

Hospitalitynews

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EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEWS

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INDUSTRY

Women are shaking up hospitality like never before, bringing talent, ideas and a can-do attitude to the sector in unprecedented times. Here, 30 professionals who are today disrupting the industry across the region in a big way, share their success stories and offer words of wisdom to those just starting out.



Mayada Badr



Tatyana Atanasova



Katrin Herz



Hala C. Massaad



Sabine Renner



Chirine Salha



Dagmar Symes



Nada Aad



Fatma Al-Otaibi



Christine Assouad



Liza Asseily



Amal Chahine



Zeina el Eid



Suzan Hallal



Aline Kamakian



Rima Karam

PIIONEERS



Maya Bekhazi Noun



Tiffany Pilard



Yasmina Hayek



Dina Abboud



Hilda Hanna Issa Al Masrieh



Douha Abdullah Al Otaishan



**Cynthia Bitar
Nazira Bitar**



Youmna Al Ashkar Chedid



Joanna Kassem



Rouba Khalil



Nada Alameddine



Hala Matar Choufany



Candice D'Cruz



Fay Economides



Bibi Hayat



Liz Stevenson



Joanna Kassem
Owner
Joanna's Table Too sal

Years in the role 7

Policies that you have implemented within the company benefiting women's career development

Supporting them by focusing on developing their organization skills.

Do you believe that the hospitality industry offers the same opportunities to professionals of both genders?

No, unfortunately not.

What advice would you give to young women in the industry?

To follow their instincts and not be afraid to take risks.

Can you name one or more women in the industry that has been a role model or mentor to you?

Lina Lteif (La Mie Dorée) because she has been so successful in the food and catering business.



Rouba Khalil
Chef and owner
RKK SAL

Years in the role 5

Greatest professional achievement to date

Opening my retail store in Beirut.

Policies that you have implemented within the company benefiting women's career development

We implement policies that benefit both women and men; we believe in equal opportunities.

Do you believe that the hospitality industry offers the same opportunities to professionals of both genders?

I believe the industry does offer the same opportunities for both sexes as they are both welcome. I haven't personally encountered any barriers as a woman. I do believe, however, that if a woman chooses to have a family and children it will become very challenging to maintain a career in hospitality down the road, and that may be why we see fewer women at the top.

Can you name one or more women in the industry that has been a role model or mentor to you?

I can only think of the late Gina DePalma, the acclaimed pastry chef, cookbook author, cancer warrior, pioneer and innovator, who was my mentor when I was working as a pastry cook at Babbo in New York City. She taught me how to make olive oil cake and olive oil ice cream. Today, at the shop we sell an olive oil ice cream sandwich in a rosemary polenta cookie as a homage to Gina.

CONSULTANTS



Nada Alameddine
Partner
Hodema Consulting Services

Years in the role 10

Greatest professional achievement to date

Each year, the Marriott Awards of Excellence recognizes the 'Best of the Best' at Marriott International, honoring the company's finest associates who represent the characteristics of the award: achievement, character, dedication, effort and perseverance. I received the President Award for 2004 for being among the best sales and marketing leaders at Marriott International.

Policies that you have implemented within the company benefiting women's career development

As a board member at Hodema Consulting Services, I'm constantly striving to implement corporate governance, empowering women and working to achieve gender equality within my company.

What advice would you give to young women in the industry?

To find a balance between their personal life and their career and to be willing to go where the opportunities are. Success also requires flexibility.

Can you name one or more women in the industry that has been a role model or mentor to you?

We have indeed a number of inspiring women in the hospitality industry. However, I can't name a specific woman to be my mentor - each one's journey had an impact on my career path.

