



## The Pursuit of Excellence

An Interview with Ezio Attilio Indiani,  
General Manager, Hotel Principe di Savoia



**EDITORS' NOTE** Ezio Attilio Indiani has worked at some of the most prestigious hotels in the world for over 25 years. In 1987, he joined the Forte Group and worked at a number of its hotels including the Hotel des Bergues in Geneva as Director. Before assuming his current post in 2005, he was Director of the Hotel Villa D'Este in Cernobbio, Italy. In 2002, he received the Hermes Prize as the 'Best Hotel Director' in the world, the highest award given in the deluxe hotel category.



Ezio Attilio Indiani

**PROPERTY BRIEF** The Hotel Principe di Savoia ([www.hotelprincipedisavoia.com](http://www.hotelprincipedisavoia.com)) is a luxury five-star hotel that has been the natural home for international travelers and cosmopolitan society since the 1920s. With its superb location, superlative facilities, and outstanding standards of service, the Hotel Principe di Savoia offers a winning combination of old world luxury combined with the latest innovations in technology and design. The property is accessed from all parts of the city and close to Milan's many attractions and elegant shopping districts.

### How has Hotel Principe di Savoia fared during the economic crisis and what is your outlook for growth for the property?

The year 2009 was a period of financial distress and we witnessed a decrease in both clientele staying at the hotel and companies requesting our meeting and banquet spaces. But crises like these also provide opportunities to undertake far-reaching structural measures. So in 2009, the Hotel Principe di Savoia underwent a major design overhaul and a new lobby, bar, and suites were unveiled. In 2010, we began to see an increase in room occupancy and requests for events. We had a completely renovated product to offer our guests that were eager again to splurge and understood the true value of staying at a five-star luxury hotel. We adapted a flexible rate strategy to increment business during our low season and instead of lowering our rates, we focused heavily on added value. In 2011, the hotel did very well and the sales, marketing, and F&B strategies that were put in place to help us remain competitive have proven extremely successful. If we continue with these aggressive strategies, we will also see growth in 2012 and the future.

### Your owners continually invest in the property to enhance your offerings and maintain your leadership position in the market. Would you highlight some of the projects planned for the property?

In 2009, the acclaimed international architect, Thierry Despont, redesigned the lobby, Il Salotto, and Principe Bar; nine new Principe suites were also introduced as well as four new Imperial suites. London-based architect Francesca Basu was responsible for the restyling of these nine new Principe suites following her sensational design of the mosaic rooms.

The redesign of the Imperial Suite was overseen by Celeste dell'Anna and combines a series of contemporary and classical elements. In 2010, all of our room inventory was refurbished, and in 2011, we also introduced the new Ambassador Junior Suites and Ambassador Suites. In 2012, we will refurbish the lower floor of the hotel adding new spaces. We're also currently analyzing various projects to update our spa.

### How challenging is the food and beverage part of the business, especially in a city like Milan that has so many great stand-alone restaurants?

Coming from a food and beverage background, I understand the importance of this department from a revenue and client perspective. Our department generates half of the total revenue of the hotel. We continually strive to offer the best service, finest ingredients, and an unforgettable environment in all our F&B outlets from our Il Salotto Lobby Lounge, which offers all-day dining and afternoon tea, to our Principe Bar, which serves the best cocktails in town in an extraordinary surrounding, to our Acanto Restaurant, to our room service menu, which offers a wide selection of local and international dishes 24 hours a day, to our banquet facilities that can easily serve an intimate dinner for five or a formal gala event for 750 people.

### How much of a focus has your spa product been and would you provide an overview of these facilities at Hotel Principe di Savoia?

The breathtaking Club 10 Fitness & Beauty Centre located on the penthouse floor of the hotel covers an area of 1,000 square meters and offers its guests a fully equipped and relaxing oasis. It includes a wide gym, a heated 60-square-meter swimming pool, a hydro-massage pool, a sauna, a Turkish bath, and a

wraparound terrace, as well as an open air solarium. In addition to the wonderful view from the terrace and the fitness center, guests will find comfortable mahogany-paneled locker rooms, marble showers, and massage and beauty rooms. The Club 10 Fitness & Beauty Centre has thought of everything, from sporting goods to beauty treatments to the finest cosmetic products.

### How do you maintain such consistent service standards at the property?

The Principe is committed to providing our guests with the highest standards of personal care and attention, something we would not be able to offer without our staff and their dedication to the pursuit of excellence.

We believe in investing in our people since it is vital that each person is motivated and happy – only then can we provide the best. As soon as you join us, you begin with a comprehensive welcome program called Engage. From there, we provide regular in-house learning for all levels of employees. An extensive training program is also in place for the management to guarantee continuous growth both professionally and personally. The training sessions throughout the year are open to all employees to enhance language, computer skills, and to encourage growth in one's field of expertise. Furthermore, we encourage job rotation to allow our staff to understand the various departments of the hotel and how every role is crucial to the hotel's success.

### Hotel Principe di Savoia is part of The Dorchester Collection. Would you highlight the value this brings to the property?

We are extremely proud to be a part of The Dorchester Collection, which is such an extraordinary collection that has brought further prestige to the property. Dorchester Collection hotels are landmarks of individuality, prestige, and comfort that continue to attract royalty, dignitaries, celebrities, and an international set accustomed to the finer things in life. Whether you are staying in London, Beverly Hills, Paris, Milan, Geneva, or Los Angeles, each of our hotels offers a rich and unique provenance, embodying the distinct culture of the world's finest cities.

The Dorchester Collection name remains an assurance to guests of a special sense of welcome and belonging in hotels remarkable for their unique character, attention to detail, and quality of service. ●

The Imperial Suite living area (left); Presidential Suite swimming pool (right)