

FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Louis XIII serves cognac-centered tasting atop Four Seasons Hotel New York

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Image courtesy of Louis XIII

By JEN KING

Please note: Since the publishing of this article Nov. 2, 2016, Four Seasons Hotel New York has discontinued the Louis XIII Experience program.

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Cognac-maker Louis XIII de Rmy Martin is demonstrating craftsmanship and savoir-faire during an experiential tasting 52 stories above the streets of New York.

Organized jointly by the cognac brand and Four Seasons Hotel New York, the Louis XIII Experience launches on Nov. 13 and is reserved only for guests who book the hotel's Royal Suite, or the "crown jewel" of the property, the bespoke Ty Warner Penthouse. Experiential travel is on-trend, and hospitality brands are continuously searching for unique, one-off ways to capture affluent consumers' attention, especially those who are not restricted by cost.

"Four Seasons Hotel New York is known for creating unimaginable one-of-a-kind experiences for the world's most discerning clientele, and so a partnership with Louis XIII cognac, widely recognized as one of the world's most luxurious spirits, is a natural fit," said Mehdi Eftekari, general manager of [Four Seasons Hotel New York](#).

An experience above the clouds

The Louis XIII experience is only to be held in Four Seasons' 32nd floor Royal Suite or the Ty Warner Penthouse. If a guest books either on the 13th of a month, beginning in November, they will receive an invitation to the Louis XIII experience. Guests who book for another date, even a day later, on the 14th, will not be eligible for the experience, further heightening the allure and exclusivity of the culinary tasting event.

"We chose these suites as their views, from the suites and terraces offer unimaginable views...a perfect pairing for an unimaginable evening," Mr. Eftekari said.

Four Seasons' Ty Warner Penthouse is considered by the hotel as its crown jewel, as it was built after the building was considered complete and is the outcome of a seven-year collaboration between renowned architect I.M. Pei and the hotel's owner, Ty Warner.

The \$50 million Ty Warner Penthouse project, which saw Mr. Pei come temporarily out of retirement, resulted in the

52nd floor of the Four Seasons Hotel New York demolished to make way for 4,300-square-foot penthouse.



View from Four Seasons Hotel New York's Ty Warner Penthouse

Four Seasons' Ty Warner Penthouse, where no expense was spared, offers views of the New York skyline unavailable by any building in the city. By taking out concrete columns and creating four diagonally placed balconies that run opposite the north-south, east-west grid of New York, the skyline view is completely changed.

At \$50,000 per night, a stay in the one-bedroom penthouse, which boasts a library, living areas and private spa, includes unlimited use of a chauffeured Rolls-Royce, a dedicated guest relations manager and complimentary spa treatments, among other amenities.

If booked on the 13th, the unprecedented amenities package also includes the Louis XIII Experience.

The Louis XIII Experience has been entirely curated to be exclusive to the Four Seasons Hotel New York and will be led each month by the cognac brand's New York ambassador Philippe Vasilescu.

During the experience, Mr. Vasilescu will guide guests through an intimate tasting of Louis XIII cognac, which has been paired with a four-course meal, enjoyed in the penthouse or Royal Suite.



The Ty Warner Suite's Library at Four Seasons Hotel New York

Throughout the meal, guests will enjoy plates, using seasonal ingredients all sourced from just outside the city limits, meant to highlight the cognac's flavor and notes. The Louis XIII enjoyed during the meal will be drunk from specially-designed pillet glasses. Guests' initials will be engraved into the crystal as a memento of the experience.

The four-course Louis XIII Experience tasting was developed by Four Seasons Hotel New York's executive chef John Johnson. Each course has been prepared to complement Louis XIII's flavor profile.

To continue the experience after the guest has checked out, Louis XIII's cellar master Baptiste Loiseau is inviting participants by hand-signed note to visit the Rmy Martin estate and Louis XIII cellar in the Cognac region of France.

More than a room with a view

One-off experiences that are curated specifically for affluent's discerning interests vary in scope.

For example, The Venetian Las Vegas hotel is taking guests on a grand culinary voyage led by internationally renowned chefs.

The hospitality brand has planned a decadent weekend-long experience for its high-tier guests, filled with grand tasting menus, libations and one-off experiences. Now in its fourth year, The Venetian's "Ultimo – A Week of Excellence" Dec. 9-11, brings together the hotel's exceptional service, in-house gastronomy and, for the first time, the greater Las Vegas valley ([see story](#)).

Also, in Singapore, \$2 million can buy a Rolls-Royce Phantom, a penthouse or in the case of C La Vi, a venue atop the Marina Bay Sands Hotel, an experiential dinner for two.

Together with Russia's World of Diamonds Group, the venue has organized the world's most expensive and exclusive culinary experience, for a pair of affluent diners to enjoy. The concept of experiential programs have grown in popularity recently as consumer mindset has shifted from materialism to once-in-a-lifetime experiences that money cannot typically buy.

For the world's most expensive and exclusive culinary experience, being able to afford the staggering asking price is not enough. The purchaser must be considered qualified, at the discretion of the World of Diamonds Group and C La Vi ([see story](#)).

"Four Seasons Hotel New York's Louis XIII Experience exemplifies our commitment to providing our elite guests with superlative experiences unrivaled in luxury hotels," Four Seasons Hotel New York's Mr. Eftkari said. .

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