

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Aman, purveyor of ultra-luxury hospitality, banks on social encounters for new Janu hotel line

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Janu Montenegro pool with Cabanas will open in 2022. Image courtesy of Aman Resorts International

By DIANNA DILWORTH

Aman Resorts International, not satisfied with its positioning as an ultra-luxury hospitality brand, is rolling out a new concept called Janu for younger affluent travelers with three propositions: human interaction, playful expression and social wellness.

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Janu means "soul" in Sanskrit, and Aman is positioning the new brand as a hospitality experience that delivers soulful human interactions at a time when people have lost social connections because they are staring at their screens.

"One of the most rewarding things you can get from travel is meeting people," said Roland Fasel, chief operating officer of Aman, Singapore. "However, the world is also an increasingly lonely place, too reliant on the digital world, and people have lost the art of interaction and conversation."

In short, and to borrow a bit of philosophical corporate speak, Janu's goal is to create environments that encourage purposeful connections to bring balance to the head and heart and to rekindle the soul.



Purposeful interactions

Janu aims to offer affluent travelers the best of both worlds: a place to rejuvenate and re-balance through mindful experiences, as well as a place to socialize with likeminded affluent global travelers in meaningful human interactions.

Rather than focus on quiet and sanctuary as Aman has, Janu wants to bring the pleasure back into socializing and group connections.

As such, Janu will create environments that encourage purposeful connections through experiences such as group yoga classes, art tours, festive dining experiences, hosted wine pairings and cooking classes with a nutritionist.

The on-site restaurants and bars will be designed to foster human interaction through communal tables and live entertainment that focuses on local arts and music.

"Janu shares much of its DNA with Aman, but exists in the white space between its legendary elder sister and other lifestyle brands," Mr. Fasel said. "It is in this space that Janu can uniquely offer luxury holidays with greater purpose, where people can interact and connect with likeminded souls with shared experiences."



Janu Montenegro lobby will open in 2022. Image courtesy of Aman Resorts International

Familiar, but different

Janu will officially launch three properties, one in Montenegro, another in Al-Ula, Saudi Arabia and a third in Tokyo in 2022.

Over the next decade, the company has plans to open five more.

The brand will likely compete with other big name luxury brands such as the Four Seasons, Ritz-Carlton, Rosewood Hotels and Mandarin Oriental. Each of these brands has a presence in Tokyo and Saudi Arabia.

The Ritz-Carlton recently opened a hotel in Montenegro, suggesting a growing opportunity for attracting affluent travelers to the region.

The Four Seasons recently launched a series of experiences at its properties after research among its clientele suggested that people are looking for ways to connect with people in the different cultures they visit ([see story](#)).

One difference between Aman and Janu is where the younger brand sets up shop. While Aman tends to opt for more serene settings, even remote, Janu will be more socially situated for nearby cultural and social experiences.

The magic hour on Moyo Island, when day and night meet and merge, and something serene and sublime descends upon [#Amanwana](#)'s shores.

<https://t.co/OV2TdEiuWO> pic.twitter.com/OTN4Tue2d8

Aman (@Amanresorts) February 27, 2020

Owned by Russian billionaire Vladislav Doronin, Aman was founded in 1988 and now comprises 32 hotels, resorts and private residences. Plans call for soon adding eight more properties to take the total to 40 in 22 countries.

Janu is Aman's first spinoff. No doubt it will attract business from Aman, but Janu's locations and offerings will be sufficiently different to make the hotel brand additive to the parent company's bottom line.

"The core guest is defined and characterized by their attitude and approach to living," Mr. Fasel said. "They are drawn to opportunities for self-exploration, inspired by purposeful experiences and the lively energy.

"We do expect Amanjunkies to be a guest of Janu, it would be like staying with another member of their family for a different experience familiar, but different," he said. "It depends if they want more of a tranquil hideaway, or something more social."



Janu Montenegro Serviced Residence with Pool Janu will open in 2022. Image courtesy of Aman Resorts International

Mind the gap

While Aman has delivered top-notch service to customers for years, Janu was born from conversations with customers about the potential for new experiences.

"Aman has been at the forefront of hospitality for over 30 years, and always had an incredibly close connection with its guests," Mr. Fasel said. "Through listening, and then talking with our guests and other professionals in the industry, we realized that there is a gap in the market for a different take on hospitality and travel experiences.

"We've had a fantastic reaction from the market, with many saying they have been looking for a concept like Janu to be developed," he said.

"The world is an increasingly lonely place, too reliant on the digital world and, as a result, people have lost the art of interaction and conversation. With Janu, we want to kickstart human interaction again, a sentiment that has been well received."

"Smile, breathe and go slowly." - Thich Nhat Hanh <https://t.co/9qcr4HLJPU>
pic.twitter.com/NwjZ743ESx

Aman (@Amanresorts) [September 18, 2019](#)