

REZIDOR LIFE

LIFE'S TOO SHORT... SPOIL YOURSELF!

THE CULTURE OF WOW!

How the hotel business changed from providing just a bed and a breakfast to a whole world of experiences

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THE MAGIC OF YES! Page 55

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT Page 28

STAYING THE NIGHT WITH FASHION HOUSE MISSONI Page 12

H. M. QUEEN SILVIA AND HER BELOVED CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION Page 44

THOUSAND & ONE NIGHTS Page 20

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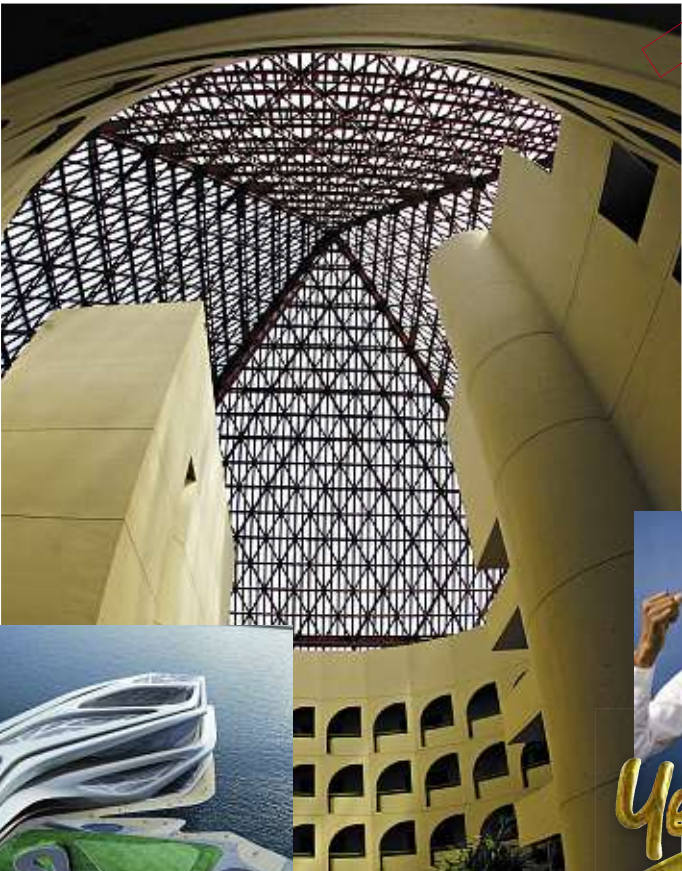
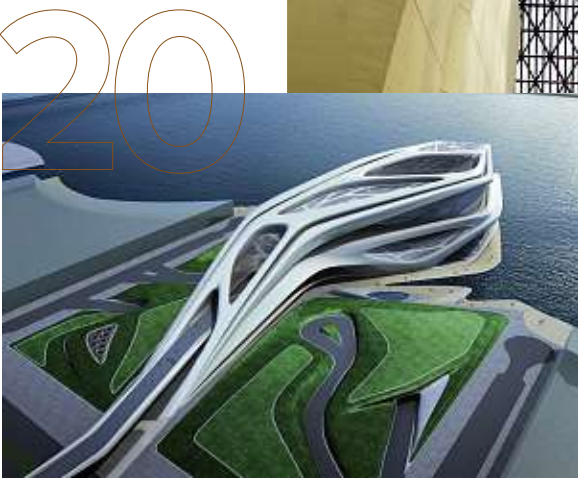
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A NEW TAKE ON THE THOUSAND & ONE NIGHTS. Read about the innovative recipe behind the fast emergence of Dubai and the United Arab Emirate as new leading tourist destinations: a saga for our time.



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THE CULTURE OF WOW!
The new breed Radisson SAS hotels challenge the ordinary notion of what a hotel could look like.



IT'S MORE FUN TO SAY YES!
Everybody knows that – especially Rezidorians. Read about an entire corporate culture based on the spirit of Yes.

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REZIDOR LIFE

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TAIPEI TURKS & CAICOS ZAGREB

Welcome to the world of

Innovative Hospitality

The Rezidor Hotel Group is one of the fastest growing hotel companies in the world. Doing things differently from other companies in the hospitality business is a key factor behind our success. We pride ourselves to be non-conformists, and actively participate in driving change in our industry. Interacting with stakeholders is no exception to this, and communicating in non-traditional ways has become something of a tradition for us.

Rezidor LIFE is a part of the 2007 information package, which also includes the formal Annual and Sustainability Report and Rezidor FINANCIAL. While the former can be found at www.rezidor.com, the latter is available in a newspaper format. The magazine, Rezidor LIFE, provides glimpses from the global environment in which we are conducting business.

Understanding the operating environment and having the ability to rapidly adapt to new situations is always a prerequisite for success. Luckily for us our context is full of life – wonderful people, interesting challenges, great ideas and exciting developments.

Welcome to share some of this context...
... and welcome to Rezidor LIFE!

REZIDOR LIFE

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Small things that make a big difference



<< THE VIP TREATMENT AT THE REGENT ZAGREB

The Regent Esplanade Zagreb might not be the only luxurious hotel in the world to welcome dogs. But it's definitely one of the few that offers your precious dog a truly unforgettable five-star experience. So there's no need for tearful goodbyes when you part with your pampered pet for your weekend trip. You can take off happily knowing that he or she will be thoroughly spoilt by the VIP (Very Important Pet) programme

The treats of the VIP

- A specially designed dog bed with a comfortable pillow
- A welcome letter with your dog's name
- A healthy, delicious bone and a bottle of the finest water to refresh after a long and strenuous trip
- A healthy, outdoor walk through nature
- A special menu created in close cooperation with the local veterinary clinic

If this isn't enough to put your dog at ease, he or she can enjoy a treat from the luxurious Spa Set that offers haircuts and manicures, plus medical massage and acupuncture, especially designed to meet the needs of your pooch. The hotel also sells an extensive selection of dog toys that can be used for playtime, or just as a souvenir of a happy stay. The dog-loving Regent Esplanade Zagreb Hotel – luxury beyond the ordinary. For you and all of your friends.



LOBSTER PRESSING AT THE REGENT BERLIN

The Michelin-starred restaurant Fischers Fritz at The Regent Berlin is the proud owner of the first lobster press in Germany, made by French silver manufacturer Christofle. A first for Germany, but not for Rezidor! Executive chef Yves Mattagne at the famous 2-star Sea Grill in Brussels has been using one for years. But the lobster press is not an easy tool to use. It requires both teamwork and special skills, now, handled with ease, by Chef de Cuisine

Christian Lohse and his team in Berlin. The procedure is carried out in several steps. First, the lobster meat is thoroughly prepared by the Chef and his team in the kitchen. Then, the waiting staff take the special press out in front of the guests. The lobster shell, including its roe – le corail – is put into the crushing machine and, as a dramatic finish; the actual pressing requires the strength of two people to produce a delicious "Homard à la presse". Don't try this at home!



CELEBRITY CHICKENS RAISE MONEY FOR CHARITY

It all began in 2006 when General Manager Florian Meyer-Thoene accidentally bumped into a charming china chicken in a little store. He decided to buy it and asked celebrities staying at the Radisson SAS Erfurt to autograph his porcelain poultry pal. Over the years, a wide range of major world names including, George Bush Senior, André Rieu, Kai Pflaume, Snoop Dogg, Florian Silbereisen, Revolverhead, DJ Ötzi, Yvonne Catterfeld and Erkan & Stefan, signed the famous bird. And as the number of celebrities visiting Erfurt increased, so too did the number of autographed chickens. Finally, it was decided to auction the birds off on e-Bay. All the money raised was donated to the Albert-Schweizer-Kinderdorf Thüringen e.V., a foundation for homeless children. The result – an impressive €842! Precious chicken indeed! More charity actions are expected in the future from this innovative team.

The Wonders of Water



Imagine not only receiving a wine menu when ordering at a restaurant, but also a water menu. That's what guests at Fischers Fritz at The Regent Berlin encounter when asking for sommelier Arno Steguweit's recommendations. Steguweit is a water sommelier and firmly believes in the true wonders of water.

"It is a great opportunity for me to get to explain why we offer a range of waters. Water might seem straightforward, but there is actually a huge amount of choice. Each classification is different. They contain different elements that contribute to healthy living, they each taste markedly different – and they also come in bottles of varying design, an aspect which is becoming increasingly important. For example, mineral waters with a lower mineral content have a subtle, mild taste, while more mineralised waters can taste salty or bitter". Apart from personal taste, the time of the day is also important for the choice. "While sparkling water is refreshing at lunchtime, it can be a strain on the stomach and even disrupt your sleep in the evening", explains Steguweit, who has even written a book about the wonders of water.



BYE BYE MUZAK – WELCOME MUZIK

Sometimes it is virtually impossible to pinpoint why you get that comfortable or uncomfortable sensation when entering a room. There is more than meets the eye, or so it seems. While the visual aspects of interior design are obviously affecting our deeper experience, there are also other impressions operating on an almost unconscious level. Shopping malls, restaurants and switch boards have all known this for decades. And hotels. Music Styling is a company offering “Sensory Branding” – a way of enhancing brand loyalty through the listening experience. The Rezidor Hotel Group is one of the hotel chains who has realised the true powers of music, integrating sensory branding into the various brands’ holistic identity programmes. Radisson SAS hotels around the world are all playing the right tunes thanks to a carefully selected music collection called “24 hours”. Everything you need in other words to get that cool ambiance. Artists like Norah Jones, Bebel Gilberto, Beauty Room, Carmen McRae and many others will lure you into a world of sophisticated upscale hospitality. You won’t even know what hit you until it’s too late. Or why not blame it on the bossa nova?

FEEL THE PASSION...

The success of the innovative welcome cards at the Radisson SAS Stansted Hotel was immediate. The guests loved the personal and humorous touch of the cards, and it wasn’t long before the experiment was extended to all Radisson SAS hotels. It’s the little things that make all the difference... as you can see for yourself...



PARADING THE YES I CAN! ATTITUDE

In June 2007, the turn had finally come to Marseille in France to welcome the world’s most famous cow parade. Starting its life in Chicago and New York in 1999, cities all around the globe have welcomed the arty cows during nearly a decade now. Local artists rise to the challenge of interpreting the cow as an art object – and exceeding the previous artistic cow creations. And it’s all for a good cause! At the end of each manifestation, the cows are herded up and many are auctioned out, donating a substantial amount to charity. In Marseille, we spotted one very familiar message among the colourful ruminants; it seems that the Yes I Can! spirit has even made its way into the official cow parade...



NESPRESSO

In the beginning of 2006, Rezidor SAS entered into a partnership agreement with Nespresso, making Nespresso the coffee partner of choice for over 180 Radisson SAS hotels and resorts. The agreement meant equipping all Business Class and Royal Club rooms and suites, and Meetings & Events facilities, with Nespresso coffee machines. These stylish, smart and technologically advanced machines offer a wide selection of some of the world’s highest quality Grand Cru coffees.

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HOTELS THAT LOVE TO SAY YES!



Fashion marries hospitality

Sumirago. No, it's not a Japanese poetry meter. And it's not the latest performance model from one of the aggressive Korean carmakers. Sumirago is the home of one of the world's most authentic fashion brands, Missoni, who are currently expanding their legendary fashion house into a whole new field – the hotel business.



Started more than 50 years ago by Rosita Missoni and her husband Ottavio, the vibrant Missoni house has become one of the world's most enduring and loved presences in the fashion world.

The story began in London in 1948 when the young Rosita, who was then studying in the city, attended the Olympic Games at Wembley Stadium. During the games, she watched a dashing young Italian man, Ottavio Missoni, win his heat in the 400 metre hurdles. Two weeks later, she went to the Piccadilly underground station where a mutual friend had arranged a meeting with the young man. And as it turned out, they both had a background in textiles. Rosita's family run an embroidery factory and she had become interested in fashion from an early stage. Meanwhile, her future husband – the son of a countess and a sea captain – had recently set up a knitwear business. They married five years later and set up a garment business together a few miles outside Milan, in Gallarate in the Varese province in Northern Italy. What started out as a small knitwear workshop quickly translated into a very successful and flourishing business.

The family was soon enlarged with the birth of Rosita's and Ottavio's three children – Vittorio, Luca and Angela – and the family settled down in Sumi-

rago in Varese, surrounded by the most beautiful views of the Mount Rosa.

Passion has undoubtedly always been a crucial thing for Rosita and Ottavio, and later on for their children when they took over the business. A passion for life in general and for good food, good wine and of course – fashion, bold patterns, colours and playful design ideas. A passion for doing things differently, by doing them the way they have always been done at this house.

In the traditional way of manufacturing all clothes and fabrics by hand lies a truly unconventional view on fashion. While companies around the world see China and Indonesia as part of their local labour market, Missoni prevails in its confident belief in hand-made fashion with exquisite quality. Right from the very beginning, the Missoni fashion has always been about reinventing itself – adding the little details that connects the first collections of the 50s with the latest spring collection.

Missoni Home – entering the interior design market

Rosita Missoni recently retired as head of the fashion house and handed over the reins to her daughter Angela who is now the Creative Director. Rather

than completely retire however, Rosita relaunched Missoni Home, a range of luxurious tableware, bedding, cushions, rugs, all carrying the easily identifiable Missoni patterns, florals and stripes, and so beautifully complementing the clothing range.

"With fashion you have to be passionate and you need to be curious – I had no curiosity left. But when it comes to home styling and the style of living, I still do. And now I have the time to work on it", says Rosita Missoni.

The Missoni Home collection has become a huge success. It is designed by Rosita and is the product of a collaboration between two leading companies, a perfect match also on a personal basis – Missoni and T&J Vestor, the latter a worldwide manufacturer and distributor, presided by Rosita's brother Alberto Jelmini.

