

Holiday Inn Hotels and Resorts Debuts Niche Hotel Concepts

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Generation X and family travelers have new homes within the Holiday Inn family

From its annual Americas Investors and Leadership Conference, InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG) today unveils two niche hotel concepts within the Holiday Inn(R) Hotels and Resorts family of brands geared towards Generation X and families. Holiday Inn is repositioning its Holiday Inn Select(R) line extension for Generation X and is introducing a new Holidome(R) Recreation Center model for family leisure travelers.

This year Gen Xers are expected to account for more than 349 million room nights, making it the fastest growing generation of travelers(1). And families make up 74 percent of all leisure travel(2), which is poised to surpass business travel in room nights for the first time ever(1).

"Our core Holiday Inn brand remains strong with a broad cross-section of the traveling public," said Mark Snyder, senior vice president of Brand Management for Holiday Inn Hotels and Resorts in the Americas. "As Generation X and family leisure travelers increase in market share, the timing is right to introduce a refreshed Holiday Inn experience for these guests -- a Holiday Inn that demonstrates we know what matters most to them and speaks directly to their individuality, energy and lifestyles."

Holiday Inn Select: Targeting Gen X

Holiday Inn today debuted plans for a new Holiday Inn Select prototype hotel, designed to meet the needs of the brand-conscious, peer-focused, tech-savvy Gen X traveler. InterContinental Hotels Group hopes to begin construction on the first of these new Holiday Inn Select properties in Atlanta in 2006 and grow the brand to a total of 200 properties in airport, urban and secondary markets by 2010. All of these new-build Holiday Inn Select hotels will open with the complete suite of Gen-X offerings, and guests at the 91 existing Holiday Inn Select properties can expect to experience all the Gen X-focused amenities and services by early 2007.

"This new Holiday Inn Select hotel will be purpose-built to accommodate our unique brand-within-a-brand approach," said Snyder. "The 53.1 million members of Generation X represent the most significant market opportunity today and into the future. Holiday Inn already compares above key competitors for Gen X penetration, and we intend for this new Select positioning to solidify that lead," he added.

The Holiday Inn Select prototype includes dedicated space for social activities and branded elements like a new Sporting News Grill restaurant -- a first of its kind partnership between the media giant and Holiday Inn -- and new Fitness by Nautilus workout centers, which will ensure travelers a comprehensive exercise experience with a brand they trust.

The desire to make Gen Xers feel at home on the road even extends to the new employee uniforms, which include contemporary pieces from Pacific Trail that reflect current fashion trends like cargo pants, fleeces and boldly patterned shirts. Holiday Inn Select hotels already offer brand-savvy guests items like Wolfgang Puck coffee, Moen showerheads, Garden Botanika bath amenities and FedEx/Kinko's Online DocStores, all introduced earlier this year. With the additions of free high-speed Internet access, free Wi-Fi and new iHome MP3 clock radios in every room, Select will satisfy the Gen-X need for technology and convenience.

Elements of Feng Shui will be employed throughout the building's architecture and room design to tailor the hotels' interiors to the Gen X lifestyle and create a balanced, calming and inviting stay experience with a sense of purpose.

"Our research tells us there is far more to this demographic than red velvet couches," added Snyder. "This generation works hard and plays harder. Our approach with this hotel is not 'design for design's sake,' but rather functional lifestyle design based on the needs and habits of the Gen X traveler."

Holidome(R) Recreation Center for Families

To meet the needs of today's increasingly time-starved families, Holiday Inn has refined the Holidome Recreation Center concept and is introducing prototype designs intended as additions to the Holiday Inn next-generation hotel model introduced in 2004. For owners who want a more extensive offering, Holiday Inn also is unveiling a turnkey Indoor Waterpark model. Franchisees will get their first glimpse at both prototypes at the IHG Conference today.

"Within the leisure market, there is an increasing consumer affinity for water-based recreation, and a growing trend for short, drive-to vacations," said Snyder. "The new-and-improved Holidome Recreation Center and Indoor Waterpark concepts will offer families the one-stop, stress-free retreat they want, with assurance their quality time is weather-proof."

The Holidome concept was introduced in the early 1970s and spread to an estimated 130 hotels across the US and Canada and is now ripe for an upgrade to meet today's consumer expectations for water-based recreation. Designs for Holidome Recreation Centers and Indoor Waterparks include indoor activity elements like shuffleboard, water slides, wading pools, mini-geysers and aquatic basketball hoops, as well as spa and exercise features for parents, in a choice of three themes: Southwestern, Caribbean or Northwoods.

In addition to offering the new prototype designs, Holiday Inn will introduce standards for properties with existing Holidome facilities later this year that will require hotels to upgrade their Holidome facilities to include enhanced water features, dry recreation elements like shuffleboard, and a food and beverage component. Holiday Inn begins selling the new Holidome and Indoor Waterpark features today as part of the new Holiday Inn hotel design.

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