

SUPPER

GLOBAL HOTEL F&B

ISSUE 5



Michael Caines

On old ventures, new beginnings
and why chefs are like swans

Colin Peter Field

Back behind the bar and ready
to serve at The Ritz Paris

The Mezcal Boom

Why the popularity of tequila's
smoky cousin is set to continue



F&B: A Dirty Little Term

Words: Afroditi Krassa

design restaurants. Whether they are located on the high street, in airports or in the middle of a disused car park, they are still 'restaurants': a post French Revolution word to describe places to 'restore' yourself, physically and arguably mentally.

I was sat in a meeting with our very first hotel client when I came across the acronym F&B and, just like all acronyms, I totally ignored it. As a person who dreams up restaurant names for a living, I have a healthy disrespect for words that are reduced to mere first letters. There is nothing cool, memorable or beautiful about FMCG, FHA or even LOL. An exception is IKEA, which, lets face it, is an acronym masquerading as an Ancient Greek word out of embarrassment.

Our generation has witnessed the most phenomenal cultural shift in dining focused experiences; the last decade has been nothing short of a cataclysm of creativity, experiments and new ideas. I still remember my first visit to a British supermarket as a young student circa 1992. There was just a single brand of olive oil on the shelf. So much has changed since then that even the most die-hard 'foodies' - another dirty word in my books - cannot keep up with the latest trends or openings.

One thing is for sure though, hoteliers could spend all their time trying to re-invent the way they describe their restaurants (F&D anyone?) but is this truly going to bring

genuine innovation and category-defining thinking to our sector? In a world where the very notion of a restaurant is being challenged, we need to go beyond a skin-deep approach. In 20 years time, I am not even sure if restaurants as we know them will still exist. I am pretty sure we will have dining experiences, but not restaurants as in: a room with four walls, a floor and a ceiling. The current obsession with dining in unexpected environments - everything from flying zeppelins and subterranean bunkers to toilets - is a pretty good indicator.

After all, hotel F&B outlets are nothing but restaurants that happen to be within a building that provides temporary accommodation for travellers and tourists by the night. Actually, when you describe it like that, it sounds pretty sexy and interesting. There are golden opportunities within the context of a hotel: a unique location, a standalone building and a wonderful mix of customers.

Hotels shouldn't look to simply emulate the high street but challenge competing local restaurants through innovatively conceived, creatively planned and excellently operated restaurants. So perhaps if we think of eating and drinking experiences beyond the confines of two dirty little letters we might just end up with one less acronym in this world.

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