

Outrigger Resorts Invites Guests to Join its Global Conservation Initiative During World Oceans Month



Worldwide properties roll out eco-experiences for guests as part of OZONE conservation program

View/download Outrigger's OZONE video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SQxauG7g0h0>

PHUKET - Each year, World Oceans Month in June calls attention to the vital role the sea plays in our everyday lives and serves as a reminder for global citizens to take an active role in fighting for the sustainable future of our oceans, "the lungs of the Earth."

As a premier beachfront resort brand, Outrigger Resorts invites guests to join its global celebration during World Oceans Month and participate in numerous eco-experiences as part of its ocean conservation program, OZONE (Outrigger's ZONE), and its ongoing effort to preserve and protect the ocean's coral.

In fact, while Hawaii currently awaits the signing of its latest bill to enact the first-ever sales ban of reef-damaging sunscreen, Outrigger has championed the cause by offering samples of reef-friendly sunscreen since 2014 as part of its OZONE program.

OZONE aims to improve coral health and resiliency, as well as the overall well-being of the seas surrounding Outrigger's iconic destinations, by inviting guests to become immersed in practical marine science through hands-on educational activities. Together, Outrigger guests and employees have successfully planted, monitored and protected more than 100 football fields' worth of coral since the 2014 launch of OZONE.

"Caring for the planet is part of Outrigger's DNA. We believe in creating a strong sense of place for our guests and that includes the oceans surrounding the iconic destinations of our beachfront properties," said Monica Salter, vice president of corporate communications for Outrigger Enterprises Group. "Our resort hosts put Outrigger's conservation mission into action each day by educating guests through our OZONE program and participating in green initiatives and volunteer projects throughout local communities. With our guests' help, Outrigger has surpassed its goal to grow and protect 100 football fields' worth of coral, and we are proud to continue our OZONE endeavors by providing travelers and locals alike with eco-friendly, educational and impactful experiences during each visit."

Outrigger is making a splash for World Oceans Month

Located on eye-catching beaches in Hawaii, Thailand, Guam, Fiji, Mauritius and Maldives, Outrigger is dedicated to marine preservation and works year-round on a range of initiatives to generate awareness for the cause, as well as create opportunities for guests to help with the crucial marine ecosystems' conservation. In celebration of World Oceans Month, each of Outrigger's beachfront resort properties across the globe invite guests to get their hands wet and participate in an array of immersive OZONE activities and volunteer projects. Highlights from each destination include:

- Thailand: Outrigger Laguna Phuket Beach resort continues to support the Laguna Phuket CSR

initiatives, including the annual mangrove tree planting initiative and ongoing support to Turtle conservation with a focus on raising funds and awareness in support of the Phuket Marine Biological Centre (PMBC) and the Royal Thai Navy turtle hatchery and conservation project.

Additionally, this year the resort aims to significantly reduce its consumption of single use plastic. Currently water is bottled at the resort through a reverse osmosis bottling plant and the property has recently discontinued the use of plastic straws, takeaway containers and bags, with more initiatives to follow.

Additionally, in celebration of World Ocean's Month on Friday, June 8, Outrigger Koh Samui Beach Resort will host an afternoon of 'Rak Thalay' (thai meaning "Love the Sea" in the Library. During the event, guests will participate in coconut palm leaf fish folding while listening to stories of the history of Koh Samui and life surrounded by the ocean in the Gulf of Thailand.

- **Maldives:** At Outrigger Konotta Maldives Resort guest of all ages are invited to Coral Reef Conversation workshops conducted by Outrigger's resident marine biologist, where they can even take part in the creation of new coral planting. Alongside, to support this year's World Ocean Day's theme of elimination of plastic waste, guests can also join the snorkeling/diving against debris and come to the marine talk followed by the documentary "A Plastic Ocean" to raise awareness.
- **Mauritius:** With a focus on the elimination of plastic waste on the marine environment, Outrigger Mauritius Beach Resort will host a beach clean-up on June 8 with the students of the Keats College and the hosts of the resort. The property has a commitment with local NGO Reef Conservation that hosts ongoing educational events and tools to inspire guests, hosts and partners to join Outrigger's ocean conservation efforts for a sustainable future.
- **Hawaii:** Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort and Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort partnered with the Waikiki Aquarium to encourage guests and employees to learn more about protecting Hawaii's marine life through an interactive event - OZONE Day - which featured live Hawaiian music, educational activities and exhibits with booths from NOAA, All Good reef-friendly sunscreen, Polynesian Voyaging Society, Kokua Foundation's Plastic Free Hawaii, Sustainable Coastlines and Surfrider Hawaii. Additionally, the Outrigger Reef Waikiki Beach Resort restaurants have been awarded Platinum designation as Ocean Friendly Restaurants for their effort to reduce plastic waste and implement ocean-friendly practices.
- **Fiji:** On June 8, Castaway Island, Fiji Resort encourages guests to take part in coral planting, as well as a snorkeling scavenger hunt, sunset kayaking, night snorkeling, a parade of costumes made of recycled materials, and more. Continuing its commitment, Castaway Island, Fiji Resort named its first chief environmental officer to spearhead the property's conservation efforts, including its thriving coral nursery and educational offerings for guests.

