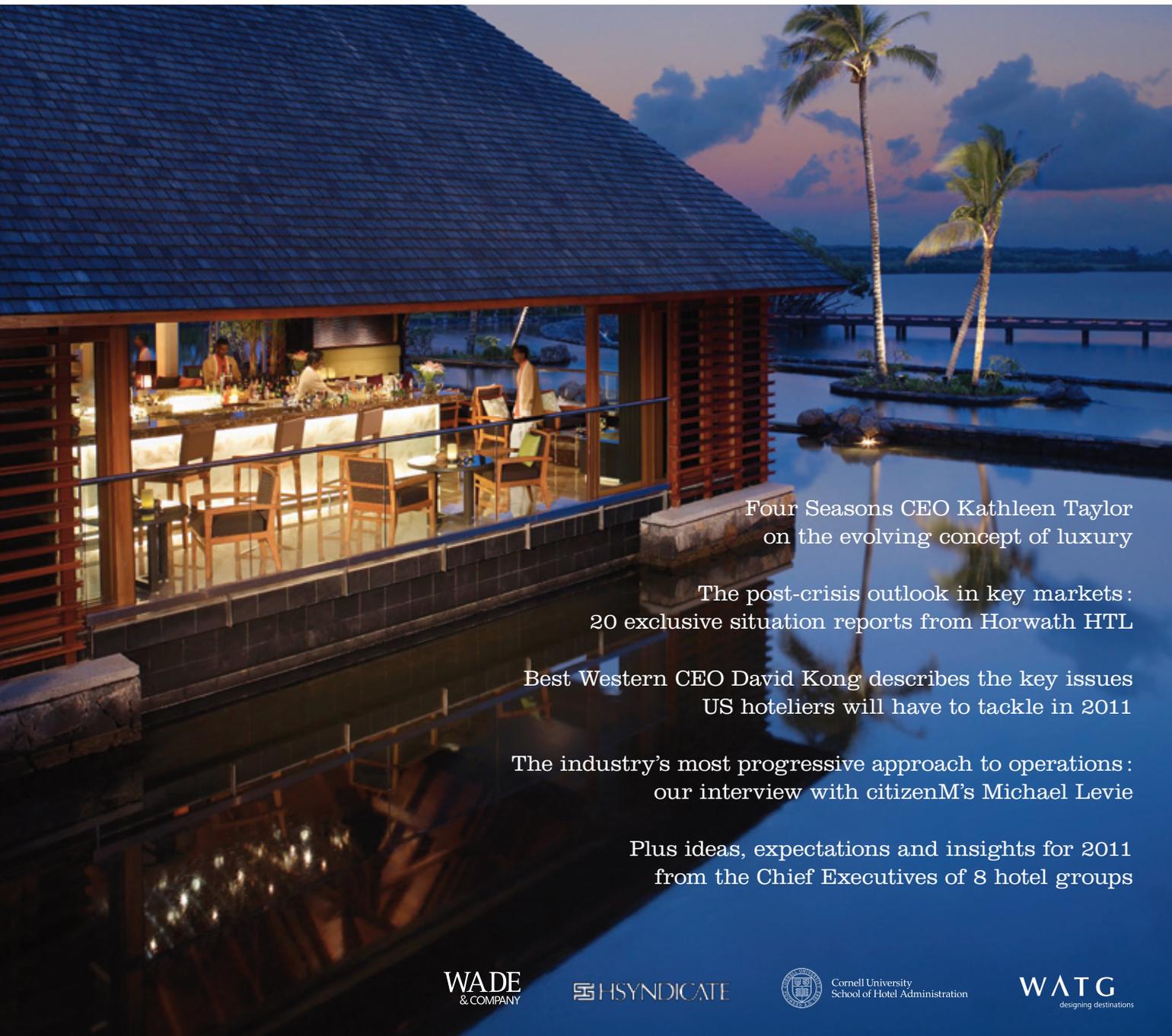


# HOTEL yearbook 2011

What to expect in the year ahead



Four Seasons CEO Kathleen Taylor  
on the evolving concept of luxury

The post-crisis outlook in key markets:  
20 exclusive situation reports from Horwath HTL

Best Western CEO David Kong describes the key issues  
US hoteliers will have to tackle in 2011

The industry's most progressive approach to operations:  
our interview with citizenM's Michael Levie

