

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Ritz-Carlton revels in transformative power of travel with 'Leave Better'

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The hospitality brand is celebrating the ways that exploration can bring about personal evolution. Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

By EMILY IRIS DEGN

Marriott International-owned hotel and resort chain The Ritz-Carlton is rolling out its first global brand campaign in over a decade.

The new "Leave Better" slot celebrates the ways that traveling can cause change on a personal level. In visuals centered on the idea of broadened horizons and opened minds, The Ritz-Carlton is encouraging guests to embark on a path of self-discovery, which can be done at the luxury hotels found around the world.

"We are thrilled to introduce the Leave Better campaign, which reflects our commitment to not only honoring our heritage as a luxury hospitality icon, but embracing the desires of our discerning guests," said Jamie Kerr, senior director of global marketing at [The Ritz-Carlton](#), in a statement.

"Through Leave Better, we invite travelers to journey with The Ritz-Carlton to places, moments and spaces that are marked by genuine care only we can deliver, and will encourage self-growth and discovery, staying with them long after they depart."

Open invitation

Created in partnership with Team One, The Ritz-Carlton's longtime agency collaborator, "Leave Better" leans into the fact that many consumers travel for the purpose of self-improvement and mind-opening activities.

The Ritz-Carlton and Team One present, "Leave Better"

According to the [Harvard Business Review](#), being in new places boosts empathy and creativity, which in turn leads to overall better mental health. [CNBC](#) also reports that despite historic trends, younger generations are beginning to go on vacations specifically to try dishes they have never eaten before and meet fresh faces rather than activities like clubbing.

In fact, a study done by travel technology company [StudentUniverse](#) of 4,000 full-time students found that 68 percent of respondents aged 18 to 25 want to venture out in order to get to know a new culture just 21 percent indicated that they were in search of nightlife.

"Leave Better" seemingly acknowledges all of this, capturing the sentiments that are defining the current era of the

travel industry, which is at the moment promising consumers lessened stress levels ([see story](#)) and sensorial luxury ([see story](#)).



A range of nature-based changes is shown in the new campaign like birds hatching from their eggs and taking flight. Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

It appears that people who travel want to go through a transformation in some regard, and this new and colorful campaign responds with a clear message: The Ritz-Carlton can help with that.

In a series of five hero videos, various scenes that evoke feelings of openness and evolution appear.

The question of "How will a stay leave you?" grounds each, nudging consumers to consider the long-lasting impact of their stay, granting the hotel chain's identity a transcendental nature.

Through storytelling, the argument is made that this is not just an overnight or multinight place to sleep. This is a quintessential part of the trip, which happens to complement the growing drive to travel for the point of newness; of getting to know one's self on a deeper level.



Flowers blooming from a previously frozen tree are among the symbols of self-realization offered in the slot. Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

According to the marketing, The Ritz-Carlton customers will leave better than when they arrived.

Fortunate timing

As top earners are poised to put at least 20 percent more money into their vacations in 2024 ([see story](#)), a year when global luxury travel spending is expected to spike to \$1.5 trillion ([see story](#)), this advertising effort comes at a lucrative time for the market.

On the heels of a steady year for five-star hotels ([see story](#)), The Ritz-Carlton has been bolstering its digital footprint as of late.

After announcing expansion plans ([see story](#)), the brand refreshed its website in August 2023. In a move that elevates its interactions with the online community, the new platform is quite the update ([see story](#)).

With this multi-million dollar campaign at hand, it looks like The Ritz-Carlton is not done boosting its virtual image.



The changes in the seasons, shells opening up and notes becoming symphonies are just a few visuals revealed in "Leave Better." Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

Before it was introduced to the public, luxury travelers in five countries were focus-grouped to help the company understand perceptions of the videos and what their potential guests are looking for.

Respondents stated that they found the imagery to be "avant-garde" and "more connected to a younger audience" since as the aforementioned statistics show, it is this population that is leaning so heavily into transformative experiences when they make their travel plans, the answers from the collective hint that perhaps the campaign is speaking to the right demographic.

"Leave Better" is debuting in many languages across the world's markets, including China, Japan, the United States, Germany, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Through a partnership with the Cond Nast network, the release will be found across video, print, digital display and paid social points.

"The Ritz-Carlton has long understood its superpower in creating sublime, transformative and hyper-personal travel experiences," said Julie Michael, CEO of Team One, in a statement.



Kaleidoscope-like pictures are cast upon the screen in "Leave Better," representing the multi-dimensional nature of personal change. Image courtesy of The Ritz-Carlton

"The idea of 'Leave Better' is much bigger than an ad campaign," Ms. Michael said. "What sets The Ritz-Carlton apart is what guests take away from their stay: the epiphanies, new perspectives, and transformations.

"We really wanted to amplify the before-and-after moment of how The Ritz-Carlton changes you."

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