As part of the property's ongoing efforts, Outrigger Fiji Beach Resort invites guests on June 15 to participate in sinking a fish house, comprised of transplanted coral which will grow into a coral nursery, as well as cleaning clam cages and repopulating propagation racks with new young coral.

- **Guam:** Outrigger Guam Beach Resort will host a full week of events to celebrate World Ocean's Month and Outrigger's OZONE initiatives. From June 3 through June 8, guests can participate in hands-on activities such as Ocean Critters Cookie Decorating, Kids Reefscape Craft, Ocean Canvas Paint Party, a snorkeling class, educational conservation talks, a community beach cleanup and more.

Limited-time OZONE special

Those inspired to stay with Outrigger can save up to 35 percent if they book now through June 18, 2018 with the rate code OZONE18 at Outrigger.com for a holiday now through March 31, 2019.

Coral reefs are under threat

Coral reefs are among the most diverse ecosystems on the planet, and while they are only found in less than one percent of the world's oceans, they are home to 25 percent of all marine life. They also protect coastlines from waves and provide food and livelihood to coastal communities. A study published in 2017 found the global reef tourism industry alone is worth around \$36 billion (Marine Policy, 2017).

However, coral reefs are in great danger. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), even the most protected coral reefs have experienced bleaching, with scientists warning that U.S. reefs are on course to largely disappear within just a few decades due to global warming. Since 2014, coral bleaching has shifted on a global scale to both the northern and southern hemispheres, affecting close to 70 percent of the world's total reef population.

OZONE in action

In response to this direct threat from climate change, land-based pollution and unsustainable fishing, Outrigger launched the OZONE conservation initiative to encourage guests to become a part of the solution. From sinking fish houses and planting coral nurseries in Fiji to exploring the sea while snorkeling with a resident marine biologist in the Maldives, Outrigger guests can take part in hands-on educational activities on vacation, while making a positive impact on the oceans' health and resiliency. Outrigger's OZONE program takes place year-round with plenty of opportunities for guests to participate in marine education and conservation activities across all properties.

Outrigger's global OZONE partners include:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

Polynesian Voyaging Society (PVS)

Pacific Islands Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS)

Waikiki Aquarium (Hawaii)

Underwater World (Guam)

Mamanuca Environment Society (Fiji)

Reef Conservation Mauritius

Best Dives Maldives

For more information on Outrigger's ZONE - visit: outrigger.com/ozone.

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ABOUT OUTRIGGER HOTELS AND RESORTS

Outrigger Hotels and Resorts is a privately held leisure lodging, retail and hospitality company with corporate offices in Hawaii and operating globally in the Asia-Pacific, Oceania and Indian Ocean regions. From its Outrigger Signature Experiences to its Outrigger DISCOVERY loyalty program, the values-based company invites guests to escape ordinary with exceptional hospitality and authentic cultural experiences, incorporating local traditions and customs at each of its properties worldwide. Founded in 1947, Outrigger has grown into a highly successful, multi-branded portfolio of hotels, condominiums and vacation resort properties, including Outrigger® Resorts, OHANA Hotels by Outrigger®, Hawaii Vacation Condos by Outrigger®, Embassy Suites®, Best Western®, Wyndham Vacation Ownership® and Hilton Grand Vacations™. Outrigger currently operates and/or has under development 37 properties with approximately 6,500 rooms located in Hawaii (Oahu, Maui, Kauai, Hawaii Island); Guam; Fiji; Thailand; Mauritius; and the Maldives. Find out; find Outrigger at: www.outrigger.com or visit @OutriggerResorts on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

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