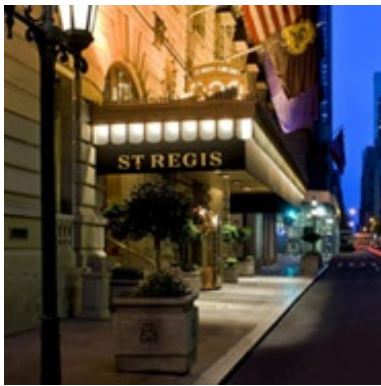


MULTICHANNEL

St. Regis doubles luxury hotel portfolio during global slump

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By PETER FINOCCHIARO

St. Regis Hotels & Resorts doubled its global footprint in the past two years in spite of an economic downturn that left many travelers tightfisted with their finances.

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The upscale chain's current expansion to Bahia Beach, Puerto Rico, along with new hotels planned in Lhasa, Tibet and Osaka Japan by the end of 2010 will increase the chain's number of locations to 23, more than double the size of two years ago. The company is celebrating the occasion with a number of parties and charity events, special rates at select locations, and a commemorative jewelry collection created by designer Alexis Bittar.

"Starwood begins building hotels several years out from the completion date, so many of these projects started in advance of recent financial uncertainties," said Paul James, global brand manager at Starwood Hotels and Resorts, New York. "Additionally, many of St. Regis' core customers have not lost their appetite for luxury.

"In the last year the brand has learned that luxury consumers are spending more judiciously and are putting a larger emphasis on value, which means that the success of luxury brands depends on a few key points, including heritage, superior craftsmanship and innovation," he said.

“With more than 100 years of experience in luxury hospitality, an unparalleled level of service and marketing initiatives that target a large spectrum of affluent travelers, St. Regis felt very well positioned to expand the brand during uncertain financial times.”

St. Regis is owned by [Starwood Hotels and Resorts](#).

Celebrations

St. Regis is celebrating the opening of the Bahia Beach location with a number of events that evoke the brand's early history.

The festivities will kick off with gala at the St. Regis flagship hotel in New York on Nov. 10. The event will feature a jazz performance and a silent auction – the proceeds of which will benefit UNICEF’s Education for All program.

The hotel chain also plans to reveal its St. Regis Collection of jewelry by designer Alexis Bittar.

The collection was inspired by Caroline Astor, a famous socialite in the latter half of the 19th century and the mother of St. Regis founder John Jacob Astor IV.

The set includes a brooch, earrings and a necklace.

Additionally, Mr. James will host an event at the St. Regis New York called the Midnight Supper – a tip of the hat to the brand’s early days and a one-time ritual of Ms. Astor.

The exclusive event will include 21 attendees in total and feature the first public tasting of Krug Collection 1989 champagne.

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The price is right

Finally, St. Regis is launching a program for the remainder of 2010 and 2011 called Suite Luxury, Legacy Rates.

Guests planning to stay at one of the hotel chain’s participating properties in select suites for two or more consecutive nights can receive the second night’s stay for \$4, the original price of a suite at St. Regis New York when it opened in 1904.

“St. Regis aims to bring the brand’s legacy of unparalleled luxury and bespoke to service to every corner of the world, with particular focus on the best address in new markets,” Mr. James said.

“2010 is a landmark year for the brand and marks the culmination of continued dynamic

growth with openings of three highly-anticipated hotels and resorts, each debuting in new markets,” he said. “With 23 properties by the end of 2010, St. Regis will have doubled the number of hotels and resorts in the brand’s portfolio in just two years.”

Final Take

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