

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Hilton hires luxury marketing exec from Johnnie Walker

April 5, 2017



Waldorf Astoria New York

By STAFF REPORTS

Waldorf Astoria owner Hilton has appointed Sumindi Peiris to head its luxury marketing, public relations and digital activities.

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Ms. Peiris joins Hilton from Johnnie Walker, where she was vice president, global director in Singapore. In her new position, she will coordinate the marketing initiatives for Hilton's Waldorf Astoria, Conrad and Canopy brands.

Positioning as priority

While at Johnnie Walker Reserve, Ms. Peiris launched international campaigns that involved storytelling, influencer collaborations and experiences. The bilingual marketer who is fluent in both English and Sinhalese is based in the United States.

Throughout her 20 years of marketing experience, Ms. Peiris has also worked for spirit brands under the LVMH umbrella.



Sumindi Peiris

"We are thrilled that Sumindi has joined our brands, supporting our journey of becoming the fastest growing, most innovative luxury hotel brands in the world," said John Vanderslice, global head, luxury and lifestyle brands, at Hilton. "Her track record of success showcases a proven ability to create meaningful and unique experiences for the luxury consumer. We are confident she will serve as an invaluable resource and addition to our team."

Along with Ms. Peiris, Hilton also appointed Greg Hartmann as its senior vice president of luxury, lifestyle, resort and corporate development this week.

The executive comes to Hilton from real estate firm Jones Lange LaSalle, where he was most recently the managing director for the company's Hotels & Hospitality Group in North America.



Greg Hartmann

During Mr. Hartmann's six-year tenure at JLL, he worked with hospitality brands such as St. Regis, Four Seasons, Hilton, Marriott and Fairmont on asset management. This experience has given him an understanding of the positioning of various hotel chains.

A graduate of the Cornell Hotel School, Mr. Hartmann's resume also includes 24 years at HVS as managing partner and his experience founding STR's analytics division. The executive has worked with 12,000 different hotels across all 50 states and around the globe, including the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East.



Trianon Palace Versailles, A Waldorf Astoria Hotel

At Hilton, Mr. Hartmann will report to Ian Carter, president, global development, architecture, design and construction.

"We are extremely excited to have Greg join our team," said Mr. Carter in a brand statement. "He has a deep understanding of the luxury market and extensive experience working with institutional owners and advising them on brand selection.

"His knowledge of the competitive positioning of all hotel brands, his relationships within the industry and his

unique perspective will be a valuable asset to Hilton."

Hilton-owned Waldorf Astoria Hotels & Resorts is climbing the ranks in terms of international brand awareness, despite consumers spending less time traveling, according to the Luxury Institute.

JW Marriott, InterContinental, Four Seasons, Grand Hyatt and The Ritz-Carlton have maintained their places as the most visited hotel brands, reported last year and this year in the LBSI Global Hotel study. However, affluent consumers are cutting down on hotel stays with modest decrease in number of nights stayed ([see story](#)).

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