Desk
 - (c) Reception
 - (d) Tour Operator

B. Subjective Questions

1. What is the importance of first impression for the front office staff?
2. Write a dialogue between an angry guest and the reception staff, due to the delay in the check-in procedure.
3. Define centralised reservation system (CRS) in hotel reservation. What are the other modes for booking of hotel rooms?
4. Briefly explain the different sections of hotel front office.
5. Explain the check-in and check-out procedures in a luxury hotel.