

Consistency And Personalization

An Interview with Marcel Kloet, General Manager, Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve

EDITORS' NOTE Marcel Kloet is a seasoned professional in the luxury hospitality industry with a track record of success over more than 20 years of experience holding leadership positions at renowned establishments across Europe, Australia and Asia. In his early years, Kloet's passion for service flourished while assisting his mother in the kitchen during the holidays. At 15, he took on a role in a small hotel restaurant, sparking a lifelong journey in the world of hospitality. Later, at 17, as a line chef in a 200-room hotel, he discovered a love for business management, prompting studies across Holland, Cyprus, Australia and Beijing. Beginning his formal studies in Holland, he completed a pre-internship in Cyprus and earned a bachelor's degree in hospitality management from the International Hotel College Management in Adelaide, Australia. His journey with Marriott International began during an internship in Beijing in 2008. Today, Kloet brings a wealth of expertise in the industry, cultivated during his previous roles as General Manager at The St. Regis Bali Resort, to his first tenure with a Reserve property at Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve.



Marcel Kloet

Will you discuss your career journey?

My path into hospitality has taken me across Europe, Australia, China, Singapore, Hong Kong/Macau, Malaysia, and Indonesia over the past 18-plus years, and each market has shaped how I think about luxury today. I started in Food & Beverage, with roles at The Westin Beijing Financial Street, The Westin Singapore, and The St. Regis Macao that gave me a real appreciation for the guest experience from the

ground up. From there, I moved into leadership, serving as Executive Assistant Manager for The St. Regis brand and eventually overseeing two properties simultaneously, The St. Regis and Westin Langkawi. Most recently, I was General Manager at The St. Regis Bali, where we achieved a 5-Star *Forbes* rating and I was honored as the brand's global General Manager. In December 2023, I relocated to Puerto Rico with my wife and two children to lead Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, and it's been an incredible chapter, especially as we've just been named the #1 resort in Puerto Rico and a Triple Crown Award winner by *Condé Nast Traveler*.



Will you provide an overview of Dorado Beach?

Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve, is one of only a handful of Reserve properties in the world, and it sits on a stretch of coastline in Puerto Rico with a rich history and a strong sense of place. It's a resort built around discovery, whether that's through Spa Botánico, our golf, our beaches, or our culinary program, and every element is designed to feel personal rather than programmatic. Being named the #1 resort in Puerto Rico and a Triple Crown Award winner by *Condé Nast Traveler* this year is a meaningful reflection of that work.

What do you feel have been the keys to the strength and leadership of the property?

Consistency and personalization. We've built a culture where every team member understands that true luxury isn't about volume of amenities, it's about anticipating what a guest needs before they ask. Our Embajador program is a good



Dorado Beach, a Ritz-Carlton Reserve arrival pavilion



Pineapple Garden



Spa Botánico



Posi+ivo Sand Bar

example: each guest has a dedicated point of contact throughout their stay who can arrange anything, which allows us to tailor the experience rather than offer a one-size-fits-all luxury. Strong leadership, for me, means empowering that team to make those decisions in the moment.

How valuable is it for Dorado Beach to have such a strong suite product?

Extremely valuable. The suite product is often the first and most lasting impression a guest has of the property. Space, privacy, and thoughtful design allow guests to feel like Dorado Beach is truly their own during their stay, not simply a room they're passing through. It gives us the flexibility to host multi-generational families, honeymooners, and guests seeking a quiet retreat, all within the same property, and all feeling like the experience was built around them.

How has Dorado Beach approached its restaurant/food and beverage offerings?

Food and beverage has always been personal to me, since that's where my career began, and I think it shows in how we approach it here. We

want each outlet to tell a story, of Puerto Rico, of the ingredients on the island, of the culture, rather than simply replicate what you'd find elsewhere. It's about showcasing local flavor within a Reserve-level dining experience, so every meal becomes part of a guest's discovery of Puerto Rico, not just a stop between activities.

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

Luxury today is personalization, not opulence for its own sake. Guests are far more discerning, and they're seeking experiences they genuinely can't find anywhere else. At Dorado Beach, that means understanding a guest's individual preferences and creating moments, whether it's a treatment at Spa Botánico among the treetops or a round of golf, that feel exclusively theirs. The goal is to not just meet expectations, but to transcend them.

What has made the hospitality industry so special for you?

It's the ability to create genuine human connection across cultures. Having worked

across Europe, Asia, and now the Caribbean, I've seen how hospitality transcends language and background. A great guest experience means the same thing everywhere, even when the culture and setting are completely different. That universality, combined with the constant variety of people and places, is what has kept me passionate about this industry for over 18 years.

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

Start in operations, ideally in food and beverage. It teaches you the fundamentals of guest service faster than any other department. Say yes to international opportunities early in your career, even if they take you somewhere unfamiliar; that adaptability becomes your greatest asset later on. And stay genuinely curious about people. The technical skills of hospitality can be taught, but the ability to anticipate what someone needs before they ask for it is what separates good hospitality professionals from great ones. ●



COA grill-inspired restaurant



East Beach one-bedroom suite