

EVENTS/CAUSES

## Fairmont Macdonald looks for stories behind “stolen” hotel items

April 20, 2015



*The Fairmont Hotel Macdonald*

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By JOE MCCARTHY

The Fairmont Hotel Macdonald in Edmonton, Canada, is celebrating its centennial by inviting guests to visit the property April 25 with beloved artifacts or knickknacks taken from past stays.

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**Luxury Daily**

The Fairmont "Amnesty Event" seeks to temporarily reclaim stolen items to be displayed during a "Historic Open House" while eliciting guest stories and building community. The whimsical campaign deftly draws attention to the property's storied history and puts guests front and center.

"We are most interested in the stories behind the items," said Steven Walton, director of sales and marketing at [The Fairmont Hotel Macdonald](#), Edmonton. "Where have they been? Where have they traveled? Are there emotional/sentimental attachments to these items?"

"We would be looking specifically for logo'd items that have the Grand Trunk Railway or Canadian Pacific (CP) logos as those are the ones that have the most age/history associated. A key takeaway is we will display them at the Amnesty Event and if on loan,

again at our public Historic Open House in August. We would return any items back to their owner if that is their wish. Any items not returned will find a home for display in parts of the common area of the hotel with a brief story behind them as well."

Coming clean

Running a hotel inevitably entails losing coveted items on a more or less routine basis. Easily replaceable towels and toiletries are probably two of the most stolen categories, but anything that can be concealed is generally within limits depending on a guest's audacity.



*Pillows, a lamp and a framed print for the taking*

Fairmont fully accepts this inconvenient situation and intends to portray it in a light-hearted rather than heavy-handed manner, poking fun at "guilty" guests.

In doing so, the property will likely garner a range of theft stories that showcase its varied customer base and provide all involved with a good laugh or fond recollection.

Past guests are invited to visit the property between 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on April 25th to forfeit their bounty and share the origin story of items. Tours of the property will be provided to all who attend.

All returned items will be on display during an open-house exhibit in August. Guests can choose to regain the taken goods or give them to The Fairmont Macdonald for indefinite display.

Mr. Walton noted that other Fairmont locations have had successful "Amnesty" campaigns.

"The event at the Palliser in Calgary and Chateau Laurier in Ottawa were well represented with hundreds of items returned for keeps or on loan between the two properties," he said.

Embedded Video: [https://www.youtube.com/embed/-of\\_MvjYtPQ](https://www.youtube.com/embed/-of_MvjYtPQ)

*Château Laurier Amnesty Day*

Next phase

Surpassing 100 years is a rare achievement for a brand in any category, so celebrations tend to be reverent and inclusive, especially with luxury brands.

For instance, Italian automaker Maserati furthered its centennial celebration by traveling to historic landmarks in the brand's history.

From Sept. 18-20, consumers could follow the brand on social media and through a dedicated microsite to see where the festivities were going next. Hosting a physical event with digital extension helped Maserati involve both locals and a larger fan base in the milestone ([see story](#)).

For The Fairmont Macdonald, celebrating the cavalier side of its history adds to the fun.

"We would accept any items from our 100-year history," Mr. Walton said. "Silverware, check-in keys, furniture, pictures, old guestroom bills, uniforms, robes, glasses, china, etc."

Final Take

*Joe McCarthy, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

Embedded Video: <https://www.youtube.com/embed/5oGLG3rKH80>

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