

Pursuits Travel

Waldorf Astoria Named Best Luxury Hotel Brand in North America

Ritz-Carlton has won the accolade from J.D. Power for nine of the past 10 years. This year, it fell to second place.



The spa at the Waldorf Astoria, Cancun, in Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. Source: Waldorf Astoria Cancun



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By **Nikki Ekstein**
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Waldorf Astoria is the most loved luxury hotel brand, according to a consumer satisfaction survey released on Wednesday by J.D. Power. It's the first time in roughly a decade that the designation has gone to a brand other than Marriott International Inc.'s Ritz-Carlton.

According to Andrea Stokes, hospitality practice lead at J.D. Power, the 2023 North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study surveyed 33,754 hotel guests about their satisfaction during hotel stays that took place from May 2022 to May 2023. Among criteria newly added to the survey are such details as whether hotel rooms have sufficient outlets and USB ports or whether the brands' mobile apps add to the overall guest experience. In all, hotels are rated on 37 individual factors.

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Staff service, guest room quality, and food, however, are the categories that made the biggest, broadest impact, with those scores correlating tightly to overall guest satisfaction. None should surprise as culinary travel takes on increased cultural importance and service rebounds from a pandemic-era low.

“As those brands grow, we’ll keep an eye and see if they become big enough to include in our study,” Stokes says.

So what made Waldorf Astoria shine, specifically? Stokes says this is a closely guarded secret. But she says brands in general would do well to think beyond their guest rooms. “These days, it’s basically table stakes that you would have a great room as a luxury hotel.”

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