

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## High-end hospitality groups set the mood for Valentine's Day

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*Some hotels are keeping romantic experiences intimate. Image credit: Four Seasons*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Love is in the air for Valentine's Day, and luxury hospitality brands are helping lovers and friends celebrate the holiday in memorable ways.

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Hospitality brands can capitalize on the holiday by offering unique experiences for travelers and locals looking to savor romantic and spontaneous moments with their significant other. Other brands make a conscious decision to also market special events to affluents who may not be celebrating Valentine's Day in the traditional sense.

"Valentine's Day is a holiday that is celebrated around the world, so it's a great time for hotels and hospitality groups to showcase their romantic offering," said Tiffany Dowd, founder and president of **Luxe Social Media**, Boston. "It's a day to celebrate love, and hotels can find small gestures like offering a bottle of Champagne or rose petal turndown to mark the occasion.

"More hotels are offering 'Galentine's Day' afternoon teas and offers for single travelers to celebrate the holiday in an effort to be more inclusive," she said. "It doesn't have to be about romantic packages for couples anymore."

### Romantic getaways

To celebrate the romantic holiday, many people indulge in special dinners and drinks with their loved ones.

Private aviation firm VistaJet is taking those experiences to new heights with a special Valentine's Day Experience package this week. Flyers will get to travel in a cabin filled with roses, personalized hand-crafted chocolates and a bottle of distinguished Dom Prignon P2.



*Wine lovers can enjoy an experience in Tuscany with VistaJet. Image credit: VistaJet*

For an additional cost, members can enjoy VistaJet's Antinori package, which transports them to a three-day wine tour in northern Italy. The experience includes a helicopter ride, dining at the historic Palazzo Antinori and a private wine tasting.

Fairmont Hotel & Resorts' Sonoma property is also keeping the focus on wine. The Mission Inn & Spa's Valentine's Day Sparkles in Sonoma package includes two nights in a suite, a four-course dinner for two with special wine pairings and a couple's spa treatment.

The Ritz-Carlton, San Francisco is hosting special events for those in a relationship, as well as those hoping to find their future significant other.

On Feb. 14, The Lounge at The Ritz-Carlton will host an upscale Singles Mingle. The happy hour is open to guests and locals alike and includes drink specials and servings of Veuve Clicquot Champagne.

For a more intimate evening, the property's Parallel 37 restaurant will be offering a five-course meal featuring duck, crab pasta and wine pairings. Attendees can also enjoy decadent caviar and toast with Dom Prignon Champagne.

In Geneva, Ritz-Carlton's Hotel de la Paix is offering a "Chocolate Lovers" package that includes chocolate and wine tastings, afternoon tea and a tour of the Chocolate Factory. The hospitality group's Dubai property is also hosting a special Valentine's Day tea and its guests can enjoy heart-shaped cakes during the week.



*Ritz-Carlton guests can enjoy heart-shaped desserts. Image credit: Ritz-Carlton*

Four Seasons Resort Dubai at Jumeirah Beach is also hosting a variety of events around the holiday.

For single women, the hotel is hosting an anti-Valentine's party at its lounge, the Luna Sky Bar. In addition to the female-only playlist, complimentary Champagne and cupcakes will be served.

Couples at the Four Seasons can enjoy spa and private dinner packages. For more intimacy, a handful of experiences are reserved for only one pair who are looking to splurge.

One couple will be able to craft their own "love potion" that will appear on the bar's menu with the help of a Four Seasons' mixologist. Another couple will have the chance to reserve the hotel's famed glass pool and view the Dubai skyline at sunset while rose petals, a personalized playlist and cocktails set the mood.

Love in luxury

Leading up to Valentine's Day, luxury brands are expanding their marketing efforts beyond typical romantic themes, taking into account the diversity of love.

In addition to amorous themes, brands are pushing consumers to self-gift or celebrate the platonic loves in their lives. Breaking out of the romantic mold may help brands reach more consumers around the holiday, which has previously been more limited to those in relationships.

Cartier, De Beers, Roger Vivier and YSL Beauty are among the brands changing their approach to Valentine's Day ([see story](#)).

Holidays often offer an opportunity for hospitality brands to get creative and show off their brand personality.

Leading up to Chinese New Year on Feb. 5, luxury travel brands including Mandarin Oriental and Four Seasons offered unique experiences to mark the holiday. The holiday represents an opportunity for hospitality groups to appeal to both Chinese travelers and other affluents who have a strong desire to experience more cultural events.

Since culinary exploration is more popular than ever among affluent travelers, many hoteliers are capitalized on Lunar New Year as chance to experiment with Chinese cuisine ([see story](#)).

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