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JULY/AUGUST 2019

HOTELS

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LIFE AFTER PLASTIC

ROSEWOOD HONG KONG

THE FUTURE OF 5G

HOTELS 325

world's biggest hotel companies

TRENDING

Bamboo
straws at
Avani

MAKING THE SWITCH

HOTELS FIND ELIMINATING PLASTIC STRAWS ISN'T DIFFICULT - BUT IT DOES TAKE PLANNING AND RESEARCH TO BREAK THE HABIT.

Contributed by **DEBBIE CARLSON**

More hotels are ditching single-use plastic straws, whether forced to find alternatives because of legislation or because of environmental concerns.

"It's a remarkably simple thing to do. And to be frank, I wished we'd done it earlier," says John Roberts, group director of sustainability and conservation at Bangkok-based Minor Hotels, whose Anantara and

Avani brands stopped using single-use plastic straws in all Asian properties in 2018.

But it does mean finding the right alternative to plastic straws, stirrers and cocktail sticks. Simon Amos, hotel manager at Hilton Waikoloa Village in Hawaii, the first Hilton property to go plastic-straw free in 2018, says the F&B teams tested different types of material: paper, corn starch, even candy, before settling on a compostable paper straw.

"We weren't sure if they would work in hot drinks, cold drinks, how long they'd last. Would they bend? Would they go soggy?" Amos says.

The hotel depleted its inventory before the switch. There were a few errant plastic straws after the change, but by the end of the first week, Waikoloa Village was 100% compliant. Hilton removed plastic straws from its managed hotels at the end of 2018,



A Banyan Tree employee participates in a beach cleanup.

and in July will enforce compliance with its franchisees, says Caitrin O'Brien, Hilton corporate sustainability senior manager.

Different materials are available, from single-use paper or bamboo to reusable metal and silicone. Amos says the hotel just switched to a straw made from a wheat stem, a product normally discarded (also gluten-free). Sometimes a supplier switch is necessary.

Successful transitions require buy-in from F&B teams and sometimes need a bit of a mind shift from staff. The first step can be asking F&B staff to opt out of automatically giving straws to reduce total usage, says Roy Breiman, director of F&B at Seattle-based Columbia Hospitality, which owns and manages 42 properties, the majority in Washington state.

"People have been kind of programmed to think that a straw comes with every beverage that you send out," he says.

Columbia worked with the Lonely Whale Foundation to help bring about Seattle's plastic straw ban. It took a little education to change habits with staff and guests, but many quickly came on board. "You encourage them to be part of this very positive movement to eradicate something that is kind of useless," he says.

Minor's Roberts says allowing hotels, whether owned or managed, to choose alternatives helped. Some started creating drinks around different straws, such as

using vegetables like celery for straws. "You throw an idea out there and some people are really inspired and go ahead and say, well, that sounds cool. What can I do?"

SUCKING UP THE COST

Plastic straw alternatives do cost more. Paul Saucedo, corporate director of sales and marketing for The Godfrey Hotel Boston, which uses waxed paper straws at its restaurant, Ruka, and lobby bar, says costs doubled, but it's a relatively small amount more than covered by their use, frequently in higher-margin cocktails.

Roberts says the metal straws some Anantara locations use cost 17 times more than plastic. Many hotels find their costs eventually go down because they first opted out of giving any type of straw. Hilton says its Seattle Airport and Conference Center saves US\$3,000 monthly this way.

Many hotels announce in advance their plans to switch. Branding expert Rachel Weingarten says hotels making these pledges need to ensure they follow through. Consultant Bjorn Hanson agrees.

"Brands who announce these initiatives have to be careful not to overstate (what they're doing) because of the backlash of 'I trusted you and you deceived me.' It doesn't just do damage to the individual hotel, but it can interfere with the whole issue of brand value and integrity," he says.

"I WISHED WE'D DONE IT EARLIER,"

**JOHN ROBERTS,
MINOR HOTELS**

HOW BANYAN TREE DID IT

On Earth Day 2018, Banyan Tree announced a goal to reduce and ultimately eliminate all single-use plastic. One year later, the hotel has seen a 24% reduction across all properties.

Banyan Tree started by measuring its "plastic footprint," says Steve Newman, the company's head of group sustainability. The chain wanted to know what it used, how much and where, eventually tracking 31 categories of plastic use. Banyan Tree's top-performing properties are in the Maldives, where they reduced single-use plastic by 73%.

Some changes were easy. Instead of using plastic trash-can liners, it now uses washable bins. Landscaping bags are now reusable. Instead of serving condiments like butter in plastic containers, washable dishes are used. "Sometimes it requires us to go back to how hospitality used to be," Newman says.

The company struggles with how to eliminate plastics from products used in back-of-house necessary for hygiene, like cling film and plastic gloves for food prep, he says. But it is approaching alternative ideas with an eye toward long-term investment.

"When you have properties that use over US\$10,000 of cling film a year, you can start looking at things over a longer period of time and justify alternatives in that manner. If over three years you spend US\$30,000 on cling film, (maybe) you can eventually find an alternative that would last longer than three years," Newman says.

SPECIAL REPORT

325 HOTELS



By JEFF WEINSTEIN, EDITOR IN CHIEF

DISRUPTORS LIKE OYO BREAK INTO THE RANKING IN A BIG WAY, WHILE CHINESE GIANTS SUCH AS STATE-OWNED JIN JIANG ASSERT THEIR DOMINANCE VIA ACQUISITION.

The makeup of the world's 325 biggest hotel companies is increasingly unfamiliar. It wasn't more than five years ago when then-Shanghai Jin Jiang stood with 235,000-plus rooms and some 1,500 hotels. Based on 2018 data, now-Jin Jiang International became the world's second-biggest hotel company, after its acquisition of Radisson Hotel Group's more than 180,000 rooms and 1,100-plus hotels. With 941,794 rooms and more than 8,700 hotels, it surpassed Hilton.

