

A photograph of two women sitting at a table in a restaurant, laughing and talking. The woman on the left is wearing a patterned sleeveless top and holding a drink. The woman on the right is wearing a blue and white striped top. There are plates of food on the table, including a salad. The background is a blurred restaurant interior.

SEVENROOMS

HOTEL F&B:
LOCAL MARKETING

**UNLEASH THE REVENUE
POTENTIAL OF LOCALS**

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From rooftop bars and pools to hotspot restaurants and swanky lounges, today's hotel F&B experience looks nothing like yesterday's. Modern travelers look for properties with amenities, including F&B, and hotel operators are investing accordingly.

But the trends shaping this hospitality renaissance extend beyond travelers into the daily lives of locals.

We live in an experiential economy where consumers seek new and exciting experiences in their day-to-day lives. Hotels are uniquely positioned to capitalize on this lucrative trend by providing these experiences closer to home where they can be enjoyed many times over and create loyal guests for life across the portfolio.

Dive in as we explore how you can leverage F&B to engage locals. Hear directly from EAST, Miami, a Swire Hotel property, on how they successfully built a local following for their F&B outlets.



PART 01

HOTEL F&B GAINS MOMENTUM

For the first time ever in 2015, consumers spent more on eating out than buying groceries¹. And this trend is continuing to pick up steam, particularly with Millennials: in 2017, 7% of spending by consumers under 25² was on food away from home. This growing consumer segment creates a broader target audience for F&B experiences.

According to EuroMonitor International, consumer values have fundamentally shifted to prefer experiences that bring happiness and well-being over material things. Spending on these types of experiences, including traveling and dining out, is expected to rise to **\$8.0 trillion by 2030**.³



\$8.0 TRILLION BY 2030

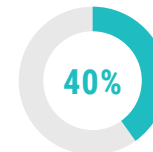
GROWTH TRENDS ARE ALSO SPILLING INTO HOTEL F&B. CONSIDER THIS:



Hotel F&B has shown a robust 5.5% annual growth rate every year since 2011.⁴



Hotel guests spent \$48.7 billion at restaurants, bars, banquets, room service and mini bars in 2017.⁴



40% of hotel owners and 33% of independents say they plan to increase F&B square footage.⁵

1. US Commerce Department

2. <https://www.businessinsider.com/average-restaurant-takeout-spending-generation-united-states-2018-9>

3. <https://blog.euromonitor.com/experiences-overtaking-consumers-buying/>

4. <https://www.technomic.com/>

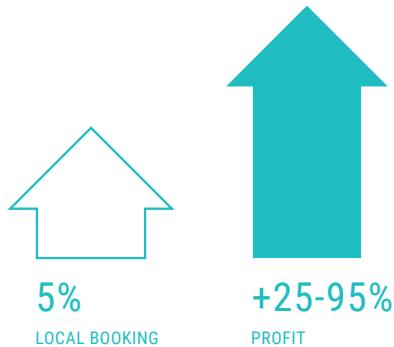
5. <https://www.hotelmanagement.net/food-beverage/avendra-study-uncovers-trends-supporting-f-b-growth/>

PART 02

WHY LOCALS?

When we talk about hotels as part of the travel industry, we overlook the important fact that locals can play a pivotal role in a hotel's profitability. In fact, a strong F&B presence with locals can help fortify your bottom line against seasonal travel slumps.

Increasing your F&B retention rate (a.k.a. increasing the percentage of locals in your book) by 5% can increase your profits in that area by 25% to 95%.⁶



Think about your F&B profit for the year, and then multiply it by 1.25 to see the potential boost in revenue you could achieve.

WINNING OVER THE LOCAL CROWD PAYS DIVIDENDS...

The easiest way to improve your restaurant's repeat visitors rate is with locals. And the benefits don't stop there.

