

HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST
Form 424B5
September 22, 2004
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)5

Registration No. 333-113061

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To Prospectus dated April 2, 2004)

3,500,000 Shares

Hersha Hospitality Trust

Common Shares Of Beneficial Interest

\$9.55 Per Share

We are selling 3,500,000 common shares of beneficial interest. We have granted the underwriter an option to purchase up to 525,000 additional common shares to cover over-allotments.

Our common shares are listed on the American Stock Exchange under the symbol HT . The last reported sale price of the common shares on September 20, 2004 was \$9.80 per share.

Investing in our common shares involves risks. See Risk Factors beginning on page S-6 of this prospectus supplement and on page 4 of the accompanying prospectus.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

	<u>Per Share</u>	<u>Total</u>
Public Offering Price	\$ 9.55	\$ 33,425,000
Underwriting Discount	\$ 0.18	\$ 630,000
Proceeds to Hersha Hospitality Trust (before expenses)	\$ 9.37	\$ 32,795,000

In addition to the underwriting discount, the underwriter will receive a commission equivalent from investors in the amount of \$0.05 for each common share of beneficial interest sold to those investors in this offering.

The underwriter expects to deliver the shares to purchasers on or about September 24, 2004.

Citigroup

September 20, 2004

Table of Contents

You should rely only on the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We have not authorized anyone to provide you with different information. We are not making an offer of these securities in any state where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus or the documents incorporated therein is accurate as of any date other than the date of this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or such documents.

References to our company, we, and our in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus mean Hersha Hospitality Trust, including, unless the context otherwise requires (including the discussion of federal income tax treatment of Hersha Hospitality Trust and its shareholders), our operating partnership and other direct and indirect subsidiaries. Our operating partnership refers to Hersha Hospitality Limited Partnership, a Virginia limited partnership. HHMLP refers to Hersha Hospitality Management, L.P. and its subsidiaries, which are the entities that lease or manage all of our hotels. Common shares means our common shares of beneficial interest, par value \$0.01 per share.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Prospectus Supplement	
<u>Forward Looking Information</u>	S-1
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	S-1
<u>Incorporation of Certain Documents by Reference</u>	S-1
<u>About the Company</u>	S-3
<u>Risk Factors</u>	S-6
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	S-7
<u>Capitalization</u>	S-8
<u>Additional Federal Income Tax Considerations</u>	S-9
<u>Underwriting</u>	S-14
<u>Legal Matters</u>	S-15
<u>Experts</u>	S-15
Prospectus	
How to Obtain More Information	1
Incorporation of Information Filed with the SEC	1
About this Prospectus	1
Forward Looking Information	2
Certain Definitions	2
Our Company	3
Risk Factors	4
Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and of Earnings to Combined Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends	15
Use of Proceeds	15
Description of Shares of Beneficial Interest	16
Description of Debt Securities	22
Legal Ownership of Securities	26
Certain Provisions of Maryland Law and of our Declaration of Trust and Bylaws	30
CNL Strategic Alliance	33
Federal Income Tax Consequences of our Status as a REIT	39
Plan of Distribution	54
Experts	55
Legal Matters	56

Table of Contents

FORWARD LOOKING INFORMATION

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus contain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. These statements relate to future events or our future financial performance and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors, all of which are difficult to predict and many of which are beyond our control, that may cause our or our industry's actual results, levels of activity, performance or achievements to be materially different from any future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements expressed or implied by these forward-looking statements. In some cases, you can identify forward-looking statements by terminology such as may, will, should, expects, intends, plans, anticipates, believe, estimates, predicts, potential, continue, our future success depends, seek to continue or the negative of these terms or other comparable terminology. These statements are only predictions. Actual events or results may differ materially. Important factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those in our forward looking statements in this prospectus include, but are not limited to, the factors discussed in the section entitled Risk Factors and the filings made by us with the SEC that are incorporated in this prospectus. Although we believe that the expectations reflected in the forward-looking statements are reasonable, we cannot guarantee future results, levels of activity, performance or achievements.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission. You may read and copy any reports, statements, or other information we file with the SEC at its public reference room in Washington, D.C. (450 Fifth Street, N.W. 20549). Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. Our filings are also available to the public on the internet, through a database maintained by the SEC at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you can inspect and copy reports, proxy statements and other information concerning Hersha Hospitality Trust at the offices of the American Stock Exchange, Inc., 86 Trinity Place, New York, New York 10006, on which our common shares (symbol: HT) are listed.

INCORPORATION OF CERTAIN DOCUMENTS BY REFERENCE

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is considered to be part of this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, and later information filed with the SEC will update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings made with the SEC under Section 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Exchange Act prior to the completion of this offering.

1. Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2003, filed March 29, 2004, as amended by the Form 10-K/A filed on July 1, 2004.
2. Quarterly Report for period ended June 30, 2004, filed August 16, 2004.
3. Quarterly Report for period ended March 31, 2004, filed May 17, 2004.
4. Current Report on Form 8-K filed April 22, 2004.

