

PRESTIGE

THE MAGAZINE FROM
SODEXO SPORTS & LEISURE

AUTUMN/WINTER 2015

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EAST TO HEATHROW'S TERMINAL 2

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PRESTIGE

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FAREWELL

As we come to the end of 2015, I am delighted that Sodexo Sports & Leisure has continued to perform strongly and delivered service excellence for our clients and customers.

Our teams have produced many magic moments in 2015; from the venues we represent with sales and marketing support, event management and of course food service, to the aviation lounges we run globally.

We now have over 45 venues in our Prestige Venues & Events portfolio, providing a wide range of exciting spaces and places to hold a conference, celebration or meeting. The launch of the Enquiry Hub in 2014 has given event bookers a one-stop-shop to make finding that ideal venue easier and simpler. Our major events business now covers many of the UK's most famous sporting and cultural fixtures; RHS Chelsea Flower Show, RHS Hampton Court Flower Show, the Henley Royal Regatta, Royal Ascot, The Open and Rugby World Cup 2015 (through Rugby Travel & Hospitality), our event teams are able to manage a busy calendar, whilst maintaining the highest quality delivery.

The aviation portfolio continues to go from strength to strength and as pioneers in global lounge management, we are proud to be consolidating our reach internationally, building on the solid relationships created with great companies such as Virgin Atlantic, United Airlines and Emirates.

Looking further back over my tenure as CEO for Sports & Leisure UK&I, it has been a period for which I feel immensely proud. I have many fond memories across the



whole business, too numerous to mention here. As I leave this role, I take with me some great experiences and ideas, which I'm certain will be used in my new role as COO for Sodexo's Global Events.

I wish you all the best of luck for 2016 and I look forward to working with you on some exciting global events in the future!

Chris John
Chief Operating Officer, Global Events

WELCOME

Firstly, I would like to say a big 'hello' to everyone. My name is Chris Bray and I am privileged to have been given the opportunity to become the Chief Executive Officer for Sodexo Sports & Leisure here in the UK and Ireland. I come in at an exciting time in our company's journey. We are now part of a global segment and with that comes fantastic opportunities to get closer to clients, share global best practice and deliver unique experiences for everyone who attends our venues or events.

I am passionate about Sodexo, having enjoyed almost 10 years in senior positions in the company. During this time I have been lucky to work in 3 segments and have met some fantastic people. For the last 18 months I have been working as the Divisional Director for our Corporate Services business, having spent 3 years in Cyprus as Managing Director and 5 years as the Retail Director for our Defence business. Sodexo is a unique business driven by unique people all over the world. I am always humbled to see their endless energy, enthusiasm and creativity and it is these qualities that make this such an exciting place to be.

I hope you enjoy this issue of Prestige magazine to see what we have been up to over the summer season and to get an idea of our exciting plans for next year. From the investment we put into our teams through the Be More Than a Spectator recruitment and training programme, to the challenges in launching and mobilising an airport lounge almost 6,000 miles away for Virgin Atlantic, we don't shy away from amazing opportunities. Make sure you don't miss the article on our international visitor attractions such as the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago and the Puy du Fou

in France. You can also read more about those closer to home such as the Tyne and Wear Archive Museums in Newcastle and also Headingley Carnegie Stadium which has seen huge success in 2015 with the Leeds Rhinos.

As always, summer major events are of particular importance to Sodexo and I hope the feature on Hampton Court Palace Flower Show takes you back to much warmer days. If you need something to whet your appetite, see how we keep track of the latest food trends with our food tour report which took in some of the hottest spots to eat in London.

It's another packed issue of Prestige, reflecting what has been a hectic and thrilling year for Sodexo. I'm looking forward to many more such moments and what the business has in store for 2016

Chris Bray
CEO, Sports & Leisure, UK & I



A DAY ON THE RIVER

On the hottest day recorded throughout the whole of 2015, crews and spectators alike gathered for the annual spectacle that is the Royal Henley Regatta. With ladies in their finery and crews in club dress, the cool breeze coming off the water and chilled refreshments from the Sodexo-run hospitality tents kept everyone in the high spirits for which the event is internationally renowned.

ATTENTION TO DETAIL

At a globally observed sporting event such as The Open – where the focus is well and truly on the golf – it's sometimes easy to forget the many tiny details which must be attended to if the championship is to run smoothly. One such detail involves the use of beautiful birds of prey, employed to ward off nuisance birds such as seagulls and pigeons from the hospitality areas.



WORTH A TRY

THIS AUTUMN SAW RUGBY WORLD CUP 2015 TAKE PLACE IN SOME OF ENGLAND'S MOST IMPRESSIVE STADIA, CULMINATING IN NEW ZEALAND LIFTING THE TREASURED WEBB ELLIS CUP AT TWICKENHAM, THE HOME OF ENGLISH RUGBY



To all outside appearances, the eagerly-anticipated Rugby World Cup 2015, made up of 48 matches and played at 13 different stadiums, was a roaring success. However occasions like these do not happen by magic – coordinating the hospitality for this major event was Rugby Travel & Hospitality, the official hospitality provider for Rugby World Cup 2015 who has extensive experience, previously delivering successful, award-winning programmes for Rugby World Cup in 2007 and 2011.

For Rugby World Cup 2015, Rugby Travel & Hospitality had exclusive rights to manage and operate ticket inclusive hospitality packages for the tournament. Within these rights it received an allocation for tickets to use in ticket inclusive hospitality packages, permission to use Rugby World Cup 2015 branding, and received exclusive access to space in close proximity to match venues.

So what is behind the design of these exclusive and exciting experiences? What goes into picking the right elements for a package and creating an amazing space in which to enjoy rugby at its best?

To start, Rugby Travel & Hospitality conducted a six-month research project in order to gauge the UK hospitality requirements, and following this design commenced on each hospitality package.

By incorporating research at the earliest stage, the packages were highly tuned to the needs and expectations of the market. This included a price range with tiered options, formal or informal dining, a choice of experiences and entertainment and even branding options for large corporate purchases. A blend of private and shared hospitality experiences were created to cater for the more traditional buyers and also

The pavilion was designed to be a vibrant hospitality experience with guest speakers

those after something more innovative in the market.

Most of the stadia across England and Wales hosting Rugby World Cup 2015 matches already boasted impressive hospitality areas such as boxes and bars. However Twickenham, as the stadium to host the Final and also home of English rugby, required something special. The Champions Park, Webb Ellis



Suites and Twickenham Pavilion were three purpose built yet temporary structures located adjacent to the stadium, within the Tournament ticketed perimeter and designed to provide distinctly different hospitality options.

The Webb Ellis Suites offered a private restaurant for up to 250 guests and also



private chalet-style hospitality hosting 30 guests, perfect for those looking for a more intimate setting for a group and also offering the chance to brand the suite with their logo and graphics. Champions Park provided four themed restaurants accommodating 2,000 guests and offering a more traditional catering experience with three course dining, whereas the Twickenham Pavilion was the largest structure, holding 3,000 guests. The pavilion was designed to be a vibrant hospitality experience with guest speakers, video highlights packages and unique entertainment and interactive games for guests to enjoy. There was also a choice of informal dining with buffet-style bowl food served from a variety of themed food stations, or private tables of 10 in a raised mezzanine restaurant level which offered three course fine dining. All three



temporary structures at Twickenham were located directly outside the stadium, meaning guests only had a few metres to walk to take their places in their category A seats.

With the guest experience packages designed, it was time to promote them, creating integrated marketing campaigns using multiple channels from digital and social, high end sales events with celebrity guest speakers and PR, direct mail and social media. As the official provider of Rugby World Cup 2015 Hospitality, Rugby Travel & Hospitality was well positioned as the place to buy packages and the incorporation of official Rugby World Cup 2015 branding meant the association with the event was very strong and effective. The website was the lynchpin for converting initial leads. With more than a million unique visits, and 10% of all sales coming through online it meant the buying process was as simple and as easy as possible.

Other routes to market included a direct sales team, venue agents, travel agents and even French sales agents. Direct sales were the strongest channel with over 85% of all sales being driven by the sales and marketing teams. All in all, over 10,000 leads came through email and phone and hospitality was purchased from 84 countries, showing the incredible reach of

the event as an international spectacle. Further digital facilities for bookers included a client services portal that hospitality bookers could log in to to manage their booking, providing them with tailored, personalised information and giving them the details they needed at their fingertips. Catering information and table plans were stored for over 90,000 hospitality clients – a huge logistical exercise neatly managed through a bespoke web portal that controlled ticket allocation and sales reporting. With 620 different types of hospitality accreditation, it was also Rugby Travel & Hospitality's role to allocate, print and despatch these impressive packs in time for each match.

Twickenham Pavilion was the largest structure, holding 3,000 guests.

Coming back to the hospitality spaces, once the design of the structures was finalised and compliance with local authority regulations completed, the 12 week build programme commenced, with over 500 workers on site during construction. The build was completed one week before the opening ceremony, and the whole event has been widely acknowledged as the highlight of the British sporting calendar in 2015, and as the best Rugby World Cup in history.

Rugby Travel & Hospitality will already be planning for the next one in another four years when they will do this all over again in Japan.

A CHRISTMAS CRACKER

WHETHER IT'S A TRADITIONAL EVENT YOU'RE AFTER THIS CHRISTMAS, OR SOMETHING WITH QUIRKY, CONTEMPORARY FLAIR, SODEXO'S DIVERSE PORTFOLIO OF VENUES UP AND DOWN THE COUNTRY IS SURE TO HAVE THE PERFECT SETTING FOR EVERY FESTIVE GATHERING.



KNEBORTH HOUSE



NEWCASTLE UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB



EDINBURGH CORN EXCHANGE



CALEDONIAN HALL, ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH



With festive party planning now well underway, event bookers everywhere are feeling the Christmas season upon us. Thank goodness for the UK-wide venue and events experts at Sodexo, then, who'll be offering a helping hand to event organisers this year by delivering stress-free Christmas party experiences up and down the country.

Armed with over 50 unique venues and events throughout the UK and celebration ideas to suit all budgets, the company aims to capture the charm of Christmas while alleviating booking stress, sending out their very own virtual 'Christmas cracker' to event organisers. Inside the cracker is a digital brochure containing a full run-down of this year's venues and offers, hand-picked from right across the Sodexo portfolio.

Among the options are The Crystal – East London's newest landmark and a glittering venue set to be transformed

into a Bavarian winter market offering food, drink and entertainment – and Bateaux London, the original Thames dining cruise experience, which treats guests to a festive cruise through the heart of London while they enjoy a three-course festive menu and entertainment from a live band.

Then of course there's beautiful Knebworth House with its 500 years of history, atmospheric Cobbold barns and giant star clothed marquee; perfect for any Christmas party, with Sodexo transforming the marquee into an '80s-themed party night for up to 400 people.

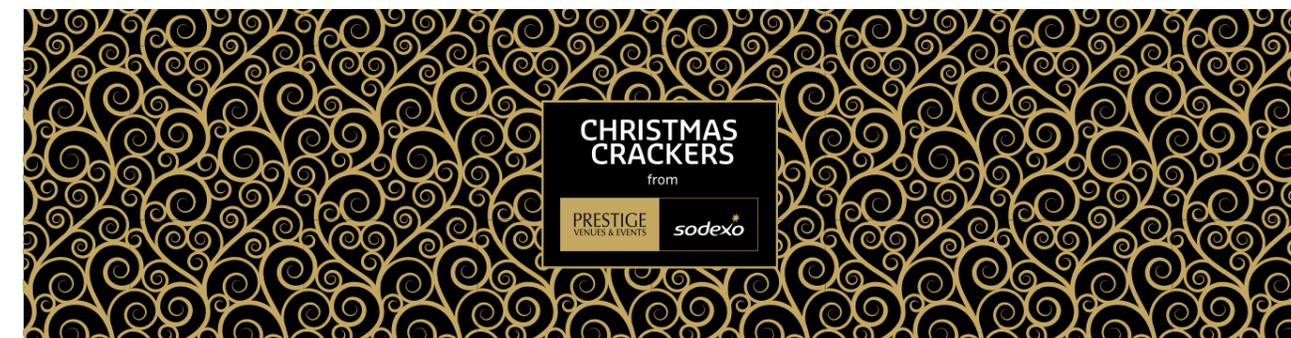
For those looking for something even more unusual, there's the 'Nights to Remember' programme of parties and disco nights at Brighton's Amex Stadium (home to Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club) – or, for fans of carnival, there's a series of festive parties with dancing and dining to a multi-coloured



ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH

backdrop of fairground attractions (from sideshows and stalls to popcorn and candy floss stands, and even a chance to meet Santa Claus) at Newcastle United's St James' Park. Or, if you'd like to add a touch of natural beauty to your event, there's the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh where, as Scotland's Year of Food and Drink draws to a close, guests can enjoy a Christmas lunch at The Gateway Restaurant, bespoke evening party or fabulous Hogmanay dinner dance.