Then there is Oyo Hotels & Homes, a name virtually no one knew until 2018, when its concept to better outfit and standardize budget

accommodations gained serious traction in India. Now, via increased capital sourcing and dealmaking, it is growing rapidly in China and has its eye on the United States. It is a bit of a hybrid with a mix of hotels, rooms and vacation rentals, which makes for uneven comparisons, but it is not to be overlooked.

Marriott International, of course, remained king of the hill. Other big movers, such as Bangkok-based Minor International, grew via acquisition, in this case of NH Hotels.

On the pages ahead follow our ranking and note additional listings such as brand and hotel counts, as well as newcomers and drop-offs.

2018 rank	2017 rank	Company	Location	2018 Rooms	2018 Hotels	2017 Rooms	2017 Hotels
1	1	Marriott International	Bethesda, Maryland USA	1,317,368	6,906	1,195,141	6,333
2	5	Jin Jiang International Holdings Co. Ltd.	Shanghai, China	941,794	8,715	680,111	6,794
3	2	Hilton	McLean, Virginia USA	912,960	5,685	856,113	5,284
4	3	InterContinental Hotels Group	Denham, England	836,541	5,603	798,075	5,348
5	4	Wyndham Hotels & Resorts	Parsippany, New Jersey USA	809,900	9,200	753,161	8,643
6	6	AccorHotels	Paris, France	703,806	4,780	616,181	4,283
7	7	Choice Hotels International	Rockville, Maryland USA	569,108	7,021	521,335	6,815
8	-	Oyo Hotels & Homes	Gurugram, India	515,144	17,344	-	-
9	9	Huazhu Group Ltd. (formerly China Lodging Group)	Shanghai, China	422,747	4,230	379,675	3,746
10	8	BTG Hotels Group Co.	Beijing, China	397,561	4,049	384,743	3,712
11	10	Best Western Hotels & Resorts	Phoenix, Arizona USA	295,849	3,618	260,015	3,324
12	12	GreenTree Hospitality Group	Shanghai, China	221,529	2,757	190,807	2,289
13	11	Hyatt Hotels Corp.	Chicago, Illinois USA	208,297	852	204,485	779
14	15	Dossen International Group	Guangzhou, China	199,042	2,247	105,951	1,087
15	14	G6 Hospitality	Carrollton, Texas USA	123,162	1,422	124,739	1,417
16	19	Qingdao Sunmei Group Co.	Qingdao, China	121,483	2,352	91,706	1,697
17	21	Aimbridge Hospitality	Plano, Texas USA	102,786	834	87,971	706
18	17	Magnuson Worldwide	Spokane, Washington USA	94,386	1,119	103,306	1,274
19	26	RLH Corp.	Spokane, Washington USA	85,700	1,327	64,308	984
20	18	Meliá Hotels International	Palma de Mallorca, Spain	83,253	329	96,956	382
21	16	Westmont Hospitality Group	Houston, Texas USA	82,617	731	105,000	507
22	22	Interstate Hotels & Resorts	Arlington, Virginia USA	80,172	481	67,958	390
23	68	Minor International	Bangkok, Thailand	75,219	513	20,209	158
24	24	Whitbread	Dunstable, England	74,624	793	71,282	770
25	23	New Century Hotels & Resorts	Hangzhou, China	72,642	330	71,665	292
26	25	Extended Stay Hotels	Charlotte, North Carolina USA	69,002	627	66,100	599
27	30	APA Group	Tokyo, Japan	65,538	434	53,168	355
28	28	Toyoko Inn Co.	Tokyo, Japan	60,508	288	57,010	274
29	33	Red Roof	New Albany, Ohio USA	58,319	627	48,508	528
30	48	The Ascott Ltd.	Singapore	56,594	433	31,285	306
31	29	Barcelo Hotel Group	Palma de Mallorca, Spain	55,670	251	53,668	244
32	31	Scandic Hotels	Stockholm, Sweden	51,693	268	49,983	262
33	32	MGM Resorts International	Las Vegas, Nevada USA	48,968	28	49,000	27
34	42	Zhuyou Hotel Group	Hangzhou, China	47,190	788	38,580	583
35	34	Club Med	Paris, France	47,141	69	46,708	69
36	38	Travelodge Hotels	Thame, England	43,421	578	40,000	562
37	37	Shangri-La Group	Hong Kong, China	42,383	101	42,600	103
38	35	Riu Hotels & Resorts	Palma de Mallorca, Spain	42,155	93	44,226	98
39	41	Millennium & Copthorne Hotels	London, England	40,323	139	39,402	136
40	40	Caesars Entertainment Corp.	Las Vegas, Nevada USA	39,960	32	39,680	32
41	36	Walt Disney Co.	Burbank, California USA	39,652	38	43,121	52
42	-	Wanda Hotels & Resorts	Beijing, China	38,035	154	-	-
43	50	HK CTS Hotels Co.	Beijing, China	37,672	150	30,225	138
44	-	Thomas Cook Group	London, England	37,584	186	-	-
45	39	Highgate	New York, New York USA	37,307	123	39,940	132
46	44	Iberostar Hotels & Resorts	Palma de Mallorca, Spain	37,100	124	37,100	110
47	43	Jinling Hotels & Resorts Corp.	Nanjing, China	36,297	135	37,314	136
48	-	Barony Hotels & Resorts Worldwide	London, England	33,730	157	-	-
49	45	Nordic Choice Hotels	Oslo, Norway	33,406	188	32,722	190
50	46	Fattal International Hotels & Resorts	Tel Aviv, Israel	33,000	173	31,935	170