

# Restaurants upskill staff to serve better post lockdown

31 May 2020 [Rashmi Menon](#)

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The staff members of Cocktails and Dreams Speakeasy and Sidecar are all geared up for the opening for their restaurants from 8 June, as directed by the government. Since the nationwide lockdown started in March, the 50-odd people have been using their time to upskill themselves through webinars on bartending, drink presentation and a certified course by FSSAI (Food safety and standards Authority of India) on hygiene and post-lockodwn safety, all organized by Minakshi Singh, the co-founder of the two properties in Gurugram and Delhi. "It's been a major learning curve for my young staff. I find that it has made us more closer and stronger," says Singh, adding, "We started it as a way to keep them engaged while many lived away alone. It was a way to meet them virtually and ensure they were alright."

Besides the skill-building activities, Singh also organized webinars on mental health, video-making, and even yoga and meditation.

The hospitality industry has been under intense stress since the lockdown started, with many fighting for survival. But a handful of eateries have taken the initiative to invest in their staff, encouraging them to participate in training classes and webinars to help them improve their skills. The idea is not just to train them in their present job, but to also make them ready for the post-covid-19 world.

At Mumbai's B Bhagat Tarachand restaurant too staff from two outlets are being trained for post-lockdown housekeeping measures, along with improving English speaking, positive thinking, leadership and financial planning.

The sessions are followed by assignments to ensure they retain the essence of the training, which his keenly tracked by Hitesh Gurmukh Chawla, whose family owns the restaurant chain. "Most of my staff have little education and come from poor families. By doing this training, not only they grow, but I also grow. Besides, it's the best time to do the training as all my staff

has a lot of time at hand. I am looking at it as an investment even though the restaurant is shut (delivery is on)," says Chawla, who's in charge of the restaurant's two central Mumbai properties.

Even small family-run resorts in the small towns are sponsoring training webinars for employees.

For Sai Thattee, proprietor of 20-room Amraban Resort in Maharashtra's Konkan region Chiplun, the post-lockdown training held last week was a way to dispel paranoia about coronavirus among the staff. "I am a daughter of a farmer and there is a saying that when you have time at hand, keep the land ready for the rain. Our business is all about human interaction. So, the staff was scared about covid. We put them through a six-day training to help them be mentally prepared for the safety measures that need to be taken once we are back in business."