Next step: the hotel industry

The next stage of the journey for the innovative Missoni family was the hotel business. In November 2005, Missoni signed a worldwide licence agreement with The Rezidor Hotel Group to jointly develop a hospitality brand in the "new luxury" segment. The development will focus on selected style-conscious and energetic cities as well as beautiful resort destinations, with an initial focus on Europe and the Middle East, the established markets of Rezidor.

The first two hotels of a large-scale roll-out, consisting of around ten locations in five years, are due to open in Kuwait City and Edinburgh in the first quarter of 2009. In these hotels the concept will be fine-tuned in real-life before being launched shortly thereafter in style-conscious mega-cities all over the world.

When dealing with such an eminent luxury fashion brand as Missoni, it is essential to get the details right from the very beginning. For this reason, a design workshop has been set up in Sumirago, the home town of the Missonis, to meticulously test and develop every aspect of the new lifestyle brand concept.

Rosita Missoni is the Creative Director of Hotel

Missoni and has developed the design of the first two hotels in collaboration with architect Matteo Thun, the man behind spectacular Rezidor properties such as the Radisson SAS Frankfurt and Radisson SAS Berlin.

Gordon McKinnon, Executive Vice President Brands at Rezidor, is responsible for the development work.

"Relevance and authenticity are always important when building a brand, and we are extremely proud to work with Rosita and the Missoni family. Rosita's passion, flair and truly international design aesthetic have helped make Missoni a household name. By harnessing Rosita's remarkable ability to define a distinctive, fashionable yet timeless look, I firmly believe that Hotel Missoni will raise the bar compared to existing fashion boutique hotels, and create a hotel genre with lasting, international appeal", says McKinnon.

Hotel Missoni will bring the timeless style, colour and glamour of Missoni to life for today's design conscious traveller. The bold use of colour and surprising yet harmonious combinations is the signature of Missoni, which will bring a contemporary energy to these hotels – not only to the highly visible public spaces like the restaurants and bars, but also to the private spheres of the bedrooms and bathrooms. Each Missoni hotel will have a distinctive individual look, inspired by the location and culture of the host city or resort.

Hotel Missoni will also embrace the traditional Italian family values of warmth and hospitality, which the Missoni family is famed for. This emphasis on service, style and great food will ensure a hotel experience that is visually, emotionally and physically rewarding.

Hotel Missoni will not just be a hotel concept but will also include the "Cucina Missoni" restaurants, the vibrant Bar Missoni and, in some properties, spas and luxurious coffee and chocolate boutiques.

All in all, a generous setting of life and style. ■

"With fashion you have to be passionate and you need to be curious – I had no curiosity left. But when it comes to home styling and the style of living, I still do. And now I have the time to work on it", says Rosita Missoni. ¶¶



New Breed

A feast for all your senses. The new breed Radisson SAS hotels challenge the ordinary notion of what a hotel could look like. They are designed to "wow!" their guests. And the service experience is equally exciting.

Dramatic architecture, jaws-dropping interior design and service features that sometimes border on entertainment. Once upon a time a hotel offered a bed and a breakfast. That was then. Now is now. And now is "wow!"

The Culture of Wow!

Strutting the stuff in Germany.
Wine display at Radisson SAS Hotel, Frankfurt.



Chilling out in Norway.
Eero Aarnio Ball Chairs at Radisson SAS Hotel, Fredrikstad.



Warming up in Switzerland.
Free standing bath tub at Radisson SAS Hotel, Luzern.



Glamorous reflections in the UK.
Stucco lustro lobby and atrium in Radisson SAS Hotel, Liverpool.



Double shading in Ireland.
Lobby seating arrangement at Radisson SAS Royal Hotel, Dublin.



Deep into the red in France.
Enjoying a strawberry daiquiri at Radisson SAS Hotel, Marseille.



Calling it a day in the UK.
Sleeping on the rainbow at Radisson SAS Waterfront Hotel, Jersey.



Close encounter with the elements in Tunisia.
Earth, wind, water and fire at Radisson SAS Resort & Thalasso, Djerba.

A new take on the

Thousand & One Nights

Anything imaginable, and on of top that, the utterly unimaginable. That's the basic recipe behind the emergence of Dubai and the UAE as one of the world's top tourist destinations. It's a saga for our times, and it's evolving as we speak.

Most of them were stories of love and deceit, of spirits and spells and magic, of thieves and royalty and of naked poverty turned into regal fortune. "The Thousand And One Nights", told by young Sheherazade to King Schariar – with a new tale every night – not only kept her from death but made her his Arabian Queen for life, in a twist that is perhaps the best of all the stories.

Sweet nights of make-believe have recently become the speciality of this region once again – and everyone wants to share in the magic. And the good news is – everyone can. Dubai International Airport saw 34 million travellers cross its floors in 2007. For almost half of them, this was the final destination and Dubai's 40,000 hotel rooms enjoyed 83 percent occupancy. Initially supply-led, Dubai's booming hotel sector is driven today by demand. In 2008, another 22,000 rooms will be added to accommodate the growing number of visitors. And in the years to follow, tens of thousands of new rooms will open for guests. The Thousand and One Nights have become the Million and One Nights, a spell-binding success story that you better believe in.

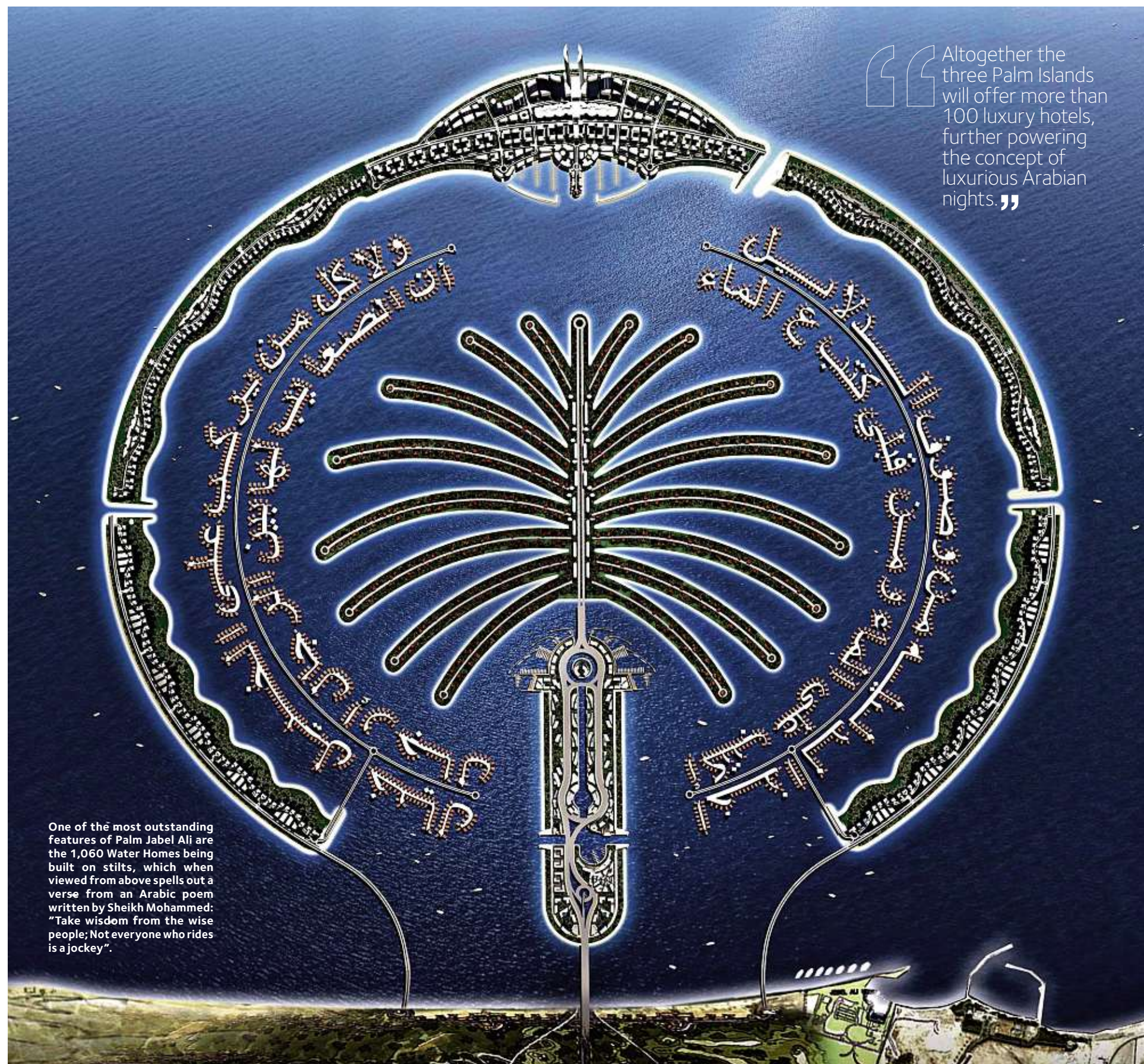
And it all started with the vision of a young Prince. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum of Dubai's ruling family since 1833, realised that his emirate must build its future fortunes on a more diverse economy than merely pumping oil out of its ground. Oil riches should instead be used as the vehicle to transform the sheikhdom into one of the most dynamic economies in the world, one that would continue to prosper once the oil was just history.

Sadly, there were not many natural attractions around that could help do the trick. Endless sand dunes and beach shorelines may have their magnetism, but are hardly enough to lure large numbers of visitors, especially with temperatures hovering around 110° Fahrenheit.

NO, DUBAI HAD TO RECREATE ITSELF. Stunts like that had been pulled before. In the United States, Las Vegas was created out of nothing in the middle of the desert to become a thriving entertainment capital, attracting millions of visitors every year.

The rapid transformation of Dubai really started to take off in the mid 1990s, when Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum was appointed Crown Prince of Dubai. He quickly initiated a number of spectacular projects including the construction of the Burj Al Arab Hotel and The Palm Islands, changing forever the perception of this small emirate. The sheer size and audacity of these projects caught the world's imagination, making people want to come and see and experience for themselves.

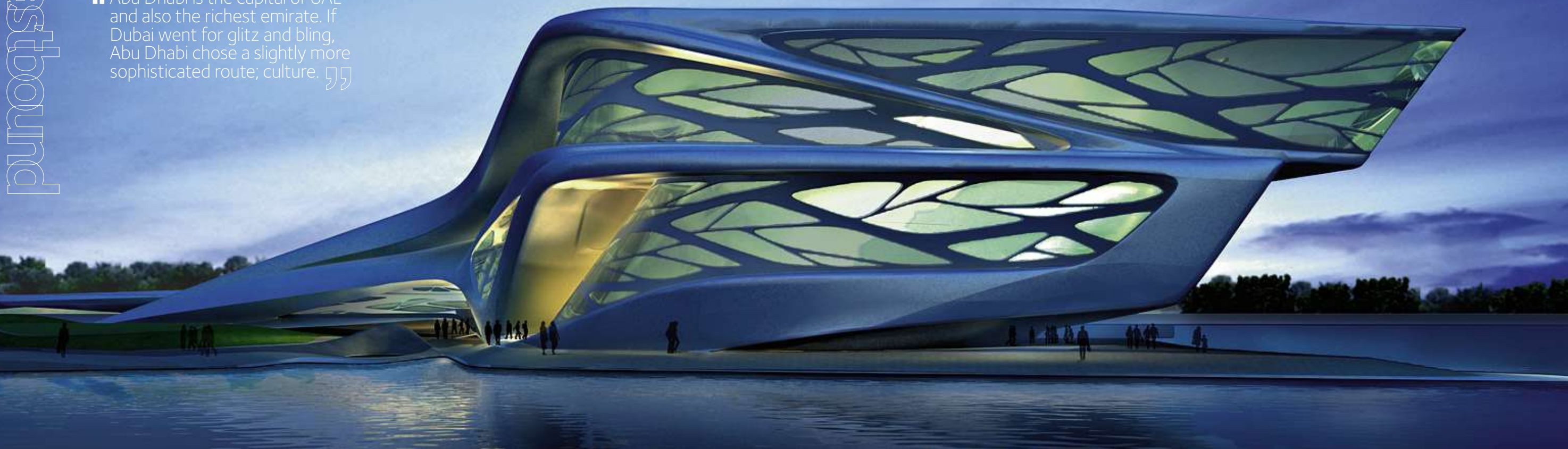
Alpine skiing in the middle of the desert heat? Sure, why not? An indoor ➡➡



“Altogether the three Palm Islands will offer more than 100 luxury hotels, further powering the concept of luxurious Arabian nights.”

One of the most outstanding features of Palm Jabel Ali are the 1,060 Water Homes being built on stilts, which when viewed from above spells out a verse from an Arabic poem written by Sheikh Mohammed: "Take wisdom from the wise people; Not everyone who rides is a jockey".

“ Abu Dhabi is the capital of UAE and also the richest emirate. If Dubai went for glitz and bling, Abu Dhabi chose a slightly more sophisticated route; culture. ”



Abu Dhabi's The Performing Arts Center, designed by Zaha Hadid, seats 6,300 people in two concert halls, one opera and two theatres.

ski slope was built inside one of the world's largest malls. Sleep deep under water in the world's only sub-marine complex with "floating beaches" on the surface? But of course! It may never have been done before, but there always has to be a first time. Tuck in way above the clouds on the 160th floor? Certainly, time to book! Anything imaginable, and on of top that, the utterly unimaginable. That's the recipe. It's indeed a saga for our times, evolving as we speak. And, instead of Las Vegas' gambling, Dubai offers the best shopping in the whole world, claiming that here everyone is a winner, every time.

The Burj Al Arab is not only the world's first "seven star" hotel, defying all known limits of extravagant luxury: with its iconic architecture rising from a small artificial island like a giant sail, it quickly became a symbol for Dubai.

