

# 5 STAR AQUARIUMS AT LUXE RESORTS

Living Color Aquariums of South Florida brings exceptional skill to the art and artistry of luxury hotel aquariums.

BY JOHN D. ADAMS



Vivid, natural-looking corals are custom designed and hand cast by the artisans at Living Color Aquariums.



Canyon Ranch Hotel & Spa



Belize at Cape Marco, on Marco Island

Aquariums bring with them an innate sense of relaxation and tranquility. Is it any wonder that a number of luxury resorts around the world incorporate that quiet mystery of the deep into their guests' getaway experience? We asked Mat Roy, President and COO of Living Color Aquariums in Fort Lauderdale, Florida and star of the Nat Geo WILD series, "Fish Tank Kings," to comment on some of his company's iconic aquariums in landmark properties.

## LOEWS MIAMI BEACH HOTEL

The show-stopping 1,000-gallon, double-sided custom aquarium at Loews Miami Beach Hotel-South Beach is stunning. Alex Tonarelli, the hotel's managing director, says, "This was the vision from our Chairman, Jonathan Tisch. He always looks for ways to creatively enhance the arrival experience for all guests. It seemed like a natural thing to do, to add an aquarium at an oceanfront resort." Its size

and location are strategically suited to usher guests through the lobby and into a gift shop on the other side. "It's the centerpiece of their renovated lobby," said Roy. "This saltwater aquarium re-creates a lifelike Caribbean coral reef by using museum-quality corals and reef structures. Guests are drawn to its size and splendor which, in turn, allows them to see into the gift shop. Guests are bound to visit the store so they can view the aquarium from the other side."

## FONTAINEBLEAU MIAMI BEACH

For a number of years, Fontainebleau's 12 rectangular custom aquariums were not just aesthetically pleasing, but also served a practical purpose. All of the sea life contained within are "fished out" and served by the resort's 12 award-winning restaurants. Now in a first for



the hospitality industry, some privileged guests are offered a tour of the mechanical wizardry behind the curtain. With this unusual amount of attention paid, a remodel was in order. Roy explains, "We dismantled the 12 custom aquarium systems we had installed previously, and now everything is brand new and accessible to VIP guests. You will see two custom aquarium seafood 'towers' that house the resort's menu items. You learn just how seafood live-stock holding systems work for these five-star establishments. In addition, Fontainebleau added dynamic graphics on the walls, special lighting throughout to accentuate all of the details, even the plumbing has been painted blue. This is something completely unique for the hospitality industry."

## CANYON RANCH HOTEL & SPA, MIAMI BEACH

This breathtaking 1,260-gallon, 14-foot-long custom aquarium is the ideal introduction to the Canyon Ranch Hotel's spa. Because

of its size, Living Color Aquariums was able to incorporate larger artificial corals and sea life. Thanks to the addition of custom lighting, aquatic blues and greens accentuate the marble reception desk, lending to a cohesive, tranquil environment before you have even entered the spa. Roy adds, "We wanted to create a specific reaction. Namely, if this is what they have in the reception area, what must the spa be like?"

To experience the grandeur of hoteliers' custom aquariums, visit one of these beautiful resorts – even as a "day-cation." You can also tune into an episode of "Fish Tank Kings" on Nat Geo WILD, or visit Living Color Aquariums online at: [www.livingcolor.com](http://www.livingcolor.com), or in person at 6850 NW 12th Avenue, Fort Lauderdale, Florida. To request a tour, call 954-970-9511. ●

Learn more about Nat Geo WILD and "Fish Tank Kings" at: [channel.nationalgeographic.com/wild/fish-tank-kings](http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/wild/fish-tank-kings)