



**ACCOR HOTELS**  
Feel Welcome

## Accor Hotels

### Pride in Diversity for Major Hotel Group

The mission of any hotel is to make guests feel comfortable and welcome. But at the heart of every organisation is its own staff and AccorHotels Apartments & Leases goes above and beyond to make all employees feel welcome and included through initiatives like A Taste of Harmony.

AccorHotels Apartments & Leases operates over 135 properties across Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia and Hawaii under the AccorHotels umbrella and has over 5500 employees working under its four trusted brands of Art Series, Peppers, Mantra and BreakFree.

AccorHotels Apartments & Leases has been taking part in A Taste of Harmony since 2008 and in 2018 cemented its role as a campaign Supporter with team members taking part in over 50 events.

So how do they coordinate A Taste of Harmony each year across multiple hotels? What are the secrets to its success?

We spoke to Alexandra Purser, T&C and Internal Communications Officer - who helps manage the initiative.

### Why is cultural diversity a priority at AccorHotels Apartments & Leases?

We pride ourselves on being a culturally rich and diversified company which employs and accommodates people of diverse ethnic backgrounds. Celebrating A Taste of Harmony in our workplaces allows us to recognise these diverse cultures, to share our experiences with others and to demonstrate to our teams that we truly value this as an employer.

### What are some of the benefits of taking part in A Taste of Harmony?

It's a major benefit for team members to know that their heritage and culture is respected and welcomed in their workplace, and that as an organisation we have respect for diversity in an honest and open environment.

We have seen increased team morale, especially in our housekeeping teams, where we have the largest range of cultures. We find team members love tasting home-made dishes as it's a personal and bonding experience.

Our team members genuinely look forward to A Taste of Harmony and start thinking about what they'll cook several weeks beforehand - and this includes taking requests from their colleagues!

At one event, a team member requested recipes from a colleague and a 'how to cook' lesson. The colleague was proud to receive such a request and it boosted her individual morale, which then flowed onto the team.

### How do you communicate with your different hotels about A Taste of Harmony?

The Regional Talent & Culture teams are responsible for communicating with hotel teams and encouraging participation and they do this via email, providing a link to the A Taste of Harmony website. They encourage properties to utilise the tools and information on the campaign website and brainstorm ideas for activities they can do at their lunches, providing a few ideas for inspiration.

Each property is asked to register their event and advise when completed, so we can be sure the full extent of our participation is recognised.

## Logistically speaking, how do the properties run their events?

Smaller properties often join with each other and hold a larger event involving several teams of staff. Most team members want to cook a dish of their own to showcase their culture and their cooking skills!

Each property displays A Taste of Harmony collateral from the website and decorates the room with flags from around the world, colourful pictures and balloons.

Notable activities have included a demonstration of tai chi and a personal introduction of each team member with a short summary of their cultural background.

## How do you make A Taste of Harmony work in a hotel setting, where staff operate in shifts?

Properties ensure all shifts are covered with a celebration of some kind. Most properties hold an event at lunch time and then include a night time meal or snack for the evening and overnight shifts.

Properties pin up posters in staff rooms to showcase the event, and team members who are not rostered to work on the day of the lunch are encouraged to attend celebrations in their own free time and bring their children if appropriate.

## What do some of your staff members say about A Taste of Harmony?

We always receive lots of positive feedback and here are a few comments that have resonated with me:

"I love to see and smell the different foods and get to know my colleagues' backgrounds, as it is not always obvious."

Danielle, Talent & Culture Advisor.

"I am proud of my nationality and was happy to bring food that we eat back home and see my work friends try something new."

Ana, Area Executive Housekeeping Manager.

"It is very important for my team and it gives me the opportunity to give something personal back to them."

Helen, Mantra MacArthur.

## Why would you encourage other organisations to get involved?

A Taste of Harmony is a great event to foster workplace engagement, to have a bit of fun, to try new foods and to recognise cultures within the organisation.

It's always rewarding for both the employer and the employee to see the smiles and happiness in their teams. Throughout history, eating a meal together is seen as a celebration of major family and significant milestone events, a time to bond, and to celebrate with stories, announcements and great memories.

To reflect this in the workplace, by having a celebration of diversity and inclusiveness, is a real privilege. It is a wonderful opportunity to recognise the contribution of multiculturalism in our workplace, our community and Australia as a whole.