

# OPULENT INTERLUDE

The O Hotel in Pune's upmarket Koregaon Park is an eclectic mix of design, colour, lighting, art and music, set against a contemporary and chic background. **By Bindu Gopal Rao**



A Deluxe room with a panoramic view

It is located in the vicinity of one of Pune's most famous landmarks, the Osho Ashram. The O Hotel, just 10 minutes away from the airport, is an interesting fusion of style and tradition. The lobby is done up in hues of beige and cream interspersed with gold and deep red. The chic interiors have been given a traditional twist with the use of Peshwa *pagadis* on the walls.

But why the unusual choice of the hotel name? Managing Director Neelam Seolekar explains, "I think O was meant to be – it just evolved in my mind. Also, our parent company is called the Oxford Group and my husband and I are followers of Osho."

The facade of O Hotel



## ROOMS WITH VIEWS

There are four categories of rooms to choose from. Each O-Deluxe and O Club room covers 400 sq ft. The O-Suite is 610 sq ft while the Presidential Suite is 1,500 sq ft. I stayed in an O-Deluxe room on the fourth floor. The first thing that struck me was that the room was dynamic as opposed to the traditional straight walls. A demarcated glass wall filled with wood shavings made for an interesting décor element. The floor-to-wall mirrors are used intelligently and make the room look larger than it is.

Bathrooms with a custom-made tub; free standing steel counter basin; hand-crafted stone-clad walls in copper; warm timber flooring; a combination of silk, tissue and jute for curtains; and lampshades woven with silver threads – all take you to a dream world. A pillow menu gives you the choice of four kind of pillows: the Mustard pillow (for firmer support), the Anti-stress millet pillow (to reduce stress), the O pillow (that snugly mirrors the shape of your face) or the Anti-allergy pillow. The view from the room is stunning. The green canopy of trees that shroud the Osho Ashram gave me a positive feeling that perhaps there is still some hope for our environment.

# GASTRONOMIC DELIGHTS

FOOD IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE AND THE O HOTEL DOES NOT DISAPPOINT. YOU WILL BE SPOILT FOR A CHOICE AS FAR AS FOOD IS CONCERNED

## HARAJUKU

The Japanese dining restaurant is helmed by expatriate chefs. It is done up in vibrant hues of gold and red with hints of sap green bamboo. While here, a good bet is the Bento Box. Akin to a *thaali*, you can sample Tenderloin, Sashimi, Miso Soup, Tempura and more.



## ADDAH

If you want something Indian, head to the rooftop restaurant on the 9th floor. Addah, open for dinner, is next to the swimming pool and offers a breathtaking view of the city skyline. It serves charcoal Indian delicacies from all over the country. If you want to have an out-of-this-world dining experience under the stars you can choose to dine at the shallow pool seating with your feet in the water and chill out (quite literally).

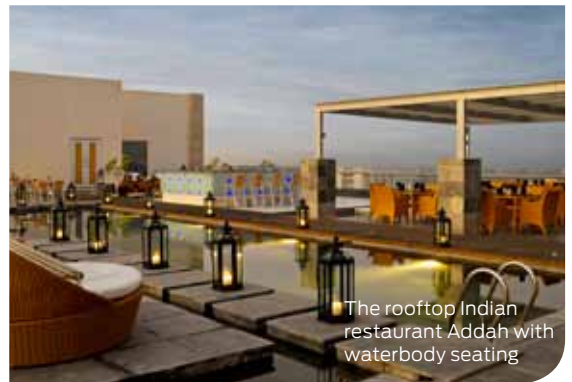


## KITSCH

If you are in a hurry, head to Kitsch at the lobby level. It is a large community living space where lounge meets bar and the bar meets all-day dining. This eclectic multi-cuisine restaurant boasts of a freestanding 18 feet high glass wine cellar.



# Berina ad to come



While at the O hotel, there are plenty of options for you to ensure you stay fit. This starts right from the breakfast buffet where specific food items are actually marked with a tag that reads 'Healthy option'. This apart, there are special Tango Evenings on Saturdays. The hotel has also recently introduced a unique and unconventional way to keep your mind and body fit with the 'O Bicycle Diaries'. You can explore the quaint streets of the city in the most environment-friendly form of transport. But if you want to try something different go for O Aqua Aerobics, a type of resistance training where you can do aerobic exercises in water without the risk of muscle or joint injury. Or simply take a swim in the stunning rooftop infinity pool.

"I want my guest to feel like a star and we make sure they are pampered and experience drama in real life," is how Seolekar describes the O experience. I certainly couldn't disagree.