THE PALM ISLANDS are the largest land reclamation projects in history and will result in the world's largest artificial archipelago, clearly visible from space. Each settlement will be in the shape of a palm tree, topped with a crescent, and will have a large number of residential, leisure and entertainment centres. The Palm Islands will add 520 km of beaches to the city, and the first island alone, Palm Jumeirah, is doubling Dubai's coastline.

Palm Jumeirah is now nearing completion. Many of the exclusive residential beach side villas and apartments have already been handed over to

owners and residents while marinas, water theme parks, hotels, restaurants, shopping malls, sports facilities and health spas continuously open for business. Altogether, the three Palm Islands will offer more than 100 luxury hotels, further boosting the concept of luxurious Arabian nights.

Palm Jebel Ali is 50 percent larger than Palm Jumeirah and is due for completion by mid or late 2008. By 2010, it is expected to accommodate 1.7 million people. The Palm, Deira, the last of the three palm islands, will be the largest of them all, ten times the size of Palm Jumeirah. It is due to be finished by 2015. Other offshore construction projects such as The World – an archipelago in the shape of Earth's continents – and Dubai Waterfront, encircling the Palm Jumeirah, add to the impressive projects list.

Today, it is thought that one third of all the world's active building cranes are working in Dubai. Quite a few of them are engaged in erecting Burj Dubai, which, at 800+ metres, will be the highest building in the world when it's completed in 2009, for a short time, at least... In Kuwait, the rulers plan to build the Mubarak Tower, scheduled for completion by 2012, which will be the first man-made construction to reach over 1,000 metres. This threw up a challenge for Dubai, and plans for the latest project, Al Burj, reveal a 1,050 metre colossus. Its exact location is still not decided. It has moved around on the plans and recently had to give up its location on the Dubai Waterfront because of

a conflict with the plans to build the world's largest airport just south of the site.

Oil currently accounts for less than 5 percent of all Dubai's income, while tourism, shopping and business dominate income generation. Many large multinational corporations have moved their headquarters to Dubai, enjoying business and tax incentives in a number of free economic zones, such as the Jebel Ali Free Zone, Dubai Media City, Dubai International Financial Centre and Dubai Internet City.

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum is the ruling Emir of Dubai today as well as the Prime Minister and Vice President of UAE. He presents his philosophy in a book; "My Vision – Challenges in the Race for Excellence", formulating a pathway for the Arab nations to come together and become an effective central region of the world. Dubai's spectacular success has inspired a number of Gulf States to follow its example, including Oman, Qatar, Kuwait and to some extent even Saudi-Arabia, introducing free economic zones and launching spectacular mega-projects claiming their share of the action.

THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES – UAE – consists of seven emirates: Abu Dhabi, Ajman, Dubai, Fujairah, Ras al-Khaimah, Sharjah and Umm al-Qaiwain. Abu Dhabi is the capital and also the richest emirate. If Dubai went for the glitz and the bling, Abu Dhabi has chosen a slightly more sophisticated route, including culture.

To cut the corners, Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the president of the United Arab Emirates and ruler of Abu Dhabi, recently decided to "buy" a big chunk of The Louvre for a reported sum of 1 billion USD and open Louvre Abu Dhabi. And that's only to get things started.

The Sheikh has commissioned four of the world's most prominent architects – Frank O. Gehry, Jean Nouvel, Tadao Ando and Zaha Hadid – to create what promises to become one of the world's most important cultural destinations. Saadiyat Island, "Island of Happiness" in Arabic, lies just off Abu Dhabi. The idea is to transform its 27 square kilometres to one of the world's foremost museum islands. Jean Nouvel, perhaps most famous for his Institut du Monde Arab in Paris, has been commissioned to design the Louvre Abu Dhabi, planned to open by 2012. Frank O. Gehry is to repeat his Bilbao success and build another Guggenheim Museum, and do we need to add – the biggest yet. Iraqi architect Zaha Hadid, working from London, has designed the Performing Arts Center, seating 6,300 people in two concert halls, one opera house and two theatres. Finally Japanese architect Tadao Ando has designed a stunning Maritime Museum in the shape of an abstract sail curved by the wind. To accommodate all the visitors, 29 hotels are planned for completion by 2018.

Abu Dhabi obviously does not want to be another Dubai, and it has the means to provide an alternative. The emirate recently started to build a ➡



“Offering unsurpassed quality of life to its inhabitants while leaving a “zero carbon footprint” Abu Dhabi’s new city is a stunning statement from a country which sits on the world’s fifth largest oil reserves and fourth largest gas reserves.”

Designed by Sir Norman Foster the new city is called “Masdar”, meaning source in Arabic, and is everything that Dubai is not.

“zero-carbon city”, designed by Sir Norman Foster to offer unsurpassed quality of life to its inhabitants, while at the same time leaving a zero carbon footprint, a stunning statement from a country which sits on the world’s fifth largest oil reserves and fourth largest gas reserves. The United Arab Emirates has the world’s largest ecological footprint per capita, according to a recent WWF report. That means each resident uses up more of the world’s resources than any other person in the world. It takes 9.06 global hectares of land to absorb each person’s carbon dioxide emissions in a year. The United States’ carbon footprint is 5.66, and the world average is 1.7.

The new city is called “Masdar”, meaning source in Arabic, and is everything that Dubai is not. Once completed in 2013, it will house 50,000 people and promises a clean, attractive and ecologically

responsible way of life. The compact, low-rise city will be run almost entirely by solar electricity generated on site. Every surface will collect energy, homes will respond to the seasons with opening or closing roofs, and it will desalinate and recycle its own water. No cars. Residents will move around the six-square-kilometre city using a light railway line and a series of automated driverless transport pods taking people to wherever they want to go. The city will also link itself to the past, with narrow streets and small squares with playing water, natural air conditioning coming from wind towers, and an infinity of shades and light. It is, in short, a real oasis in the unsustainable world of energy-guzzling skyscrapers now thrusting up throughout the region.

It is as far away you possibly can come from the Burjes of Dubai. And only next door. ■

REZIDOR EXPANSION IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Rezidor has been present in the Middle East since 1980, establishing a solid base of 15 Radisson hotels in operation across the region as well as the company’s first Park Inn resort in Egypt. This number is set to double in the coming three years.

The Middle East region holds enormous growth potential as governments look to diversify their economies and shift their income sources away from oil to key sustainable industries such as tourism. In addition intra-regional traffic continues to grow and the increases in direct flights from local carriers to main capital cities in Europe, United States and Asia will have a major impact on inbound and outbound travel patterns. This is clearly demonstrated by the fact that the Middle East recently topped an International Air Transport Association report, recording the highest increase in passenger traffic last year when it reached 18.1 percent year-on-year growth.

In the upcoming year Rezidor is expecting to open the Hotel Missoni Kuwait – a milestone for the region and the company as it will be a first-of-its-kind.

“The Arab community appreciates the finesses of haute couture. We experience a high interest of potential owners for Missoni as it matches the brand oriented society”, says Puneet Chhatwal, Senior VP and Chief Development Officer. “The local community will also appreciate and value the Regent culture as it celebrates east and west heritage with respect to local traditions. Brand awareness amongst this target group and the Middle East as a whole will definitely have a positive impact on the development for Regent hotels worldwide.”

With the announcement of the upcoming Regent Emirates Pearl, Abu Dhabi in the United Arab Emirates, Rezidor is well on track to have a presence in each of the seven emirates in the next five years. Two Radisson projects are coming up in Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah and a fourth hotel is being developed for Dubai. Currently Rezidor operates two city hotels and one residence in Dubai which are complemented by a beach resort in the adjoining emirate of Sharjah.

“Tourism in Abu Dhabi is currently undergoing a major transformation and will soon become one of the region’s top business and leisure destinations and it is important that Rezidor is part of this development,” says Chhatwal. “Our growth is marked by strategic tie ups with local partners.”

As the five star market continues to grow exponentially across the region, so does the demand for value for money and a hassle free accommodation. Rezidor is anticipating this important growth sector by introducing the Park Inn brand into primary and secondary cities across the Middle East.

Park Inn hotels are being developed in the major cities of Riyadh, Al Khobar, and is the first international mid-market hotel brand to



Dusk at the Tamanya Terrace at the Radisson SAS Hotel, Dubai Media City.

open in the holy Islamic city of Makkah. Rezidor’s expansion within the Kingdom includes a Radisson SAS property in both Al Madinah and Makkah – totalling the number of hotels in Saudi Arabia to nine by 2010.

“We have been present for a decade in the Kingdom and we have acquired an excellent understanding of the Saudi Arabian market and the unique nature of this country. It is one of our major growth markets, as religious tourism figures are set to increase by 20 percent per annum. The Kingdom’s geographical, economic and social attributes have a lot to offer for tourists, particularly Muslim travellers visiting the country for Hajj.”

Another focus area for Park Inn is the emerging market of Oman where Rezidor will introduce the brand to be developed in close proximity of the Radisson SAS Hotel, Muscat.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has also seen a significant increase in tourist numbers over the years, which is being primarily driven by the country’s association with the Formula 1 Grand Prix. Our Radisson SAS Diplomat Hotel, Residence & Spa has continued to meet travellers’ needs, and recent renovations include the development of the largest wellness centre in the Kingdom with 17 treatment rooms for both males and females.

In the Levant area of Lebanon and Jordan, Rezidor currently operates one hotel in Beirut and is well on its way to open a resort in Aqaba, Jordan, which will be part of the Tala Bay mixed use real estate development, taking shape on an exclusive two-kilometre beach strip.

Egypt continues to be a strong market for the group with four properties currently open in the country. Taking Rezidor’s tally to five this year, the group will open its Radisson property in Egypt’s second largest city, Alexandria.



www.hotelmissoni.com

THE MODERN BRASSERIE

Verres en Vers is the reinvented classical French family member with a modern twist. Combining the atmosphere of Parisian cafés, the soul of Le Marais, the character of Montmartre and the chic of Rue St Honoré, the ambience of Verres en Vers could simply be described as "poetry in a glass". And just like the name implies, this is the place for intimate candle light dinners as well as evenings of wining, dining and gossiping in best friends' company. Santé!



You are what you eat – and increasingly: you are *where* you eat

"Real men don't eat sushi" was a famous bumper sticker that originated from the US mid-west in the late 1990's. As a statement, it may not be valid anymore, if indeed it ever was. But there is a deeper truth in this one-liner that has become even more apparent over the last ten years...

You are what you eat.

Few things define your lifestyle as much as what you eat and drink. That is true for what you eat at home as well as when you're dining out. Or taking out to eat at home.

You are what you eat, and healthy eating has become a global trend. What constitutes 'healthy'

is endlessly under debate – even among scientists – and there are almost daily "news" items, sometimes conflicting with yesterday's bulletins. Alcohol, for example, has undergone a re-evaluation and is now considered to be healthy when consumed in moderation.

All this has contributed to moving eating and drinking into the core of people's awareness and interest. You can eat or diet yourself to health, beauty, happiness, perhaps even wealth. As the Duchess of Windsor reflected – "You can never be too thin or too rich".

The global restaurant scene has evolved im- ➞

THE CONTEMPORARY ITALIAN

Searching for an authentic yet stylish Italian experience to an affordable cost? Look no further. The brand new Italian restaurant concept of Rezidor has it all. Filini is all about taste and flavour. The best ingredients of Italy are gathered to create a memorable experience enhanced by the clean wooden design and atmosphere, offering an instinctively recognisable ambience. And not to forget – the people. Yes I Can! is not just a core concept of the Rezidor hotels, but the Filini people also love to say Yes!



mensely during the past ten to fifteen years reflecting this growing interest in food and drink and the continuously richer diversity of world gastronomy.

In most contemporary developed cultures, eating out has become, if not an everyday, then at least, an every-week activity. It's not an uncommon thing to eat out, but people want it to be a big thing. They want a rich experience. People don't just want food and drink, they want to enjoy themselves – they want fun as well. Putting fun into eating and drinking is perhaps the most important mega-trend in the restaurant industry of the 21st century. And so, hospitality is slowly merging with the entertainment and fashion industries.

The kitchen and the service staff are not the only ones putting on a show: so are the diners themselves. Being at the right place at the time with the right people has also become an issue. You are where you eat. It is more likely today that your favourite hangout is socially compatible with your

lifestyle, than that it serves your favourite food. In the best of all worlds, food, drink, design, fashion, people and buzz all blend into that irresistible mix that denotes a successful destination venue, a place where you want to go.

Rezidor firmly believes that one way to the guests' hearts is through a carefully chosen collection of well-defined restaurant concepts. Food and beverage are crucial elements, but they're not enough. A successful concept caters for all the senses – taste, smell, vision, hearing and even touch. And then there's the fun, the life you put into it, plus an understanding that there is no such thing as the perfect standard concept. It all comes down to tailoring each bar and restaurant according to the location, clientele and competition.

Filini, Sure and Verres en Vers are three of the brand new Rezidor concepts. With three different personalities, they all reflect the importance of the new holistic brand experience where every little detail counts. ■



THE IRISH BAR FLAVOUR

Step inside to discover a welcoming, modern and unpretentious bar with an Irish flavour. A place for chatting with friends over fantastic cocktails, great beers or carefully chosen wines; afternoon tea or lounge food in the sumptuous armchairs. The relaxed open plan design puts the customer immediately at ease, and for the private gathering, a "Vintage Private Area" offer the finest whiskeys, spirits, wines and champagnes.

Adding
colour
to life



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turns 100



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Renowned chef Yves Mattagne has taken on another challenge as the conceptual advisor for the new seafood restaurant at The Regent Bordeaux.

Stardust from the Sea Grill

The famous 2-star seafood restaurant Sea Grill scores again. In the Trends-Tendances Top Restaurant 2007 guide, based on the rankings of 14,349 selected top managers and executives, the Sea Grill is voted No 1.

