

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong opts out of plastic bottles in sustainability push

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*Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong filters its water on site. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong*

By STAFF REPORTS

A new water filtration initiative from Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong is the latest in a wave of sustainability efforts from premium hotel brands.

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Mandarin Oriental has announced that its flagship Hong Kong hotel will no longer serve water in plastic bottles, instead offering reusable glass bottles with water filtered on site. With this plastic bottle ban, along with the popular push to reduce the use of plastic straws, hotel brands around the world are looking to minimize their plastic waste.

### Plastic waste

Sustainability is one of the major themes in the travel industry today as more customers are becoming conscious of what environmental choices the businesses they patronize are making.

In recent months, there has been a push to reduce the use of disposable plastic straws, which are small but can add up to thousands of pounds of plastic waste thrown out each year. A number of luxury hotels have already taken this step and have begun phasing out plastic straws from their services.

As hotel brands have begun more sustainable efforts, Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong has unveiled its own sustainable choice in the form of reusable glass bottles and an on-site water filtration system.



*The initiative is meant to reduce plastic waste. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental*

Where once, the hotel would use plastic, disposable water bottles by the cases, now water is served in reusable glass bottles meant to significantly lower the output of plastic waste from the property.

Additionally, Mandarin Oriental filters water on-site, allowing customers to easily refill their existing bottles rather than having to get a new plastic one each time they want more water.

#### Sustainability drive

The sustainability trend has affected many of the biggest players in luxury travel today.

For instance, Marriott International has become the latest in a long line of businesses to ban disposable plastic straws.

Marriott will stop the use of plastic straws and stirrers at its 6,500 hotels around the world, potentially eliminating more than 1 billion straws worth of plastic waste over the next year. The move is part of a growing effort towards sustainability in general and the more specific campaign to end the use of plastic straws, which are used in abundance and never fully biodegrade ([see story](#)).

Similarly, Peninsula Hotels has instituted a ban on the use of disposable plastic straw as well.



*Marriott has begun phasing out plastic straws. Image credit: Marriott*

The ban is part of the hotel's plan to transition away from all single use plastics by 2020. Straws may seem like a small thing, but at an institution such as a major luxury hotel, any bit of waste can add up to huge amounts of pollution ([see story](#)).

These moves are in accordance with an agreement struck between hotel brands to lower their waste output. Luxury companies need to address environmental challenges as climate change and technological advancements impact the industry, according to a recent report by the Business for Social Responsibility (BSR) and members of its Responsible Luxury Initiative.

A diverse group of luxury brands are part of the initiative, including luxury conglomerate Kering, the Peninsula Hotel, Cartier, Chanel and PVH Corp. The report makes recommendations for luxury brands to fortify themselves in a changing world and contribute to a sustainable future ([see story](#)).

