

Interview with Nicolas **Dubort**, General Manager Mandarin Oriental, Muscat



MANDARIN ORIENTAL
MUSCAT



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Why Nicolas? Why this hotel?

Because in just 90 minutes we spoke about passion, vision, luxury, career paths, international tourism, local anchoring, high standards, competitiveness, operations, emotions, training, mentoring, values, experience, rituals...
In short: **hospitality**.

Because it was sincere and human.

And because Mandarin Oriental Muscat is truly unique and a must-see for the destination.

#JungleHotelTour by Jungle Project ! #002

- Inspiring properties, led by exceptional host •

1/ The role of the General Manager

2/ The definition of luxury

3/ Oman, a land of hospitality

4/ The MO: rooted, open, alive



How to define the role of a General Manager?

Nicolas openly shares how he embodies the GM role in such an exceptional property: far from the office, close to the teams and the guests.

“

I see myself as a conductor.

“There are musicians, soloists, different instruments... but for it all to come together in harmony, you need a conductor. That’s my role every day: set the tempo, ensure fluidity, and let everyone shine.”



Essenza Bar



“

"I try to be present in the hotel, not in my office. You need to see, feel, and listen. That's how you know whether the energy is flowing."

An international and committed team

"We are more than 200 people, up to 280 in high season. What makes me proud is the diversity: 50 nationalities, a third Omani including 30% women, while the national average is around 15%."



Sawa Lounge



TwoThree58 Club

Training, transmitting, inspiring

"My role is also to show that hospitality is a great career, through example, mentorship, and guidance. Many of our young colleagues are proud to represent their country and culture."



Essenza



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1/ The role of the General Manager

