

The Power Of Human Connection

An Interview with Ulises Guzmán, General Manager, Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa

EDITORS' NOTE *Ulises Guzmán is a hospitality leader with more than 27 years of experience in the luxury hospitality industry, widely recognized for his human-centered, strategic and conscious approach to leadership. Throughout his career, he has held key roles including General Manager of world-class resorts, President of hotel associations, and leader of multidisciplinary teams across high-impact tourism destinations. He currently serves as General Manager of Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa.*



Ulises Guzmán

He holds advanced training in business management, leadership and service quality, along with a master's degree in Integral and Organizational Executive Coaching, and has completed hospitality management studies at Cornell University. In parallel, he develops his personal brand, Ulissance, and the project "The Stories We Tell Ourselves," where he explores the role of belief systems, awareness and the reinterpretation of human experience as drivers of personal and professional transformation.

PROPERTY BRIEF *Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa is a contemporary, adults-only lifestyle resort located in the heart of Cancún's Hotel Zone, designed for travelers seeking social energy, design-forward spaces and oceanfront elevated experiences. The resort features 429 modern suites, with 97 percent offering ocean views and also lagoon views, creating a constant connection to the destination. Culinary offerings are a defining element, with six restaurants showcasing international inspired cuisine, complemented by 10 bars, two snack bars, and a 24/7 coffee shop. Wellness is expressed through a 25,000-square-foot, two-level spa with beachfront sauna, while three pools, each with a distinct atmosphere, allow guests to curate their own pace. Breathless Cancún Soul is the only resort in the destination with dual 360° rooftop experiences, and offers over 9,000 square feet of meeting spaces within a modern lifestyle setting.*

Will you discuss your career journey?

My journey in hospitality began not with a grand plan, but with necessity – and, as I now see it, with purpose. At 19, I stepped into the industry as a bellman. It was a role born of circumstance, not ambition. But in that very first week, I encountered something that has stayed with me ever since: the quiet, transformative power of human connection. What began as a job quickly became a calling.

I was captivated by how hospitality brings together operational precision, emotional intelligence, and the opportunity to lead by example. From my earliest front line roles, I committed myself not just to professional advancement, but to learning from every challenge, every guest, every team.

My academic path, however, was not linear. I attempted university studies more than once in my early years, but the demands of life and work often took priority. It wasn't until 2018 – many years and leadership roles later – that I returned

to complete what I had started. In 2022, I proudly earned my professional degree, a milestone that represents not just academic achievement, but perseverance, self-leadership, and the belief that it's never too late to grow with intention.

Over the years, I've led luxury resorts across Mexico and the Caribbean, managed multimillion-dollar operations, overseen strategic brand transitions, and helped shape high-performing cultures. I've been entrusted with launching new brands, reviving properties, and steering complex operations with clarity and vision. And through it all, I've remained grounded in the human side of

hospitality – the relationships, the trust, the ability to create a sense of belonging through service.

Today, I see my career not as a straight path, but as a layered and evolving story. Each chapter – every reinvention, every challenge, every success – has deepened my perspective. Hospitality has been my school of leadership, emotional awareness, and purpose. And the lesson I return to, time and again, is this: when we serve with intention and lead with empathy, we don't just deliver experiences – we create meaningful impact, one human moment at a time.

Will you provide an overview of Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa?

Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa is an adults-only resort located in Cancún's Hotel Zone, designed for guests who value energy, connection, and choice. From the outset, my focus has been to ensure the resort feels alive and intentional – not as a product, but as a space shaped by people. Everything we do revolves around how guests actually experience the resort – how spaces flow, how music sets the tone, how wellness and gastronomy support different moods throughout the day. The goal is not to impress, but to create an environment where guests feel comfortable engaging, disconnecting, or simply being themselves – without pressure.



Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa



Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa pool and beach

None of this works without the team. Our role as leaders is to give them clarity, trust, and direction so they can translate the concept into real, human moments. When that alignment is there, the experience feels natural, effortless, and genuinely personal.

How do you describe the Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa experience?

I would describe the experience as freedom with intention. While we offer thoughtfully designed programming and experiences, they are never imposed. Guests are invited to participate, explore, or step back according to their own rhythm. What defines the experience is not a single outlet or activity, but a feeling. There is a sense of flow, inclusivity, and emotional ease. Luxury here is subtle – it lives in the freedom to choose, in the balance between structure and spontaneity, and in the feeling that the environment adapts to you, not the other way around.

How critical has it been to build the Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa team?

The team has been the most critical element of the entire operation. You can design beautiful spaces and create strong concepts, but culture is what guests ultimately experience. We invest heavily in building a team that understands hospitality as a human responsibility, not just a service function. I look for awareness, empathy, and accountability. When people feel trusted and aligned with a clear purpose, they don't rely on scripts – they make conscious decisions. The energy of our team defines the soul of the resort. Their presence, creativity and emotional intelligence shape the experience in ways no physical asset ever could.

What does luxury mean to you in today's hospitality landscape?

Luxury today is not about excess; it is about relevance, sensitivity, and freedom. The highest form of luxury lies in the ability to read a moment from the perspective of those who design and lead the experience – to understand a guest's intention and respond with precision, sometimes by acting

and sometimes by deliberately stepping back. It is the freedom to move at one's own rhythm, to engage or withdraw, to feel supported without ever feeling managed.

Of course, this experience rests on impeccable facilities, thoughtful design, and high-quality amenities. These elements are essential; they form the foundation. But true luxury goes further. It provides emotional clarity. Guests feel recognized without being exposed, cared for without pressure, and inspired without being overwhelmed. When all of this aligns, luxury feels effortless – not because it is simple, but because it is deeply intentional.

What has made the hospitality industry so special for you?

Hospitality became meaningful to me long before I consciously chose it as a career. At 19, it was not part of my plan. Circumstances at that time

were far from ideal, but they led me – almost unexpectedly – into the world of hospitality. During my very first week as a bellman, I experienced something that anchored me permanently to this industry: the power of human connection.

Since then, hospitality has represented the intersection of leadership, service, and emotional intelligence. Few industries offer the opportunity to create environments where people feel genuinely welcomed, understood, and emotionally safe. That responsibility – and that privilege – has always been my greatest driver.

Beyond the human aspect, hospitality is a continuous learning space. Every guest interaction, every team conversation, and every operational challenge offers a new perspective. It demands presence, humility, and adaptability. That constant evolution is what keeps the industry both demanding and deeply rewarding for me.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in building a career in the industry?

I would encourage young people interested in hospitality to stay open to the path, even when it is not linear. Very few meaningful careers in this industry begin with certainty. Many start with necessity, curiosity, or simply with an opportunity taken at the right moment. Hospitality rewards those who are willing to learn in real time – on the floor, with guests, and alongside teams. Progress often comes from showing up consistently, taking responsibility early, and being willing to grow into roles before feeling fully ready. Formal education is valuable and can accelerate that growth, but it is not indispensable. Titles may change, and formal education may come later or evolve over time, but the commitment to learning cannot stop.

What sustains a long-term career in hospitality is resilience, emotional intelligence, and deep respect for the craft. For those willing to build patiently, adapt through uncertainty, and stay present during the difficult stages, the industry offers something rare: a deeply human, global career shaped as much by lived experience as by intention. ●



Breathless Cancún Soul Resort & Spa Spumante gourmet Italian restaurant