

Jobs in Casino Tourism in India

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Abstract: This paper is by-product of the unending research of the author to provide new placement/job opportunities of the skilled and educated youth of the country in general and the scholars of Hospitality management in particular.

Casino, in India is almost a converted, and niche market and hence the job seekers must update themselves for the same. The first thing which a job seeker should know that Casinos are the major revenue centres of the complex and all other hospitality is just to ensure that the player is given an opportunity to remain at his best comfort level while at the games/tables.

A skilled Casino employee is an asset to any such establishment and hence they are sought-after. Hence, it is always recommended that the jobseeker must undergo a specialised training program in professional game managing. Additional benefits of hospitality education and soft skills will certainly enhance the employees own marketability and ensure better results in profits for the Casino.

Keywords: Jobs in Casino Tourism, Casino gaming industry.

1. INTRODUCTION

Casino gaming industry in India has experienced substantial growth and expansion from the late 1990s onwards. Much of this has been a direct result of explicit strategies adopted by the state governments of Goa and Sikkim, which believe that casinos can be an important catalyst in creating or otherwise stimulating growth and tourism within their borders. The actual impacts of casino developments and their contributions to tourism objectives have depended on a variety of circumstances, hence the requirement of this research work. The form of legal gambling that is most associated with tourism is Casino gaming. Other popular forms of gambling—such as lotteries, wagering on racing, charitable gambling, and non-casino located gaming devices—cater predominantly to local markets and therefore have little direct impact on tourism or tourism development.

The economic ramifications of the recent spread of casinos and legal gambling in India have been discussed by a Report from the newspaper Times of India dated April 13, 2013 explains aptly as:- “Casinos, a key attraction for tourists visiting Goa, contributed a healthy Rs 135.45 crore to the state government's coffers in fiscal 2012-13. According to official figures, casino industry paid Rs 135.45 crore in the form of various taxes, including entertainment, entry, liquor licences and port charges (from casino vessels anchored off the state's coast). The revenue was collected by four different departments of the Goa government. The revenue collection figures from the previous fiscal (2011-12) were not made available. Casinos charge Rs 500 per customer as entry tax and the entire amount is paid to the government. They contributed Rs 17.96 crore in the form of entry fee, which was lowered from Rs 2,000 per person during the last budget (FY 2011-12). The government had earned criticism for lowering entry tax, although it hiked licence fee for casino operators. The government charged Rs 6.5 crore per off-shore and Rs 2.5 crore per on-shore casino as licence fee, netting Rs 32.50 crore and Rs 25 crore, respectively for the last fiscal. The two-decade-old casino industry currently operates 10 on-land and five off-shore casinos. In all, they employ around 5,000 people, industry sources said. Goa, which charges 15 per cent entertainment tax, has collected Rs 53.29 crore revenue from this levy in 2012-13. In addition, the casino industry paid Rs 2 crore worth of value-added tax (VAT) on food and beverages. The off-shore casinos paid Rs 1 crore as liquor licence fee and on-shore ones paid Rs 1.2 crore, according to the figures.”

2. THE PROLIFERATION OF LEGAL CASINO GAMING IN INDIA

(The factors considered below present an overview of the gaming industry in India. The analyses below are based on the circumstances of Delta Corp Limited which runs the largest casino operations in India.)

2.1. WHAT'S DRIVING THE STOCK?

2.1.1. Rising internal consumption and favourable demography:

Over the last few years, domestic consumption in India has kept the economy insulated from the global economic turmoil. Owing to its strong internal demand, the Indian economy managed to grow at a steady 5.00 % in FY 2013 and is **estimated to end FY 2014 with a GDP growth rate of 4.7-4.9%** over the previous year. The Indian growth story is a very favourable one with more than 50 % of its population below the age of 25 and more than 65 % below the age of 35. It is expected that, in 2020, the average age of an Indian will be 29 years. Such a 'young' economy with growing disposable incomes and greater exposure to western lifestyles is encouraging for the growth of entertainment and casino industry. Further, Asia is the fastest growing market for casinos. Gaming in the Asia-Pacific region has grown phenomenally over the last few years. Until recently, Indians have been forced to travel to destinations like Macau, Singapore and Kathmandu to experience the thrill of betting. However, with casinos now opening in Goa, Sikkim, and Daman which are at par with the best in the world, the gaming industry in India is set for exponential growth. Even though the Indian gaming industry was recently legalized, revenue generated from casinos in Goa is growing at an annual rate of over 50 %. In comparison, Macau, Philippines, and Singapore have witnessed a revenue growth of approximately 30 to 40 %. We believe that over the next few years, India will become a popular destination for casino goers; not just in Asia, but the whole world.

