EGYPT HOSPITALITY
The Hospitality Business Magazine of Egypt
Summer 2013

Sam Saker
The secret to keep it up

Cover Photo Courtesy of Cairo Marriott Hotel

Magdy Naguib
Introducing The New RENAISSANCE CAIRO MIRAGE CITY HOTEL

Jean Pierre Mainardi
A Hotelier with Western Mentality

Coffeemania grows up
Ramadan
Good for the Soul and Good for Business

By the time this issue goes to print June 30th will have passed with the all the anticipation that is coming with it as Egyptians hold their breath for the expected demonstrations on that day. No matter what the outcome of that day is I hope that Egypt and Egyptians emerge as winners. I will not get into politics but the sure thing is that Egypt has not been on the right track for the past couple of years since the revolution and clearly something needs to be done to steer the ship to the right direction. I am very optimistic about Egypt's future despite the frustrating situation we are currently living in. The reason for my optimism lies in Egyptians themselves who finally woke up after years of passive attitude they now play an active role in shaping the future of their country and no leader whoever he is and no matter what his background is will be able to manipulate Egyptians and fool them.

Summer time has finally arrived and so have school holidays. This should be good news for the hospitality business in Egypt both for local as well as international tourism. Locally Egyptians flock to the North Coast resorts while international tourists head to the red sea resorts of Sharm and Hurghada. This year Ramadan is coming in the midst of the summer heat and fasting will be anything but easy. In this issue our special file examines the effect of Ramadan on the hospitality business in Egypt. We examine how hotel and restaurant operators prepare for this holy month and whether their business is positively or negatively impacted. In “From the GM” section, we interview Mr. Jean Mainardi, the new GM of Conrad Hotel Cairo and in the “Careers Leaders” section we interview Dr. Sameh Saker, a renowned figure in the hospitality business in the Middle East and the US.

In our quest to make Egypt Hospitality a local magazine with an international flair, we always try to bring international contributors in each issue. In this issue we have Mr. Douglas Fisher, a renowned foodservice and hospitality consultant in North America. We feature two articles for Mr. Fisher, the first under the ‘Ask the Expert’ section where he wrote about how to find the best food franchise. The second article is featured under the “In Depth” section where he talks about the art of finding the best location for your restaurant. Also featured in this issue is Mr. Nagi Morkos, a renowned foodservice and hospitality consultant in the Middle East who talks about the new trends of the coffee business in Egypt.

As always I hope you enjoy this issue of Egypt Hospitality and I wish you Ramadan Kareem.

Adham El-fayoumi
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Sofitel Cairo El Gezirah awards of success

Marking a significant milestone of commitment and dedication, the Sofitel Cairo El Gezirah was recognized for the second year in a row with a BEST SPA award at the Annual MENA Travel Awards in Dubai. The MENA Travel Awards recognizes the triumph of the service leaders in the tourism industry, and a prestigious regional award in the Middle East and North Africa hospitality industry. So Spa, at the Sofitel Cairo El Gezirah offers a wide range of treatments and massages in an environment of French elegance and natural well-being using only Cinq Mondes products. The scent and candle of the Oriental décor of the treatment rooms wrap you in a mystical Arabian feeling heightening your senses. A private access to the Hammam, Jacuzzi and the infinity Pool overlooking the Nile river, with the Sunny bar offering snacks and signature cocktails throughout the day. The ideal well-being oasis in the center of Cairo. In addition to this prestigious award, Sofitel Cairo El Gezirah was also recognized by Tripadvisor with two certificates of excellence for the Hotel and its Kebabgy restaurant. These recipients of these certificate of excellence are awarded based on their ability to continue to offer the highest levels of service to all its clients.