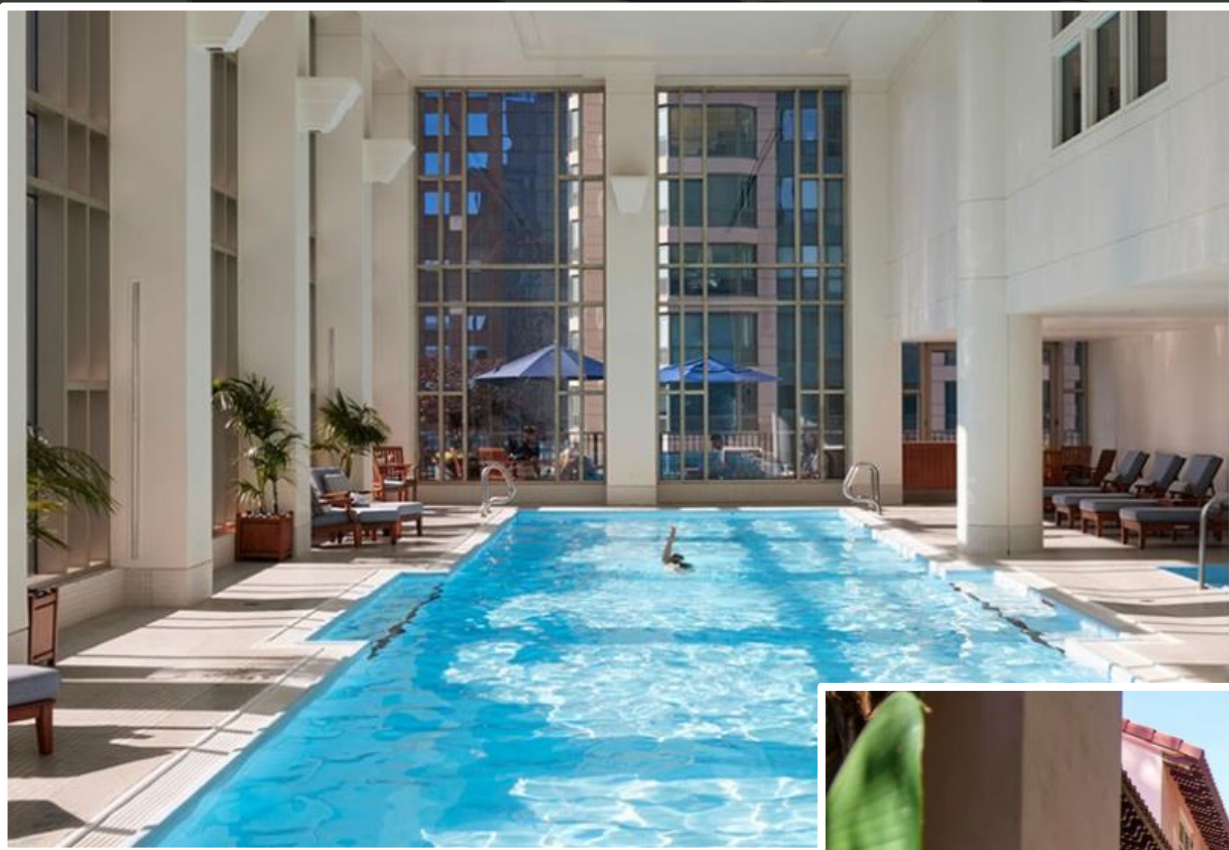
2/ The definition of luxury

3/ Oman, a land of hospitality

4/ The MO: rooted, open, alive



An international career in luxury,
started in operations.