2.2. First mover advantage in the lucrative gaming industry in India:

Despite the existing prohibitive legislation, there is extensive illegal gambling throughout the country. The illegal betting market created during cricket matches further demonstrates the passion which India shares for the thrill of betting. Its high growth potential in India is further evidenced by the success of lotteries (an industry valued at US\$12.5 billion) and horse-racing (with annual turnover more than US \$ 350 million). Gaming industry in India bears high entry barriers due to a strict cap on the number of licenses issued. Delta Corp has the first mover advantage in this space and holds 3 of the 6 casino licenses issued in Goa, and both the licenses issued in Daman. With the casino industry in Goa growing at an annual rate of 50 %, we believe that regulations for existing and new players in this space will be relaxed further. A relatively lengthy process for obtaining licenses for casino business in India; and the considerable time and costs involved in setting up the requisite infrastructure, which Delta already has in place, puts it at a strong competitive advantage.

2.3. Expansion plans:

Currently, Delta Corp has 700 live gaming positions (660 table positions and 40 machines). It is expected to expand its positions in Goa through the launch of another casino vessel M.V. Horseshoe, which is expected to be operational shortly. This new casino is expected to have 1,500 positions (155 tables and 250 slot machines). During the financial year 2013-14, the Company is also expected to launch a land-based casino in Daman through its hospitality project named 'The Deltin', adding approximately 1,000 additional positions. Further, the total gaming positions of the Company is set to grow five-fold with the commencement of a new casino vessel in Goa and a 5-star hotel-casino resort in Daman.

Deltin is the largest integrated resort in Daman; spread over 10 acres with approximately 300,000 sq. ft. of developed area. This hotel will offer the largest banquet facility in the area with 3 bars, 4 speciality restaurants, 29,000 sq. ft. of indoor event (MICE space) and 8,000 sq. ft. high-end retail space. The Deltin, Daman is only a 2.5 hour drive from Mumbai, and a similar driving distance from major cities of Gujarat. Delta Corp has recently acquired an all-suite hotel namely "Deltin Suites" located at Nerul in North Goa. Deltin Suites is well equipped with all amenities and recreational facilities. The property is a 5 to 10 minute drive from the beaches of Candolim and Calangute, and is in close proximity to the embarkation points of Company's respective casinos.

In a move to boost its tourism industry, the government of Sri Lanka legalised casino gambling in November of 2010. Sri Lanka is well positioned to become one of the major gaming hubs of South Asia due to its potential to attract additional visitors from nearby countries such as China, Australia and Malaysia. The Company is exploring the possibility of starting casino operations in Sri Lanka and has taken initial steps in acquiring an 11 acre land parcel near the Bandaranaike international airport at Ketunayke to develop a high-end hotel.

2.4. WHAT'S DRAGGING THE STOCK in INDIA?

2.4.1. Strict government regulations:

For the most part, Indian legislatures and courts have considered gambling to be an immoral act which is detrimental to the interest of the common man as the thrill of the sport continues until a player experiences heavy losses. For this reason, **gaming industry in India** is subject to several rules and regulations. It is largely dependent on licensing which is purely subject to Government approvals. In Goa and Daman, where most gaming countries have their operations, the laws (*i.e. The Goa, Daman and Diu Public Gambling Act 1976*), allow casinos to be set up only at five star hotels or offshore vessels with the prior permission of the government. In general, casino licenses are awarded for a term of 5 years from their respective date of issuance, at the expiry of which period they have to be renewed at the payment of a prescribed fee. Moreover, there is always a possibility of stringent or adverse changes in government policies in the gaming industry in a conservative country like India.

