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## Shangri-la, Glenworth to open high-end tea cafes

*In the process of finalising venues; to invest Rs 15 lakh in each cafe*



Targeting homes: Glendale packed tea on display

P.S. Sundar

Coonor, Feb. 8 US tea café major Shangri-la Tea Co Inc will lend its technology to Glenworth Estate Ltd, which owns Glendale Tea Estate in Coonor, to open high-end tea cafes in different parts of India.

"We have already drawn up the action plan. We are in the process of finalising the venues. Our plan is to cover three segments — high-end cafes serving as tea parlours; exclusive in select spots like airports, railway stations, food courts and entertainment outlets and also kiosks in high-bracket institutions such as software companies, select educational institutions and factories, besides petrol pumps. Apart from supplying quality teas, we will, as our contribution to generic promotion, distribute pamphlets highlighting tea's positive impact on health," Mr G. Udayakumar, Glenworth's Executive Director, told *Business Line*.

### To consider offers

For the tea parlour, the company is open to consider offers from land and building owners including bungalows. "We are focussing on making them exquisite centres for tea, not tea being served in coffee cafes. Not many such exclusive cafes are in the country now. Our idea is to invest around Rs 15 lakh in each café. We will begin with the Nilgiris as this is the home for our tea manufacture and over two million tourists visit the district annually. The first phase also includes concentration on metros, to be followed by select cities," he said.

The technology to be imported from Shangri-la will include modern tea machine brewing. "Our cafes will supply freshly-brewed high-quality teas, not instant teas. Shangri-la runs 30,000 outlets in the US. It has bagged the American Tasters' Choice Award and holds a gold medal for the last seven years

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for its best iced teas. In our cafes to be opened with their technology-support, we will serve ready-to-drink teas, iced teas, flavoured teas and hot teas. Most of the speciality teas served in the tea cafes abroad will be available in our Indian cafes. There will be a menu of 25 varieties of teas to provide choice and serve the changing preference of the youth," Mr Udayakumar said.

Accordingly, the teas used will be from different origins. "Glendale speciality teas will certainly be used. Glendale has ISO 9001:2000 certification.

"By April, we will get HACCP and Rain Forest Alliance certifications. Our teas have created records at US tea auctions held in Las Vegas by fetching \$600 a kilo for which an entry in the Guinness Book of Records has been sought. So, tea connoisseurs in India and tourists visiting India can enjoy globally famous tea preparations at our Indian cafes," Mr Udayakumar said.

All the same, the best of teas from other origins like Sri Lanka and Kenya will be available, he added.

Glenworth produces 1.5 million kg annually, but 75 per cent of this is exported.

"For the niche consumers in the Indian home segment who enjoy speciality tea, we have just launched four brands of vacuum-packed orthodox teas which retain factory freshness, aroma and overall quality for a longer period," said Mr K.V. Shenai, Group Manager.

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