World’s Biggest Youth Conference Comes to Egypt

Under the name of AIESEC International Congress, passion-driven young leaders will be brought together in the city of Sharm El Sheikh at Savoy Hotels. This congress will act as a cultural fest and a business incubator that puts Egypt on the map, globally, as a tourism and investment destination, putting all doubts about the safety and stability of the country to rest. Carving their way through, to be ranked among the top 10 performing countries in the AIESEC network of 113 countries and entities, AIESEC in Egypt (highest performing chapter of AIESEC in the MENA region) is honoured to be hosting this congress, as it is an anticipated annual event that takes place in a different AIESEC country every year since 1949; for it puts together the essence of a youth-organized conference with a professional engagement event. Through a series of discussions and seminars with global business, cultural, science, Government and NGO leaders, 1000 youth from 113 countries will have a unique opportunity to discuss hot issues affecting today’s world. It is also an event that enables the public to interact with AIESECers from around the world. All adding up to what could be the world’s largest congregation of youth leadership.

BURJ AL ARAB ADDS 24-CARAT GOLD IPAD TO MENU

The Burj Al Arab, Dubai’s crown jewel, is notorious for not sparing any expense when it comes to luxury. They have recently begun to offer guests an extra special amenity – 24 carat gold iPads. Guests are offered the gold plated iPads when they check into the hotel, and can use them to browse hotel services, menus and guest information. The Burj Al Arab is the first hotel to offer the Interactive Customer Experience (ICE) software on an iPad – meaning guests can use the iPad as a concierge. The iPads were designed exclusively for the Burj Al Arab by bespoke luxury brand Gold & Co. London, infamous for their gold-plated technology products, who engraved the iPads with the hotel’s logo. Gold & Co. London and the Burj Al Arab teamed up for a month in October 2012 to create a rose-gold iPad in support of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, but this venture is at the Burj Al Arab to stay. “The Gold & Co. London 24-carat gold iPad is the ultimate in luxury accessories, hence we wanted it to be paired with the Burj Al Arab, the world’s most luxurious hotel. The symmetry is obvious, as both the gold iPad and the hotel are unique in terms of extraordinary quality and design,” said Amjad Ali, CEO of Gold & Co. London. If a stay at the Burj and using the gold-plated iPad isn’t indulgent enough, the 24-carat gold iPad will also be available for purchase at the Burj Al Arab’s boutique store. It may seem a bit extravagant – but when in Rome...
Dr. Sam Saker
President of "Consultants of Hospitality Administrators" CHA International
"Modern Century Hotels" MC Hotel Management Company

The secret to keep it up
Give us an overview about your background.
I received my B.Sc. in Administration and Accounting from Egypt, and my MBA with a focus on International Marketing, from U.S.I.U. “United States International University”, in San Diego. Over the years, I received an extensive amount of industry related educational courses and programs as well as Certifications from various industry and management institutes, including Cornell University, Holiday Inn University, Dale Carnegie, UCLA, AH&MA-El, and California Restaurant Association. In June of 2002, I attained, with honour, my Ph.D in Hotel Management from Parkwood University (division of USIU).

With my degree in accounting from Cairo University, I was very much fascinated with the Hospitality Industry, where I started in the late 70's with the London Ryan Hotels, then Oberoi in Cairo and Mesilla Beach Hotel in Kuwait. In fact, my field related education complements my Thirty three years of responsible and progressive experience within the Hospitality Industry including 20 years in the United States of America, fourteen years of which as a General Manager with Holiday Corporation, Forte Hotels International and most recent with Marriott Hotels, Resorts and Suites. In 1998, as the president and partner, I got the chance to establish (and responsible for) the continued development and growth of CHA International “Consultants of Hospitality Administrators” Company, through that bases of Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation while serving the Hotel and Hospitality Industry Worldwide.

Being President of CHA-International, I worked on expanding Egypt's Offices as well as the Dubai Media City office, UAE in 2002. In 2004 the USA, California office was launched, then the Stuttgart Germany and Maldives offices in March 2006. The Doha, Qatar office opened in December 2006. In 2007 the Berlin office was launched, followed by Shanghai, China, Seattle Washington, Cancun, Mexico, Ontario Canada, Las Vegas Nevada, Singapore, and Vietnam offices. In 2011, both Thailand and France offices launched. The annual Middle East & North Africa (MENA) Travel Awards event perfectly illustrated my commitment to the Hospitality industry and passion for its cause besides the Oscar like event is held every May at Al Bustan Rotana in Dubai along side with the Arab Travel Market trade show (ATM).

