

3 Hospitality and Design Professionals on Navigating Uncharted Territory

As the world continues to navigate the [COVID-19 pandemic](#) and adapt to these unprecedented times, *HD* is checking in with [members of the hospitality industry](#) around the globe to find out how their businesses are being impacted and what they anticipate will change down the line.

Michael Cioffi, [Monteverdi Tuscany](#)



What are the biggest challenges you're facing?

Monteverdi employees are based in Italy and throughout the U.S., so we are operating with the information we receive from local governments, but these are unpredictable, rapidly changing times that will affect when we reopen and what changes we will implement upon doing so.

What is your current work situation?

As news of the coronavirus began to develop in February and March, I made the decision to temporarily close Monteverdi, allowing employees to be home with their families with full pay. In addition to being the founder and owner of Monteverdi Tuscany, I am an attorney based in Cincinnati. With the majority of my law and hotel employees working

from their homes in Italy and across the U.S., we have been conducting regular conference calls. Our guest relations, housekeeping, and F&B team members based in Italy are also engaged in online learning and seminars as we continue to develop and fine tune our reopening plans.

What are some of the positive effects of working in these new ways?

We have had an increase in cross collaboration between the team on the ground and the team in the U.S. In the absence of having guests, everyone is pulling together and sharing ideas. Department heads have had the time to assess each of their teams, to look at what is working and what changes we can—and must—implement in the coming weeks. This time has also provided us with an opportunity to check in with our partners, to see how they are faring, what they are thinking and working on, and how we can collaborate for a more immersive experience in the future.

What is your pulse on the industry?

Though we completed an expansion project last year, which included the opening of a Culinary Academy, additions to our spa, and a new lounge and terrace bar, we are continuing to enhance the Monteverdi experience. Construction will soon begin on an addition to our health and wellness facility, as well as accommodations for corporate retreats.

What does this mean for the future of hospitality?

Authentic hospitality will never go out of style. Monteverdi prides itself on being a home-away-from-home, a retreat from the ordinary. Our staff will always go the extra mile for guests. Remembering a favorite wine or preferred table at the restaurant, and carrying out small, thoughtful gestures will continue.

Lastly, share some good news! Have you done anything to stay busy in these crazy times?

In many ways, we have been busier these days than ever before. I named Monteverdi after the great composer and father of modern opera, Claudio Monteverdi. Exposing guests and visitors to music and the arts has always been a core goal of mine. In March, we debuted a digital program called La Bella Musica di Monteverdi. Each week, we share a performance online via our social media channels and website. The diverse array of artists include musicians from the Metropolitan Opera, Grammy-winning performers and conductors, and even best-selling authors. The program was created as a way to financially support performers who have lost income during this time, while providing the world with the gift of beautiful music and art.

In addition, our Executive Chef Giancarla Bodoni is sharing some of his recipes, and we have been providing social media followers with step-by-step directions for at-home face and body treatments based on those featured in our spa.