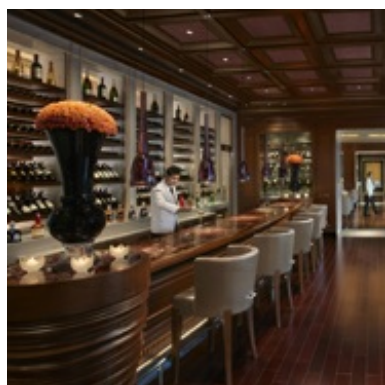


IN-STORE

## Le Cirque makes first Asian venture with the Leela Palace New Delhi

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By KAYLA HUTZLER

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New York-based fine-dining group Le Cirque is expanding business and aiming to tap into a hot market by opening its first restaurant in Asia at The Leela Palace New Delhi hotel in India.

The restaurant in India will uphold Le Cirque's dedication to a fusion of Italian and French cuisine and, given cultural preferences, the company has also added a number of vegetarian meals to the menu. Le Cirque currently has restaurants in New York, Las Vegas and the Dominican Republic, making the New Delhi restaurant the company's first major international presence.

"India, undoubtedly, is emerging as one of the most important business and leisure destinations globally," said Tamir Kobrin, general manager at the Leela Palace New Delhi, India.

"Over the years, discerning Indian travelers have had phenomenal exposure to world cuisine served at varied global destinations," he said. "Le Cirque is the leading American fine-dining brand celebrated amongst the finest food connoisseurs and India is an evolving market."

“Keeping in view the prestigious collaboration, the market trends and growth opportunities, it was a perfect timing to present the opening of this iconic restaurant in India.”

## Fusion food

Le Cirque is now open on the 10th floor of the Leela Palace New Delhi.

The space was designed by Japan-based design house Spin Studio and is able to sit 144 diners.

The three dining rooms feature alfresco seating, a lounge and bar area as well as an open kitchen where guests can watch the chefs prepare food.



In addition to five-star meals, guests at the Leela can enjoy more than 80 Italian and 100 French wines at Le Cirque.

The porcelain tableware was made by French china brand Bernardaud, while Austrian glass brand Riedel is responsible for all of the stemware.

Le Cirque’s newly-added vegetarian options include pasta primavera, ravioli, tuna in a pistachio crust, and paupiette of black cod.

“While the cuisine in many of Le Cirque’s outlets is predominantly French, to suit the local palate here in New Delhi, we have designed a menu which is an eclectic mix of contemporary Italian and French, keeping in mind the taste and the necessities of the guest,” Mr. Kobrin said.

“More than 30 percent of our menu is vegetarian and some of these dishes are without onion and garlic,” he said. “Without losing the real essence of Le Cirque, the menu is intelligently divided into two – Le Cirque’s classics and the Chef’s creations – inspired by the local ingredients available.”

## Arriving in Asia

Le Cirque's extension into Asia comes as no surprise given the amount of luxury brands moving into the emerging market.

The Leela Palace New Delhi is likely a good location for the restaurant, given that a majority of the guests are affluent consumers and travelers.

The Maharaja suite at the Leela Palace comes with a complementary 24-hour chauffeured Rolls-Royce, a private gym, pool and Jacuzzi.



Hotel rooms start at \$290 and reach \$2,000 for online reservations. The Maharaja suite is not available for online booking.

Many brands have been working to increase their presence in Asia in the last few months.

For example, department store chain Saks Fifth Avenue announced this summer that it was expanding its global brand awareness in emerging markets by building a store in Almaty, Kazakhstan ([see story](#)).

In addition, Ritz-Carlton opened its presence in Hong Kong this year, occupying the 102nd to 118th floors of the International Commercial Centre ([see story](#)).

Also, Dolce & Gabbana announced it was going to open 15 boutiques in China over the next two years and Ralph Lauren has similar expansion plans.

Le Cirque has attributed its location choice to the alignment of the Leela's core values and target audience with its own.

"Both the Leela Palaces, Hotels and Resorts and Le Cirque for years have been synonymous with uber-luxury – hosting celebrities, dignitaries, high society individuals and corporate heads from around the world," said Mauro Maccioni, owner of Le Cirque, New York.

"With Le Cirque's entry into the Indian market, this iconic restaurant aims to bring a luxury dining experience complementing the Leela Palace New Delhi's commitment to quality and exemplary service to the expanding and discerning clientele in India," he said.

## Final Take

*Kayla Hutzler, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York*

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