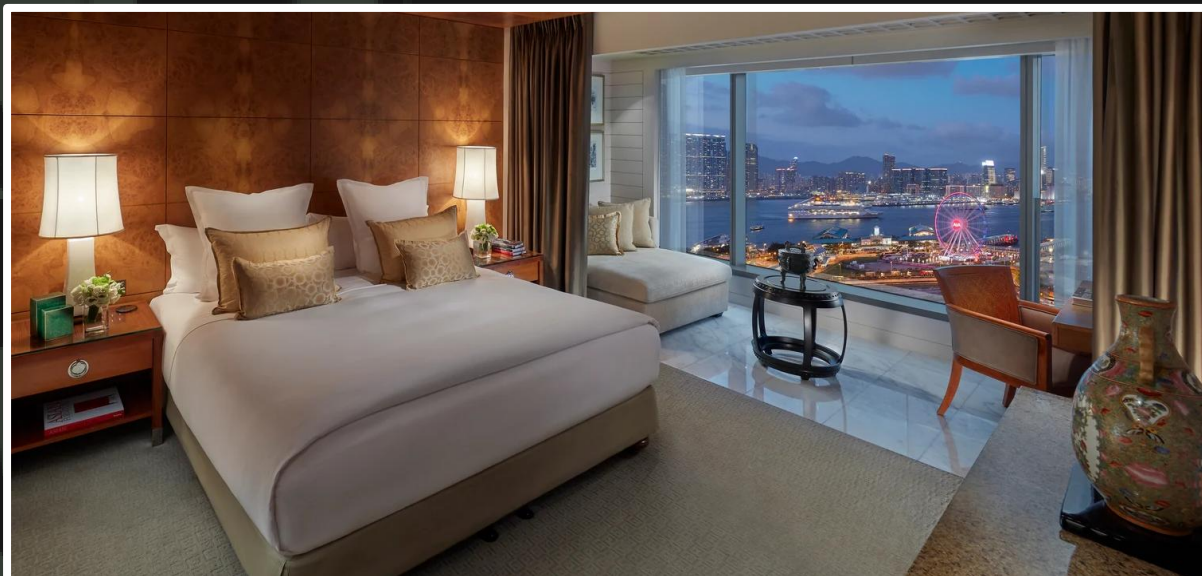
THE PENINSULA
HOTELS

The Peninsula Chicago
Avenues Restaurant Manager

)(
Dorchester
Collection

Hotel Bel-Air
Ass. Director F&B

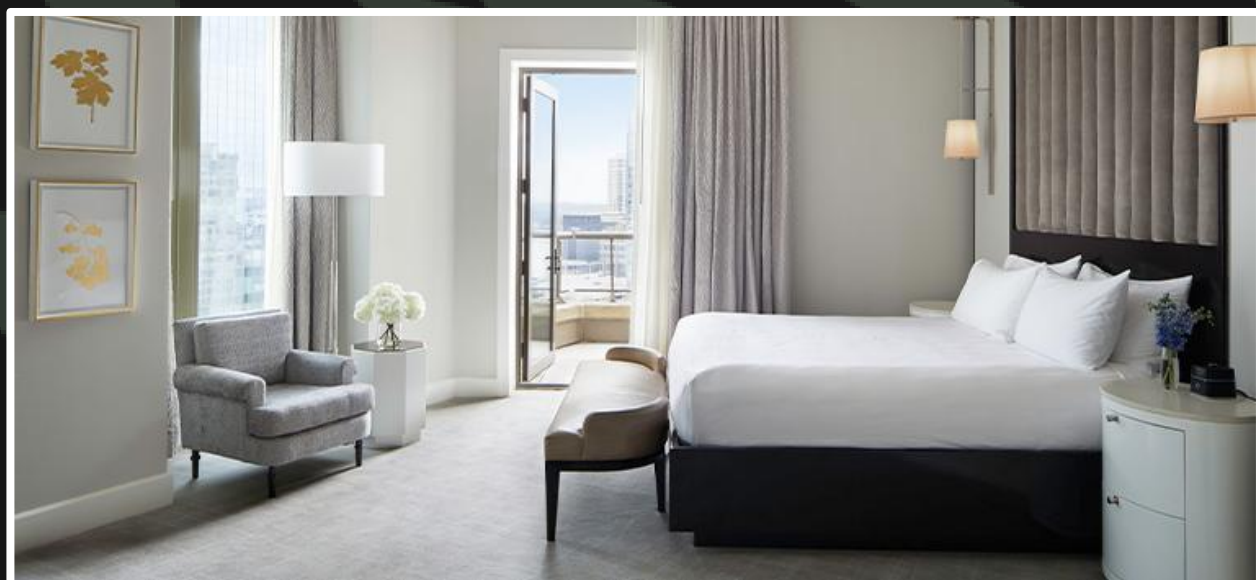




Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong
Director F&B



Waldorf Astoria Atlanta
Hotel Manager



Mandarin Oriental Washington DC
General Manager



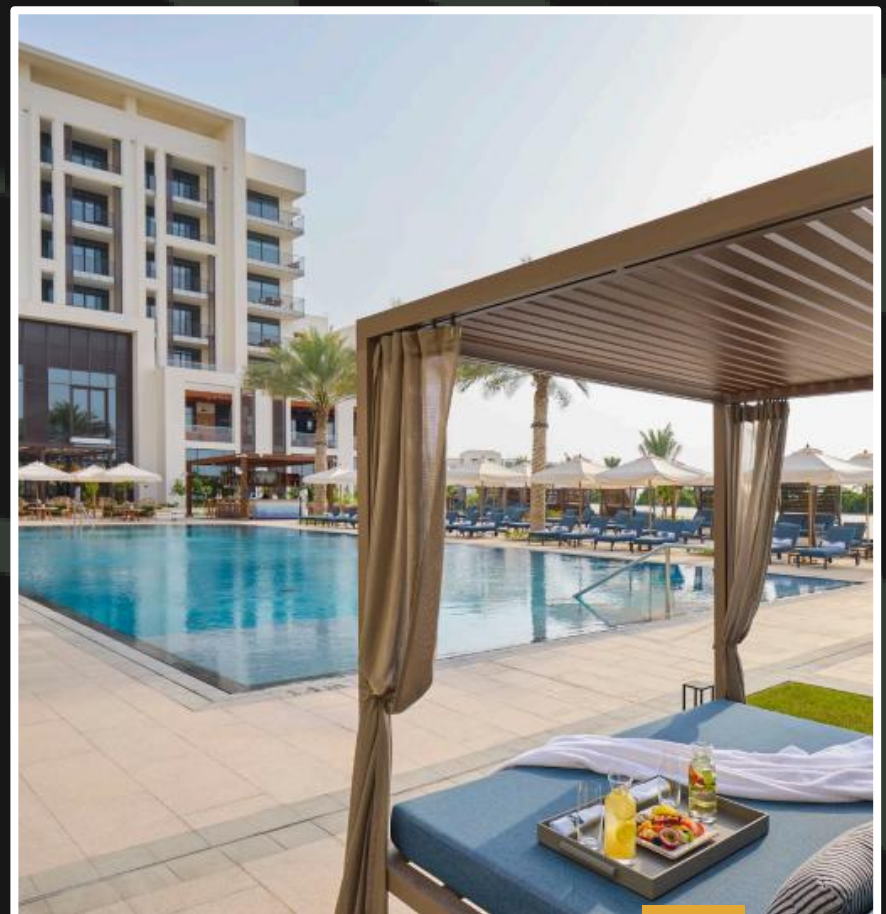
How can we define luxury?

With 20+ years of international experience in highly exclusive environments, Nicolas shares his vision and definition of luxury.

“

*Luxury isn't caviar,
it's the emotion you create.*

“When I started, luxury was marble, gold on the walls, stiff uniforms, champagne and caviar. Very quickly, I realized it wasn't that. True luxury is the experience. That unique moment you live and can never reproduce.”



