

Lockhart Cadillac
& U.S. Sedan

Team Up for Top Hotel

By Liz Hunter

When thinking of the name “Ritz-Carlton,” you probably relate it with the ultimate in quality service and hospitality. Its clients are top priority and as their demands shift to become more considerate of the environment, The Ritz-Carlton stays one step ahead by filling these needs before clients can even request it.

The world-class hotel succeeds with the help of its people who are each as individually dedicated to service as the hotel itself. And when it came time for The Ritz-Carlton Georgetown, in Washington, D.C., to create a theme for 2009 in conjunction with the inauguration of Barack Obama, it settled on “Red, White, Blue and Green.” It is the first Ritz-Carlton to initiate a green program, which now—thanks to a D.C.-based operator and Lockhart Cadillac—includes environmentally friendly transportation for its clients.

Ahmed Atris, owner of U.S. Sedan Service in Dulles, Virginia, was the ideal choice to facilitate The Ritz-Carlton with a Cadillac Escalade Hybrid and chauffeur service for its



Ahmed Atris



U.S. Sedan dispatch

high-end clientele. Not only does Atris have a reputation for working with some of Washington’s elite, he has a background in hotel management that he says is a big plus to understand the service mentality. Over the years, he realized that there was a market for transportation to and from private aviation terminals in the D.C. area. Starting with two cars in 1994, Atris capitalized on this niche and chauffeured congressmen, senators, and other politicians in order to grow to his current

fleet of 47 vehicles, of which 60 percent are Cadillac products.

“With my background in hotel management, I always like to keep in touch with hotel business,” says Atris. He became acquainted with Ian McPhee, director of operations for

The Ritz-Carlton Georgetown, and McPhee realized Atris’ dedication to service and knew it could benefit the hotel in some way. “We met and discussed providing quality service, and as we discussed what the hotel provides for our guests, we talked about the hotel car,” says McPhee. “At the same time we were developing the green theme, and that’s where the idea of the hybrid came to life. Ahmed was happy to make this happen for us.”

Atris contacted Greg Maddock, fleet manager at Lockhart Cadillac in Indianapolis, Indiana. Maddock says Atris has been a long-time customer of Lockhart’s, and he was happy to help Atris obtain the Escalade Hybrid that would be the first used exclusively by a Ritz-Carlton property. “We’ve seen many requests for the hybrids, especially since Obama took office and we have a lot in stock,” says Maddock. As demand increases from coastal areas like New York City

and California, Lockhart is offering incentives for livery operators looking to introduce more hybrids to their fleets.

Maddock says the Escalade Hybrid is fully equipped, black on black, with rear camera, navigation system, 22-inch tires, sunroof, and rear entertainment—everything any client would want in a luxury vehicle, while still providing environmental peace of mind. McPhee agrees that the Escalade is going to be a perfect fit for clients and The Ritz-Carlton is excited about the offering, which went into effect at the end of March. “We know our clientele will enjoy the fact that we are putting the environment first and still providing world-class service,” says McPhee.

Atris says feedback on test drives has been phenomenal. “Clients say it is a smooth ride and also citing environmental concern when considering vehicles, so this is just the first step for a greater green initiative,” he says. U.S. Sedan plans to make its fleet green by the end of 2010. **LD**



L to R: Ian McPhee, Greg Maddock,
and Ahmed Atris with U.S. Sedan’s
Cadillac Escalade Hybrid

Want to read more
about the 2009
Cadillac Escalade
Hybrid? Read our
staff review on
page 48.

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