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LATEST NEWS

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West Paces Hotel Group plans Solis luxury hotel and resort in Alpharetta

[Mary Jane Credeur](#)

Staff Writer

The former president of Ritz-Carlton Hotels is creating a new luxury hotel and resort chain called Solis, which will compete with Ritz, Four Seasons and other high-end hotels.

Horst Schulze's new company, [The West Paces Hotel Group LLC](#) based in Atlanta's tony Buckhead district, plans to open six Solis hotels by 2008 including one in Atlanta's wealthy Alpharetta suburb.

The first six properties will cost \$700 million in development and other renovation costs, and each of the hotels will be owned by individual investment groups, Schulze said.

The Solis properties will be managed by West Paces Hotel Group, whose financial backers include M. Douglas Ivester, former chairman and CEO of the Coca-Cola Co., whom Schulze has known for many years.

The first Solis property in metro Atlanta will be The Stanbury hotel and spa in Alpharetta, which scheduled to open in late 2007 in the 66-acre Prospect Park development off Old Milton Parkway near Ga. 400. The mixed-use property will combine a 144-room boutique hotel with a high-end spa, luxury condo residences, a signature restaurant, meeting and banquet facilities, and space for office, entertainment and retail use. The hotel is planned to reflect a series of historic Southern manor houses arranged surrounding a central house as an iconic showcase. The residential component will be built in three mid-rise towers directly adjacent to the hotel's wedding garden and conservatory.

Solis also will open hotels in Chicago; San Antonio, Texas; Paradise Valley, Ariz.; Orlando, Fla.; and Frankfurt, Germany.

Schulze has been working on the concept behind Solis for nearly two years.

He and other top West Paces Hotels executives held focus groups and intense surveys with dozens of business travelers over the past two years, and Schulze said he wanted to create a high-end hotel with "immaculate and impeccable" service that would be a refuge for harried travelers and redefine standards for service.

"Customers felt that hotel brands were just names and not really brands, because the service wasn't consistent. People deal with airline travel and security and traffic and they might travel 100 days out of the year, and they want to be taken care of when they get to their hotel. It has to offer solitude or adventure or personal services or whatever they need," said Schulze, who created a much-copied culture of "ladies and gentlemen service ladies and gentlemen" while at Ritz-Carlton.

Schulze's vision for Solis attracted longtime friend and business associate Ivester, who is a strategic investment partner with West Paces Hotels.

"The vision behind the Solis brand and the strength of The West Paces Hotel Group's management team represent an excellent opportunity," said Ivester, the former chairman and CEO of Coke, in a prepared statement.

Schulze left [The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Co.](#) after it [moved its headquarters](#) from Atlanta to Chevy Chase, Md., in 2002 to be closer to the home base of parent company [Marriott International Inc.](#) (NYSE: MAR).

Schulze then founded The West Paces Hotel Group with several former Ritz-Carlton executives including Robert Warman, former vice president of operations at Ritz; Philip Keb, former development executive with Ritz; C. Scott Rohm, former vice president of rooms at Ritz; Owen Dorsey, former vice president of human resources at Ritz; Peter

Schoch, former vice president of culinary at Ritz; John Russell, former general manager of several Ritz properties; Fausto Barba, longtime hotel financier; Hans van der Reijden, former food and beverage manager at several Ritz properties; Leonardo Inghilleri, longtime executive with Ritz and The Walt Disney Co.

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