The man behind Sea Grill, renowned Executive Chef Yves Mattagne, explains some of the secrets behind this lasting success. Travelling is an underestimated source of inspiration, he claims.

"I'm convinced that chefs do not travel enough. There is a lot of mixing with Asian products nowadays for example, and it is important to discover the cuisine abroad and the different tastes. You gain creativity, reflection and motivation from travelling and the chef who stays in his or her kitchen will remain limited, I think. The cuisine is in constant evolution and it's all about discovering and transforming subtle mixes."

All chefs bring their experience with them into the kitchen, regardless of the type of restaurant. But when it comes to the secret behind a superb seafood dish, there are no shortcuts.

"It's all down to the quality of the products, its

origins and the seasonality", Mattagne claims firmly.

The new challenge for Mr. Mattagne, in good companion with Kitchen Chief Pascal Nibaudeau, is the new seafood restaurant at The Regent Bordeaux. Mr. Mattagne is a conceptual advisor for the restaurant, while continuing his passionate engagement in the Sea Grill.

"The new seafood restaurant is designed in 'Jacques Garcia style' which makes it more contemporary. But the main factor making the difference in all restaurants is the staff, since service quality as well as cuisine quality is primordial. The reputation of the Sea Grill restaurant is mainly due to its people, a faithful team working together since 17 years. Now we need to replicate this winning concept with the Bordeaux team, and we believe we have every chance of succeeding", concludes Mattagne. ■

Crayfish and Belgian Caviar 'Carpaccio, Sour Cream, Oyster Dressing'

For four people

Main Ingredients

8 crayfish
30 gr. caviar belge
1 lemon
½ cucumber
1 minced shallot
2 branches dill
10 gr. minced chives
100 gr. sour cream
5 cl liquid cream
20 gr. samphire
salt and pepper

Oyster Dressing

4 oysters
1 egg yolk
½ soup spoon red wine vinegar
3 soup spoon liquid cream
10 cl light chicken stock
lemon juice
1 coffee spoon mustard
salt and pepper

Shell the crayfish and keep the pincers. Pack the crayfish in plastic film (one on top of the other) and keep them in the freezer.

Produce thin slices of carpaccio and place on the plate.

Mix the sour cream together with the liquid cream, add salt and pepper and drizzle onto the carpaccio.

Cut the cucumber into brunoise (small cubes).

Put the brunoise of cucumber on the cream, with the minced shallot, chives and Caviar Belge.

Add the samphire, lemon – blanched three times then cut into thin sticks. Add the cooked crayfish pincers and dill.

For the oyster dressing: Mix all ingredients together, pass through strainer.



East European Beauty

RECLAIMING ITS GLORIOUS PAST

Centuries of influences from the Romans, the Venetians, the Ottomans and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire have given Croatia a long tradition of prosperity and opulence. And now the time is right for this European Beauty to reclaim its glorious past.

Croatia – and the peninsula of Istria in particular – is often affectionately referred to as Little Tuscany because of its beautiful rolling hills, picturesque medieval villages and scenic vineyards. With its diverse terrain, Croatia has everything to offer from plains, lakes and dense wooded mountains to rocky coastlines and inviting beaches on the Adriatic coast.

Apart from the beautiful landscape, the wealth of fascinating ancient treasures is another compelling reason to visit Croatia. Majestic cathedrals, fascinating ruins and impressive architectural footprints; there are no less than six sites in Croatia registered on the UNESCO world heritage map. Add eight national parks, hundreds of museums and a range of cities, each with a unique historical personality, and it becomes more than evident why Croatia is the new hot destination.

Zagreb – the city of the Golden Bull

After a dark period of war and violence in the 1990's, Croatia has quickly recuperated during the last couple of years. It's economy is booming with an average annual real GDP growth of 4,6 percent between 2000 and 2007 (Source: International Monetary Fund). Business travellers and tourists alike have rediscovered the many treasures of this East European beauty.

Zagreb is the largest city of Croatia with a population of just over one million people and the cultural, scientific, economic and governmental centre of the Republic of Croatia. The city is beautifully situated between the southern slopes of the Medvednica mountain and the river banks of the Sava. The Medvednica Mountain's peak is called Sljeme and rises 1,033 metres above the sea, providing a magnificent view over Zagreb, the river Sava and the Kupa valleys. In 2005, Sljeme held its first World Ski Championship tournament.

Zagreb is a city of a rich cultural heritage going as far back as 1094 when King Ladislaus founded the Zagreb bishopric in Kaptol on the eastern slope. The fortified settlement of Gradec on the neighbouring hill was also developed around this time, now Zagreb's Upper Town (Gornji Grad) and one of the best preserved urban nucleus in Croatia. When the two settlements were attacked by the Tatars in 1242, they offered the Croatian and Hungarian King Bela IV a safe haven for which he bestowed them a Golden Bull, offering the citizens autonomy and the city its own judicial system. In 1621, Zagreb was finally chosen as the seat of the Croatian viceroys. During the 17th and 18th centuries, Zagreb was tormented by fires and the deadly plague, but was resurrected again in the 19th century. After the end of World War II, the new city of Zagreb (Novi Zagreb) was built, expanding the city westwards and eastwards. During the Croatian war of Independence in the 90s, the city was the scene of sporadic fighting but luckily escaped any major architectural damage.

Zagreb is nowadays an attractive tourist destination in the heart of Croatia, ➡➡

“

Dubrovnik is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Clinging to the majestic cliffs of the Adriatic coast with the vast blue sea as its only neighbour to the west, Dubrovnik is truly the pearl of the Adriatic.”



The Art Pavilion. A stunning baroque building in the middle of one of Zagreb's most beautiful parks, often used for weddings or other special events.



The Croatian National Theatre in Zagreb is a striking neo-baroque building offering internationally renowned opera and theatre performances.



The Stradun is the main promenade of Dubrovnik and the unofficial runway for the Croatian elite and international celebrities. Clubs and bustling cafés squeezed into ancient buildings resulting in a buzzy and welcoming atmosphere – this is the place to be on a hot Croatian summer night.

STAY AT



THE REGENT ESPLANADE, ZAGREB

In the very heart of the historic city of Zagreb and surrounded by beautiful art nouveau buildings, the botanical garden and the Art Pavillion, The Regent Esplanade offers a haven of unabashed luxury. With its 179 hotel rooms, the Esplanade is undoubtedly Zagreb's most gracious hotel with striking 1920's architecture, world-renowned impeccable service and legendary hospitality standards. Totally renovated and reopened in 2003, the hotel was originally built to service passengers of the Orient Express. The Esplanade has also played host to many legendary celebrities of the 20th century. Among those who have signed the guest book are Josephine Baker, Charles Lindbergh, Orson Wells, Liv Ullman, Louis Armstrong and Woody Allen. Nowadays, The Regent Esplanade is also a vital part of the social life of Zagreb, as businessmen, politicians, journalists and famous writers come here to meet, discuss current events and politics – and to entertain and be entertained.

Address: 1, Mihanovicva, Zagreb
Internet: www.theregentzagreb.com

both in its own right, and for tourists heading to the beaches of the Croatian Adriatic coast and the old historic Renaissance cities such as Dubrovnik, Split, and Zadar. Zagreb's many visitor attractions include:

- The Art Pavilion – a stunning baroque building in the middle of one of Zagreb's most beautiful parks, often used for weddings or other special events.
- Tkalčičeva Ulica is a cobble-stoned street lined with pastel buildings housing cafés, galleries, restaurants and trendy boutiques. This is the place for shopping away – reviving the past luxury of The Balkans!
- The Croatian National Theatre is a striking neo-baroque building, offering internationally renowned opera and theatre performances.
- Gallery Klovičevi dvori – the 16th century Jesuit monastery that was used for military purposes during the World War II, now the home of local and international cultural projects.

Dubrovnik – The Pearl of the Adriatic

Dubrovnik is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Clinging to the majestic cliffs of the Adriatic coast with the vast blue sea as its only neighbour to the west, Dubrovnik is truly the pearl of the Adriatic.

Dubrovnik is divided into two parts – a newer part and an older one. Stari Grad, the older part, is still surrounded by the medieval city walls and offers a picturesque historical atmosphere. With its roots dating as far back as the 6th century, Dubrovnik is actually the oldest living walled-in city in the world. The newer part of the town houses hotels, apartments plus the harbour from which the boats to the islands depart.

Already an important trading centre in the 12th century, the Republic of Ragusa was the only Eastern Adriatic city-state to rival Venice. The modern name of Dubrovnik was officially adopted after World War I and derives from the Slavic word dubrava which means forest. The name stems originally from a famous Slavic village tribe in the end of the 11th century – the "Dubrons", who came from the village of Dubrovnik.

In 1667, Dubrovnik was completely destroyed by a massive earthquake. The city was rebuilt however and lived quietly and prosperously up until the Balkan wars in the 90s. Badly damaged, another restoration of the city was needed and today Dubrovnik is once again the pearl of Croatia. The historic centre of Dubrovnik has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites since 1979.

Today, Dubrovnik is a quiet coastal town with plenty to offer tourists. The city hosts many musical, art and theatre events every year, including the annual Dubrovnik Summer Festival. Other attractions of the old town are for example:

- The Stradun in the Old Town is the unofficial runway for both the Croatian elite and international celebrities. Clubs and bustling cafés squeezed into ancient buildings result in a buzzing and welcoming atmosphere – this is the place to be on a hot Croatian summer night.
- Prijeko Ulica in Old Town is the charming parallel street of Stradun; the charming little sister of the big star. Narrow and lined with tiny restaurants, frequented by locals and international visitors alike.
- Why not take a walk around the walls? The tour takes about two hours and is not for the weak, but the view from the walls is spectacular. The best view is from Fortress Minceta at the highest point, built in 1319.
- The Onofri Fountain was built in 1438, originally a cistern for storing the town's water.

Split – Emperor Diocletian's Village

Split is the second largest city in Croatia and beautifully situated on the eastern shores of the Adriatic Sea. Split was originally a Greek colony and first gained its reputation during the Roman Republic. The Roman Emperor Diocletian decided to build himself a palace for his retirement after recovering from a deadly disease, and he chose Split because of its proximity to his home town. The work began in AD 293 and the palace was finalised in due time for his retirement in 305. The palace was constructed like a Roman military fortress, and the massive palace walls still constitute the inner core of the old town today. Since 1979, the historic centre of Split has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

- Apart from the old town itself there are many other attractions, for example:
- The Archaeological Museum which is the oldest museum in Croatia, about 20 minutes walk from the old town.
 - Naturally, the Diocletian Palace itself is a must-see.
 - Climb the campanile bell tower, next to the palace mausoleum. Not a suitable trip for someone with vertigo, but the view from the top is amazing.
 - Visit any of the many beaches around Split. Bacvice is probably the most busy one, although not necessarily the best one. ■

COMING SOON



THE RADISSON SAS RESORT, SPLIT

The 4-star resort in Split will open its doors in the summer of 2009. Offering 246 rooms, the hotel will also feature conference facilities, restaurant and fine dining, hotel bar, an indoor spa and an outdoor spa pool. Address: Put Trstenika 19, Split, Croatia.

RADISSON SAS RESORT & SPA, DUBROVNIK

The hotel will be located in the central part of Sungarden Resort and feature 408 guest rooms, state-of-the-art meeting and events facilities, restaurants, bars and a superb wellness and spa facility, including a Thalasso therapy centre.

THE REGENT DUBROVNIK

This luxurious hotel will have a spectacular view of the Adriatic Sea from the eastern part of the Sungarden Resort. Featuring 130 first-class rooms and suites, the elite spa and wellness facility, restaurants with a blend of Mediterranean and South American cuisine, poolside bar and a cocktail lounge will add to the luxury experience.



Tired, age beginning to show? Or just grumpy? Don't worry,

We've got The Treatment ...



Welcome to the Radisson SAS Djerba, the resort of your dreams. Relax in tranquil and seductive surroundings in Djerba – the “Isle of Forgetfulness”.

Going away for a spa weekend or a full-day treatment is not a once-in-a-lifetime luxury event, not anymore. Spas and resorts are the new hot trend, and we know where to look for the best offers.

You know how it is. The thought has crossed your mind at least twenty times, in the last two months alone. You promise that you will finally reward yourself with a day or two to focus on YOU and your own wellbeing.

But then there's that big project to finish off. And there's yet another important set of meetings to arrange. And that upcoming business trip. You simply don't have the time, yet again this year.

But don't worry. We've got the treatment you need and we can help you create the opportunity. In fact, we've got a whole bunch of treatments, all catering to your individual special needs. Extending a business trip by an extra day? Travelling alone or taking the family? Going with a friend? There are options for all occasions and all parties. So step away from your stressed-up life for a moment and into one of Rezidor's relaxing and luxurious spa resorts. Soak in soothing bath oils, get a world-class relaxing massage, let someone gently smooth out all the wrinkles on your face – you'll feel like a brand new you.

The most classical spa resort is, of course, the town of Spa in Belgium. At the city's Radisson SAS Spa, there are lots of appealing offers to choose from. Take a 2-night package for two in spa heaven,

a relaxing visit to Les Thermes de Spa, breathe the fresh air of the Ardennes Bleue forest with a special spa break, experience a royal treatment for women only or get an all over Svelte Body Cure. The choice is yours!

Fancy something more exotic? Then the Radisson SAS in Djerba might be just the place for you. Relax in the tranquil and seductive surroundings of Djerba – the “Isle of Forgetfulness”. Discover the amazing 3,000 meter spa and wellness area, “Athénée Thalasso”, with its choice of pools, hammams and white, sandy beaches and its breathtaking views of the Mediterranean. It's the perfect chill out destination, designed for recreation and harmony.

Back in Europe, France also offers a choice of world-class spa and wellness facilities – from Aix les Bains to Disneyland Paris, all the way to sunny Biarritz. Radisson SAS has France covered. Maybe you'd like to combine your relaxing spa break with a surfing adventure off the Atlantic coast or a gastro-nomic tour through Provence? It's all up to you...