And as an added bonus, this year Sodexo are even entering every Christmas booking enquiry into a prize draw, offering each the chance 'pull a cracker' with Prestige Venues & Events to win one of a raft of Christmas surprises, from match day hospitality or afternoon tea, to museum tours and even a dinner cruise on the River Thames. Suffice to say, this festive season looks certain to be merry and bright – a cracking Christmas.



ROLL UP, ROLL UP!

WITH FRANCE'S PUY DU FOU, AND AMERICA'S RENOWNED SHEDD AQUARIUM AND ZOO ATLANTA AMONGST SODEXO'S GLOBAL PORTFOLIO OF ZOOS AND ATTRACTIONS, THE LOGISTICS OF HOSPITALITY HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE COLOURFUL

When it comes to huge, world-class visitor attractions, a park, zoo or aquarium is only as good as the service it provides – so it goes without saying that, when Sodexo is involved, the standards are as high as the service is seamless.

At Chicago's Shedd Aquarium, for example, clients can see the venue perfectly adapted to host a whole range of private events, including corporate cocktail receptions, plated dinners, strolling events, award presentations, galas, meetings, weddings, receptions and not-for-profit events. The space is equipped to host anywhere from 35 to 1,200 guests, and every event has full access to the beautiful aquarium in all its splendour, including amazing animals ranging from beluga whales and pacific white-sided dolphins to sea otters and sting rays, plus sweeping views of the city and classic Beaux-Arts Chicago architecture.

Sodexo conducts all catering on-site at the Shedd Aquarium, allowing it to offer a personalised service for each client, meaning that event guests are able to experience classic dishes and all the newest trends in catering during their visit. In addition to this, the aquarium embraces a program called Right Bite which helps guests and clients to focus on sustainable seafood, choosing fish species that are bountiful and thus limiting the impact on the health of waters worldwide so as to create a fully ethical offering.

Throughout all events, guest experience team members are present to engage



SHEDD AQUARIUM

with guests, answer questions and provide information, fun facts and stories about all aspects of the aquarium and its inhabitants, while there's even a range of unique experiences which can be added in to give events an extra dose of excitement. These include a Caribbean reef dive, during which guests can hear one of the expert divers talk about the various animals in the reef while they are underwater in the exhibit, making guests feel as though they are actually part of the action. For events such as weddings, the diver can even wear a customised T-shirt over his or her wetsuit that is provided by the client and depicts a relevant image or logo. In the past, wedding parties have provided shirts of the university where the couple met and logos of their favourite sports teams, all helping to give the couple another opportunity to add yet another personal touch to their special day. Where food is concerned, Sodexo



endeavours to reflect the collection at the aquarium, connecting guests to the living world by engaging, inspiring, entertaining and informing in order to provide a truly once in a lifetime experience. Clients' requests can range from simple, to classic or unique, with some requesting that their guests experience Chicago through the views of the skyline and with food items such as Chicago-style hot dog carts for



SHEDD AQUARIUM

that everything was done to the highest possible standards and that each guest felt individually catered for.

While hiring the entire site as a venue in itself is an option, there are also over a dozen unique indoor and outdoor event spaces within the zoo which can be hired individually, including the Coca-Cola World Studio, the Chinese Plaza and Panda Veranda, the Twiga Terrace (or giraffe deck where you can host an event alongside the animals) and Publix Party Pavilion, not to mention the impressive Ford Pavilion, a 16,000 square foot tent that can host up to 1,000 guests, popular for dinner events and frequently filled with such activation points as bouncy castles, face painters, DJs and other forms of entertainment.

The zoo is open 364 days a year, so the Sodexo team must also be working alongside the client during that time to ensure business success. The busiest time for the zoo is spring and autumn, though attendance constantly exhibits peaks and troughs which consequently require the staffing levels to flex accordingly. In order to deal with these fluctuations, Sodexo proactively anticipates customer demand and ensure stocks are full, with general managers making sure that their workforces are trained and that there is a good mix of all generations to take advantage of the flexible working set up (many of the roles are ideal for students, for example, who like being able to fit the job around their lifestyle).

"Corporate bookings make up about 75 per cent of the revenue for events, while parties and weddings make up about 25 per cent," explains general manager Jason Hadley. "Corporate bookers like the unique experience for their staff, particularly as it makes a much more interesting venue than a hotel. We also

late night snacks, while others are eager to inject an element of fun into their event experience, requesting such food offerings as dippin' dots ice cream stations, milk and cookie shooters or a dessert served in a customised chocolate aquarium shell.

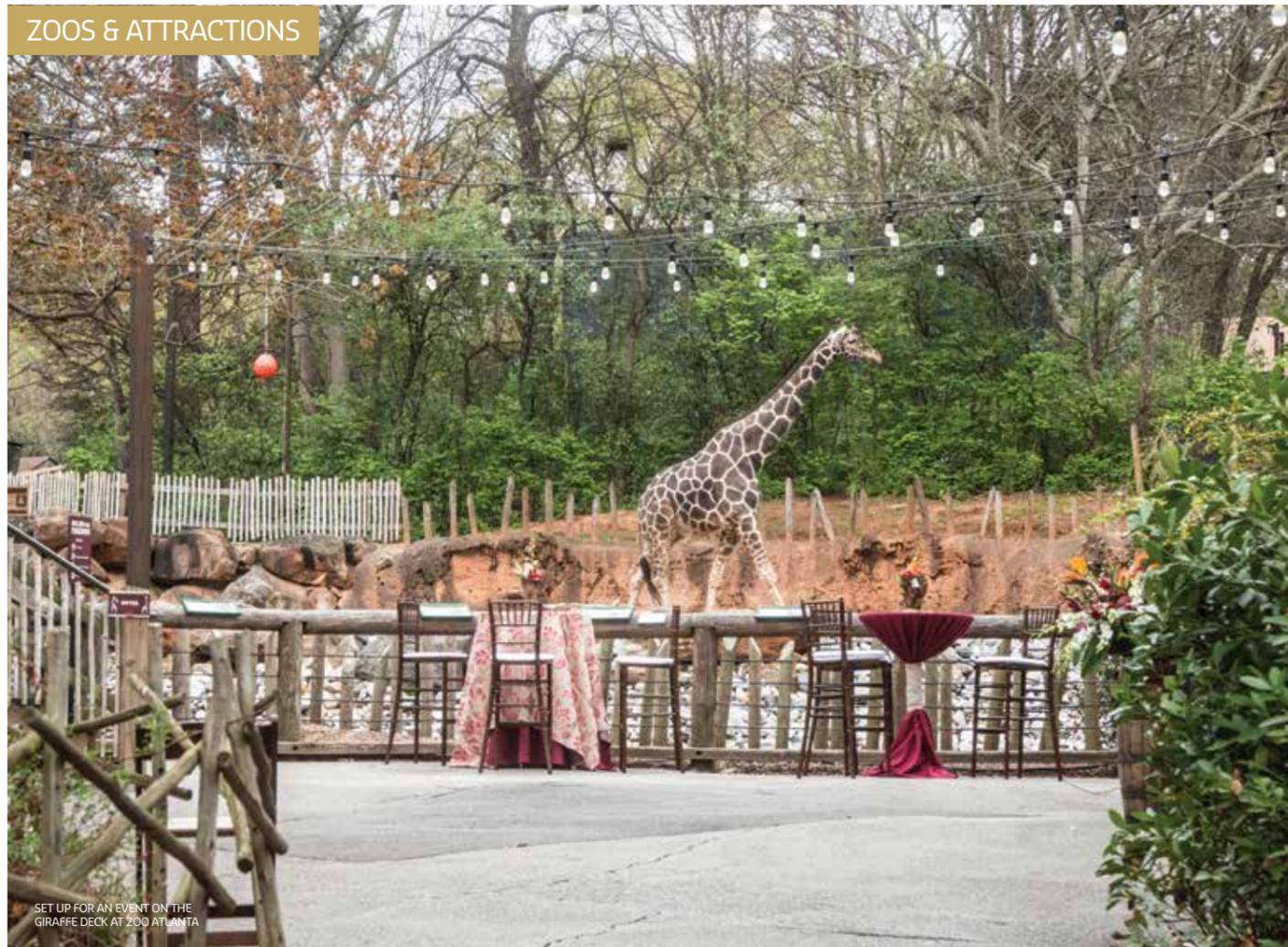
Providing an equally unique venue is the Zoo Atlanta, an internationally renowned animal park – and one of only four in the US currently housing giant pandas – at which Sodexo provides all food and service for zoo visitors, including five different outlets, two cafés and three kiosks with rotating menus throughout the year. Sodexo's involvement is tirelessly orchestrated by a team of sales, marketing and event management professionals who work closely with the zoo to ensure their

site is as commercially successful as possible and that the customer experience is ultimately enhanced by Sodexo's contribution.

The zoo can also be used as a conference or events venue, having previously hosted

Sodexo conducts all catering on-site at the Shedd Aquarium, allowing it to offer a personalised service for each client.

everything from family reunions and weddings to corporate and social events, with the capability to host from 20 to 10,000 guests. A recent community event intended to celebrate the volunteer projects that took place for Hands on Atlanta Day saw the entire venue hired for the evening by event sponsor Mercedes-Benz. The enormous undertaking involved the hosting of 4,000 guests at the site and even required the zoo to close early in order to accommodate the exact specifications of the client, ensuring



SET UP FOR AN EVENT ON THE GIRAFFE DECK AT ZOO ATLANTA

get lots of family fun days with picnics in the pavilion, and there are kids parties hosted there too, running the full range right from small, intimate gatherings to full-blown extravagant affairs."

One of the most impressive and unusual venues in Sodexo's portfolio of attractions is undoubtedly the Puy du Fou historical amusement park in the Vendée region of western France. Bringing in more than two million visitors every year and covering an enormous 110 acres, the park is the second most popular attraction in all of France and allows visitors to

travel through different time periods by watching historic shows and passing through reconstructed sites. Amongst these are the five 'grand shows', each lasting around half an hour; Triumph's Sign (recreating Roman games in Gaul), Richelieu's Musketeer (musketeers performing sword fights), The Vikings (a Viking longship attacking a fortress), The Secret of the Lance (set in a Medieval castle) and The Phantom Birds' Dance (birds of prey flying amongst ruins).

Added to this are a whole host of smaller shows and activities, including

a musical puppet show, a retelling of the Excalibur story, a water ballet, a plant maze filled with moving statues, a performance by traditional mechanised musicians, and an arts and crafts village in which guests can see dozens of craftspeople who create the authentic materials for the park and specialise in 22 different trades.

There are also night-time shows, including the largest in the world – Cinéscénie – an incredible super-production lasting almost two hours and performed by 1,200 volunteer actors to



ZOO ATLANTA



PUY DU FOU

There are also night-time shows, including the largest in the world – Cinéscénie – an incredible super-production lasting almost two hours and performed by 1,200 volunteer actors to an audience of 14,000.

an audience of 14,000, and The Organs of Fire - A Daydream, which sets breathtaking eruptions of fire and water to the music of Mozart, Delerue, Bach and Bizet.

