

IN-STORE

Ritz-Carlton bolsters rewards program in China through Mercedes-Benz partnership

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By ERIN SHEA

Hotel chain Ritz-Carlton is bolstering membership in its frequent stay program Ritz-Carlton Rewards for guests in China through a partnership with German automaker Mercedes-Benz.

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This partnership will give Ritz-Carlton Rewards members exclusive Mercedes-Benz benefits in China. Mercedes-Benz will have the opportunity to introduce its vehicles to hotel guests at Ritz-Carlton Chinese properties.

“More competition in recent years from other luxury auto manufacturers gives Mercedes a very big incentive to have this incredible exposure through the Ritz-Carlton,” said D.M. Banks, director at [D.M.B. Public Relations](#), New York.

“The executive vehicle of choice is generally the Mercedes S-Class in the primary Chinese cities, and China continues to be the third-largest market for Mercedes, behind Germany and the U.S.,” he said.

“The two brands complement each other very well and combine to make a great team in these major Chinese destinations.”

Both **Ritz-Carlton** and **Mercedes-Benz** did not respond by press deadline.

Members only

Guests who are members of the Ritz-Carlton Rewards program will receive complimentary access to the Mercedes-Benz VIP Lounge and airport limousines at the hotel properties in Beijing and Shanghai.



The Portman Ritz-Carlton, Shanghai

Platinum Rewards members will have access to complimentary chauffeured, city-wide transportation in an S-Class vehicle.

Members will also have the opportunity to attend events such as Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week, auto shows and art fairs that are sponsored by Mercedes-Benz.

In addition, Mercedes-Benz customers in China who are Ritz-Carlton Rewards members will receive an upgrade to a suite when booking Club level accommodations at Ritz-Carlton hotels in China.

S-Class vehicles will be on display at the Ritz-Carlton hotels in China.



S-Class vehicle

“With the impressive history Mercedes-Benz has for its sponsorship and partnerships with events such as Fashion Week and the PGA Tour, having VIP access to these events and facilities, along with services such as chauffeured transportation provide generous incentives for Ritz-Carlton guests,” Mr. Banks said.

Pays to be loyal

Other luxury hotels have recently been offering more deals for their frequent guests.

Fairmont Hotels & Resorts partnered with British Airways to offer frequent guests who are also members of British Airways Executive Club bonus points each time they stay at Fairmont.

Members of the Fairmont President’s Club who also belong to British Airways Executive Club earn a bonus of 500 British Airway Avios every time they stay in a Fairmont Hotel. Members who stay at a Fairmont through Dec. 31 will receive a special four-times mileage bonus for the holidays ([see story](#)).

Starwood Hotels & Resorts continued to build brand affinity through the addition of culinary benefits extended to members of its Starwood Preferred Guests loyalty program.

The culinary benefits program consists of discounts at Starwood properties’ restaurants and bars and VIP experiences with well-known chefs ([see story](#)).

Ritz-Carlton also offers its Rewards members other special deals.

The hotel chain was looking to enhance its rewards membership program through the addition of bespoke wine-oriented travel experiences with partner brand Destination Cellars.

Ritz-Carlton is working with the high-end wine club to give loyalists private tastings, one-on-one workshops with winemakers and wine-blending sessions ([see story](#)).

Rewards members can also receive Abercrombie & Kent tours in China, Turkey and Egypt, special shopping experiences at Neiman Marcus and Bergdorf Goodman and the opportunity to take a workshop with National Geographic photographers in San Francisco and Miami.

In addition, members can redeem their points for flights on 30 different airlines and certain luxury cruise lines, including Crystal Cruises, the Yachts of Seabourn and Silversea.

“Beyond just the level of the hotel chain’s services while at one of its many international properties, the Ritz-Carlton has managed to partner with many other influential luxury brands,” Mr. Banks said. “This continually enhances its strength within the hospitality industry.”

Final take

Erin Shea, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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