Gaming operations in India are located in tourist hubs like Goa and Sikkim, and rely on out of state tourists for their revenues. A further slowdown in the Indian economy could adversely affect the gaming industry in India.

3. JOBSEEKER IN INDIAN CASINOS?

3.1. Land vs. Ship Casinos: The Difference?

So, what exactly are the differences between casinos that operate on water and those on land? For the customer few differences exist. Once on board or underway, gamblers get down to the business at hand – playing the table games and working the slot machines, looking for that lucky break. Most report they don't recognize any differences after becoming acquainted with the ship's layout and house rules. And to be sure, shipboard casinos rarely have a shortage of lavish surroundings, colourful lights, and most importantly, action. Depending on the local laws and gaming regulations, so-called riverboat casinos might be no more than permanently moored floating barges. Other casino operations must depart for open water on scheduled runs before customers may begin gambling. Still other states have stipulated the actual design of the boat. For example, in Louisiana riverboats must duplicate the historic paddle wheelers in order to qualify as legal gaming facilities. Betting limits, maximum loss, and payoff amounts may also vary. Often, too, services and amenities, such as floorshows and full-service restaurants, may be on land with the casino portion of the facility technically on water.

As more and more individual communities and states set up the parameters for their own gaming concerns, additional differences can be expected. But as an employee, you no doubt will quickly learn all the rules and regulations regarding casino play at your particular place of employment. Currently, only one state in India, i.e. GOA, allow gaming parlours and casinos on riverboat. All operate on the Mandovi river in Goa. Goa is the first state to introduce this type of gambling facility. Slot machines and table games are allowed.

3.2. Developing your Qualifications for a Casino Industry Job:

Professional gaming attracts a variety of people. Many get jobs working in casinos without any experience, yet all come with common qualities that make them effective employees. According to the hiring directors we've talked with, applicants need outgoing, friendly personalities and a take-charge attitude as a first requirement for hiring consideration. A personnel manager at a land-based Goan Casino & Resort had this to say about her company's policy: *"We hire people with all kinds of previous employment experience. The important thing is for the applicants to have proven skills that will make them an asset for our company. We are looking for friendly, well-groomed people who are dependable and can handle a variety of responsibilities."*

Management also wants its employees to have excellent customer service skills. Mix that with technical skills, like the ability to deal specialty table games, and you have a winning formula for casino floor employment. But casinos hire more than just those who can work the actual games. They need a support staff as well. People, who can handle the money as it flows in, carefully counting and recording it, are in high demand. They need slot change attendants, security officers, and beverage service personnel. Away from the casino floor are still more opportunities. Many get their start in the hotel side of things or in the marketing and sales department. Secretaries and receptionists work in casino resorts as do maintenance crews. So, if you have what hiring managers deem "transferable skills," the ability to take what you learned at your previous jobs and apply those skills and experiences in a positive way for their purposes, the better your chances for employment.

To work as a professional dealer you will need special training. There are three ways to achieve this: learn from a friend who is already in the business, attend a professional dealing school, or receive on-the-job training. Sometimes people combine these methods; for instance, getting a friend who is a blackjack dealer to spend a couple nights going over the basics of shuffling, pitching, giving hits, and cutting checks (casino talk for chips). The aspiring dealer may then take a job at a casino working a casino floor support position, meanwhile training with staff dealers during breaks and on days off until the shift managers or pit supervisors feel the new employee is ready for his/her own table.

In addition to this informal system of current dealers breaking in new ones, more and more casinos have incorporated their own formal, full-time dealer training facilities. This is especially true for casinos in the Lake Tahoe area and those in Atlantic City. Some even go so far as to include general job skills training. At the Luxor in Las Vegas, employees go through a one-month customer relations training program designed to promote better overall service. Similarly, the MGM Grand sends its new employees to the "University of OZ." At casinos with their own in-house dealer training facilities, you'll learn one or two games, depending on the needs of the casino. After perfecting the skills required, you'll be stationed on the floor, eligible to receive the same takes as those who have been in the business for years. However, if you don't want to depend on finding situations in which the company provides training or don't know someone already in the business who can teach you all the necessary skills, you'll need to turn to a private, professional dealer school for your training.

