



**EDMONTON**  
destination hotels

## #HospitalityStrong Radiates through Edmonton

**EDMONTON, AB (April 21, 2020):** During these dark times in Edmonton, the High Level Bridge, ATB Place and The World Trade Centre are standing in solidarity with the hospitality industry on Wednesday, April 22nd to quite literally, light up the city with positivity. Since the word ‘hospitality’ came from the Latin word ‘to have power,’ hotels remind people that, even in our darkest hour, the heart of hospitality beats strong. Purple, which is the colour the hotel industry has chosen due to representing its blend of luxurious, confident red and relaxing, comforting blue; and hearts that are probably the single most cornerstone reflection of hospitality, are illuminating Edmonton.

The #HospitalityStrong movement provides hope and encouragement to all industries and people impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. “The hospitality industry –led by hotels & restaurants - were the first to shut down, now with an estimated 90% of employees lost. The collective light that will illuminate Edmonton shows that we’re standing in unison to reignite when the time comes again” said Karen Chalmers, Executive Director of the Edmonton Destination Marketing Hotels.

While many hotels have not completely gone dark, operating at on average a 20% capacity, COVID-19 has been particularly devastating for this industry. The travel ban combined with social distancing measures have resulted in a significant number of Edmonton’s hotels closing their doors. Those that remain open are working to support those who support, and to maintain the sense of community they’ve always provided. Restaurants that can offer take-out keep their kitchens going, but all of their hospitable servers wait for COVID-19 restrictions to be lifted.

"As just one Edmonton hotel, we're in a complete shutdown right now, during the start of the wedding season of all months. At the Fairmont Hotel MacDonald, we do more weddings than any other Fairmont in North America, but this has been on pause in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. However, the greatest tragedy from our perspective is the devastation to our team. These major events take hundreds of professional staff, who are all instrumental in our industry but because they are the ones that perform the 'welcome', which presently we can't provide.

Though these measures are necessary to save lives and get our economy back on track, treating people with high-level care while distancing ourselves from them will be difficult. The good news is that the hospitality industry has always been innovative, and we will find a way to adjust to the "new normal." Garrett Tutra General Manager at the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald

Edmonton has never seen a global shutdown before, we do know from experience in previous down markets that travel is the quickest to re-engage. However, international travel bans and restrictions on large gatherings will likely extend past the non-essential business ban putting additional stress on hotels. While international travellers make up a certain amount of business, hotels always rely on their core regional market guests to return to Edmonton for short, reliable & familiar holidays in Edmonton. Enjoying safe and relaxing hotels, and enjoying some of the best cuisine in the land.

For now, Edmonton's hotels & restaurants to illuminate to provide a glimmer of hope for Edmontonians and to remind all levels of government that once this pandemic is over, both are standing by to reignite the economy.

For further information, please contact:

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