

MIDDLE EAST

Hotelier

THE DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO SUCCESS

EMENT

AUGUST 2014

*To Berlin
With Wyndham:*

RUI BARROS
STIRS THE
BUTTERFLY
EFFECT
P48—

DUBAI'S
MID-MARKET
BOOM
P40

WINNING
TIPS:
LAST YEAR'S
HOTELIER AWARDS
HEROES REVEAL ALL

*The Renaissance
man*

MEET THE MAN TURNING HMM FORTUNES AROUND, LAURENT VOIVENEL



● Oasis Lounge view

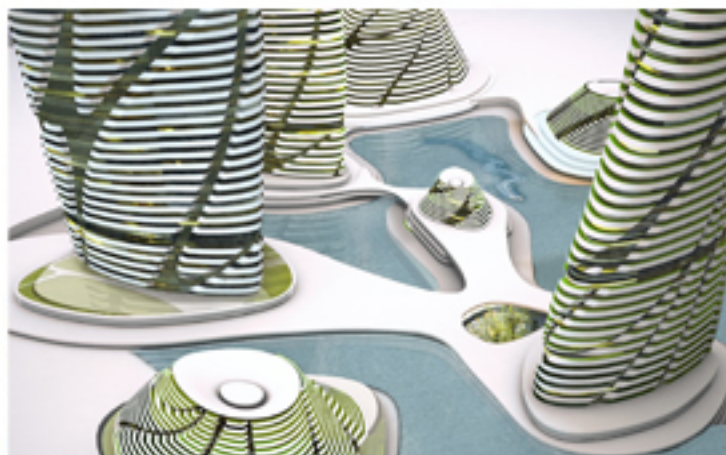
Dhabi (9,058), Riyadh (8,954), Jeddah (7,969), Muscat (4,587), Manama (3,078), Al Khobar/Dhahran/Dammam (1,729) and impressively, Ras Al Khaimah (1,698). Notable further down the location rankings were many other provincial towns across the Gulf region, including Ajman and Khorfakkan in the UAE; Al Ahsa, Baha, Hail, Jizan, Jubail, Tabouk, Unaiza, Yanbu and Qurayyat in Saudi Arabia; and Duqm, Jebel Akhdar and Sohar in Oman. This reflects not only the rapid economic or tourism development of such locations, but also the maturing of the large chains to the extent that they have established their key brands in primary locations and are now seeking to develop their networks into secondary and tertiary communities.

MASSIVE CHAIN DEVELOPMENT

2014 has seen 22 chains each declaring more than 1000 rooms under development, a figure just shy of the peak of 23 achieved in 2009. The average number of keys per property under development by each of the 71 chains that declared pipeline activity was an impressive figure of 259.

Hilton Worldwide tops the all-important rooms-based ranking with 9,593 keys (30 hotels), which compares favourably with the all-time record pipeline of 10,472 rooms set by Marriott back in 2009. Starwood is in second place with 7,912 keys. The other management companies in the top 10 comprise – in order – Marriott, Accor (with the largest number of hotels at 31 properties), Rotana, InterContinental Hotels Group, Millen-

“ WT Project architectural office based in Milan (Italy) and branch offices worldwide, focused on master planning and architecture with many worldwide projects and international competitions for multifunctional areas and relevant buildings.



● Oasis Towers

nium & Copthorne, Wyndham, Hyatt and Golden Tulip. At 11th place with 3,070 keys, Rezidor is ranked ninth in the hotel ranking with 17 properties under development.

Within the top 20, it is impressive to see local companies Anjum, with one single upcoming hotel in Makkah boasting 1743 keys, Time Hotels from Dubai and Bin Majid from Ras Al Khaimah, the former now expanding beyond the UAE into Doha and Riyadh, for example, and the latter spreading from its provincial base into Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Among the 134 hotel management companies to whom we requested information this year were a number of interesting new names. Spanish resort operator Blue Bay, for example, which has 27 hotels under six brands in Spain and the Caribbean, will be opening two properties in Dubai, with further expansion expected soon in other UAE emirates. Thai hotel company Centara Hotels & Resorts, which boasts 45 Thai properties and almost 20 elsewhere in the Far East, in Ethiopia, Mauritius, the Maldives and Sri Lanka, will make its Gulf debut with two hotels in Doha. The formerly one-off Emirates Grand Hotel in Dubai has now become a brand that will be featured on a hotel apartments property in Dubai and a hotel in Sharjah.

In Doha, The Souq Waqif Boutique Hotels have grown into a group of six jewel-like properties in the eponymous, most attractively restored historic district. In the process, they have become a benchmark

for orientally-styled boutique hotels. A seventh property, Soy, will open with just 19 rooms later this year.

Back in Dubai, Teal Hospitality, run by former Rotana veteran Daniel Hajar, will open a second hotel under its Cosmopolitan brand, the Grand Cosmopolitan, in 2016. Named after a famous New York hotel, Warwick International Hotels now has a global network of 57 properties including one recently opened on Dubai's Sheikh Zayed Road. A Doha hotel is due to open in phases over the next few years.

MORE BRANDS THAN EVER

Viability's research showed that there were 140 different brands (as distinct from the 72 chains) in this year's pipeline, of which 44 were completely new to the region. In a fast-growing, highly competitive hotel market like that of the GCC, it is

Ranking Methodology

- 14th continual year of survey
- All chains active in the GCC are canvassed directly
- All letting units included (rooms, suites, apartments & villas)

Excluded:

- All rumoured projects
- All unsigned projects
- All projects with unconfirmed room counts
- All projects on hold or with unconfirmed opening dates
- All single owner-operated properties