



FOUR SEASONS
Hotels and Resorts



FOUR SEASONS

miami
atlanta
london
new york

The
PARADIGM *of*
FOUR
PILLARS

quality, service, culture & brand





Once upon a time... there was no such thing as a short-sleeved Dress Shirt. Young professionals, up through the 1990's, in fact, were required to wear long sleeves and slacks within the echelons of white-collar professional settings. Color, too, was considered taboo and it was clear, at least to me, that an unofficial Dress Code existed among those who contended with or were considered for the coveted executive level positions of the corporate environment. That, however, is but a stitch on the proverbial sleeve of history, as the dawn of the 21st century brought with it the advent of "Business Casual."

I have never been more aware of this fashion shimmy than in my own rather clumsy segue from a conservative line of work into the less conventional world of publishing. As a young professional I was sewn and stuffed into hand tailored suits and spent tireless hours pairing every conceivable shade of gray with executive male's one color consideration, the tie. How I loathed this uniform and its failure to in any way distinguish me from the pack. And when I abandoned the traditional work force to pursue other interests I declared, in this, I'm free. Free, yes, to peruse the world of denim, chinos, and dungaree. Free to exchange my briefcase for a backpack. And decidedly free to explore the unique and fascinating me I'd always longed to be.

As fate would have it, smiling, I found myself on errand to the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts. It's reputation as an international luxury brand is sewn together by the spirit of 83 properties throughout the world. And what I know of its founder, Isadore Sharp, who began his own journey with the creation of the Four Seasons Motor Hotel in 1961, was that 50 years ago he'd been concerned with the very same things as me. Upscale luxury, in fact, hadn't occurred to him at all until a developer approached the young hotelier about the creation of a Four Seasons Hotel in London. Sharp contended that the hotel should compete with the city's elite, old-world style hotels, such as Claridge's and The Connaught, which he felt catered to an exclusive clientele based on their social class. Incorporating "The Golden Rule" as the hotel's guiding mission statement, along with the importance of quality, service, culture and brand, he believed that each individual has both the right to just treatment, and, therefore, a responsibility to ensure that justice for others.

This very basic philosophy is arguably the most essential basis for the modern concept of human rights, and the very key upon which he built and opened the doors to what Forbes Magazine calls the finest Five Star Kingdom in the World.

When I arrived in Miami for celebrity photographer David Vance's book signing last spring, it was to be the first stop on a whirlwind tour that would connect me to 4 of the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts around the world. Just a block from glittering Biscayne Bay in the heart of the city, the Four Seasons presents a sophisticated urban oasis within easy reach to the very best of Miami. And of the hotel's 221 spacious guest rooms, I was whisked to one of the 39 suites in the architecturally striking 70-story tower of glass and granite. The Fitness Facility is operated by Sports Club/LA, and the Business Center is actually staffed with attendants to personally assist you 24-hours a day. The magnificent outdoor terrace comes with a sparkling pool around which personal caterers swirl with cool towels, Evian spritzes and frozen fruit brochettes. A canopy of umbrellas and private cabanas preside over both the excitement of the city and the splendor of the sea. And when the Consulting Director of Public Relations, Evelyn Bastos-Klein, invited us to an impromptu lunch at the hotel's casual but elegant restaurant, Acqua, I'd almost forget I was there on business



at all. The innovative contemporary seafood somehow pairs with the South American art and sculpture, and crescendos in a message of converging world culture into a single and utterly unique component of society.

The one-hour flight onto Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport was but a quick, one night, overseas port of call to Europe. Situated in the heart of the South's Capital City, the Four Seasons Hotel represents the only five-star and five-diamond hotel in Atlanta. One climbs the grand and formal stair to Midtown's most popular living room, the distinguished Park 75 Lounge and Terrace, where a full bar, light fare and even the hotel's signature Coca-Cola chocolate cake will dare you not to linger through the night. Reluctant, we collected our things and settled our check before heading back to our room, but as we passed from one side of the room to the other I noticed an unmistakable energy at its center. The hour was near midnight, the pianist still taking requests and when I recognized Patti LaBelle, the Godmother of Soul who's sold over 50 million records worldwide, well, I decided to put the three together. With all the confidence of someone with nothing to lose, I approached the distinctive high-octave belting diva with my simple request. "Over the Rainbow?" I asked, pulling a crisp one-dollar bill from my wallet and placing it atop the piano. She crosses the room, her entourage silent, and I, needless to say, helplessly still. "Somewhere over the rainbow?" she began, framing the lyrics more as a question than a statement and I was struck in that moment by how every message and inquiry of hope connect us all. As I left my ultra-spacious guest room that next morning and descended the 50-story



Opposite Page
Top: Biscayne Bay
Middle: The Lobby at the Four Seasons Miami
Bottom: Rooftop Terrace and Pool
Above: The Lobby at the Four Seasons Canary Wharf
Right: Park 75 Lounge and Terrace

hotel and residential tower, the lyrics I'd heard the night before still lingered in my mind. Indeed, the skies were blue on that particularly cool spring morning as we embarked with Delta Airlines on our continuing journey to England, The Land of the Angels.

