

Simplicity is Ultimate Sophistication

A decade ago, no one looked at a mid-segment and budget hotel room from design point of view. But now, time has changed, anyone who checks into a hotel wants to stay in an aesthetically designed room. **Preeti Swaminathan** gives an insight into various aspects of planning a budget hotel



Le Sutra designed by Dr Art+Design



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MITALI BAJAJ
Head, Dr Art+Design

Most of the hotels regularly renovate their spaces in order to attract guests. The discerning traveller wants more than just simple aesthetics. He/she wants the design experience that they do not find at their home. And thus, when working on a hotel project, an interior designer generally selects an underlying theme. Some designers incorporate local design or artwork into their overall plan, while others seek to create a functional place that consistently reflects the chosen style. Maximising a small space with luxury and high quality materials makes a guest feel ‘at home’.

Mitali Bajaj, Head, Dr Art+Design, said, “Hotels are lifestyle properties and the design should reflect the brand. It should be relevant to the location, authentic and should inspire guests. Hotel design is a tool for creating an atmosphere, which suits the overall project parameters. Clearly, it is not a piece of art, which only expresses thoughts and feelings of an artist – the design must be used and accepted for whom it has been created.”

A hotel needs to attract guests for much longer than just one season! The property is created with the purpose of being utilised by a diverse range of personalities for a variety of events. Therefore, the design must have a broader appeal in order to attract a majority of people. Yet at the same time, these travellers expect a special experience, which they ordinarily would not have at home.

For instance, Le Sutra designed by Dr Art+Design depicts Indian mythology in a contemporary form. The floors are based on *gunas* like *Rajsik*, *Tamsik* and

these *gunas*. The rooms tell a story but it still maintains the comfort level. Bajaj, said, “People should have a memorable experience, something they will remember. In Le Sutra, we have created a story in every room that ties into Indian mythology”.

Designing Hotel Room

Economic design needs to be under the common man’s affordable range which incorporates the design statistics of a five-star rated arena in restrained expanse. Khozema Chitalwala, Principal Architect, Designers Group, explained, “The ambience of budget hotels in each of the countries varies, even though the area programme of most of these hotels is similar. The products of similar category in the USA and Europe are very basic and simple whereas the same in Asia has a design touch. Even the service levels vary from country to country.”

Budget hotels need to accommodate all the basic needs in a compact space. Thus, it is a challenge for the designer to accommodate all the essentials within the minimum budget to bring in the project viability. The budget can only be achieved by creating an intelligent FF&E (Furniture, Fixture and Equipment) and other hard finish specifications. The owner driven property with a room size of budget hotel demands a high design touch and comfort in the same space to have an edge over their competitors. Designers Group has done several budget hotels like Peppermint, Comfort Inn and Sarovar Portico, Mumbai where these elements have been inculcated.



Sarovar Portico, Mumbai designed by Designers Group

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