Plus ideas, expectations and insights for 2011  
from the Chief Executives of 8 hotel groups

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## **ECOLE HÔTELIÈRE DE LAUSANNE**

The Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne (EHL) is the co-publisher of The Hotel Yearbook. As the oldest Hotel School in the world, EHL provides university education to students with talent and ambition, who are aiming for careers at the forefront of the international hospitality industry. Dedicated to preparing tomorrow's executives to the highest possible level, EHL regularly adapts the contents of its three academic programs to reflect the latest technologies and trends in the marketplace. Since its founding in 1893, the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne has developed more than 25'000 executives for the hospitality industry, providing it today with an invaluable network of contacts for all the members of the EHL community. Some 1'800 students from over 90 different countries are currently enjoying the unique and enriching environment of the Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne.



## **HSYNDICATE**

With an exclusive focus on global hospitality and tourism, Hsyndicate.org (the Hospitality Syndicate) provides electronic news publication, syndication and distribution on behalf of some 750 organizations in the hospitality vertical. Hsyndicate helps its members to reach highly targeted audience-segments in the exploding new-media landscape within hospitality. With the central idea 'ONE Industry, ONE Network', Hsyndicate merges historically fragmented industry intelligence into a single online information and knowledge resource serving the information-needs of targeted audience-groups throughout the hospitality, travel & tourism industries... serving professionals relying on Hsyndicate's specific and context-relevant intelligence delivered to them when they need it and how they need it.



## **CORNELL UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF HOTEL ADMINISTRATION**

Founded in 1922, Cornell University's School of Hotel Administration was the first collegiate program in hospitality management. Today it is regarded as one of the world's leaders in its field. The school's highly talented and motivated students learn from 60 full-time faculty members – all experts in their chosen disciplines, and all dedicated to teaching, research and service. Learning takes place in state-of-the-art classrooms, in the on-campus Statler hotel, and in varied industry settings around the world. The result: a supremely accomplished alumni group-corporate executives and entrepreneurs who advance the industry and share their wisdom and experience with our students and faculty.



## **WATG**

Over the course of the last six decades, WATG has become the world's leading design consultant for the hospitality industry. Having worked in 160 countries and territories across six continents, WATG has designed more great hotels and resorts than any other firm on the planet. Many of WATG's projects have become international landmarks, renowned not only for their design and sense of place but also for their bottom-line success.

# New directions in 2011

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE NEW HOSPITALITY CONCEPTS THAT MAY AFFECT THE HOTEL INDUSTRY NEXT YEAR?

**DESIGN HOTELS AG'S** FOUNDER AND CEO **CLAUS SENDLINGER** DESCRIBES THE MAJOR TRENDS THAT HE BELIEVES WILL GAIN MOMENTUM IN 2011.

The one thing that's certain in the hospitality world is change. New market niches are opening up as travelers' wants and needs evolve. Several movements are simultaneously occurring in the hotel industry, all of which are set to have dramatic effects over the long term. Here, I'll focus on four trends that will make an impact in the upcoming year.

## INTEGRATION INTO THE NEIGHBORHOOD

It might seem ironic that I would say that the hotel industry needs to move beyond «design.» Hotels with contemporary aesthetics were once a novelty, but nowadays design alone is no longer enough to create premium experience. Most hotels today have an element of contemporary design.

Of course, a hotel needs to have a strong aesthetic, but even more importantly, it must be firmly rooted in its neighborhood, with a strong local relevance. A hotelier needs to know not only his or her hotel inside and out, but also the district it lies in, and the entire city... and that means not only the major attractions but also the little secrets and the local people that make up the very fabric of an urban landscape. And the hotel should be an integral part of this fabric. Environment obviously also includes the rest of the world, and hotels need to stop just giving the cursory nod to «being green» and seriously address climate change and respecting the planet with more radical solutions.

## «BLEISURE» – BLENDING BUSINESS AND LEISURE

The second movement is «bleisure,» a brilliantly fitting term meaning the blurring of business and leisure, coined by The Future Laboratory, a trend forecaster and brand consultancy in London. That people mix work and play is in itself nothing new, but the ways in which the 20- to 40-year-old demographic does so, means that next year, the hospitality industry has to take notice.

Bleisure travelers are far less formal than their business-only predecessors, conducting impromptu meetings in lounges and setting up mini-offices in lobbies. An estimated 15% of the modern work force no longer has set work hours nor a set office, and that number will only increase. Savvy hotels are

catering to their needs, providing free Wi-Fi, ample electrical outlets and quiet nooks in public spaces that used to be solely used for socializing.

