

# Hospitality

## The Heart and Soul of the Hotel

An Interview with Offer Nissenbaum,  
Managing Director, The Peninsula Beverly Hills



The entrance of The Peninsula Beverly Hills

**EDITORS' NOTE** Offer Nissenbaum has held his current post since December 2007. Prior to joining Peninsula, he was Regional Vice President of Operations for Omni Hotels, based in New York City, overseeing eight properties on the East Coast. He concurrently served as Omni's corporate liaison to the Global Hotel Alliance, which includes international luxury brands like Kempinski, Pan Pacific, Dusit, and Leela. Nissenbaum received the coveted "Hotelier of the Year" Award by Virtuoso, the prestigious global organization of luxury travel specialists.



Offer Nissenbaum

**PROPERTY BRIEF** The Peninsula Beverly Hills ([beverlyhills.peninsula.com](http://beverlyhills.peninsula.com)) has been one of the few AAA Five Diamond and Forbes Five Star-rated hotels in Southern California for 21 consecutive years. The iconic luxury hotel offers 195 elegantly appointed rooms, including 38 suites and 17 private villas, nestled among lush tropical gardens in the heart of Beverly Hills. The property is home to The Belvedere, the only AAA Five Diamond-rated restaurant in Los Angeles for 19 consecutive years, and also features The Living Room, where the legendary Peninsula Afternoon Tea is served daily, as well as The Roof Garden for alfresco dining and The Peninsula Spa.

**What has been the key to The Peninsula Beverly Hills maintaining its leadership position as one of the world's best hotels?**

Our success as a leader in luxury hospitality is founded on our customer-focused mindset in which our organization is grounded, and a collaborative team approach to hotel management. It is based on a culture of mutual respect among staff members and commitment to both employee as well as guest passion points.

We celebrate our outstanding team who are essential to the DNA of the product. They are the heart and soul of the hotel and the reason why our guests keep returning.

**You are known as an innovator in the industry. Would you highlight some of the innovation taking place at The Peninsula Beverly Hills?**

We have an exceptional arrival experience, and remain a leader in the industry having pioneered "Peninsula Time" in 2012. Our unique

check-in/check-out experience, with prior arrangement, offers our guests the luxury of checking in and out at any hour of the day or night for no additional fee. When booking a room, suite, or villa, it is theirs and they are free to check in at 8 AM and check out at 10 PM. We also remain the only hotel with its own airport concierge team based at LAX. Upon arrival there, a Peninsula Airport Concierge will collect guests' luggage and escort them to a waiting hotel car. En route to the hotel, guests may check in and

order from a bespoke menu, and their dish requests will be awaiting them when they arrive at The Peninsula Beverly Hills.

This year, we also updated all 195 guestrooms with state-of-the-art bedside panels. The interactive, digital tablets allow hotel guests to control their environment with the touch of a fingertip. Features include access to menus at all restaurant outlets including in-room dining, mood lighting, valet call, local weather, privacy settings, and 11 different language settings.

**How do you define a true luxury hotel experience today?**

It is all in the ease of the experience, because true luxury not only takes stress away from the guest but focuses on his complete comfort and the value of his time. For instance, at The Peninsula Beverly Hills, we allow guests to check in whenever it is most convenient for them and to do so away from the front desk to avoid waiting in line.

At the end of the day, it's not the bricks and mortar that makes something luxurious – it's the process, the experience. Making things simple and easy, and saving the guest time? That, to me, is luxury.

**Would you discuss the service standards at the property and your focus on providing personalized service and customizing the guest experience?**

The services and amenities we offer are designed with a personalized guest experience in mind. From welcoming our guests with a customized monogrammed pillowcase to greeting our guests upon arrival and departure, we want to ensure a flawless visit from start to finish. Our Peninsula Time offering only enhances this – our housekeeping team operates 24/7 to ensure rooms are ready for our guests, no matter when.

**Peninsula Hotels has three properties in North America. How closely do the properties collaborate?**

Although each of these three properties are distinct in character, we're all part of the same Peninsula family and share the commitment to offering an exceptional guest experience. We work together to cross promote our properties in North America and beyond. For instance, when our sister hotel in Chicago began a landmark rooms renovation project, we launched a "Celebrate Chicago" program group-wide. Our F&B team had a lot of fun recreating classic Chicago dishes with a Peninsula spin to promote the destination to our guests. We are looking forward to next year when we will promote The Peninsula Beverly Hills in honor of our 25th anniversary.

**How important is the strong suite offering at The Peninsula Beverly Hills as a differentiator for the property?**

Our suites are a favorite among our guests, especially in the case of our signature suites, which each feature a distinct look and feel. We've labeled the collection our color suites as each is themed with its own hue – we have white, blue, pink, and, of course, peninsula green. Each suite has its own personality, which is why they are so popular – a stay in a color suite is a truly unique guest experience.

**What advice do you give to young people interested in building a career in the hotel business?**

Have patience. One needs to have patience. Rome was not built in a day. One needs to work hard and experience all aspects of the operation, and understand that it is an investment in the future. It's about experience, understanding, and maturity.

**What are your key priorities for The Peninsula Beverly Hills to ensure that you maintain a leadership position?**

Our priority, first and foremost, is to create memorable experiences for our guests – that's what makes them come back. We focus on the details and offer a truly personalized experience.

We are able to do this through ensuring that we have a great team. As I mentioned before, our team members are the heart and soul of the hotel and it is through them that we achieve excellence. ●