

A praiseworthy journey from Apprentice Chef: Chris Franzen appointed as GM of Grand Hyatt Mumbai and Area VP

By **Mewati Sitaram** - July 24, 2019



Chris K. Franzen newly appointed General Manager of Grand Hyatt Mumbai and Area VP Western India.

A Swiss national, hospitality industry veteran, a professionally trained chef and sommelier, Chris K. Franzen has been appointed as General Manager for Grand Hyatt Mumbai and Area Vice President for Western India. Prior to his appointment in India, he worked six and half years as GM

at the luxurious Grand Hyatt Doha Hotel & Villas in Qatar. He is a hard-core loyalist of the Hyatt group, having worked with the group for over two decades. Besides his role as GM for the Grand Hyatt Mumbai Hotel & Residences, he will also be responsible for Operations for all Hyatt Hotels in his role as Area Vice President for West India.

Educational assets: Chris was raised and went to school in the Swiss Alpine Village of Zermatt, at the foot of the famed mount Matterhorn. He completed his Bachelor of Business in Hospitality degree from the Australian International Hotel School and Cornell University in 1999.

Beginning of career: Chris has come a long way to reach his current position and achieved all of this through showing passion for a superior guest experience, determination and hard work. He began his hospitality career as Chef Apprentice at the Gourmet Restaurant Wart in Zug, Switzerland; before graduating as a Sommelier a few years later. He still likes cooking very, very much. Cooking frequently at home, he is also a big BBQ fan – something a little bit of a challenge living in an apartment in the middle of this magnificent city, Mumbai.

Vast Experience: After spending several years in the culinary and food & beverage departments, he opted to try out other areas of the hospitality trade. He was keen on expanding his horizon and worked for many smaller luxury hotels and restaurants along the way such as the Hotel La Porte D'Octodure in Martigny and the Hotel Duc Berthold in Fribourg, both in the French speaking part of Switzerland. He brings with him over thirty years of experience having worked in Europe, the US, Australia, Russia and the Middle East before joining in India. He has also worked for other global hotel operators and luxury boutique hotels over the years that include the Gourmet Restaurant Glashof in Zug, the Hilton Hotel in Zurich, Kofler & Kompanie in Germany, the luxury boutique hotel The Inn on Fifth in Naples, Florida, and the Hotel Kurrajong in Canberra, Australia. He started his Hyatt career as Revenue Manager at the Hyatt Regency Dubai, followed by other appointments at the Grand Hyatt Muscat in Oman, the Park Hyatt Moscow in Russia, the Grand Hyatt Dubai in the UAE, and the Grand Hyatt Doha Hotel & Villas in Qatar.

Third generation hotelier: He originates from the Alpine Village of Zermatt, in the heart of the European Alps, where almost every family depends on the hospitality business. With only 5,500 permanent inhabitants in the car-free village, the same operates over 125 hotels! He is also a third generation hotelier, with his grandfather and father also having been in the trade. The experiences that Chris garnered earlier in his career have uniquely positioned him to take the next step in his career. He brings the same passion that he has for his love of cooking to the role of general manager and area vice president.

Decision to join hotel industry: Chris decided to join hospitality trade early on, despite his father telling him not to do so. In retrospect he still says that this was the second best decision of his life after marrying his Australian wife, Rachel, with whom he has two children. For once, Chris was happy that he did not listen to his Dads request.

Accomplishments: Chris has won several awards and honors over the years that include the Business Excellence Award 2017 and was also one of the candidates for the Jay A. Pritzker Award for Leadership and the same year his hotel team in Qatar was also a contender for the Donald N. Pritzker Award for Hotel Team of the Year. He is also well versed in three languages English, French and German.

In his leisure time he loves spending quality time with his family and children and likes everything with an engine – Motorbikes, boats, cars and jetski's. When asked about his favorite band and movie he says that he enjoys a variety of music, especially from the 70's, and his favorite movie would be 'The Magnificent Seven' with an all-Star cast.



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