



HOTEL CASUAL

designing experiences worth sharing



F&B
MANAGERS
ASSOCIATION

steelite
INTERNATIONAL



Designing experiences worth sharing

"The need for hotels to stand out from the crowd has never been greater.

That makes an exceptional food and drink offer more important than ever. To discover how hotels are responding, Steelite International and the Food & Beverage Managers Association (FBMA) of London held a roundtable with industry experts from some of the most exciting hotels in the world. The group's findings were conclusive, inspiring, and portentous. You'll find them summarised in the pages that follow. I hope you enjoy the report."

Roy Sommer,
Chairman, FBMA of London

F&B
MANAGERS
ASSOCIATION

"Hotels will rise and fall with their ability to offer standout experiences.

And increasingly, people want those experiences to be as unique and personal as they are. There are many different factors and countless details that go into creating experiences of that calibre, and none can be overlooked. In all my years in the industry (which is more than I'd like to admit), I've never seen so many fantastic examples of hotels responding to that challenge with such creativity and ingenuity. Many of which you'll find discussed in this report. Enjoy."

Andrew Klimecki,
VP of Design, Steelite International


steelite
INTERNATIONAL

EXPERIENCES
— are the new —
LUXURY ITEMS

they're to be >
ENJOYED
collected,
& SHARED



THEY NEED TO BE **UNI**
QUE,

creative,

&

DIFFERENT

yet **ACCESSIBLE** and

familiar

L

A little bit
PREMIUM

A little bit
CASUAL >

A little bit
COOL

HOTEL F&B

has never been so

puzzling

nor held so much

opportunity



London leads

From Chiltern Firehouse to The Ned, London is overflowing with examples of first class F&B. Competition is fierce and only grows more so as the East End continues to flourish, with the likes of The Hoxton and Ace Hotel setting the bar high in Shoreditch.

“F&B in London has never been so strong. It’s a leading light for Europe, and the rest of the world.”

Pedro Mendes,
Director of F&B, RAC Club

As it tends to, fierce competition in a saturated market has forced hotels to innovate and diversify, driving up standards not only in London but across Europe and beyond.

“London is setting a new standard globally, particularly in Europe – we’re seeing fantastic things coming out of Amsterdam, Berlin, Rome, and Barcelona.”

Roy Sommer,
Chair of FBMA

Be our (non) guest

While there is always the opportunity to grow guest revenues, FBMA members report that the majority of F&B revenue is driven by non-guests, particularly dinner and evening cocktails. And – in London's West End particularly – through themed afternoon teas inspired by iconic children's books and films.



“People want something different, creative. They want an experience, not just food and drink.”

Achille Checuz,
Restaurant and Hotel Consultant



One Aldwych has opted for an afternoon tea inspired by the Roald Dahl classic *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The Sanderson offers the chance to tumble down the rabbit hole into the fantastical world of *Alice in Wonderland*. While Town House at Kensington Hotel caters for lovers of the Disney classic *Beauty and the Beast*.



“This is one area where hotels are leading the high street – the ability to be part of a chain, while carving out a strong individual identity.”

Peter Bradley,
Director of F&B, Renaissance St. Pancras

Afternoon tea has long been a crucial daypart for hotels, but was in danger of becoming irrelevant to a generation that had been taught to expect more for less by the shift towards casual dining. Themed teas have been instrumental in reversing that trend, attracting much younger guests by offering something strikingly different, strangely familiar, and decidedly Instagrammable...

Image credits: left - One Aldwych, top left - Town House at Kensington Hotel, bottom right - The Sanderson



Consumers love experiences worth sharing

In a world where experiences are measured in likes, and anyone can be an influencer, social media is a hugely important tool for hotels. This is particularly true for highly visual platforms like Instagram, where snaps of food, cocktails, and awe-inspiring skylines are king. And F&B managers know it – with a large number of FBMA members curating their hotel's design, lighting and plating with Instagram in mind.

“ Social media, particularly Instagram, is one of the most effective tools hotels have to attract customers. ”

Martin Youds,
Sales Director UK & IRL,
Steelite International

But while the look is key, it's not the only thing that matters. People want an experience – it needs to have an element of discovery, it needs to be creative, out of the ordinary. And most importantly, it must have that element of exclusivity or rarity that lends itself to the image people wish to project.

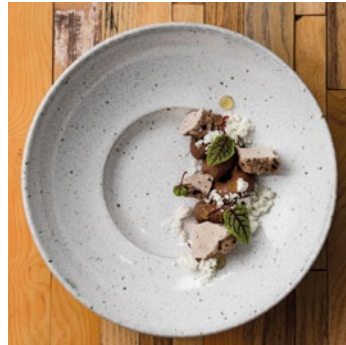
Engagement with brands on Instagram is 10 times higher than Facebook, 54 times higher than Pinterest, and 84 times higher than Twitter.

