

Q&A

SHAWN SHAW, BUTLER AND STARGAZING CONCIERGE AT SANDALS DUNN'S RIVER, OCHO RIOS, JAMAICA

INTERVIEW BY Clare Vooght

How long have you worked for Sandals?

My journey with Sandals began 11 years ago at Beaches Ocho Rios, where I joined the company as a junior concierge agent. I remember being fascinated by the hospitality industry and seeing people from all around the world choosing Jamaica as the place to spend their holidays. I was soon promoted to various other positions before being considered as a butler – a role that has changed my life. I've had the privilege of meeting thousands of guests while working in some of our most beautiful resorts, most recently the Sandals Dunn's River, which opened in May.

What does being a stargazing concierge involve?

I didn't think my profession as a butler could get any better, but then the company introduced the Stargazing Concierge experience. I'm now able to incorporate my love of nature into my job, showing our guests an entirely new side of Jamaica. It's the ultimate cosmic experience. Of course, having an interest in the stars helps. The Caribbean sky is a beautiful thing, so this job is really exciting for me because I get to share my part of the world with guests from across the globe.

How can guests take part in stargazing experiences at Sandals Dunn's River?

The Stargazing Concierge is available as part of the Butler Elite service for guests staying in one of



“These suites have open-air rooftops and a telescope – it's a perfect, private spot



Shawn Shaw

PICTURES: Epix Professional Imaging by Sandals Resorts

TOP TIP

For something extra special, suggest clients book the luxurious Coyaba Sky Villa Swim-Up Rondoal Butler Suites and the Stargazing Concierge programme. A night-time picnic or delicious cocktails under the stars can be organised too.

the resort's Coyaba Sky Villa Swim-Up Rondoal Butler Suites. These suites have open-air rooftops and a telescope. This setting is an amazing canvas – a perfect, private spot for drinking champagne, and having the telescope opens up a whole new world of constellations. All guests need to do is give the Stargazing Concierge a ring on their butler phone and we'll arrange the entire complimentary experience. It can include anything from moonlight cocktails to tasting sweet treats and more, all under the night sky.

Which stars can guests see from Sandals Dunn's River?

There are such beautiful stars, constellations and planets to see in Ocho Rios. Mercury is the closest planet in sight and using the telescope you can often see

the Milky Way and Orion's Belt, which consists of the three bright stars: Alnitak, Alnilam and Mintaka. Every two days, you might also be able to spot the International Space Station passing by.

What kind of guest does this activity appeal to?

Everyone! Today, travellers are keen to try new experiences on their holiday, so this is a perfect way to do that, and they don't need to be fascinated by stars and space to take part. The Stargazing Concierge is also a chance for guests to connect with their partner in a different way, through doing something new together.

What are your favourite things about the new Sandals Dunn's River resort?

Each morning at 8.30am there is a wandering musician who plays unamplified music by the pool. It is usually a saxophonist, violinist

or a steel pan band, and is a lovely way to start the day. There's also a coffee bike that goes along the beach each morning from 5.30am, for those early risers, particularly UK guests who naturally wake up early [due to jet lag]. Staying true to my roots, my favourite restaurant for dinner is the Jerk Shack, which offers an extensive menu of delectable local dishes on the beach. We are also really excited by the Dunn's Rum Club. This bar has the largest selection of rum in Jamaica, with more than 30 versions of the spirit. It's the place to be and promises a good time, every time. **TW**