



# AWAKENING ATLANTIS

When faced with the challenge of providing the ultimate four-day experience for a 30-person incentive group for New York-based corporate client, Metiom, Harith Wickrema of Harith Productions in Philadelphia, decided to take them to the lost city of Atlantis.

After a search of several luxury resorts, Wickrema and Metiom chose Atlantis Paradise Island Resort in the Bahamas. "It was an easy decision," says Wickrema. "Atlantis, in addition to being an extraordinarily beautiful property with an array of themes and recreational options, has a reputation for excellence, especially when it comes to groups."

## Waking the Gods

Guests eagerly anticipated the award celebration night. Wickrema themed the evening "Night of the Gods," unbeknownst to the 30 VIPs, and led the attendees on a special journey. An invitation awaited each guest the night preceding the awards evening, which only fueled their level of anticipation, not to mention, piqued their curiosity, as the invitation was sent by the almighty Zeus.

Guests were summoned to gather inside the beach tower caves, which were lit with color-gelled lights, and showcased the indigenous beauty of the caves to provide magnificent ambience.

## Courting the Favor of the Gods

Guests then were led from the caves down a path flanked with more than 250 luminaries as well as flickering tiki torches, to Atlantis' Royal Ballroom.

Mayan and Atlantean warriors and a high priestess greeted the guests and led the procession to the Mayan Temple inside the ballroom. Rather than round tables, the room was designed in a U-shape. Each place setting had a 12-inch Atlantean Mayan temple on it, which when opened, revealed the theme and menu. Tables were adorned with ancient artifacts, tropical flowers, and earth- and golden-colored linens and chair covers.

"It was an odyssey where each award winner relived the history of when the Mayan and Atlantean cultures interacted with the gods," says Wickrema.

The banquet staff was costumed, and served each course synchronized to music. The service was unparalleled, as 14 waiters served 30 guests.

As guests entered the room, a voice-over of Poseidon welcomed them, and set the stage for the evening they were about to experience. The menu was a tempting feast for the senses. Poseidon explained the intricacy of each course as it was served, while Atlantean and Mayan warriors paid homage to the gods.

The sorbet, Zeus's Lightning Strike, was served as streaks of lighting effects crossed the room. Each sorbet presentation had its own glow-in-the-dark lightning rod, and each waiter wore complementary paraphernalia. Poseidon's Trident design was baked into a Parmesan crisp and was called Poseidon's Trident Forge.

The cuisine was a collaborative effort between Wickrema and Atlantis' Vice President of Culinary Operations, Chef George



Photos courtesy of Richard Riley

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Paulussen. "Harith is very creative. What he put on paper, works very well with what I put on a plate," says Paulussen.

The dinner portion of the evening started with mythical Atlantean music playing in the background. Three vibrantly dressed gods and angelic dancers in flowing, white garments performed the first production number, which led to a Mayan warrior fire dance.

Just before dessert, the Mayan queen arrived on a royal stretcher carried by Mayan and Atlantean warriors.

Following dessert, an offering was made to the Sun God Ra. The prayer to Ra was branded in a manner to reinforce the Metiom sales goals and objectives. The prayer asked for more wisdom for e-knowledge, e-thoughts, B2B e-commerce success, etc. This not only got the winners roaring with laughter, but also drove home the message of why they were at Atlantis.

The rise of Ra dazzled the audience with an incredible light and sound show, and was followed by a high-energy dance production number that concluded with an indoor pyrotechnic show.

"It was overwhelming," said one attendee. "The best part was that you didn't know what was happening next."

"A high degree of artistry, imagination, and creativity, exemplified through unique and innovative stage sets, brought another time and place to reality," said Kristina Cortes, vice president for Metiom's Global Brand & Marketing Services.

"The caliber of this event can only be done with team work, trust, confidence, and relationships," says Wickrema, who credits many event partners with the success of the evening. Those partners include Designs by Sean; Paradise Sound and Light; Cloth Connection; New Century Dance Company; and Atlantis' culinary staff headed by Paulussen. Wickrema also credits the sense

## The Menu of the Gods

A pyramid-shaped menu entombed the creative fare the guests would be served throughout the magical evening.

**Atlas' Horizon**  
Jewels of the Sea perched in an icy saffron scented pool with an abyss of apple-smoked salmon soufflé in a tangle of selected greens finished with fire, charred-pepper coulis and splashes of the rainbow.

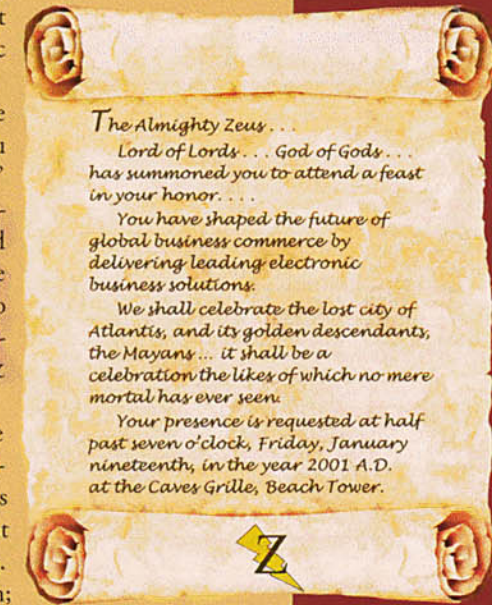


**Poseidon's Trident Forge**  
Maine lobster braised in a fennel curry broth and crowned with a Parmesan crisp showcasing Poseidon's trident.

**Zeus' Lightning Strike**  
Mango and papaya sorbet to cleanse the palate.

**Trilogy of Gods: Poseidon, Atlas and Zeus**  
Medallions of beef, lamb and veal served with wild mushrooms and truffled potatoes alongside seasonal greens.

**Mayan Temple Rising**  
A chocolate Mayan pyramid filled with espresso mousse made from Arabic beans, complemented with a cornucopia of wild berries.



*The Almighty Zeus...  
Lord of Lords... God of Gods...  
has summoned you to attend a feast  
in your honor...  
You have shaped the future of  
global business commerce by  
delivering leading electronic  
business solutions.  
We shall celebrate the lost city of  
Atlantis, and its golden descendants,  
the Mayans... it shall be a  
celebration the likes of which no mere  
mortal has ever seen.  
Your presence is requested at half  
past seven o'clock, Friday, January  
nineteenth, in the year 2001 A.D.  
at the Caves Grille, Beach Tower.*