In 2011, I contributed to the foundation of “Modern Century Hotels”, the Hotel Management company. The new trend Management Company, offering an ideal fusion of a healthy lifestyle in a luxurious environment, such has always been my inspiration. In fact, the company’s highly experienced management teams are dedicated to exceeding the expectations of the business partners, investors, associates and guests through the consistent delivery of superior quality hotel products and services in each of the three hotel Brands: Modern Century Plaza - Modern Century Court - Agate Hotels. Driven by my passion for excellence, the highly experienced team excelled on the journey of developing a unique family of Hotels that satisfy the growing demand of a Healthy subsistence in a superior quality hotel environment; while offering the guests an atmosphere that allow them self-discovery, leading to a healthier yet balanced lifestyle, in comparison with our brand agate hotels; via its three passages of: body mind and soul. As a Certified Hotel Administrator by Educational Institute of the American Hotel and Motel Association, I dedicated my whole career “to make a true difference”.

What made you decide on starting a career in the Hospitality business?
Working with people and different cultures was much more fascinating for me than just working in accounting with numbers, invoices and ledgers. My first encounter with The Hospitality / Hotel Industry was during my College years during the summer vacations, I traveled every year to London seeking experiences and making use of the vacation time. The London Ryan Hotel was my first Hotel experience and eventually became my training grounds every summer vacation for four years.

Tell us about your current role as president of CHA International?
CHA International being a Consultancy Firm for the Hotel & Hospitality Industry kept me busy making it a ONE STOP SHOPPING for our industry colleagues Worldwide. Being a hotelier myself, and knowing the challenges that may face the hotel operations, I am constantly augmenting various services and new solutions to our portfolio that may ease the Hotel management tasks, save cost, enhance efficiency, heighten productivity and or boost revenues. Consequently, while expanding the firm’s locations around the globe we are always service expansion mode including the Mystery Shoppers Service, AH&MA El Professional Certifications, Hospitality Solutions (Smart
Lobby & Smart room, Mobile Apps for MOD & HK, eMenu .etc), Training & Development, Technical Assistance, Operation Audits, Associates Survey, SPA Service, Executive Search .etc .etc.. Additionally, we have recently started the Hotel Management Company “Modern Century Hotels” taking much effort to develop, and promote its brands Plaza, Court & AGATE with the “Health Conscious Lifestyle / Renewable Energy & Sustainability” concepts.

Tell us about the early days of CHA International and why did you decide to go private? What’s your vision? The early day of CHA International were most challenging, yet inspiring. Starting the company in Cairo in 1998, from a zero point with one Admin and myself only. With TQM as the foundation with the philosophy, that CHA International will have no Employees but rather associates and partners only. Returning to Egypt after 28 years from the USA, there was also the challenge of establishing the network within the MENA Region thus and so the company developed on four pillars of its family members (Trust – Respect – Communication and Teamwork). With democracy amongst its members worldwide, when it comes to company decision-making; where partners, Worldwide, enjoy up to 50% on his/her productivity CHA International developed and grew with Partnership Model (where partners invest Time & Efforts Only and the Company Invests Time, Efforts, Planning & Money with 50% split of productivity). I decided to go private / Self-employment after 14 years of holding the GM post managing other people’s money / Hotels (Owners & Management Companies); realizing that when I am successfully managing others money / business I would rather, then, manage and run my own. Considering the return on investment (Time & Efforts) as an Employee (Salary) versus the ROI of own business with professional partners.

Vision and mission
My solid vision remains the same to create worldwide synergize with all the Hotel Professionals and CHA teams, to reach the ultimate in performance, yet to Champion professionalism around the globe within the Hospitality Industry, hence, To “Make A True Difference”. As for the mission I worked to achieve is to cater excellence in the Hospitality world as well eminent conformity in the industry’s Global aspiration through Serving colleagues, and providing industry professionals with the utmost, advanced and innovative service for better end results with People, Product, Promotion & Profit.

Why did you decide to expand regionally and internationally? To reach out to our industry’s colleagues worldwide, create and develop a powerful network amongst them. After all, our hospitality world is a small world and we all ought to be strongly in touch for the benefit of all of us.

