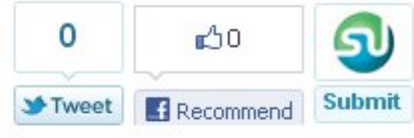


Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide plans more Aloft hotels in India



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COIMBATORE (Tamil Nadu): Global hospitality major Starwood Hotels and Resorts Worldwide plans to add more hotels under its brand Aloft in India, a company official said Sunday.

"We will be opening one Aloft hotel in Chandigarh by the end of this year and another in Ahmedabad next year. Currently we have Aloft brand hotels in Bangalore, Chennai and Coimbatore," Rajan Bahadur, regional director (sales and marketing), South Asia told reporters after opening the hotel in this Tamil Nadu city.

The Aloft brand made its debut in India last year in Chennai and the second one was in Bangalore.

"This is one the fastest growing hotel brands in the world. In four years time we have 52 hotels in the world. The brand is all about the tech-savvy early adopter and we are excited to connect with India's Gen Y travelers and provide them with a hotel experience that matches their very forward thinking sensibilities," said Brian McGuinness, senior vice president, specialty select brands - Aloft, Element, Four Points by Sheraton.

The Aloft hotel here has 167 rooms with nine-foot ceilings and oversized windows to create a bright and airy environment. For the tech savvy, the rooms offer plug and play environment for all kinds of electronic gadgets with free internet.

"Each Aloft hotel would involve an outlay of around Rs.100 crore. The Aloft hotels at an average will have around 150-160 rooms. The investment in each room excluding the real estate cost will be around Rs.4 million. The breakeven is expected to be on the third year," Udday Kumar Krishnan, managing director, Auromatrix Holdings Pvt Ltd said on the sidelines of the media meet.

Auromatrix is the holding company for the company/special purpose vehicle (SPV) that owns the hotel.

"We are looking at opening Aloft hotels in Hyderabad, National Capital Region and Goa," Krishnan said.

He said the brand agreement with Starwood Hotels is for 15 years.