

# eastern hotelier

www.easternhotelier.com

YOUR HOTEL MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE

JUNE/JULY 2014 / \$8.95

Dominic Meffe,  
President, Monte Carlo  
Hotel Motel International

HOUSEKEEPING  
& UNIFORMS

SASKATCHEWAN

CASE GOODS

LIGHTING

## From Humble Beginnings

*Starting from a single property, Monte Carlo Inns builds a strong brand and looks to further expansion*



+ HOUSEKEEPING & UNIFORMS • GO GREEN • CASE GOODS • FLOORING



## STAYING AGILE IS CRITICAL. FORTUNATELY, OPENING MORE THAN 1,100 NEW\* HOTELS HAS KEPT US IN SHAPE.

In the past six years, Hilton Worldwide has opened more than 1,100 new hotels around the world, bringing us to more than 4,000 hotels in 90 countries today.\* In Canada, we have 88 hotels open from coast to coast with a growing pipeline of 18 hotels under construction and over 25 fully approved projects. Impressive growth, made possible by our ability to adapt to the world's increasingly complex business environments. As a result, we've developed a wealth of experience creating and operating the most award-winning portfolio of hotels in the industry. Not a bad workout for a 94-year-old.

For development opportunities in Canada, please contact Tom Lorenzo, Vice President and Managing Director of Development (+1-203-463-3407, thomas.lorenzo@hilton.com), and Jeff Cury, Senior Director of Development (+1-514-695-6798, jeff.cury@hilton.com).

[hiltonworldwide.com](http://hiltonworldwide.com)

### STAY AHEAD



\*From January 2008 to December 2013 © 2014 Hilton Worldwide

# eastern hotelier

YOUR HOTEL MANAGEMENT MAGAZINE

JUNE/JULY 2014 VOLUME 6 NUMBER 3

## features

- 19 **A Case of Good Taste**  
*Case goods have transformed from boring old armoires to a sleek, clean design.*
- 29 **Selecting Flooring as Simple as ABC**
- 32 **'Igniting the Future'**  
*Choice Hotels International's 60th Annual Convention.*
- 35 **A Lot of Checking In**  
*St. John's in Newfoundland and Labrador saw heavy business travel in 2013, and kept hoteliers busy.*
- 37 **A Change for the Best**  
*Renovations are vital for maintaining and boosting your competitive edge.*
- 39 **A Dream Come True**  
*Dreamz Inn offers broad appeal in a contemporary feel.*
- 43 **Fundamentals Versus High Tech**  
*Gadgets are good, but training is the key to effective housekeeping.*
- 47 **Little Guests**  
*Tailoring services and programs for children and the whole family.*
- 49 **Doing the Right Thing - Go Green**
- 53 **The Online Conundrum**  
*From OTAs to Metasearch Channels, hoteliers have a lot of options for online marketing.*
- 57 **Lighting - A New World of Design Opportunities**

19



43



16



## on our cover

- 16 **From Humble Beginnings**  
*Starting from a single property, Monte Carlo Inns builds a strong brand and looks to further expansion.*

## departments

Business News	..... 8	New Products	..... 61
Outstanding Employee	..... 31	Checking Out	..... 62

Starting from a single property, **Monte Carlo Inns** builds a strong brand and looks to further expansion.

# From Humble Beginnings

(Left to right) Danny Pedone, Carmela Meffe, Sabrina Meffe, Laura Pedone, Maureen Scott, Tammy Lee, Prit Singh, Justin Meffe and Domenic Meffe.

**I**t was 30 years ago that Dominic Meffe opened the first Monte Carlo Inn at Dundas Street and Highway 427 in Toronto, a 34 room hotel that proved to be the springboard for what would eventually become one of Canada's most remarkable success stories in the hotel industry — one achieved through simple hard work and determination.

Meffe came to Canada from Italy with a drive to succeed in business, although he had little idea that would end up being in the hotel industry. He started a small restaurant making and delivering pizza where he would often work from early morning until late at night. Many of his deliveries were to hotels where he soon became acquainted with the local managers and how the business worked. Impressed with the business potential, he decided, despite the significant capital requirements, to eventually open his own hotel.

