



A new era of hospitality has arrived – one that honors legacy while fearlessly shaping what’s next. Rooted in nostalgia, yet driven by innovation, this moment calls for design that transcends trends, bringing generations together through experiences that are both timeless and transformative.

# Hospitality's Next Frontier

**PICTURE THIS...** It's 1983. You've just turned 18 and are joining your parents at one of South Florida's iconic hospitality escapes: The Boca Raton. Mizner-inspired fountains, luxury boutiques, fine dining, serene pools – it's everything you imagined as you step into adulthood.

Fast forward to 2025. Now 60, your children and grandchildren surprise you with a family getaway to the same property. As you arrive, the iconic porte cochere, graceful sculptures, and familiar sense of tranquility welcome you back. You wonder how the resort you knew as a young adult will accommodate three generations – until you spot the new kid's zone, a water park, and flexible amenities that are seamlessly woven into the property you've always loved.

## Together By Design

Hospitality is an industry that has endured much fluctuation. Yet with the global market expected to surpass \$7 trillion by 2030, the sector continues to thrive, propelled by a growing desire for connection and shared experiences.

“In recent years, society has faced a variety of challenges and divisions, reminding us just how meaningful quality time with loved ones is,” shares EDSA Principal, Derek Gagne. “That said, I recently vacationed with my young daughter and father-in-law, and despite the age differences, we all had an incredible time – and intuitive design is the reason for that.”

With multi-generational travel at an all-time high, everything from aquatic amenities to off-site adventures must cater to visitors of all ages. “You can’t design for just one type of traveler anymore,” says Rob Hutcheson, a Principal at EDSA. “If you want to attract families, you have to think about everyone, from toddlers to retirees.” Splash pads and activity zones for kids, loungers and golf for grandparents, strong Wi-Fi and soundproof booths for working parents – even pet relief stations, “Each attraction and amenity must serve a greater purpose, all while empowering guests to curate their own journeys.”

“EACH AMENITY MUST SERVE A GREATER PURPOSE, ALL WHILE EMPOWERING GUESTS TO CURATE THEIR OWN JOURNEYS.”



EVERMORE RESORT | ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Such all-age offerings are central to destinations like the Evermore Resort in Orlando, Florida which reimagines the traditional vacation focus to multi-generational enjoyment. Families can choose to stay on-site at the Conrad hotel, or in an expansive vacation home, flat, or villa – each with access to a tropical beach, entertainment area, and iconic Crystal Lagoon®. In addition, fire pits, cabanas, and lush landscapes provide areas for relaxation, while kayaks, volleyball courts, and a family waterslide tee up opportunities for memory making the entire group can enjoy.

“Fostering spaces of individuality and togetherness, where people can go about their day and eventually come back together, is a new form of luxury,” mentions EDSA Vice President, Gabriela Patocchi. “It’s the quiet moments of solitude that evolve into shared experiences – those layered memories make the hospitality journey truly meaningful.”

## Timeless vs. Trend

While the travel industry evolves to meet the needs of a more inclusive and experience-driven audiences, timeless design must remain at the forefront for long-term success. “Today, features like surf lagoons and mega pools are in high demand,” states Hutcheson. “But to stand the test of time, these trending amenities must be thoughtfully integrated into a broader design framework. The goal is to create destinations that resonate and endure.”

That means going beyond current trends and expectations to deliver moments of surprise and delight – offering amenities guests did not initially anticipate. From vibrant retail and dining hubs to open green spaces and flexible programming, these layered activations ensure the guest experience remains engaging, relevant, and future ready. “It’s more than just checking the box with a flashy attraction,” notes Gagne. “It’s about crafting encounters that captivate and remind people why they chose to get away in the first place.”

## A BOOMING BUSINESS

HOSPITALITY CONTINUES TO THRIVE



### A TRILLION DOLLAR SURGE

The global hospitality market is projected to grow from \$5.71 trillion in 2025 to around \$7.74 trillion by 2030. (AltexSoft)



### REVENUE CLIMBING

Revenue per available room (RevPAR) globally is up 15% year-over-year, reaching \$112.50. (DRVN)



### TRIPS ON THE REBOUND

Worldwide, the total number of trips in 2025 is expected to hit 2.61 billion, up from 2.40 billion in 2019, indicating a sustained rebound in travel volume. (TravelPerk)

Take, for example, the Gaylord Rockies Resort and Spa in Aurora, Colorado, a property that recently underwent an \$800 million expansion. Through the addition of an outdoor events pavilion, expanded function spaces, and event lawns that complement the existing Arapahoe Springs Water Park, the resort has seen a notable increase in revenue, occupancy rates, and overall guest satisfaction. “This is just one example of how holistic guest experiences can transcend fleeting trends,” explains Patocchi. “When multi-dimensional amenities are thoughtfully integrated to serve diverse purposes and guest profiles, the result is a destination that remains relevant and in demand.”