Pool

Creating unforgettable memories

“

“Luxury is about creating memories. A wine, a dish, a smile... can take you back 20 years in an instant. That kind of emotion is magic.

And that's our craft.”



A mission of humility

"I always tell my team: we're not doing heart surgery, we're not 10,000 meters in the air with 200 passengers. We create experiences, but experiences that can last a lifetime."



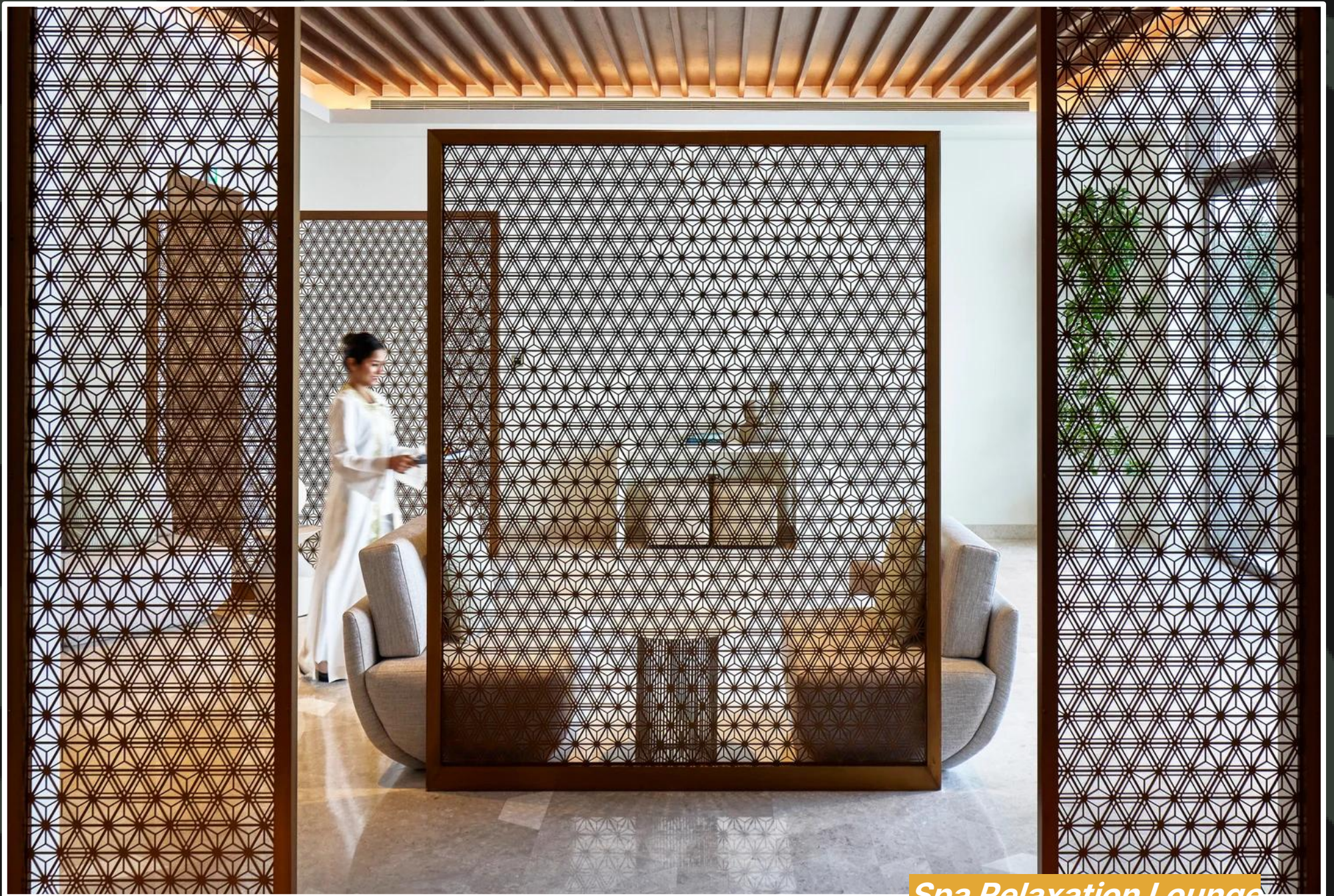
Rawya - Terrace



Rawya

Hospitality as a way of life

"Being a hotelier is about bringing people together. It's also about listening. Creating connections. Offering what's real. Luxury today is no longer about bling, it's about attention, sincerity, authenticity."