LOCALS CAN

- Generate repeat F&B business
- Lend ambiance and local flair that overnight guests crave
- Build a guest database you can target with marketing year round
- Provide lift to fend off potential seasonal dips
- Recommend hotel to visiting friends
- Choose the brand when traveling
- Become influencers/followers for your social media accounts

“

**YOU CANNOT GET AN
INFLUENCE FROM THE
CUISINE OF A COUNTRY IF
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.
YOU'VE GOT TO STUDY IT.**

– CHEF FERRAN ADRIÀ



PART 03

HOW TO CREATE A RESTAURANT THAT STANDS ON ITS OWN

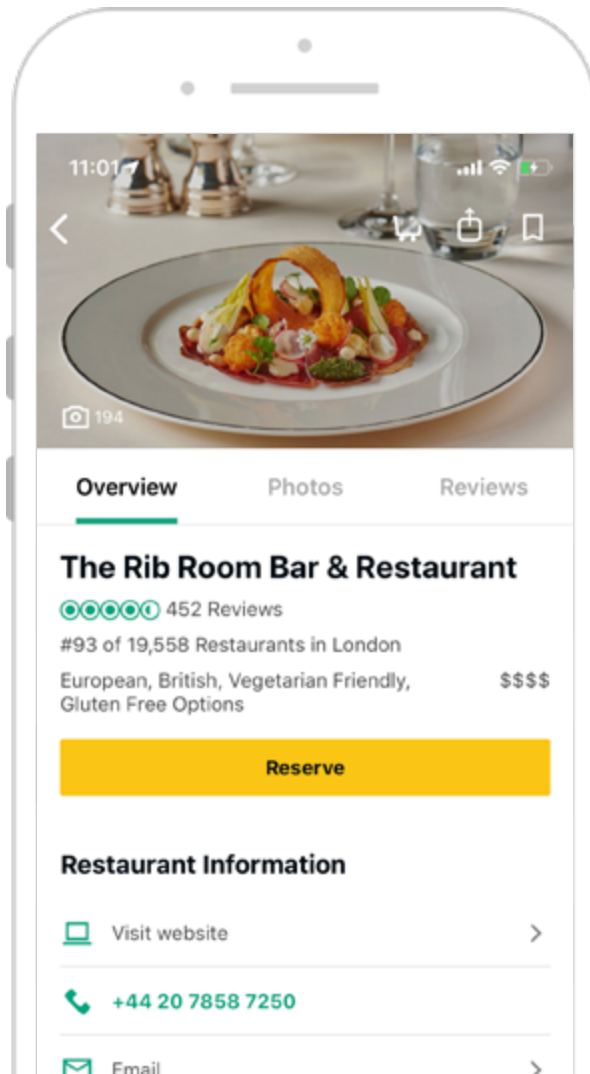
Developed with locals in mind, F&B programs can create enticing spaces to work, relax, socialize, and most importantly, eat and drink. They must be compelling enough to get someone to come in, even if they aren't staying upstairs.

From naming and brand aesthetics to your website and social channels, think about your restaurant as an independent, free-standing concept, separate from your hotel, that competes on its own.

REFLECT THE MARKET & CULTURE **AUTHENTICALLY:**

Your restaurant's city, state, and culture — is key in zeroing in on the decor, the chef, and the menu. A winning concept in one geography doesn't necessarily make it a winning concept in another. Bring in local flavors and design elements that genuinely reflect local culture. This could mean partnering with a well-known local chef or purveyor to create buzz and drive home the local flair at your establishment.

Once you've shaped your unique brand, it's time to spread the word, and the best place to start is online, where consumers spend the majority of their time.



CREATE A DISTINCT ONLINE PRESENCE:

When a guest or prospective guest googles your restaurant, it should be easy to find. Claim your listings on search engines like Google ([Google My Business](#)) and Bing ([Places for Business](#)).

Don't forget local review sites – take the time to create or claim your business profiles on [Yelp](#) and [TripAdvisor](#), adding your direct online booking link where possible.

WEBSITE

Your restaurant's website should have all of these components:



Menu



Photos



Location



Contact Information



Booking Policies



Easy-to-Use Online
Reservations Widget



PRO TIP

If you choose to host your restaurant's information on your hotel's website, don't accidentally bury the page. It's easy to purchase a URL and redirect it to your hotel website.

