

EVENTS / CAUSES

The Dorchester boasts fashion sense via runway show event

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By TRICIA CARR

The Dorchester, London, will host a fashion-themed tea party during London Fashion Week at which British fashion label Teatum Jones will give an exclusive preview of its autumn/winter 2012 collection.

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The Teatum Jones Fashion Tea event takes Sept. 18, with the hotel supplying guests with tea, Champagne cocktails, finger sandwiches, scones and pastries while they view the runway show. The Dorchester is inviting past guests personally via email and raising awareness for the event on its Web site and Facebook page to target affluent consumers.

“Travel and fashion can be very compatible and synergistic partners in various types of promotional activities and marketing programs,” said Ron Kurtz, president of [American Affluence Research Center](#), Atlanta. “The key is to bring together partners that target and serve similar consumer markets, as the two participants in this event do.”

“This event will help the hotel to reach its target consumers, the affluent, because it is an event that will be attractive to the upscale consumers who attend London Fashion Week and follow Teatum Jones,” he said. “The nature and pricing of the event will also limit its appeal to a more affluent consumer.”

Mr. Kurtz is not affiliated with The Dorchester, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

The Dorchester could not comment before press deadline.

Sipping on style

The Teatum Jones Fashion Tea will take place in the hotel's large indoor space called The Promenade where it serves breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner.

The event is on the same day that a printed silk scarf by Teatum Jones inspired by and named for The Dorchester goes on sale exclusively at London's Liberty department store. It is priced at \$380.



The Promenade

During the two-seating show, Teatum Jones will present its autumn/winter 2012 collection. The collection explores the sensationalistic and menacing side of The Grimm's fairy tales and Hollywood crime scene photography circa 1940s, per the label.

Tea and a special campaign cocktail called the Odyssey will be served. The cocktail was created by The Bar at The Dorchester manager Giuliano Morandin and selected by a fashion committee to be served at Teatum Jones' official London Fashion Week presentation.

There will be seatings at 2:15 p.m. and 4:45 p.m. Tickets are \$80 and include one Odyssey cocktail.

Guests will receive a goody bag and a Liberty credit for \$46 when they spend \$232 or more at the store.

Meanwhile, The Dorchester is hosting an illustration contest inspired by Teatum Jones' latest collection. The winning drawing will be featured on the event's tea menu.

The hotel is asking consumers to send submissions via email. Consumers can follow [@TheDorchester](#) and [@TeatumJones](#) on Twitter which will announce the winner.

The winner will get a complimentary table for two at the Teatum Jones Fashion Tea.



The Dorchester, London

“By hosting a luxury fashion event, The Dorchester is able to present itself to a facet of the luxury market that may not necessarily consider the hotel when traveling to London,” said Taylor Rains, account coordinator at [Rawle Murdy Associates Inc.](#), Charleston, SC.

“It is not so much a strategy to renew interest among current consumers as it is a way to reach a different segment of its target consumer,” he said.

Elite event

The Dorchester is creating an exclusive atmosphere at its property that will likely draw an affluent audience in a few ways.

“First, the event will likely attract an upscale audience that could represent future business for the hotel,” American Affluence Research Center’s Mr. Kurtz said. “Second, the event will be a good launch platform for the Dorchester-inspired scarf.

“Third, the event will generate favorable publicity during the important London Fashion Week,” he said. “Fourth, the event provides a basis for creating buzz in social media with the competition for the design of the tea menu.”

The Dorchester is one of many upscale London hotels to hold events aimed at the affluent community.

Its sister property 45 Park Lane, London, hosted an event with on-site restaurant owner Wolfgang Puck that seemed to be a tactic to attract locals to the property’s high-end culinary offerings ([see story](#)).

Additionally, Starwood Hotels & Resorts’ St. Regis enticed its loyalty members interested in Queen Elizabeth II’s 60th anniversary on the throne and London culture with a curated four-night experience ([see story](#)).

Luxury travel brands that want to compete in London seem to be stepping out of their own industry to grab attention from affluent locals and guests.

“Luxury brands in a variety of industries have been turning to these partnership strategies with increased frequency,” Rawle Murdy’s Mr. Rains said.

“While fashion and travel may not have the most obvious marketing overlap, what they do

have in common is luxury,” he said. “As a result, mixing marketing efforts across industries can be an extremely viable strategy so long as the luxury messaging remains consistent throughout.

“By crossing industry boundaries while remaining within the overall luxury umbrella, The Dorchester is able to expand its exposure to a viable consumer base, garner publicity and provide guests with a unique experience.”

Final Take

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