

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Hospitality brands serve up breast cancer donations

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Peninsula breast cancer cocktail

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

Pink cocktail themes are this October's leader in breast cancer awareness hospitality initiatives, with the Ritz-Carlton and Peninsula Hotels driving charity sales with special recipes.

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While many hotels and resorts are adding shades of pink to their locations in October, specialty cocktails seem to be popping up at numerous venues to raise funds for various breast cancer funds. These initiatives are important because these locations are not just incorporating the pink ribbon for a positive appearance, but are actively raising donations in a manner that appeals to the affluent consumer.

"Breast Cancer Awareness Month is always a highly visible opportunity for hospitality brands to demonstrate their commitment to the community and giving back," said Taylor Rains, managing partner at **Flugel Consulting**. "It is not uncommon to see properties adding pink decor to their common areas or adding signature items to their food and beverage offerings.

"The Ritz-Carlton San Francisco, for example, has added a special pink cocktail and tea hour to their menu and opened up a donation drive to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund," he said. "The Biltmore in Florida is adding pink "flare" throughout the property and has incorporated a special menu to its restaurant in support of the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation.

"The common thread among hotel brands' recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness month is to take a step beyond simply raising awareness. Many are actively contributing to funds and charities committed to fighting the disease and are developing offerings and specials that afford their guests the opportunity to give back as well."

Raising more than awareness

Breast Cancer Awareness Month each year prompts a variety of brands to help out those in need through various marketing and sales efforts that incorporate the color pink. Travel and hospitality brands are some of the biggest drivers for Breast Cancer Awareness with various on-site activations such as offering pink-colored food and beverage, or changing the lighting hues.

In one example, Peninsula's French dining restaurant in Hong Kong will be home to a special blush colored lunch from October 3 to 28, in a mission to raise awareness and charity for breast cancer. Naturally Peninsula in Pink lunch is a four-course meal priced that features a dessert platter incorporating grapefruit and cherry.

Half the proceeds of the lunch will be donated to Hong Kong's Breast Cancer Registry.



Afternoon Tea (2014) by Chinese visual artist Chen Man, courtesy of Peninsula

However, there will be brand-wide initiatives for various pink infused products being sold for charity at Peninsula locations. For instance, the Fuschia Fleur cocktail is a drink that consists of lemon peel infused vodka, fresh peach pure, lemon juice and strawberry.

Hong Kong's Breast Cancer Registry will also receive 50 percent of the funds.

San Francisco's Ritz-Carlton is also featuring a pink themed, vodka infused cocktail of which funds will be donated to Breast Cancer Emergency Fund. Each drink costs \$14 at the Parallel 37 or in The Lounge, and for every cocktail sold \$1 will be donated to the fund.

The drink consists of vodka, lime, strawberry, peppermint, Velvet Falernum and rose lemonade.



Ritz-Carlton's Pink Promise cocktail

Miami's Biltmore will also be featuring a cocktail for Breast Cancer Awareness month. The pink cocktail is made of kappa pisco, Chambor Liqueur, muddled raspberries, fresh lime juice, simple syrup and egg whites.

There will also be pink macaroons created by Executive Pastry Chef Olivier Rodriguez of which \$1 for each sold will be sent to the Florida Breast Cancer Foundation. Biltmore also created a video to celebrate seven Breast Cancer survivors.

More than October

Each October for Breast Cancer Awareness Month, luxury brands across sectors work to raise awareness and proceeds for a cure, but how did this initiative become so popular, and what makes it effective?

Whether it is hotels lighting up pink or beauty and skincare brands offering pink products and donating a percentage of the revenue, it is by now inevitable that charitable engagements will outnumber Halloween promotions in the luxury world. Luxury brands have always been called upon by consumers to be socially conscious, a call only

strengthening as millennials accrue wealth, and it's that requirement that prevents such initiatives from feeling like gimmicks or cheap attempts at good publicity ([see more](#)).

For instance, The Ralph Lauren Centre for Breast Cancer Research at The Royal Marsden opened on May 17 to expand the brand's 20-year efforts in the fight against the disease.

The center is focusing on breast cancer tumors at a molecular level, establishing the differences between growths in different women to be able to better target treatments for individual patients. Cancer is a personal cause for Mr. Lauren, and this latest partnership with the Duke of Cambridge and The Royal Marsden is poised to make a difference in how the disease is treated ([see more](#)).

"Pro-social initiatives are always a strong way for company's to humanize their brand and demonstrate a commitment to their community," Mr. Rains said. "Breast Cancer Awareness Month is highly visible with a significant amount of media coverage. Recognizing and actively supporting the cause serves to strengthen overall perception of the brand among guests and the market as a whole.

"This is especially important for luxury brands that are often subject to criticism by those who feel they are disconnected from their respective communities," he said. "While it's not necessarily innovative, one trend that's presented itself this year is a commitment to contributing financially to the cause and not simply recognizing the month as important.

"In the past, brands would stop at changing their lighting to a pink hue but recently we're seeing these properties put their money where their month is on a much larger scale. Ritz-Carlton San Francisco, for example, is hosting a handbag drive for the third consecutive year to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Emergency Fund. These sort of creative fundraising endeavors go a long way in showcasing a brand's charitable nature."