

EVENTS / CAUSES

Maserati expands support for Parkinson's charity with eBay auction

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By JOE MCCARTHY

Italian dealership Maserati of Walnut Creek, CA, is expanding its involvement with the Parkinson's and patient care charity Danville D'Elegance Foundation's charity by hosting an eBay auction that lets car enthusiasts take part in the Maserati Trofeo MC World Series weekend.

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Luxury Daily

Although the auction is aimed at car enthusiasts, its promise of placing consumers in and around racing activities may attract a variety of consumers. Maserati's choice to team up with a foundation steeped in the automotive world may mean that many brand loyalist will become invested in the charity's outcome.

"This is a great opportunity for the dealership," said Deb Pollack, marketing and public relations associate for [Danville D'Elegance Foundation](#), Los Angeles.

"It opens up the awareness of the brand, extends Maserati hospitality, allows car enthusiasts drive at a world-renowned event that most people would clamor to go see," she said.

Finding one's way

The Maserati Trofeo MC World Series generally takes place in Europe and the Middle

East, but the brand has added Sonoma, CA race weekend to its global schedule of events for the 2nd time.



The auction involvement will allow car enthusiasts to drive the most advanced Maserati road car available and enjoy a VIP Maserati experience.

Those who win the bid or purchase the offer have the ability to drive a Maserati vehicle Saturday, Aug. 24th, during Maserati of Walnut Creek rally to and from Sonoma Raceway.

All of the proceeds will go to [Danville D'Elegance Foundation's](#) charity which supports Parkinson's research and patient care. The charities have raised more than \$1.5 million since the foundation's inception in 2004.



Additionally, winners will receive access for two to Maserati North America VIP hospitality area during the Maserati Trofeo Series and INDYCAR events at Sonoma Raceway, Aug. 24-25.

Maserati of Walnut Creek has sponsored Danville d'Elegance Concours and Tour d'Elegance for several years.

Danville d'Elegance Concours is a yearly event in which car collectors, automotive enthusiasts and the local community gather together to for a variety of activities and displays of racing cars. This year's event takes place Sept. 21-22.



The Tour d'Elegance program is a subsidiary event in its third year which brings automotive enthusiasts on a scenic drive.

Aligned purpose

When luxury brands engage in philanthropy, they should ensure that the greater purpose has been thoughtfully considered rather than merely courting charities for public relation's sake.

Other luxury brands have found similar aligned purposes.

For instance, Fairmont Hotels & Resorts is beginning a month-long charity initiative in September that tackles issues relevant to its properties' surrounding areas.

The "Community Connections Month" invites Fairmont colleagues and hotel guests to work with local organizations to volunteer at shelters, improve elderly facilities, spread knowledge of bee preservation and other charitable activities. Making a sweeping effort to aid community outreach projects will likely appeal to luxury travelers who search for brands engaged in authentic philanthropy.

Similarly, British jeweler and retailer **Astley Clarke** is boosting its philanthropic efforts by selling a new rose gold bracelet to benefit Britain and Ireland's Breast Cancer Campaign.

The bracelet is being sold in boutiques, select retailers and online, while 20 percent of the proceeds from the sale of each bracelet will go directly to the Breast Cancer Campaign research. To promote the new bracelet and the cause, Astley Clarke hosted a release event and is using digital platforms ([see story](#)).

As with many charities, Danville d'Elegance began with a simple idea that spread and gained momentum.

"The foundation started out as this little concord that could between a lot of car collectors in the area," she said.

Final Take

Joe McCarthy, editorial assistant on Luxury Daily, New York

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