

# MARRIOTT



30 minutes with ...

## Victoria Palacios | Director Operations F&B

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### -Can you tell us a little bit about your work?

I’m Director of Operations Food and Beverage. The main role I have is about organization, planification and developing of all the things related to F&B in the events, meals and drinks at **Kalma Restaurant** and **Madrid Buffet**, besides all those events which have D&B included. It is a responsibility which star from the very first time the client contacts us, stay at the hotel and leave it.

### -How is your daily routine?

It is very complete and busy at the same time that enjoyable. There’s not any single second to get bored. It’s about being updated daily, minutes by minute of the developing which is taking place at the hotel. I need to pay attention to each person who visit the hotel to have breakfast at the **Madrid Buffet** as well as all those who are attending the event, maybe at the same time in other meeting room, or people who are on the outlets or room.

My daily routine is about see and check everything is working as it was planned, the client is satisfied and they feel attended. F&B is also service, attention, setting of the events... It’s not only talking about food.



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I control and supervise that all people do their tasks correctly in order to satisfy the clients.

**-How do you control so much volume of clients in different meeting rooms at the same time?**

The key of success in order to achieve something similar to perfection (knowing that perfection doesn't exist) is trying to have everything under control, getting the client leave the hotel happy and satisfied. The only way to achieve this is having a good work team. It needs to be excellent, trained and motivated. They need to love the company, the brand, the client and the service. He/she needs to



have dedication to the service in all the areas we attend. We have to worry about the human being part. First your team work and then the raw materials.

**-How do you motivate your team in order to achieve this?**

Each leader has different ways to lead their teams. **My way is to get it from my good example.** If I want that my people learn new things I did it first and then I show and explain them how to do it. When people see that I'm able to do some work in the same way that them, they will feel motivated and they look for improve their skill and doing even better.

**The proximity is one of the most important things.** We all call us by our name, apart from the hierarchy. This simple fact creates a reconciliation which generates respect and affection. When you're able to understand your people and taking one hour per day to go through all the facilities and say hi to every single person by his/her name, you're creating an ambiance which get the motivation. When you worry about your people, they believe in you, trust you and it produces a confidence relationship. When there's confidence, people get motivated.

**We're a big family.** We're 75 people in my team, besides an extra staff getting sometimes to more than 150 people.

**-What is the differentiating element with respect to other hotels?**

First of all, we're a great brand with clear standards focus on the complete satisfaction of our clients. Besides, we've the best hotel infrastructure in Spain and a human quality dedicated to achieve all the expectation of our guests and how to beat them.

**-The new Madrid Buffet concept. Where is the secret of this new space?**

It was a huge investment with an economic effort really important in order to get the special and impressive restaurant we have nowadays with a total **capacity of 724 people.** We give breakfast, lunch and dinner services, when it's necessary, apart from attend to special events.

The success has arrived thanks to reflect how we are. A modern hotel, functional, practice and with the capacity to attend big volumes. We've wonderful pictures of Madrid which represent perfectly the city in which we are. Besides, we try to remark what Spain is, the Spanish food. This modernity and functionality has been the key of the success: **cleanliness, valour and professionalism.**

**-One of the roles is the anticipation of client 's needs. How do you get it?**

In order for you to anticipate you really need to understand very well what hotel management is. You achieve it only with experience, knowledge... You need to understand who a hotel works, not only at the area you are working. It's important to know all the need a person can have and putting yourself in the place of the other person. Every single person is a world with different needs. You can anticipate because you have information and try to come early to they can need.



**-How do you deal with the crisis in your department?**

The crisis in our department are opportunities to improve. The first thing is to know how to where this situation is and have in mind a plan A, B, C and D. It's necessary to anticipate thinking of all it can happen. It's important to have a cold mind, without stress. Think first and then act.

**-How would you define your experience at Marriott?**

I've been working for Marriott brand for I entered at University, in EEUU. It was the first hotel where I started my career. This is where my affection to this brand come from, being the number one of the world and now this hotel is trying to be the first one in Europe.

**-Define it with three words.**

Professionalism, proximity and perfection.

**-How do you imagine the Madrid Marriott Auditorium Hotel & Conference Center in a few years?**

We want to be one of the best hotels in Europe and I'm pretty sure we're going to make it. One of the largest talking about volume and quality.