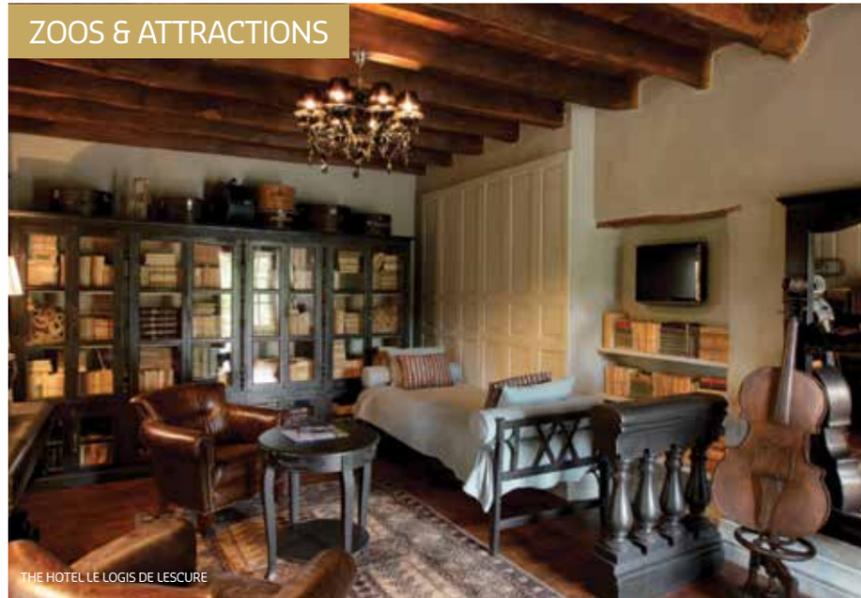
The park is also home to four themed hotels – The Gallo Roman Villa, The Field of the Cloth of Gold, Clovis Island and Hotel Le Logis de Lescure – all of which are located in the Night-Time City area, as well as more than 20 catering outlets, including the 11 main restaurants where visitors can enjoy a range of themes, from Renaissance to the Roman Empire and even Medieval. In 2014, the park was extended, investing a further €23.7 million to establish a new

hotel, restaurant, 80,000 m² Renaissance world and the latest Grand Park show; The Renaissance of the Château.

The park dates from 1977, created when Philippe de Villiers, a 27 year-old student (now a French politician) and Jean Saint Bris, a young creator of son et lumière shows in the Loire Valley, decided to create an original show named the Cinéscénie in the ruins of an old renaissance castle. The show soon began to gain attention and before long had grown into a huge nationally-acclaimed spectacular, with the Grand Park of the Puy du Fou opening near the Cinéscénie in 1989 and since producing



DINING IN THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD RESTAURANT



THE HOTEL LE LOGIS DE LESCUR



THE CINÉSCÉNIE SPECTACULAR SHOW

its own micro-industry of actors, prop-makers and trainers for the featured horse riding and sword fighting.

Sodexo has been present at Puy du Fou since 1991, now providing all catering and hospitality services, laundry services, creation and management of costumes, delivery and maintenance throughout the park, including all cleaning services for Sodexo-run restaurants, hotels and gifts shops. There are 35 permanent employees at the park, a number which increases to more than 470 in high season, many of whom are involved in the running of the 11 themed restaurants, eight snack outlets and four hotels (including 400 rooms and four suites).

The catering team provides more than 20,000 meals to visitors each day, including an incredible 300,000 sandwiches each year, and has established a production centre in order to most efficiently cope with the high and constant demand. For two years, Fabrice Prochasson, licenses manager at Lenôtre and culinary adviser at Sodexo Sports & Leisure, has been helping the catering teams to create new menus and new recipes which complement the ambiance of each restaurant.

As is the case at the Shedd Aquarium and Zoo Atlanta, Sodexo's involvement at Puy du Fou has long been both crucial to its smooth running and enormously successful – even contributing to the park

receiving the Applause Award from the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) in 2014, an award for which they were singled out by a jury from amongst an incredible 700 parks internationally.

The park also boasts statistics specifying that 98% of visitors were happy or very happy with their visit, while the Shedd Aquarium and Zoo Atlanta regularly receive detailed letters or emails of gratitude from guests who have hosted or attended events there. With feedback of this kind so hugely dependent upon the quality of catering and hospitality services, it seems that Sodexo's reputation for efficiency and high standards is as well-deserved as ever.



A TASTE OF THE ORIENT

AS SINGAPORE AIRLINE'S BRAND NEW SILVERKRIS LOUNGE OPENS ITS DOORS AT HEATHROW'S TERMINAL 2, SODEXO ARE ON HAND TO MAKE SURE THE SERVICE PROVIDED TO ITS GUESTS IN TRANSIT IS FIRST CLASS ALL THE WAY

This year saw the brand new SilverKris Singapore Airlines lounge open its doors at Heathrow's Terminal 2, with Sodexo delivering hospitality, catering, housekeeping and front of house services to its approximately 300 first and business class passengers every day. The three-year contract began at the start of April 2015, and was awarded to Sodexo in recognition of its reputation for quality airport lounge services and honest approach to running the business, as Phillip Parker, catering and premium services executive for Singapore Airlines, explained.

"We went through a major tender exercise about 18 months ago, and we wanted to get a new fresh approach to the lounge, and Sodexo basically offered us everything that we wanted." He added, "and we're very pleased with them – although the lounge opened a few months late, in April of this year, they've really proved to us that we made the best choice. It has a very good portfolio, outside and inside the airline industry, and it delivers the hospitality for

Ascot, amongst many other venues, plus of course we'd seen what it is like in other lounges that it also services at Heathrow. We took a very broad approach and we wanted something different for our new lounge, which has gone down really well."

Having been at Singapore Airlines for 36 years, Phillip is well aware that caring, pleasant companies are something of a rarity and well worth the loyalty they inspire, so he's keen to make sure that the Sodexo employees he meets know how fortunate they are.

"We find that [Sodexo] is very responsive, very obliging, very helpful, and they're a nice bunch of people," he said. "I often say to people who work for them 'You're working for a very nice company', because that's how they come across. They're very personable, and that makes a big difference – having been with Singapore Airlines

for so long, I know that a good company is one you stay with. And I think, from what I've seen and heard, people who work for Sodexo should really consider themselves very fortunate."

Our new SilverKris lounge at Heathrow is a huge investment for us and brings our 'home away from home' concept to the UK for the first time.

But it isn't only Sodexo's treatment of its employees that has impressed Phillip and the Singapore Airlines team at the SilverKris lounge. Since all airlines have such different requirements when it comes to operating lounges, he's been amazed at how readily the company

is able to moderate and adapt to the airline's needs, saying that "thus far we're very happy with Sodexo and we're looking forward to a long-standing relationship with them."

As with any partnership, cooperation is a two way street and – unsurprisingly – it seems the feeling is more than mutual.



ALAN PENONE AND HIS TEAM

JOHN HOLLAND-KAYE, MS FOO CHI HSIA AND WILSON YOUNG

PHILLIP PARKER AND SHARMILA BHAMBHANI

Richard Cripps, operations director for Sodexo's airport lounge services, said, "Sodexo is very proud of our new partnership with Singapore Airlines, and this is a fantastic feather in my team's cap for all their hard work and consistent delivery of excellent service across all our aviation contracts. We believe in an open and honest relationship with our clients, working alongside them to deliver the best possible food and service quality to their passengers."

Wilson Yong, general manager for Singapore Airlines in the UK and Ireland,



added, "Our new SilverKris Lounge at Heathrow is a huge investment for us and brings our 'home away from home' concept to the UK for the first time. With such a change, it was hugely important to work with the right partner and we are delighted to have found that in Sodexo. We very much look forward to working with them to surprise and delight our customers over the years ahead."

Nevertheless, while a mutual respect and synchronicity is undoubtedly vital to an amicable partnership, it is of course the day-to-day running of the lounge and the response of passengers which most profoundly dictates its success. When it comes to the nuts and bolts of the new lounge, nobody knows the importance of these finer details better than Sharmila Bhambhani, customer services officer at Singapore Airlines, and the SilverKris lounge's head chef, Sodexo's own Alan Penone.

"In our previous lounge we had lots of challenges," Sharmila explained, "but as

our new service partner, Sodexo has done such a fantastic job, it has been a great working partner and it has just transformed everything for us. The new lounge as a whole is a very exciting development – particularly as it means that we get to interact with not only Singapore lounge passengers, but also a variety of Star Alliance passengers. There are 28 Star Alliance carriers under one roof now, so you get people from different walks of life and it's a very diverse environment which is really interesting to work in. And obviously it's fantastic to work in a brand new lounge, and very satisfying to see

it all finally come together. I actually watched it from the time it was going under construction, about a year and a half ago when the whole place looked like a football field, and now it's just transformed into something amazing."

As the only Asian lounge in the entire terminal, the SilverKris lounge has catered specifically for its Asian passengers by creating a menu bursting with Singaporean signature dishes, as well as providing a general ambience

We took a very broad approach and we wanted something different for our new lounge, which has gone down really well.

THE OFFICIAL LOUNGE LAUNCH

Thursday 17 September saw a rather glamorous gathering airside at Heathrow's Terminal 2, with the new Singapore Airlines SilverKris Lounge celebrating its official opening with many of the airline's most esteemed VIP customers, as well as key representatives from the airline and Sodexo. Guests were welcomed with Champagne on arrival, proffered by smartly dressed lounge staff, while the kitchen buzzed with activity as head chef Alan Penone and his team created tray after tray of delicious Singaporean cuisine-inspired canapés, including miniature samosas, beef, lamb and chicken satays and tasty macarons.

As the Champagne and specially-created Singapore Slings flowed, a presentation was given which included insightful speeches from both the High Commissioner for Singapore, Ms Foo Chi Hsia, and John Holland-Kaye, CEO of Heathrow Airport, before a huge commemorative cake – decorated with the words 'SilverKris Lounge – your home away from home' – was cut and distributed to the guests.

A duo of violinists serenaded the group, while a representative of chocolatiers Charbonnel et Walker offered guests Champagne truffles. Contemporary homeware and gifts brand Culinary Concepts, which produces many of the beautiful decorative pieces that give the lounge its air of contemporary charm, conducted a wine tasting in the first class gallery. Meanwhile, Phillip Parker, catering and premium services executive for Singapore Airlines, Wilson Yong, General Manager for Singapore Airlines in the UK and Ireland, and Sharmila Bhambhani, Customer Services Officer at Singapore Airlines, spoke to guests, gleaned welcome feedback and further explained the various features of the lounge and how it will operate.



beautiful and calming – with the lovely background music and all the stunning orchids that remind you of Singapore it really makes people feel comfortable."

Head chef Alan Penone shares Sharmila's sentiment, coupled with an eagerness to tackle the challenge of a new kitchen and cuisine.

"It's still early days as we're only a few weeks in," he explains, "but I can say already that I'm very happy with how it's going. I've worked for Sodexo now for two and a half years, but this is the first time that I've worked in aviation, so this has so far been a great challenge for me because everything's new. I really want to gain more skills in the oriental kitchen, and my team here includes a couple of guys that are Singaporean and Filipino, so I'm already learning from them. We've also been able to be very creative with the food and from now my priorities are to make sure that all the guys in the kitchen are happy, to set up the kitchen and get organised, and ensure that the food we're delivering is of a very high quality. We have to provide a totally seamless service, so organisation is very, very important."

So far feedback from guests has been overwhelmingly positive, so it seems that the SilverKris Lounge has well and truly started as it means to go on – delivering the top-class service which Singapore Airlines' passengers and Sodexo's partners have come to expect, and making many a long haul journey all the more enjoyable.

designed to help guests feel that they are in a home away from home through the use of far eastern design touches, and even an ice cream inspired by the Singapore Sling.

The lounge also boasts a cosy gallery space in which a gourmet popcorn pop-up event was recently held, soon to be followed by another from chocolatiers Charbonnel et Walker and also a cheese and wine event later in the year, while first class passengers who'd prefer not to make the long walk to the lounge from the other end of the terminal can be picked up by their very own private buggy service.

"I've been with Singapore Airlines for over 20 years now, with the Singapore lounges for 16 years, and for the last two years I've been heading the department," Sharmila said, "and I'm really enjoying it, it's really a pleasure to work here. The passengers are really very, very nice, and the lounge is so



CALIFORNIA CONNECTION

WITH 10 CLUBHOUSES AND 1 ARRIVALS LOUNGE ACROSS THE WORLD, FROM JOHANNESBURG AND LONDON, TO HONG KONG AND NEW YORK, VIRGIN ATLANTIC IS THE BUSINESS WHICH LAUNCHED RICHARD BRANSON'S IMPRESSIVE EMPIRE, SYNONYMOUS WITH INNOVATION, AMAZING SERVICE, PERSONAL TOUCHES AND ITS OWN BRAND OF COOL – AND ITS HOSPITALITY OFFERING IS NO EXCEPTION

As the strategic global Clubhouse management partner for Virgin Atlantic, Sodexo understands the importance of

upholding the reputation of such a well-known and respected brand. This is only possible by closely aligning its approach with the Virgin way of doing things. Outsourcing such a key role as lounge management requires a robust and trustworthy relationship, with open and honest communication. After all, a brand is only as strong as the service delivered under it.

