

Comfort Code

Inside The Blue Kite's playbook for turning holiday homes into a trusted, tech-led hospitality business.

By JHANVI DUGGAL



When every nook and cranny of a property feels close to home, you know it's more than just a project—instead, it's a promise of belonging. That's the idea behind The Blue Kite, the hospitality arm of Goa-based developer Vianaar, which today manages 290 properties across five cities, with 100 more homes on the way by the end of 2026. At the helm is Caroline Mulliez, who brings an unusual mix to the role—a double degree from LSE and NUS, three years at Bain & Company, and six years scaling operations for a sporting goods retailer in India. Under her leadership, that background has translated into a business built on transparency, sustainability, and consistency. The Blue Kite tends to elaborate on the existing understanding of hospitality. Whether it's a milestone, an occasion, a mere holiday, or a home away from home, it's designed to feel unmistakably personal. We spoke to Mulliez about what

changes when a side project becomes a 300-home operation, and what she's betting on next.

Harper's Bazaar: The Blue Kite started as a side project in 2019 and now manages 300+ homes across five cities. What changed operationally as you scaled?

Caroline Mulliez: Two things really had to change. The first is the human element. When we were small, our values and culture were shared informally. With 300 employees across multiple cities, we had to formalise our standards, write our processes, and train teammates to embody the brand more consistently. The second is tech. When you manage a few homes, you call the homeowner every now and then. It's an easy relationship, and you manage pricing manually. But pricing 365 days for 300 homes manually is no longer possible. So we lean on tech to ease those

processes. We also wanted homeowners to have transparent access to their financial information—what they've earned, check-ins, number of guests all shared across apps. And we wanted to limit administrative tasks for our teammates, so we built an app for digital check-ins. Tech and human—that's really what you need to look at when scaling a company delivering the kind of service Blue Kite does.

HB: You've called this a new category—somewhere between hospitality and property management. What sets The Blue Kite apart?

CM: We do both the things. We take care of our homeowners' home because we know they've trusted us with their most precious asset. Hospitality is what we do to serve our guests, and they want hotel level standards of cleanliness, operation, comfort, and maintenance. But they also want the privacy and personalisation that you get in a private home.

What we try to do differently is revenue management. Because ultimately, our homeowners care about how well we look after their home, while also wanting their investment to perform well. Our role is to bring both together through thoughtful management. So our job is to optimise pricing and occupancy to ensure that the homeowners are happy—their home is well-maintained, they earn enough, and our guests are satisfied because we give them amazing service. So it's all about combining these elements.

HB: The brand's philosophy leans heavily into slow living, intentional travel, and reconnecting with a sense of place. How does that translate into decisions on the ground—property selection, guest experience design, or service protocols?

CM: We feel luxury travels have really changed over the years. [Today] people look for intimacy, space and reconnecting with their loved ones, which they don't really have time to do in their everyday lives. So we select and design homes around how people will genuinely spend time together. And that can mean having a large dining table where people can have their lazy breakfast, smaller nooks and corners where those long overdue conversations with your loved ones can happen. Then the homes must function as real homes. They must have well-equipped kitchens and reliable internet, and all the practical things that somebody would have in their own home. So we need to make sure that all our properties are either new or feel like new and the experience must be flawless. In Goa, this is an opportunity for people to reconnect with nature. Our properties there have large windows overlooking nature. Whereas in cities like Bangalore and Delhi, we always tell the designer who furnishes the home that it should look a bit special. It should have all the comforts of a home. But it should feel interesting enough.

HB: With over 2 lakh guests served and a growing base of NRIs, international travellers, and long-stay residents, are you seeing shifts in what today's traveller wants from a home versus a hotel?



Caroline Mulliez

CM: People need a home, but they also want the local hint—what's happening in the neighbourhood, where to find the best local food. Travellers coming to Delhi are often here for wedding shopping and similar occasions, so our local team on the ground helps them make the most of their time. In Goa, many of our guests visit to mark meaningful occasions such as a wedding anniversary, a 10-year college reunion, a bachelorette or a 50th birthday. Our team takes the time to understand these occasions and helps guests shape their stay around them.. So we make sure our team is trained to understand those needs and helps guests customise their trip to make the most of it.

HB: What's next for Blue Kite?

CM: We will continue to make Goa our base. As Vianaar develops more inventory, we'll keep onboarding homeowners who want to generate income. The idea in Goa is to remain the local favourite—we have everything from a one-bedroom studio to a five-bedroom villa with a private pool. So, we need to keep delivering the level of care our guests expect, offering a local experience while ensuring our homes are beautifully maintained. The other side of what we're working on is opening in more cities. Today we're in Delhi and Bangalore, but there's a lot to do in Hyderabad, Pune, Chennai, and Mumbai. If you want an apartment with the comfort and privacy of a home, along with professional cleaning and maintenance, The Blue Kite brings together the best of both a hotel and an Airbnb. We saw an opportunity for this in the cities, and the response has been very encouraging, with strong occupancy. ■