With many offices around the world, tell us about the challenges and opportunities you face? The Challenge we face worldwide lie in the urgent need to customize our services for the different region’s cultures and industry requirements, however, the opportunities to bring them all together and to deliver our unique resources, services and facilities to make a difference are greater than the challenges.

Who is the person who left a mark in your career? It is Mr. Bill Marriott himself, Marriott Hotels & Resorts (North America) who has actually achieved the ultimate culture for our Industry. Being one of the pioneers in implementing the TQM in the west (Ownership, Partnership, Accountability with Responsibility, Empowerment & Quality Productivity). Along with Mr. Marriott’s slogan, “Take Care of your people. They take care of your business”. A simple philosophy that make a great difference for the end results of Productivity & Loyalty and profitability, hence, retention of the superior associate (close to none turnover).
What is the turning point in your career?
When I decided to take off the employment hat and put on the entrepreneur hat, that was in 1998.

Who do you consider to be a legend in your field in Egypt and worldwide?
If I think of someone, it would definitely be Mr. Sami El Zoghby because he created the culture, the force and expansion of "ITT Sheraton" in The Middle East & Africa as well he is a mentor / idol for more than three Industry generations in Egypt as well as the ME Region. He is a make-it-happen exceptional reputable hotelier with an absolute leaders charisma and appeal.

What are the current trends in the recruitment industry?
The trend of the Executive Search Industry is leaning towards the younger, energetic profiles seeking creativity and innovative talents at relatively less cost and higher return on investments.

Why did you decide to specialize in Hospitality recruitment?
In fact, we are not specialized in Executive Search only, however, the professional Executive Search Division happened to be the most obvious in Demand. Talent Search in vast expanding competitive industry with much need for "Qualified Man Power". Hence, supply versus demand is what drove the volume in our Executive Search Division of the Firm.

What's CHA's competitive advantage versus other global recruiters? How do you rate the competition?
Our competitive advantages, in addition to being at every corner of earth / 34 locations (in the backyard of our world clients), that we are all hotel operation professionals / experts (GM's, Division heads ...etc) we know our industry's colleagues needs, we speak the language (unlike many of the competition) where 90% of our clients are also candidates. Thus and so, I leave rating the competition to the audience and the end users of the Executive Search service.

Tell us about the factors which helped you move up the career ladder?
Applying TQM, my People skills and the ability of balancing between the management of Key Result Areas and the FOUR "P'S": People, Product, and Profit & Promotion as well having the right people on my team (Not Just People but the right people) additionally learning from the industry leaders over the years.

What has been the most rewarding thing in your career?
Applying the concept partnership model over employees model in our CHA International culture where by the partner invests Time & Effort only and share 50% of his or her productivity.

Now that you have made to top level what inspires you in your job? what is your next challenge?
Not yet on the top, the sky is the limit for our ambitions as success breadth success. From a challenge to another, the upcoming challenge for us is to keep on delivering new solutions and services that will make the difference in our industry. I am always challenged and inspired by new solutions and ideas that will bring our industry's productivities to higher levels of Service and Product Quality, the annual MENA Travel Awards is one example of such effort.

What do you believe to be the main success factor CHA International?
Its people and exclusive team members are the main asset and treasure of the company. Besides, the commitment to keeping up the industry ultimate standards are behind the exclusive projects and services we are offering to our range of customers.

What's the dream that you still did not realize on the business scale?
The full application of "Modern Century Hotels" Management Company Concepts of "Health Conscious" & "Lifestyle" with the implementation intact sustainability systems / programs is the dream I am still working on and whenever possible utilizing the Renewable Energy resources.
Finding the Best Site... Luck or Science?

This article examines effective site selection methodologies and determines if good site selection is a science or something best left to luck. The article follows three issues: The Wrong Way to Select a Site, Sample Cases of Poor Site Selection and Effective Site Selection. The process outlined here can be used by both franchisors and franchisees. While we always recommend that franchisors use a ‘best practice’ approach to franchisee site selection, we also feel that a franchisee who is about to invest a great deal of money in a franchise system also take a close look at their new site and become comfortable that it meets with the franchisor’s and your needs. The methodology outlined below will provide potential franchisees with some direction in how to review a site effectively.