As one of the first models of its kind in the aviation world, Sodexo has enjoyed

a global airport Clubhouse contract with Virgin Atlantic since 2009 which spans those destinations already mentioned,

As one of the trendiest brands in the world, Virgin were keenly involved in looking into partnerships with the coolest local bars and restaurants.

as well as San Francisco, Manchester, Newark, Boston and Washington; the latest addition to the Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse family for Sodexo is Los Angeles. A major route for the airline with two flights daily to the 'City of Angels', it was time for Virgin

Atlantic to open a Clubhouse for their Upper Class passengers flying from LA to London.

Nigel Scott, global operations director for Sodexo's aviation business, was charged with leading the project, working

alongside the team at Virgin Atlantic to set up the LA lounge, with tasks ranging from setting up a recruitment strategy to employ 24 staff, developing a menu that reflects the healthy LA lifestyle, and also rolling out a customer service programme to ensure all staff were on brand both in their appearance and behaviour. "We worked to a robust mobilisation plan that kept everyone on track, which was imperative given the geographical distance between London and Los Angeles".

Nigel explained, "Virgin wants customers to feel at home. Its clubhouses are very much a destination in themselves, not just somewhere to wait for a flight. It was a great opportunity to work closely with



our client at Virgin Atlantic on the LA Clubhouse and be involved from the very start. We looked at everything from the kitchen spec, bar design, staffing and the food and beverage concepts to reflect the very best of the Virgin brand, but with a Californian twist."

With a launch deadline of 28th April 2015, the Sodexo team responded to the challenge and got to work on the pre-opening plan. Collaborating with key Virgin Atlantic colleagues meant their vision and approach was always on brand, showcasing the best of both companies' strengths. Nigel said, "We received great support from Mike Gillespie, Vice President Operations, Sean Donlon, district manager and Lloyd Queen, HR manager who masterminded

a three day recruitment fair interviewing over 200 candidates. Day three involved a joint Sodexo / Virgin collaborative short list interview to ensure we got the right mix of team that had the X-Factor." Nigel added, "The biggest challenge was mobilisation due to the time difference. Communication was key with our LA Sodexo team, however our commitment to the global lounge management model allows us to partner with local Sodexo teams to deliver consistent, yet internationally coordinated service."

Airports are complex for a number of reasons but especially for logistics concerning delivery and supply of product through security to airside. Sodexo's West Coast executive development chef Gustavo Vega worked with John



VIRGIN LOUNGE

We worked to a robust mobilisation plan that kept everyone on track which was imperative given the geographical distance between London and Los Angeles.

Marks, Sodexo's global food and beverage development manager based in the UK, to set up suppliers and delivery slots. Liaising with the Port Authority and obtaining the required badges and licenses were all a part of satisfying the authorities and ensuring deliveries for launch.

Menu development was obviously a key focus, and based on research conducted in partnership with Virgin, it was decided that the food served in the LA Clubhouse should predominantly have a healthy eating theme, with a few innovative treats – think Miso doughnuts with honey caramel, or a hearty seared ahi tuna burger with wasabi mayonnaise – for those comfort food aficionados. As the majority of travellers with Virgin Atlantic are Brits,

it is always important for Virgin to provide locally sourced produce on its menus but with a reassuring touch of home. Hence the extensive range of teas available, with 12 at the last count ranging from traditional English breakfast, to oriental options and iced variants, reflecting the local climate.

As one of the trendiest brands in the world, Virgin was keenly involved in looking into partnerships with the coolest local bars and restaurants. Mark Murphy, Virgin Atlantic's global food and beverage executive, supported by John Marks, linked up with Hinoki and the Bird – a very on-brand Pan-Asian restaurant in Los Angeles – to feature one starter, main and dessert along with signature cocktails. These dishes were included on the Clubhouse

menu highlighting the alignment between Virgin Atlantic customers and a trendy restaurant. A relationship was also struck up with The Juicery, aligning the healthy beverage offering to that of a company well known in LA for providing a range of freshly pressed fruit juices and smoothies.

Once the Sodexo and Virgin food development team had tried and tested the dishes for the launch menu, they presented them to the Virgin Atlantic board of directors for feedback and approval. At last a menu was agreed, and in order to ensure consistent and high quality dish delivery, each plate was photographed and specifications produced for the culinary team.

As the final details were confirmed, staff who were going to deliver on Virgin Atlantic expectations were hired, the product agreed and the fantastic Clubhouse environment created,

the next step was to ensure all team members were trained to the highest level.

Prior to launch, a full-on Virgin and Sodexo orientation was undertaken, which would see the entire front of house servers and bar mixologists flying over to New York to work alongside the Sodexo team in the JFK Clubhouse for two days. On returning to LA the team were engaged in a series of role-play activity days, playing the role of the customer and the server by ordering from the menu, giving all staff the opportunity to try the dishes and build their knowledge on taste, flavours and ingredients. To ensure the chefs understood the signature dishes from Hinoki and the Bird they attended a two day training session at the restaurant as did the mixologists to learn the cocktails. It was imperative that the quality of ingredients together with the presentation and taste of the signature dishes were as good as the offer in the restaurant. Having hand-picked all the staff,

Sodexo was confident it had the right calibre of employee that could deliver the Virgin Atlantic brand, ensuring the customer experience within the Clubhouse was as good as it gets. Virgin Atlantic brought key Clubhouse team members over from the UK who could impart their knowledge and experience to this new team. One of the tools apart from role play was the 'service excellence' training programme that was delivered by Graeme McKinley from Sodexo's UK learning & development team supported by Hannah Thirkettle from the Virgin Atlantic training team.

Before launch day there was a series of 'trial' days when a complete dress rehearsal was carried out in true Hollywood style. Invited guests were treated to a trial day to experience what was about to change the whole eating and service experience

at LAX airport. Guests from Hinoki and the Bird, The Juicery and a number of dignitaries from the airport were invited to taste dishes from the menu and cocktails from the bar.

Virgin want customers to feel at home. Their clubhouses are very much a destination in themselves, not just somewhere to wait for a flight.

Customers were excited from the first day to see the Clubhouse and all it had to offer, experiencing the true Virgin hospitality that they have come to expect from such a great and celebrated brand.

Client feedback has been amazing, and the LA lounge considered a great success, even surpassing their own high expectations. However Sodexo is not resting on its laurels and are working for accreditation from the Sustainable Restaurant Association, on an impressively international basis. There is also increasing interest in the global lounge management model, so the sky really is the limit for Sodexo in the aviation world.





SERVICE EXCELLENCE – A CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

The Service Excellence programme is a training and service delivery scheme used to ensure a consistently high level of service and was created in response to the opportunity to provide consistent, consolidated and superb service levels and to raise the bar for Sodexo clients. It also makes it easier to understand the service offer, packaging the service element of Sodexo's proposition and making it more tangible and easier to grasp.

The programme is supported by a comprehensive range of activities and guidelines called the Service Excellence Toolkit. This toolkit comprises:

- 26 interactive pre-written sessions (team talks) that are structured for the facilitator to make them easy to follow and cover a range of topics. This also includes a set of 'guest profile' cards (like personas) to help staff get inside the mind of the consumer. These sessions can be delivered in under 30 minutes
- On the Spot recognition cards which encourage managers to look out for and recognise great service
- A memory stick containing the full contents of the toolkit and also templates for managers to create their

own sessions and scenarios, ensuring the programme develops around their needs

- 31 scenario cards (linked to the sessions above) which help bring customer situations to life with role play and allow the team to explore the behaviours they would demonstrate in various interactions with customers

The scenario cards are largely written by on-site managers, engaging them in the Service Excellence development process and ensuring they are relevant to their staff. It is important to Sodexo that this programme is not something developed in isolation, but fed into by the teams, for the teams.

The Service Excellence programme is also adaptable to each client's specific needs, reflecting the unique challenges and characteristics of each site, team and customer type (the information above reflects the particular set up for the aviation clients).

The result is a programme which acts as an operational tool and also elevates the service proposition as a key differentiator. Roll out is in progress in a variety of aviation sites and also venues and events.

CLIENT COMMENTS

"At Virgin Atlantic we see Sodexo as an extension of the Virgin Atlantic family, and in order to work effectively and consistently to provide excellent customer service, we have to work as one team and understand each other. The training sessions that have been delivered to both VAA and Sodexo staff have really brought the two companies together. Making the sessions short, fun and informative has meant that the teams quickly got involved and engaged, and there has been overwhelmingly positive feedback." – Rebecca Creer, global spa and styling manager, Virgin Atlantic

"As one of the most recognisable brands in the world, Virgin Atlantic is always aware of the impact the customer experience has on brand perception. Sodexo's Service Excellence programme has been a great success and I have been really impressed with how Sodexo has rolled this out consistently in all our airport lounges globally. Its collaboration with us to develop a solution to suit the Virgin approach has been top notch and meant we were fully engaged throughout the process. Our people really enjoyed the training sessions and we know that happier staff lead to happier customers, so within Virgin Atlantic this is always the top priority." – Matt Callard, head of clubhouses at Virgin Atlantic Airways

The Sodexo team at the Los Angeles Virgin Atlantic Clubhouse have been acknowledged by the client for a 'Spirit of Sodexo' award. Nigel Scott, Marissa Moore and John Marks of Sodexo were particularly recognised for their outstanding performance in support of Team Spirit mission and values through their work supporting the successful opening of the LAX VA Clubhouse.



NIGEL SCOTT, MARISSA MOORE & JOHN MARKS

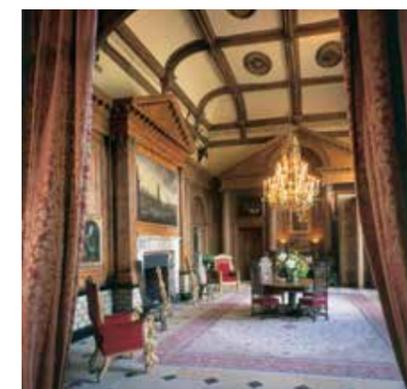
TOP TIPS FOR TIP TOP EVENTS

When you're tasked with running an event, whether it be a board meeting for 10 or a conference for 3'000 it can become an overwhelming logistical challenge. We asked the experts at Sodexo Prestige Venues & Events for their advice on how to ensure your event goes swimmingly.



"Get in early and let us help to avoid your own technology headaches. The classic pairing with a projector is still the most common complaint we tackle... turn off your company security protocols if you're using your own hardware."

ANDREW BOONE, DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER, AMEX COMMUNITY STADIUM, BRIGHTON



"Ask your venue for directions to the site which is usually more reliable than using the internet. Local knowledge is key for helping your guests find the venue and arrive unflustered."

KATY DOHERTY, KNEBWORTH HOUSE



TOP TIPS

"Think about using unusual venues. Stadia are great, particularly when they offer views of the pitch, and racecourses are beautiful settings with lovely scenery. Your delegates can often take advantage of site tours as well as copious car parking. The abundance of outside space can give opportunities for team building activities and outdoor pursuits."

TRACEY QUIN, SALES MANAGER, PERTH RACECOURSE



"Meetings always tend to start late, so opt for tea and coffee with something scrumptious to welcome your delegates for the first 15 minutes, allowing for those late comers."

JULIE HEPTON, APEX AND ATHENAEUM



"Investigate unusual packages incorporating aspects of the venue such as dinner in the Jockey's changing room at Ascot, or the boardroom at John Smith's Stadium or team building activity with club players at Headingley Carnegie Stadium."

STEPHANIE LEE, CENTRAL ENQUIRY HUB MANAGER



"If you're using a production company, it should supply a really clear plan and proposal signed off in advance so that everybody is really clear of timings and expectations. This must be accurate and continually tweaked and re-circulated to ensure everyone involved in your event has the same information."

