



celebrates the chocolate professionals' innovation, artistry and technical skills. Contestants are chosen for their flair and competence – talents that are put to the test in front of an international panel of food experts. The Oberoi Hotels & Resorts, Mumbai, Chef Vikas Bagul, has won the Indian finals of the World Chocolate Masters, at a premier culinary competition for chocolate craftsmen from all over the world by Cacao Barry partnered with Callebaut—a leading manufacturer of high-quality cocoa and chocolate products.

Chef Vikas Bagul beat seven other pastry chefs and chocolatiers from some of the country's leading hotels, restaurants and culinary institutions and was named Indian National Chocolate Master 2014 following the two-day competition that was held on Sept. 24 and 25, in Mumbai. During the two-day contest dedicated to the creative use of chocolate under the theme "Inspiration from Nature", participants demonstrated their culinary skills in crafting a chocolate showpiece, a moulded praline/moulded bonbons, a gastronomic cake of the day and a chocolate to go. A six-member jury which included Chocolatier Zeba Kohli, Callebaut Brand Ambassador (Fantasie Chocolates), Chef Parvinder Singh Bali (Programme manager culinary services, Oberoi Center of Learning and Development), Chef Avijit Ghosh (Callebaut Brand Ambassador & Corporate Pastry Chef, The Leela Palaces, Hotels & Resorts) Chef Abhiru Biswas (Head of Academy, Barry Callebaut India), Chef Nitin Upadhyay (JW Marriott) and Chef Lionel Villaron (Executive Chef L'Opera) judged the competition. The event was organized to offer chocolate artisans and pastry chefs a forum to showcase their skills in designing chocolate showpieces and other chocolate desserts. Chef Vikas Bagul will now represent India at the Asia Pacific - World Chocolate Master Championship to be held in March' 2015 in Taiwan where he will compete against other winners from Asian countries. The World Chocolate Masters is the only international bi-annual competition that is solely dedicated to the Art of chocolate. ■

Jakson Gourmet – Redefining Industrial Catering Space



"Jakson Gourmet is looking forward to feeding the industrial growth in India with hygienic, nutritious and hassle free food" said Mr. Sandeep Talaulicar, Managing Director Jakson hospitality.

Tier-3 cities have played a significant role in India's transformation into an industrial hub. They are the preferred business destinations for industries due to the availability of affordable real estate, untapped labour, and low-cost lifestyle. The central and state governments encourage businesses in tier-3 cities through favourable policies and reforms, including tax subsidies, Special Economic Zones (SEZ), re-assessment of existing laws and private-public partnerships (PPP). The government's latest proposition to develop 100 new smart cities, along with upgrading industrial corridors across India is yet another step towards increasing the spread of industrialization. These smart cities offer promises of excellent infrastructure and exemptions on FDI restrictions. However, the spurt of growth in industries has not reflected in a proportionate increase in the amenities offered by these cities, despite the large workforce inhabiting the area. For corporate organizations and industries, satisfying the basic needs of their employees for healthy and affordable food becomes a huge challenge.

Jakson Gourmet, the division of Jakson Hospitality, aims to dispel this lacuna by establishing industrial catering units in Tier-3 cities. Offering premium quality of services to guests while maintaining international standards is what differentiates them from their competition. At vantage locations, where basic facilities are hard to find, Jakson Gourmet offers solace to industries by providing superior catering services. Leveraging well-appointed kitchens, international best practices, fresh farm produce and high-quality ingredients, and competent staff, Jakson brings to the table the promise of hygienic and wholesome food.

Understanding corporate requirements, preferences, and dietary needs, and innovating dishes to match them are Jakson's forte. Right from quality resource procurement to its hygienic storage and transport, standardized recipes and unmatched customer service, Jakson aims to delight their customers every time.

Jakson Gourmet has operational catering units at Phaltan and Pune, with the launch of similar state-of-the-art units at other Tier-3 cities under the pipeline. Further, they propose to diversify by associating with malls, schools, airlines and other business avenues to become their official catering partners. In their journey ahead, Jakson Gourmet endeavours to combine their expertise with innovation to prepare nutritious food, delivered hassle-free!

While maintaining high quality and excellent service standards, Jakson guarantees that their commitment to society and stakeholders remain uncompromised. Working in synergy with the environment to ensure reduced impact, Jakson plays a part in contributing to build a sustainable future. Serving over 4500 healthy and mouth-watering meals daily, Jakson professes that its kitchens are, in fact, institutions of culinary expertise and hygiene. With increase in facilities of this type, running a business in industrial cities may soon become less of a hassle! ■

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc has announced to open Le Méridien in Ahmedabad

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc has recently announced the signing of Le



Méridien Ahmedabad, a 200-room new build hotel likely to open by 2018. Le Méridien Ahmedabad will mark the return of Le Méridien brand to this vibrant city as represent Starwood's third hotel in this growing Indian market. Owned by established real estate developing company, Seven Leisure Private Limited, the hotel will be located within close proximity to the central business district and the Sanand Industrial Estate and will offer easy access to the main Gandhinagar

Highway. Le Méridien Ahmedabad will be part of a mixed-use development, featuring unbranded serviced apartments and Club07, a fully equipped recreational facility. The hotel will have the city's largest convention center facility with 74,000 square feet of state-of-the-art meeting and event space. In addition to well-appointed, oversized rooms, signature amenities and personalized services, the hotel will also offer four restaurants and bar venues, including a signature all-day dining outlet and two specialty restaurants that will offer distinct culinary experiences for both guests and locals alike. Recreation facilities at the hotel will include a swimming pool and fully equipped fitness center.

"We believe the return of Le Méridien to Ahmedabad is a key milestone for Le Méridien, which is experiencing renewed traction and momentum throughout South Asia," said Dilip Puri, Managing Director India and Regional Vice President South Asia, Starwood Hotels & Resorts. ■

Jumeirah Group to expand their business in India

Dubai-based international luxury hotel-chain, Jumeirah Group



wants to expand their business in India after the new government appointed at the centre. Jumeirah Group owns the famous Burj al Arab Hotel.

Gerald Lawless, the group CEO and President of Jumeirah stated that he was enthusiastic about the opportunities opening up in India, especially after the coming of new government. He said that he was optimistic about the scenario after the election of pro-investment Prime Minister.

Outside its core market in the Middle East, Jumeirah is aggressively expanding its footprint in Asia. It is already developing hotels in Mumbai and Goa.

"Look at the very business friendly government that is in power at the moment and what it is doing to try to improve the economy of India and improve the wealth of its citizens. Like China it has a rising middle class and these people will increasingly want to travel. We have really big hopes for the economic development in India," Lawless said. Talking about the expansion plans, he informed, "We have two hotels about to start construction, one in Mumbai and one in Goa, and we hope to get more." ■