



Adding teeth to Kochi's tourism landscape, Ayana unveils a luxury boutique hotel

In a bid to provide an immersive experience of the destination itself, Ayana Hospitality has recently launched a luxury property in the Southern state of Kerala. TF speaks to Akhil Behl, CEO. Excerpts:

By TF BUREAU

Please take us through the product of the new property in Kochi. What experience does it entail for the consumers?

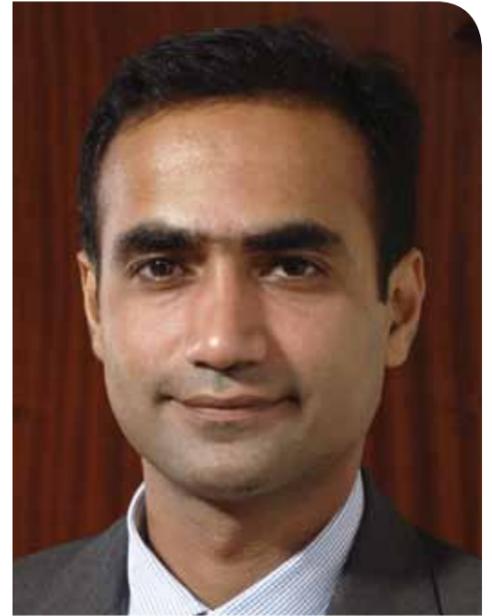
Ayana is a luxury boutique hotel that celebrates the local architecture, culture and cuisine of Fort Kochi. Step into the past as you enter the 200-year-old courthouse and find a modern sanctuary in Ayana's striking art deco renovation. Art deco designs and

striking colour combinations define our rooms. All 16 rooms feature classic black and white tiled floors blending history with modern luxurious comfort. The hotel offers two options for stay – the smaller and cozier Deluxe Rooms and the spacious, glamorous Luxury Suites. The hotel is equipped with a roof top pool and a fitness suite – both offering mesmerising views of the sun and sea.

Ayana places a high priority on food and offers fresh local produce and authentic flavors. We offer a sundry menu based on

organic vegetables and only the freshest local catch.

For contemporary Indian art aficionados, the hotel takes great pride in sourcing and showcasing Indian artworks at the hotel. Currently there are pieces from established artists such as T. Vaikuntam and Sakti Burman, as well as relative newcomers like Vaishali Dalvi and Sharanu Aloli on display and for sale at the hotel. Ayana's commitment to promoting Indian artists is clearly visible as you walk through the hotel.



AKHIL BEHL
CEO, AYANA HOSPITALITY PVT. LTD.

As per the guest interest, Ayana curates unforgettable excursion deep into Fort Kochi with trusted and expert local guide. For historians, our guides will bring Kochi's unique history of diverse influences alive around you, from the Santa Cruz Basilica and the Dutch Palace to the Chinese fishing nets and the Ginger Factory. Alternatively, one can immerse themselves in traditional culture with authentic regional dance performances, interactive exhibitions of the local form of martial arts, Kalari, and personal stories from someone inside the community. Choose to focus instead on the ways in which Fort Kochi is leading high culture today, touring sleek cafés and contemporary galleries where internationally acclaimed art is displayed in connection with the famous Kochi Biennale.

How are you adding to the larger tourism profile of the city? What is your USP?

Our inherent philosophy is quite different from that of a typical resort, where the hotel is showcased over the destination. At Ayana we drop our walls quite literally to allow our guest to have an immersive experience of the destination, which in this case is Fort Kochi and its glorious past. It's the destination that first inspired us to conceptualize the hotel.

The property is one of the oldest heritage structures in Fort Kochi and the art deco interiors makes the property quite unique when compared with the typical Indian traditional interiors of most hotels. Another key distinguishing factor is our diverse collection of contemporary art which is a big pull factor for the art enthusiast.

What is the target segment you are looking at? What is the positioning that you wish to acquire in the city's tourism landscape?

Our target clientele is the luxury discerning traveller. We are targeting both, domestic as well as international guests. We would like to be positioned as leading heritage luxury hotel in Fort Kochi.

What is the state of tourism in Kochi? What are your expectations on the footfalls front?

Its been an encouraging season for Kochi with Biennale happening this year. The visibility of Fort Kochi as a destination is increasing in the domestic market as in the past demand has been driven by foreign travelers. There are no accurate statistics on the visitor arrivals in Kochi but as a hospitality product we hope to achieve a 50% year round occupancy this coming year. **TF**

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