3.3. Casino Dealer Schools:

For many entering this profession, the route to success will include a stop at the local dealer school. These schools employ instructors who are licensed to teach gaming procedures to aspiring dealers. Enrolees usually choose one or two games to specialize in, learning the particulars of that game from the instructors and practicing with class members. Most schools offer flexible schedules, with day and evening classes. Admission requirements are also similar, with classes running from approximately four weeks for poker to about twelve weeks for craps. The better schools will have aggressive job placement services and offer tuition assistance or accept financial aid. Costs vary depending on the length of the class and game procedures being taught. Courses typically cover all aspects of dealing. Students learn how to handle cards and other game equipment, how to take bets, and specific rules of the game. Most schools create an atmosphere similar to what you would find in a real casino, using authentic tables, chips, and other professional equipment. Some will even simulate high-stress situations with lights, noise, and perhaps the instructor even acting as an overly abrasive player. Upon completion of the class, students should have gained sufficient knowledge and skills to be employed in a casino.

3.4. Deltin Institute Of Learning (Goa, India):

For more information on the schools refer to the various websites. However in India we do not have many good casino schools other than Deltin Institute of Learning, situated at Goa. Deltin Group always looks forward to employing trained and skilled manpower in large numbers for its ever growing share in the Indian Casino market. Deltin Group decided to bridge this gap by launching its own training institute with a view to meet its manpower needs and the needs of the hospitality industry at large. By providing **free training** and creating employable local youth, the organisation feels that in a small way, it is giving back to society.

The Institute facilities are state-of-the-art and centrally located in the economic hub of Porvorim, Goa. Ideal surroundings for a good institute such as lush greenery, no noise or exhaust pollution, overlooking a picturesque valley with the Mandovi flowing by, all conducive for the health and academic performance of the students. The area also boasts of the unique gallery of Goa's famous son, Mario Miranda. The Institute is equipped with all the latest audio visual teaching aids, a 20-workstation IT Lab and a well-stocked library. All classrooms can seat a maximum of 20 students, thereby ensuring individual attention to all students.

Tourism in India is the largest service industry. The travel and tourism sector currently employs 49 million people, or 1 in every 10 jobs, and this is projected to increase to 58 million, or 1 in every 9.6 jobs by 2020. Hospitality is the world's fastest growing industry and will add 1 new job every 2.5 seconds. Figures from the World Travel and Tourism Council have the industry growing at a rate of 23% faster than that of the global economy, employing 212 million and earning approximately \$ 3.4 trillion (U.S.) annually. The worldwide hotel industry is expected to reach almost \$480 billion in 2015, according to research by global industry analysts. Industry players are responding to a rise in demand, with plans for many new hotels. There are several factors that are responsible for the growth of the hospitality industry, such as development of transportation systems, increasing industrialisation, speed at which businesses are conducted, need to maintain a personal touch and rising levels of discretionary incomes.

Today, tourism has been recognised as the fastest growing business in Goa. Hospitality is a key segment of the total travel and tourism industry. This means the need to have professionally trained manpower to operate modern day hospitality enterprises has become extremely important. Since the Hospitality industry calls for hard work, odd hours and ever increasing competition, there is great emphasis on development of the right attitude, values, and discipline and personality traits appropriate to prepare a person for a career in the hospitality industry. In the gaming, hospitality & entertainment sphere, the Deltin Group employs around 2,700 personnel. With fast expansion and constant upgrades, pan India operations are constantly in need of skilled and well-trained staff.

3.5. The Dealer Audition:

Most, if not all, casinos will require those applying for dealer jobs to complete an audition demonstrating their dealing skills. The audition happens after or as part of the initial interview with either a pit supervisor or a human resources person grading the performance. From the research we've gathered, those reviewing performances look for a variety of things. They obviously want to see that the applicant has sufficient knowledge of the game he's dealing, but they may also judge the applicant on efficiency, math skills, and politeness. The casinos you apply at will let you know the details on how they conduct their auditions, informing you when the audition will take place and with whom. The important thing to remember is that at some point you'll need to demonstrate your skills, emphasizing your showmanship and natural style, as well as your knowledge of the game.