Spa Relaxation Lounge

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Why choose to move to Oman?

For Nicolas, Oman is not a destination like any other. It is a land of contrasts, culture, and heartfelt hospitality. Mandarin Oriental aims to be a bridge between travelers and this richness.



Oman is a surprise for many.

"It's not yet an overcrowded destination. People don't expect such natural beauty, history, and understated refinement. Between the corniche, old souks, wadis, mountains, and the desert... Oman has it all."



Hospitality as a way of life

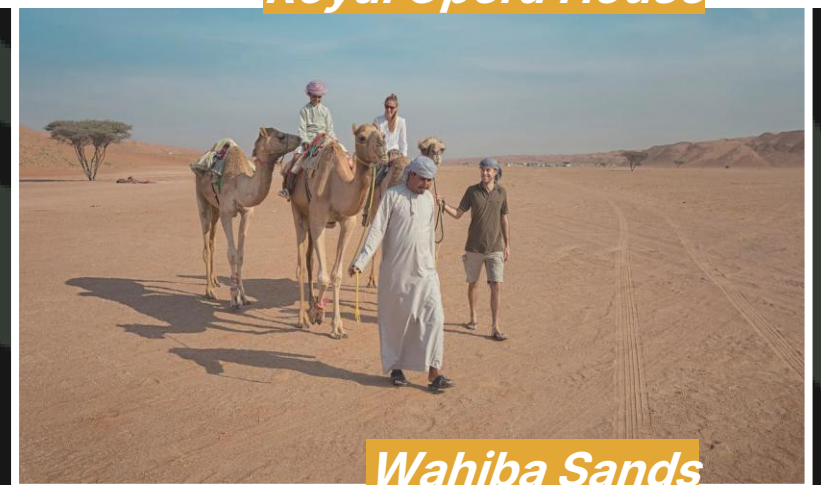
"From the hotel, within two hours' drive, you can reach incredible landscapes: the Middle East's Grand Canyon, the roses of Jabal Akhdar, wadis, forts... an exceptional cultural and natural density."



Alqurum Mosque



Royal Opera House



Wahiba Sands

Damask roses: a fragrance found nowhere else

"We created a short film with the BBC about the ritual of rose distillation at Jabal Akhdar. It's a deeply rooted Omani tradition. These roses have a unique fragrance sought after by the world's greatest perfumers. (...) Experiences like this don't exist anywhere else."



A culture of hospitality deeply rooted

"Omanis are proud, warm, and extremely welcoming. (...)

Our local colleagues are true ambassadors. You can feel in them a sincere desire to share their country, to do things well, to welcome with authenticity."



Chef Issa, hosted for a pop-up event

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How to define the uniqueness of the hotel?

"The hotel isn't self-sufficient. We don't just sell a room, we open doors. What we offer is immersion. We collaborate with local producers, artisans, and artists to create experiences that exist only here."

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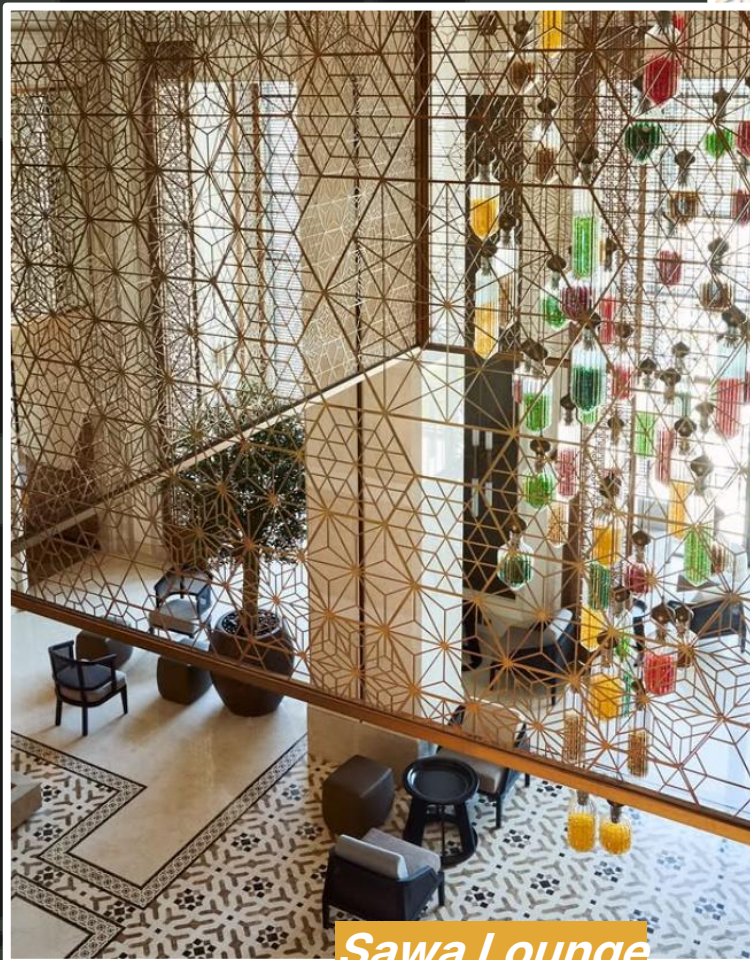
We want to be a platform for discovering Oman.