TIM FURNIVAL, EVENT MANAGER, SODEXO PRESTIGE VENUES & EVENTS



"Provide as much detail as possible to the venue at the initial enquiry so it has all the information it needs for their event planner. This will ensure all details are captured and expectations on both sides are clear."

JANE THOMSON, HAMPDEN PARK STADIUM

CREATING A LEGACY



HOW DO YOU ATTRACT, RECRUIT, TRAIN AND MOBILISE A WORKFORCE OF THOUSANDS FOR A TASK LASTING ONLY A FEW WEEKS? FOR SODEXO THIS IS A SCENARIO BUT NOT A CHALLENGE. THANKS TO ITS 'BE MORE THAN A SPECTATOR PROGRAMME', IT HAS THE TOOLS NECESSARY TO QUICKLY RAMP UP RESOURCES TO CATER FOR AND DELIVER SOME OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST EVENTS

Originally conceived for the 2012 Olympics, Sodexo's 'Be More Than a Spectator' programme had clear objectives; to promote the scheme and drive at least 40,000 users to the online 'Be More Than' portal by March 2012, recruit almost 5,000 staff within five months, engage these staff and get them to fill out all the necessary forms and attend relevant training, and lastly to retain them for future events. The programme has been subsequently used for the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow 2014 and is also a permanent part of the Royal Ascot recruitment process since 2012.

Be More Than a Spectator uses a blend of marketing tools to attract new candidates, such as social media (Facebook, Twitter), advertising in local papers and also roadshows, all reaching out to prospective team members for Sodexo's major events. A user-friendly online portal allows candidates to formally apply and track their progress

through the recruitment process. Sodexo HR business partner Alexis Barclay and Ascot Academy business partner training manager Fleur Robilliard gave us an insight into how the programme works for recruitment at Ascot:

Alexis explained, "The recruitment process is similar to that used at the Olympics. Candidates are directed through the 'Be More Than' dedicated website whereby they register their interest in working with us, successful candidates are then contacted by the Ascot team and invited to an interview. Once they have secured their place on a recruitment day they attend a face-to-face interview with one of the team; during this session they are also given an overview of who Sodexo are and what we do at Ascot Racecourse. Upon successful completion of the interview, they are asked to

Through our extensive training programmes we can teach the key skills

complete the standardised paperwork and issued with details of the online training modules and Ascot Academy sessions. From this point they are required to complete all training online before attending an Ascot Academy session. Upon successful completion of the training programme, they will be offered their first shift to work at Ascot. "The process has become streamlined over the years and by inviting the candidates for a training session on site this not only up-skills them and prepares them for their shift but it allows us to conduct a familiarisation session. It removes the nervous feeling towards arriving at a venue they don't know for their first shift in a place they are unfamiliar with."

Owing to the scale of Sodexo's events and the quantity of staff needed, recruitment for the programme is based



on candidates' attitude rather than previous experience.

"A lot of our casual workforce have never worked in events before but they have something different to other candidates we see and they have the drive and commitment to successfully deliver the event they are part of," Alexis and Fleur explain. "Through our extensive training programmes we can teach the key skills such as how to open a bottle of wine, how to lay a table and how to serve/clear a table. However, we cannot teach attitude and behaviours. We can outline our expectations in terms of behaviour, but at

the end of the day it is each individual that makes our events successful."

So far approximately 7,000 recruits have come through the Be More Than a Spectator programme, with around 40% of the workforce made up of repeat candidates – a figure undoubtedly linked to the strong reward and recognition system in place. If a staff member is recognised for delivering service excellence at the Ascot Academy, for example, their manager will issue them with an On the Spot Card. This card will then get entered into a prize draw to win one of five great prizes, such as iPads, Kindles and shopping vouchers.

On receiving their first 'A' badge, the staff member will receive a silver 'A' pin, then if they get 10 On the Spot Cards for delivering service excellence, they will be issued with a gold 'A' badge indicating that they are a true ambassador of world class service.

The rewards structure – like the scheme as a whole – is a cornerstone of the Sodexo ethos of quality, allowing managers to better understand what they need to do to recognise staff for doing a great job, as well as motivating teams to maintain consistently high levels of customer service from the first guest to the very last each and every day.



OSMAN HERSI

I started working for Sodexo through Be More Than a Spectator during the London 2012 Olympic Games.

Never in my wildest dreams did it occur to me that I would end up working for a team that delivers the hospitality and public catering services to thousands of customers who come to watch games and attend events and functions.

My colleagues and I attended an interview at Sodexo's HQ in London, with the Be More Than a Spectator Team. After being accepted I went through a rigorous training course to improve my staffing engagement skills and learn more about Sodexo's

mission, values and expectations during events.

In the beginning I started off in the staffing team, where I dealt with the check in and out of our casual teams. This involved welcoming them to the event, issuing the correct uniforms on event days and ensuring our workers' personal belongings were kept safe during the event.

I later moved up in my role and was promoted to team leader on event days. This role gave me additional responsibilities, requiring me to make sure that my team was engaging with our workers and that the staffing operation was running smoothly.

By February 2013, I was offered a seasonal role for six months, as an administrator for the staffing team at one of our fixed venues. At the

end of this contract, I was excited to be offered a permanent position as a staffing coordinator at the same venue. My role mainly involves monitoring the Be More Than a Spectator inbox by responding to our worker's enquires, expressions of interest to work at our venues and also includes recruitment for events, training of casual workers and processing staff payroll.

Be More Than a Spectator has enabled me to grow my network, expand my skills and play a role in developing the Be More Than a Spectator experience for our current and future staff. I have learned and continue to learn a lot from the people that I have met within the industry, which has allowed me to gain quality skills both in the field and also in the office. Sodexo is a really exciting and fun place to work, and I enjoy coming to work each day!



SHINING LIKE SILVER



THIS SUMMER SAW SODEXO PROVIDE HOSPITALITY AT THE REVERED HAMPTON COURT PALACE FLOWER SHOW FOR THE SECOND YEAR RUNNING, DELIVERING FLAWLESS SERVICE AS NEATLY EXECUTED AS THE PERFECTLY MANICURED GARDENS

Despite the record-breaking July heat, this year's Hampton Court Palace Flower Show nevertheless started with a resounding bang, with the clear skies providing the perfect setting for the preview evening's much-anticipated firework display above the glorious palace. With sumptuous food and drink provided by Sodexo, guests marvelled at the spectacular light show and were treated to a jaw-dropping finale which saw the number 25 spelled out in the sky to commemorate the event's anniversary, all of it beautifully reflected in the Long Water.

Considering this extravaganza was only the opening act of this well-loved flower show, it's no surprise that guests' expectations were high. On the back of a hugely successful Chelsea Flower Show,

Sodexo was primed and ready to deliver superb hospitality to match the occasion.

The largest annual flower show in the world, each year Hampton Court Palace welcomes horticultural enthusiasts from around the globe, wowing them with a seven-day garden festival which this year showcased a mix of glorious show gardens, dazzling floral displays, and even opportunities to watch planting and country crafts in action.

At this unique event, Sodexo presented an all-encompassing catering offering from indulgent four-course dining experiences at the Allium restaurant to hand-crafted picnics for those who preferred al fresco dining. Overlooking the show gardens, palace and historic deer park, The Allium showcased fantastic

views across the floral festival amid stunning surroundings. The excitement of the preview evening, which took place on 29 June, was accompanied by a menu of antipasti and artisan breads, potted confit of Scottish salmon with cucumber crème fraiche and Angus beef fillet





with tortellini and gratin dauphinois; a thoroughly fitting companion to the spectacular fireworks and buzz of eager anticipation.

Another popular choice for diners at the show this year were the garden picnics. Guests enjoyed a gourmet twist on the classic British picnic on the banks of the Long Water, accompanied by summer sunshine and live music. The tasty options included chargrilled chicken with rosemary gremolata, a truffle dressing salad with asparagus, edamame, broad beans and edible flowers, as well as dark chocolate and orange mousse, all with a bottle of white or red wine.

We are delighted to once again be part of the spectacular event which is the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show

Alex Beaumont, Events Director

The Long Water restaurants presented a more casual set up for diners, situated in attractive tents on either side of the banks of the palace fountain; the summer breeze refreshed diners as the scent of bouquets neatly placed on each table filled the air. The beautiful crystal ware and bright table settings were adorned with delicious plates of charcuterie and seafood such as Severn & Wye smoked salmon and fennel salami, mortadella, prosciutto and smoked speck. A selection of delightful desserts featured 'plant pots' of chocolate orange delice, summer berry Eton mess with lavender meringue, and old English trifle 'shots'.

Taking a break from the kitchens, Sodexo sport & leisure executive head chef Ben Dutson offered insight into the preparation and planning needed to cater for the crowds at the world's largest flower show. Despite the volume of customers, Ben emphasised that the scale of the Hampton Court Palace event is always beneficial for catering, since the colossal space provides much needed room for logistics as well as the opportunity to create separate areas with unique identities within the event.

"Returning to Hampton Court Palace Flower Show for our second year, we were delighted to once again be catering for this unique event," Ben explained. "We ensure that the produce is sourced from the very best British suppliers, such as Wild Harvest who forage in



KELLIE BATE AND BEN DUTSON

SODEXO CHEF KELLIE BATE

"We always plan our desserts around the flower show. Foraged flowers and seasonal ingredients are always key. It's Ben's vision, but I always like to sneak in a bit of fairy dust! I am not one to conform to boundaries but Ben likes my wacky side, so it's a bit like yin and yang, but it works and we produce some amazing desserts. As for next year, there are some truly amazing ideas in the pot and I am excited to see how they pan out. Production for the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show is always a challenge but one we rise to, from cookies to tray bakes, Victoria sponge to our signature desserts. It takes a year to plan and a blink before it's over but I'm always left with very fond memories."

forests to find seasonal ingredients for us. We also theme our food according to the event – at Hampton Court Palace we wanted to incorporate the outdoors into our catering, so we themed the Long Water Delis around British picnics and incorporated mini flowers and cresses into our menu at The Allium."

As the preview evening's various food offerings and fabulous firework display wrapped up, the Sodexo team immediately set about gearing up to cater for the next four days of the flower show.

For the thousands who came to visit Hampton Court Palace, a very busy and ever-dedicated Sodexo team had just 10 days to set up and dismantle their various fine dining restaurants and cafés at the event. With 400 Sodexo staff present each

day to ensure all the hospitality needs were attended to with their trademark expertise and efficiency, everything went according to plan. Sodexo's Events Director Alex Beaumont was always on hand, and was pleased and proud in equal measure at the enormous success of the preview evening, and also the show as a whole.

"We are delighted to once again be part of the spectacular event which is the Hampton Court Palace Flower Show," he explained. "The largest flower show in the world is a fantastic addition to our portfolio, giving us the chance to demonstrate our capacity for both fine dining and more casual, but equally stylised, take-away food and drink. All in all, it's a great opportunity to showcase our expertise at such large-scale, iconic events."

A TOUR FOR THE TASTEBUDS

TAKING IN THE LATEST FOOD TRENDS AT LONDON EATERIES, AND ALSO INVITING SMALL, NICHE SUPPLIERS TO SHOWCASE THEIR WARES AT SALON CULINAIRE, SODEXO ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR NEW DINING IDEAS AND CONCEPTS

The world of food is a fast-moving and dynamic one. It is easier than it has ever been for culinary trends to transfer internationally in super-quick time. The latest crazes and fusion flavours are being seized upon by the top foodie entrepreneurs and introduced in cities across the world. With 16 new outlets forecast to open each week in the UK, this really is the cuisine hotspot for cutting edge food concepts. Nowhere is this more apparent than in London.

So, where better to start a food tour than the UK capital? A variety of Sodexo staff gathered at Steelite, the crockery and cutlery company, just off Oxford Street for a briefing on the latest food trends and a sneak peak of where the tour would take them in the afternoon. The team then set out for Kingly Court, a three-floored mini mall off Carnaby Street, comprising 21 outlets arranged around a covered courtyard. In the last few years it has become known as the area's food quarter. Boutiques have moved out and an exciting collection of bars, cafés and restaurants have taken their place, creating a concentrated hub of culinary choice not easily found elsewhere in central London. Many of these eateries



are temporary pop-ups, where chefs and proprietors can test-run recipes and concepts, which means there's a new opening most months.

