

IN-STORE

Baccarat hotel launch to shake up hospitality industry

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By TRICIA CARR

A new modern, luxury hotel brand named for French crystal maker Baccarat will open in New York in 2014 that its creators claim could set a new standard for exclusive hotel experiences.

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Baccarat Hotel & Residences is preparing for its New York debut with additional locations slated to open around the world soon after. The hotel was created by Starwood Capital Group CEO Barry Sternlicht to redefine luxury hotels in New York.

“Luxury industry partnerships such as this one are an innovative way by which a brand can distinguish itself from the pack,” said Taylor Rains, account coordinator at [Rawle Murdy Associates Inc.](#), Charleston, SC. “Creating the Baccarat Hotel & Residences leverages the Baccarat name and legacy of excellence while also reinvigorating the centuries-old luxury brand.

“There are various cases from across the globe where hotels have partnered with luxury fashion houses or even automobile brands,” he said. “In some ways, affiliation with a crystal brand like Baccarat is an even more natural luxury partnership.

“The brand itself is unique and by affiliating with it, the hotel is slated to be unique as

well.”

Mr. Rains is not affiliated with Baccarat Hotel & Residences, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Starwood Capital Group declined comment for this article.

Empire state of mind

Baccarat New York was created by Mr. Sternlicht in a partnership between Starwood Capital and Tribeca Associates.

Mr. Sternlicht is the founder and previous chairman/ CEO of Starwood Hotels & Resorts where he created the W Hotels brand.

The mogul created the Baccarat Hotel & Residences brand to fill a niche in the ultra-upscale hotel market, per Starwood Capital Group.

In addition, the hotel will position the crystal company as a lifestyle brand.

Baccarat New York will be located at 20 West 53rd Street off of Fifth Avenue and across the street from The Museum of Modern Art.

The hotel tower will be 605 feet tall and contain 46 stories. It will hold 114 rooms including 26 suites and residences.



Baccarat New York

The residences will go on the market in January 2013.

Baccarat New York will have a spa, fitness center and indoor pool on its property.

The property will also host a crystal pavilion and garden that hold meeting salons called B Bar, a restaurant and a collection of Baccarat products available for purchase.

The hotel's interior will be designed with the notion of European glamour combined with urban influences, per Starwood Capital Group.

Baccarat locations are also planned to be constructed in Rabat and Foshan, China, that will open in 2014. Future locations will be in Dubai, Marrakech and other cities in the Middle East and Asia.

The opening of the first Baccarat hotel in New York is a vital decision, per Mr. Rains.

"New York is the center for luxury brand innovation in the United States," Mr. Rains said. "It is not so much about satisfying a need as it is introducing something special into the market."

Crystal cues

Baccarat Hotel will focus on servicing consumers through technology and recreating the traditional hotel operating procedures, per Starwood Capital Group.

"Interestingly enough, I feel that the property should take a cue from its namesake with regard to marketing strategy," Mr. Rains said.

"Baccarat has maintained an unparalleled level of exclusivity and brand equity for nearly 250 years," he said. "In order to leverage that legacy most effectively, the Baccarat New York must communicate an equally impressive attention to detail when it comes to guest experience."

If the hotel brand does follow the crystal maker, it is likely to focus on digital channels to reach affluent consumers.

For example, Baccarat recently synced emotive and practical marketing in the relaunch of its Web site through video, commerce and content.

Where most luxury brands use Flash and content-heavy components on their Web sites, Baccarat is making it user-friendly and easily-accessible on most devices, including mobile ([see story](#)).

In addition, the hotel opening in 2014 will align with Baccarat's 250th year anniversary.

To be successful, the hotel should use a marketing campaign that sets it up as a unique destination experience, per Mr. Rains.

"I doubt that the property will be a primary detractor of affluent consumers who frequent other luxury hotels in the city," Mr. Rains said. "To be honest, though, I do not believe it has to in order to be successful."

"The hotel itself is a destination and an experience," he said. "People will stay at the New

York Baccarat Hotel for the hotel experience and stay at other luxury hotels to experience the city.”

Final Take

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