



Hospitality Insights: Interview with Puneet Sethi of Kaara Hotels



*An Exclusive Interview with Puneet Sethi, Managing Director of Kaara 
Hotels & Resorts*



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Discover the vision behind boutique luxury as Puneet Sethi, MD of Kaara Hotels & Resorts, discusses scaling an asset-light 🏠 **hospitality** brand and redefining the guest experience in India's emerging tier-2 markets.

Why do you believe India's next wave of hospitality growth belongs to the middle class rather than luxury travelers?

Puneet Sethi: India's growth story is being driven by rising GDP and continued infrastructure development, along with a very young population that forms a large share of the economy. This demographic is naturally inclined to 🏠 **travel** and explore more than previous generations.

Earlier, the dominant mindset was saving-oriented. That is now clearly shifting toward spending for experiences. The middle-class youth, in particular, wants to explore new places, travel more often, and spend on experiences rather than just assets. This change in behavior is what makes the middle class the strongest driver of future hospitality growth, not just a niche luxury segment.

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How are shifting domestic travel trends in India fueling the demand for mid-market hotels?



Puneet Sethi: Domestic travel is being reshaped by multiple forces. A key driver is the government's active promotion of tourism destinations across different regions, supported by sustained infrastructure investment that has improved connectivity and accessibility.  Travel & Transportation

At the same time, there is a noticeable shift in mindset. Travel and exploration are no longer limited to a small segment, there is a broader cultural push toward visiting destinations across India, often encouraged even at the highest levels. This “top-down” influence is helping normalize domestic travel across regions.

As infrastructure improves and people become more open to exploring new destinations, domestic tourism is expanding rapidly, directly strengthening demand for mid-market hotels.



Launching during the uncertainty of COVID-19 was a massive risk. What gave you the confidence to move forward?

Puneet Sethi: COVID-19 was not seen purely as a risk but as a period where opportunities naturally emerged. In difficult times, entry barriers tend to be lower, and opportunities become more accessible.

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The confidence came from the belief that one only needed conviction to take the step. In strong markets, competition and barriers are much higher, but in uncertain periods, opportunities often present themselves more clearly. From that perspective, the pandemic became an enabling phase rather than a restricting one.

