

IN-STORE

Ritz-Carlton hosts outdoor entertainment to target locals

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By TRICIA CARR

The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown in Washington is attracting affluent locals by hosting a series of on-property summer events that include drive-in movie showings, yoga demonstrations and garden parties that are free of charge.

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The hotel will host weekly Friday evening "Movies by Moonlight," Saturday morning outdoor yoga classes and Sunday afternoon garden parties in its Urban Garden. The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown, is inviting locals and visitors to the area to enjoy the property during the summer as an alternative to other waterfront bars and restaurants on the harbor in the nation's capital, per the hotel.

"The goal of these programs is to grow awareness and connect us with the local community and a variety of demographic markets to continue promoting events and activities at the hotel with a focus on growing our food and beverage and spa revenues," said Jeff Brower, general manager at [The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown](#).

"Overall we are seeking consumers that are looking for active and fun events that are authentic to our region," he said "Yoga allows for a primarily female consumer in the 25-50 age range that is active and seeking serene, active and social types of yoga, while our Sunday garden party is focused on the 25-40 urban professional seeking a casual luxury

environment where they can connect with friends.

"These events will create value for The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown, by continuing our legacy of creating one-of-a-kind, memorable events that can only be had at The Ritz-Carlton."

Summer sun

The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown, is focusing on its outdoor space in its warm weather packages, per the hotel.

During Friday evening Movies by Moonlight showings, consumers and guests can watch a classic films in the property's outdoor theater within its Urban Garden, a newly-renovated area which holds approximately 90 people.

Movies by Moonlight begins July 6 with "Ghostbusters" shown at 8 p.m. The last event will take place Sept. 28.

Complimentary popcorn will be offered as well as movie-themed cocktails and other snacks for purchase.

Meanwhile, the hotel is offering complimentary outdoor yoga classes Sept. 8 by the Lululemon retailer in Georgetown every Saturday at 9 a.m.

On Sundays, the property's Urban Garden will host a cocktail party. These events will take place July 1-Sept. 30 from 4-10 p.m.

There will be specially-priced cocktails, bottles of wine at half price, buckets of beer, a summer tapas menu and a local DJ.

Cocktails include classic mixed drinks and hotel-specific cocktails such as the Fresa Chiller, Urban Sunset and the Skippy Surprise.

Complimentary valet parking is offered at all events.

So far, Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown, is spreading the word about its summer events via its [Web site calendar](#).

The events will also raise awareness for the addition of the Urban Garden outdoor space that was previously unused among locals, per Mr. Brower.



The Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown

"The primary trend evident in the marketing of these packages is the importance of experience-based travel to luxury consumers," said Taylor Rains, account coordinator at [Rawle Murdy Associates Inc.](#), Charleston, SC. "Hotels are no longer standalone destinations, but they are part of the community that houses them.

"Whereas it used to be best practice for major luxury chains to remain consistent across all markets in order to manage guest expectations, these brands are now creating experiences unique to each property," he said. "In DC, some properties aim to position themselves as an escape where the guest never really needs to leave the grounds to have a great vacation."

Local appeal

A few other luxury hotel brands are hosting special events to attract local consumer to certain properties.

For example, Starwood Hotels & Resorts' Luxury Collection brand brought a partner New Delhi, India, property restaurant to its London hotel as a limited-time pop-up joint that proved to be popular with locals by maxing out on reservations before opening ([see story](#)).

In addition, The Dorchester Collection's 45 Park Lane hotel in London hosted an event with on-site restaurant owner Wolfgang Puck that seems to be a tactic to attract locals to the property's high-end culinary offerings ([see story](#)).

These types of events can benefit hotels during slow travel times of the year by raising awareness for what they have to offer in terms of dining and entertainment among locals.

Events can also keep the hotel brand top-of-mind when local consumers are travelling elsewhere.

Furthermore, Ritz-Carlton, Georgetown, seems to be spreading itself to all local demographics.

The complimentary movie showings could attract families while the garden parties could attract consumers of all ages that can indulge in the discounted beverage offerings.

"This location is very much in the middle of Washington, so unlike a resort location with many activities for the guests, city hotels must think outside the box and find inventive ways to provide activities to keep the guests entertained," said D.M. Banks, director of [DMB Public Relations](#), New York.

"Guests who enjoy these events will certainly appreciate the opportunity, but I do not see these kinds of activities bringing in new guests," Mr. Banks said. "It is more of a way to provide a service to current guests.

"These types of activities tend to appeal mostly to the young and affluent traveler who will enjoy the opportunity to meet others for cocktails or yoga and, in this case, if someone is

not staying at the property, they still have access to the benefits.”

Final Take

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