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Hotel Galileos: How to Go from Bland to Beautiful

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That's rich: The Resort at Pelican Hill ballroom gets a rich baroque treatment thanks to AOO Events (here, right). Photos by David Marrett/AOO Events.

Behold the Ballroom

The basic hotel ballroom: In the right hands, it transforms from a simple space into an unforgettable setting for special events

By Lisa Hurley

GOING FOR BAROQUE

Although the Resort at Pelican Hill in Newport Beach, Calif., is only six years old, its look is "modern baroque," management says. And it was that rich, ornate style from 17th and 18th century Europe that Los Angeles-based AOO Events keyed on to create the "Modern Baroque on Steroids" final-night party for the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence.

After a reception overlooking the ocean, the 240 guests entered the ballroom to find an array of tables mixing rectangles, squares and rounds. Antique mirror tops and ornate velvet cloths in burgundy floral prints alternating with gold brocade were accented with burgundy and gold satin napkins. Place settings featured a mix of china, flatware and stemware patterns. Clear Louis XIV Ghost chairs kept the focus on the tables, which were topped with rich arrangements of orange spray roses, hydrangea, cymbidium orchids and andromeda. The room was finished with red and gold lighting in intricate architectural motifs washing over the walls.

WHITE THIS WAY While a rich mix of color brightens a ballroom, going all-white is still a winner. The team at Atlanta-based Legendary Events reimaged the tan, taupe and mineral green palette of the Astor Ballroom at the Atlanta St. Regis as a white-on-white "winter wonderland" wedding reception for 280 guests.

During the reception, the event team flipped the ceremony area to install the dining set-up in 30 minutes, placing 8-foot manzanita trees and 12-foot crape myrtles covered in fresh white floral, crystal strands and flickering lights, along with tables, chairs, pillows and place settings. The room glittered, thanks to reflective mirror tabletops and the 27-by-27-foot crystal and snowflake canopy over the dance floor.

And that snowy look never melted; instead, it was the work of the event team, which hand-strung 87,500 feet of organza ribbon for the 8,000-crystal canopy structure, which incorporated the existing chandelier. The frosty finishing touch: 500 white "snowflakes" attached to the bottom of the crystals.



White done right: Legendary Events creates a rich white-on-white wedding at the St. Regis (middle, above). Photos by Peacock Audio and Video.