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Athens Georgia updates for our meeting planner partners.



The Culinary Experience:

EXPERT ADVICE FROM CHEF DANIEL MASSIE

Executive Chef Daniel Massie is the creative force behind The Classic Center's catering services from Levy Restaurants. A Culinary Institute of America graduate, Chef Massie has 28 years of experience in restaurants in New York City, Dallas, and other destinations.



Q: What are some top culinary trends you're seeing?

A: We're doing a lot of slow-cooked and soul food menus, such as short ribs and meatloaf, accompanied by comfort side dishes like macaroni and cheese and condiments like from-scratch pickles.

Q: What recommendations do you give to planners who are looking to elevate the meal experience for their attendees?

A: Be open to trying new things, and don't be afraid of having a little fun. There's no reason for meals to become boring for your attendees. Be sure to vary menus over multi-day events and from year to year.

Q: What options do you offer planners that can help ensure success?

A: Come in for a tasting! There's no charge, and you'll be able to experience a range of possibilities. We love creating custom menus. There are so many possibilities; it would be a shame to stick with the status quo.

Chef Massie says,

"I enjoy surprising people. I genuinely want events to be successful on every level, beyond the food and beverage. We want to work alongside planners to create an overall experience."

Chef Massie has just completed an **all-new menu** with page after page of inspiration exclusively for Classic Center events. [View it here](#), and arrange for a consultation and tasting through your Athens meetings professional.

Hotel Headlines:

GRADUATE ATHENS PLANNER PERKS:

- Meeting Planners who book a meeting between now and December 31, 2016, and hold the event before March 31, 2017, can **"pick yer perks"** at Graduate Athens, based on total room nights contracted for the event. These valuable perks range from comp rooms and VIP upgrades to cocktail receptions and coffee stations. View the incentives [here](#).

HOTEL INDIGO REFRESH & REWARDS:

- Be sure to add Hotel Indigo to your Athens site inspection, as the decor in the common spaces and overnight rooms is all new. They've kept their Southern farmstead intention, but added in some new colors and fresh design.
- Hotel Indigo Athens is participating in the **IHG Business Rewards Booker Bonus**. Meeting planners will get an additional 50% more IHG Business Reward points for meetings booked by the end of November for meetings scheduled through Aug. 2017. This includes all group overnight rooms and meeting rooms including A/V, Food & Beverage, and meeting room rental.



HYATT PLACE NEWS:

- **Celebrating a Milestone:** Hyatt Place's construction and management firms will pause on December 15 to recognize the last beam placed atop the new connecting hotel to The Classic Center. [Request an invitation!](#)
- Completion remains on schedule for Spring 2017.
- **Angela Smith** has been hired as General Manager. A native of Germany, she has more than two decades of experience in the hospitality industry, including 10 years as general manager in Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi for prestigious brands within the Hilton Portfolio. Smith has overseen every aspect of hotel openings and management. In her personal time, she loves spending time with her family and pursues her interest in travel and design.



Hire a Local Musician:

AN UNFORGETTABLE VIBE

Athens has a world-renowned music scene known for its vast variety in genres and artists. There's no better way to incorporate some local flavor into your next event than by hiring local musicians. President of Foundry Entertainment, Troy Aubrey, has some tips for adding local music into your event:

Q: Why should meeting planners consider adding local live music to their itinerary?

A: People want authentic experiences when they travel, whether it is for work or for vacation. By adding local music to an Athens meeting, a planner can highlight one of Athens' most distinctive elements. Live music is a real draw that will increase attendance, as well as memories.



Q: What type of live entertainment can meeting planners find in

Athens?

A: Anything. Seriously, there are hundreds of bands in Athens. A lot of folks will get a jazz trio just for instrumentals. There's a ton of singer songwriter types. We do quite a bit of Motown-type stuff. Anything anybody wants we can get. I've had people call up needing a harmonica player, so okay we start calling our blues guys. I have a virtual Rolodex of different artists. I tell people

I'm the musical version of a matchmaker.

For entertainment bookings at The Foundry, which is onsite at Graduate Athens, or elsewhere in Athens, contact Troy Aubrey at 706.433.1926, or troy@foundryent.com.

Athens CVB Profile: NICK ARNOLD

Please join the CVB in welcoming Nick Arnold as Senior Sales Manager. This position became open due to Missy Wilson's recent promotion to Director of Sales. Prior to joining the CVB, Nick spent nearly three years at The Classic Center leading sponsorship sales and assisting with marketing initiatives. With Jay Boling's recent hire as Sales Manager and Missy's promotion to Director of Sales, Nick's hire officially completes the CVB sales team. Contact Nick at narnold@VisitAthensGA.com, 706.357.4433.



Nick Arnold

Schedule an Athens Site Inspection Today

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