

EVENTS/CAUSES

Peninsula Hotels rejuvenates academy program to broadly engage

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SnowPage for Peninsula Hotels

By JOE MCCARTHY

The Peninsula Hotels is showing brand-wide cohesion with updated Peninsula Academy offers.

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Luxury Daily

The Peninsula Academy is part of the brand's push to distinguish itself in the luxury realm as a premier arbiter of experiences. As demand for experiential travel escalates and consumers become experts at researching locales, brands are hard-pressed to come up with original, compelling efforts.

"There are always those instances when hotels try to focus too much on the offerings, and the fundamentals suffer, which makes for many unhappy guests," said [Damon Banks](#), freelance journalist and media consultant, New York. "However, in the case of the Peninsula Hotels having such a solid reputation of providing some of the finest services available in hotels today, these added 'experiences' can be very beneficial to a number of guests.

"With so many travelers today wanting a more 'localized' experience, these immersion programs are perfect for these guests to experience a bit of local culture while still

benefiting from the standard Peninsula level of services and amenities," he said.

Mr. Banks is not affiliated with The Peninsula Hotels, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

The Peninsula Hotels was unable to comment by press deadline.

Back to class

The Peninsula Academy helps guests plunge into the heart of their hotel's country or city.

Each hotel offers several programs that aim to submerge guests into the art, cuisine, fashion, style and culture of the location and present guests with greater opportunities to connect with the city, country and individual Peninsula hotel ([see story](#)).

Peninsula recently rolled out an update to the academy, demonstrating to consumers that this is now an ongoing, central part of the brand.

Also, the new slate of programs and the promise of continual updates may coax dedicated guests into making the academy program part of annual travel plans, essentially creating a student body of cultural experiences.



Peninsula Easter activity

This summer, guests can travel through the brand's small portfolio for several new academy programs.

At the newly opened Peninsula Paris, a kids culinary class will teach young guests chocolate recipes from the property's pastry team and give them a tour of the kitchen.

Guests can also take a private tour of Versailles in a vintage 1934 Rolls-Royce and then enjoy a picnic on the palace grounds.

A helicopter, Rolls-Royce or Mini Cooper will transport guests to the next academy program at Peninsula Paris, a tour of cellars and vineyards and a meet-and-greet with the winemaker of the House of Deutz.

Football fans can receive a tour of the Parc des Princes stadium with members of Paris Saint-Germain FC.



Peninsula Paris

At the Peninsula Hong Kong, guests can take a class with a famous Hong Kong-based comic artist at Comix Home Base, where they will learn the process of creating comic art and get a chance to create their own illustrated narrative.

Travelers can also go on a gastronomic journey with a sketch artist.

In Shanghai, a sidecar motorbike ride, vase making classes and a sushi master class are available.

The brand's Tokyo property will take guests to a famed fish market to learn about how to buy the best fish and then head back for a sushi class and lunch.

Also, plastic and wax modeling experiences can be arranged.

In New York, a farmer's market tour and afternoon tea courses are offered.



The Peninsula New York

Comedy is the basis for Peninsula Chicago's new academy course.

Finally, visitors to the Beverly Hills, CA, hotel can link up with a top hollywood stylist and also take a course by a fitness guru.

Keeping up

Peninsula is not the only brand that has recently boosted their experiential promises.

For instance, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts is compiling top experiences from properties around the world for its “Extraordinary Experiences Collection” series.

The collection aims to immerse guests in a location’s culture, which inevitably leads to a wide range of potential options. Travelers have consistently professed that trips should entail original experiences, and luxury hotel brands are fundamentally shifting to meet this demand ([see story](#)).

Also, Dorchester Collection is looking to boost fan engagement with its #DCMoments initiative spanning the brand’s social media pages.

Many hotel chains are seeking to brand guest experiences by implying that favorite “moments” wouldn’t be possible without the property’s guidance. In doing so, hotels are able to aggregate valuable user-generated content, and also build loyalists by defining an event that might otherwise have remained neutral ([see story](#)).

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, staff reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

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