The Wrong Way:
Many franchise and restaurant operators have their franchise sales or real estate representatives conduct their site analysis. In many cases the site analysis is very cursory and leads franchisors to place operations in the wrong locations. As many franchise sales representatives are only making an income on the sale of a franchise and the real estate agent on the lease of the space, the work which goes into the site selection and site criteria, is at best, lacking in quality and good judgment. The individuals who conduct the site analysis in these cases are usually short term employees or representatives with not long-term vested interest in the operations themselves and receive the bulk of their renumeration in the form of a commission based on a percentage of sales. Their objective is to make lots of sales not necessarily lots of ‘quality sales’. In many cases a site study is simply a ‘wind shield’ review, where the representative drives past the site and approves it. Survival of a franchise, restaurant, or retail outlet is based on three critical criteria: Location, Location and Location. While this is a tired old axiom, it still holds true. One of the most lucrative aspects of my consulting practice is litigation support, and of that over 50% deals with proving negligence on the part of the Franchisor in site selection for franchisees. The results of poor site selection are unhappy franchisees. The outcome of that can be a lawsuit. The outcome of the lawsuit where no reasonable and independent site analysis was conducted can be substantial financial losses to the Franchisor. Every Franchisor emphatically suggests that they place a great deal of emphasis on site selection, however, poor site selection, strategy and location analysis is one of the most prevalent and persistent problems in the franchise industry today.

Poor Location Strategies - Sample Cases
The following is a franchise situation where I have worked for the Franchisee in law suits against the Franchisor. The Franchisee placed a white collar family style restaurant on a fast food strip. The franchisors requirement for automobile traffic flow was
20,000 to 40,000 cars per day. (This site was 19,500 according to the City Statistics). Half of the traffic could not access the site as there was a median in the road making access impossible. Traffic coming in the opposite direction could not see the site as the site was below grade, set-back and the landlord refused street signage. When asked how the site was chosen the franchisee's representative, who conducted the analysis, stated that they were from the particular area, knew it well and watched the traffic near the site for an hour on a Friday night. At that time, the traffic flow seemed to be able to support the location. The franchisee sued the franchisee based on the fact that the initial site analysis was poorly conducted and as a result their business was not achieving the gross sales anticipated. The franchisee won.

**Effective Site Selection**

In order to develop an effective site selection strategy a franchisee must define the requirements of the site. First they must develop a site criteria which reflects the standard criteria of the franchisee's best stores in a 1, 3 & 5 mile radius. Depending on the style of operation, customers will generally not travel more than 15 minutes or five miles. They will travel less for expensive items like convenience and fast food items and, further for specialty items such as a high end retail products or a gourmet restaurant.

There are eight steps to effective site selection which are analyzed in two phases as follows:

**Phase I**

The first Phase is to determine the attributes of your best current sites and the second phase is to match your proposed locations to your best locations in an effort to duplicate them. By doing this, the franchisee will be able to provide franchisees with a more realistic opportunity to match the sales of the best operations. The more closely each location is matched, the greater the propensity to ensure success at each location.

**Step 1**

The first step is to analyze the current markets of your best operations, thus, creating a demographic profile of your most successful operations based on the following criteria.

- Age
- Income per Person
- Lifestyle Attributes
- Population and Trends
- Income per Household
- Education Level of Customer
- Number of People per Household
- Expenditures on your Product (i.e. food away from home)

**Step 2**

The second step is to determine the customer profile and make-up of your most successful operation. Are they:

- Housewives
- Business People
- The Theatre Crowd
- The After hours Crowd
- Afternoon Shoppers
- Office Towers Employees

**Step 3**

The third step is to determine how your customers at your most successful operations access those locations and to determine what services are required to support their transportation preferences. Do they use the following transportation methods:

- Subway (access)
- Bus (access)
- Private Cars (parking)
- Foot (are there other demand generators)

**Step 4**

The forth step is to define the access, egress and visibility of your best locations. Which of the following attributes are very prominent at your most successful sites:

- Access
- Egress
- Visibility
- Signage
- Parking
- Support Services
- Sunny Side of the Street
- Going Home Side of the Street

**Step 5**

The fifth step is to determine what constitutes your ideal store in terms of physical attributes. Remember that a 6,000 square foot operation will have a significantly different feeling than a 3,500 square foot operation.