Because you're worth it. So don't let another year go by. Don't wait for the signs of age to show – beat them before they get to you. And welcome to another world. ■

Destination Stewardship

Decades of mass tourism have left their footprint on the most popular destinations around the globe. While some are on the verge of environmental collapse, others are coping better with the challenges. But the new hot issue is Destination Stewardship; global climate change does not go on holiday, even if you do.

Destination Stewardship is a key topic for tourism in the era of global climate change. Popular destinations today are subject to a variety of pressures, among which development, pollution, globalisation and mass tourism are the most obvious. Destination Stewardship entails taking care of the destination in terms of sustainability, environmental health and the preservation of the distinctive character that makes every place worth visiting. With nearly 1 billion tourists crisscrossing the globe every year, it's more important than ever for both travellers and the travel industry to minimise their impact on the earth's natural and cultural treasures.

For the traveller, taking a responsible approach to travel destinations is an easy and essential way to protect the places we love to visit. Not just for ourselves, but for future generations and the people who will continue to live there long after visitors have returned home. In addition, it often makes for a more rewarding, authentic travel experience, fostering stronger affinities with the people and places we visit.

For hotels, a sustainable approach to their surroundings should be carefully considered through collaborations with local communities and environmentally sound choices, but above all, a raised awareness of the fact that every little thing counts.

Destination Stewardship In El Quseir

El Quseir in Egypt is a small and unspoiled resort on the Red Sea. The vast beaches and crystal clear waters complement the ancient town in which many historic buildings are being preserved and restored under a UNESCO heritage programme. It is also an attractive tourist destination.

Located directly on the shore and in the middle of this sensitive environment is the Radisson SAS Resort El Quseir. The architectural appearance of the property reflects the characteristics of the old townhouses in the area, featuring natural stone and colourful plasterwork.

The resort's Responsible Business Programme has been in place since the opening in 2005, and it is being continuously updated. Many projects are carried out with the support of the Danida Programme – an initiative of the Danish Embassy helping private companies to work on sustainable development in developing countries.

In 2006, the hotel was awarded the Rezidor Responsible Business Award for its dedicated work to minimise its negative impact and support beneficial activities in the region. The level of dedication and energy of the staff and the community is clearly something to inspire others.

“The hotel can't thrive in El Quseir without contributing to the life of the local community.”



The many actions and activities contributing to Destination Stewardship include:

Enhancement of the landscape

A greenhouse and themed garden allow guests to learn about and experience local nature and culture. Local species have been carefully selected including aromatic herbs, fruits and vegetables that the hotel uses in cooking, plus local flowers and decorative plants adapted to the sandy soil. This garden, along with the rest of the resort's cultivated grounds, also pro-actively contributes to the introduction of vegetation in this desert area.

Heritage management

The remaining parts of the educational village structure are not yet operational, but are close to completion:

- A reef educational centre, providing information on the coral reefs and how to preserve them, where they can be found, the variety of fauna and flora, etc.
- A phosphate mini-museum, explaining the geologic and historical past of El Quseir city through stone samples and photographs.
- Local food cookery events, with live evening shows featuring typical Egyptian food and local ingredients.
- Local music tent, where visitors can learn about Egyptian music and instruments.
- Handicraft workshops, teaching how to make hand-made carpets, bamboo baskets and clay pots.
- Children's playground, with special furniture and tools for painting competitions on environmental themes.

Environmentally sensitive projects

- A local well supplies the hotel with water, distributed through a highly efficient water treatment station. The water is bacteriologically tested every month, and the grey water from the hotel rooms, restaurant and public areas is recycled and used for irrigation of the hotel landscaping.
- In April 2007, the hotel received Egypt's very first solar driven club cart following a collaboration with Danida, while the hotel's staff quarters have solar panels to heat the water.
- Clean-up campaigns on the beaches in cooperation with local schools teach children not to leave litter far more effectively than any classroom lesson.

The Radisson SAS hotel management takes the view that the hotel can't thrive in El Quseir without contributing to the life of the local community. Many hotel activities involve local associations, and local schools are invited to visit the property, possibly inspiring them to a future career within tourism.

An educational and cultural development centre is also being built in cooperation with the Danish embassy. This centre will set a new standard for responsible business in the hotel industry and throughout Egypt. The long-term plan is for El Quseir to be recognised as a socially and environmentally conscious resort, and Radisson SAS is happy to contribute. The support of the Danida funding programme has been crucial to the achievements of El Quseir, and the hard work of Destination Stewardship continues. ■



“Being a father of two little girls and a leader of a team of young people in the hotel, I feel that I have the duty to educate and to sensitise this little world I can influence on environmental, ethical and social issues.”



Park Inn Zürich Airport

Swiss responsibility at its best

Park Inn's most responsible hotel in 2007 was the Park Inn Zürich. The Swiss hotel effectively applied a responsible approach across all areas of operation, showing outstanding effort and commitment. Now meet Andreas Andreas Stöckli, the General Manager who lives and breathes Responsible Business.

Of course, many different actions and activities contributed to Park Inn Zürich winning this prestigious Responsible Business award, but two crucial aspects are dedication and commitment. Andreas Stöckli, as the General Manager of Park Inn Zürich Airport, is devoted to making the Park Inn experience a green one.

“Being a father of two little girls and the leader of a team of young people in the hotel, I feel that I have the duty to educate and to sensitise this little world I can influence on environmental, ethical and social issues. Responsible Business should not just be a programme – it should become a lifestyle. I've learned that the key to acceptance is to add a big fun factor to responsible business activities and to “sell the creation of meaning”, in popular speech. It's a small world we are living in and it's up to every one of us to make sure, by very small changes of attitude, that the prodigy of our right to exist stay's livable and enjoyable”, says Andreas Stöckli.

The hotel's generous support of World Childhood Foundation was certainly one of the factors behind the award, along with their special efforts to organise responsible business activities involving the wellbeing of the employees. The well-planned gardens and grounds have earned the hotel a “Naturpark” certification, and two brand new Toyota Prius hybrid cars were purchased in 2007 to ensure an environmentally friendlier transportation of the hotel's sales force. In addition, the hotel has also sponsored the new tracksuits for the junior team of Turnverein Rümlang and proactively communicates Responsible Business to guests.

Located within the vicinity of Zürich Airport, the World Trade Centre, Messe Zurich and Hallenstadion – Park Inn Zürich Airport is an ideal location for conscientious guests on the move. Why not choose a green stay next time you're in Zürich? ■



“Childhood currently supports more than 110 projects in 14 different countries, including several in Eastern Europe.”

World Childhood Foundation

Every child has the right to a childhood

Having spent a number of her own childhood years in Brazil, H. M. Queen Silvia of Sweden – then Silvia Sommerlath – witnessed the harsh conditions of children in countries like Brazil early in life. It left an ever-lasting impression and this was one of her reasons for founding the World Childhood Foundation.

“Sadly, I have witnessed alarming developments on my frequent travels around the world, both on state visits and on less official trips”, says Queen Silvia in the Deed of Trust of World Childhood Foundation. “Millions of children live in extreme material, social and emotional poverty. Homeless, under-nourished, abused, unwillingly forced into addiction, they are being robbed of their childhood. I believe that every child has a right to his or her childhood, and that is why I took the initiative to found the World Childhood Foundation. We try to work for better living conditions for the most vulnerable and exploited children in the world.”

Childhood was founded as a non-profit organisation in 1999 and has grown to support projects in 14 countries. Prevention, intervention and education are hallmarks of these programmes, which are found in urban, sub-urban and rural areas throughout the world. The Foundation operates from offices in Stockholm, São Paulo, New York and Berlin.

14 founding members contributed one million USD each to provide a stable platform for the organisation. This endowment covers all administrative costs and allows Childhood to ensure that all funds raised go directly to the projects and the children in need. The Curtis L. Carlson Family Foundation was ➤



one of these co-founders, and Carlson Companies have been a generous supporter to Childhood ever since.

"UNICEF estimates that two million children are part of the multi-billion dollar commercial sex trade," says Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Chairman of Carlson Companies. "We need to do what we can to educate people about this growing problem and help put an end to it".

When Carlson became the largest shareholder in Rezidor, the two companies began to align global strategies for their joint brands and Rezidor decided to make the World Childhood Foundation its official international charity.

"We firmly believe in the highly efficient way Childhood operates", says Pia Heidenmark-Cook, Vice President Responsible Business at Rezidor. "Childhood partners the most effective NGOs and other organisations, developing close relationships with them and assisting them, both financially and in other ways, to achieve their own – and Childhood's – goals. Instead of building their own infrastructure, they funnel power and resources to the best existing operatives. They also look for, and support, highly committed people, known as 'fire souls', whose enthusiasm can make all the difference in a project."

Childhood currently supports more than 110 projects in 14 different countries, including several in Eastern Europe. The majority of the projects are located in Brazil, Russia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden and the US. But they also support a number of projects in other countries, such as Germany, Moldova, Poland, South Africa, Thailand and China.

"Our main concern", explains Secretary General Gunilla von Arbin, "are street children, children in institutions, and all children who are at risk for sexual abuse and exploitation, including the trafficking of children for sexual purposes. We focus on interventions to stop ongoing abuse, prevention to reduce the risk of future abuse, and education to teach children and their young mothers strategies to promote a life free from abuse."

Rezidor has now embarked on an ambitious programme to raise money for Childhood. Fund-raising efforts include auctions, raffles, gala events, sponsored activities and designated Childhood rooms – with all revenue going to the charity. Hotel guests have also been invited to participate by adding a small sum to their bill during specific charity periods. From the inception in September, until year-end 2007, Rezidor contributed more than 64,000 Euro to the World Childhood Foundation. And this is only the beginning: innovative and exciting initiatives are being launched continuously.

"Childhood's special focus on Russia and Eastern Europe fits very well into our business development pattern", says Heidenmark-Cook. "We're by far the leading, and fastest growing, international hotel company in this region. And, having our business expansion paralleled with the opportunity to help the many children at risk here fuels our motivation even further."

Some 500,000 Russian children live in orphanages and other institutions. Similar situations abound in all former Soviet states and the numbers are staggering. Most of these children have parents but have been institutionalised after suffering abuse or neglect at home.

Children raised in institutions are ill-prepared for an independent life when they leave. Having no experience of family life, they are frequently unable to perform everyday tasks, have no support network and often no steady job or place to live. Many become homeless, turn to crime and even end their own lives.

Childhood supports many projects that prepare children for life after these institutions. One such example is the MiraMed Institute, which is active in several cities in Russia. MiraMed has developed a programme for teenagers preparing to leave institutions. It offers instructions in practical life tasks, and, more importantly, vital education about relationships, HIV/AIDS and a healthy lifestyle, making young people much better prepared to manage on their own. The programme's staff are available around the clock to provide support as these teens take their first steps on the path to a brighter future. ■

Let's take responsibility!

Responsible Business practices at The Rezidor Hotel Group cover issues such as cultural heritage, community outreach, employee and children's rights as well as resource efficiency relating to energy, water and waste.

responsiblebusiness.rezidor.com



responsible business

“It’s very true that we’re living in a style-conscious period. People are informed and opinionated about design, art and culture; they want that to reflect on their consumption, and on their choice of hotel.”



Navigating a Changing Brandscape

As clichéd as it sounds, building strong and preferred brands is all about fulfilling the promise. And that’s not just about understanding people’s needs and priorities. That’s about actually creating exciting expectations, deliver against them and driving to exceed them.

“Relevance is all-important”. Gordon McKinnon repeats this over and over again.

“Brands must be relevant first of all. Relevance is based upon understanding your customers, their needs, preferences, priorities and expectations. It’s about what’s important to people.”

As Rezidor’s Executive Vice President Brands, McKinnon has been at the centre of events ever since Rezidor decided to go multi-brand in 2001. With a broad media, brand and marketing background that included a long spell as the marketing director of UK’s leading lifestyle brand, Malmaison, it’s no surprise that he has a soft spot for “style”, but is more anxious to emphasise the “life” part of the full word now recognised as a new hotel segment.

“It’s very true that we’re living in a style-conscious period. People are now informed and opinionated about design, art and culture, and they want that to reflect on their consumption, and in their choice of hotel. Style is very much relevant today. But it cannot only be about packaging – there has to be substance, genuine and active ingredients to go along with the style. That’s why bars and restaurants have become so important in a hotel. They bring credibility to the concepts, embodying the very lifestyle that the hotels are trying to promote”.

The proof is in the pudding, as the old saying goes. And this has indeed become the case in the hospitality business.

“Bars and restaurant are essential to bringing life to any hotel property”, says McKinnon. “Ideally they should attract the local market as much as in-house guests. We have put some considerable effort into developing and launching a number of bar and restaurant concepts that will help build our brands by funnelling life into them. People make a brand live. While it’s certainly about the people enacting the brand, or ‘living the brand’, it’s also very much about the people you attract.”

CONSUMERS WANT TO EXPRESS themselves through their choices. Increasingly this has extended beyond physical products and brands to service products and brands, such as ‘my hotel by preference’. Hotel customers want ‘their brand’ to understand and be compatible with their needs, identity and style. But they also want it to confirm and, possibly, express something about themselves. Image transfer is now a two-way street.

“That’s why there is a new holistic demand on brands. Of course in the long and distant past it was just about a logo, but today you have to get it right throughout the entire brand journey. There has to be consistency of tone and position at every point, 360 degrees of potential relationship break points.”

