

IN-STORE

Washington's Willard Hotel bolsters history, holiday offerings through on-site exhibit

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By TRICIA CARR

The Willard InterContinental, Washington DC, is encouraging foot traffic during the holiday season by aligning with the presidential election and displaying the entire White House Christmas Ornaments collection on a tree in its lobby.

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The hotel is partnering with the White House Historical Association to show the display on-site starting Nov. 28. Displays or events of significance to the local audience are another way for luxury hotels to garner foot traffic during a holiday in addition to attracting out-of-town guests through packages.

“Such a display, especially during the holiday season when our hotel is decorated in a very beautiful way, is another way for the guests to come see something special,” said Barbara Bahny, director of public relations at [Willard InterContinental](#), Washington.

“We have other things going on – the hotel is really a place to meet and a place to have your party,” she said. “When you have this kind of display, it is an added benefit for not just our guests, but other travelers who want to experience a taste of Washington hospitality at its highest level.”

Lobbyists

The hotel's lobby will display the White House Christmas Ornaments collection so that guests going in and out of the hotel are able to see it.

The tradition of the White House Ornament began in 1981 from the White House Historical Association. Each ornament marks a president's term or special event at the White House.

A new ornament is offered each year. These trinkets have become collectibles.

For instance, the 2012 ornament celebrates the country's 27th president William Howard Taft who served 1909-1913. He is also responsible for introducing the motorcar to the White House fleet.

The ornament shows President and Ms. Taft in a chauffeured White Motor Company Model M. The couple is delivering Christmas presents.

Furthermore, the location of the Willard on Pennsylvania Avenue makes it in close proximity to the White House and other Washington landmarks.

The hotel also has a history of presidential guests that it is looking to highlight through the exhibit, per Ms. Bahny.



Willard lobby

On holiday

Other luxury travel brands are aligning with holidays to draw both locals and visitors with a themed experience.

For instance, Mandarin Oriental, Munich, is reopening its new rooftop chalet to target consumers who wish to spend the holiday or host Christmas-themed parties at the property.

The Alm will be serving Bavarian cuisine and is open for lunch and dinner ([see story](#)).

Additionally, The New York Palace created a unique venue for luxury consumers through a partnership with Lindt & Sprungli chocolatiers focused on providing a limited-time experience for springtime.

The hotel offered the Gold Chocolate Package earlier this year that honored the 60th birthday of the Lindt Gold Bunny near Easter Sunday ([see story](#)).

The Willard is aligning with Christmas as well as the election year to further the reach of its holiday focused-efforts.

“This being a presidential election year, there is a lot of buzz and excitement about Washington, DC,” said Tiffany Dowd, Boston-based luxury hotel inspector and president of [Luxe Social Media](#). “Adding an attractive historic display like this at the hotel will make guests proud to experience a part of U.S. history.

“For an exhibit-type display to be effective for a luxury hotel, it must capture a sense of place while complementing the hotel's image,” she said. “This exhibit, in particular, accomplishes this perfectly.”

Final Take

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