For example, *The Commons Club* at the *Virgin Hotel*, purchased the URL:

www.commonclub.com

and redirected it to:

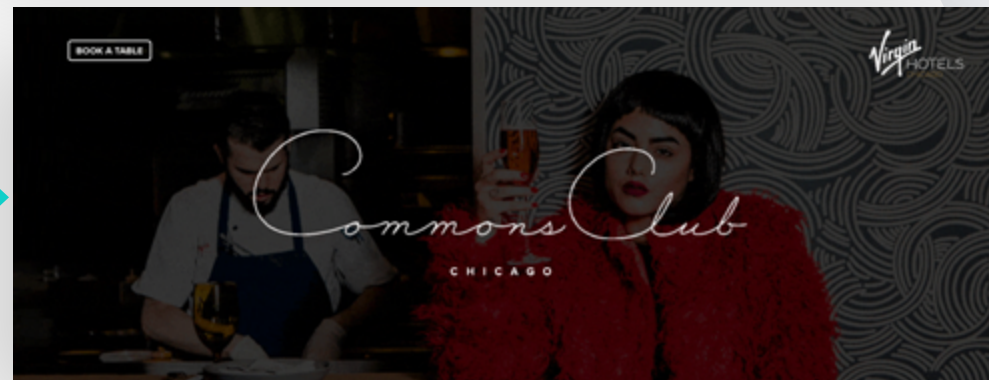
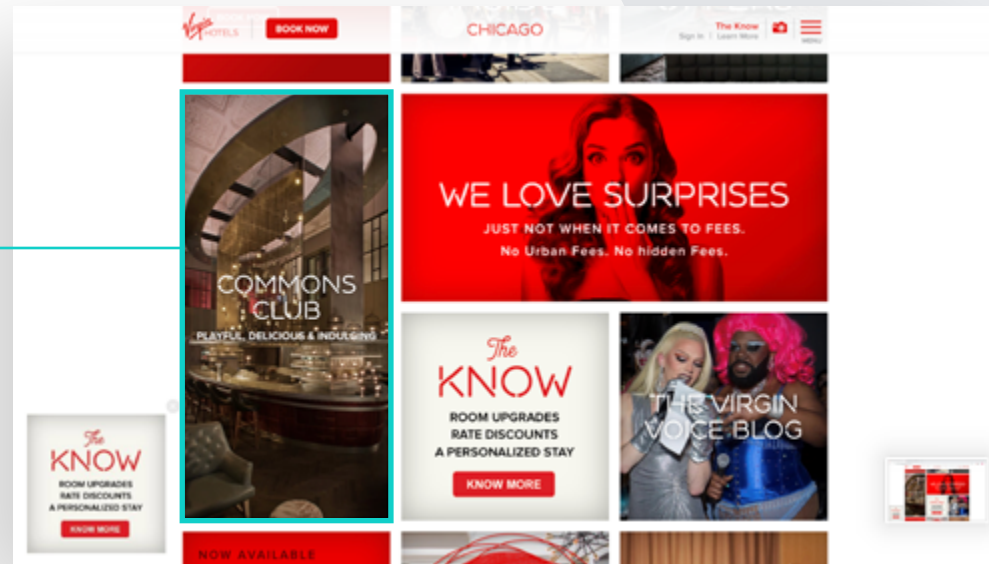
virginhotels.com/the-commons-club/

Guests visiting your hotel's website should be able to easily find information on your restaurant and book a table directly.

For example, Commons Club inside Virgin Hotels in Chicago has its own restaurant website, linked to the hotel's website on their homepage, in their top navigation, and under their dining options. Whether a local is searching for Commons Club directly or exploring the hotel's dining options, the restaurant makes it easy for the diner to find and book.

Bonus Content:

[4 Keys to the Best Restaurant Websites](#)



SEARCH MARKETING & GOOGLE:

There's a lot you can do here but to start:

1. Identify core keywords you want the search engine to know about you and include them in your website page headers, meta title and meta descriptions.
2. Use a free tool like [Google's Keyword Planner](#) to see search volume for those terms. (We suggest you try variations of a restaurant term + your city name.)
3. Contact third parties you work with, who are also bidding for your core keywords, and request to be removed from their Google Ads list.
4. Consider Google Ads for your brand terms to appear in sponsored search ads. This can give you extra real estate on the search engine results page.