“A brand has to evolve incessantly”, continues McKinnon. “Relevance is a rather momentary phenomenon. As the world changes around you, it’s

easy to become irrelevant. The world is full of irrelevant concepts and products, and the hotel scene is full of brands that have lost their connection to people’s reality and feelings. For one thing, most people do not now expect, nor are they always comfortable with, old school ‘full service’. Portage is one such area. Having to wait for your one and only piece of baggage – that probably has wheels anyway – to be brought to your room via a separate elevator is not necessarily experienced as good service at all. Of course, if you stay at a Ritz or a Regent, you do expect your baggage to be taken care of. But that is not the case at a Radisson SAS with its more contemporary attitude to service and lifestyle. There, it’s much more important that you have free Internet, which we are still, incredibly enough, the only international brand to offer our guests. That is relevance!”

THE REZIDOR HOTEL GROUP operates a five-brand portfolio. Radisson SAS is the initial core brand, still accounting for most of Rezidor’s business. As the market developed and the Radisson SAS brand reached critical mass in its home markets, the company needed additional brands to carry relevant offers to other segments of the market.

“Yes, there was an apparent risk that Radisson SAS was going to be too broad and diffuse. If you cater to everyone, you can’t make anyone happy”, McKinnon acknowledges.

In 2001 Rezidor and Carlson Hotels Worldwide agreed that Rezidor would operate the Park Inn, the Country Inn and The Regent brands in the EMEA region under a 50-year master franchise contract.

“With a multi-brand portfolio, we have more options to match every property and location with the right offer to market”, says McKinnon. “It quite simply makes it easier to be relevant to more people. It also allows us to fine-tune each brand and to play the business cycle more efficiently. To make the best out of every market situation, at any given time.”

Park Inn is Rezidor’s new growth brand, having grown from zero to 100+ properties in five years.

“Park Inn is a young, fresh, fun and light-hearted brand”, says McKinnon. “Catering to the mid-market customer, it prides itself by mastering the essentials better than any competitor. That includes the best sleep in town, the best shower and the best breakfast at this price level. These things are highly relevant for any hotel guest. But in addition to these basic and easy-to-use functionalities, we want Park Inn to be friendly, informal and full of positive energy. Rather tongue in cheek, we want it to add colour to life. Park Inn is not a lifestyle brand, but it is supportive of most contemporary lifestyles.”

The fast emergence of Park Inn has made it possible for Radisson SAS to position itself more clearly upmarket. Radisson SAS is not only currently the fastest growing “upper upscale” brand in Europe, it also has the highest guest satisfaction in this segment according to a recent study



“Relevance is all-important”, says Gordon McKinnon, Executive Vice President Brands at The Rezidor Hotel Group.

by J.D. Power, the legendary consumer research institute.

“Recognising trends and understanding how to ride the crest of the wave as it moves from niche to volume is the key to developing relevant concepts and brands”, says McKinnon. “I’m very proud to have been involved in the re-engineering of the Radisson SAS brand. We build market leadership for Radisson SAS by combining a unique and stylish approach to hotel hardware with innovative service fuelled by our trademark “Yes I Can!” spirit. Re-positioning Radisson SAS from the rather ordinary 4-star brand of seven years ago to where it is today is quite an unparalleled move in our industry. We understood that the lifestyle approach to hotels was not only a narrow demand from a small elitist group of travellers, but something that many people wanted. Radisson SAS is the answer to that on a broader commercial scale.”

To a large extent, the re-positioning of Radisson SAS has been delivered by a growing number of new-build flagship properties, with spectacular exterior as ➡➡➡



These new breed Radisson SAS hotels are critical in redefining the brand and securing its position as the most dynamic and innovative contemporary upscale hotel on offer.

well as interior architecture (see page 14) and design statements to match in the public areas and guest rooms.

"Some of these properties are truly iconic", says McKinnon. "They are the talk of the town, both near and far. In some cases they have become 'destinational', a reason in themselves to embark on a trip. These new breed Radisson SAS hotels are critical in redefining the brand and in securing its position as the most dynamic and innovative contemporary upscale hotel on offer. Furthermore, most of the new bar and restaurant concepts (see page 28) have been developed to support the "new breed" Radisson SAS position as THE place in town where it's all happening."

TOURISM AND TRAVEL is the world's largest industry – employing some ten percent of the world's working population. Universally more affordable in relative terms, travel is growing fast. Upscale hospitality has traditionally been built on business travel. In today's

more affluent and dynamic societies, a larger percentage of people are willing to spend money on hospitality and also to pay for it out of their own pockets. But they also expect more, a lot more! While the business traveller is still the foundation of the hotel industry, it must cater to individual needs and preferences regardless of how guests are paying their bills.

"Increasingly, we have to manage diversity", says McKinnon. "We have to understand and meet the different demands and preferences of guests from various cultures. Furthermore, consumers are no longer easy to categorise. Situation-based needs and lifestyle criteria have become increasingly significant and old patterns have changed. Business travellers are getting younger, while 'swinging' leisure travellers may be in their sixties. The same individual may shop up and down the vast scale of hotel types, depending on purpose. Travelling on business may be an entirely different thing from travelling for leisure. Travelling for leisure alone may again be poles apart from family leisure travel. We need to understand the difference – and provide the hospitality that satisfies these different demands. So it certainly helps to have a portfolio of brands."

To consistently deliver on promises is what makes any brand strong. Over-delivering – exceeding expectations – turns customers into 'fans'. It makes them come back for more and spread the good word.

"As clichéd as it sounds, it is all about fulfilling the promise. And that's not just about understanding people's needs and priorities. That's about actually creating exciting expectations, deliver against them and driving to exceed them. This requires an attitude that recognises that a high level of product consistency, within the context of individual brand positions, is the base from which you need to work. And of course service is of paramount importance here. But it's only a base that then needs to add layers, to improve every single day while also simultaneously providing good value for money in relative terms. Preference is something you earn. True loyalty is driven by the standard, authenticity and consistency of the hospitality experience, not by gimmicks, superficiality or short-term thinking."

THE LUXURY SEGMENT has outperformed the economy as a whole during the last six years, growing by some 15 percent annually worldwide. The Regent is one of the hospitality world's most legendary luxury classics, excelling in gracious old-world service.

"At the very top-end of the market there will always be a demand for the full programme of traditional service", claims McKinnon.

"In fact, the top-end is pushing its limits in such a way that the old formal "five star luxury" category was not enough and some hotels now claim to be six or seven stars. Some of these properties are overtly vulgar and miss out completely on the refinement and grace that is always at the core of true luxury. This is where The Regent has the upper hand; it has largely defined genuine low-key elegance."



In 2005 Rezidor signed an agreement with the Italian fashion house Missoni to jointly develop a new luxury hospitality brand for distribution in capitals and dynamic cities all over the world. The first hotels will open in Edinburgh and Kuwait early next year.

"Missoni is one of the few fashion houses anywhere that has evolved and stayed true to an original and truly distinctive style of its own. Bold patterns and dramatic colour combinations are typical for Missoni, and all this translates beautifully into interior decoration and a full identity programme for Hotel Missoni."

Quite a few fashion brands have extended into hotel concepts without leaving a lasting footprint on hospitality. So why should Hotel Missoni succeed?

"Again it's about relevance. And authenticity. Hotel Missoni will be a contemporary luxury brand catering to sophisticated people with a deep understanding of style, design and culture, with bars and restaurants to support this lifestyle approach. We have left nothing to chance here. Few hospitality products have been so carefully developed and considered to ensure that they genuinely reflect a real and much coveted lifestyle."

And what about the timing? Is this the time to launch a new luxury brand, with a possible downturn in the economy around the corner?

"The first two Hotel Missoni will open in 2009. After that we will open a couple of new hotels every year. So by the time the portfolio begins to take shape it is very likely that the cycle will have turned again. In addition, Hotel Missoni will provide excellent value for money, compared to the competition, by offering all the contemporary treats of relevance rather than all the traditional luxury perks that modern people can do without. So there's a good case to argue that even in an economic downturn Hotel Missoni should do very well."

Park Inn is Rezidor's new growth brand, having grown from zero to 100+ properties in five years. Park Inn is a young, fresh, fun and light-hearted brand.

The Regent is one of the hospitality world's most legendary luxury classics, excelling in gracious old-world service.



Adding Colour to Life

The effect of colour on the human psyche played an important role in the ancient cultures of Egypt, Persia, India, China and many other cradles of history. There is no need to follow in the footsteps of the subtle bleakness of The Interior Decorator à la mode! Create your own colourful life! Have fun...



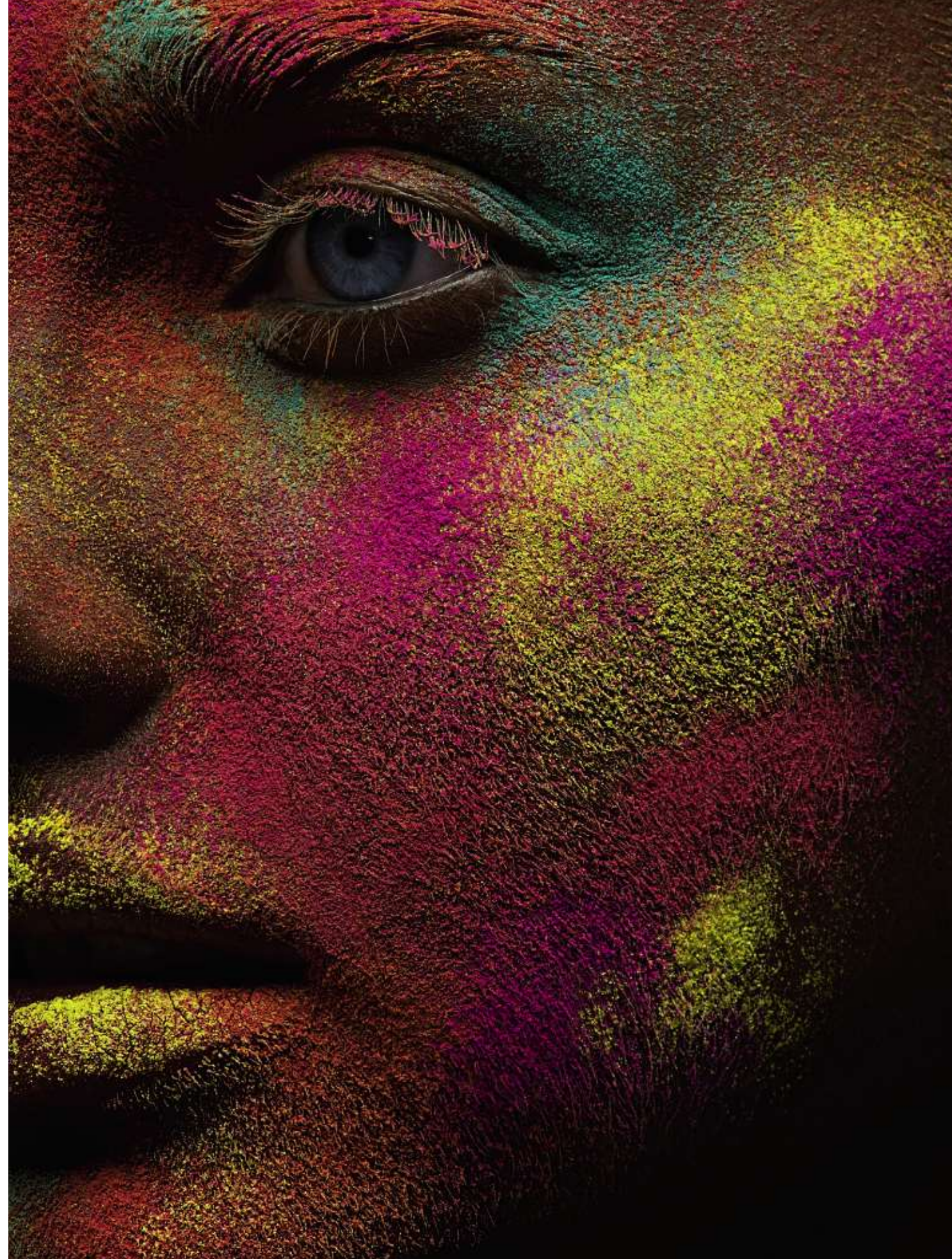
Take a look at that flaming red carnation over there. The way the glowing petals contrast with the green leaves, the way the light beams break and burst into all the colours of the rainbow. It's hard to imagine that this perception is all in the mind, isn't it? But, colour blindness aside, no two people ever see the same colour in exactly the same way because of the individual variations in the receptor cells. And, according to the extreme empiricism of philosopher George Berkeley in the 18th century, the carnation itself would indeed only ever exist in our mind.

Even so, the effect of colour is enormously important to most people – and to animals as well. The ancient cultures knew this and believed in the power of colours to stimulate, calm or even cure. One of the most famous colour theories from the 20th century was Goethe's "Theory of Colours", in which he outlined the "effects of colour with reference to moral associations". But although many sources claim to have identified a universal "key to colours", science has yet to find any evidence. So, while there

are many commonly used interpretations of colour around the world, there is no accepted constant and the meanings vary from place to place.

A seemingly innocent colour, such as white for example, is the colour of death in Eastern cultures, while it represents purity, light or hope in other parts of the world. The same confusion applies to the colour of passion – red. It symbolises luck and prosperity in China and fertility in India. Conversely, it is the colour of war in other cultures; connotations of red are closely linked to it being the colour of blood, meaning both life and death, depending on where you are.

Black is also closely linked to death and mourning, especially in Western cultures. But it can also have more positive connotations; for example in fashion, where black signals elegance, sophistication and power. And grey is often perceived as a more subtle form of black; it has the elegance of black but lacks the same passion and power.



Blue is usually seen as the least controversial and most neutral colour – probably the reason why so many multinational corporations use it in their logos. But blue is also the colour of the seas and the skies and is often used to convey feelings of harmony, tranquility and coolness. So, it's no coincidence that many spas and health institutions use blue as their predominant colour for both decoration and advertising.

