

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Accor introduces global 'Handwritten Collection,' launching one dozen midscale hotels

January 19, 2023



*The Le Saint Gervais Hotel and Spa is just one among many in the Handwritten Collection that will provide guests with more immersive travels. Image courtesy of CNW Group/Accor*

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

In an effort to bolster the company's global portfolio with midscale hotel offerings, French hotel giant Accor is introducing the Handwritten Collection, a brand of bespoke hotels launching worldwide.

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In an exercise that takes after chirographic practices, distinct personalities and details are assigned to each location, thus the chain's title. The hotelier is taking a personalized approach building out properties in cities like Madrid, Perth, Romania, Shanghai and more, having secured 12 locations so far under the new entity, with five additional expected during the year's first trimester.

"Handwritten Collection enriches Accor's offering in the 'collection brands' segment with a curated selection of hotels that exhibit charming and one-of-a-kind concepts," said Alex Schellenberger, chief marketing officer of premium, midscale and economy brands at **Accor**, in a statement.

"Our aim, beyond delivering a truly authentic guest experience, is to support the growing number of independent and boutique hotel owners looking to boost their global profile, connect with more audiences and grow their revenue without losing their identity," he said. "The hotels we will feature in Handwritten Collection are those sought out by travelers who appreciate heartwarming travel experiences and a twist on traditional hospitality, as well as by hoteliers who cherish the unique personality of their properties while desiring the benefits that come with a leading global partner."

Always the hosts

Accor's latest growth vehicle vies for custom travel experiences, offering guests a chance to have a more interactive stay. A majority, 80 percent, of the hotels joining the collection are conversion projects, rather than new constructions.

Similar to the intimate act of drafting handwritten notes, the company's Handwritten Collection hosts will act as the

heart and soul of each location. Accor will offer support to these independent and boutique hotel owners, expanding the exposure of the locations.



France's Square Lodge Hotel La Roche sur Yon. Image courtesy of CNW Group/Accor

The first hotels to launch under the Hotel Collection include China's Hotel Shanghai Sheshan Oriental and France's Le Saint Gervais Hotel and Spa, both open Jan. 19, as well as Australia's Wonil Hotel in Perth and Hotel Morris in Sydney, both slated for early February debuts.

Slated for spring 2023, France's Le Splendid Hotel Lac d'Annecy; Hotel Les Capitouls Toulouse Centre; Paris Montmartre Sacre Coeur and Square Lodge Hotel La Roche sur Yon, as well as Estonia's Oru Hub Hotel in Tallinn are to follow.

Vietnam's Sunrise Premium Resort in Hoi An is named, but a timeline is unspecified at time of publication. Currently unnamed, properties in Madrid, Spain and Bucharest, Romania are slated for eventual opens.

"The manner in which each host interacts with their guests is thoughtfully considered and brings to life their own personal passions," said Caroline Bnard, global senior vice president of economy and midscale brands at Accor, in a statement.

"Whether in a social setting or the privacy of a guest's room, there will be moments of storytelling and engagement that create a genuine connection," she said. "This rapport between host and guest contributes to a more meaningful and memorable stay experience."

Accor is promoting the personalities themselves that run the worldwide range of locales, as the art of hosting is to be placed centerstage in this distinct portfolio.

Aside from career-building perks, Accor will also extend its environmental, social and governance infrastructure to hoteliers, enabling locations to step into the future ethically ([see story](#)).

"Independent hotels are increasingly seeking the strength of Accor's powerful sales, distribution and loyalty platform to increase their revenue and assist them in optimizing their costs, whilst retaining their own distinctive personality and offering a highly qualitative product, service and experience," said Camil Yazbeck, global chief development officer of premium, midscale and economy at Accor.

"Handwritten Collection offers them an ideal solution, providing the option for a franchise contract and a flexible and cost-effective level of investment," Ms. Yazbeck said. "We look forward to working collaboratively with owners and partners and welcoming additional hotels from around the world into this outstanding collection."

"With over 110 properties and 11,500 rooms in negotiation to become part of Handwritten Collection, including 12 hotels committed already, we aim to have over 250 properties by 2030."