But these nooks aren't sterile and separated, but rather warm, inviting and integrated. Lobby layouts and work space can be used to do business and to relax. A good example of how this runs smoothly and aesthetically can be seen in the citizenM hotels, which continue to refine their concept in their new property in Glasgow.

Not everyone on a «bleisure trip» is heading to a city. Think of web designers or graphic artists traveling to a remote destination for an inspirational think tank. Especially the creative class needs a respite from their normal environment in order to regain their ability to think out of the box. Nevertheless, these guests need to be fully connected. Smart hotels and secluded resorts are already taking notice and accommodating these guests' needs.

## HYBRID HOSPITALITY CONCEPTS

Like-minded, visionary hoteliers around the globe have begun to create hybrid properties that go far beyond the original purpose of simply providing a bed. Multidimensional hotel concepts focusing on authentic experiences are on the rise, combining elements from galleries, hospitals or film theaters with the traditional idea of hospitality. These concepts cater to the needs of modern travelers seeking personal transformation during their stay. The sheer experience is not enough for them; these guests want to take something meaningful home with them.

Looking at the Waterhouse at South Bund in Shanghai, for instance, illustrates how creative hoteliers like Loh Lik Peng blur the boundaries between hotels, restaurants and galleries. Another example is the Soho House group. What started as a private member's club has evolved into an international hospitality concept combining screening rooms, bars, and restaurants with hotel rooms and meeting facilities. The Soho House brand has really managed to attract an international creative crowd and shape a community of like-minded people with their hybrid concept.



Soho Beach House,  
Miami

## RURAL RETREATS

In 2011 and beyond, rural hotels need to deliver authentic experiences and provide a certain amount of education, like Daniele Kihlgren's Sextantio Albergo Diffuso, one of our member hotels. Several years ago while riding his motorcycle through Abruzzo in southern Italy, Kihlgren came across an abandoned village, Santo Stefano di Sessiano. Here he created the Sextantio, which has 28 rooms spread throughout various medieval structures in the village. Artisanal crafts and traditional gastronomy – you could even say the village itself – has been revived. Guests can not only have a fabulous dinner, but learn about the recipe's provenance. They not only sleep on exquisite bed linens, but can also meet the craftswoman up the street who made them.

In future, even more daring projects like cocoons planted into trees, deep in the forest may become a common reality. The Dutch architectural firm 24H has already created a private cabin in Sweden that reacts to its river environment. They also created the

Children's Activity and Learning Centre as part of the Six Senses Soneva Kiri resort in Thailand. This organic structure provides a fun place for visiting children to raise their ecological awareness.

Beyond 2011, I see an even bigger movement coming: the migration of the creative class out of the cities and back to the land. Since 2008, more than half the world's population has been living in cities; forecasts predict that this percentage will rise to 75% in the year 2050. Starting with a few pioneers now and increasingly into the future, the creative class will start heading back in the other direction. Rural retreats focusing on simple pleasures will give urban dwellers a bucolic environment and a mental break from overstimulation.

A current concept in this context can be seen on the Swedish island of Gotland. This remote area has become a magnet for Stockholm's movers and shakers yet still retains its authenticity with small hotels that are built as creative clusters. Here, the Fabriken Furillen is a striking example of an industrial site remade into a simple retreat, where guests stay in private cabins in the middle of nowhere, surrounded by a glittering sea, craggy rocks and a desolate landscape. It's the ultimate rest for a busy mind. After all, the way we «recover» – 30 days' holiday from a shift-based job – hasn't changed since the industrial revolution. Starting now, offering true escapes and the opportunity to disconnect will represent the flip side of accommodating «bleisure» travelers.

## CONCLUSION

I believe that as the hotel industry matures, the best properties will combine several of the above elements into holistic reflections of their locations, their scenes, and above all the people behind them. These types of hotels will last in the minds of travelers as well as within their own local environments.

Offering guests educational experiences, an opportunity to work as they relax, a healthy relationship to the immediate and distant environment and real recovery are all important factors to consider in creating a new kind of hospitality – a word whose meaning we have to make sure we never forget. ■



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the *right word* and  
the *almost-right word* is  
the difference between lightning  
and the lightning bug. »

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