

## Focus on food boosts f&b salaries in London hotels

The boom in fine dining in London, which now boasts 55 Michelin starred restaurants, has helped push salaries for food and beverage professionals in city hotels up by 25% over the past year.

According to a new survey by **HVS Executive Search**, the salary hike comes as the capital's hotels place increasingly more emphasis on food and drink revenue, alongside that of rooms.

Hotel operators are now prepared to reward the best people to oversee their restaurants, banquets, bars and room service operations and help them compete with London's buzzing independent restaurant scene. The average salary for a hotel food and beverage director now stands at £58,350, with a food and beverage manager averaging £37,734.

'Hotel banquets have been feeling the pressure with shorter booking windows and lower discretionary spend,' said Chris Mumford, President EMEA at HVS Executive Search.

'Clearly the capital's hotels have been focusing on their talent capability in this area, reflected by a 25% increase in average salary. The capital's hotels have become ever more competitive in their restaurant offerings, going head-to-head with the top standalone restaurants in the city. The result is increased complexity of food and beverage operations, greater revenues, and a rise in the salary of the food and beverage director.'

The annual HVS London Hotel Salary and Benefits Report, published this week, includes data from 74 luxury, upscale and mid-scale hotels in London.

Overall, the average salary across 36 executive management and department head positions in London's hotels has risen by 3.5% in the past year to £46,122. In line with the majority of the UK private sector, wage increases were below the Retail Price Index of 5%.

As in past years, the survey reveals that the larger and more luxurious the hotel, the higher the salaries it pays. And for the first time, HVS also recorded employee per room ratio, which demonstrated that smaller luxury hotels employ more people per room than lower class hotels.

Looking ahead Mumford forecast: 'With London recording strong performance in 2011 and with the help of the Diamond Jubilee and Olympics this year, we expect salary reviews later in the year to at least match, if not exceed, inflation in 2012.'

A copy of the HVS London Hotel Salary and Benefits Report 2011 can be purchased online <http://www.hvs-executivesearch.com/CompensationConsulting/Reports/> or via email from [pvir@hvs.com](mailto:pvir@hvs.com).

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#### EDITOR'S NOTES

HVS Executive Search is the premier executive search and advisory firm providing consulting services to leaders of the hotel, restaurant, gaming and real estate industries. Practice areas include senior-level executive search, mid-management recruitment, compensation consulting and performance management. Its offices are located in New York, Buenos Aires, London, Hong Kong, Moscow, Mumbai and New Delhi.

HVS Executive Search is a division of HVS, a fully integrated consulting firm focused on the hospitality industry. Founded in 1980, HVS is the world's leading specialist in hospitality consulting. With 30 offices globally, HVS offers unparalleled worldwide market expertise.

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