

ADVERTISING

Ritz-Carlton partners with Chase to extend rewards program reach

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By TRICIA CARR

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co. is extending the reach of its rewards program by offering Chase Sapphire Preferred cardholders the opportunity to exchange card points for Ritz-Carlton Rewards points which can be used for hotel stays at any brand property and 3,400 partner hotels.

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Luxury Daily

Chase cardholders can equally transfer points from the Chase Ultimate Rewards Program to a joint Ritz-Carlton Rewards account. The Ritz-Carlton is the latest partner in Ultimate Rewards point transfer program.

“I think this idea comes from the fact that both [brands] have similar clients and Chase is trying to add value to the credit card by providing access to a great experience at The Ritz-Carlton,” said Milton Pedraza, CEO of the [Luxury Institute](#), New York.

“At the same time, there is an opportunity to cross-sell with this partnership,” he said. “I think it would be beneficial to both parties because they have overlapping client bases.”

Mr. Pedraza is not affiliated with The Ritz-Carlton, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Ritz-Carlton](#) could not comment before press deadline.

Even exchange

Chase Sapphire Preferred Ink Plus and Ink Bold cardholders can now instantly transfer **Ultimate Rewards** points to Ritz-Carlton Rewards points at full value. One Ultimate Rewards point is equal to one Ritz-Carlton Rewards point.

The Ritz-Carlton seems to have partnered with Chase due to both companies' large luxury consumer base that enjoys high-end travel options.

Points can be used towards Ritz-Carlton hotels in 25 countries. There are additional options for redemption with 30 aircraft carriers.



Ritz-Carlton Rewards Web site

There are no restrictions to the number of points that Chase cardholders can transfer.

Chase Sapphire Preferred gives two points per dollar spent on travel and restaurants. Points have no blackout or expiration dates.

“This will give The Ritz-Carlton the opportunity to have new clients that will try the hotel and come back in the future,” Mr. Pedraza said.

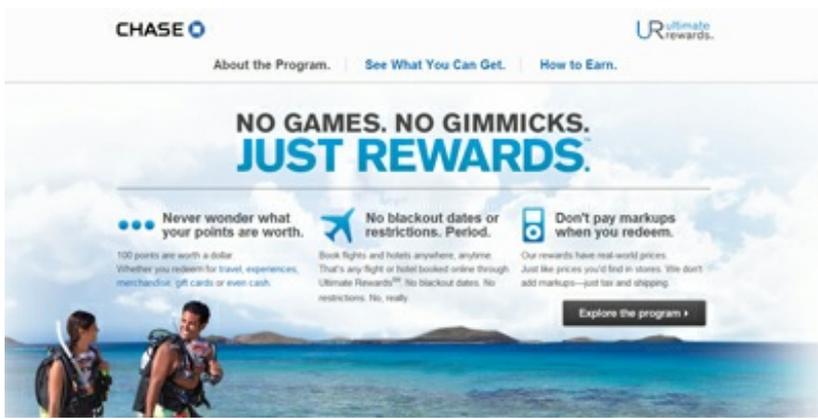
“It is more of a trial device to give Chase rewards program members the opportunity to switch their points and go to The Ritz-Carlton and hopefully become a consumer for life,” he said.

“Since [The Ritz-Carlton] is global, it provides a very compelling opportunity for the large Chase client base.”

Elite travel

The Ritz-Carlton could see this partnership as a good business move for reaching luxury consumers since Chase Sapphire has aligned itself with luxe travel and other experiences.

Advertising campaigns for the Chase Ultimate Rewards Program show consumers taking advantage of high-end entertainment.



Chase Ultimate Rewards Web site

Other luxury hotels have partnered with brands to extend the reach of rewards programs and offer exclusive experiences.

For example, Garden Court Hotel reached out to brainy affluent consumers through its Geek Chic package at its Palo Alto, CA, property. The package includes tours of the Computer History Museum, Apple and Google ([see story](#)).

Meanwhile, St. Regis and The Luxury Collection hotel chains offered private benefits to preferred guest program members in its North American properties through VIP tickets and backstage passes to Cirque du Soleil performances ([see story](#)).

“Partnerships like this can work, but you have to look at the economics of each program one by one and decide if it works,” Mr. Pedraza said. “If economics are liable, as in Chase points are economically worth the same as Ritz-Carlton points, then [these partnerships] really become a win-win.”

Final Take

Tricia Carr, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York