Wadi Shab and Bimmah Sinkhole

The hotel as a catalyst for encounters

*"Very quickly, the lobby became a living space, not just for guests, but also for Omanis, residents, and ambassadors. There's real energy. (...)
The lobby is called Sawa, which means 'being together' in Arabic."*



Sawa Lounge



A cultural and diplomatic role

"It's not unusual to see ministers, business leaders, and artists here. Mandarin Oriental has become a place of exchange, visibility, and representation."

"We're proud it goes beyond classic hospitality."



Initiatives rooted in local culture

"We partner with the Royal Opera House, one of the country's artistic hearts. (...) Umberto, the Director General of the Opera, has done an exceptional job and the performances there are truly unique."



دار الأوبرا السلطانية مسقط
ROYAL OPERA HOUSE MUSCAT

AMOUAGE



"We also have a very special relationship with Amouage, the iconic Omani luxury perfume house. They created a fragrance for the hotel that you'll find in our suites and corridors."

Ultra-personalized experiences

"Each guest can live a different stay. We can organize a dinner in a wadi, rose-picking at dawn, a wellness session facing the Arabian Sea..."



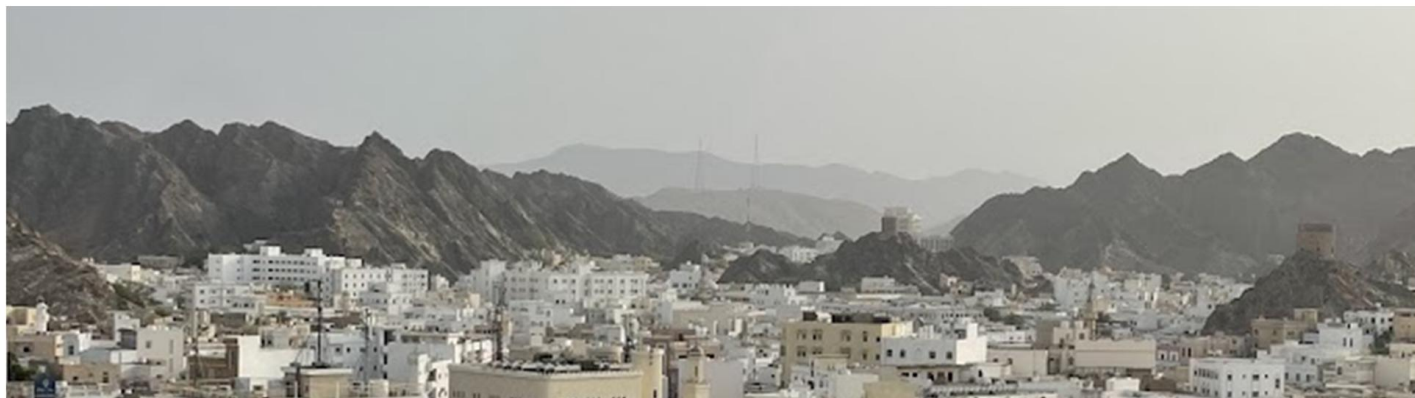
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*That is true luxury:
the unique, the unforgettable.*