A good example of how hotels have been tapping into the lifestyle element of social media through food and drink experiences is the pop-ups at Rosewood London. In 2017, it was Vogue magazine. This year, it's GQ that – for a limited time only – will have its own bar in the heart of one of London's most elegant and stylish locations.

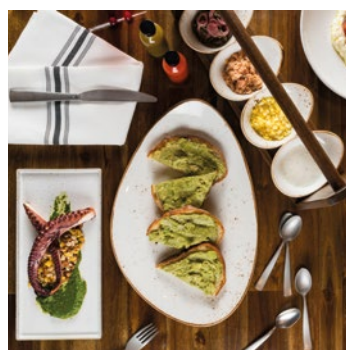
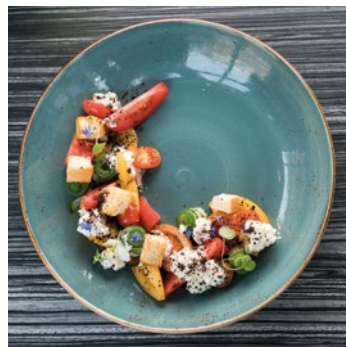
The sizzle of gourmet burgers and the smell of smoky Old Fashioned cocktails will fill the air, a physical embodiment of the refined yet laid back lifestyle GQ sells its readers. The opportunity to see, touch, and taste an otherwise intangible aspiration of style – now that's an experience worth sharing.

Engagement with brands on Instagram is...

 x84
HIGHER
THAN 



 x54
HIGHER
THAN 



 x10
HIGHER
THAN 

Image credits:

1st row left - Monsieur, 3rd row middle - Karisma, 3rd row right - Monsieur,
4th row left - Tapestry Restaurant, 4th row right - JW Desert Ridge

Hotel casual? It's *smart* casual

There's no doubt hotels are becoming more casual spaces. After all, there's no sense in swimming against the tide. However – as with all matters of taste and propriety – what's appropriate in one setting won't be in another. So don't expect hotels to go throwing out all their silverware just yet.

The ways in which hotels are becoming more casual largely has more to do with the customs surrounding food and drink, than food and drink itself. People still want exceptional food, attentive customer service, and surroundings that add to the whole experience. They just want it on their terms.

“Hotels will always be about providing something special, extraordinary, and unique. Premium doesn't have to mean stuffy or pretentious.”

Pedro Mendes,
Director of F&B, RAC Club

Consumers have become accustomed to expecting immediacy, online and on the high street. When people sit down for dinner today it's because they're hungry now, not in 45 minutes. Long waits to be served, smart dress codes, set meal times, and three-course dinner services are all for the history books. But the Châteauneuf can stay.

Attitudes towards the use of cutlery are also shifting. Particularly during working lunches, where customers expect to be served dishes that can be eaten with the hands. Or – depending on the cuisine – alternative cutlery (e.g. chopsticks).

Attitudes towards staff and customer service have also become more casual – with an increasing number of hotels relaxing policies on things like tattoos, haircuts and even uniforms. The idea being that by encouraging staff to be themselves, their genuine hospitality will shine through.

“What casualisation is really about is making people comfortable. And that's the right way for hotels to embrace the shift – not to copy the high street, or pretend to be something they're not.”

Marcha Workel,
Cluster F&B Manager, Interstate Hotels





Creating opportunities in the hotel of the future

Consumers are more informed than ever before. They have come to expect more for less. They've fallen out of love with long dinners, where wine flows freely between courses. And they're savvy to upsells. All of which spell worrying signs for a healthy spend per head.

If F&B managers can't reverse this trend, one possible solution is to increase volume. As discussed, developing a strong social presence for the hotel and positioning it as a destination for unique foodie experiences is one way to do that. Another is to create new opportunities to drive revenue, e.g. through additional dayparts and by opening up additional markets.

“Hoteliers are much savvier than they used to be. They're looking to find more ways to sweat their asset to lift revenue. From an F&B perspective, that's very interesting. It creates opportunity.”

Peter Bradley,
Director of F&B, Renaissance St. Pancras



A recent report from Skift into the future of travel¹ suggested that, under pressure from the likes of Airbnb, hotels have looked to occupy a slightly different space; providing something small rental spaces can't possibly offer – a sense of community. It predicts hotels will rapidly become more fluid and flexible spaces, used for co-living, co-working, and even immersive entertainment centers in their own right.

Examples abound. Walk into the Hoxton Holborn on any weekday and you'll find the lobby area teeming with people working on laptops, holding coffee meetings, or catching up with friends. Further blurring the line between retail and hospitality, the RITZ Hotel now houses one of the UK's finest cigar shops. The Deli at the Andaz Hotel on Liverpool St. does a booming lunchtime trade with nearby city workers. While Hotel Indigo Aldgate will open the doors of its kitchen later this year even wider, by joining Deliveroo once they open.

