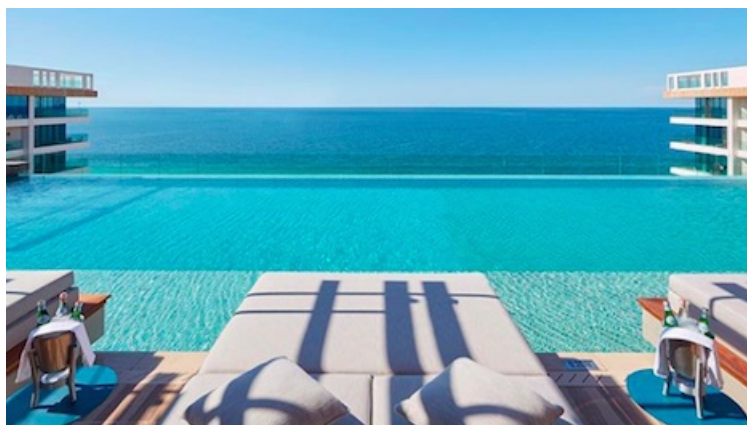


TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Mandarin Oriental to ban single-use plastic across all hotels

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Sustainability is on the horizon: The Mandarin Oriental Jumeirah in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental

By STAFF REPORTS

In line with its sustainability goals, the Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group has pledged to eliminate all single-use plastic across its entire portfolio of properties by the end of March 2021.

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The Hong Kong-based chain, owned by Jardine Matheson Group, aims to go beyond travel-industry initiatives such as the removal of plastic straws and single-use drinking bottles.

"Plastic waste is one of the gravest environmental concerns affecting our planet today," said James Riley, group chief executive of Mandarin Oriental, in a statement.

"While our relatively small footprint limits our contribution to the world's plastic reduction, as one of the most iconic luxury global hotel groups we are in a strong position to drive important changes in the industry," he said.

Showing mettle

Mandarin Oriental wants to cut out all single-use plastic across operational departments such as rooms, spa, transport, restaurants and bars.

In essence, the goal is to eliminate plastics used in all areas of the hotel, and not just in the public areas that the customer sees, the company said.

Mandarin Oriental operates 32 hotels and seven residences across 23 countries and territories, employing 12,500 people.

Hotels within the group are working towards defined eco-sensitive goals as outlined in its recent **Sustainability Report**. Each property will issue progress reports every six months, with the first one out in March next year.

Work on plastic elimination has already begun.

Via a completed stock inventory, Mandarin Oriental has identified 23 of the most common items of single-use plastic across its chain. Eighty-six percent of these items are being removed or phased out in the hotels.

The Mandarin Oriental move is in tandem with other similar initiatives brewing within the hospitality business.

For example, Marriott, the world's largest hotel chain, is moving to eliminate single-use plastic across all its properties.

Indeed, as luxury hotel brands ramp up sustainability efforts with support from a growing number of environmentally minded consumers, many have pushed to reduce reliance on single-use plastics.

Hospitality brands are not alone in being proactive about eliminating single-use plastics, with city and state governments also looking to reduce plastic waste. After straws became the subject of widespread scrutiny last year, toiletries have become the latest target ([see story](#)).

MANDARIN ORIENTAL'S move is far more sweeping in terms of plastic-use elimination.

The group is testing various concepts and inviting staff from all member hotels to find solutions that can be shared as internal best practice.

In addition, Mandarin Oriental is also working with its suppliers for procurement of alternative products that are viable and suitable for a luxury hotel environment, the company said.

"We recognize that to achieve complete elimination while maintaining our luxury service standards is a challenge, but to drive change we must set ambitious goals," Mr. Riley said in a statement.

"The elimination of single-use plastic is only one part of the group's wider initiative to operate in a responsible and sustainable way across our portfolio," he said.