3.6. When to Look for Casino Opportunities:

A key principle for landing a job in this business pertains to timing. You know – being at the right place at the right time. Due to the nature of casino employment, with its fast pace and labour-intensive work, occasional long hours, and high-stress situations, employee turnover is frequent. Some people underestimate the commitment it takes to work on a casino floor. Others hire on with a casino for a short time to make some quick cash and then they quit or are laid off during the slow season. In fact, seasonal employment is quite common at water based casinos in Goa and also the winter affected Casinos in Sikkim. A former dealer from a Sikkim based casino I interviewed strongly encouraged applicants to consider hiring on for the summer as a good way to break into this industry: *“Our area is great for people breaking into the business. Casinos recruit from a lot of nearby college campuses, looking for students who want to earn some quick cash over the summer. That's the busy time here. They send new recruits to a two-week dealer school and then put them on the floor working. By the end of the summer, these new dealers know the business inside out and have a pretty good bankroll, too. That is, if they can avoid the gaming tables themselves.”*

Others still receive promotions, creating entry-level openings. But the number one reason for employment opportunities relates directly to the tremendous growth of the industry. As mentioned earlier it's boom time for casinos, with new ones staking their claims across the country. Besides contacting the casinos included on job portals, keep attuned to what's happening around the country as local governments debate gaming issues. Obviously we can't list casinos not yet built or pinpoint where new ones will appear, but you can review media reports, looking for news of additional states or cities legalizing gambling. It doesn't take long for gambling establishments to come to town once the legalities fall into place.

All indications point toward a robust industry well into the current millennium as more and more governments embrace gambling as a way to generate tax revenues. With the rush of new places predicted to open in a recovering economy, employment for those who do their homework looks like a sure thing down the line.

3.7. Applying in Person for Casino Employment:

Unless you're very fortunate, just sending a resume via snail mail to a casino employment office from the comfort of your living room hundreds of miles away will not be enough to get you hired. Of course, the best way to apply these days is through the employer's online application system. As mentioned earlier, a lot of the gaming venues around the country look to hire applicants who already live in the area or come from nearby communities. They realize that entry-level jobs have high turnover rates for the most part and cannot invest the costs to relocate someone for such a position. They also want some assurance that the applicant is serious about working in the industry. What better way to say, “Hey, I'm ready” than to be at their door in person. According to a former marketing director, who worked in Las Vegas at various casinos for fifteen years, the way to get into this business is to follow what she describes as a pack-and-go approach: *“If you want a job in this business, particularly in Goa, the best thing is to just go. Force yourself to do it. Just start working anywhere. You don't have to work in the best place right off because there is always room to transfer and move up. That's what*

everyone does in Vegas or even Goa. I mean I changed jobs almost every two years. Everyone does it. There's no stigma attached to moving around, jumping from job to job. That's just the way the business works."

3.8. Casino Jobs – The Application:

Whether it's the online or paper version, casino applications can be lengthy. They may have several pages, asking you to give detailed information on your employers for the past ten years, your personal qualifications, skills, and training, a list of organizations you belong to, and even home addresses for several years back. You will also have to account for any period of time you were not gainfully employed, such as taking time off to raise a family, or for medical reasons, or because you were in school. Chances are you will also be asked to consent to a drug test and, as with most jobs, to provide evidence that you have the legal right to work in India.

Proof of employment eligibility can include several pieces of documentation. You may use a combination of a valid driver's license and your official birth certificate or official Social Security card, or simply your unexpired or expired passport. If you have questions regarding what type of documentation is necessary or anything at all on filling out the application, be sure to ask the human resources person who is in charge. Do not leave any items unanswered on the forms you are given. Your application will not be considered if it is incomplete.

Before you begin to fill out the application, you should review job openings posted on the website or HR office. Typically, the employer's website will have a complete description of every available job, maybe some pay information, hours, and requirements. Try to match your qualifications to positions currently available and indicate in your cover letter or application specifically what job you are applying for, if asked to do so. If there are no relevant job openings at the time you fill out the application and write in or type the position(s) you wish to work, such as surveillance officer, or change attendant, pit clerk, or something similar. If you have any questions, be sure to ask the person accepting applications (if applying in person) or send questions via email – or make a call. Because of the volume of applications received, some casinos will require very specific guidelines and procedures to be followed. Don't count yourself out of the running by neglecting to comply with a casino's set application policies.

