

IT UPDATE

The City Inn Group in England has set a new industry benchmark with the introduction of a groundbreaking multi-media iMac solution in every guestroom of its stunning new property in Manchester.

The hotel opened its doors on 28th May 2007, City Inn Manchester showcases a first in in-room technology; each of the 285 guestrooms are equipped with an iMac (including access to iLife 06 suite of applications, high speed internet access, a full suite of Office software, ability to play iPod and ability to video conference using an in-built iSight camera). Each iMac also functions as a TV, radio, DVD and CD player, providing the guest with the ultimate, integrated, solution.

City Inn, in partnership with software solutions provider DirectStreams, has developed a bespoke solution that takes the high quality functionality of iMac and tailors it for use in the hotel environment. All standard rooms will have a high definition 20-inch screen allowing the customer simple navigation between TV, DVD, computer, etc. using the iMac's remote control.

Customers will be able to load files via a USB port, work on them in the normal way, and save them to a memory stick safe in the knowledge that, every time the iMac is closed down, Deep Freeze software will clean down any new information on the computer and restore it to its original state.

The system offers 38 television channels, 23 radio stations and a DVD/CD player for which guests can choose movies or music from the extensive free library, available at the guest services desk. The system will allow customers to play music via iPod (or other MP3 player) as well as giving access to iTunes, iChat, iPhoto, iMovie and an in-built iSight video camera for conferencing, providing the most comprehensive in-room entertainment system currently existing in the market place. And no charge is made for use of the iMac, internet access or the DVD/CD library.

As quoted by Huw O'Connor, Managing Director of City Inn "City Inn is a new innovative brand; our entire offering (buildings, interiors, restaurants, bars and customer service) has been developed from scratch in an attempt to provide the customer with a stylish modern alternative to the typical chain hotel.

"This development, which may well be a world first for a large scale city centre hotel, is entirely consistent with that ethos.

"It is increasingly the case that neither the modern home or the modern office can function efficiently without a computer and we believe, that in the future, the same may well be said about the hotel room."

People Making A Difference In Hospitality



There are no shortage of nice guys working in the hospitality industry here in Thailand and Khun **Mongkolchai Thammachote**, General Manager of the Davis Bangkok hotel is a prime example. This affable gentleman is in charge of a 225-room hotel complex in the heart of the Sukhumvit area that also houses a retail area and a unique villa concept on its grounds.

Khun Mongkolchai has been working in the hotel business for about 17 years now and the bulk of his experience has been in-

involved with direct contact with guests which may explain his easy-going friendly manner. Since guest relations can strain even the best person's personality at times, it seems as if Khun Mongkolchai's temperament is perfectly suited for this role.

Whatever the reason, his persistence in sticking with this industry has certainly paid off as he steadily rose through the ranks after starting as a receptionist at the Landmark Bangkok back in 1990. Within seven years he was the Front Office Manager at the hotel and also held that position at the Siam Intercontinental from 1999 until its closure in 2002.

From that point until now he's been at The Davis and he has mastered other areas of expertise within the hotel business including sales and marketing. The Davis is currently running at about 83% occupancy this year with a good average room rate and is also enjoying a good corporate meeting business. It seems that Khun Mongkolchai has found a good outlet to develop his talents and show off his management skills and it couldn't have happened to a nicer guy.

It's not every day that a high-end New York French restaurant loses its dining room captain and chef de partie to a Bangkok hotel but that's what happened when **Thomas Deledalle** and Thibault Chiumenti left Daniel restaurant to come to the Hotel Plaza Athenee's Reflexions restaurant. You'll be able to read more about Thibault in next week's issue but this week we'll confine our article to Thomas.

A trained chef himself and graduate of the Albert de Mun College in Paris, Thomas started his career as a commis de cuisine at the Hotel Le Meurice Paris and stayed in the back of the house until he emerged from the shadows at the Four Seasons Hotel in Boston as an Assistant Captain in the dining room in September of 2002. After that two-year experience he did go back to the Four Seasons Hotel George V in Paris — where he worked as a commis de salle before moving to Boston, making his Four Seasons tenure a full four years — and worked as a chef de rang in charge of the hotel's cheeses for a year before moving to the fine dining Daniel French restaurant in New York where he met Thibault for the first time.

His position as captain at Daniel involved staff training in food product knowledge as well as other areas, presumably wine knowledge also as he demonstrated his grasp of



wine and food pairing at a recent lunch in Reflexions. In case you haven't heard of Daniel Boulud he is one of the most leading food authorities in the U.S. with multiple restaurants, cookbooks and even utensils bearing his name. It's an extremely strong resume entry for Thomas to have acquired considering the level of elegance Boulud's New York restaurant possesses and the food quality that is present there.

Now, it is supposed, Thomas will be looking to transfer his high level of expertise and professionalism to the staff at Reflexions and thereby improve the already exacting standards that have made this restaurant a bastion of good food over the years. From him, nothing less would be expected.