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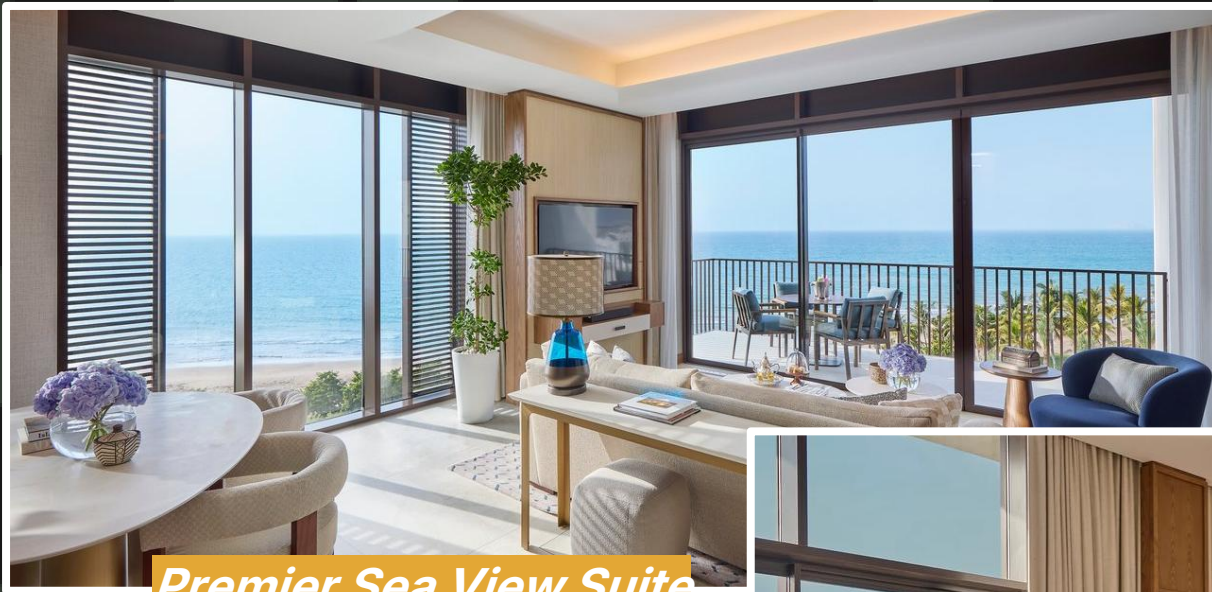
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Facing the Jungle...

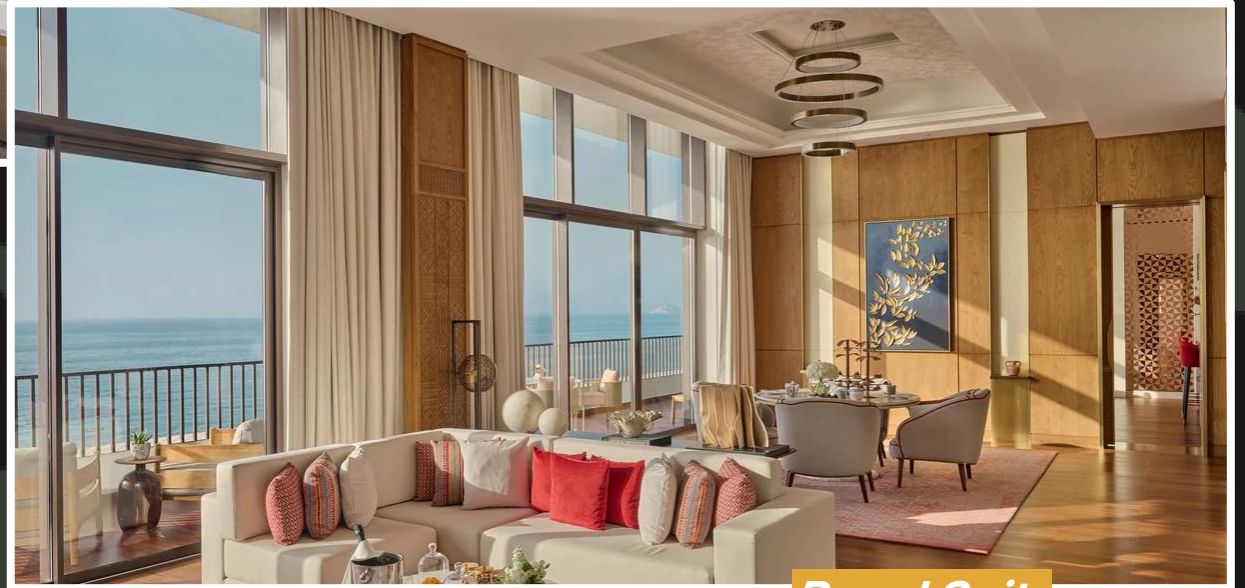


A room designed as a tribute to Oman

From the very room, the intention is clear: to make you feel the soul of the country. Materials, objects, textures... everything tells a story.



