

INTERVIEW YI-HWA HANNA

All in the details

Rixos's unique concept offers distinct appeal in an overtly switched-on world: a sense of freedom, through experience-led stays that make everyone feel like royalty. **Ali Ozbay**, Vice President of Marketing & Communications for ALL Inclusive Collection and Rixos Hotels, explains the brand's ethos

Rixos is a brand synonymous with luxury and style. What do these words mean to you?

For me, luxury is more than just plush fabrics and high-end finishes – it's about crafting experiences that feel exceptional at every turn. It's that "wow" moment when you step into a room with a view that takes your breath away, or when the scent of freshly brewed coffee fills the air before you even have to ask. Style, on the other hand, is our signature mark. It's bold, it's elegant, and it's ever so slightly playful, like a good conversation with a friend who knows how to keep things interesting.

What is the hallmark of your all-inclusive, all-exclusive concept?

Our all-inclusive, all-exclusive concept isn't just about "everything is included" – it's about offering an experience where guests feel like the world is their oyster, and we've made it easy for them to enjoy at a price

point they are happy to pay. Think of it as a VIP pass to everything you could ever want, without ever worrying about the bill. Want to sip a cocktail while watching a sunset? Done. Enjoy a seven-course meal while a live band serenades you? Done. It's freedom with finesse, where every detail is taken care of, so you can simply be in the moment, with no strings attached.

How does Rixos typically incorporate its Turkish heritage into its properties?

We infuse our Turkish heritage into every corner, but not in the way you might expect. It's less about cliché references and more about creating an experience that feels distinctly Turkish – generous, welcoming, and rich with stories. From the traditional Turkish hammam – where relaxation meets ancient rituals – to the cuisine that invites guests to taste a slice of Türkiye's rich culinary history, it's about bringing the essence of Türkiye into each stay. It's not about re-



creating the past, but about celebrating it with a modern twist that feels familiar and yet new – like the best kind of homecoming.

What were some of the highlights of 2024 for Rixos within the region?

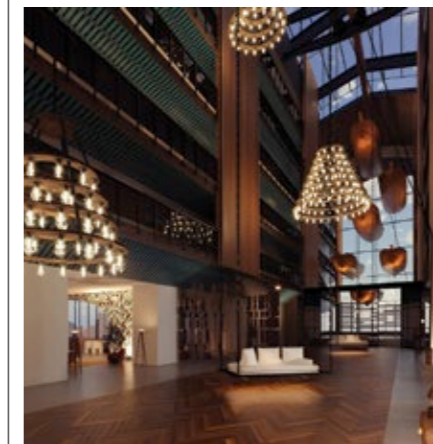
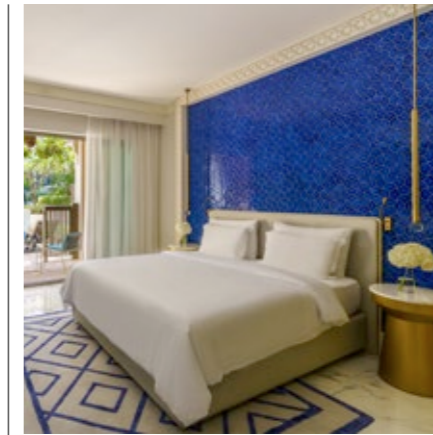
2024 has been nothing short of extraordinary for Rixos in the region – it's been a year of bold moves, unforgettable milestones, and a lot of celebratory toasts! From the grand openings of stunning new properties that redefined luxury and hospitality to hosting world-class events that brought communities together, every moment was a highlight in its own right. We elevated guest experiences with new wellness initiatives, unique kids "edutainment" activities, dazzling entertainment, and immersive culinary journeys, proving that "all-inclusive, all-exclusive" isn't just a concept – it's a lifestyle. But perhaps the brightest highlight has been the connections we've made: welcoming new guests, delighting returning ones, and continuing to build a legacy of unforgettable memories across the region. 2024 was all about raising the bar – and we're only getting started.

You had some impressive partnerships in 2024, including one with the Al Jalila Foundation, and another with the NBA Abu Dhabi Games. How do you choose your partners – and what's the creative process behind these ventures?

Partnerships, for us, are about finding the perfect synergy – aligning with brands and organisations that share our values, elevate guest experiences, and bring something truly unique to the table. The creative process? It's where the magic happens. We start with a simple question: What would make this unforgettable? From there, it's about storytelling, curating experiences that not only wow but also connect – whether it's cheering courtside at a world-class game or standing together for a cause that matters. We don't settle for "just another collaboration." Every partnership we dream up is designed to surprise, inspire, and leave a lasting impression – because that's the Rixos way.

In 2024, five Rixos hotels received Certified Autism Center accreditation. Why is inclusivity such an important aspect of good hospitality?

Inclusivity isn't just an aspect of good hospitality – it's the very foundation of it. True hospitality means making everyone feel



FROM TOP: One bedroom suite at Rixos Saadiyat Island; Rixos Tersane Istanbul

OPPOSITE PAGE: Lobby at Rixos Saadiyat Island

welcome, understood, and valued. It's about creating spaces where no one feels like an afterthought, and every guest – regardless of their needs – can relax, connect, and enjoy moments that matter. In

today's world, inclusivity isn't optional; it's essential. Guests are looking for more than just luxury; they're seeking experiences that resonate with empathy and care. Receiving the Certified Autism Center accreditation for five of our Rixos hotels in 2024 wasn't just a milestone – it was a statement. It reflects our belief that hospitality should leave no one behind, and that thoughtful, meaningful service is what truly sets exceptional hotels apart. At Rixos, inclusivity is how we turn "welcome" into "you belong here." Because that's what great hospitality is all about.

One major project announced in 2024 was the Rixos Hotels and Residences, to be launched

by 2026. Why do you think branded residences are becoming so appealing nowadays?

Branded residences are the ultimate blend of "home sweet home" and "five-star living" – a perfect marriage of comfort and curated luxury. In a world where time is the new currency, people crave seamless, stress-free lifestyles with all the perks of a luxury hotel at their doorstep. It's not just about owning a space; it's about owning an experience – and that's what makes it so irresistible.

Rixos Bab Al Bahr achieved FEE Blue Flag certification in 2024. What is your philosophy when it comes to sustainability?

Sustainability isn't just a trend; it's a responsibility woven into everything we do. Achieving the FEE Blue Flag certification at Rixos Bab Al Bahr in 2024 was a proud moment, but it's also a reflection of our broader philosophy: luxury and sustainability can – and should – go hand in hand. We believe that taking care of our guests also means taking care of the environment they're here to enjoy. From pristine beaches and clear waters to eco-conscious practices behind the scenes, we're committed to preserving the beauty of our surroundings for generations to come.

Sustainability, for us, is about balance – creating extraordinary experiences today while protecting tomorrow. Whether it's reducing our footprint, embracing local initiatives, or fostering awareness, we strive to set a standard where indulgence feels good and does good. After all, a view is only as beautiful as the care we take to protect it.

What can we look forward to from Rixos Hotels for 2025?

If 2024 was extraordinary, 2025 is set to be a showstopper. You can expect more stunning openings, innovative partnerships, and experiences that continue to redefine all-inclusive, all-exclusive luxury. We're talking elevated dining, next-level entertainment, and wellness offerings that truly nurture the mind, body, and soul.

But beyond that, we're doubling down on what makes Rixos special – creating meaningful connections, pushing boundaries, and ensuring every stay feels unforgettable. Trust me, 2025 will be one for the books, and we can't wait to share what's next. Stay tuned – there's so much more to come! 🌟