

# Spa the size of 1,300 football fields

Yogesh Pawar @ MUMBAI

If you want to be pampered at the world's largest retreat and spa destination, you don't have to fly out of the country any more. A mere two-and-a-half hour drive from Mumbai into the Sahyadris in the Maval tehsil of Pune district will suffice. Spread over an area the size of 1,300 football fields, the private Shillim Estate had a soft launch on Friday.

The 320-acre retreat, in which the Hilton Group is a partner, is ecologically-sustainable and is surrounded by 3,500 acres of lush greenery.

An experience at the all-

Pritin Chachad



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villa property, which offers world-class food and beverage restaurants, including the world's largest wine cellar, starts from US \$600 a night.

"We want nothing but the

best for our clients. So, we are sourcing all the non-vegetarian food from abroad," says GM Andreas Kraemer. This German, who has helped set up several holiday resort destinations world over, says he's never been as excited as he is about Shillim. "This place has so much potential with the Tungi, Tikona, Lohgad and Visapur forts, and ancient Buddhist caves of Karla and Bhaja. We are hoping to help boost the heritage tourism in the region."

Gavin de Souza, chairman, Hilton Shillim Estate Retreat and MD, Writer Realty, says the property is accumulation of land parcels acquired over the

years. Villagers from Shillim, he claims, have been active participants in the process of conservation of forest land.

"Since this initiative started, the forest cover and the water table has improved. Why wouldn't we want to be part of the project? Unlike other projects around, we have not been displaced," says a chuffed Balu Jadhav, a local farmer, 29.

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—GM Andreas Kraemer