

RESEARCH

66pc of online searches for luxury hotels generated by US consumers: report

June 7, 2013



By TRICIA CARR

Internet users in the United States generate 66.3 percent of global searches for luxury hotel brands with New York securing the No. 1 spot as the most-searched for destination, according to a new report from Digital Luxury Group.

[Sign up now](#)

Luxury Daily

The first World Luxury Index Hotels examined luxury hotel brands by three categories – Luxury Major, or luxury brands of a major integrated hotel chain; Luxury Exclusive, or luxury brands of a small- or medium-sized luxury chain; and Upper Upscale brands – with Hilton Hotels & Resorts, The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company and Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts as the No. 1 most-searched for brand in their respective category. Luxury Major is the fastest growing hotel category in global searches, up 12.1 percent from last year.

"When you look at the strongest contenders in the luxury hotel searches, the brands that have properly invested and executed an active digital strategy are having the most success," said Damon M. Banks, director of [DMB Public Relations](#), New York.

"These brands bring a comfort level to the consumer by connecting to them on a variety of digital levels and having a relationship with them, compared to a decade ago when the

only time you connected with a property would be on the telephone, with an operator or on-location," he said.

Mr. Banks is not affiliated with Digital Luxury Group, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Digital Luxury Group was not available for comment before press deadline.

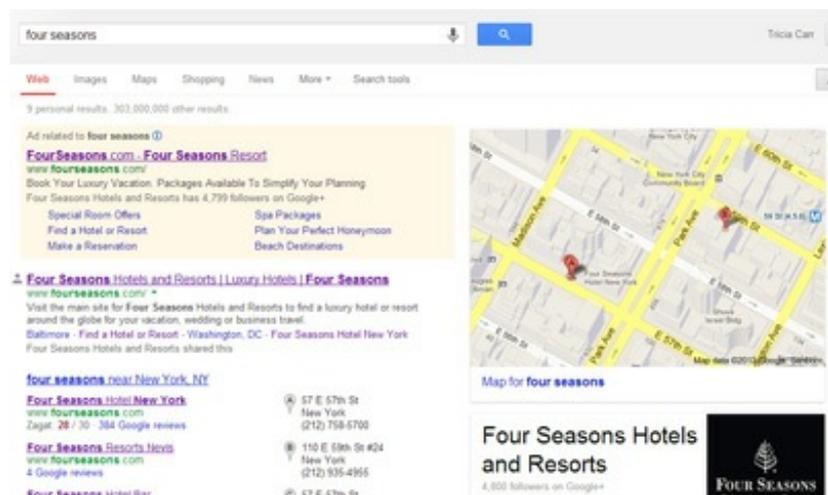
The first World Luxury Index Hotels, part of the Digital Luxury Group's World Luxury Index, covered 70 luxury hotel brands in 10 key luxury markets and more than 133 million unbiased searches from the top search engines. The three hotel brand categories were adapted from the tier division based on ADR data proved by Smith Travel Research.

The report was produced in partnership with the chair of luxury hospitality at **Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne** and **Luxury Society**.

Top of the world

Four Seasons is the most-searched for brand in the Luxury Exclusive category, which could have been prompted by its \$18 million investment in digital marketing, per Digital Luxury Group.

The Toronto-based hotel brand generated 4.8 percent of total global searches for luxury hotels in the study.



Four Seasons Google search

Among Luxury Exclusive hotels, Four Seasons was followed by Loews Hotels, Shangri-La Hotels and Resorts, Mandarin Oriental Hotel Group and Regent Hotels & Resorts.

Ritz-Carlton topped the Luxury Major category with 4.6 percent of all searches, followed by InterContinental Hotels & Resorts, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, JW Marriott Hotels & Resorts and Sofitel Hotel.

Hilton, Sheraton Hotels & Resorts, Westin Hotels and Resorts, Hyatt Hotels and Resorts and Hyatt Regency were among the most-searched for Upper Upscale hotels.

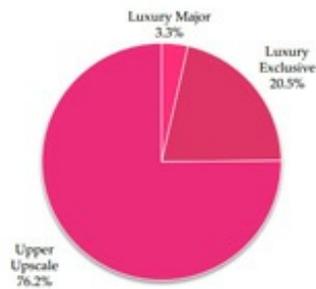
The top 10 list of the most-searched for luxury hotel brands is led by Hilton, Sheraton, Westin, Four Seasons, Hyatt, Hyatt Regency, Ritz-Carlton, Embassy Suites, Renaissance

and InterContinental.

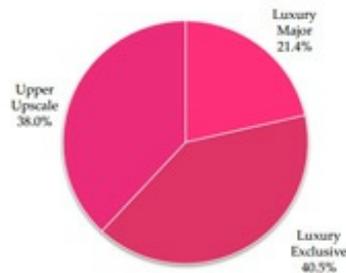
The Upper Upscale category, which is 38 percent of hotels, comprises 76.2 percent of all searches, but total searches have decreased 1.1 percent since last year.

The Luxury Major category, which is 21.4 percent of hotels, saw a 12.1 percent growth in searches year-over-year, while Luxury Exclusive, which is 40.5 percent of hotels, saw a 5.6 percent growth.

MOST SOUGHT-AFTER HOTEL CATEGORIES
(no of searches)



HOTEL CATEGORIES BREAKDOWN
(no of hotels)



Study graphs

Traveling up

Overall, searches for luxury hotel brands rose 1.5 percent since last year.

The U.S. was responsible for 66.3 percent of the searches, Britain for 13.3 percent and China for 5.2 percent.

Russia saw the most growth in searches since last year with 12.8 percent growth. Also, Britain saw 8.4 percent growth and China saw 3.3 percent growth, while the U.S. saw 5 percent growth.

Markets such as Italy, Brazil and Japan saw a decline in luxury hotel brand searches from last year of 14.3 percent, 12.1 percent and 11.1 percent, respectively.

Seventy-five percent of the luxury hotel brands studied originate in the U.S. and 85 percent of global luxury hotel searches are for brands in English-speaking countries.

New York is the most-searched for luxury hotel destination. London, Dubai and Paris are also popular cities in luxury hotel searches.



The Bar at Four Seasons New York

The U.S.'s Washington, DC, is the fastest growing destination among online searches.

In addition, the most-searched-for destinations among consumers located in the BRIC markets are Miami and New York in Brazil; Hurghada, Egypt, and Dubai in Russia; Dubai and Singapore in India; and Hong Kong and Singapore in China.

"Americans live on their smartphones and tablets and, therefore, do their research and booking online," Mr. Banks said.

"Through social media, they have become more familiar with many of these luxury hotel brands, and then want to experience them for themselves when traveling."

Final Take

Tricia Carr, associate reporter on Luxury Daily, New York

© Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your **feedback** is welcome.