



A Sense of Place

An Interview with
**Sase Gjorsovski, General Manager,
 The Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami**



*Ocean View One Bedroom Suite (left)
 and an exterior view of the property (above)*

EDITORS' NOTE Prior to his current post, Sase Gjorsovski was Executive Director and General Manager of Turnberry Ocean Colony. He has also served as General Manager for Acqualina Resort and Spa and China Grill Management, as well as Director of Operations for Ian Schrager Hotels – Delano. He received his B.A. in organizational leadership from St. Thomas University.



Sase Gjorsovski

PROPERTY BRIEF Set along pristine, white sand beaches and overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Intracoastal, The Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami (ritzcarlton.com/en/hotels/miami/bal-harbour) exudes a warm, inviting atmosphere while offering elevated services and amenities. The resort's location in the exclusive Bal Harbour Village neighborhood offers easy access to boutique shopping, exciting nightlife, outdoor adventure, and a thriving art scene. Guests will discover that everything they desire is accessible, from South Florida's finest flavors at the newly revamped Artisan Beach House to Core Fusion and Yoga classes at Exhale Bal Harbour Spa. With beautiful beach views from the floor-to-ceiling windows in each guest room and suite, the property also offers a European-edged outdoor heated pool as a worthy alternative to the Atlantic.

Will you discuss how The Ritz-Carlton Bal Harbour, Miami is positioned in the market?

We offer spacious suites and suite-style guest rooms. Our suites are fully equipped with kitchens and we are currently refreshing our product. All of our guests enjoy residence-style luxury and intimacy with just two rooms per floor.

We leverage our proximity to the Bal Harbour shops and will continue to do so as they undergo another renovation at the mall.

We also offer strong wellness offerings and partner with Exhale Spa on our wellness programs.

We consistently create new programming and implement new partnerships to stay relevant within the Miami hotel scene. For example, we're currently hosting a pop up with a New York-based swimwear and resort wear brand through the end of this month, offering the only brick and mortar shopping experience for that brand in Florida.

The property is currently making a major investment in its room and suite offering. What can guests expect from this new product?

Based on feedback on the previous guest rooms, we have made some advancements to better cater to our guests. The room enhancements offer an elevated guest experience. Our new guest room and suite design evokes the essence of the sea and creates a more definite sense of place.

The new design is brighter, lighter and reflects the hotel's prime waterfront location and the floor-to-ceiling windows offer impressive oceanfront views.

How broad is the suite offering?

The hotel has very spacious one- and two-bedroom suites. We also have a 2,800-square-foot Presidential Suite with ocean views from every room. This unit has a private movie theater, a piano and gorgeous living and dining areas.

What technological advancements will be added to the rooms and suites?

We always enhance the platforms. Every room will have a new high-tech TV that will enable our guests to stream content directly through their Netflix or other streaming accounts. This means we can provide guests with more of the entertainment that they desire, not only what we're offering.

Have there been changes made to the restaurant, Artisan Beach House, and what are the keys to being successful in food and beverage at the property?

We recently revamped the Artisan Beach House design and menu offerings to be more seafood centric. This will align it with the property location, which is right on the water.

There are also a number of refreshments like fresh pressed juices and light options on the menu that reflect the hotel's dedication to wellness.

There are many restaurants we compete with locally. We are careful to follow the trends to ensure that we are aligned with customers' expectations. We have seen great compression within the local market and the hotel guests are enjoying their F&B experience here.

How broad are your meeting and banquet capabilities?

We offer one of the best meeting room spaces in the market featuring floor-to-ceiling windows facing the ocean. We can accommodate a range of meetings and events for anywhere from 12 to 250 guests.

We also offer creative team building break-outs, including guided meditation breaks, as well as excursions on a yacht that incorporate dolphin and manatee watching.

Where do you see the Bal Harbour/Miami market today?

The market has increased inventory over the past year and has become very competitive.

As a hotelier, I have to stay in tune with what is happening, but also focus on service delivery and the experience we're delivering. It is very important for us to consistently deliver the highest service standards for all of our guests.

Offering featured shopping experiences, especially in our area, is an important way we cater to our clients, regardless of what is happening with the market.

Does success for the property start with the focus on employees?

It does start with employees. Our culture is employee-centric. Our ladies and gentlemen are our most important resource in the delivery of service. Happy employees will deliver what is expected by the customers, but I still must maintain a balanced scorecard to ensure that all the key success factors for this hotel are met. I don't think any single focus would go well without the other.

As the business is becoming more dynamic, we must keep an eye on the ball in all aspects including financials, employee satisfaction, and guest satisfaction – all three of them have to be balanced.

Is it more challenging to forecast for the business today?

This is more difficult today. Customers are becoming more educated and the booking window has been reducing as well. Even groups are booking within a shorter window than we had previously experienced.

However, the enhancement of technology and ensuring we use all the platforms out there can enhance our forecasts. We continue to educate ourselves and introduce new platforms to help forecast meetings and transient business to ensure that we are ahead of the curve.

With the financial pressures on the business, is the general manager role still about hospitality?

The success of the business is about balance. As the market has become more competitive in Miami, it's important to emphasize certain aspects of the business, but it hasn't been difficult for me to ensure that the core values and culture of the Ritz-Carlton brand remain intact. ●