

Quality Brand Hotels Launch Innovative Breakfast Concept

Quality Beginnings(TM) Redefines Midmarket F&B

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First came system-wide inroom coffee by Maxwell House. Then came the Quality Sleeper by Serta, the first bed by a major manufacturer designed exclusively for a hotel brand. Then came the 100 percent satisfaction guarantee, the Quality Executive Room for business travelers, and a revolutionary Quality brand prototype.

Today, in perhaps its boldest initiative designed to imprint the Quality name in the minds of travelers, Quality introduces Quality Beginnings(TM), an innovative midmarket breakfast concept that will become mandatory in all Quality brand hotels entering the system as of January 2001.

Quality teamed with Kraft Foods to develop Quality Beginnings, a buffet breakfast concept that includes hot foods such as eggs, breakfast meats, pancakes and waffles; "better for you" offerings such as granola bars, fresh fruit and yogurt; cold items such as cereals, pastries and breads; and "grab- and-go" items. Key to the success of Quality Beginnings, according to Quality Vice President and Brand Manager Pete Jordan, is the use of Kraft branded foods such as Oscar Mayer(R) bacon and sausage, Philadelphia(R) cream cheese, Tang(R), Post(R) cereals, General Foods International Coffees(R), Maxwell House(R) coffee and Breyers(R).

"Simply stated, there is no concept equal to Quality Beginnings in the midmarket hotel segment today," said Jordan. "Those hotels that do offer food and beverage don't do a very good job of it. Product is inconsistent, and travelers don't know what to expect.

"The success of our partnerships with both Maxwell House and Serta demonstrate clearly the value of offering branded products to our guests," Jordan added. "In the development of Quality Beginnings breakfast, we wanted to go with a consumer brand leader, Kraft Foods."

Quality Beginnings is a complete, turnkey system for franchisees. Training, a feasibility site visit, cabinetry, amenities such as uniforms, buttons and merchandising, small wares and equipment are all part of the package. Kraft will assist properties with preparation area and breakfast area design and will assist in the training and procurement process. "We have greatly streamlined the process to make it efficient and cost effective for our franchisees," said Jordan.

The launch of Quality Beginnings is the latest strategy in Quality's five- year evolution from a chain of hotels that were not always consistent to a brand that represents real value to travelers. In 1996, Jordan and his brand team worked with Quality franchisees in the development of a 100 percent satisfaction guarantee for the brand, not considered standard for midmarket hotels at the time; the implementation of the in-room Maxwell House coffee program; and the implementation of mandatory free local calls throughout the brand.

Also in 1996, the introduction of the Quality Sleeper by Serta redefined the industry -- and guest -- perceptions as to what a hotel bed should be. "We were the first to develop a bed exclusively for our brand, working with Serta to create a 'best in class' product," said Jordan. "We've been flattered to see other hotel chains follow our lead."

In 1997, Quality developed the Executive Room, designed with the needs of the business traveler in mind and containing data ports, speakerphones, extra- wide desks, upgraded soft and case goods, and the Quality Sleeper by Serta.

And in 1999, a new prototype for Quality Inns & Suites and Quality Suites was rolled out, making the brand a first choice for developers looking to build from the ground up. In fact, Quality's evolution has redefined the brand from a conversion to a new construction product; of the Quality brand hotels in the pipeline today, 50 percent are new construction properties.

"Working side by side with our franchisees, we have built Quality into a brand that is readily identifiable among consumers," said Jordan. "Quality Beginnings takes us even further along our journey from chain to brand."

Quality is one of seven brands franchised by Choice Hotel International, the world's second-largest lodging franchisor. Choice franchises more than 5,000 hotels in 39 countries under the Comfort, Quality, Clarion, Sleep, Econo Lodge, MainStay Suites and Rodeway Inn brand names. For more information on Choice, visit the company's Internet site at <http://www.choicehotels.com/> .

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