

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Longtime brand advocates drawn to luxury residences: Mandarin Oriental exec

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Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London includes guest rooms and residences. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental

By SARAH RAMIREZ

NEW YORK - Ultra-high-net-worth individuals have several options for real estate investments, but they are drawn to the service and amenities offered at luxury-branded residences, according to a marketing executive from The Residences at Mandarin Oriental.

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Luxury residences help high-end homebuyers avoid the inconveniences associated with property ownership, especially since many are juggling several other properties. As discussed in a fireside chat at the Luxury Marketing Forum on Sept. 26, buyers already familiar with hospitality groups are drawn to their branded residences as opposed to other luxury properties.

"It's about the lifestyle, it's about the ease of life, it's an oasis," said Adelina Wong Ettelson, head of residences marketing at [The Residences at Mandarin Oriental](#). "Our colleagues at Mandarin Oriental are really trained to provide that ease of life.

"[Our residents] want to have the five-star hotel lifestyle but they don't want to share with hotel guests," she said. "They want to have those exclusive amenities at home."

Marketing efforts

The partnership between Mandarin Oriental and property developers is essential to attracting the right buyer.

Developers harness technology including CGI and augmented reality to showcase future properties to potential owners.



The Residences at Mandarin Oriental, Honolulu. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental

Current owners were invited to the upcoming Mandarin Oriental Barcelona development to view the new site and learn more about the region. Special tours and meals were also incorporated into the experience.

According to Ms. Ettelson, Mandarin Oriental also collaborated with data company Wealth-X to gain insights from current residents on how to better appeal to other UHNWI.

"In many ways, the consumer has changed, so it's more difficult to speak with them," Ms. Ettelson said.



Mandarin Oriental, Canouan will be the group's first Caribbean property. Image courtesy of Mandarin Oriental

A growing priority for residents is sustainable construction. Together with developers, Mandarin Oriental works to create properties that fulfill those needs.

More recently, Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong has unveiled its own sustainable choice in the form of reusable glass bottles and an on-site water filtration system.

Previously, the hotel would use plastic, disposable water bottles by the cases, but now water is served in reusable glass bottles meant to significantly lower the output of plastic waste from the property. Additionally, Mandarin Oriental also 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 ([see story](#)).

Residential boom

The Residences at Mandarin Oriental includes seven existing properties, with an additional nine in development.

Most recently, the hospitality company has signed a management agreement with local development firm Capital Group for a riverfront property in Moscow. Slated to open in 2021, this hotel will be the brand's first in Russia.

The hotel will feature 65 guest rooms and suites, designed by Sergey Skuratov Architects with interior design by Pierre-Yves Rochon Studio. Amenities will include two restaurants, a bar and a spa and wellness center with a swimming pool.

With this project, Mandarin Oriental is also introducing 137 residences. This will be the first branded residences development in Moscow ([see story](#)).

Mandarin Oriental is one of several hospitality brands making moves in the real estate industry.

Hotel group Marriott International is also planning to grow its branded residential portfolio, which includes Ritz-Carlton and St. Regis projects. The hospitality brand has already opened almost 90 residential properties and has 60 additional projects already approved and expected to open in the next four years, a jump of 70 percent.

Marriott residences are dominated by high-end brands, which are expected to comprise 70 percent of all the group's residential properties by 2022. Ritz-Carlton has 35 projects open and has another 15 in development, while the St. Regis is expected to double its residences to 24 ([see story](#)).

"We're really the brand keepers and brand ambassadors for our developers around the world," Mandarin Oriental's Ms. Ettelson said.

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