



## Creating Experiences

An Interview with Matthew Humphreys,  
Area Vice President and General Manager,  
Hyatt Regency San Francisco



Hyatt Regency San Francisco Water View room (left);  
the second-floor lobby (above); exterior at dusk (below)

**EDITORS' NOTE** Prior to assuming his current role in February 2017, Matthew Humphreys served as General Manager of the Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf, as well as Senior Director of Rooms of Grand Hyatt San Francisco, Director of Rooms for Grand Hyatt Kauai Resort & Spa and for Hyatt Regency Newport Beach. Humphreys graduated with a B.S. in hotel administration from the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.



Matthew Humphreys

**PROPERTY BRIEF** Hyatt Regency San Francisco ([hyattregencysanfrancisco.com](http://hyattregencysanfrancisco.com)) features expansive Bay views and its renowned world's largest hotel lobby all near San Francisco's most celebrated hot spots and steps away from the iconic Embarcadero and Union Square. Many of the property's 821 rooms and suites feature views of the bay area and city skyline and the 15 newly introduced Water View rooms showcase the best views of the San Francisco Bay and historic Ferry Building with smart amenities and voice-activated controls. The hotel offers flexible meeting and exhibition space with 39 innovative venues, including a 17-story vaulted atrium, an elegant ballroom and a 17,000-square-foot exhibit hall.

### Will you provide an overview of the accommodations at Hyatt Regency San Francisco and the suite offering at the property?

We have 821 rooms and 45 suites so we have a pretty strong connection to our suites. All of our suites have great views and many have balconies.

Four of our top suites have a fun design to them. Most of our suites are tailored to that person who wants to come in from work and be able to rest a little bit, to be able to entertain a little bit inside their room, take work calls, do meetings, and be able to utilize the guest room for that.

### What are the keys for a hotel to be successful in the food and beverage part of the business?

I think the big thing is to meet customers where they're at and understanding what your customers are really looking for out of your restaurant and your food and beverage offerings.

It may be that they need something quick on their way out the door to be able to get to a

meeting, but they want it to be satisfying. That is a direction that a lot of hotels are going with in providing quick and efficient tasty food where you're not sacrificing any of the quality but you're getting it in a faster timetable.

We have great offerings whether it's signature cocktails or different food menu items that provide a connection to the city.

We have chefs who are inspired by that and one of the advantages you have as a hotelier in San Francisco is that people are into the food scene, especially chefs, and they want to be here.

### Will you highlight Hyatt Regency San Francisco's event and meeting capabilities?

We have 72,000 square feet of meeting space. It's split up into four different levels of the hotel from whether it's a boardroom for five to 10 people to a ballroom for a thousand people. We have the capabilities to be all things to all people.

Where I think we win often is that we're on the right side of having the space with the number of rooms to be able to accommodate a mid- or really large-size group and have them be our focus and provide personalized service.

We can make it feel like you're the only one in our hotel because we have the right number of staff and a tenured staff who have been at this hotel for many years.

The hotel has been open for 46 years and we have quite a few employees who have been here for all of that time. We just had one of our doormen retire a year ago and this was the only job he had in his life. He was a doorman at the hotel from two months before it opened all the way until he retired.

### Are there certain characteristics that you will find in every Hyatt property?

I think that the thing that is the most consistent about our brand is our brand purpose.

Our purpose is to care for people so they can be their best. I think you will find that to be consistent across our brand and when you walk into any of our properties, people care about you.

I get to work in a building with people who feel that somebody else's happiness is what makes them happy. That is a great group of people to work with every day.

We derive our happiness out of making somebody else's day and you have so many opportunities to do that in a hotel. You're just tripping over opportunities to make a difference in the lives of the people you're coming in touch with every day.



### With the financial pressures in the business, is the general manager role still about hospitality or is it more of a business role today?

I think there is definitely a balance you have to strike. It is a business and you have to be concerned about the business and how to make sure you're growing it the right way.

I think you'll find that most owners understand that the business is about experiences, and by delivering the best experience, the financial results will thrive.

It is about finding the right people to work with who deliver in their roles that they're put in.

I think those who say it best say that if you take care of your people, they'll take care of the customer which will take care of the business. ●