- Size of Site
- Ceiling Height
- Width of Store
- Min/Max Square Footage

**Step 6**

The sixth step is to count both the pedestrian and automobile traffic in front of your best locations and to set them as an ideal standard for your new operation.

- Pedestrian
- Automobile

**Step 7**

The seventh step is to assess whether or not there is a clustering effect of competitive stores within your most successful operation areas. In some cases a clustering helps build demand. Three ski stores which are all located in one area may be beneficial for all three stores as people can do their price comparison and shopping in one area, saving time for themselves and, thus, increasing demand for the stores.

- Are there too many competitors
- Will the market support your prices
- Will the market support your product
- Are there enough competitors to draw business to the area
- Is there sufficient demand not being served which would support a new entrant into the market

**Step 8**

Finally, determine how economic indicators are impacting your site. For example, areas of business growth, like the construction of a new office tower may be a positive influence, while the building of residential homes may have a negative impact on your business as people are mortgaged strapped and have no disposable income.

- Is the area growing
- Is there new market growth

**Phase II**

The second Phase of the process is that once you have a clear understanding of the attributes, market, demand generators and so forth of your best sites, you must develop a comparison or ranking of the proposed sites in relation to the most successful existing sites.

**Scoring System**

In order to do this, we have developed a site scoring system to reflect how you should rate your proposed sites or locations compared to your most successful operations. If the proposed site matches the best site by:
less than 70% give it a score of 1
approximately 70% give it a score of 2
over 85%, then provide it with a score of 3

Scoring Report
Then take the results and mark them on a scoring report. A detailed site analysis of this style will likely take two days to complete but will be well worth while in increased Franchisee satisfaction.

Step 1
The first step is to have a demographic tabulation from find appropriate pockets within a given market by conducting a profile analysis. The appropriate pockets are determined by taking your demographic information from Phase 1 and inputting it into their computers. The result will be an outline of the areas which meet your demographic profile most closely.

Step 2
Once you have the pocket areas determined, match your required demand generators to your best operations in order to narrow in on the ideal site within each area and rate all seven points on the 1 - 3 scale.

Step 3
Determine whether the proposed site matches the transportation and access strategies which your most successful stores have. If so rate the site as very favorable or a three in the scoring. If the proposed site does not match the transportation attributes of your best locations score it low. Rate the five points on the 1 - 3 scale.

Step 4
Next, does the location meet the key site attributes of your most successful operations. If so then it bodes will for your new operation. If not, then do not force a location which does not provide the ease of access necessary to make the franchises successful. Rate these seven points on the 1-3 scale.

Step 5
Are the basic site requirements met. Is the store frontage large enough for your use, are the ceilings high enough to provide you the effect that you may want, are the physical attributes of the site sufficient for your use. Rate each of the six points on a 1 to 3 scale:

Step 6
Ascertain the traffic counts for the site and its closest cross streets. Assess how closely the traffic count at the site matches the traffic counts at your most successful locations. Rate these two points on a 1 to 3 scale.

Step 7
Walk around the area of the proposed site and drive around the extended area. Mark down the names and locations of every direct and indirect competitor and, determine if you can really get the support required from the market, given the competition or lack thereof, the additional demand generators and so forth. Assess whether the market will support your business. Rate these five points on the 1 to 3 scale.

Step 8
Find out what the five year plan is for the area around the proposed location, what the planned road changes are, what new office towers or residential construction is to take place and how those changes may impact the site. Rate these two points on a 1 to 3 scale.

