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**A Decade of Event Planning Success at Hyatt Regency Trinidad**

*Director of Events, Heather Doughlin talks event planning trends, advice for planners and more*

**PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad – October 15, 2018** – Hyatt Regency Trinidad, located in the Port of Spain International Waterfront Development, is the premier business hotel in the Caribbean and has hosted hundreds of events and meetings since its opening 10 years ago. Director of Events, Heather Doughlin, is a driving force behind the events that take place weekly at the hotel. Joining the team in October 2009 in time to assist with the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, she continues to be an integral part of the hotel event planning success. In discussing the current event trends, Heather shares a few insights on industry lessons gained over the years and on current event trends

**Do you see a shift in what meeting planners have been requesting over the years?**

Most recently here in Trinidad, we have seen an interest in environmentally sustainable meetings where planners look for opportunities to cut back on waste by excluding items that do not contribute to the final outcome of the meeting. There is an emphasis on using recyclable products such as water pitchers and glasses instead of plastic bottles. There is also a reduction in single use plastic products such as packaged condiments and straws. Most notably we have seen a marked decrease in handouts for attendees, requests for photo copying and or pads/pens to be pre-set for meetings. Planners are also using environmentally friendly bags for attendees at trade shows and exhibitions.

Another shift is the request for more advanced technology enabled meetings. This had led to Hyatt Regency Trinidad's consistent update of technological capabilities and the need for our team to keep abreast of latest trends in the industry. Some planners now have an intense focus on requesting healthy food and beverage options, such as vegan meals and using free range protein sources. Recent trends also see a demand for a choice of gluten free options or eggless desserts.

**What is some advice you would lend to meeting planners breaking into the industry?**

One should be flexible by nature, willing to adapt quickly to change, be thirsty for knowledge about the craft and be willing to start at an administrative level if needed to gain experience. Much of meeting and event planning is gained from hands on experience. This can serve to reinforce academic learning. This is a service industry requiring passion for the job, and a desire to transform and surpass client's vision into the reality of a well-executed event. Lastly, seek industry certification - it can enhance the credibility for a meeting planner or special events coordinator because these credentials are key in demonstrating the knowledge to guide and direct the client while implementing industry standards. A knowledgeable meeting professional would suggest to a prospective client to review their upcoming schedule of event dates to gain leverage on negotiating the best rates for groups. At Hyatt Regency Trinidad we focus on

being knowledgeable event professionals delivering a consistently high level of service that clients expect and we do this through collaboration with all our departments.

**Working frequently with international events, how have you been able to create a comfortable and collaborative environment that meets the needs of a diverse group of people?**

Since Hyatt Trinidad has a diverse staff with people from various parts of the world, we use our global perspective and collaborate with different departments to create an experience that encompasses the diversity of the incoming group. When it comes to F&B, we like to incorporate a local flare to the menu with ingredients like pimento, cilantro, tamarind sauce and Trinidadian curry powder. We provide international favorites like continental breakfast. Overall, we make sure our friendly spirit can be felt during the planning and execution stages while remaining professional and knowledgeable.

**What differentiates Trinidad from the rest of the Caribbean in terms of hosting events/meetings/conferences?**

Trinidad, and more specifically, Port of Spain, is a financial capital for the region with banks, government offices and many headquarters located within the area. Business people from around the world congregate for conferences, meetings and events every year and we like to point out that our diverse culture intrigues visitors with our unique culinary options, festival culture and authentic hospitality.

*A Trinidad native and veteran Hyatt employee for more than 30 years, Heather Doughlin began her career as a Reservation Agent at Hyatt Regency Chicago. Progressive levels of responsibility saw her in positions spanning 10 hotels in other USA cities such as Atlanta, New York, Orlando, and Washington, DC. Her first foray into Conventions and Events was in the role of Administrative Assistant to the department. She worked through each management level before becoming an Events Director in 2002. As a Certified Meeting Professional since 1995, she pursued her passion to work with certification of meeting standards with the Events Industry Council for a short period. She served as the Program Director, promoting the Certified Meeting Professional program at industry events in various cities and was directly involved in the revamping and publication of the Council's 8th edition manual in 2008. In 2009 she returned as Director of Events at Hyatt Regency Trinidad where she remains passionate about promoting industry standards and guidelines.*

For more information or booking at Hyatt Regency Trinidad, please visit [www.trinidad.hyatt.com](http://www.trinidad.hyatt.com) or call 868-821-6550.

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**About Hyatt Regency Trinidad**

Designed as a premier meeting, convention, business, event and leisure travel property, the 423-room and 15 suite Hyatt Regency Trinidad is situated in the Port of Spain International Waterfront Development. The Hyatt's versatile event space showcases a 16,000 square-foot grand ballroom, and a 10,000 square-foot ballroom with translation facilities. Other guest facilities include one full-service restaurant; a lobby bar and lounge; a fitness center, and the 9,000 square-foot Spa Esencia. For more information and reservations, please visit [trinidad.hyatt.com](http://trinidad.hyatt.com) or call 1-800-233-1234. High-resolution images may be downloaded from [newsroom.hyatt.com](http://newsroom.hyatt.com).

**About Hyatt Regency**

The Hyatt Regency brand prides itself on connecting travelers to who and what matters most to them. More than 175 conveniently located Hyatt Regency urban and resort locations in over 30 countries around the world serve as the go-to gathering space for every occasion – from efficient business meetings to

memorable family vacations. The brand offers a one-stop experience that puts everything guests need right at their fingertips. Hyatt Regency hotels and resorts offer a full range of services and amenities, including the space to work, engage or relax; notable culinary experiences; technology-enabled ways to collaborate; and expert event planners who can take care of every detail. For more information, please visit [hyattregency.com](https://www.hyattregency.com). Follow @HyattRegency on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#), and tag photos with #AtHyattRegency.