The Next Generation of Resorts: Designing for Experience and Authenticity

Learning Objectives

1) Learn the latest emerging trends in resort development on an international scale.
2) Gain a better perspective on the needs of developers and operators in creating a successful experience-based resort.
3) Develop a better understanding of the landscape architect’s role in experience-based resorts.
4) Learn about two very different resort communities and how design excellence creates destination experiences.

Description

Trends in Hospitality – What role do Landscape Architects play in the evolving experienced based resorts? This session will explore the latest trends in experience based resorts. In an effort to bring a new perspective to the ASLA National Meeting, the session will combine viewpoints, the developer and the designer, to communicate the newest direction in hospitality development and design.

Presentation Outline

- Introduction of Speakers
- Majestic Hospitality
  - Review of what the buyer is seeking
  - Experiences that are most important to the resort visitor
  - Unique development opportunities being sought by operators/developers for resorts
- DTJ Design’s Unique Resort Experience Based Design
  - Gateway Canyons – An Education Based Resort Experience
  - Menglun Rain Forest – A Ecological Restoration, Cultural Preservation, and Adventure Activity Resort
- Questions and Answers
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a. Hospitality Trends

Once the urge to “Fly and Flop” and escape to a fantastical paradise has subsided (usually 2-3 days), guests often want to engage with their surroundings and explore other offerings; cultural, physical, and experiential. They want a place of visual and programmatic activity that draws them in to become part of the “story” of the resort. This begins with dynamic visuals and experiences at the project entry, through to the lobby and out to the pool. Hard Rock Hotels are leading the experiential edge with this approach.

Guests are spending more time in hotel common areas, mainly outside. These outdoor spaces must be designed for flexibility since a typical day in the resort’s courtyards, gardens and pool decks changes every two-three hours in terms of programming. Early mornings bring dawn tai chi or yoga, walks, bird watching, running, lap swimming. Lunch from a “grab and go” is becoming more popular than sitting down to a full meal in the dining room; the opportunity for guests to take food out to the pool or garden courtyard with a book or ipad is appreciated. Later in the day, spaces are then transformed to accommodate cultural and educational classes, or experiential activities. And as the sun sets these same spaces can be converted to event venues or party places.

Resort space programming is also becoming specialized to meet the needs of guest demographics, including providing special places and activities for teens; outdoors it can be sports areas and courts, pool and slide, “under the boardwalk”; even a teen’s only spa.

As designers, we create an outdoor canvas to invite the artistry of the day, for guests to enjoy an enriching and meaningful hospitality experience.

b. Developer Perspective

Chris Henry will provide the developer’s perspective on operators needs in creating a successful experience-based resort. He will seek to lay the foundation of how developers and operators are approaching new opportunities in the hospitality marketplace. Chris’ experience in a variety of international and national resort communities will provide a framework for the design discussion.
c. Resort Case Studies

Bill Campie will then provide examples of resort projects and their unique considerations of how to create experiences that will separate them in the worldwide marketplace. Two projects specifically will explore the challenges of developing in an environmentally sensitive area.

These communities must be developed while preserving, and actually restoring, the natural landscape communities. Additionally, each resort will demonstrate the landscape architects role in creating the emotional journeys that experience-based resorts must provide to be successful.

Notes

Christopher M. Henry co-founded Majestic Hospitality Group in August 2008. As a world leader in experiential tourism, Majestic has provided its hotel development and management services to a range of facilities across four continents. Over the years, personal and business experiences have created Mr. Henry’s well-rounded perspective on the tourism industry. Prior to launching Majestic, Mr. Henry has worked for Prince Hotels & Resorts, Mauna Kea Resort, Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts, Vista del Sol Health Services, and TS Architects.

While working for Four Seasons, Christopher earned his Associate of Science in food and beverage management from Le Cordon Bleu. He then received his Bachelor of Science degrees in hotel management and entrepreneurship with a minor in eco-tourism at Johnson & Wales University, Denver. Currently, Mr. Henry is also a principal at Senior Wellness Group and Red Diamond Hospitality.

Bill Campie is President of DTJ DESIGN, a 40-year-old international design practice based in Boulder, Colorado. Bill is an accomplished designer with a wide range of experience. His portfolio of award-winning projects in land development and planning, as well as more detailed architecture and landscape architecture, is a testament to his diverse interests. Bill began his career at DTJ in 2006 when the company was thriving as an established national presence. He has since seen the firm through the recession and been instrumental in evolving DTJ to the international practice it is today. As President of a reinvented and reenergized DTJ, practicing in five different continents, Bill brings a first hand perspective on the rewards and challenges of growing an international design practice.

DTJ DESIGN provides architecture, planning, and landscape architecture services for quality resort, residential, and mixed-use places, strategically positioned in the marketplace.

Todd Hill, ASLA, LEED®AP; is a landscape architect and land planner. He is the Director of DTJ Design’s Atlanta office who has built a 28 year career with EDAW, Inc. and AECOM. His work covers a range of scales, from large land strategies to detailed site designs. He leads the creative process for his projects to combine high design with innovative sustainability design strategies. His portfolio of global projects includes award winning master planned communities, and destination resorts, urban regeneration projects, and signature parks and public gardens.

Mr. Hill’s resort portfolio includes projects across the U.S., from Canada to Mexico, The Bahamas, The Cayman Islands and the Caribbean islands, to Costa Rica, Panama, Venezuela, and Brazil; from Europe, Egypt and Senegal, to India, the Philippines, Korea, Hong Kong and China. He manages large multi-disciplined teams involving market economists, environmental and policy planners, designers, architects and engineers.

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