Premier Sea View Suite



Royal Suite

“ *The rooms are very spacious, starting at 70 m² with balcony. Artistic nods to Omani culture are present in every detail.* ”

A hotel inspired by the Silk Road

This history as a maritime and cultural crossroads is a deep source of inspiration for the hotel team, even in the storytelling of experiences.



“ *Oman and Muscat were on the Silk Road. They were not only Bedouins, but also sailors and merchants.* ”

General Manager: a purposeful journey

This position is no coincidence: it is the culmination of a deliberate path, fueled by a true passion for the profession.

“

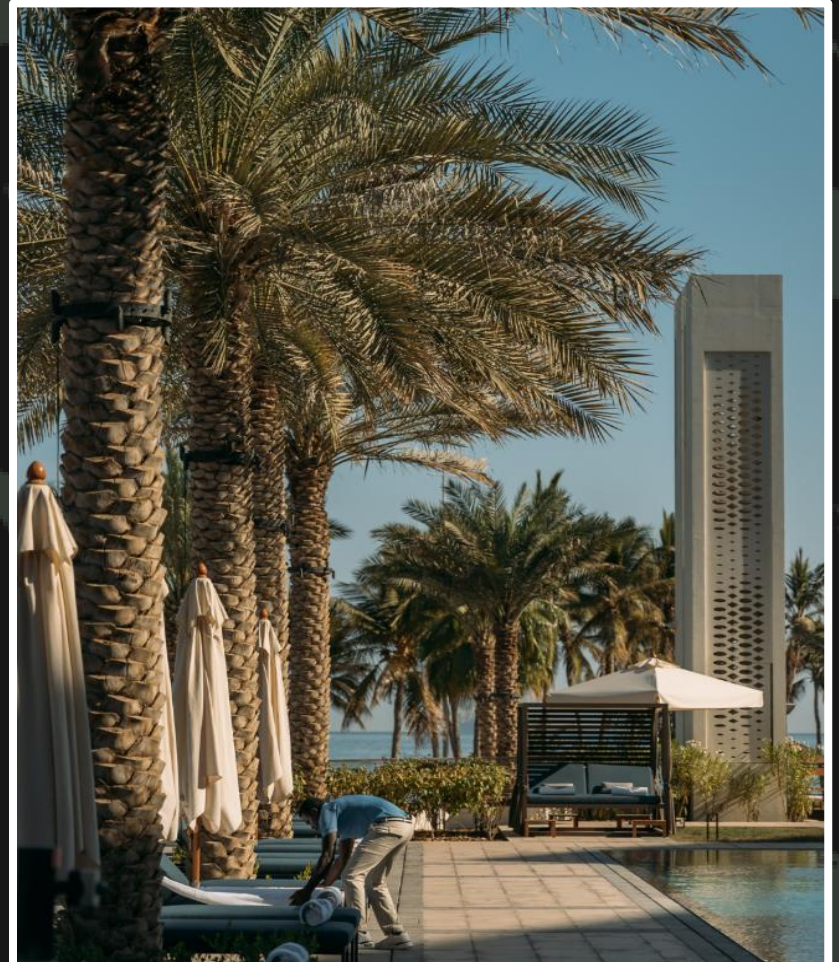
Fifteen years ago, I already had this vision: I wanted to run a hotel.



Relentless standards

A simple phrase, almost ordinary... yet it reveals a clear-sighted and demanding leadership, a cornerstone of success in high-end hospitality.

“*Every day, you must question yourself.*”



Advice for a young hotelier

“

*My advice: stay passionate, no matter what.
That passion gives you incredible energy.*



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A huge thank you to Nicolas and his
entire team for this testimony
and unique insights!



DRAWING
HOTELS COLLECTION

Episode #003 coming soon: the
interview with Florian Bitker,
General Manager of the Drawing
Hotels Collection in Paris!

*Interview conducted in July 2025
Photo credits: Official Mandarin Oriental website,
Instagram @mo_muscat & personal archives.*