



MANDARIN ORIENTAL PUDONG, SHANGHAI

When Perfection is Your Only Request!

Few luxury hotels can truly rival the Mandarin Oriental in Pudong, Shanghai in serving the discerning M.I.C.E and luxury travel segment. General Manager PIERRE BARTHES speaks on what it takes to stay a market leader in the face of great challenge.



“The M.I.C.E customer wants precision, perfection and quality amidst a range of variables and a service provider that can walk this tightrope between seen and unforeseen to take an event from start to finish seamlessly. No excuses,” -- Pierre Barthes, General Manager, Mandarin Oriental Pudong, Shanghai, China.

If you only get one chance to make a good first impression, then (in Shanghai) you can't do better than the Mandarin Oriental Pudong, Shanghai. At the helm is the no-nonsense general manager Pierre Barthes, loved as much as feared for his trademark 'no-excuses' brand of management.

“Serving the M.I.C.E market offers a hotel the best, most exciting and most challenging opportunity to advertise the quality of its product and service and make satisfied customers your best promoters. Yet, this market can also be your millstone simply because upon the quality of your service rests your customer's reputation.

“The M.I.C.E customer wants precision, perfection and quality amidst a range of variables and a service provider that can walk this tightrope between seen and unforeseen to take an event from start to finish seamlessly. No excuses. That's what the top-tier market wants. That's the reality. We've got to love it and live it. Period,” says Barthes.

Built to Serve

Blessed by location, the hotel stands on the banks of the Huangpu River in the heart of the Lujiazui Central Financial District. The tower of luxury is a picturesque wonder both outside and in, featuring 318 rooms, 44 exquisite suites and an opulent Presidential Suite. Brilliantly appointed, every room offers the famed Mandarin Oriental aesthetic blend



of colour, form and feature with just that right hue of ethnic chic.

The hotel's range of food and beverage outlets offer exhaustive fare and the hotel boasts a luxurious spa that's got to be experienced to be believed.

To serve the M.I.C.E segment, the hotel offers 1,928 sqm of state-of-the-art meetings and events venues, a pillar-free 625 sqm Grand Ballroom featuring 8-metre ceilings and able to host 800. A wireless control room offers state-of-the-art lighting, music and audio-visual functionality.

Eight multifunctional meeting rooms are available for smaller events and perhaps the most luxurious Presidential Suite offering 360-degree city views.

"We've access to a 5,000 sqm outdoor event space that's landscaped beautifully to host glamorous events, cocktail receptions, weddings, brand launches and fashion shows against the world-famous Shanghai skyline," adds Barthes.

"Our offerings go beyond just hardware and facilities. We bring to bear the knowledge and experience of our team to help our customers plan and execute events -- regardless of size and complexity -- to perfection. Often, our team acts

as a consultant to our customers offering them suggestions on getting the most out of their events dollar. This is the value-added component M.I.C.E customers get when they book with us."

What Guarantees?

How can any hotel guarantee flawless execution, though?

Short of 'acts of God' Pierre Barthes

"Our offerings go beyond just hardware and facilities. We bring to bear the knowledge and experience of our team to help our customers plan and execute events -- regardless of size and complexity -- to perfection.

guarantees his team will exceed expectations.

"We cater to the top-most tier of the luxury segment for both M.I.C.E and leisure travel so in a word we thrive on -- quality! Every part of our offering from reception to farewell has to be perfect. This includes flawless housekeeping, fresh and innovative food and beverage

choices, business lounge facilities, rest & relaxation amenities while of course our overall guest attentiveness forms that cohesive bond that our brand is so known for. Every guest checked in offers us an opportunity to turn that guest into a fan of the Mandarin Oriental signature service."

Staying open to guests' suggestions has taught us a lot about market trends,"

says Barthes.

"The competitive state of the industry, shortage of hospitality talent and growing consumer sophistication means we as professionals have to embrace innovation, adapt to suit trends, keep abreast of international market trends, keep pace with social media and think long term when it comes to interacting with the



guests.”

“At the Mandarin Oriental Pudong, Shanghai, we adopt ‘continuous improvisation’ as a way of life. We believe that the quality of our service is a reflection of our abilities and in so saying, I hope my staff agrees that I lead by example.”

A known team player, staff at the hotel testify, that Barthes is a leader par excellence.

“The trick is to act as one closely-knit team. Every department does its part in sync with the whole, a bit like an orchestra where it is crucial for each instrument to come in just at the right time to produce an enthralling overall harmony for the guest to enjoy!”

“He is a known perfectionist but isn’t that the kind of leader we need and want? It is thanks to his leadership that this hotel achieved the Five-Star Hotel rating from the influential Forbes Travel Guide just within a few months of starting operations,” says Marta Otrebska, Club Lounge Manager.

“Guests who walk into Mandarin

Oriental hotel have standards and it is our job to exceed those standards so attention to detail, sincere guest relations and quality across every part of our offering, is essential. This is why our brand has a huge fan base world-wide and with that comes the responsibility to live up to the standards we set and continually raise the bar.”

Of M.I.C.E & Markets

“Social media is changing the way we live and work across all major sectors and the hospitality industry is no exception. News via social media today travels faster than print or TV leading a new era of transparency.”

“Good news spread fast today and bad news faster. Travel sites like TripAd-

visor are serving as good performance indicators as well as providing us with a bird’s eye view of the competitive state of the industry.

“The trick is to act as one closely-knit team. Every department does its part in sync with the whole, a bit like an orchestra where it is crucial for each instrument to come in just at the right time to produce an enthralling overall harmony for the guest to enjoy!”

“It is a time in our industry when management has to be more people-centric than it ever was. You have to be motivational, demanding, understanding and you’ve got to command respect by leading from the front. We’ve achieved that at the Mandarin Oriental Pudong, Shanghai, thanks to teamwork. The challenge is to keep improving and providing that ‘wow’ factor that our guests have come to expect from us,” concludes Barthes. ■



For additional information please visit www.mandarinoriental.com