Conclusion
A site should score at least 80 out of 100 (actual scoring is out of 99) or 80% to be acceptable for your selection. This should assist in finding the best sites for your operations. Ultimately your Franchisees are not coming to your organization for your best gut feel based on your experience in the industry. They are coming to your organization for a variety of reasons and, one of the most important reasons is your ability to provide them with a site which most closely matches your successful operations and which should be able to support their franchise locations and financial goals. Give them the quality they deserve. It will make you a stronger and more successful Franchisor.
Ramadan is a time where Muslims all over the world do not eat or drink between dawn and sunset. It is also a time for us to thank Allah for all his blessings. Muslims get up very early in the morning, before the sun rises and have Suhoor. Then, you can have your usual breakfast at this time. After this, you do not eat or drink until it is iftar time, when the sun sets. And that's why the body needs at the time of iftar to get an easily available energy source in the form of glucose for every living cell, particularly the brain and nerve cells. Dates and juices are good sources of sugars, they are sufficient to bring low blood glucose levels to normal levels. Juice and soup help maintain water and mineral balance in the body. An unbalanced diet and too many servings of sherbets and sweets with added sugar have been found to be unhealthy, while there is no need to consume excess food at dinner or suhoor (the light meal generally eaten about half an hour to one hour before dawn). The body has regulatory mechanisms that activate during fasting. There is efficient utilization of body fat. A diet that is less than a normal amount of food intake but balanced is sufficient enough to keep a person healthy and active during the month of Ramadan. Here are some healthy foods to eat during Sahur. Consume a light sahur. Eat whole wheat or oat cereal or whole wheat bread, 1-2 servings with a cup of milk. Add 2-3 teaspoons of olive oil or any other monounsaturated or polyunsaturated fats in a salad or the cereal. Eat 1-2 servings of fruits, as a last item. And since Muslims come from just about every place in the world, different families have different foods they like to eat for their iftar or suhoor meal and as well they have special foods that they don't serve during Ramadan, so we met people who shared with us what they don't like to eat in Ramadan and why.

Dr Sherif Abd El Aal (consultant for pediatrics, Cairo University)
Actually in Ramadan I don't eat neither seafood nor beans like wheat and lentil, also I don't go for Romy cheese, pastrami as they definitely increase thirst which will affect the fasting hours and as for the drinks. I don't have too much fizzy drinks and I don't like to drink pomegranate juice. Light food is always the best.

Aida Mohamed Zaki
I do not change my eating habits in Ramadan, instead, it is always the same. In general, do prefer salty food rather than sweets. At the meantime, I can't eat heavy meals such as mahshi, pigeon, duck, koshari for Ramadan's breakfast. Lemon juice is not also preferred at all and lots of water is always required.
Elhamy El Kerdany
I can say that most of the people won’t go for sea food in Ramadan but for me I like to change so I don’t have any problems in eating seafood in Ramadan. And since I have colon issues so of course I don’t eat any kind of beans as in peas, lentils, soya and since I also don’t like meat in general, I will never go for it as well and especially in Ramadan. For the traditional drinks, I don’t like at all especially the kamar el dine juice.

Khaled Hosni
Sales Director - Abu Ghaly Motors
For me, everything is valid in Ramadan. I can eat anything with slight changes in my eating habits such as reducing pickles, beans and of course sea food. As for the drinks, I just like Licorice. Other than that, I have no problem.

Magda Abo el Soud
PR Manager - Hilton Zamalek Hotel
In Ramadan, I exclude everything that causes thirst like seafood, koshary and that’s why I reduce salts and I don’t drink juices like carob but I love to have Hibiscus drink which is very famous in Ramadan. I don’t also coffee because usually I have my coffee in the morning and since am fasting so I don’t have it.

At end, stick to those tips for a healthy Ramadan
- Drink lots of water after iftar to avoid dehydration.
- Eat enough vegetables. End meals with fruits but remember to wait for awhile to avoid disturbing the food processing in your stomach as in fermentation, bloating etc.
- Minimize sweets and spicy food to the maximum.
- Avoid caffeine drinks such as coke, coffee or tea. Caffeine is a diuretic. The best is to reduce them gradually three to five days prior to Ramadan. Remember, sudden caffeine decrease prompts headaches, mood swings and irritability.
- Smoking is a health risk factor. Avoid smoking cigarettes. If you cannot give up, cut down gradually starting few weeks prior to Ramadan. Smoking negatively affects utilization of various vitamins, metabolites and enzyme systems in the body.
- Brush your teeth before sleep and after Sohour. Brush more than two times or as many times as practical.
- Sports is a must in Ramadan and preferably before iftar to keep fit and healthy. Wrong to believe that you will feel tired, instead, working out will always keep you fresh.