Bonus Content:

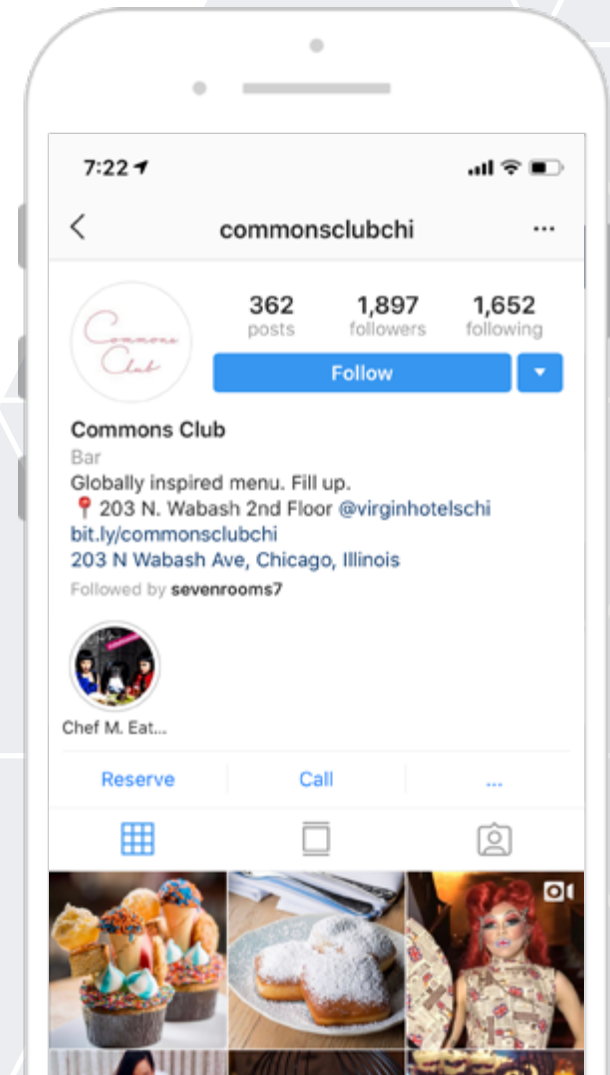
[5 Ways to Boost Your Restaurant's SEO & Online Visibility](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Create social media accounts on Instagram, Facebook, etc. that are dedicated just to your restaurant. With unique accounts, you can easily drive people to book restaurant reservations right from your social pages and promote specific events. Carefully curate these pages with content that speaks to a wider audience than the hotel guest to attract more local business.

Bonus Content:

[How to Use Instagram Business to Increase Awareness And Drive More Reservations](#)

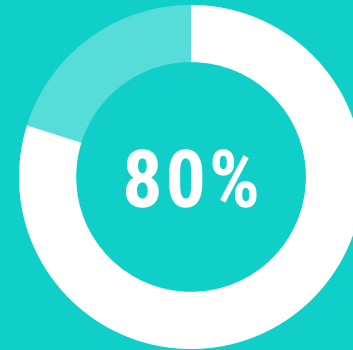


PART 04

HOW TO APPROACH YOUR MARKETING: **THINK LIKE A LOCAL**

Once you have your unique restaurant brand and people are discovering your business, it's time to move onto more advanced strategies: segmenting your marketing. One size doesn't fit all when it comes to marketing, especially to your dining-only guests vs. your overnight guests. It's important to define your two audiences, what matters to each, and target your marketing efforts accordingly.

Target these two distinct audiences with separate ad campaigns, copy, and promotions across your channels. When you're appealing to locals, it's important to tailor your content and strategies to their preferences and needs.



**80% OF CONSUMERS
ARE MORE LIKELY TO
DO BUSINESS WITH A
COMPANY THAT OFFERS
A PERSONALIZED
EXPERIENCE.⁷**

CREATE PROGRAMMING **THAT ATTRACTS LOCALS**

Below are six actionable strategies to attract more locals to your venue.

01

Develop a seasonal tasting menu of locally sourced fare, calling out any local purveyors by name. Build buzz by marketing these menus through your social channels.

02

Partner with a renowned local celebrity chef for an exclusive “Chef’s Table” event that specifically caters to local foodies. Invite local wine writers to partner with your in-house chef and sommelier to create a wine paired menu.

03

Host a cooking class for local business groups looking for team-building activities outside of the office or for parents and kids on the weekend.

04

Create a “secret” locals-only menu that is only available on certain days, and only to guests with a local address or ID.

05

Use the holidays to host special events that involve families, such as brunch with Santa, a Halloween afternoon costume contest (when your restaurant is usually closed to drive off-hour revenue), or a Thanksgiving-themed dinner supporting a local food pantry.

