

# Top hospitality trends 2018

 By [Leon Meyer](#)

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*Leon Meyer, general manager at The Westin Cape Town shares his top hospitality trends for 2018.*



Leon Meyer, GM The Westin Cape Town

## **Millennials - generation expectation:**

Let's get straight to the point, millennials are individuals born between 1980 and 2000 and are characterised to have very unique views on life, technology and social interaction. In the hospitality industry, we expect millennials to contribute 50% of our total room nights across all accommodation sectors by 2020. It's therefore of utmost importance that we understand, plan and change accordingly to exceed their expectations if we want to remain competitive.

## **Personalisation - the experience mindset:**

There is a clear global trend that people are looking for experiences and stories to enrich their lives. They want to share those memories instantly through social media, they want to feel valued and appreciated and, more importantly, they want their experience personalised and unique. There have been some great innovations and changes in the hospitality industry, allowing us to provide such personalisation and an entirely new industry has emerged to facilitate experiences that are 100% unique. It's critical we remain focused and challenged to keep innovating and to provide such experiences.

## **Hospitality and technology - where to next:**

In today's information age everything we can and could imagine has been impacted, shaped and transformed to facilitate global communication and data sharing. In the hospitality space we have seen rapid and disruptive innovation and continually invest in more and more technology to ensure we remain relevant to our ever-changing customer preferences and buying patterns.

An example would be customer feedback. In 2000, Trip Advisor was created by Stephen Kaufer and has grown from strength to strength with over 500 million reviews. Today it shows customers and the industry how technology would shape our business. We need systems such as Revinate and TrustYou to search and collect reviewed information across more than 200 different review sites available to our local and international customer base. This ensures we remain educated on our customers' feedback and more importantly remain engaged with our customers who take the time to provide their reviews. Our review averages determine our market success and play an enormous part in how we run our business.

## **Balance - health, wellness and well-being:**

The world has changed. People are more focused and driven in their personal pursuit of achieving a balanced life. These demands have shaped the hospitality industry and today we see more "lifestyle" hospitality brands than ever before.



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## Employee upliftment - a changing perspective:

“Companies should put employees first” - Richard Branson. At the time of first reading Branson’s bold comment, I was slightly unsure if this would be the correct approach to managing a customer-centric business. However, in time it became apparent and logical that these, in fact, are very wise words. The majority of the “Best Companies To Work For” all live by this concept and have shown with repetitive success that this is indeed a change that is required in many businesses.

## Sustainability - a crisis can bring much-needed change:

Bringing it home, as the Western Cape struggles with the worst drought in a century I believe great innovation and sustainable long-term best practices will define Cape Town and the hospitality industry over the next 10 years.

The Westin Cape Town as a team has been actively implementing innovative and sustainable solutions to reduce our water usage in the medium to long-term. We can confirm that we are now saving on average 1,000,000 litres of water per month compared to same time last year, and we continue to work with all areas of our business to challenge the status quo without significantly impacting our guests’ stay.

## ABOUT LEON MEYER

Leon Meyer is the General Manager of luxury city centre hotel, The Westin Cape Town. Meyer formerly held senior positions at local hotel groups, including Sun International and African Pride Hotels. Meyer also spent time on three international cruise liners between 2000 and 2007.  
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