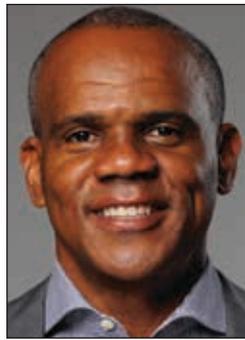


Bahamian Hospitality

An Interview with Vaughn Roberts, Chief Operating Officer, Atlantis Paradise Island

EDITORS' NOTE Vaughn Roberts, a seasoned executive with more than two decades of experience across hospitality, real estate, and global finance, is Chief Operating Officer of Atlantis Paradise Island. Roberts served as Executive Vice President of Administration & Strategic Initiatives from February 2024 after having joined Atlantis in 2021. During his tenure, he has played a critical role in guiding strategic initiatives and organizational priorities. Earlier in his career, Roberts held senior investment banking, consulting, and accounting positions with Dresdner Kleinwort, Bank One, Lehman Brothers, and KPMG. Roberts currently serves on the boards of Bonefish & Tarpon Trust, the National Art Gallery of The Bahamas, the Charitable Arts Foundation, and Friends of the Arts in The Bahamas. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and accounting from Florida International University, a master's degree in accounting from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and an MBA in finance from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.



Vaughn Roberts

PROPERTY BRIEF Atlantis Paradise Island (atlantisbahamas.com) recently completed \$250 million in bold renovations – including a complete transformation of The Royal Towers, a reimagined Atlantis Casino, and much more. These enhancements mark a dynamic new chapter for the world's most iconic entertainment resort destination, ensuring that guests from around the globe continue to enjoy the very best of Atlantis with stunning accommodations, innovative cuisine, and unforgettable experiences ranging

from live music performances and concerts to internationally acclaimed food and wine festivals.

Did you know early on that hospitality was where you had a passion?

I didn't think that I would land in hospitality. I grew up in the Bahamas, and it's an obvious career choice for folks from here, but when I came out of high school, I wanted to be an accountant. I set out on that path and went to the U.S. to study, eventually working for KPMG for a number of years. I then decided

I wanted to go to business school to get my MBA, which I did at University of Chicago. I worked in investment banking and then, being from the Bahamas, I had heard about a big project happening here in 2005-2006 which was Baha Mar. I ended up coming back to work for the developer with my background in finance and accounting, and it was a phenomenal experience which drew me into hospitality. We studied Atlantis very closely when we were developing Baha Mar and, years later, I had the opportunity to meet some people here at Atlantis which led to my current role. I have been with Atlantis four years, and it has been a terrific experience.

What do you feel have been the keys to Atlantis' consistent strength and leadership in the industry?

In terms of the physical infrastructure – the accommodations, marina, water park, all of the amenities – it's unique, compelling and iconic. Sol Kerzner, our founder, was a visionary and he created magic with his vision for this resort and what he ultimately built. A key to Atlantis' success is the people – the 6,000-plus team members who continue to drive Mr. Kerzner's vision around excellence, around being enchanting, being a place of discovery and creating special, "only at Atlantis in the Bahamas," moments. We are now in a significant multi-year reinvestment program which is going to strengthen the resort for the future, and allow us to continue to build on Mr. Kerzner's legacy.

Will you discuss the commitment from ownership to invest in the resort and the focus on continuous improvement?

We always operate from a position of leadership. When Atlantis opened, it was something that was quite special and phenomenal in this part of the world, so we are coming from a place where we're leaders in hospitality, particularly Caribbean hospitality. The resort is almost 30 years old now and our intergenerational families keep coming back. That's in part because of the incredible service our team members offer and the resort's continued interest in investing in new amenities and new programming. Our guest expectations are ever changing, and it calls for leadership to be innovative and to anticipate guest needs, and then to continue to provide the things that are going to excite and engage them when they are here.



Atlantis Paradise Island in The Bahamas

How critical has it been to continue to build the Atlantis team?

Investing in our team has always been fundamental to Atlantis Paradise Island. From the beginning, the resort has served as a major employment engine for The Bahamas, creating first-time career opportunities for many local residents. That responsibility required significant investment in training and development, and it remains a core priority today.

