

## **Experiential Vacations Moving the Needle for HGV 4,000 "Unique Experiences" Planned in 2024 via Ultimate Access Program by Marge Lennon**

Since the early days of vacation ownership, developers have continued to introduce new benefits to improve the timeshare product, meeting the needs of a constantly changing ownership base. Consider these recent industry stats shared by Mark Wang, President, and CEO of Hilton Grand Vacations (HGV):

- Buyer statistics are dramatically different from a decade ago, with public timeshare brands now generating 80% of U.S. timeshare sales.
- The average age of today's timeshare buyer is 39.
- About 60% of these buyers are Gen Xers or Millennials.
- Urban destinations are more popular than beaches, the top location only a few years ago.
- Ownership has shifted from the fixed-week model (now 40 years old) to a point-based system, providing greater flexibility of use and preferred by younger buyers.
- Travel preferences are evolving with an increased enthusiasm for adventure via immersive, physical, cultural, and educational vacation experiences.

According to Wang, the company's ability to provide these vacations via its wildly successful [HGV Ultimate Access Program](#) is moving the needle in generating sales and off-the-chart high satisfaction levels for its ownership base. So much so that the company is continuing to invest in building more "unique experiences," with over 4,000 events planned for 2024 at HGV properties worldwide.

"We've been blending hospitality, entertainment, and exclusive experiences for several years," explained Wang. "Since formally launching the HGV Ultimate Access platform in 2022 to celebrate our 30th anniversary, we've hosted thousands of events and plan to continue expanding the breadth and quality of experiences we offer. Last year, we hosted over 3,500 experiences with more than 100,000 members participating in private concerts with top musical artists, chef dinners, meet-and-greets with celebrities, and national golf tournaments. Available exclusively to members and invited guests, our events platform is designed to appeal to the next generation of travelers."

HGV [recently announced](#) plans to acquire Bluegreen Vacations, which would add 48 resorts, 14 new geographies and 8 new states to their portfolio. This acquisition will further position HGV as a premier vacation ownership and experiences company by adding outdoor-themed properties and new partnerships, including NASCAR and Bass Pro Shops.

### **Why Experiential Vacations?**

Experiential travel emphasizes personal connections resulting in deeper, authentic, and meaningful experiences that leave a positive impact. Many travelers are choosing experiences over "stuff" and prefer to learn new skills or engage in activities they would otherwise not have the opportunity to try. According to mntn research, [43% of consumers](#) reported that they are interested in traveling for entertainment events – concerts, music festivals, sporting events – with the destination concert business up more than 50% (think Taylor Swift).

"HGV has always been a leader in the hospitality space," continues Mark Wang, "and we're excited to broaden those lasting vacation memories by providing unforgettable experiences for our members. These include private top-tier musical artists with HGV Live, culinary experiences at the HGV Members Table, and sporting events like our [HGV Tournament of Champions](#) through HGV Presents. We believe these events and experiences deepen the relationship between members and our brand. In addition to quality, safety, and flexibility of use, we know what members and guests care most about today is experiences. We are proud to meet this demand through our Ultimate Access program, which offers our members unique, once-in-a-lifetime experiences they literally can't receive any other way."

### **Sports Marketing Perennial Favorites**

After HGV acquired Diamond Resorts in 2021, sports and experiential marketing continued to be a vital part of their strategy, as they presented amazing events that not only deliver marketing objectives but generate significant revenue. [Aaron Stewart](#), VP of sports marketing for HGV and son of the late, great three-time PGA major champion Payne Stewart, and HGV's COO Gordon Gurnik guided all aspects of the third-annual [Hilton Grand Vacations Tournament of Champions](#), one of the most unique and popular televised events in golf. The event took place in mid-January at Lake Nona Golf & Country Club, in Orlando, bringing together entertainment, music, and sports celebrities to compete alongside top LPGA Tour winners from the previous two seasons. Celebrity guests included NBC's Dylan Dreyer, country

musician Chris Lane, soccer legend Landon Donovan and eight-time NBA All-Star Vince Carter. The tournament featured an exclusive three-night private concert series headlined by Pitbull, Elle King, Styx and REO Speedwagon – an eclectic lineup reflecting how HGV is successfully meeting the demand for experiential travel across generations.

During 2023, more than 120,000 HGV members and guests were delighted to participate in more than 3,600 experiences.

For a previous Aaron Stewart story printed in Resort Trades, go to:

<https://youtu.be/4HQ0g67CXY8?si=Ae92j6hUKfur1Oyo>

"Recently, HGV hosted an on-track clubhouse experience as an official event partner of the FORMULA 1 HEINEKEN SILVER LAS VEGAS GRND PRIX," added Wang. "The Clubhouse was located directly in front of our premier Las Vegas property, [Elara by Hilton Grand Vacations](#), a 52-story resort known for its signature mirrored façade and sweeping views of the Las Vegas Strip. The HGV Clubhouse was a multi-story suite that offered more than 400 feet of elevated views and front-row access to one of the fastest races in the world. This exclusive setting provided our members and guests with exclusive front-row access to the race as well as all-inclusive chef-curated menus, top-shelf bars, and interactive food stations throughout the event."

### **Demand Exceeds Expectation**

Although HGV Ultimate Access events are available exclusively to members and invited guests, there are many ways to be part of the experience. Members can easily add special experiences to their planned vacations, including the ability to book with points. Guest passes are also available annually to members based on their membership tier. Many events take place at HGV properties, or within proximity to the resorts.

Concluded Mark Wang, "Research has shown that the demand for experiential travel is continuing to grow, especially among younger generations. Our members have had an overwhelmingly positive reaction to HGV Ultimate Access events and their ability to experience them. With more than 4,000 events planned for this year, we are guaranteeing something for everyone – no matter their vacation style. Events are designed to help our members discover the cities in a more impactful way – by immersing themselves in the communities where they vacation, through unforgettable experiences they can't otherwise obtain. They can now enjoy a private boat tour in Hawaii, or exclusive dining experience in Las Vegas. HGV members have told us that they love the flexibility that comes with the freedom to choose the kind of travel experiences that excite them most as they add them to their vacations. Our points-based system affords members the power to choose how they use their points – whether attending an HGV Ultimate Access event, booking stays at any property in the Hilton family of brands or even shopping on Amazon. HGV will continue to deliver our members and guests best-in-class experiences that evolve as their needs do, while at the same time helping them optimize their vacations to their fullest potential."

### **About Hilton Grand Vacations Inc.**

*Hilton Grand Vacations Inc. (NYSE:HGV) is recognized as a leading global timeshare company and is the exclusive vacation ownership partner of Hilton. With headquarters in Orlando, Florida, Hilton Grand Vacations develops, markets, and operates a system of brand-name, high-quality vacation ownership resorts in select vacation destinations. Hilton Grand Vacations has a reputation for delivering a consistently exceptional standard of service, and unforgettable vacation experiences for guests and more than 525,000 Club Members. Membership with the Company provides best-in-class programs, exclusive services, and maximum flexibility for Members around the world. For more information, visit [www.corporate.hgv.com](http://www.corporate.hgv.com).*

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