06

Partner with local bookstores to host book signing events and offer a special menu before and after the event.



PRO TIP

Promote your social channels and hashtags at the events to encourage attendees to post their photos. This helps create authentic content for your social pages.

The guests who enjoy these programs — especially locals — are your best sources of marketing. If locals have a memorable experience at your hotel and with your brand, they’re more likely to recommend you to their out-of-town friends and give positive feedback on review sites. This is the fastest way to drive interest in your property from locals and visitors alike.

STRATEGICALLY LEVERAGE LOCAL CHANNELS

FIND MICRO INFLUENCERS:

Today's brands know micro is best. Instead of paying a high-priced influencer to visit your restaurant, engage with micro influencers within your city. Invite them in to share a meal with friends and share their experience on their social channels (and tag your restaurant!).

To find micro influencers, go into your Followers list on Instagram and look for the profiles with the blue checkmark. These influencers have higher engagement from their followers than the average Instagram user, which means more extensive reach for your venue.

IMPLEMENT A LOCAL PR STRATEGY:

Identify the top local publications and papers that "in the know" people read around town, and make it a goal to get a feature or a mention in a write-up about restaurants/local events. Similar to treating influencers to meals, consider inviting local writers to experience your restaurant. You'll wow them and they'll want to write about what your hotel and restaurant are up to.



CHOOSE THE RIGHT LOCAL HASHTAGS:

Search for local hashtags with the highest traffic on each social site and use these as your key tags in your own posts. Ask your micro influencers to use your hashtags when they promote their experiences, or do this more subtly with a printed card with the hashtags at the table.

For help creating your hashtags, leverage free online tools:

[Hashtagify.me](#) - Search a complete database of hashtags and find and use hashtags from influential people in your industry and market.

[Trendsmap](#) - View the top searched hashtag by city, country, and region to get ahead of what's trending.

INVITE INFLUENCERS TO AN EVENT OR PRIVATE DINNER:

Because of their audience reach, it's worth hosting an event or dinner where you invite these users to bring their friends for a complimentary experience or private event. Just make sure that there's an understanding that they share the experience as an Instagram story or post. You can repurpose their photos and posts on your own channels and website.

SPREAD THE WORD: BE AN ACTIVE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

66% of restaurants sponsor community and/or charity organizations, making it the most common form of restaurant marketing and an important channel to reach locals.⁸

The key is to get in front of locals in an authentic way that makes sense for your brand. **Here are a few ideas to get your creative juices flowing:**



Sponsor a community sporting, music, or gaming event. If the event has a sizeable enough crowd of locals, it could be worth the cost of locking down a food truck.



Connect with local schools or universities to help mentor youths in the kitchen and teach them about a career in hospitality. Or spice it up and feature student artwork on your outlet's walls.



Surprise local workers with lunch by coordinating with a local school, hospital or non-profit to arrange a date, time, and menu. An extra plus if you can capture photos to use as social content!



Host a stand or food truck at community fairs and events. If your community has a regular farmer's market, consider being a meal option for people doing their shopping.



Support a local organization with creative monthly initiatives to collect donations. For example, donate 20% of sales of a 'local' cocktail to a local charity.



When the kitchen is closed, lend your space to local community organizations. Or host a "Dinner with a Cause" event, where a percentage of the proceeds benefit a designated organization.



LOCALIZE YOUR MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

SEND LOCAL SPECIFIC EMAILS:

Email marketing remains a staple in the marketing toolbox because it's cheap and effective. It gives you an easy-to-execute way to stay in front of your target audiences. A monthly newsletter targeted to locals can feature new menu items, recipes, behind-the-scenes stories with your chefs and local partners, and showcases for upcoming events. The most important thing is to keep the content timely and relevant. In dedicated emails promoting events and other initiatives, be sure to include a clear Call-to-Action button.

MAKE LOCALS FEEL HEARD ACROSS CHANNELS:

Respond to every comment that your brand is tagged in, especially when the comments aren't positive. Treat local comments with extra care — for example, invite them back in for a locals-only special. The more your restaurant interacts with its social media followers and reviewers on sites like Yelp, the stronger your personal connection to your guests.



