

Hospitality

A Genuine Service Culture

An Interview with Becky Hubbard,
General Manager, Lotte New York Palace



EDITORS' NOTE Prior to her current post, Becky Hubbard was Executive Assistant Manager at Trump SoHo Hotel; Assistant Rooms Executive at The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company LLC; Front House Director for The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company LLC; Director of Reception for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc.; and Assistant Director of Reception for Sheraton. She received her B.S. in hospitality from the State University of New York at Plattsburgh.



Becky Hubbard

PROPERTY BRIEF Lotte New York Palace (lottenypalace.com), a legendary New York City luxury hotel, underwent a thorough transformation from a historic Madison Avenue gem to Midtown's premier modern hotel. The hotel features 909 spacious rooms and suites, including 176 exclusive Towers accommodations, which provide the perfect setting for relaxation and inspired stays in New York City. Unique dining venues such as Pomme Palais offer everything from imaginative breakfast dishes to signature pastries and sandwiches. Lotte New York Palace's collection of versatile meeting and event spaces is ideal for weddings, corporate events, and special occasions. The hotel's famed Villard Mansion, built in 1882, is recognized as a New York City landmark and gracefully blends with a contemporary 55-story tower. The Madison Avenue courtyard provides a dramatic entryway to the hotel's grand lobby. Villard restaurant offers a New American menu comprised of "farm house" breakfast and brunch fare.

What are your views on the current state of the hotel business in New York City?

The New York City hotel market continues to grow. Each year we see growth in tourism



levels alongside increased hotel room inventory. Even though the room supply has increased, it has certainly been met with strong demand.

What have been the keys to the strength and leadership of Lotte New York Palace and how do you define the Lotte New York Palace difference?

It is important to know the market, but it is even more important to set your own standards. At Lotte New York Palace, our executive teams set aspirational goals both financially and

operationally. We've created a positive momentum that other industry leaders want to be a part of. We have built a team of experts and have amazing synergy in our organization.

How critical is it to have owners with a long-term vision and commitment to the property?

It is vital. LOTTE Hotels & Resorts is incredibly invested in building a genuine service culture alongside state-of-the-art hotel facilities. This has been instrumental in allowing us to deliver value to our guests.

Lotte New York Palace has been described as two hotels in one building with The Palace and The Towers offerings. Is this an accurate description of the property?

We like to describe The Towers as a "hotel within a hotel" as it occupies the top 14 floors of Lotte New York Palace. The Towers houses 176 spacious guestrooms and suites, in addition to its own stylish private reception area complete with a dedicated *Les Clefs d'Or* concierge team. Each guest room provides an unparalleled 'home away from home' experience.

The Towers is our premium collection of guestrooms and extra-spacious suites, ranging up to 5,000 square feet. Our suites are among the largest in New York City. Guests of The Towers have access to a wide range of exclusive services and luxurious amenities, including our Maybach car service, *Maître d'etage* service and private *Les Clefs d'Or* concierge.

Lotte New York Palace is a leader in the meeting and event business. Will you provide an overview of the property's capabilities and strength in this area?

Lotte New York Palace is the largest luxury hotel in New York City with approximately 30,000 square feet of banquet and meeting space. With our seasoned team of catering and



Clockwise from top left: Lotte New York Palace grand staircase; hotel exterior; Jewel Suite by Martin Katz living room; Gold Room

event managers, our flexible space can be easily transformed for large conferences and corporate meetings, to weddings and small celebrations.

How do you define a true luxury hotel experience today?

Luxury service is about creating transformative experiences that people want to be a part of and delivering far beyond what our customers have paid for. The core of our business is that we genuinely care about our guests and delivering memories that they will take with them long after they check-out.

What do you tell young women about the opportunities to grow and lead in the hospitality industry?

Opportunities for women in the hospitality industry are growing. Right now, there are approximately 90 female General Managers in New York City, which is extraordinary. Being a leader is not about being a man or a woman, but rather about being an expert in your craft. A piece of advice that I would offer to young women is to "lead from the front" and build relationships, because it is those relationships that will get you everywhere. ●