

IN-STORE

Peninsula Hotels offers cultural immersion to increase guest experiences

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The Peninsula Hotel launches Peninsula Academy

By NANCY BUCKLEY

Hospitality chain The Peninsula Hotels is launching a program to better immerse guests in the native culture of each hotel location.

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The Peninsula Academy will assist guests plunge into the heart of their hotel's country or city. Each hotel will offer several programs that will submerge guests into the art, cuisine, fashion, style and culture of the location and will present guests with greater opportunities to connect with the city and country and the individual Peninsula hotel.

"Core to the Peninsula DNA are our deep roots to the community and the local culture," said Robert Cheng, VP of Marketing at The [The Peninsula Hotels](#), Hong Kong.

"As such, it allows us to give our guests a truly insider and authentic perspective into our cities – something that our highly sophisticated and well-travelled guests are looking for," he said.

"Each program is bespoke and carefully curated and created by our team locally, so as to

offer our guests truly unique experiences inside each Peninsula destination.

"Today's traveler looks for memorable, out of the ordinary experiences that they will cherish for a lifetime and with special connections with key partners around the world, the Academy provides access to exclusive experiences for guests to go beyond the everyday sights and sounds of a destination."

Explore the world Peninsula style

The Peninsula Academy will present guests with unique programs to better understand the culture of the hotel's location. Programs include museum trips, culinary lessons, shopping expeditions and tastes of local specialties.

Each program includes additional Peninsula features such as transportation in a helicopter or chauffeured car and a souvenir from each academy.



The Peninsula Academy's Broadway experience

The hotel chain is also establishing Peninsula Academy for young guests. Children will also have the chance to participate in excursions and activities established just for the youngest members of the Peninsula Academy.

The opportunities range broadly to encourage every guest to participate.

For example, at The Peninsula Chicago, guests will get to be the hotel florist for the day and go on a personalized tour of a local floral warehouse and interact with the design team to help plan the weekly floral installments for the hotel.

The Peninsula New York invites theater enthusiasts to attend a Broadway theater tour led by a Broadway actor, a show and a backstage meet-and-greet after the performance. The entire outing is chauffeured by the hotel's tour guide.



The Peninsula Bangkok Holistic Conservation: A Coastal Mangrove Eco-Adventure

The Peninsula Hotels worldwide have the academy. For example, in Bangkok, guests can explore Thailand's natural beauty with naturalists at an urban nature education location.

Global knowledge and awareness that The Peninsula Hotel's are offering their guests will likely allow them to feel less like a tourist and more like a native.

Competition for exploration

The Peninsula Hotels are not among the first of the top hotel brands to offer exclusive local experiences.

For example, Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts compiled top experiences from properties around the world for its new "Extraordinary Experiences Collection" series.

The collection aimed to immerse guests in a location's culture, which inevitably led to a wide range of potential options. Travelers have consistently professed that trips should entail original experiences, and luxury hotel brands are fundamentally shifting to meet this demand ([see story](#)).

This demand creates a competition among hotels to offer the best immersive opportunities for guests.

Luxury hotels that dabble in the native cuisine, explore the surrounding area and delve into the local culture will stand out to consumers and help the properties get ahead of their competitors since these packages provide experiences that cannot be emulated elsewhere.

Since luxury consumers are known to research their trips and hunt for exclusive experiences, putting together well-curated packages that immerse guests in new realms may boost the number of bookings. Investigating the nuances of the local culture and environment is becoming more popular and should not be overlooked when trying to attract guests ([see story](#)).

The Peninsula Academy may help create an alliance to The Peninsula Hotel brand because guests gain more than a location to relax and rest, but a private tour guide without

having to leave their hotel.

“The academies give Peninsula hotels the opportunity to attract guests with unique activities and experiences that their competition is not likely to be able to duplicate easily,” said Ron Kurtz president of the [American Affluence Research Center](#), Atlanta.

“The academies also provide great content for the various forms of communication with which Peninsula maintains contacts with its past and prospective guests,” he said.

“Local tour companies, which typically need to operate with groups for financial efficiency, are sometimes unable to gain access to activities that Peninsula can access.”

Mr. Kurtz is not affiliated with The Peninsula Hotels, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

Final Take

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