

Resort joins elite collection

HABTOOR Grand Beach Resort & Spa, a five-star beachfront resort in Dubai, UAE, has joined the Autograph Collection, Marriott International's exclusive global portfolio of independently owned hotels.

The new partnership will elevate the Habtoor Grand Resort & Spa's iconic status throughout the region by participating in Autograph's global sales and marketing channels, the award-winning Marriott Rewards frequent travel programme and the company's management and



franchise expertise. Autograph Collection is an evolving ensemble of strikingly

independent hotels, with each destination thoughtfully selected for its bold originality, rich char-

acter and uncommon details. With this partnership, Autograph Collection is also able to leverage the expertise of a successful local brand with a strong heritage to further expand its footprint across the region.

The hotel also welcomes a new consultant general manager, Rick Zaella, who will lead the beachfront property with more than 25 years of hospitality experience and welcome guests looking for a bespoke travel experience.

Habtoor Grand Beach Resort & Spa, Autograph Collection, will be present at stand number HC6750.



A grand executive room at The Langham, London

LHG sees great potential

THE UAE city of Dubai attracted 1.05 million visitors in December, up seven per cent on the previous month, while the capital Abu Dhabi had 344,000 arrivals, an increase of 11 per cent on November.

These numbers are not going unnoticed. Highlighting the region's importance to the Luxury Hotels Group (LHG), managing director Rahul Arora says: "The increasing importance of the region is reflected in the latest February 2015 STR Global research report which states that there are 640 hotels totalling 149,799 rooms in the Middle East/Africa region. Among the countries in the region, the UAE reported the most rooms under construction with 21,893 rooms in 76 hotels."

"While many of these hotels will be managed by international brands, travellers are increasingly demanding personalisation. The millennials, who are projected to drive the industry again in 2015 are experiential travellers. They are after one-of-a-kind experiences rather than mainstream destination trends.

"With increasing need for personalisation of experience becoming the norm, the need for unique hospitality experiences from individual players only increases."

Participants at the LHG stand this year include the Langham Hotels (UK, US and the UAE), the Montcalm Group (The Montcalm, The Montcalm at The Brewery London, M by The Montcalm) the Park Grand UK, Royal Horseguards (UK), the Palms Beach Hotels and Spa (Kuwait), PortAventura and Villa Podsierna Palace Hotel (Spain) and Allegrotalia Hotels and Resorts (Italy).

The Luxury Hotels Group currently represents 147 properties across three collections – hotels, boutique and residences – and offers reservations, marketing and promotions for independent hotels enabling them to reach a global audience in a cost-effective and efficient manner.

For the travel trade, Luxury Hotels Group offers ease of booking and access to a portfolio of unique hotels in destinations popular with regional travellers.

Among the benefits offered by the Luxury Hotels Group to its member hotels are website and directory listing and a private label GDS, under the LH code, combined with a state-of-the-art booking engine and digital marketing, while additional support is provided with account and revenue management services for rates and inventory plus global marketing initiatives.

Luxury Hotels Group can be found at stand number HC7075.



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LANGHAM RENOVATES

PART of the Luxury Hotels Group portfolio, The Langham, London has announced a major investment of more than £7.5 million (\$11 million), with three new areas due to launch in time for the hotel's 150th anniversary this year: The Regent Wing, The Langham Club Lounge and The Sterling Suite, slated to be London's top suite with up to six bedrooms.

The investment will be the most extensive since 2009 when the hotel was officially reopened by Mayor Boris Johnson after an £80 million (\$118.3 million) refurbishment.

Duncan Palmer, managing director and regional vice president Europe, says, "This renovation will be key in elevating The Langham, London to the next echelon of luxury. The Regent Wing will be a sanctuary for guests who prefer the feeling of a private and discrete residence whilst The Langham Club Lounge and Sterling Suite will provide the ultimate in luxury amenities and service aimed at the most discerning clientele."