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Innovate ideas for beach resorts, luxurious escapes and fine dining experiences

Beach resort owners share their visions of resort lifestyle worldwide and the latest food servicing trends

Beach resorts strive to offer a lifestyle experience. People go to beach resorts to socialize, network and to be seen, but they also want an experience in return from patronizing that beach resort. What used to be a relaxed activity, with just family and close friends, is today an activity that involves planning and dining.



"Going to the beach is no longer limited to spending time in the pool or at the beach. Dining has become an essential part of their day at the beach", explains **Gilbert Khoury**, general manager, **Bamboo Bay, Lebanon**.

Beach resorts need to be innovative and offer a unique concept in order to cater to their clients and to survive the competition.

"Our customers are not regular beach goers. With a limited number of visitors allowed per day, Orchid caters for those looking for a relaxed, comfortable and an utmost sumptuous atmosphere, where every need is met



and no effort is spared in ensuring the most lavish service," says **Marc Naaman**, general manager, **Orchid, Lebanon**. "And, of course, this is true of the dining experience."

Outsourcing & food servicing

The majority of all beach resorts in the Middle East offer different levels of food service ranging from snacks and drinks to full on menus with hot and cold dishes.

Although outsourcing for catering is a definite trend, more and more resorts tend to hire their own staff for the food and beverage sector.

"We believe it is better to avoid foodservice outsourcing as it may reflect badly on the resort itself. Food servicing is extremely important for us as Orchid is not merely a beach destination but has rather become a culinary one as well," explains Naaman.

"I do not think that outsourcing is a good idea," agrees **Rita Aprat Faddoul**, director of sales & marketing, **Riviera Hotel & Resort, Beirut**. "Food service is very important after all. Guests want to eat at the beach and excellent food leads to excellent reputation - this is our mission".

"The food service concept standard of having various F&B outlets



O Beach Dead Sea

is very important to a day beach as it deals with the market demands and needs. It is the second most



important reason after the overall concept of the day beach that keeps customers coming back," states **Ralph Nader**, CEO, **Amber International Hotels & Resorts, Jordan**. "F&B outlets bring in more than 50% of the revenue of the day beach."



Riviera Hotel & Resort



Bamboo Bay

Challenges to be faced in 21st century

More and more beach and day resorts are opening up and clients are becoming more aware and more demanding; this poses a challenge to owners and operators. One main challenge, which has also been seen in catering companies, is "to keep customers satisfied," says Naaman. "With the high increase in touristic projects, loyalty of the staff becomes a great concern," continues Nader.



Some beach resorts also look at the long-term global issues and try to create awareness and prepare accordingly. "The biggest challenge beach resorts will face in the 21st century is the climate change and the fluctuation in the seasons," says Khoury. "The unpredictable

change in weather affects the ability for day beach projects to forecast opening and closing months," agrees Nader.

Beach trends worldwide

With the increase of new resorts, the competition is fierce and the clients have higher expectations from beach resorts season after season. To keep up with the demand and the latest innovations, beach resorts plan and execute ideas on a regular basis to keep up with trends worldwide.

The major trends are party beaches (crowds, DJs, music, dancers and alcohol) and private luxury beach resorts. These trends are turning beach resorts into day and night experiences where people can enjoy a certain lifestyle.

However, each concept has its limitations and poses new challenges faced by beach resorts, mainly "to keep customers satisfied, keep offering them the best and always exceed their expectations," explains Naaman. "The hottest concepts seen today are cabanas and oversized beds in day beach projects," adds Nader. ■



Riviera Hotel & Resort

The new hot spot on the Dead Sea

O Beach, the new hot spot on the Dead Sea, is the only five-star day beach in Jordan and a unique night attraction in the area. The project, a stylish destination for the younger crowd as well as the families with kids, distinguishes itself by its Mediterranean architecture and palette of lively colors and can cater to around 1,200 beach lovers and 1,500 nightlife enthusiasts.



The minds behind the O Beach concept are Amber International Hotels and Resorts headed by Ralph Nader and GM Architects headed by Galal Mahmoud.

"With O Beach we are creating a trendsetting beach concept that is meant to grow beyond the usual beach experience. O Beach is a day beach brand that will soon be equated with unique and exceptional experiences and that will be spread internationally making it a 'likely-to-be-imitated concept' and a destination worldwide for day beach luxury lovers," explains **Ralph Nader, CEO, Amber International Hotels and Resorts, Jordan.**



Extensive offerings include infinity pools, an open-air spa, luxurious secluded cabanas with ravishing views of the Dead Sea, and a beach bar with glamorous entertainment enrich the venue. O Beach also offers refined dining facilities and has become the destination of choice for those seeking an exclusive beach sensation.

"Upon entering O Beach, guests will immediately be captivated by the spectacular Dead Sea back drop present all through the various destinations of the project. The use of natural materials and salt crystal shaped volumes provide O Beach guests with a holistic experience inducing a profound sense of escapism," says **Galal Mahmoud, owner, GM architects, Jordan.**

In the Middle East, the concept of the day beach began back in the 1960's with the creation of the St Georges Yacht Club in Beirut, Lebanon. It was first to offer a new luxurious and exclusive experience. Now, Lebanon comes up with new beach concepts every summer. Today's beach experience is much more than sand and sea. Pampering the senses in every way is an essential part of the formula. The concept of a day beach has grown and today many trendy projects are developing all over the region.

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