

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Taj consolidates brand identity with streamlined philosophy

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*Taj Mahal Palace in Mumbai, India*

By FORREST CARDAMENIS

India's Taj Hotels Resorts and Palaces has introduced a new philosophy meant to redefine the customer experience and improve loyalty.

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The brand unveiled a video highlighting the philosophy, #Tajness, and streamed an accompanying party and announcement on live streaming application Periscope. Taj's #Tajness takes inspiration from the brand's Indian heritage, highlighting and incorporating the nation's culture to better serve guests.

### Tajness

To promote the initiative, **Taj** has launched a **microsite** promoting the cornerstones of its new philosophy. It begins with a video defining Taj's luxury.

The video starts with images of a craftsman working before shifting to images of the hotel, drawing comparison between the fine arts and the hotel. Text superimposed on the images define true luxury has something with a legacy, at which point images highlight the Taj's legacy and history.

Everything from artwork to etiquette rituals are shown as the text implores the feeling of luxury as something that can be sensed and recognized in the way it enhances experiences, "a feeling called Tajness."

### *Tajness You can feel it with your eyes closed*

After the video, Tajness is broken into its component parts, each of which is defined in detail. These components are nobility, sincere care, homage to local culture, sensorial journeys, pioneering spirits and authenticity.

Nobility refers to the brand's founder, Jamsetji Nusserwanji Tata, and his devotion to economic rather than political action. Accordingly, Taj will continue to champion human rights causes and stay true to founding Indian traditions.

Sincere care involves elements of great service, making consumers feel like "a privileged member of the Taj family" rather than as a customer. Homages to local culture are visible in everything from decor to staff uniforms, as well as in its community contribution, a tradition among Indian businesses.



*Vivanta by Taj - Ambassador in New Delhi*

"Sensorial journeys" refers to a series of activities or rituals that will extend across all properties. Particular entrees will be offered in all locations, while scents and music used in the hotels will also be consistent across locations. Additionally, certain rituals, including yoga and afternoon tea rituals, will also be available at all Taj locations. By instilling similarities and consistencies across all properties, guests can be assured that a good experience in one location will translate to each of the others, likely boosting loyalty and repeat business in the process.



*The Pierre, a Taj Hotel in New York*

Taj seeks to implement these practices across all properties by the end of 2017.

#### Identity crisis

While not a full re-branding, Taj is not the first hotel to take steps to consolidate its image.

Last September, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company announced that it was rebranding itself with a newly designed logo and voice to be implemented across all its properties within a year.

The organization, founded in Boston in 1983, is the parent of not just the Ritz-Carlton hotel brand but also golf clubs, high-end spas and meeting centers, a leadership center, residences and the Community Footprints charity, which focuses on relieving poverty and hunger and protecting the environment. The new logo and color, the first changes in the brand's history, aim to "clarify, simplify and amplify" the brand's identity for global consumers ([see story](#)).

Mere weeks later, Starwood Hotels & Resorts' The Luxury Collection announced plans to launch a new brand identity, complete with a global advertising campaign, to smooth the transition for consumers.

"Hotels that Define the Destination" was the brand's first global ad campaign since 2011 and showcases the hotel chain's new logo and highlight elements of experiential travel. As travelers take advantage of the Internet and other resources to plan trips well ahead of time, hotels must ensure that they can offer more than a bed to sleep in to foster loyalty, and a new brand identity will allow Luxury Collection to define itself through those additional experiences ([see story](#)).