5. Definitive proxy statement filed April 22, 2004.

S-1

Table of Contents

You may request a copy of these filings (other than exhibits and schedules to such filings, unless such exhibits or schedules are specifically incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus), at no cost, by writing or calling us at the following address:

Hersha Hospitality Trust

510 Walnut Street, 9th Floor

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

215-238-1046

All brand names, trademarks and service marks appearing in this prospectus supplement are the property of their respective owners. This prospectus supplement contains registered trademarks owned or licensed to companies other than us, including but not limited to Comfort Inn[®], Comfort Suites[®], Courtyard[®] by Marriott[®], DoubleTree[®], Doubletree Suites[®], Fairfield Inn[®] by Marriott[®], Hampton Inn[®], Hilton Garden Inn[®], Holiday Inn[®], Holiday Inn Express[®], Homewood Suites by Hilton[®], Mainstay Suites[®], Residence Inn[®] by Marriott[®], Sheraton Four Points[®], and Sleep Inn[®], none of which, in any way, are participating in or endorsing this offering and shall not in any way be deemed an issuer or underwriter of the securities issued under this prospectus supplement, and shall not have any liability or responsibility for any financial statements or other financial information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

S-2

Table of Contents

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Hersha Hospitality Trust is a self-advised Maryland real estate investment trust that was organized in 1998 and completed its initial public offering in January of 1999. We focus primarily on owning and operating high quality, mid-scale and up-scale limited service hotels in established markets in the Eastern United States. Our primary strategy is to continue to acquire high quality, mid-scale and up-scale hotels in metropolitan markets with high barriers to entry in the Northeastern United States. As of June 30, 2004, our portfolio consisted of 26 hotels with a total of 2,643 rooms located in Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Washington, D.C. and Georgia, which operate under leading brands, such as Hilton Garden Inn[®], Hampton Inn[®], Courtyard[®] by Marriott[®], Residence Inn[®] by Marriott[®], Sheraton Four Points[®], DoubleTree[®], Holiday Inn[®] and Holiday Inn Express[®].

We are structured as an umbrella partnership REIT, or UPREIT, and we own our hotels through our operating partnership, Hersha Hospitality Limited Partnership, for which we serve as general partner. All of our hotels are managed by Hersha Hospitality Management, L.P., or HHMLP, a private management company owned by certain of our trustees, officers and other third party investors. In response to tax law changes, we formed 44 New England Management Company, a wholly-owned taxable REIT subsidiary, or TRS. In April 2003, we began transitioning our hotels from leases with HHMLP to leases with our TRS, and as of April 1, 2004, we leased all of our wholly-owned hotels to our TRS. In addition, all of the hotels we own through joint ventures are leased to TRSs owned by those joint ventures. We believe that transitioning to the TRS structure positions us to participate more directly in the operating efficiencies and revenue gains at our hotels.

Our address is 510 Walnut Street, 9th Floor, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106. Our telephone number is (215) 238-1046.

Business Strategy

Increase Same Hotel Growth

Our operating strategy focuses on increasing same hotel performance for our portfolio. The key elements of this strategy are:

increasing occupancy levels and revenue per available room (RevPAR) through active property-level management, including (i) intensive marketing efforts to tour groups, corporate and government extended stay customers and other wholesale customers, and (ii) expanded yield management programs, which are calculated to better match room rates to periods of varying room demand; and

positioning our hotels to capitalize on increased demand in the mid-scale and up-scale lodging segment expected to follow from improving economic conditions by managing costs and thereby maximizing earnings.

Acquisition Platform

Our primary strategy is to continue to acquire high-quality, mid-scale and up-scale limited service hotels in primary metropolitan markets and stable secondary markets with high barriers to entry in the Northeastern United States. We believe that current market conditions are creating opportunities to acquire hotels at attractive prices. In executing our disciplined acquisition program, we intend to acquire hotels that meet the

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

following additional criteria:

nationally-franchised hotels operating under popular brands, such as Hilton Garden Inn[®], Homewood Suites[®] by Hilton[®], Embassy Suites[®], DoubleTree[®], Hampton Inn[®], Courtyard[®] by Marriott[®], Residence Inn[®] by Marriott[®], Spring Hill Suites[®] by Marriott[®], Sheraton Four Points[®], Stay Bridge Suites[®], Holiday Inn[®] and Holiday Inn Express[®];

S-3

Table of Contents

hotels in locations with significant barriers to entry, such as high development costs, limited availability of land and lengthy entitlement processes; and

hotels in our target markets where we can realize operating efficiencies and economies of scale.

In addition to the recent acquisitions described below, in the ordinary course of our business, we are actively considering hotel acquisition opportunities. We are currently reviewing hotel acquisition opportunities located in our target markets with an aggregate purchase price in excess of \$100 million, including hotels being developed by entities controlled by some of our officers and trustees, which hotels we have an option to acquire. However, each of these acquisitions is subject to due diligence, financing and negotiation of the purchase price and other key terms. There can be no assurance that we will be able to consummate any of these acquisition opportunities.