This decision was the genesis of the Monte Carlo brand. Coming from humble roots, Meffe approached his foray into the hospitality business with a basic philosophy that continues to inform his business practice to this day. "You have to treat everyone with respect. In the end, our business comes down to the individual customers who all have to be treated well. Never treat people as just numbers."

With this focus on the customer, Monte Carlo Inns have grown from that first 34-room property to a chain of eight hotels with over 1,000 beds. While all the properties are franchised Monte Carlo maintains an equity stake in each of them, creating a unique model in the industry where both franchisor and franchisee has a strong vested interest in the success of the enterprise. Unlike other franchisors, Monte Carlo takes a small royalty fee and then a share of the profits, making the relationship a true partnership.

This indeed is very characteristic of Meffe, who takes a hands-on approach by overseeing all construction through their own general contracting business and subsequently through their hotel management company, overseeing the implementation of system-wide software, marketing programs, staff recruiting and whatever else is needed by the franchisees. Recently, the company revamped its housekeeping program for the entire chain, dubbing it the Clean Team Program, which focuses on streamlining the room cleaning process.

From the beginning, says Meffe, it was important "to create a product everyone likes," catering to everyone from families, the business traveller to local commercial,



industrial and residential customers who may use the hotel's banquet or conference facilities. With a European design inspiration, the hotels are very inviting, featuring a full-service restaurant, rooms with comfortable beds and all the amenities. Each property is strategically located to draw upon as wide a demographic as possible. The company slogan is "Your Home Away from Home."

Meffe is president of Monte Carlo Hotel Motel International and is joined on the management team by his son Justin, vice-president of operations, and son-in-law Danny Pedone, vice-president of franchising. The team works hard to ensure the properties are maintained to the highest standards and kept up to date. For example, the company is continuously upgrading suites, adding flat screen televisions and upgrading décor. Knowing the importance of Wi-Fi connectivity to today's travellers, Monte Carlo Inns has improved its internet infrastructure by implementing a Fibre Network at most of its locations. On the environmental front, a commitment has been made to ensure products used within the hotel facilities follow an environmentally responsible mandate.

Marketing too has been kept up-to-date.

**Monte Carlo Inns currently has eight hotels with over 1,000 beds.**

According to Pedone, "A company such as ours needs a strong loyalty program and from time to time re-visit it and see if we can add more value." The company recently re-launched its Diamond Rewards Program to include a social media rewards component. It is on twitter, facebook and Instagram. Local advertising and aggressive rates keep it competitive in the market along with great offers such as its free Healthy Start Breakfast catering to the more health-conscious consumer.

As a responsible member of the local community, Monte Carlo has been actively involved in charitable work as well, supporting local charity the Darling Home for Kids in Milton including their Golf Tournament, Teddy Bear Toss and Round-up for Kids.

All of these efforts have paid off handsomely for the chain as reflected in an occupancy rate of over 75 per cent and an ADR of \$98.00.

And nor has Meffe slowed down. He is interested in expanding the brand outside of Ontario if the right opportunity arises. Western Canada is very much within his sights as this region continues its strong growth path. Wherever the Monte Carlo brand ends up establishing itself, one thing is for sure. "We will always seek ways to add value for the customer," says Meffe. "Every customer has a great value to the company and we will never take anyone for granted." Indeed, this is why the company proudly uses the slogan "Your Home Away from Home." ●



*The company continuously upgrades suites by adding flat screen TVs and upgrading decor.*



## Furnishings

By Shayna Wiwierski

*The skeleton of any hotel room is its case goods. Just like how humans need bones to keep everything together, case goods make up the structure of a hotel room.*

Although design is important, price is a huge factor in any purchase. Many hoteliers consider the price first, but there are many critical factors that should be considered before this when it comes to case goods. These include durability, longevity, materials used, construction methods, warranty, the strength of the company supplying the products, the reputation of the company and the manufacturers' ability to stand by their commitments.

One thing visitors look for when choosing a hotel is style. Gone are the days of clunky TV sets and the armoires to hold them. The flat-screen TV, which can be wall mounted, has completely changed the game when it comes to case goods. Hotels are looking for more sleek, clean lines to keep up with the modern design that clients are looking for.

# A Case of Good Taste

**Case goods have transformed from boring old armoires to a sleek, clean design.**