Yellow is somewhat the opposite of blue, often perceived as having energising and vitalising qualities. Yellow connotes sun and signals summer, light and happiness; in many Asian cultures it is an imperial colour, carrying the same values as purple in the west. Purple, elsewhere, is used to symbolise spirituality and mysticism; it is also the colour of mourning for widows in Thailand.

Both yellow and green were used to symbolise the devil during the Middle Ages and green is a colour with mixed symbolic values. While carrying negative connotations such as jealousy, it is also the

colour of nature, symbolising spring, grass, earth and other peaceful things. Therefore, green is thought to have a relaxing effect when used in interior design.

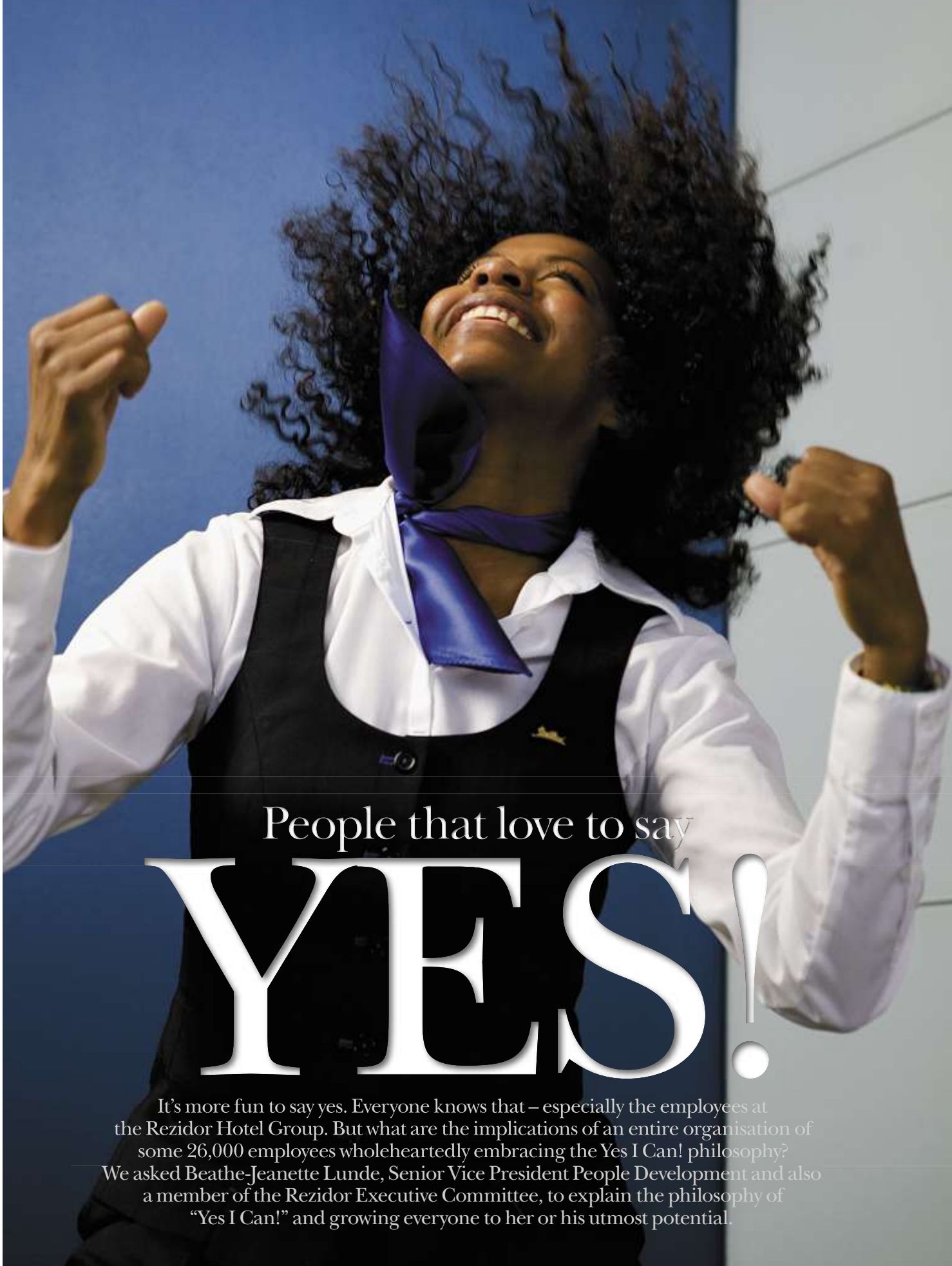
Finally, orange is seen as a divine colour in Buddhist and Hindu countries, signalling harmony, balance and energy. But it has more difficult connotations in countries where Protestants (symbolised by orange) and Catholics (green) have a history of conflict.

To sum up... paying too much attention to all aspects of the symbolic language of colours is perhaps not recommendable. In fact, it can be downright confusing! The important thing to remember though is that colour offers a simple but exciting way to enhance your home, your life and yourself! So just go for it! Mix or match! Blend all of these colours into one gigantic vibrant explosion or choose just one or two of your personal favourites to make you a happier person. ■

PARK INN PAINTING THE TOWN



Park Inn believes in adding colour to their hotels. In fact, it doesn't stop at that. They're painting the whole cities, including the air above them – with planes, trains and automobiles all carrying the bright red, yellow, green and blue colour scheme reflecting mid-market fun.



People that love to say
YES!

It's more fun to say yes. Everyone knows that – especially the employees at the Rezidor Hotel Group. But what are the implications of an entire organisation of some 26,000 employees wholeheartedly embracing the Yes I Can! philosophy? We asked Beathe-Jeanette Lunde, Senior Vice President People Development and also a member of the Rezidor Executive Committee, to explain the philosophy of “Yes I Can!” and growing everyone to her or his utmost potential.



THE MAGIC OF YES!

The journey towards the passionate people business of today started already twelve years ago when Rezidor, then called SAS International Hotels, launched what grew into the Business School@Rezidor and introduced the highly successful Yes I Can! programme. Although originally a Carlson innovation, the Rezidorians – as they like to be called – have taken it fully to their hearts.

In 2005, Rezidor celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Yes I Can! programme and decided to review the meaning. A re-launch was rolled out, linked to specific goals regarding employee, guest and owner satisfaction.

The result? A striking new awareness of the true power of a Yes I Can! attitude – which is being continuously developed in the everyday activities of more than 26,000 Rezidorians. And in 2007, this successful journey was crowned with rewards for both Radisson SAS and Park Inn in the 2007 European Guest Satisfaction Index.

The magic Yes I Can! formula

The Yes I Can! customer service strategy began its life as a strategy – a way to get the minds and souls of the business to think in a similar way about the customer, Beathe-Jeanette Lunde tells us. Since then, the strategy has grown to become a central pillar of how the organisation operates. The Yes I Can! philosophy of the Rezidor Hotel Group deter-

mines everything and forms the way all contact is made with stakeholders within the group, including guests, employees and owners. It is an integral part of the Rezidor culture.

"Yes I Can!" has become the company vision and is a service ethic which permeates every single element of the business. The Rezidor Hotel Group's business is to manage brands, people, relationships and owners' assets, which it does consistently with individual flair. Through 'Yes I Can!' it delivers more than just a great customer experience", says Beathe-Jeanette Lunde.

The success story has led to both Radisson SAS and Park Inn being awarded in the 2007 European Guest Satisfaction Index. Why have you been so successful where other hotel companies have failed?

"The success story that underpins the Rezidor Hotel Group did not happen by accident. From the outset, there has been a clear vision, a determined strategy, strong leadership and a commitment to quality. Put these elements into any company and the outcome will most likely lead to success. But the way these elements are delivered within the Rezidor Hotel Group means that it produces something quite exceptional."

Finding these true Yes I Can! ambassadors is the real challenge. Every spring and autumn, hundreds of students are interviewed. Students often start

out with an internship, and then move on to be full time employed by the company. But how can you tell who has it?

"We look for great talent and train skills within each department. Every new employee is trained in the 'Yes I Can! Delivering the Promise' course within two months of employment. We select new staff using tools within the Yes I Can! framework and this enables managers to identify the correct type of person who will enhance the brand for which they will eventually work."

Turning Yes I Can! into business advantages

The Yes I Can! philosophy is not only a way of giving excellent guest service. It also improves other parts of the business, especially when it comes to winning new business.

"We have developed and sustained a customer service culture and strategy that evolved into a company vision. It is embedded in the business and forms part of the culture – from recruitment, through training, reward and recognition. It is used as a market differentiator and is integral to the company winning new business. Hotel owners are satisfied that Yes I Can! makes the customer experience a memorable one, and they are content with continuing to sign more hotel contracts with the group. Individual hotel guests notice the difference and show a willingness to return. A 100%



Beathe-Jeanette Lunde, Senior Vice President of People Development and a member of the Rezidor Executive Committee.



Yes I Can! has become the company vision and is a service ethic which permeates every single element of the business.”

Guest Satisfaction Guarantee builds confidence in the brand, in turn building customer loyalty. Employees also notice the difference. The Yes I Can! ethos is as relevant between colleagues as it is to customers and owners, and therefore working at the Rezidor Hotel Group is a special experience. Staff know they were selected by managers using the Yes I Can! principles, they know that their career can flourish using the same principles, and every day, through interactions with colleagues, they are reminded of those principles."

Two important aspects of the Yes I Can! philosophy are empowerment and trust in employees. In what way would you say you work differently than others with your employees?

"When the 100% Guest Satisfaction Guarantee module was introduced in 1998, it was very much based on giving our employees empowerment to take a decision in front of the guest. Employees were trained to make things right or to invoke the guarantee if necessary. Management was encouraged to let go of control and to trust their employees' decision making. This was a big step for our managers and an even bigger step for our employees".

Growing everyone to her or his utmost potential!

A culture of creativity, fun and a constant desire for further development is not something that creates ➡

itself. It requires energy and hard work, from the Management and from the employees. The reward on the other hand is a straight path to success. The important thing, of course, Lunde says, is to never stop and rest, not even at the top: "You need to constantly keep developing. It's true for the individual and it's true for the company – that is the Rezidor philosophy."

Rezidor has a clear promotion strategy, supporting the continuous supply of Yes I Can! ambassadors: Talent spotting is done internally. And the existing tailored tool box of programmes and systems is the result of many years work to ensure the quality of this promotion from within. The essence of all people development is, after all, to grow everyone to his or her utmost potential.

"One of the most forward-looking initiatives was made in 1996 when we launched the Management School, which was renamed The Business School@Rezidor in 2006. This was a 'movable' school where the Yes I Can! strategy could be taught and learned in a structured and consistent way, providing opportunities for personal development and education. The Business School is widely used for talent spotting future business leaders, for general people development and for training."

Each employee can measure his or her development through a special 5-step training programme with two general objectives: career development and personal growth. These two aspects tend to support one another in life, and Rezidor takes personal growth very seriously. A healthy work-leisure balance is, in many cases, not only the recipe for personal wellbeing; it's also the foundation of an outstanding career. Rezidor also recognises an essential point about career progression: not everyone wants to become a leader. Therefore, the company acknowledges and encourages two types of career progression – vertical and horizontal.

"A vertical career is a traditional career where the ultimate goal is a management position. But there are also a lot of people who simply want to excel and become the best within their profession or function. We call this a horizontal career and we

want to encourage both kinds of careers at Rezidor", explains Lunde.

Internal programmes and daily training

Daily training is essential to keep fostering the successful Yes I Can! culture. So the Corporate People Development Department supports all hotels with monthly training packages, aimed at explaining, helping and strengthening the Yes I Can! attitude.

In 2000, a specific Mentor-Mentee programme was launched for high-potential employees. The programme is an excellent way of polishing and preparing the General Manager-to-be for a future management responsibility.

"We believe in recruiting from within and during 2007, 23 Mentees were promoted to General Managers. We currently have 45 Mentees under development and feel this programme gives us a competitive advantage. We had more than 750 students on internship from International Hotel Schools last year. We make regular visits to international hotel schools to promote Rezidor and the specific brands, and to get the right people interested in a career within Rezidor", says Lunde.

Competition is good. That is the general view within Rezidor, as long as it's kept in proportion. Rezidor believes in a healthy competitiveness to drive excellence in performance, and the annual award of "Host or Hostess of the Year" is a good example of this.

"Earning the Host of the Year Award is the goal of many of our employees and it is, of course, a great honour to receive this award. The selection committee has a hard job selecting one winner from the many applications we receive. With our 'Young Leader of the Year' award, first handed out in 1999, we aim to motivate not only the person who earns it: we also seek to encourage others to search for new challenges in their workplace and find ways to exceed their previous achievements. We present this award annually to the employee who has demonstrated not only leadership development, but whose achievements have resulted in added-value for guests, colleagues, investors and the community in which they serve", concludes Lunde. ■



Young Host/Hostess of the Year Awards. The awarded, from left to right: Nadime Arnold, Radisson SAS, Alexandre Poulenc, Radisson SAS, Pascal Gadet, Park Inn, Lee Gaskell, Park Inn. The Award Presentators: Kurt Ritter, Thorsten Kirschke and Jacques Dubois, the Executive Committee.

THE A TO Z OF YES I CAN!

Yes I Can! is not just a slogan, it's a way of life. But what does it really mean? We asked a true Rezidorian about the actual meaning of Yes I Can! – in real life.

What does Yes I Can! mean to you?

Yes I Can! is a core concept. I've worked for other hotel chains where there is no real training for guest service, and 'Yes I Can!' is all about guest service. Yes I Can, in my mind, has as much impact as the Nike logo: Just Do It. It's kind of a wave of three words – Yes I Can. It's very simple and powerful, and it's meaningful too. It tells you that Yes, I can do it. But it also tells you that Yes, I want to do it, Yes, I'm allowed to do it, and Yes, I'm able to do it. So there are a lot of different meanings and this gives a lot of confidence and strength to the whole team.

