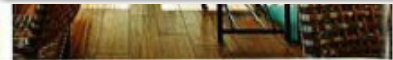


Sofitel Plaza Hanoi focuses on brown in its simple tabletop scheme for the outdoor terrace at the Summit Lounge.



Above: None of the restaurants — indoors, or outdoors — at Enchantment Resort in Sedona, Arizona, use tablecloths. Instead, the focus is on the natural materials and woods used for the tables — not to mention guests' spectacular surroundings.



Except for daily floral arrangements, tabletops on the Lakefront Patio at Wave in Chicago are kept uncluttered.



Fine-dining restaurant mar'sel at Terranea Resort aims for simplicity on its tabletops with glass tables and white linens.



SE-STO on Arno at the Westin Excelsior lets the views be the star of its outdoor terraces.

## LESS IS MORE

With a clientele comprised largely of no-nonsense business travelers — not to mention its outstanding views of Lake Michigan and Navy Pier — W Chicago Lakeshore chose to keep it simple with table settings on the Lakefront Patio at Wave restaurant.

"We don't clutter our tables with share plates, condiments, sugar caddies, etc.," says Lucas Chapman, the hotel's general manager. "The most significant items we have on our tables are the daily floral arrangements — a perfect compliment to the view and fresh air."

The Westin Excelsior in Florence, Italy, takes a similar approach on its rooftop terraces at SE-STO

on Arno, where spectacular views are the stars of the show and simple tabletops with pops of color from glasses or flowers merely play a supporting role.

Terranea Resort in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, also follows a less-is-more philosophy in its multiple outdoor dining outlets including fine-dining restaurant mar'sel, where simple glass tables

are covered with clean white linens and straightforward glassware. "Table schemes do not have to be cluttered anymore," says Carlo de Leon, Terranea's assistant director of food and beverage. "Long gone are the times that you needed flowers, salt and pepper shakers, sugar bowls, etc. to make a statement on a table. The environment and food will speak for itself."

## ON THE HORIZON

HERE IS A SAMPLING OF PREDICTIONS FOR THE NEXT BIG TRENDS IN TABLETOP ITEMS FOR OUTDOOR DINING:

**"Furniture will start being the focal point – different styles made up of different materials will be created to fit the environment, adding character along with functionality."**

– Carlo de Leon, assistant director of food and beverage, Terranea Resort, Rancho Palos Verdes, California

**"Durable settings that blend in with the environment. People choose to dine at outdoor restaurants to commune more with nature, so the manmade furnishings should reflect and harmonize with the environment rather than stand out from it."**

– Terry Hamada, director of F&B, Halekulani, Honolulu

**"The less-is-more trend will continue to evolve. Hotels may not be designed for outdoor dining spaces to have easy access to the kitchen, as other indoor dining establishments have."**

– Ian Grant, food and beverage director, Andaz Wall Street, New York City

**"I'm not opposed to using rental equipment if I can build it into a menu price. It's fun because you're not looking at the same old, same old all the time."**

– Mark Young, director of catering and conference services, Trump International Beach Resort, Sunny Isles Beach, Florida

**"Pretty soon there won't be 'outdoor' items – we will simply be using the same items as indoor dining rooms."**

– John Sheedy, general manager, JHouse Greenwich, Greenwich, Connecticut