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16 New York hotels sign commitment to combat global warming

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The Peninsula Hotel launches Peninsula Academy

By STAFF REPORTS

The Waldorf Astoria and The Peninsula are among the New York properties making a pledge to help fight climate change.

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Sixteen of the city's iconic hotels are joining Mayor Bill de Blasio's NYC Climate Challenge, promising to lower their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 30 percent within the next 10 years. Sustainability is on the minds of many travelers these days, making participation not just a worthy cause, but also a selling point and differentiator.

Plan in motion

Mayor de Blasio's 10-year plan is meant to set the city on a path toward an 80 percent reduction in emissions by 2050. New York's buildings make up three quarters of all emissions from the city, making them a prime target of the initiative.

"Whether we're talking about universities, hospitals, and offices, or large apartment buildings and hotels, all of New York City has a stake in our fight against climate change," said Mayor de Blasio in a statement. "If some of New York's most iconic hotels can significantly reduce their carbon footprint, anyone can. NYC Carbon Challenge participants are joining City government in leading by example through the green retrofits all buildings should make and that's no small feat, with current Challenge commitments equivalent to removing over 100,000 cars from our roads."

The 16 hotels that have signed the pledge are 1 Hotel Brooklyn Bridge, 1 Hotel Central Park, Crowne Plaza Times Square, Dream Downtown, Grand Hyatt New York, Hotel Pennsylvania, Hudson Hotel, Loews Regency Hotel, Lotte New York Palace, The Pierre - A Taj Hotel, The Peninsula New York, InterContinental New York Barclay, InterContinental New York Times Square, Roger Smith Hotel, Waldorf Astoria New York and the Westin New York at Times Square.



Waldorf Astoria New York

Combined, all of the properties have 11,000 rooms and take up almost 10 million square feet. Comparatively, all of the participants in the NYC Climate Challenge have properties that represent 255 million square feet.

In each year of the initiative, participants will spend \$160 million in construction costs, also creating 650 local jobs.

"As one of the city's legendary hotels that has stood as a landmark since 1931, the Waldorf Astoria New York is in a unique position to embrace the NYC Carbon Challenge as we are a showcase to both travelers and New York residents alike," said Michael Hoffmann, managing director at Waldorf Astoria New York, in a statement. "With a longstanding motto of the difficult immediately, the impossible takes a bit longer,' we pride ourselves in the ability to embrace a challenge, especially one that is so important to the New York City community. We look forward to continuing to dramatically reduce our greenhouse gas emissions over the next 10 years."

Many hotels already have a sustainability plan in place, but organizing with the city will help make more of an impact.

"The NYC Carbon Challenge represents an important partnership between the City of New York and The Peninsula New York, as we commit to make New York City a better place to live for all. The business community, and hoteliers, have an obligation to the people of New York to ensure a sustainable and viable future for the city," said Jonathan H. Cook, general manager at The Peninsula New York, in a statement. "The NYC Carbon Challenge reflects The Peninsula Hotels own Sustainable Luxury 2020 Vision program in which we aspire to deliver the highest standard of luxury in a sustainable way and continue to grow responsibly and sustainably throughout all our hotels across the world."

As consumers become more aware of the negative impact of their travels, they are increasingly favoring environmentally and socially responsible alternatives, according to a new report by Booking.com.

The impacts of travel are myriad, direct and indirect, and compound over time. As consumers see first-hand or learn about the cumulative effect of easy travel, they are turning their qualms into action ([see story](#)).

This announcement comes on the heels of the COP21 meeting in Paris, which brought climate change to the front of consumers' and companies' minds.

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