Only an interview with the United Kingdom's then Prime Minister-to-be, David Cameron, could have warranted that particular journey for me, and when I arrived to his having canceled our appointment I felt, well, oddly cheated into an all-expenses paid vacation. I still saw the musical, Enron, and even King Henry VIII's Hampton Court. But the real jewel of that particular crown is, for me, the Four Seasons at Canary Wharf. Built on the historic site of the West India Quay – the once busy sea port for Britain's spice trades - the hotel's riverfront location is today the heart of the Financial District, and when London welcomes the Olympic Games in 2012 it will be the only luxury brand within 10 minutes of Olympic Park. Her 142 spacious guest rooms and suites exude contemporary

quality
 miami

atlanta

service



elegance and preside over the River Thames and the city beyond. In fact, nowhere in the City of London is there a better view of the most visited and celebrated city in the world.

Upon our return to the US, our trip crescendoed in a visit to New York City: whose indomitable spirit exerts the most powerful influence over global finance, media, culture, art, commerce, fashion, cuisine, education, research and, of course, the best entertainment in the world. We'd been invited to see the Broadway Musical, *La Cage aux Folles*, and to interview the Tony Award winner for Best Leading Actor, Douglas Hodge. Inspired by the 1973 French farce by Jean Poiret, the comedy centers on confusion that ensues when the son of a gay man and his cross-dressing partner brings his beautiful fiancée and her ultra conservative parents home for dinner. I came, of course, expecting to be amused, but what I couldn't see from the very traditional point of view of my past was the present, and a future of ideas aligning in almost kismet precision. There wasn't a guest in the theater under the age of 50 and all laughed and cried together at the farcical comedy about an incoherent class system. At the close of the second act, in fact, Douglas Hodge, who upon learning that he's unwanted and not useful serenades us to the intermission. "I am what I am. I am my own special creation," he



York one can't help but notice a tiny alcove devoted to the famous toy manufacturer and billionaire, Ty Warner. His Original Nine Beanie Babies were launched in 1993 and are still being traded today representing just one of the many critical paths to popular culture. Soaring up through the towers and into my 39th floor suite I should have been amused that a toy manufacturer such as Ty Warner would also moonlight as a luxury hotel owner. But as I gazed over Central Park that evening I realized that, in fact, there are no contradictions. Only the premises matter. And as Isadore Sharp said it just 50 years ago, "We aim to treat others as we want to be treated ourselves."

These are the golden threads that serve and connect the Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts throughout the world. For whether you're a platinum record-selling Diva, an ambitious Member of Parliament, a billionaire toymaker, or just a middle-aged Drag Queen your dress and appearance, station or class are all relevant, welcome and resplendent here. "For life," I once heard it said, "is a sham 'til you can shout - I am what I am!" CHARLATAN



Opposite Page
Top: View of the River Thames
Middle: Quadrato Restaurant
Bottom: Lobby at the Four Seasons Canary Wharf

Top: New York City skyline
Middle: New York City's Central Park
Bottom: Create a private catering event at the Four Seasons New York.



whispers, stepping from the stage and into the audience, "so come take a look, give me the hook, or the ovation," he continues, as the orchestra picks up and tries to reach him. "Take a little pride then, not a place to hide in, life's not worth a damn 'til you can say - Hey, I am what I am!"

The walk from the Theater District to the Upper East Side is beautiful in Spring, and just beyond Carnegie Hall there's a tiny restaurant called, The Russian Tea Room. Opened in 1927 by members of the Russian Imperial Ballet, it was created as a hideaway for the Russian ballerinas and other expatriates who were then unwelcome in society, too. Serving until midnight, we peeked in very close to that hour, took a seat in the signature red banquettes, and enjoyed the tea and chocolates around Maitre d's story of revolution before continuing to our final destination at the Four Seasons New York: a conjectural palace that presides over the world's most renowned, if leading centers of Art and Culture. Madison Square Garden, the Museum of Modern Art, and the most coveted Fashion Houses in the world are just steps away from I.M. Pei's Grand Lobby of Limestone, which, coincidentally, he also used to remodel the Mese du Louvre. But on through the magnificent entrance at the Four Seasons in New