1. Megatrends Defining Travel in 2018, Skift (January 2018)

Image credits: top left & top right - Hoxton Holborn, middle left - Andaz Hotel, bottom left - Ritz Hotel cigar shop



Tech? It's a people business

“ I think F&B managers have a big opportunity to make better use of customer data – both to continue shaping their offer, and tailoring it to individual guest and non-guest segments. ”

Peter Bradley,
Director of F&B,
Renaissance St. Pancras

F&B will always be a people business. But there's no doubt technology can be used to enhance what people do best, freeing up time to focus on the more human elements, and providing valuable insight that can help offer a more personalised experience.

With customers increasingly savvy to upsells, and the skills shortage putting increasing strain on staff resource, there's also a real case for hotels to make better use of innovations like in-app ordering (particularly in larger chains where the cost of implementation is more easily recouped).

In 2012, Amazon reported a 29% sales increase year on year to almost 13 billion. This was largely attributed to the way the site integrated intelligent recommendations into nearly every part of the purchasing process. When it comes to the hotel of the future – we've barely scratched the surface of leveraging guest data to make smart up sells and cross sells.



Designing experiences people love

Hotel F&B has never been a more confusing or exciting space to be part of. The hotel of the future must offer something totally unique yet strangely familiar. It must be high end, yet effortlessly casual. It must offer an exclusive experience that people can't help but share, where every conceivable detail adds to the style and individuality of that experience. No pressure.



Steelite International

Steelite International is a world-leading manufacturer of award-winning inspirational tabletop for the hospitality industry. Working exclusively for the out of home market, Steelite International understand what is important to professional caterers – both practically and in style. Their focus means they are constantly responding to the requirements of the industry.

With a group of specialist partners who share their passion and commitment, they offer a complete tabletop solution for all dining environments.



FBMA

Starting out as an avenue for food and beverage professionals to gather, the Food & Beverage Managers Association of London (FBMA) has developed into a hub for its members to network, exchange business ideas and practices and support the ever growing food and beverage industry. The FBMA aims to promote the highest professional standards of management, education and recruitment in the food and beverage hospitality industry.



**United Kingdom & Republic of Ireland**

Steelite International Ltd
Orme Street
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 3RB
England

UK Distribution Centre

Steelite International Ltd
Station Street
Stoke-on-Trent
ST6 4NB
England

Telephone +44 (0)1782 821 000
Fax +44 (0)1782 819 926
Email headoffice@steelite.com

London Showroom

Steelite International Ltd
75 Wells Street
2nd Floor South
London
W1T 3QH
Telephone +44 (0)1782 249 599
Email london@steelite.com

Continental Europe

Telephone +44 (0)1782 829 347
Fax +44 (0)1782 829 484
Email c.europe@steelite.com

Benelux

Steelite International Benelux BV
's Gravelandseweg 258
3125 BK Schiedam
Nederland
Telephone +31 (0)20 617 5915
Email info@steelite.nl

Germany

Steelite International
Deutschland GmbH
Philipp-Reis-Straße 16
64404 Bickenbach
Telephone +49 (0)6257 61950
Fax +49 (0)6257 7944
Email germany@steelite.com

France

Telephone +33 6 8257 4291
Email france@steelite.com

Scandinavia

Telephone 0031 624 212 506
Email scandinavia@steelite.com

Italy

Telephone +39 0522 902051
Fax +39 0522 902017
Email italy@steelite.com

Spain

Steelite International Spain
C/General Espartero 18
03012 Alicante
Telephone +34 966 590 300
Fax +34 965 990 701
Email spain@steelite.com

Portugal

Telephone +351 918 550 429
Fax +351 211 541 022
Email info@steeliteportugal.com

Russia, Central & Eastern Europe

The Central Europe Consultancy
2nd Floor
3 Rosemont Road
London
NW3 6NG
Tel 0044 207 435 9033
Mob 00777 613 5088
Email rcee@steelite.com

Australia

Steelite International
Unit 45
Slough Business Park
2 Slough Avenue
Silverwater
NSW 2128
Telephone +61 (0)2 9648 4522
Fax +61 (0)2 9648 4523
Email australia@steelite.com

Canada

Steelite International Canada Ltd
Unit 2
26 Riviera Drive
Markham
Ontario
L3R5M1
Telephone +1 905 752 1074
Fax +1 905 752 1120
Email canada@steelite.com

Middle East

Steelite International Middle East
A Ronai LLC
PO Box 115944
Dubai
United Arab Emirates
Telephone +9714 341 4409
Fax +9714 341 4457
Email mea@steelite.com


Asia

Telephone +601 2347 9703
Fax +44 (0)1782 821 000
Email asia@steelite.com

United States of America

Steelite International USA Inc
154 Keystone Drive
New Castle
PA 16105
Telephone +1724 856 4900
Fax +1724 856 7924
Email usa@steelite.com

www.steelite.com

 facebook.com/steeliteinternational

 twitter.com/steeliteUK

 instagram.com/steeliteint

2000L303