PRO TIP

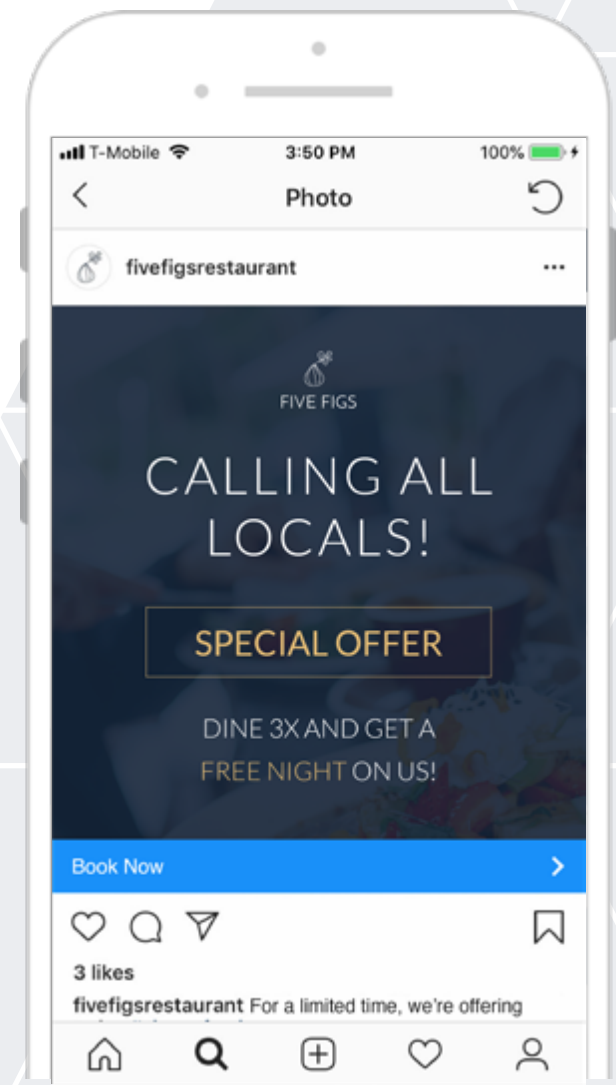
The results of your email campaigns depend largely on your email list. Make it a priority to collect email addresses from your locals. Have a business card drop at the host stand, collect email addresses when guests book a reservation online and by phone, and offer fun promotions for joining the mailing list.

GEO-TARGET YOUR MESSAGING:

To promote local-specific specials or events on channels like Facebook and Instagram, geo-target by selecting specific locations (within 10 miles of your business) and focus who can see your search.

Facebook Ads are a great channel to reach just about anyone, but the content — text, images, what it promotes, when it runs — is what makes it resonate with specific audiences. Let's use an example of promoting an offer: 'stay 3 nights, get the 4th night free.' This will certainly appeal to your overnight guests and should be used on your hotel specific social channels. As a local, I'm probably not interested in a local hotel night offer, but I may very well be interested in a 'dine 3x, get a free night' offer for any property.

Paid search ads on Google or Bing can also target by location, so your keyword ads will only appear to customers in your area.



PART 05

HOW TO TURN LOCALS INTO REGULARS: **GUEST DATA IS KEY**

Guest data is your secret weapon. It's important to know the guest, understand their preferences and make them feel special every time they dine.

With the help of a restaurant CRM system and reservation system, you can tag locals to easily pull them as a separate audience for marketing campaigns. When a local dines with you, save their name, photo, home location, birthday, and other details so they are easy to recognize when they return or show up at another one of your properties.

From understanding dietary restrictions and preferences to viewing past visits, order history and feedback, having the right data at the right time empowers your service staff to provide the level of personalized service to make a repeat visitor feel like a VIP.

51% OF AMERICANS SAID THAT A SERVER SIMPLY REMEMBERING THEM FROM A PREVIOUS VISIT WOULD MAKE THEIR DINING EXPERIENCE STAND OUT.⁷

NEXT, OFFER SPECIAL PROMOTIONS TO LOCALS TO BRING THEM BACK – NOT JUST TO THE RESTAURANT BUT TO YOUR HOTEL BRAND.

HERE ARE A FEW IDEAS:



At the beginning of each month, send **a birthday email** to locals who have dined with you and who have upcoming birthdays during that month.



