

Paris, December 3, 2014



MERCURE VERIFIES THE “SIX FRIENDS THEORY” ACROSS THE WORLD

With a worldwide network of over 700 hotels, Mercure endeavors to highlight the local features of each destination to offer its guests authentic shared experiences and encounters. For this reason, the brand decided to verify the famous six degrees of separation theory which maintains that only six people separate one human being from another on the planet. On the basis of this principle, Mercure is kicking off a new operation, “The Six Friends Theory”, which features an unmatched human experience that combines the strength of the social networks and the genuineness of real encounters. The brand will launch a call for applications on Facebook in January 2015 and one lucky Internet user will be chosen to take part in this extraordinary adventure!

An unprecedented story

Mercure highlights the richness of real encounters in this digital age. The principle is to select a candidate from around the world and take him/her **to meet an Aboriginal from the Bundjalung tribe in Australia** and thus **prove that there are only six degrees of separation between them!** They don't know each other yet, but they are going to meet through a chain of friends and “friends of friends” that links them. At every stage, the participant will be welcomed by the Mercure hotelier who will tell him where to find his next friend. This person will offer the candidate a unique experience based on history, culture or passions, and will then indicate the next stage which will bring the candidate closer to the Aboriginal.



“The Six Friends Theory” will be proved through **six meetings, six journeys** and **six Mercure hotels** around the world in an unprecedented 30-day trip planned for March 2015!

A worldwide casting

The countdown will start at the beginning of January 2015! To take part in this unique experience, Internet users will be invited to **post a video on Facebook, describing their personalities, passions, motivations, projects**, etc. In their video they will have to explain why they believe they are the best friend in the world. Candidates should use daring ideas and imagination to distinguish themselves!

Once the video has been posted on Mercure's Facebook page, the fifty candidates with the most “likes” will be pre-selected for the final recruitment stage. A six-person jury will select the winner after a final interview.

The selected candidate will win a round-the-world trip via the Mercure hotel network based on meetings, discoveries, journeys and brand new experiences! It promises to be a creative, human and warm and friendly adventure.

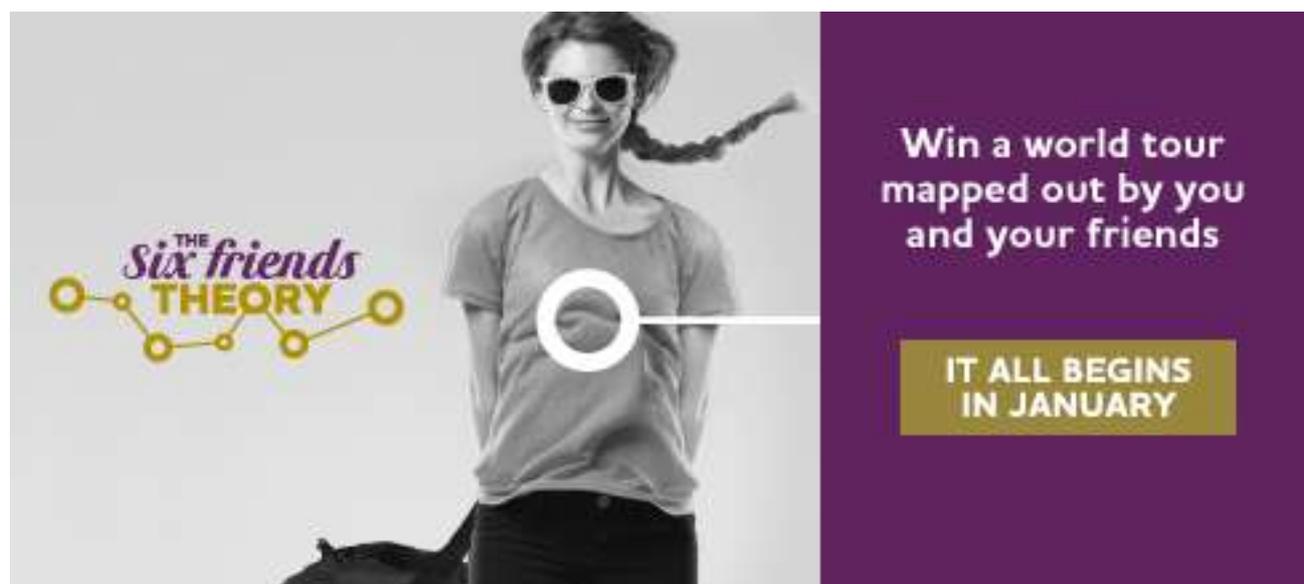
Watch the first film teaser announcing the operation now:

<http://youtu.be/QBTHjFGZ2s4>

A societal study of friendship

This operation will also serve as an opportunity for Mercure to research the question of human bonds in the digital era, through **an international societal study of friendship** carried out by research institute TNS Sofres. The results of this study will be unveiled during the “The Six Friends Theory” operation.

This operation imagined by the agency W&Cie is completely in line with Mercure’s makeover. In 2013, the brand opened a new page in its history by kicking off a transformation strategy that offered **a new approach to midscale hotels** combining **the warm experience of hotels, all different and rooted in their local communities** with a completely revisited product and service offer. By launching this operation, the Mercure brand is once again proving that it is **in tune with its times: connected and innovative**.



About Mercure

Mercure is the midscale non-standardized brand of Accor, the world’s leading hotel operator with over 3,600 hotels, 460,000 rooms and 170,000 employees in 92 countries. Mercure hotels share common quality standards and are driven by passionate hoteliers. Whether they are located in major city centers, by the seaside or in mountain resorts, each establishment offers an authentic experience for both business and leisure travelers. The Mercure network spans 707 hotels in 53 countries around the globe, represents a real alternative to standardized or independent hotels, and combines the power of an international network with professional and digital expertise. For more information, visit <http://www.mercure.com>.

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