

# Hotel Business

Auric Roads sets sight on growing its petite resort

LAGUNA BEACH, CA—While many guests may not be aware of the petite resort concept, Auric Road is leveraging it to grow its portfolio, and in the process, provide guests with a tailored experience—which is what guests these days want.

“A petite resort is an intimate, authentic luxury hotel that provides exceptional food and beverage, curated activities and a taste of a local cultural and adventure in the surrounding area,” said Paul Makarechian, CEO of Auric Road. “We refer to our properties as petite resorts with the idea behind them being that upon arrival, guests are mentally transported to another world where they can enjoy multiple on- and off-property amenities.”

A typical petite resort house is anywhere between 20-60 rooms; however, the properties themselves range in acreage and lot size. “All our rooms are individually tailored and named with distinct attention to detail and an exploration of the senses, from the vinyl records and player, to the candles, to the local in-room food and amenities, to the art,” he said. “We have everything you need to never leave, or can create an experience for you outside our walls that is additionally unforgettable. From yoga retreats to romantic getaways to birthday celebrations, it is about creating an individualized itinerary for their stay.”

The company seeks properties within a 60-minute drive from regional airports, gateway cities or both. “We also like to consider historic properties that have an interesting and pre-existing culture, and elements of adventure that are built into the surrounding areas,” Makarechian said. “We have a formula for success that includes a strength in operating in seasonal markets that might not be a fit for others.”

The petite resort concept appeals to a growing market trend—tailored experiences. “Petite resorts are redefining the hospitality industry through the pairing of authentically tailored and personalized local experiences with a high level of luxury service and stay,” he said. “The intimate environment allows us to provide custom visits for each guest, as well as inspire them to live our lifestyle on or off the property.”

With petite resorts in its portfolio, Auric Road currently has three properties: Korakia Pensione, Palm Springs, CA; Hotel Joaquin, Laguna Beach, CA; and Lone Mountain Ranch, Big Sky, MT—all of which are open and operating.

"The story behind Auric Road is based upon the idea of alchemy and building gold from dust," he said. "It's about the never-ending experience pursuing a personal highest potential, and being on a journey where along the way, you will find beautiful people and places that move you. We drew inspiration from my personal journey on The Camino de Santiago, where one stays in historic inns that, over the centuries, honored the travelers on pilgrimage. It's places like this where the traditions of hospitality were cultivated and where the brand and vision were born—to build a collection of petite resorts that satisfies the need for both inner and outer questions."

Auric Road examines "soulful locations and then reimagines them with a timeless design" when considering properties for its portfolio, he said. This enables the company to diversify its properties.

"We pride ourselves on captivating our guests through authentic, local experiences like our sleigh ride dinner in Montana, or taking our guests out for a morning surf on a local beach in Laguna Beach," Makarechian said. "Our mission is to put soul back into your journey and adventure back into your spirit—so all that we do revolves around those guiding principles."

Hospitality goes a step further by eliminating modern-day distractions, such as technology. "One of our key principles is to keep technology out of sight and mind, to delight our guests with exquisite culinary experiences, to inspire a sense of adventure with unique activities and yoga included each morning, and to always serve guests around the intention of their stay (whether it be a ski trip with friends or a romantic weekend, etc.)," he said.

Expansion plans are in place for Auric Road, and they're already underway. "On the immediate front, we are excited about recent acquisitions in Southern Arizona and a soon-to-be-announced project in Northern California's wine country," he said. "We are in the process of reenvisioning and refurbishing these new acquisitions, which are going to be unique properties."

Auric Road plans to find properties outside of its current culture set. "To date, we are located in regions that are in the vicinity of beach, desert and epic snowfall," Makarechian said. "Next, we're excited to pursue some warm-water regions, additional wine- and bourbon-country destinations, and lakefront locations within North America."

Auric Road attributes its success to staying focused on the guest experience. "Our primary focus is to add soul into every guest's stay, to create a brand that you can depend on, and that provides an unparalleled personalized experience. We pay the highest attention to our guests and what they love and respond to."

The hospitality company also monitors local culture and what defines it (e.g., artisans, craftsmen, agriculture, music, sports, spiritual wisdom and health trends). "For our team, being in tune with the spirit of our locations and our guests is first and foremost," Makarechian said.

"Auric Road is a collection of petite resorts that redefines hospitality and believes that there are places that have the power to transform us," he said. "Our future is focused on building a portfolio of luxury properties that become synonymous with authentic experiences, filled with adventure, exquisite cuisine and local traditions in an unplugged environment. We additionally hope to expand in a direction that can allow people to get more involved in a soulful lifestyle, which incorporates a love for being on the journey of becoming your best self." HB

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