Other hotels need to be service-minded as well. What is the main difference?

First of all, there is the training. We have to discover Yes I Can! for ourselves as well, but the training explains the concept from A to Z – what you are able to do and that you are allowed to do it. It also tells you that it is never wrong when you try to make it right for the guest and that is very important for the confidence of the staff when they have to make a decision.

In one of the other hotels I worked for, I had to report any problems to my manager. He, in his turn, had to report to his manager, who had to report to the front office manager who reported to the office manager who took the decision. But then he didn't know what actually happened. We are allowed to care for an issue from A to Z and also do the follow-up. And you can't say "No" to a guest if you have a pin on your lapel saying Yes I Can!, can you?

How does the continuous training work after the basic Yes I Can! course?

We have 'Yes I Can! activities' once a month. These can be about the importance of tuning into a guest's mood or the importance of team-work – things we all know are important. Like, you know it's important to smile, but you need to be reminded that it is also important to smile when answering the telephone because they will hear it at the other end! These things are explained in the Yes I Can! exercises.

How do you work to inspire your team?

I explain my philosophy, but mostly I show them examples. If a guest calls for a second set of towels, for example, other hotels would call housekeeping. But I say to my staff, "Come on, we are three of us here and it's not busy, so you go and take them". Maids have a very hard job, it's very physical and they don't have the time. But before telling my staff to do it, I'll do it myself if I can.

We also have a lot of problems here with taxis because there is no taxi stand outside. People can be left waiting for an hour, so sometimes you have to leave

the desk, run out to the Luxembourg Square, take a taxi and bring it back. So that's what I tell my staff that they should do, and I also do it myself. And now, I'm very pleased to see that my staff are just doing it without being told!

So, what do you do if you have a bad day?

I would say there is no bad day. Except if someone is sick and you're understaffed. Of course it can be hard and reception is one of the toughest jobs, but you try to adjust your mindset. If you have 120 check-outs, the Yes I Can! attitude is very important. It helps you deal with it!

One day, the boiler room broke down so we had no hot water. I called the guests and also sent an email presenting our problem. The next day we offered them an upgrade to a junior suite. A lot of guests were very pleased that we had called them to apologise, and they came back. The next time they of course asked for their upgrade, but they chose to stay with us again. When you have bad days, you always have to see the commercial possibility in the situation.

We had a guest recently who called about the mini bar which wasn't cold. I called the mini bar clerk, but I also went to the guest's room with a fresh beer from the draft and said it was on the house. He was very pleased, and afterwards he had three more beers. Yesterday, he booked another stay for next week.

Another guest had a problem with his safe getting stuck with his money and passport inside. He had an important appointment at the European Parliament and he needed his passport to get in. The safe company couldn't send anyone in time so I took the decision to drill it. I went on my scooter to bring him his passport just in time for his meeting. He checked out early next day, but later we had a comment on the Customers Service Application. He congratulated us for the service and said he would recommend us to all his colleagues, and that he would also be sure to come to us on his next visit to Brussels.

These are all those things that are very annoying and give you a hard time when you're on the spot. But afterwards you think that this was really something! We managed to do it through our teamwork, and it's also money for the hotel in the end.

The important thing is, I tell my staff, to always put yourself in the place of the guest. What would you expect if you were a guest and paying big money for a hotel room? I don't accept mediocrity so if you do something, you do it right, or you do it right in the end. Of course you won't do it perfectly the first time and maybe not the third. But by trying harder and harder and focussing, then you can. And that won't just help my staff now but also in the future, not only professionally, but on a personal level as well. ■



Name: Reynante Gaspasin

Position: Front Office Manager at the Radisson SAS EU Hotel in Brussels, Belgium

Employed since: January 2006 (the opening)



Cameron Diaz



Jack Nicholson



Angelina Jolie



Brad Pitt



Madonna



Amy Winehouse
Radisson SAS Hotel Hamburg



Lionel Richie
Radisson SAS Hotel Basel



George Clooney

The Queen of Pop chose the luxurious haven of the Presidential Suite at The Regent Berlin during her stay in mid February. Arriving to the German capital in her private jet, Madonna came to launch her director's debut "Filth and Wisdom", and was seen late at night enjoying the hotel bar after clubbing all evening.

But Madonna is far from alone in discovering this gem of Western Europe. The Regent Berlin has had the pleasure of welcoming world luminaries such as Cate Blanchett, Meryl Streep, Reese Witherspoon, Cameron Diaz, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie, George Clooney, Morgan Freeman and Jack Nicholson. Marie Wellmann, PR Manager at The Regent Berlin, is very careful to point out the importance of discretion when it comes to their guests. It is one of the reasons why The Regent is so immensely popular – that, along with the unabashed sense of luxury, the superlative service and the unique sense of individuality.



Nelly Furtado
Radisson SAS Hotel Köln



Depeche Mode
Radisson SAS Hotel Frankfurt

Hollywood checking in

With more than 60,000 fantastic guest rooms on offer, it's no surprise that celebrities have found their way into the wonderful world of Rezidor. We conducted an unscientific survey to find out which of our hotels is the celebrity-preferred choice. And the outright winner is... The Regent Berlin.



24 HOURS ON The Ritter Express

Fast forward has been the basic mode for Rezidor ever since Kurt Ritter took over the driving seat in 1989. Life at Rezidor is a life in the fast lane, and some days more than others.

It is December 5, 2007, and Berlin has already started to celebrate Christmas. From his top floor suite overlooking the Berlin Cathedral, the river Spree and the Museum Island, Rezidor's CEO Kurt Ritter can watch hundreds of Berliners wandering around the glittering stalls of the traditional Schlossplatz Christmas Market, working up their Christmas spirit.

Kurt Ritter's spirits are high as well. He has just met with the correspondent of Sweden's largest business daily, Dagens Industri, for an advance brief, and he believes the issues addressed were the right ones.

"I'm used to speaking my mind, not to following a script", he says. "As the president of a listed com-

pany I can't talk as freely as before. Luckily these are my favourite topics – how we continue to grow and outgrow competition, and work on improving profitability."

On the next day, December 6 – St. Nikolaus Eve in Germany – Rezidor will hold its first ever Capital Market Day, to elaborate on these subjects. Some 20 analysts and other guests have travelled from all over Europe to be educated about this new, listed hospitality company. They are all staying at the dazzling Radisson SAS Berlin, one of the much-celebrated "new breed" properties with an unbeatable location, smack in the middle of Berlin Mitte.

"Obviously, we chose Berlin because we have three flagship properties here," explains Ritter, "each one representing its brand extremely well. Across the square from the show-stopping Radisson SAS, we have the 37 story Park Inn Berlin-Alexanderplatz with its 1000+ rooms, and in the other direction, the magnificent Regent Berlin, the blueprint of classic luxury."

KURT RITTER AND HIS COLLEAGUES in Rezidor's Executive Committee have teamed up a bit earlier in the day to fine-tune the presentations, having spent weeks preparing for this encounter with bankers, analysts and reporters.

"Our company is not so easy to understand", says Ritter. "Apart from other peoples' properties we only manage immaterial assets; brands, people, relationships, trust and experiences. That is what hospitality is all about. This is great opportunity not only to talk about all this, but also to let our guests experience the rich spectrum of Rezidor hospitality first-hand."

The first informal gathering will be held at The Regent Berlin, a ten minutes stroll down the legendary Unter den Linden street. Kurt Ritter leaves his quarters and knocks on the door to CFO and Deputy President Knut Kleiven. "Come on, Knut, time to take care of our guests."

It's only a couple of weeks since Fischers Fritz, The Regent Berlin's acclaimed seafood restaurant, received its second star in Guide Michelin, making it the only 2-starred restaurant in the city. And of course the culinary wonders of chef de cuisine Christian Lohse must be tasted.

"Mr. Lohse is one of Germany's leading chefs, and we're extremely proud to have him on the Rezidor team", says Ritter, as he introduces the Chef, inviting the guests to nibble on finger food versions of à la carte dishes from the award-winning kitchen. "And it's certainly no big surprise to us that this happens in The Regent Berlin with the General Manager of the Year, Mr. Wolfgang Nitschke, at the helm."

With the Gendarmenmarkt Christmas Market right outside the door of The Regent, it takes the party of some 30 people – including the Rezidorians – a good half hour to get back to Radisson SAS, where dinner is served at HEat, the main restaurant featuring different open-fire and cooking techniques from various cultures.

It's all very informal with no pre-seating. Kurt Ritter invites guests from some of the banks to join him and Rezidor's Senior Vice President Sales, Marketing and Distribution, Olivier Jacquin, at the table.

"It took us fourteen years to grow the Radisson SAS brand to 200+ properties, but only five years to take Park Inn to its first 100", says Ritter. "That's evidence of what a powerful growth machine we have now established mid-market. The first Park

Inn is the giant here in Berlin, which, by the way, is no longer the biggest Park Inn. Park Inn Pribaltiyskaya in St Petersburg offers 1,200 rooms. When it comes to mid-market, big is beautiful."

Kurt Ritter has been the company's CEO since 1989, when it embarked on its fast-forward voyage to become one of Europe's leading hotel companies. Growth has been at the core of the company philosophy ever since. It is no wonder that Rezidor has been referred to as "The Ritter Express".

The group gathers for after-dinner drinks, coffee, chat and mingle in the Aqua Lounge. One of the last to call it a day is co-host Mr. Per Blixt, Senior Vice President Corporate Communications and Investor Relations, sticking to non-alcoholic drinks to stay on top of the discussion.

"In those last thirty minutes I got a very clear picture of what question-marks we have to address in our future investor dialogue", declares Blixt the next morning to Ritter in the pre-brief meeting in Ritter's room. "I think we have to start to straighten out as many as possible today. For one thing...."

THE CAPITAL MARKET DAY kicks off in the new top floor meeting rooms at 9:00 a.m. as planned. Some guests flying in from Stockholm have not yet joined the group, but Kurt Ritter begins without them, because the event is being broadcast on the Rezidor Investor Relations Website, and quite a few analysts have chosen to participate from afar.

After formally welcoming everyone to the Capital Market Day, Kurt Ritter delivers a historical résumé of the company's development from its first hotel in 1960, the SAS Royal in Copenhagen, for which many pieces of Arne Jacobsen's legendary furniture, such as the Egg and Swan chairs, were initially manufactured.

"The long and successful journey with SAS has now come to an end", says Ritter. "SAS has divested its last stake in our company and we will drop SAS from the Radisson trademark at some time in 2008 as we already have from Rezidor's name."

Next it is time for Radisson SAS COO Thorsten Kirschke to talk about market dynamics and Chief Development Officer Puneet Chhatwal to disclose how Rezidor works with a nearly unique flexible approach to contract types. At the coffee break, a worried Per Blixt confides to Kurt Ritter:

"Just had a phone call. Someone's got it very wrong about the brand-name. There was a news flash that we're scrapping the Radisson name along with SAS. We have to correct that misunderstanding."

"We'll put it right in the next session. Have a word with Gordon. He should touch upon it anyway."

Next, it is Executive Vice President Brands, Gordon McKinnon's turn to deliver his brand overview, explaining how Rezidor plays its five brand portfolio to optimise growing the top and bottom ➡



00:00 p.m.

“All work and no play makes Kurt a dull boy”, says Mrs. Lara Ritter.



line simultaneously. He can naturally re-address the issue of the SAS trade-name being replaced by something else to distinguish Rezidor's top Radisson portfolio from its US sibling.

LUNCH IS BEING SERVED in the hotel's other restaurant The Noodle Kitchen, serving a cornucopia of Asian specialties, today including sushi, sashimi, Beijing duck, vegetarian dishes and Singapore noodles.

“With Carlson Hotels Worldwide now being our largest owner with a 45 percent stake, we will focus on aligning our brands and distribution and marketing initiatives on a global scale”, says Ritter to an analyst who still wants to discuss the branding issue. “The re-engineered Radisson SAS, demonstrated so well in this Berlin hotel, may well get its equivalent in the US and other parts of the world. We believe that these superior Radisson hotels must have a brand differentiator of some kind. We have jokingly referred to it as “life in the blue box” after SAS. Here, try the duck, it's really delicious.”

After coffee, Olivier Jacquin takes the audience through some surveys showing how brand awareness and guest satisfaction have developed to premium European positions for Radisson SAS and regarding guest satisfaction also Park Inn, after only five years in operation. Jacques Dubois then reveals the winning formula behind this winning mid-market brand – based on mastering the essentials.

Heavy fire follows from Puneet Chhatwal and Thorsten Kirschke as they outline Rezidor's strategies for business development and operations. Finally CFO Knut Kleiven explains how a gradually shifting business model from leased to managed

and franchised business will affect Rezidor's revenue growth and margin prospects. It's now time for Kurt Ritter to wrap things up under the heading “Going Forward”.

“Going forward, we're aiming at continued fast profitable growth. Our case is basically a growth case. We're going to grow our business volume as well as our margin. We have promised, and we will deliver. Today we have tried to explain how. It's been very educative for us to have these 24 hours with you, and we hope that some of your questions have been answered. As you might have noticed there are heavy security measures here today. It is not because of us, in spite of you being very important people indeed, but due the fact that the Interior Ministers of the German Federation have a parallel conference at the hotel. This is why you will all need some extra time to get out of here and catch your flights home. Now we all have to go forward.”

Going forward for Kurt Ritter in the very short term means two separate interviews under the famed Aqua Dome in the main lounge, with 2,500 unconcerned fish watching from their giant 25 metre tall tank above. Then it's off to the airport for his Brussels flight, to catch up with wife Lara for tomorrow's trip to Radisson SAS Paris Disneyland, where a hundred Rezidorians – all of them riding the fast-moving Ritter Express – meet up with their families for a two-day session themed “Finding the Balance between your Professional and Private Lives”.

They all need that balance. Who knows, possibly even the pilot himself. ■



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