

Ritz-Carlton bolsters amenities to active affluents via Tough Mudder package

Posted By [Tricia Carr](#) On August 10, 2012



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Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe

The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe in Truckee, CA, is targeting consumers in town for the Tough Mudder competition by creating packages to relax active, affluent consumers before and after the event.

Participants in the NorCal Tough Mudder, an internationally-held obstacle course challenge designed by the British Special Forces, can buy a hotel package for an overnight stay or an event-themed spa package. The property seems to be taking a risk to increase brand awareness by aligning with the rugged event, but can potentially reach a large group of young consumers.

“Marketing and selling to the affluent is about experience,” said Chris Ramey, president of [Affluent Insights](#) ^[2], Miami. **“The Tough Mudder packages are in-sync with the mindset of today’s affluent consumers.**

“Achievement and affluence are closely related,” he said. **“Juxtaposing the Ritz-Carlton spa against the Tough Mudder is the type of counter-intuitive thinking that you expect from a market leader.**

“It is a brilliant idea to expand your bandwidth to include an organization that heretofore may not have been thought to be comprised of typical Ritz-Carlton prospects, and it also illustrates the evolution of luxury and wealth.”

Mr. Ramey is not affiliated with Ritz-Carlton, but agreed to comment as an industry expert.

[Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe](#) ^[3] did not respond before press deadline.

Up for the challenge

Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, will offer overnight accommodations and spa treatments for participants in the [NorCal Tough Mudder](#) ^[4] Sept. 22-23 in Truckee, CA.

Entry in one day of the challenge is \$200, but was previously \$95, \$125 and \$155 depending on the time purchased. Tough Mudder events support the Wounded Warrior Project.

The Discover With You overnight package includes a S’mores welcome gift, overnight stay in a deluxe guest room, daily breakfast for two and a \$100 daily resort credit. The package starts at \$449 per night.



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Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe

Guests can also purchase the Tough Mudder Spa Package at \$245 for 75 minutes that was created to help participants recover from the event.

A warm soak with Verde scented bath salts assists in muscle recovery by drawing out toxins that cause soreness. Next, an Après Sports Massage enlongates stretches and pressure points.

Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, is using its Web site to raise awareness for the packages. For instance, when users visit the spa section of the property's site, a box to the right of the screen describes the Tough Mudder Spa Package.



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Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe, spa

In this case, Web site marketing will likely work in the hotel's favor, since affluent consumers will be researching hotels to stay at during the event.

However, the brand could use more intrusive methods such as email and social media to target the young, affluent consumers who might be participating.

"With the Tough Mudder package, Ritz-Carlton leverages the popularity of a unique event while aligning itself with the charitable beneficiary," said Taylor Rains, account coordinator at [Rawle Murdy Associates Inc.](#)^[7], Charleston, SC.

"Ritz-Carlton understands the Lake Tahoe travel market well and is strategically targeting the active, affluent segment that would be drawn to such an event," he said. "By offering them all the comforts before and after the Tough Mudder experience, the brand also demonstrates its support for those who commit to a charitable cause."

Young at heart

Other luxury travel brands are aiming at young consumers who want to participate in the affluent lifestyle with event-related efforts.

For instance, Thompson Hotel Group and music festival Lollapalooza partnered for the first pop-up shop concept called LollaShop that offered exclusive experiences and a first look at the Thompson Chicago property opening next year.

The LollaShop included VIP listening parties and performances in the Thompson Hotel Lounge, which also offered a preview of the new Thompson Chicago ([see story](#)^[8]).

In addition, The Dorchester, London, will host a fashion-themed tea party during London Fashion Week at which British fashion label Teatum Jones will give an exclusive preview of its autumn/winter 2012 collection.

The event is on the same day that a printed silk scarf by Teatum Jones inspired by and named for The Dorchester goes on sale exclusively at London's Liberty department store. It is priced at \$380. ([see story](#)^[9]).

When hotels participate in events, they are bringing the hotel experience to target consumers in a creative way.

"It is imperative for luxury brands to aggressively pursue opportunities and events wherever their best prospects may be," Affluent Insights' Mr. Ramey said. "Entitlement is gone and passivity is killing brands that think they are entitled.

"Brand ubiquity is every marketer's responsibility," he said. "Today's most successful luxury brands are finding creative ways to be a part of their best customers' lives where and when they least expect it."

Participation in the Tough Mudder could be considered a risk for the Ritz-Carlton brand since it does not outwardly portray the affluent lifestyle.

However, the event benefits a charity and its participants are encouraged to show confidence and stamina, which could only help Ritz-Carlton.

"Ritz-Carlton cannot go wrong with a package like this," Rawle Murdy Associates' Mr. Rains said. "First of all, it is a singular event, meaning that if it fails to achieve the necessary level of success, the property does not have to suffer through the backlash of backtracking.

"In addition, the event itself is a unique experience and something that will likely pull a number of people to the area," he said. "Finally, the event itself supports a good cause, and association with a charity, particularly one as respected as the Wounded Warrior project, is almost always a positive move.

"Event-related packages can be tricky to execute properly, but in this case, Ritz-Carlton is taking all the necessary strategic steps to promote success."

Final Take

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- [2] Affluent Insights: <http://www.affluentinsights.com>
- [3] Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe: <http://www.ritzcarlton.com/en/Properties/LakeTahoe/Default.htm>
- [4] NorCal Tough Mudder: <http://toughmudder.com/events/norcal-tahoe-2012>
- [5] Image: <http://www.luxurydaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Ritz-Carlton-Lake-Tahoe-lobby.jpg>
- [6] Image: <http://www.luxurydaily.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/Ritz-Carlton-Lake-Tahoe-spa.jpg>
- [7] Rawle Murdy Associates Inc.: <http://www.rawlemurdy.com>
- [8] see story: <http://www.luxurydaily.com/thompson-hotels-lollapalooza-combine-to-target-affluent-music-lovers/>
- [9] see story: <http://www.luxurydaily.com/dorchester-boasts-fashion-sense-via-runway-show-event/>