With Kingly Court as the base, first stop was Pizza Pilgrims, a cool take on an Italian favourite and London's first pizzeria and friggitoria. On entering the establishment, you're greeted by classic 1950s Italian film posters, contrasted by a very hip outsized Mario Brothers mural in the basement. With authentic Neapolitan pizzas on offer, Pizza Pilgrims brings Italian bang up to date with new deep-fried numbers like pizza fitta, arancini (tomato risotto balls), potato and mortadella croquettes and deep fried courgette flowers. They also bring luxury ingredients such as truffle oil and fennel to the pizza table, but there's plenty to satisfy comfort food lovers with deep fried mac 'n' cheese.

Trying to ensure there was room in their stomachs for all the other eateries on the list, the group moved on to The Detox Kitchen. An independent deli, it's where healthy food is made delicious. A light

It's never been a better time to enjoy the best the restaurant world has to offer with the most amazing selection.

and airy feel is achieved with a large open glass frontage where customers can sit and enjoy their dishes and sip a smoothie. The décor is white and very clean with cute hints of pastel shades.

The Detox Kitchen menu specialises in 'free-from'; whether it be gluten, sugar, wheat or caffeine but this isn't just a place for the health conscious. The range of salads, lean meat and fish, fresh smoothies and juices were a pleasant change for the team, and it was clear why the place is a favourite with a number of celebrities. When healthy food can taste this great, good habits are much easier to keep.

It was then time to head upstairs at Kingly Court to the Asian fusion of Oka. Here the group were treated to a selection of traditional robata grill dishes and of course the classic sushi. The tender fish and tasty prawns were encouraging everyone to go back for more with the miso black cod a particular favourite, alongside an amazing array of bulgogi beef, kimchi chicken, and Mongolian lamb. The delicate flavours and gorgeous textures really stood out at Oka.



hot and spicy and with sophisticated and innovative presentation. The group left Jinjuu waxing lyrical over the yuja marinades and wonderful soy and ginger glazes.

After all that food it was time for some coffee, so the group headed for one of the hippest cafés right now, Soho Grind. With a diner-esque feel, but brought together with an industrial London edge, it was clear the baristas cared about coffee. What the host there didn't know about the coffee bean wasn't worth knowing. The group were lead downstairs to a funky basement area, which after dark becomes a late night cocktail bar serving Soho Grind's now legendary Grind Espresso Martinis. Presented with an array of coffees, from flat whites, lattes and cappuccinos, to the latest trend, cold brew coffee, everyone was able to get their late afternoon caffeine fix. An antidote to the usual high street cafés, this was a creative place to have an extraordinary coffee with the deconstructed chic atmosphere a welcome change.

By this time everyone was full and growing tired, but there was one last treat on the tour, Jason Atherton's Social Wine & Tapas. An intimate affair, seating 70 at maximum in Marylebone. Frankie Van Loo's unequivocally British Tapas and Laure Patry's wines (a long-time Atherton associate) are served



throughout. The ground floor hosts a wine shop with selected world-leading wines, largely from small growers – and sourced internationally – and a raised wine-tasting table is standing by. An open kitchen feeds those at the counter, dining, or sitting at one banquette. Every waiter on the floor is a trained sommelier so there was no shortage of advice on how to choose the perfect accompaniment to the variety of small dishes we were served.

By the end of the day, the Sodexo team had experienced an eye-opening number of different food offers, and gathered plenty of inspiration to feed into their variety of venues and events.

It is very difficult to sample everything London has to offer on the food scene, such is the proliferation of new establishments, however it's never been a better time to enjoy the best the restaurant world has to offer with the most amazing selection and choice right on our doorstep.





Held at Ascot Racecourse, Sodexo's Salon Culinaire is the second largest significant culinary competition in the UK and a supplier event attracting around 1,500 people from across Sodexo's business including representatives from its clients.

A new Supply Chain Inclusion programme was launched this summer by Sodexo, aiming to open up new markets for small to medium sized suppliers. Three months on and a third of its participants are being welcomed into Sodexo's supply chain. Those who get on the list benefit from coaching from Sodexo on how to scale up and develop to be able to supply to a big company. The main benefit for Sodexo is being able to supply innovative and niche products to its customers.

As part of this year's Salon Culinaire, a number of existing suppliers, and those who wish to be included on the Sodexo supplier list via the Supply Chain Inclusion programme, were exhibiting at Ascot Racecourse. For the latter, the Artisan Village was the location to be seen; a temporary marquee dedicated to



niche, specialist providers with everything from ice cream to banana bread.

Starting with popcorn, Joe & Seph's had a stand which showcased its imaginative range of flavours, up to 40 in fact, including salted caramel and white chocolate & vanilla bean. Award-winning and founded by a small team of pastry chefs, it is inspired by the USA where it has taken a snacking staple and re-invented it with a British twist, air-popping the corn and uses butter rather than oil.

Salon Culinaire is the second largest significant culinary competition in the UK

Making our way round the Artisan Village, we found Rubies in the Rubble. It specialises in taking produce which would otherwise go to waste

(think mis-shapen but perfectly edible vegetables), and include it in some delicious chutneys. Its flavours are very unusual but have to be tasted to be appreciated. Hot Banana Chutney was a particular favourite with the visitors to Salon Culinaire.

Talking of banana, The Big Banana Bread Co was displaying its tasty range of, yes, banana bread! As the only consumer-facing banana bread brand in the UK, this offered a healthy all day snack using free range eggs and ethically sourced bananas. It also provides a gluten-free version.

After this we needed a good cup of tea. The Simpsons Food and Drink Limited provide luxury teas to the UK and Europe hotel market with traditional blends through to more adventurous teas such as Hitchcock Blonde (a blend of sencha green tea, white tea, strawberries and



even some mini love hearts) and G&T (gin and tonic tea).

There was certainly plenty of inspiration for Sodexo in the Artisan Village and quite literally food for thought. Being able to exhibit and show their wares to key Sodexo decision makers is a great opportunity for fledgling yet talented suppliers and the connections created through the Supply Chain Inclusion programme look set to yield benefits for both parties.



MULTIPURPOSE MAGIC

WEST YORKSHIRE'S FAMED HEADINGLEY CARNEGIE STADIUM, HOME OF YORKSHIRE COUNTY CRICKET CLUB, LEEDS RHINOS RUGBY LEAGUE TEAM AND YORKSHIRE CARNEGIE RUGBY UNION TEAM, IS AS MULTIPURPOSE A VENUE AS THEY COME

Nestled in the Leeds suburb of Headingley and beloved by many a Yorkshire resident, the site has existed as a sports ground since 1891, boasting a rich history of sporting triumphs, crushing defeats and nail-biting rivalry throughout the years. The site sees three different sports taking place on its grounds; home to the current rugby league Challenge Cup, Grand Final and Super League champions Leeds Rhinos, Yorkshire Carnegie Rugby Union and current County Championship winners Yorkshire County Cricket Club. In addition the England and Wales Cricket Board host International Cricket Test matches twice a year.

The sporting fixtures total an incredible 150 days of sport annually, with the cricket ground and rugby stadium boasting seating for 17,500 and 21,000 respectively. Each match brings in hoards of spectators – particularly with the 2015 season seeing the Leeds Rhinos become only the third team in the Super League era to win the Treble by emerging from the Challenge Cup, Super League and Grand Final victorious.

With each sport adhering to a different seasonal calendar, the sport truly never stops at Headingley, meaning that it's not unusual in September, when all three teams clash, to have all three sports play in the same week or for cricket and rugby to be played at the same time, while from May onwards Rugby League and 20/20 cricket matches take place on alternate Friday evenings through the summer.

But that's certainly not all there is to this legendary venue, and as the stadium's exclusive catering and hospitality partner since 2011, Sodexo certainly has its work cut out at Headingley. Employing 14 full-time staff and around 650 temporary staff, the Sodexo team works alongside its client, Leeds Rugby, as well as the other on-site partners, YCCC and Leeds Beckett University, to provide a constantly high-quality, flexible service for the thousands of different visitors and fans who attend the venue's myriad of diverse events throughout the year. One of the highlights of the site is the Taverner's Suite – the only room in the world to have a view of two international sporting grounds. On

one side there is the cricket pitch and the other the rugby pitch, a truly unique setting and one which is very popular even on non-sport days.

In addition, there is the stadium's busy conference and events calendar – which has grown by more than a third over the past three years – as well as numerous weddings, exhibitions, concerts and even Europe's Strongest Man competition. The





latter took place on Saturday 11 July this year, taking over the entire rugby pitch and attracting more than 6,000 spectators, many families amongst them, who enjoyed Sodexo's catering from kiosks and public bars while watching competitors lift cars and doing traditional deadlifts.

Sodexo's hospitality skills were given another chance to shine in September

"Sodexo are a truly valued member of our team here at Headingley, and we've enjoyed a long and productive relationship with the team led by John Hill being a real asset to the stadium. They have completely turned around the Conference & Events side of the business, coming up with new ideas and ways to improve our venue sales, but they don't stop there. Sodexo also lend their expertise to our matchday retail bar and catering business and have brought more revenue through those areas than ever before. As a result our sales revenue from both retail and events has increased year on year by almost 20%. They really understand the business and what makes each of the sports on site tick, never flinching at adapting to different events or types of customer."

Gary Hetherington, Chief Executive Officer, Leeds Cricket Football and Athletic Co.

when 7,500 eager fans flocked to the stadium to see acclaimed English ska band Madness. The concert was the very first ever to take place on the Headingley cricket ground, and saw the band perform their full repertoire – including crowd-pleasing favourites 'Baggy Trousers' and 'House of Fun' – as part of its summer-long 'Grandslam' tour of the nation's favourite racecourses, cricket grounds, rugby and football stadia,

taking in venues from Fratton Park in Portsmouth to Carlisle racecourse, and many others in between.

Unsurprisingly, with such a constant stream of diverse events going on, the venue has occasionally had to deal with scheduling conflicts and clashes – although, in true Sodexo style, even the most incongruous of these have been speedily and seamlessly remedied.

A recent situation requiring such a solution occurred when a couple had booked their wedding to take place at Headingley on the 30 August, a Sunday. After securing the Challenge Cup, The Leeds Rhinos Homecoming parade is usually held at the stadium on the last bank holiday of August, a Monday – however, due to the Rhino's success in 2015, and a subsequently busy fixture list (they still had two other trophies to play for), the parade was brought forward a day, thus potentially clashing with the wedding booking. Luckily all was well, as both bride and groom-to-be were huge Rhinos fans and more than happy to adjust their day to fit Headingley's busy schedule. The horse

and carriage they were being transported in came around the cricket pitch (the same route as the players' coach) to avoid the fans at the usual Michael's Lane entrance. Arriving at the same time, the team congratulated the happy couple, and as an added bonus, the players came onto the pitch to meet them and pose for pictures, while Sky Sports presenter and Leeds Rhinos player Danny McGuire even interviewed them on live television.

With such a constant schedule of events and the need to deliver a service which effortlessly adapts to suit visitors ranging from families to rugby fans and everyone in between, Headingley Carnegie Stadium certainly provides a hospitality challenge as complex and demanding as they come. Nevertheless, with a wealth of experience and thoroughly dedicated team, it's one which has seen Sodexo – like the Rhinos – triumph time and time again.

Sodexo has been a vital part of our success at Headingley in the last year. The variety of domestic and international cricket matches and also the increasingly popular Twenty 20 matches pose many logistical challenges, but Sodexo rises to them all. I've been particularly impressed with how they work with us to continuously improve the offer and service for both hospitality and general admission customers. The food and drink is superb and is tailored for each event ensuring fans are looked after and that their time at Headingley is a great experience.

Mark Arthur – Chief Executive Officer, Yorkshire County Cricket Club





FOCUS ON THE NORTH EAST

DISCOVERING THE TYNE AND WEAR ARCHIVES & MUSEUMS COLLECTION – A GROUP OF VENUES AS DIVERSE AS THEY ARE UNIQUE



Responsible for managing some of the North East's most prestigious and well-loved museums and galleries, it stands to reason that the Tyne and Wear Archives & Museums collection is able to offer a range of events venues truly unlike any other – and with Sodexo at the helm for hospitality, it's easy to see why they're a popular choice.