Though often, it is not about adding something new but leveraging what already exists for a bigger impact. Patocchi continues, “Before making any recommendations to a client on how to improve their property, we conduct a thorough analysis of the site, its existing assets, the surrounding culture and history, natural systems, and social dynamics,” she explains. “From there, we identify what and where special moments can occur while remaining true to the place.”

At The Westin Beach Resort in the U.S. Virgin Islands, a recent repositioning effort infused the natural beauty of St. Thomas more deeply into the guest experience. Aesthetic enhancements throughout the site echo the island’s essence, fostering a seamless connection between the built environment and its stunning surroundings. In addition, an upgraded arrival sequence, expanded pool deck, and new amenity offerings not only strengthened the resort’s market position, but elevated its sense of place – contributing to increased occupancy and guest satisfaction.

As Hutcheson explains, these design moves go beyond aesthetics. “Every guest is looking for that ‘Instagrammable moment’, but from a design standpoint, it must feel authentic, not staged or gimmicky,” he notes. “Destinations become globally sought-after when visitors are immersed in experiences worth sharing. It’s the organic influence of past visitors – not just traditional marketing that drives a property’s success.”



WESTIN BEACH RESORT | ST. THOMAS, U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS



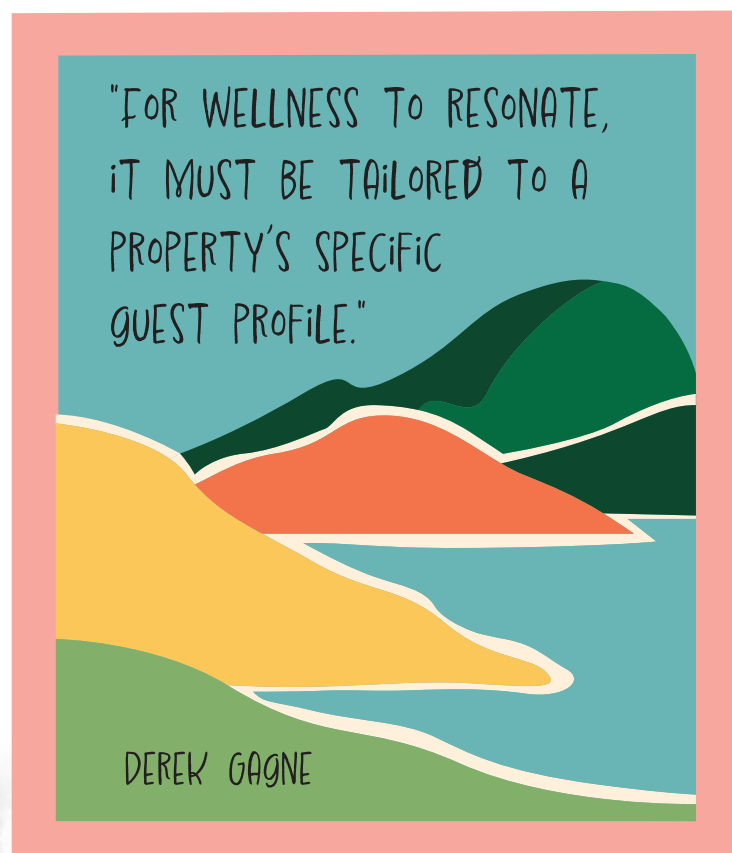
FOUR SEASONS RESORT AND PRIVATE RESIDENCES | OKINAWA, JAPAN



HILTON HOTEL | ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA



GAYLORD ROCKIES RESORT | AURORA, COLORADO



## Buzzword Breakdown

But embracing trends extends beyond site amenities into the very essence of places and people themselves. From Expedia and Vrbo to Tripadvisor and beyond, hospitality brands are rich in insights and forecasts, each offering a unique take on the future of travel. While these perspectives, especially when paired with guest feedback, are undeniably valuable, design is what ultimately determines whether these nuances have lasting impacts or quickly fade away.

As such, travel fads like ‘JOMO’ (the Joy of Missing Out), is gaining momentum with tourists seeking beach destinations that offer leisure, serenity, and a break from the noise. At the same time, APEX Travel is attracting popularity, drawing guests to high-altitude escapes where they can immerse themselves in adventure and rugged landscapes. Not to mention the resurgence of the All-Inclusive Resort, as money-savvy visitors want to cut costs without compromising their experience.

