

Case Study: Hotel Maiyango



How Leicester's first boutique hotel worked with Leicester Shire Promotions to position itself as part of the 'transformed' city's new fashion and cultural offering for short break visitors



In the heart of Leicester's city centre, Hotel Maiyango and Restaurant is a stunningly-designed 4 star boutique hotel and fine dining experience. The multi award winning restaurant has earned the reputation of offering some of the most inspirational dishes in the country whilst the ultra fashionable adjacent hotel has set a new benchmark for excellence in city centre accommodation.

Taking a chance on Leicester

After graduating from the University of Leicester, Maiyango's young and entrepreneurial owner – Aatin Anadkat – embarked on putting into motion his vision of creating a new concept in hospitality, never before seen in the city. This coincided with the early stages of planning for a subsequent £3 billion regeneration programme that has since physically transformed the city landscape.

"I realised the scale of Leicester's regeneration quite early on and wanted to be part of it. I began with plans to bring a design-led eatery to Leicester; a restaurant that offered the complete package - excellent food, excellent service and an ultra-fashionable ambiance."

This vision materialised in September 2005 when he opened his neo Moorish-designed Maiyango Restaurant and Cocktail Bar – now regarded as offering one of the best dining experiences in the country.

Origins of hotel development

Plans for a hotel development adjacent to the restaurant were set in motion almost a year after the restaurant opening. "The restaurant had a very successful year which proved to me that the design-led, boutique style hospitality concept could be taken a step further in Leicester," explains Aatin.

Leicester Shire Promotions started its engagement with Aatin during this initial planning stage of the hotel development. Senior members of staff met with Aatin and colleagues to discuss positioning, marketing and logistical aspects of the new hotel. After several consultations, work began to create Leicester's very first boutique hotel at the end of 2006. The stunning, 14-bedroomed hotel, complete with a spectacular third floor roof top terrace overlooking the city, opened its doors to the public at the end of 2007.

Aatin explains: "It was a great relief to be able to use Leicester Shire Promotions as a sounding board for my ideas and vision – especially since nothing like the hotel existed in the city at the time. I was fully briefed on Leicester's strategy for tourism and regularly updated on the progress of the regeneration programme which better informed the decisions I made."



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Marketing partnership with Leicester Shire Promotions

It was extremely important for Leicester's new hotel development to align itself with Leicester's new 'city culture' short break proposition. The city's high profile leisure openings such as Curve and Highcross Leicester, both of which opened in 2008, offered a significant opportunity for tourism partners to work together to change perceptions and present Leicester as a dynamic and fashionable destination for the city-based short break market.

Maiyango and Leicester Shire Promotions began joint strategic marketing activity almost immediately after the hotel opening. Maiyango has featured heavily in promotional literature produced by Leicester Shire Promotions to showcase the city's new offer, and has also played a key role in Leicester Shire Promotions' successful city short break campaign. Joint public relations activity to secure high-quality national coverage for the city through press trips, placed features and articles has also been a central feature of the partnership.

"Working with Leicester Shire Promotions on marketing projects has been incredibly beneficial for Maiyango. The marketing and communications messages have really captured the essence of Leicester's new offering and being part of it has presented opportunities that we may have never come across otherwise," continued Aatin.

Focus on quality improvement

Leicester Shire Promotions' Tourism Development team has worked with Maiyango since its opening to help enhance the hotel's visitor experience. Leicester Shire Promotions provided guidance and consultancy for the hotel's quality accreditation application, which succeeded in it securing a strong 4 star grade in summer 2008.

Aatin and his team have also benefited from various East Midlands Tourism-funded quality improvement workshops provided by Leicester Shire Promotions and covering hospitality topics such as accessibility and customer service.

One of the most significant and successful projects has been Maiyango Restaurant's Gold award at the East Midlands Enjoy England Excellence Awards in the 'Taste' category in 2008. Leicester Shire Promotions provided support to Aatin and his team during the application process to ensure all aspects of the category requirements were covered.

Aatin explains: "We would not have known about the awards were it not for Leicester Shire Promotions. We were encouraged to apply and were fully briefed and supported during the application process. The accolade is probably one of the most prestigious awards the restaurant has achieved in its short life so far."

Helping to lead the local tourism industry

The strength and success of the partnership has been further highlighted with the offer for Aatin to join the Leicester Shire Promotions non-executive Board of Directors.

"My engagement with Leicester Shire Promotions has proven invaluable, right from early stages of the hotel development. This is an incredibly exciting time for the destination and I look forward to working with the board to help develop what I believe to be one of the strongest tourism offerings in the Midlands," concludes Aatin.

