

Tata's IHCL plays catch up with Marriott, plans to open 1 hotel each month

Tata-owned hotel chain Indian Hotels Company (IHCL) is on track to open at least one hotel a month that will add an inventory of about 2,500 rooms for the year ahead, pushing it into an unprecedented growth phase. Market leader, the Marriott Group, has also charted its own aggressive plans for growth.

Last year, Marriott opened 13 hotels in India across multiple brands that include Marriott, Courtyard by Marriott, Fairfield by Marriott and the Ritz Carlton. They also include The Four Points, the Le Meridien and the Sheraton.

This year, the multinational has another dozen openings planned and the room count of 25,000 rooms is expected to reach around 28,000 by 2020-end, said Marriott officials.

The new destinations that will be opened include the Taj Fateh Prakash Palace in Udaipur, the Devi Ratn in Jaipur and the Taj Convention Center Goa, in central Goa. The opening in Goa will take IHCL's hotel count up to 11 in the resort city, making it one of the largest operators there. Other IHCL openings slotted for this year include Darjeeling, Shillong, Gangtok, Wayanad, Haridwar, Navi Mumbai, Bharuch, Karad and Kalinganagar.

In the last two years, IHCL has signed on as many as 46 hotels across its four different brands that include Taj, Vivanta, Ginger, and SeleQtions. Those, as well as contracts signed earlier, are now opening. The expansion is about more than just new hotels in existing hotspots.

Marriott has also been opening in strategic pockets that include locations such as Siliguri, Surat and Kolkata with future plans for Thiruvananthapuram, Navi Mumbai, and Mahabaleshwar.