Incentivize locals to regularly dine at your restaurant with a promotion to **dine 3x to receive a free room night** at a hotel property of their choice in your portfolio. This helps build overarching brand loyalty. During shoulder season, offer your locals an exclusive discount to stay with you for one or two nights.



Create **local-only perks** or loyalty programs. For example, give locals a card for a special discount.



Partner with a local **babysitting service** to invite locals who have visited your restaurant to come back for a parents' night out. Set up babysitting in an empty events space. Kids can watch a movie in their PJs with pizza, while the parents dine in peace.



Run promotions on holidays like Valentine's Day or New Year's to encourage locals to spend the special occasion at your restaurant and make it a **staycation** with a night at the hotel, too.



Promote **friends and family discounts** for all your hotels to your most loyal guests each year. Use data to identify your most loyal restaurant guests, and reward them with discounts on their future stays.



PART 06

NOTES FROM THE FIELD: 'LOCAL' TALK

east
東隅 MIAMI



ERIKA THOMAS,

Senior Marketing & Communications Manager

Local hot spot EAST, Miami has made winning with locals a strategic priority. Senior Marketing & Communications Manager, Erika Thomas offers details on how the popular hotel group keeps Miamians coming back for more.



“

**SHOWING OUR
GUESTS A GOOD
TIME, MAKING THEM
FEEL AT HOME, AND
BEING AUTHENTIC
GOES A LONG WAY
IN MIAMI.**





IT'S ALL ABOUT MARKETING.

“We take a multi-channel approach to our digital marketing to make sure the local community is informed about what we’re up to. We use social media, email marketing, paid search and our websites. We have used giveaways to launch new menu items and expand our brand into new niches.”

PARTNER UP.

“We have a great PR agency that helps us brainstorm programming and trends and what will resonate with locals vs what people will travel for. We also partner with local brands and influencer accounts that make sense for us, so we get them into the restaurant to then spread the word and make sure part of their communities. We also host events that showcase our F&B venues, and the goal is to really wow attendees so they come back as individual diners.”

OFFER A UNIQUE DINING EXPERIENCE.

“For us, it was important to create an authentic environment for the restaurant that would appeal to anyone looking for a unique dining experience, not just those staying at the hotel. People love to go to try new places, but they are also creatures of habit. Show them a great time, make them feel at home, and be authentic, and you’ll create a regular. The food, and the full EAST, Miami experience - those usually speak stronger than anything we can say about ourselves via marketing. It ultimately comes down to the guest experience and the confidence of making it great every night, even for a local who has so many options.”

TREAT LOCALS LIKE LOCALS.

“The hotel is constantly building new ways to reach new local guests, and keep them coming back for more. This includes developing “invite only” programs that specifically target repeat customers. Rewarding these guests with an exclusive affiliation makes them feel like VIPs, and drives more business from the property. So our CRM (guest database) is a huge part of how we can execute on targeted marketing efforts like these.”

TRY NEW THINGS.

“In September we hosted a wine promotion. We shared it online and promoted it via in-house hosts and waitstaff, and it proved to be successful in moving the product in record time. But it was only successful because we had the right tools to make guests aware of specials and promotions, and then execute on them efficiently. In return, the guests felt extra special.”

COMMIT TO USING DATA.

“The key is having the right data to know who is a local and if they are a regular. We tag all return guests’ profiles with information like their birthdays, anniversaries, likes and dislikes, and any allergies. It can feel time consuming but going this extra mile to collect this data pays off. Repeat guests want to be treated like repeat guests and not some stranger. This is even more true when it’s a local at a hotel. They want to feel special and feel like they are on the inside.”





SCHEDULE YOUR DEMO

WIN WITH LOCALS
READY TO PUT YOUR F&B OFFERINGS TO WORK
ATTRACTING LOCALS?

SevenRooms empowers operators to create direct and personalized relationships with guests to make exceptional experiences possible. The company's reservation, seating and guest management solutions boost revenue and enable personalized service and marketing. SevenRooms has restaurant, hotel and nightlife clients in more than 250 cities worldwide, including: Jumeirah Group, The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas, Standard Hotels, LDV Hospitality, TAO Group, Bagatelle, Altamarea Group, NoHo Hospitality Group, Chase Hospitality Group, Corbin and King and The h.wood Group.

Learn more at sevenrooms.com, or contact us at sales@sevenrooms.com.

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