



(Clockwise from top) The buffet spread at The Lotus Cafe; the banquet hall; a traditional welcome awaits; lounging by the pool

introverted Hindu temple plan in order to optimise on land space and context. The central open courtyard with the lotus restaurant and the all-pervading water body form the core of the hotel, spatially and experientially. At the heart of the experience is the worship of the Lord Vishnu, symbolised by the *Dashavataras* or the ten incarnations,” explained Rishu Roshan, the hotel’s General Manager as he showed me around the property.

#### DESIGN MATTERS

The 10 avatars are integrated into different parts of the hotel. *Matsya* or the earliest

form of life, the form of the fish embodies man’s earliest connection to water and the swimming pool is where this is manifested. An ornate door with a beautiful fish shaped handle leads you to the blue tiled pool. *Kurma* the tortoise represents the evolution of man to land, which you see in the reception area of the hotel, where the motif of tortoise shell is seen on the mirrored panel behind the reception, in the carpets, the door handles and even the reception desk. *Varaha* or the boar represents the fierce competitive survival spirit of man and this is exemplified in the Games Room. *Narasimha*, the half-man half-lion form that thrives in the transitional zone where it is neither water nor land, neither night nor day, is represented in the all-day dining of The Lotus Cafe where land and water, night and day merge seamlessly. The *mandapa* in the centre of the water body inside the temple complex has been translated into a central

courtyard with a water body within, which floats the all day dining space. *Vamana* or the intellectual dwarf is represented in the two small business centres. *Parasurama* or the strong man is seen in the gym and his trademark axe is seen outside the door. *Rama*, the social man, who represents and stands for public opinion and the laws of common good, is seen in the banquet halls where marriages are solemnised and conferences that disseminate opinion and thought take place. The door handles are actually shaped like arrows and the decor in the banquet room, from lights to wallpaper are all tied together with the archery theme. My favourite is the *Krishna* theme, the playful god who is much loved in Indian folklore – which is represented in the Thali restaurant where Indian food, with all its rich flavours and diversity is appreciated. The blue and pink coloured interiors also