Amongst the collection is the Great North Museum: Hancock in Newcastle upon Tyne, a natural history museum established in 1884 which boasts one of the largest and most diverse collections of artefacts of any non-national institute in Europe, giving guests the chance to experience the world through natural science, archaeology and ethnography. For those who choose to hold a private event there, unique packages offer the opportunity to meet the curators of the museum and get up close and personal with the collections, which cover everything from a life-size

cast of an African elephant and the Egyptian mummy Bakt-hor-Nekht; to a full size replica of a T-Rex skeleton, and even Sparkie, Newcastle's famous talking budgie, who was stuffed after his death in 1962. The museum is also a registered zoo, with residents such as Stinky the Skunk and Monty the Python, meaning that the more daring private

The Living Planet Gallery, where 120 guests can dine alongside a full-size model of a great white shark

event attendees can also get acquainted with the animals and their keepers as most visitors could only dream.

The majority of events which take place at the museum are conferences, thanks to the perfect balance of gallery-feel and practicality that

the venue's purpose-built conference rooms offer, providing the option to have the spaces decorated in whichever way the client wishes and even to utilise the outdoor terrace.

There is also the Living Planet Gallery, where 120 guests can dine alongside a full-size model of a great white shark, the

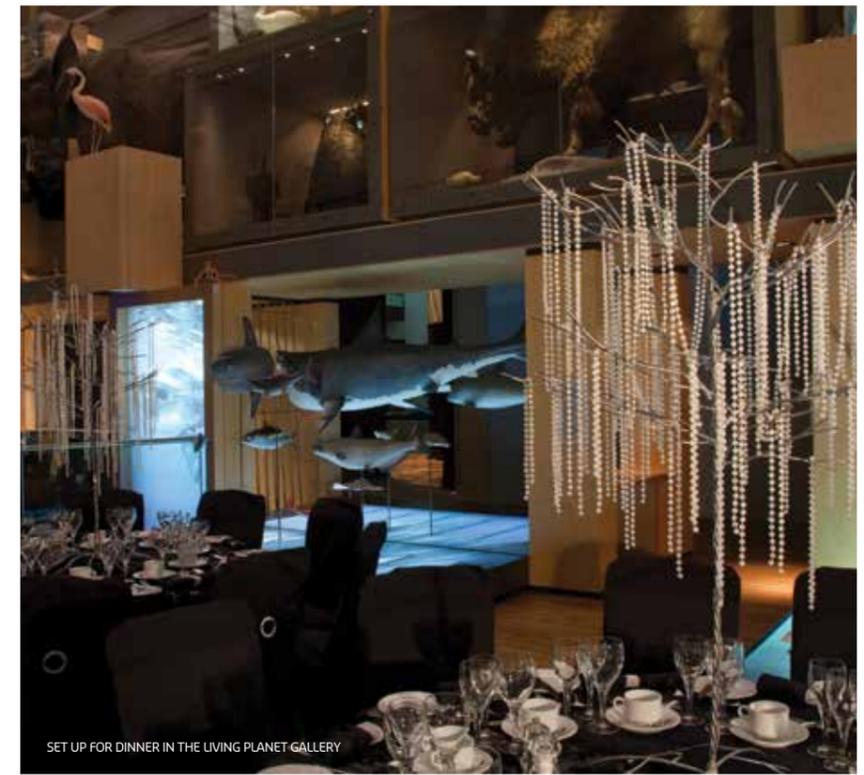


Clore Suite (complete with patio garden), Special Exhibitions Gallery and the planetarium – all of which, unsurprisingly, make the museum a popular and unusual wedding venue.

One such unusual wedding took place in September 2015, when bride and groom Nik Lamont and Tracy Young combined their big day with their fifth entry into the Great North Run – certainly no mean feat when it came to venue logistics. The couple began with a specially created buffet wedding breakfast served to them and their 30 guests at 9am, after which came photographs and then, at exactly 11am, the vows in the Clore Suite. It was then that Tracey and Nik hot-footed it to the startline and, a mere 13.1 miles and two and a half hours later, crossed the finish-line victorious and married.

"The Great North is a hugely popular wedding venue, but this is the first time we'd been asked to organise the reception before the ceremony," explained Samantha Doyle, sales and marketing manager for Sodexo at the Great North Museum: Hancock. "Nik and Tracy were in very safe hands though, with our expert team of staff and chefs on hand to make their special day as perfect – and as precisely timed – as it could be."

The Discovery Museum, meanwhile – also based in Newcastle upon Tyne and official home of the Tyne and Wear Archives – celebrates Tyneside's engineering, shipbuilding and entrepreneurial heritage. Popular with schools and families, the museum was winner of the North East's Best Family Experience award at the North East England Tourism Awards



SET UP FOR DINNER IN THE LIVING PLANET GALLERY



THE GREAT HALL, DISCOVERY MUSEUM

in 2006, and is one of the largest free museums in North East England.

The Discovery boasts a number of function rooms, from the vaulted Great Hall, which can hold up to 350, to the intimate meeting room, which holds just 15. In addition, as many as 100 guests can dine – or 200 can enjoy drinks and canapés – in the shadow of the steamship Turbinia, once the fastest ship in the world and the centrepiece of the ground floor exhibition, while events can also be held in the Café, the Science Maze, and the Story of the Tyne space, which showcases 150 years of shipbuilding alongside full size boats and stories about how the ecology of the river has changed.

The Discovery Museum was a very different building 100 years ago from the one it is today. It was once the headquarters of the North East branch of the Co-operative Wholesale Society. Founded in 1863 the society grew in popularity. Architects Leeson and Wood designed this building, Blandford House, which opened in 1899. In 1977 the Co-op moved out and in 1981, the building was taken over by the museum. One of the most popular spaces for events at the Discovery Museum is the Great Hall. Once the dining hall for the workers at the Co-op, it is a stunning space. With Victorian heritage and Art Deco features, restored in 1999 it now hosts receptions and dining occasions. The venue is a popular choice for couples seeking a truly unique space in which to hold wedding celebrations, such as the 1920s-themed nuptials of Zoe Georgoulis and Phillip Groom in

January 2015. A perfect example of the distinctive and flexible nature of the venue, the wedding saw the Great Hall filled with towering palms and elegant floral displays of the period, while the 120 guests enjoyed a three course meal served to the backing music of a string of 1920s hits and the hall itself transformed into a speakeasy-style seating area.

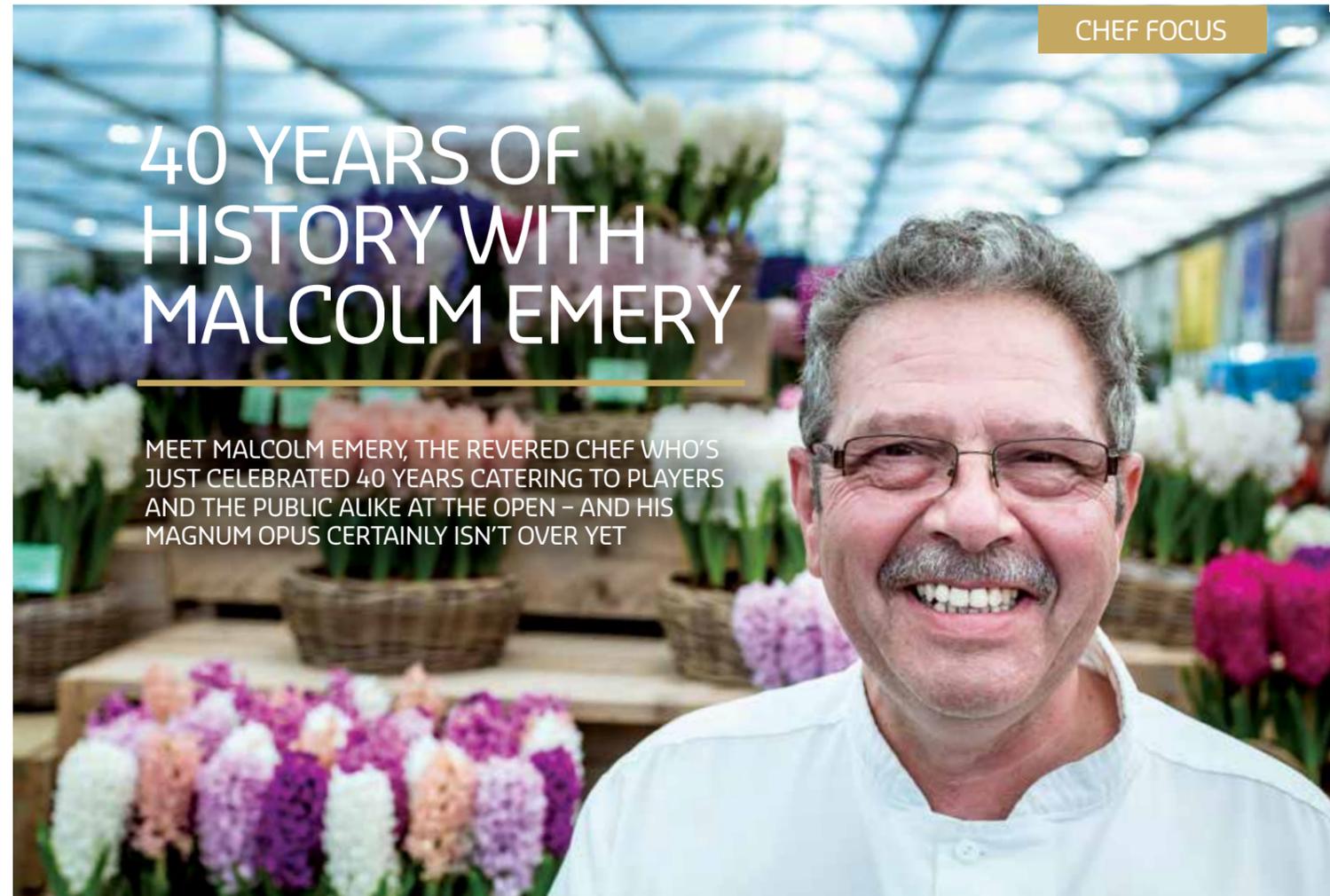
With Victorian heritage and Art Deco features, restored in 1999 it now hosts receptions and dining occasions

Sodexo's catering and hospitality teams work tirelessly to make each event the very best it can be, though they're also on the ground day in, day out, taking care of the museums' visitors and working in partnership with the in-house teams to maximise revenue by getting as much out of each site as possible. Whether it be a wedding, a conference or simply a family day out, you can be sure the experience will be as memorable as the service is flawless.



40 YEARS OF HISTORY WITH MALCOLM EMERY

MEET MALCOLM EMERY, THE REVERED CHEF WHO'S JUST CELEBRATED 40 YEARS CATERING TO PLAYERS AND THE PUBLIC ALIKE AT THE OPEN – AND HIS MAGNUM OPUS CERTAINLY ISN'T OVER YET



Malcolm Emery is no ordinary chef. With a glamorous career that includes catering experiences at a whole host of the country's most impressive venues and events – not least among them Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, the Lord Mayor's Banquet and Buckingham Palace Garden Parties – it's nevertheless his incredible length of service at The Open which Malcolm credits as the most defining aspect of his working life to date.

Sodexo's principal chef for the past 20 years, Malcolm counts among his accolades, Masterchef of Great Britain, Craft Guild of Chefs, La Parade des Chefs Hotelympia, 2010 (Gold Medal), La Parade des Chefs Hotelympia 2009 (Silver Medal), Square Meal Canapé Cup, Gold Cup and Critics Choice 2008) and nominations for Chef of the Year in 2007, 2008 and 2009. Modest to a fault, even he has to admit it's quite the roll call.

Since his first Open in 1975, Malcolm has seen the competition change dramatically, witnessing its incredible growth first hand and simultaneously developing a great relationship with the R&A, the ruling authority of golf throughout the world. 2015 marked the 145th Open, and was the 29th time the

championship has been held over the links land near the beautiful ancient town of St Andrews, so it comes as no surprise that over the years the event has become a popular place to entertain guests for a day of hospitality.

Today, Malcolm works at The Open to personally deliver a special catering facility on behalf of the R&A, a role which has involved catering for the event's patrons – including Rolex, Mercedes and Nikon – as well as their distinguished guests who often include politicians, actors, players and officials themselves. However, this luxury hospitality is in stark

contrast to Malcolm's early days feeding the players in a much simpler setting.

