

Innovative Dining Offerings: A Case of Kowloon Shangri-La



Source: Pexels (2020)

Background

Established in 1978, Kowloon Shangri-La was among the first hotels to open in the reclaimed Tsim Sha Tsui East area (Shangri-La, n.d. a). Situated in a bustling area famous for shopping and entertainment, the hotel invites guests to dive into the city's energy the moment they step out (Shangri-La, n.d. a). Apart from its elegant interior design and luxurious guestrooms, Kowloon Shangri-La has recently gained significant exposure for its innovative food and beverage offerings.

One highlight is the “Moonlight Hours” Chinese desserts at Lobby Lounge, which invites guests to indulge in an exquisite selection of traditional and contemporary Chinese desserts (Kowloon Shangri-La Instagram, 2024). Available daily from 6:30 pm, the menu features over 24 items, including signature dishes such as the Ginger Milk Pudding and the refreshing Chilled Mango Sago Cream with Pomelo (Shangri-La, n.d. b). This experience offers patrons a relaxing gathering spot, enhanced by live music, where they can enjoy five-star hotel desserts at an affordable price starting from just HK\$38 (Singtao Headline, 2024).

On the other hand, in an effort to tackle the food waste problem, Kowloon Shangri-La has launched the city's first-ever Buffet-Box in partnership with award-winning food-saving app CHOMP (Foodie, 2024). Inspired by the local-style "this this rice", the Buffet-Box includes one main carb option along with two side dishes, available in four varieties every day – meat, seafood, vegetarian, or halal (Yahoo!, 2024). Available for takeaway during lunch (12:30 PM - 2:30 PM) and dinner (6:30 PM - 9:30 PM), the Buffet-Box can be pre-ordered via the CHOMP app 30 minutes before pickup (Foodie, 2024). Each box is thoughtfully packaged in biodegradable containers provided by “Sustainabl”, a local low-impact packaging brand (CHOMP, n.d.). For just HK\$88 per box, guests can savor gourmet buffet dishes while contributing to the fight against food waste (Yahoo, 04 Sep 2024).

Challenges

Despite the enticing offerings, Kowloon Shangri-La faces several challenges. The affordability of the Moonlight Hours raises profitability concerns, especially given the high-end ingredients and costs associated with live entertainment. Similarly, while the Buffet-Box aims to innovate, it may struggle to resonate with luxury hotel guests who expect exceptional dine-in experiences rather than takeaway meals. Furthermore, forecasting demand for the Buffet-Box varieties—meat, seafood, vegetarian, or halal—could be tricky, resulting in waste or shortages that undermine the initiative’s goal of reducing food waste.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can Kowloon Shangri-La balance the affordability of the Moonlight Hours desserts with the need to maintain profitability, considering the costs of high-end ingredients and live entertainment?
2. In what ways can Kowloon Shangri-La enhance the appeal of the Buffet-Box to align with the expectations of luxury hotel guests who typically prefer dine-in experiences?
3. In what ways do the Moonlight Hours and Buffet-Box offerings enhance Kowloon Shangri-La's competitive edge in the luxury hotel market, and how might these initiatives be further refined to strengthen the hotel's unique brand identity?

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Keywords

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- Chinese desserts
- Buffet-Box
- Profitability
- Brand image
- Competitive edge