Yet perhaps the most influential movement shaping today’s hospitality landscape is the continued rise of wellness – a trend that shows no signs of slowing. “Wellness means many things to many people,” outlines Gagne. “But for it to genuinely resonate, it must be tailored to the needs and expectations of a property’s specific guest profile.” So, while wellness appears in the form of reflection pods and an outdoor spa at the Four Seasons Resort and Private Residences Okinawa in Japan – where the property focuses on celebrating its global Blue Zone roots, the Hilton Anaheim in California takes a different approach, featuring a redesigned pool and inviting landscapes that foster socialization and cater to visitors of all ages.

“Not everyone is going to spend \$400 on a spa day, but everyone, no matter where they’re staying, wants to leave feeling better than when they arrived,” observes Gagne. “So, whether that’s walkable trails, beachside ping-pong and Jenga, or outdoor yoga, wellness is about offering moments that reset and recharge the mind.”



## Tech Talk

While health and wellbeing held center stage in recent years, technology is quickly emerging as a close contender across the travel sphere. Patocchi comments, “With more than two thirds of all hoteliers already implementing or planning to introduce technology into their property, advancements are reshaping how guests interact and engage – from mobile check-ins and smart rooms to personalized service and seamless digital experiences.”

While guest-facing innovations often capture attention, forward-thinking amenities like the FlowRider at The Boca Raton or the automated sunscreen dispenser at Conrad Evermore are just the beginning. To maximize impact and investment, tech integration must deliver meaningful, behind-the-scenes enhancements.

“It’s less about the novelty of technology and more about how it informs smarter decision-making and better design outcomes,” Gagne points out. Beyond guest-facing features, tools like data capture, 3D modeling, and virtual simulations give designers a deeper understanding of the land, allowing them to approach projects with greater sensitivity. He elaborates, “We can protect natural resources while still meeting, and often exceeding, guest expectations. It’s as much a win for property owners as it is for the surrounding environment.”

Adding another layer to the conversation, Hutcheson emphasizes that the key to integrating technology lies in its subtlety. “Technology should enhance the design – not dominate it. The most effective tech is almost invisible. It streamlines operations, improves flow, and supports guests without ever getting in the way.” That said, wristband tracking, site-wide WiFi and crowd analytics are all subtle, yet effective, ways to heighten the guest journey. “When everything works, visitors can be fully present, and that’s the ultimate goal,” he adds.



## Actionable Advice

As the future of hospitality continues to evolve, one thing is certain – it holds exciting potential. But it is up to property owners, hoteliers, and operators, in collaboration with a well-rounded, experienced design team, to stay ahead of the curve. “I’d start by focusing on accessibility and inclusivity,” shares Gagne. “Not just in terms of welcoming guests of all ages and abilities, but in ensuring the property is always open and engaging.”

This mindset guided the revitalization of a legacy resort club on Long Island – a destination once limited to spring and summer, best known for its tennis courts and marina access. “We built upon the site’s historic roots, enhanced its recreational offerings with a mix of traditional tennis, in-demand pickleball courts, and a range of indoor and outdoor wellness-focused activities,” elaborates Gagne. “The result is a year-round resort that honors the club’s history and aligns with the expectations of visitors.”

Building on that idea, Patocchi stresses that a meaningful guest journey is rooted in authenticity. “Experiences must be rich in meaning, in memory, and in the way they connect people to place.” One of the most effective ways to achieve this is by ensuring a hotel or resort is a true reflection of its surroundings. “Are you using local materials? Does the property highlight regional art, culture, and cuisine? Does it evoke a sense of belonging or connection to something greater than oneself? These are the questions that should guide the design. She adds. “Because when a place feels authentic, it becomes unforgettable.” Equally important is designing with the future in mind. As guest

preferences shift, flexibility becomes the true marker of long-term prosperity. Resorts that incorporate open lawns, multi-purpose zones, and versatile gathering areas can pivot seamlessly. Hutcheson further underscores this principle. “Design with the unknown in mind. The greatest amenity you can offer is the ability to adapt. By planning for evolution from the outset, properties can ensure spaces that remain relevant, responsive, and resilient no matter what the future holds.”

And while scale and luxury have their place, Hutcheson finishes by affirming that impact doesn’t require extravagance. “You don’t need the biggest or fanciest resort to make a lasting impact. It’s about being purposeful – designing spaces that are thoughtful, true, and genuinely responsive to the needs of your guests. That’s the real next frontier of hospitality.”