Speaking about the event Malcolm remembers: "As a young lad just out of college, when I first started working at The Open, it was mind-blowing to enter the world of hospitality and see the players up close. It totally changed the concept of hospitality for me, bringing me from the world of catering to à la carte dining."

One of the obstacles that Malcolm has to overcome in his preparation for The Open each year is its changing location. Whilst other Sodexo hospitality venues





THE 14TH HOLE AT ROYAL ST GEORGES 2011

such as Royal Ascot and Henley Royal Regatta are held in the same location each year, The Open is a somewhat nomadic championship. Over Malcolm's 40 years, the event has been held at no less than nine locations, each presenting its own unique challenges for catering, including working in a temporary structure and managing the logistics of delivering supplies to the middle of a course.

Malcolm has also worked to modernise the hospitality experiences, making them more convenient and accessible for guests. His team introduced The Champions Club, which includes roaming waiters offering a selection of pre-lunch canapés, chefs serving a variety of bistro-style classics and savoury snacks from a central station and a centrepiece garden with large covered bar area. The experience allows guests to enjoy the luxuries of fine food with the flexibility to enjoy it at any hour, rather than having to organise a set time.

While procedure is another crucial consideration at The Open, with 700 covers being served each day, innovation and quality is also of paramount importance. A different menu is presented each day, including everything from a full Scottish breakfast to a five-course lunch and afternoon tea. Malcolm sets

In his 40 years at The Open, he's seen the competition change drastically, witnessing its incredible growth first hand

high standards for himself and is only satisfied if the offer he creates at the patrons' catering facility continues to evolve and impress year after year. A key to Malcolm's success is that he always endeavours to discover new recipes and new

ways of preparing ingredients to make fantastic meals, a pursuit which involves participating in food innovation tours and study groups as well as working closely with his supply team. In 2015, the team made agreements with over 22 Scottish suppliers for The Open in order to provide a culinary offering of the highest possible quality and with provenance at its heart, becoming the largest supplier supporting Visit Scotland's 'Year of Food and Drink'.

Malcolm was in good company (to say the least) when it came to special years at St Andrews. Coincidentally, Tom Watson, the legendary golfer who has enjoyed eight major victories over his career, five of which were at The Open (four of which were in Scotland), was also celebrating. Looking back to Carnoustie in 1975, like Malcolm, he celebrated the 40th anniversary of his debut appearance at the championship, where he successfully won and was crowned Champion Golfer of The Year for the first time – achievements which the R&A recognised by presenting Tom with a crystal replica of the famed Claret Jug this year.

The last 40 years have seen The Open and its culinary offerings evolve in leaps and bounds, and this is thanks in no small part to Malcolm's innovation and input – qualities which the event will undoubtedly continue to benefit from in the years to come. And one thing is certain; whether this internationally renowned event is creating sporting history on the links of St Andrews, in the picturesque surrounds of Hoylake or at any number of other beautiful venues, with Malcolm at the helm, the catering is sure to score a hole in one.



DELIVERING THE DIFFERENCE

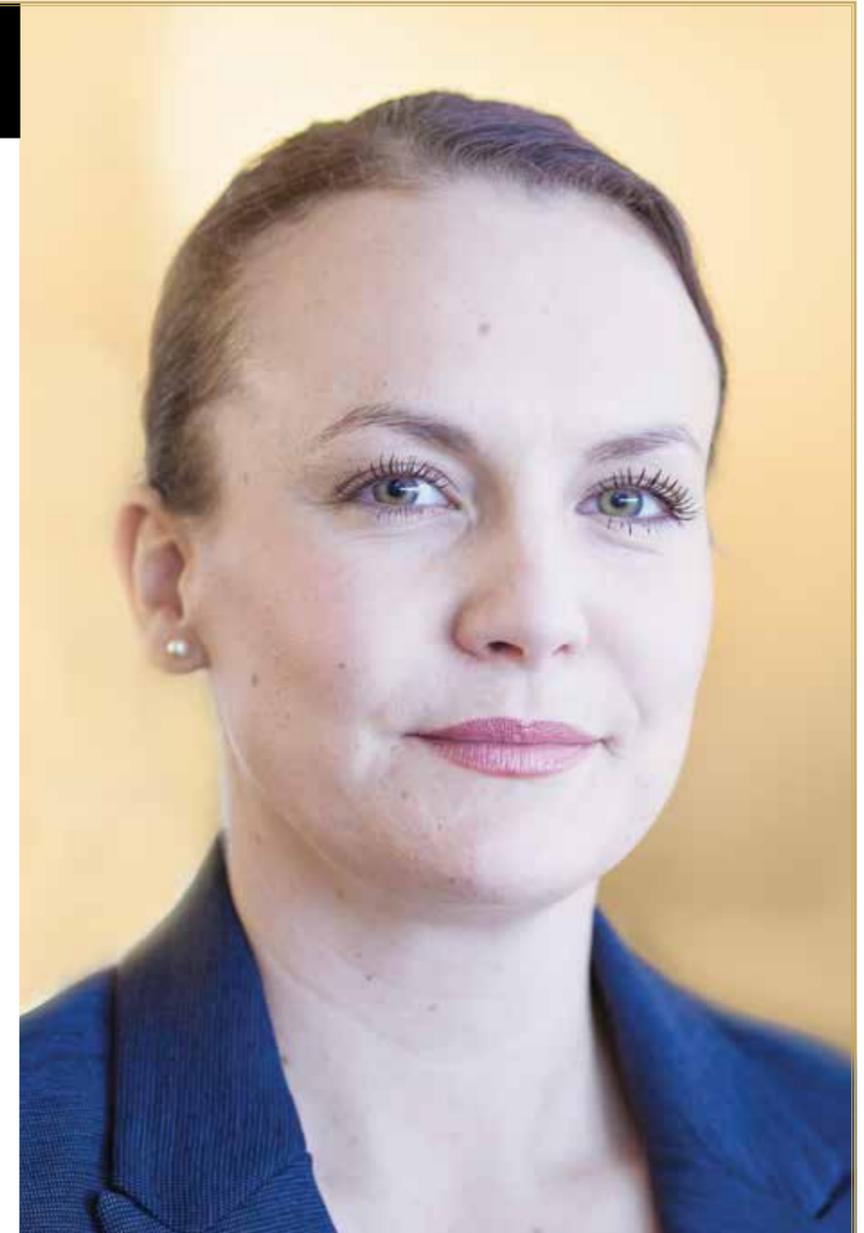
LEANNE FINDLEY
ACCOUNT MANAGER
AT SODEXO

It was shortly after leaving school that Leanne began working as a food service assistant for Sodexo's airport staff catering division, a job she immediately took to and soon decided to take on full time. Within six months she had been promoted to supervisor and then, not long afterwards, to duty manager, assistant manager and then catering manager of the new staff canteens at London Gatwick, where she supported the mobilisation of a newly built coffee shop at the airport's North Terminal. It was then that Leanne was given the opportunity to move away from the airport sector and look after two group contracts.

"This was challenging but good for my career as it took me out of my comfort zone and gave me the opportunity to manage a team of unit managers and work with clients on a daily basis", she explains. "As part of this development I was promoted to an account manager and took over the responsibility of two airport lounges plus the group contracts, and since being in this role I have worked on various airport lounge tenders and mobilised new business wins."

With Sodexo recently winning contracts for several new lounges in the UK, the last 18 months has been a particularly exciting time for Leanne, and she is currently responsible for Emirates at London Gatwick, Glasgow and Manchester, Gulf Air and Malaysian Airlines at Heathrow, Virgin Atlantic's V-room Manchester, CP3 cafe and the cleaning business at Gatwick. Her day-to-day role is complex, and involves ensuring lounges are fully staffed, recruiting new staff, and checking that standards of everything from food and uniforms to cleanliness and passenger interaction are being maintained right across the board.

Leanne enjoys her job immensely, saying that the two most enjoyable



aspects are getting to work with a wonderful team which feels "like a family" and benefitting from the varied and stimulating atmosphere of a job where no two days are the same.

Leanne's love for her work certainly shows, especially as she was recently the much-lauded recipient of the Tom Crowley Award at the HR in Hospitality Awards, given to those who engage

their teams, and promote recognition in the workplace, acknowledging the importance of celebrating and reflecting on success with employees. This is an achievement of which Leanne is rightly proud. She hopes to help the company continue to deliver a five-star service and to play a meaningful role in the growth of global aviation, although she happily admits that her personal life and that of her fiancé are currently dominated by the arrival of their baby son.

IAN RANDALL
BEVERAGE MANAGER
AT SODEXO



Having joined Sodexo in 2001, Ian's first role was managing all beverage requirements at six racecourses Sodexo were operating at that time, including Ascot. During this time he also supported the beverage team at Everton Football Club, and in 2010 was asked to additionally support the Sodexo Events Team. Since then, Ian has been responsible for Ascot and the Sodexo Events Team beverage operations, a varied role which covers everything from race meetings at Ascot racecourse (including Royal Ascot) to The Open, Henley Royal Regatta, the 2012 Olympics and the Rugby World Cup.

Due to the varied nature of his position, a typical day for Ian can be spent planning for future events or on site at events currently in progress – be it operating at Chelsea Flower Show and planning Royal Ascot stock

requirements, or at his desk in Berkshire planning beverage operations for The Open. Nevertheless, it's this variety which he most enjoys.

"The most satisfying aspect of my job is the variation between each event I support and the beverage operations for which I am responsible," he explains. "And of course it goes without saying that I enjoy working with all my colleagues in both the Ascot and Events teams."

And Sodexo's effect on Ian's life certainly doesn't end there, as it was while working as bars and cellar manager at

Twickenham Rugby Stadium that he met his wife Lynn, to whom he was married in 2004.

"I now have a step-daughter and step-son and three wonderful grandchildren (one grandson and two grand-daughters)," he says, "so needless to say much of my time off revolves around my grandchildren; whether it be at the park, swimming or playing football. I also love cricket, American football and, when time constraints allow, I enjoy reading thriller novels. Another interesting fact about me is that for the first nine years of my professional working life, I was a professional musician in the Irish Guards Military Band. During my time with them, I played at seven Trooping the Colours at Horse Guards Parade and spent time in Germany and Northern Ireland entertaining the troops."

In the new year Ian intends to take his operator's licence, which will enable him to be responsible for the logistics of vehicle transport for the Sodexo Events team and further satisfy the variety which he so enjoys within his role.

ALEXIS BARCLAY
HR BUSINESS
PARTNER AT SODEXO

Alexis' career at Sodexo began when she secured a placement on the company's Olympic project as part of her university degree, spending 14 months working as HR coordinator within the full-time team, before returning to university to complete her degree. She continued to work for Sodexo on a casual basis as staffing coordinator at Ascot Racecourse then, once she had finished her degree, undertook a Sodexo-sponsored masters in Human Resource Management and CIPD qualification.

During this period of her studies, Alexis worked on a fixed term contract at Ascot Racecourse, before graduating and being promoted to senior staffing coordinator at the venue. Shortly afterwards she decided that she wanted to push herself even further, and successfully applied for her current role of HR business partner, sports and leisure and Travel. Although she took

up her new role in February 2015, the sudden availability of a head of staffing role at Ascot Racecourse just three weeks before Royal Ascot saw her drafted back in to apply her expertise – a position which she still fills at present.

A finalist for the recent Rising Star Award at the HR in Hospitality Awards, Alexis divides her time between supporting her business areas within sports and leisure, with a strategic HR approach, and travelling to Ascot, where she works with the team to ensure they are on track for the week including any operational preparation for forthcoming events. To date, she has participated in many of Sodexo's events such as the Olympics, Paralympics, Commonwealth Games, Rugby World Cup and many other summer events such as Royal Ascot, Chelsea Flower Show and The Open, garnering significant levels of experience and expertise along the way.

"The best thing about my job is the variety of tasks I will be doing from one day to the next," Alexis explains. "I love meeting employees from throughout



the business and as HR business partner I get the opportunity to do this regularly. Due to the nature of the sports and leisure business, weekends are a novelty and in the summer weekends become another working day but I wouldn't have it any other way. I thrive on the buzz of the summer events. The teamwork and camaraderie that comes into play on our large scale operations is something I am immensely proud to be part of."

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