

IN-STORE

## Ritz-Carlton opens first Western Hemisphere reserve with Dorado Beach

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By RACHEL LAMB

The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co. is expanding its reach through the introduction of its first reserve in the Western Hemisphere called Dorado Beach that was built with special attention to environmental beauty and sustainability.

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Located in Puerto Rico, Dorado Beach was built on the former Laurance Rockefeller estate from the 1950s that prided itself on its eco-friendliness. The reserve will offer all of the traditional Ritz-Carlton amenities along with other exclusive experiences for couples, families and individuals.

“The Ritz-Carlton is truly a unique brand, but it is important to market this extension exactly as what it is,” said Alejandro Helbling, general manager of Dorado Beach, a [Ritz-Carlton](#) reserve, Dorado Beach, Puerto Rico.

“It is a luxury hotel unlike any other reserve property and it does so by highlighting the variety of things that Dorado Beach has to offer,” he said. “The layout is still consistent in incorporating as many natural elements as possible into the design and construction.

“In today’s luxury market, it will be worth it for affluent consumers to have a sense of environmental conservation and that is part of the DNA of the reserve product.”

No reservations

The property is on 1,400 acres. There are 115 guestrooms and suites overlooking the beach.



*Su Casa at Dorado Beach*

Also, there is a five-bedroom beachfront VIP villa called Su Casa. This hacienda was renovated from its original state from the 1920s.

Another amenities include a five-acre spa called Spa Botánico. It features 12 glass-walled spa treatment pavilions and Treehouse treatment platforms.



## *Dorado Beach spa*

“The resort is truly destined to be a spa destination,” Mr. Helbling said. “What is incredible about Dorado Beach is that guests can learn about the environment with an experience that works exclusively with the Puerto Rico landscape and culture.”

Dorado Beach was designed to be a getaway destination with unobtrusive personal service that will enhance the resort’s barefoot luxury atmosphere, per the brand.

Aligning with Ritz-Carlton’s service, there is a 2:1 employee to guest ratio for individualized service.

Dorado Beach will open December 2012.



*Guest room at Dorado Beach*

## Natural instincts

An important part of the Dorado Beach property is that it was built with sustainability and natural elegance in mind.



*Su Casa at night*

Even though the property underwent a multimillion-dollar renovation, it was still built to mirror most of the original property design philosophies, according to the brand.

In fact, none of the buildings are more than two stories high. This will help to minimize the resort's effect on the surrounding environment.

Some of the activities that consumers can participate in such as Ambassadors of the Environment lessons by environmentalist Jean-Michel Cousteau reflect this philosophy.



*Dorado Beach treehouse treatment rooms*

Ritz-Carlton often takes social corporate responsibility into consideration with its other properties through its Community Footprints program.

For example, the Ritz-Carlton Environmental Action Conservation Teams implement best practice to minimize environmental imprint at each property.

Therefore, Dorado Beach will not only encompass the Ritz-Carlton mentality of customer service and luxury, but corporate social responsibility and environmental awareness.

“The environment nowadays is such an important decision when families make choices on where to stay,” Mr. Helbling said. “It all goes back to the experiential aspect and that is what people on the luxury level are looking for today.

“Ritz-Carlton as a brand is very environmentally-conscious in all of its companies around the globe,” he said. “Therefore, we are putting an ultra emphasis on this and try to find secluded remote locations that are environmentally-chic.”

Final Take

*Rachel Lamb, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York*

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