

Creating Memorable Moments

An Interview with Anthony Fabiano, Hotel Manager, Waldorf Astoria Orlando

EDITORS' NOTE Anthony Fabiano is the Hotel Manager at Waldorf Astoria Orlando (waldorfastoriaorlando.com), where he oversees day-to-day operations with a focus on elevating guest experiences, enhancing service delivery, and fostering team engagement. A seasoned luxury hospitality leader with more than two decades of experience, Fabiano most recently served as Director of Operations (Task Force) for Hilton Luxury Brands Americas, supporting iconic properties including Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills, Waldorf Astoria Park City and Waldorf Astoria Washington DC, where he led operational recovery efforts, executive leadership transitions and Forbes Travel Guide standards initiatives. Previously, he served as Director of Rooms and an Executive Committee member at Mandarin Oriental, New York, driving guest experience innovation and operational excellence across front office, housekeeping and concierge teams. His career also includes leadership roles at Conrad New York Downtown, Millennium Hilton New York Downtown, and the historic Waldorf Astoria New York.



Anthony Fabiano

and groups seeking exceptional service in a resort setting.

How valuable is it to have such a strong suite product, and do you see this as a differentiator for Waldorf Astoria Orlando?

A strong suite product is incredibly valuable, but it is only half the story. The most obvious value is accommodating diplomatic delegations, entertainment groups and executive meetings in a setting that offers both discretion and comfort. Luxury hotels provide an environment where

important conversations can happen more naturally than in a traditional boardroom.

The other advantage is the flexibility a strong suite portfolio provides as guest expectations continue to evolve. Our suites appeal to travelers seeking residential-style accommodations

for extended stays, while also meeting the needs of multigenerational families who want to stay together without sacrificing the amenities and service of a luxury hotel.

Beyond the accommodations themselves, our suites have become platforms for unique guest experiences. While many luxury hotels offer beautifully decorated holiday suites (don't miss our Nutcracker Suite this holiday season), at Waldorf Astoria Orlando we've expanded that concept with seasonal and trend-driven suite activations. Our Dream Haven Suite, for example, is designed around restorative rest and includes a Waldorf Astoria Orlando x KIP Sleepwear pajama set, a calming tea turndown service, a luxurious bath bomb, a sunrise alarm clock, a dream dictionary, a curated coffee table book and access to Calm guided meditations on the in-room TV. It transforms the suite from simply a place to stay into a destination and experience in its own right.

Will you discuss your career journey?

I have spent the majority of my career with the Waldorf Astoria and Conrad brands. I began as a Front Desk Agent at Waldorf Astoria New York and have had the opportunity to grow through roles in Front Office, Housekeeping, Revenue Management, Payroll, Training, Quality and hotel openings. From New York to Washington, DC, Park City, Beverly Hills, Dana Point and Las Vegas, each experience introduced me to remarkable people who generously shared their knowledge and helped shape my career. I owe much of my success to those mentors.

Will you provide an overview of Waldorf Astoria Orlando?

Waldorf Astoria Orlando offers a luxury resort experience that feels removed from the energy of the theme parks while remaining incredibly convenient to everything Central Florida has to offer. As an Official Walt Disney World Hotel, guests enjoy benefits like early theme park entry and complimentary transportation, but many come simply to enjoy the resort itself. With award-winning dining, a Forbes Four-Star spa, championship golf, and access to the amenities at Signia by Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek, we offer a luxury experience that appeals equally to leisure travelers



Waldorf Astoria Orlando



Waldorf Astoria Orlando pool

How has Waldorf Astoria Orlando approached its restaurant/food and beverage offering, and what are the keys to being successful in this part of the business?

We have an exceptional food and beverage team at Waldorf Astoria Orlando that is constantly innovating while honoring the legacy of the Waldorf Astoria brand. Bull & Bear carries forward the name and spirit of the iconic restaurant from the original Waldorf Astoria New York, while creating an experience that's uniquely Orlando. Across our restaurants, our chefs celebrate the hotel's culinary heritage by reimagining classic dishes, like our Lump Crab Eggs Benedict, using the best of Florida's ingredients.

We also create experiences that connect guests to our history in unexpected ways, such as The Devil's Martini, inspired by Waldorf Astoria New York's role in *The Devil Wears Prada*. The key is respecting our history while continuing to evolve for today's luxury traveler.

Will you discuss Waldorf Astoria Orlando's focus on offering personalized service and a customized guest experience?

We go to great lengths to ensure our team is actively listening to our guests and looking for opportunities to surprise and delight them in meaningful, highly personal ways. Guest requests are never simply tasks to complete. Each one is an opportunity to shape the stay and create a moment the guest will remember. Our personal

concierge team thrives on these moments. If a family dreams of experiencing Disney through a private tour, we have the relationships and local expertise to help make that happen. If parents are enjoying their first trip away from the children in years, our personal concierge team can curate an itinerary that feels entirely their own, from a restorative spa experience to an intimate dinner at Bull & Bear.

We train our team to recognize the small clues guests share, anticipate needs and act on them thoughtfully. Just as importantly, we empower them to create memorable moments without unnecessary barriers. Removing those barriers to creativity is one of the most important things we can do as leaders because it allows our team to deliver service that feels intuitive, genuine, and uniquely tailored to each guest.



How do you define the role of the hotel manager, and what are the keys to being effective in the role?

A hotel manager keeps a finger on the pulse of the operation while providing clear direction for where the hotel is headed. It's about taking a holistic view of how every decision affects our guests, our team members, and the business. If we're doing our job well, we've hired the right people to lead their teams. Our responsibility is to ensure everyone is rowing in the same direction. Clear communication is essential, but the most important thing we do is develop those around us to become stronger, more well-rounded leaders, both within the hotel and in their communities.

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

Hospitality is an incredibly rewarding industry because every role teaches you something new. Say yes to opportunities that are outside your comfort zone, and seek out mentors who challenge you to grow. You never know where those experiences will lead. ●



Waldorf Astoria Orlando Deluxe Suite (above); The Blossom cocktail from Bull & Bear (center right)