

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Four Seasons indulges in local fish, flavors to initiate new consumers

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View of Alfama from Four Seasons Lisbon

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

Four Seasons Hotel Ritz Lisbon is taking one of its brand staples into the public on the occasion of a local festival.

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The ninth edition of Peixe em Lisboa Lisbon Fish & Flavors festival will feature Pascal Meynard, the executive chef of the Four Seasons hotel, who will give attendees a taste of what Four Seasons has to offer. Participation in local festivals strengthens a property's ties to its locale while also offering the opportunity to initiate new consumers to the brand and demonstrate the breadth of its offerings.

"Festivals like the *Peixe Em Lisboa* are huge draws for luxury travelers," said Taylor Rains, managing partner at **Flugel Consulting**, Charleston, SC. "Chef Meynard's participation in the program extends the visibility of the property to a wide, viable audience of potential guests and demonstrates the brand's commitment to culinary excellence and serves to bolster not only the Hotel Ritz Lisbon's reputation but also the Four Seasons collection as a whole.

"The event showcases Four Season's fine dining expertise to tourists and locals alike, increasing awareness among new potential guests and strengthening affinity among brand loyalists," he said. "Gastro-tourism is a major segment of the luxury travel market. Four Seasons' properties consistently rank at the top of the list for their culinary offerings, making the brand a top choice for travelers looking to enjoy fine dining on their stay.

"In essence, culinary excellence has become an inextricable part of the brand's identity. It's important for Four Seasons to continue to curate the best culinary offerings for its guests in order to continue to attract this major market segment."

Mr. Rains is not affiliated with Four Seasons, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

**Four Seasons** was unable to respond by press deadline.

A taste of Lisbon

The ninth Peixe em Lisboa festival will take place at Ptio de Gal, formerly the Royal Palace, in downtown Lisbon, from April 7-17. It highlights recipes and preparations of various fish from the Atlantic Ocean the city's specialty.

Mr. Meynard was present at the festival in 2014 in the form of a live cooking station, but this year he will have a stand in the festival. There, attendees can learn his favorite recipes and taste some of his signature dishes.



#### *Four Seasons Lisbon food*

Liberated from the hotel's Varanda Restaurant, Mr. Meynard will be offering a menu at a lower price point, meaning consumers who have never stayed at a Four Seasons hotel will be given a preview of the food it serves. The menu will also concentrate on local ingredients, as many young foodies are particularly keen on where their meals come from.

Entrees range from 5 to 8, or \$5.60 to \$9, and include a golden bream tartar with fruit passion foam, espelette pepper, cara cara and jerez cracker, salmon with sour mustard and lime served with vegetables, and a black truffle and yuzu lobster with a spinach salad and crispy leek. A ritzamisu, raspberry mille-feuille and a poached pineapple with ras el hanout and poejos foam can top off the meal for 4, or \$4.50.

Mr. Meynard's stand will be open from noon to midnight. He will be joined by standards from a variety of other top Lisbon chefs and restaurants, including two-star Michelin Chef Jos Avillez.



#### *Available at Peixe em Lisboa*

The lower price points will attract aspirational consumers, who will then see Four Seasons not merely as an hotelier but also a service company with great food. As younger travelers who are most likely to have aspirational and rising incomes turn toward home-sharing services such as Airbnb, hotels must continue to promote more diverse elements of their offerings, including food.

Participating in local festivals creates ties between a hotel and the city's culture. With travelers seeing genuine experiences of a culture as a top priority when traveling, such initiatives that help build bonds between brand and culture will positively reinforce a brand's image in the long-term and help compete with home-sharing services.



### *Raspberry mille-feuille*

To further encourage visitors, Four Seasons is offering a complementary third night for every two consecutive nights booked.

#### Food comes first

Four Seasons has previously aimed to delight consumers' taste buds to make an initial impression.

In fall 2014, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts drove down the East Coast to treat consumers to food from its top chefs.

The food served on the truck varied at each destination to reflect the different styles of each culinary team. This concept effectively promotes the brand's culinary roots and will likely earn many consumers along its journey who will now see the chain as an ideal place to stop for a bite to eat ([see story](#)).

Other hotel brands also pride themselves on their culinary successes.

Hilton's Waldorf Astoria will bring some of New York's culinary culture to the debut of its Beverly Hills, CA property in 2017.

The hotel chain recently announced that award-winning New York restaurateur Jean-Georges Vongerichten will bring his expertise to the West Coast for the first time as culinary partner at the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills. Joining forces with a well-known chef can increase interest among locals and those visiting the property through dining experiences, a sure way to create a memorable visit ([see story](#)).

"At its core, the Four Seasons brand is about providing its guests with the best quality of life possible during their stay," Mr. Rains said. "A cornerstone of that promised quality is the company's culinary talent.

"Participation in the Peixe Em Lisboa festival perfectly marries respect for local culture and culinary expertise; it promulgates the brand's commitment to offering only the best in fine dining, not only in Lisbon, but across all its properties," he said. "Participation in an event so unique to the local gastro-culture also serves promote the individual identity of each Four Seasons property with regard to its culinary expertise. Chef Meynard's recognition as a top talent in local cuisine suggests the brand's other properties would offer dining of equal quality unique to each location."