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# Number cap on weddings comes with opportunities: Vikram Lalvani, Sterling Holidays

*For Sterling, destination weddings are a growing business segment, almost doubling every year and contributing up to 35 per cent of the total revenue.*

Sakshi Singh • ETHospitalityWorld • August 21, 2020, 10:35 IST



**S**terling Holiday Resorts, which has a major share of business coming through weddings, witnessed a growth in the segment post lockdown. For Sterling, [destination weddings](#) are a growing business segment, almost doubling every year and contributing up to 35 per cent of the total revenue. The hospitality company recently hosted a couple of destination weddings in Andhra Pradesh and anticipates that people will now explore destinations on short-haul to bring their small and residential wedding requirements that are for a group of 50 pax and above. In a conversation with ETHospitalityWorld, [Vikram Lalvani](#), Chief of Sales, Revenue and Destinations at Sterling Holiday Resorts Ltd, talked about the growing demand and how the company intends to tap the market.



**ETHW:** What percentage share does destination weddings contribute to Sterling Holiday's business?

**Vikram Lalvani:** Since the launch of [Sterling Destination Wedding](#) offerings, we have managed to tap the wedding segment to unexplored destinations and popular locales. Sterling can host varied destinations for upscale weddings, located in mountains and valleys, by the riverside, beaches, in heritage and pilgrimage destinations, across the country. For Sterling, destination weddings are a growing business segment, almost doubling every year. In some resorts like Puri, [Jaipur](#), Guruvayur, Palavelli Godavari, the contribution of weddings is up to 35% and growing.

**ETHW: Do you see a spike or decline in those numbers due to Covid-19?**

**Vikram Lalvani:** The pandemic has surely impacted the hospitality business, and briefly during the time that the pandemic was new, we had a strict lockdown. But that did not stop us from reaching out to our partners, wedding planners and organisers, with our concept of how the same pandemic can reshape the idea of weddings. Now with things gradually shaping back, the queries have started to come, the traffic on our websites have spiked, the requests for e-wedding brochures have increased, more people today are willing to explore destinations on short-haul to bring their small and residential wedding requirements that are for a group of 50 pax and above.

**ETHW: Is Sterling receiving any wedding queries? Do you see weddings happening this year?**

**Vikram Lalvani:** Yes, as we enter the wedding season for the year, Sterling has been receiving a fair amount of wedding queries. This is from families, wedding planners and also organisers. Sterling recently hosted a couple of destination weddings at our new resort, Palavelli Godavari, located on the west of river Godavari, in Andhra Pradesh. Located on the banks of river Vashistha, the wedding at this lesser-known destination took place keeping all social distancing norms in place and was covered by our strict hygiene and sanitization program Sterling Cares. Some of the popular resorts that have received several inquiries for destination weddings are in Puri, Palavelli Godavari in Andhra Pradesh, Jaipur, [Lonavala](#), [Kodaikanal](#), [Ooty](#), [Darjeeling](#) and [Mussoorie](#), amongst many.



**ETHW: Considering the number cap, do you think people will opt for destination weddings shortly?**

**Vikram Lalvani:** The number cap brings in its opportunities. As this is difficult to limit the number of guests in the domicile city of the bride and grooms, several weddings are moving to exotic locations, with close family and friends. An example is the resort Rajakkad, where we allocate the entire resort for the wedding event.

The limited size also gives the families a chance to explore more of the destination, the cuisines, thematic setups – indoor and outdoor venues, enjoy the wedding ceremonies at a leisurely pace instead of rushing through, and with their near and dear ones. Our resorts are large, spacious with multiple options of venues within the resorts for conducting weddings even as small as 50 pax to very large gatherings.

**ETHW: Majority of bigger weddings used to move out of India, do you think this is the opportunity for the Indian wedding market to capitalise on those who won't be going out now?**

**Vikram Lalvani:** As skies open up, there will still be a need with some weddings to travel outbound. Sterling does not see this as a substitution as the market for upscale weddings in India is big enough to capitalize on. We have been bringing 'delight' into the holidays for our guests, which we are confident to extend into weddings as well.

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