

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Waldorf Astoria makes food unforgettable with latest initiative

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Waldorf Astoria New York

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Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts is giving its consumers a taste of the unforgettable.

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The brand has launched Taste of Waldorf Astoria Unforgettable Experiences, a collection of property-specific packages highlighting the high-end gastronomy of each locale. Both Taste of Waldorf and Unforgettable Experiences have long been staples of the brand's promotions, but combining the two allows them to please consumers who treat fine dining with the reverence with which others treat sightseeing.

"Culinary travel is one of the current biggest trends and, as such, guests are looking for one-of-a-kind culinary experiences," said Stuart Foster, Vice President Global Marketing, Hilton Worldwide. "Simply dining at a hard-to-book, Michelin-starred restaurant is no longer enough they want to meet the local farmers, discover culture through food and learn how to prepare some of their signature dishes themselves, which is why Waldorf Astoria wanted to bring these experiences to life for guests."

A taste to remember

To inaugurate the new program, Waldorf Astoria has designed in initial 13 packages, each highlighting the culinary culture of a separate destination. These experiences will be available on select dates throughout 2016.

Among the highlights is a tour of Mahane Yehuda Market in Jerusalem, led by the Waldorf Astoria Jerusalem's chef. In Ras Al Khaimeh, United Arab Emirates clients will partake in a date-themed cooking class and visit a local date farm, while Panama will feature a fishing trip and dinner based on the day's catch.



Waldorf Astoria breakfast

The Taste of Waldorf Astoria Unforgettable Experiences will be merged into the brand's broader Unforgettable Experiences, wrapping the attractions and activities unique to each location into the gastronomic journey.

"Merging two Waldorf Astoria initiatives into a selection of specially curated itineraries truly allows guests to have unmatched experiences in some of the most iconic hotels in the world," said John T.A. Vanderslice, global head of Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts, in a statement. "Guests can now book culinary-specific offerings that are validated by Waldorf Astoria's elevated guest service."

The Unforgettable Experiences will include luxury airport transfers and additional Michelin-starred private meals. Prices range from \$900-\$6,000.

To promote the packages across all properties, the brand has also introduced the 2016 Taste of Waldorf Astoria winning dish, the Jing Roll, to all of its menus. The Jing Roll was created by Benoit Chargy, chef at Waldorf Astoria Beijing, and Bruner-Yang, one of the apprentice chefs who competed in this year's Taste of Waldorf Astoria contest.



Waldorf Astoria Jing Rolls

Food has long been a part of Waldorf Astoria's history. The brand is the birthplace of Eggs Benedict and red velvet

cake, as well as the eponymous Waldorf salad.

Experiential packages focused on food therefore allow the brand to communicate its history in a way that also capitalizes on the steady growth of food tourism and a craving for experiences abroad.

Unforgettable experiences

Waldorf Astoria has a history of offering promotions geared at enthusiasts of other sectors.

In August 2014, Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts revealed an ultimate driving experience at six of the brand's locations that allows guests to drive several luxury vehicles with a professional driver.

The program continues today at select Waldorf Astoria locations across the United States and will allow guests to gain firsthand experience with racecars from Ferrari, McLaren and Porsche. Since specific brands are featured, Waldorf Astoria may attract loyalists of the accompanying automakers ([see story](#)).

Waldorf Astoria is not the only luxury hotel brand to shine a light on upscale dining.

Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts is also keeping things exclusive with a new batch of private jet journeys.

"Culinary Discoveries" joins "International Intrigue" and "Extraordinary Adventures" in taking a select handful of consumers on a themed journey across a number of countries in Four Seasons' private jet. Although only the wealthiest few will embark on the trip, its visibility and exclusivity will resonate throughout the brand ([see story](#)).

"Waldorf Astoria Hotels and Resorts are unified by a culture of consummate service and singular experiences," Mr. Foster said. "The brand is committed to offering guests unmatched, authentic moments that are reflective of the history and heritage of the brand as well as individual hotels and their locations.

"These offerings honors the brand's heritage as the birthplace of legendary culinary inventions while continuing our legacy by offering our guests authentic and unforgettable moments that further connect them to our properties in a new, interactive way."