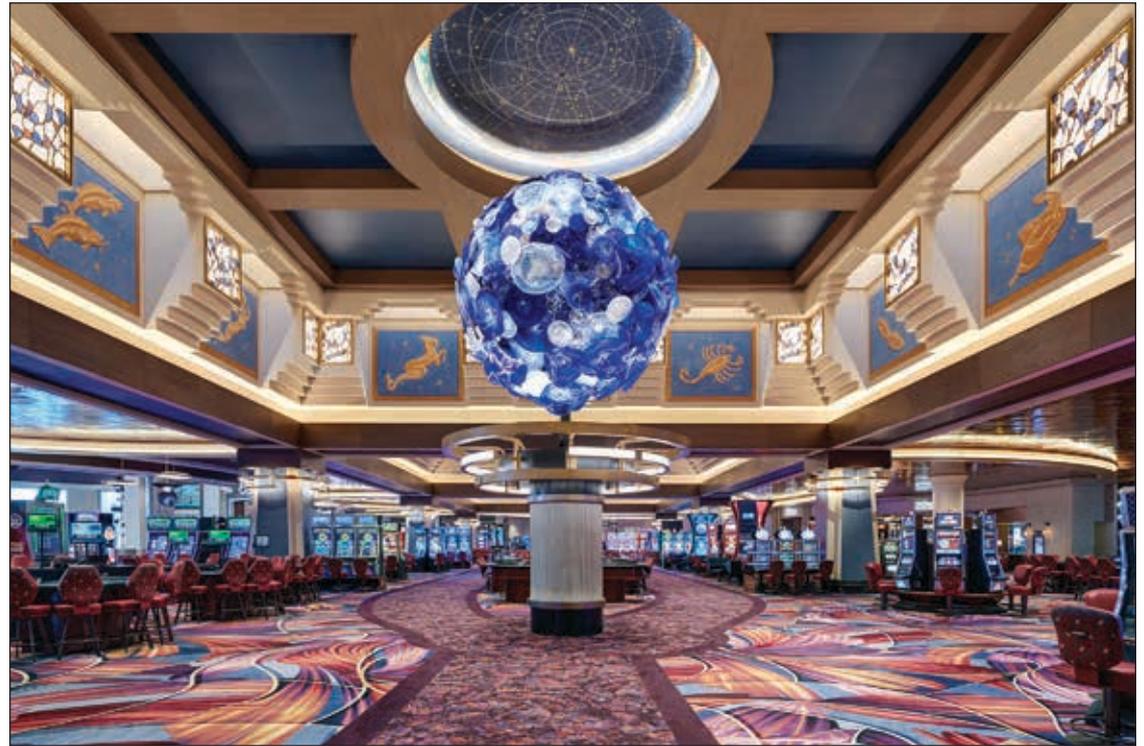
We bring in young talent, often straight out of high school, and provide skills training, mentorship, and career pathways to help individuals grow and advance within the organization.

Building a strong team is an ongoing process – attracting talented people, investing in their development, and creating opportunities for them to succeed. The result is a powerful balance of experienced team members who have grown with the resort over many years alongside new talent bringing fresh energy and perspective.

Ultimately, the culture, pride, and dedication of our people define the experience guests feel when they arrive in The Bahamas and step onto Paradise Island.

How do you define a true luxury hospitality experience?

It is about service excellence and standards, being very anticipatory in terms of getting ahead of the guest's needs. It is also about connecting with the guests and creating special moments for them. I've seen very basic examples of that which really get me excited, like when you're in a restaurant at a table with some guests, and the server really engages the group around something that's unique about the Bahamas and does it in a way that's quite impactful. Guests are wowed, and although it seems simple, it's that genuine touch of Bahamian culture that the server is bringing



Atlantis Casino's Chibuly Temple of the Moon

into the conversation that creates a special guest moment. Luxury is about connecting with folks in a very real way. That relationship drives memorable experiences.

Atlantis is deeply engaged in its community. Do you see that as a responsibility for the resort?

We have a very strong commitment to conservation and marine environment. You may be aware of Dolphin Cay at Atlantis. Dolphin Cay is one of the most sophisticated marine habitats in the world, with the Caribbean's premier marine life rescue and

rehabilitation facility. Every Marine Adventure and Dolphin Cay program supports the Atlantis Blue Project Foundation, Atlantis' nonprofit organization that works to protect coral reefs, mangroves and sea life. In addition, we have 6,000-plus full-time team members in the Bahamas, and we're reaching so many guests that are coming to Atlantis each year, so we have a responsibility to the communities where we operate, the communities where our team members live and the communities where our guests come from. Our commitment is quite broad beyond the Bahamas in that respect, and we take corporate philanthropy very seriously.

What advice do you offer to young people interested in pursuing a career in hospitality?

What has served me well throughout my career is maintaining deep curiosity and a genuine appetite to learn. Hospitality is an industry where curiosity is a real advantage.

It is important to stay connected to the marketplace and observe what others are doing well – especially when you travel. Experiencing great hotels, restaurants, and destinations often challenges you to see things differently and think more creatively about how experiences are designed.

Most importantly, everything must be anchored in the guest experience and how you "wow" people at every touchpoint. Hospitality ultimately comes down to how you make people feel.

Every interaction – with a guest or colleague – is an opportunity to create a meaningful moment. When you approach the work with that mindset, the work becomes incredibly rewarding. Over time, those moments are what build great hospitality brands – and great careers. ●



The Beach Bar at Atlantis Paradise Island