

Artistic training implemented at Fairmont



The Fairmont Dubai is the first property outside the company's US portfolio to implement the Fairmont Artistic Mixology Programme (FAME).

"Our company was signed on to deliver training for an initial 34 Fairmont properties," Kathy Casey Food Studios senior associate Christy Pope told *Caterer Middle East*.

"Fairmont was pleased with the response from bartenders and clientele so it made FAME a standard for the corporation in all bars and in all locations."

The benefit of the initiative for Fairmont Dubai would be differentiation explained the hotel's director of food and beverage Sunny Joseph.

"A guest can have a cocktail in our Fairmont property in New York and it will be consistent in terms of the taste and the look.

"The other side of the programme looks at making the cocktails hygiene-compliant. We are HACCP certified, but we still have to be consistent with that in the way we make the drink; the way we set up the bar; the way we put the ice in the bins, and so on," he added.

Regular mystery guest audits

would ensure that the cocktailing standards were maintained consistently and ongoing internal training — including a website featuring resources for all bar staff — would ensure the programme became a lasting part of the Fairmont Dubai's corporate culture and philosophy, he added.

"We are the first international hotel company that has really committed to something like this. We needed a lot of commitment from the owners to invest in the programme because it was not cheap."

The major challenge faced by Fairmont Dubai in the run up to the programme's implementation was sourcing all the ingredients and equipment.

"There are specific guidelines in terms of what products can be used. It took a year just to get the logistics right," said Joseph.

"A&E and MMI have helped us to source some of our ingredients from the UK, but with the list of equipment that we were asked to purchase, everything needed to be ordered online and the companies in LA would not deliver things to this part of the world."

Where ingredients proved impossible to find, Fairmont Dubai opted to remove certain items from its cocktail menu rather than offer a potentially inferior substitute.

"Probably any other hotel would just use what was available, but not us," said Joseph.

Once fully implemented, the FAME programme would tie in with the Fairmont Residents Club guest recognition programme, linking Fairmont Dubai's F&B outlets with other Fairmont properties around the world Joseph added.

"We use the system to keep track of guest preferences, so if a guest likes to drink margaritas at Fairmont in New York then when the guest checks in to their room here we could have one

waiting for him and it will taste exactly the same."

The next two years would see FAME training spread across all the group's other properties internationally said Joseph.

"Our mixologist Ryan Magarian, who has a lot of experience in creating cocktail cultures for large-scale hospitality environments, is going to Egypt to begin the implementation of the programme at the Fairmont Towers, Heliopolis," confirmed Kathy Casey Food Studios' Pope.

The FAME programme would also be carried out as part of the pre-opening training at Fairmont's forthcoming properties in the Middle East, including those on the Palm Jumeirah, in Abu Dhabi and at The Wave Muscat.

Programme mission and training

The Intensive Mixology Training programme from Kathy Casey Food Studios provides bartenders with the following:

- Introduction to mixology: a history of the American cocktail
- Intensive mixology training covering various techniques

- Signature vintage cocktail training: a step-by-step guide to the evolution of the cocktail
- Signature modern cocktail training sessions
- In-depth spirits training
- Comprehensive cocktail and spirits testing for all staff