3.9. Background Checks – Casino Employment:

If you want to work in the gaming industry, you should know that an extensive examination of your professional background and perhaps even a review of your personal character will be done by all casino companies interested in hiring you. Background checks or investigative reports may cover a variety of things, including an applicant's driving record, employment history, medical records, and credit history for the last eight or ten years. Such investigations are a reality of this business, and if you have what's deemed a "negative work history" or a criminal record, chances are you won't be allowed to work on the casino floor. (However, you may still qualify for other support jobs, such as hotel or restaurant work.)

To what extent casino managers use all the information available to them in doing these checks is unknown. Some casinos will really only check applicants for a criminal record and call previous employers to verify work histories. Other casinos are extremely thorough, seemingly picking the applicant apart, looking for any signs of potential trouble. They may go so far as to ask previous employers not only how you performed your duties, your salary history, attendance record, and reason for leaving that particular job, but also for an account of your character, attitude, behaviour, and demeanour on the job. Most applicants, however, have good work histories or, at the very least, average ones that will still qualify them for casino employment.

Employers may continue to review you by calling all of your references as listed on your application and asking similar probing, highly personal questions. As such, it is imperative that you list only references who know you well and can speak highly of your character. Once you have received a satisfactory review, which for most people is no problem to achieve, you'll be invited back for a more formal interview, or perhaps even be hired on the spot.

4. LIST OF FUNCTIONAL CASINOS IN INDIA

Sr No.	Gambling facility name	Phone	Location
1	Casino Carnival at Marriott Hotel	+91 88888 85314	Panaji
2	Casino Mahjong at Mayfair Spa Resort	03592-250126	Gangtok
3	Casino Palms at La Calypso Goa	+91 832 227 5777	Bardez
4	Casino Paradise at Neo Majestic	+91 588 8509 2	Bardez

5	Casino Pearl at Bogmallo Beach Resort	+91 588 830 18	Vasco da Gama
6	Casino Pride Panaji		Panaji
7	Casino Sikkim at Hotel Royal Plaza	91-3592-280032	Gangtok
8	Casino Strike Goa	+91 832 7122270	Bambolim
9	Chances Resort & Casino - Goa	+91 832 245 2201	Dona Paula
10	Costa Cruises - neoClassica		Mumbai
11	Crown Casino - Goa	+91 832 2222 822	Panaji
12	Deltin Caravela	+91 98196 98196	Panaji
13	Deltin Daman Casino	+91 260-6699999	Daman
14	Deltin Denzong Casino	+91 98196 98196	Gangtok
15	Deltin Jaqk Casino	+91 77 987 40004	Panjim
16	Deltin Royale Casino	+91 86 985 99999	Panjim
17	Deltin Suites Casino	+91 832 6710 777	Nerul
18	Goa Nugget Casino	+91 832 6695 000	Salcette
19	The Zuri White Sands Casino Resorts		Salcette

5. CONCLUSION

Job scenario in Goa's Casino development has been unimaginable, in just a few years they have transformed Goa into a mega casino destination and it is still developing. The same might not be true in quantum for Sikkim but in terms of relativity, Sikkim too has offered its due share of job creation to the local youth.

The job development that usually is one of the major optimistic sides of Casinos as in Goa and Sikkim has proved itself to be true to its spirits. The Job seekers in the Hospitality sector in India have much more choice in what to work with and a better chance of working upwards on the corporate ladder with the advent of this market of Casinos.

Both the private sector and state governments will benefit from investing a higher amount of money and time in this niche tourism sector.

The youth of the country have several new options to choose from and Casino gives a great opportunity to them. The part-timers can take up the job as a hobby during their summer holidays where as the serious contenders must prepare themselves with the right amount of professional skill from structured colleges, Professionals etc. They must prepare themselves for a long term hospitality career of the most rewarding kind.

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