Prudent Use of Leverage

The relative stability of the mid-scale and up-scale segment of the limited service lodging industry allows us to increase returns to our shareholders through the prudent application of leverage. Our strategy is to maintain target debt levels of approximately 60% of the total purchase price of our hotels both on an individual and aggregate basis, and our Board of Trustees' policy is to limit indebtedness to no more than 67% of the total purchase price of all our hotels on an aggregate basis. As of June 30, 2004, our total debt was approximately 47.1% of the total purchase price of all our hotels on an aggregate basis. We may employ a higher amount of leverage at a specific hotel to achieve a desired return when warranted by that hotel's historical operating performance and may use modestly greater leverage across our portfolio if and when warranted by prevailing market conditions.

Recent Developments

Recent Acquisitions

Since December 31, 2003, we have completed the following additions to our portfolio:

Hilton Garden Inn, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. On July 23, 2004, we acquired the 88 room Hilton Garden Inn, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania for approximately \$7.7 million, including approximately \$5.5 million of indebtedness secured by the property.

Residence Inn, Greenbelt, Maryland. On July 16, 2004, we acquired the 120 suite Residence Inn, Greenbelt, Maryland for approximately \$19.4 million.

Courtyard by Marriott, Ewing-Hopewell, New Jersey. On July 1, 2004, we acquired a 50% joint venture interest in the 130 room Courtyard by Marriott, Ewing-Hopewell, New Jersey for approximately \$1.0 million.

Comfort Inn, Frederick, Maryland. On May 27, 2004, we acquired the 72 room Comfort Inn, Frederick, Maryland for approximately \$5.4 million, including approximately \$3.7 million in indebtedness secured by the property.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Residence Inn, Framingham, Massachusetts. On March 26, 2004, we acquired the 125 room Residence Inn, Framingham, Massachusetts for approximately \$15.6 million.

Four Points by Sheraton Boston/Logan International Airport. On February 23, 2004, we acquired a 55% joint venture interest in the 180 room Four Points by Sheraton Boston/Logan International Airport for approximately \$3.0 million. The Four Points Sheraton Boston/Logan International Airport was substantially rebuilt in 2001 and is located in Revere, Massachusetts, within five miles of Boston Logan Airport and downtown Boston.

Holiday Inn Express, Hartford, Connecticut. On January 14, 2004, we acquired the 96 room Holiday Inn Express, Hartford, Connecticut for approximately \$4.0 million, including approximately \$0.5 million of indebtedness secured by the property, and assumed the ground lease for the underlying property.

S-4

Table of Contents

All of these hotels have been leased to a TRS and are managed by HHMLP pursuant to management agreements.

Completion of Transition to TRS Structure

We entered into an agreement with HHMLP effective April 1, 2004 to terminate the eight remaining leases with HHMLP, which related to the following properties:

Holiday Inn Express, Long Island City, New York

Doubletree Club, Jamaica, JFK Airport New York

Mainstay Suites, Frederick, Maryland

Hampton Inn & Suites, Hershey, Pennsylvania

Hampton Inn, Danville, Pennsylvania

Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

Sleep Inn and Mainstay Suites, King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

We simultaneously leased all of these properties to 44 New England Management Company (our TRS), although each of the hotels will continue to be managed by HHMLP pursuant to management agreements. As part of these lease terminations, the original sellers of the properties agreed to waive any and all purchase price adjustments in the original purchase agreements for each of these properties. As a result, there is no contractual liability for any future repricings with any of our owned properties as of April 1, 2004. We entered into management agreements with HHMLP for each of these hotels, but did not pay any other consideration in connection with the lease terminations.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider the risk factors and other information included in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus before you decide to buy our common shares. You should also consider the information contained in the section entitled "Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations" in our most recent Annual Report on Form 10-K and Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q, which are incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, as the same may be updated from time to time by our future filings under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended. For more information, see the section entitled, "Where You Can Find More Information" in this prospectus supplement.

Our recent transition to TRS structure may result in a decrease in lease revenue.

During the years ended December 31, 2003, 2002 and 2001, certain hotels owned by us were under fixed lease agreements with HHMLP. The payments received from some of these fixed leases exceeded the payments that we estimate would have been received had the hotels been leased directly to our TRS. Each of these leases has now expired, and these hotels were released to our TRS. We may experience a decline in the revenue generated by these hotels under the leases to our TRS.

We may be unable to invest the net proceeds raised in this offering on acceptable terms or at all, which would harm our financial condition and operating results.

The portion of the net proceeds of this offering not used to repay indebtedness will be approximately \$31.5 million, and will be available for future investments in hotel assets and for general corporate purposes. Until we identify hotel investments consistent with our investment criteria, we intend to invest that portion of the net offering proceeds in money market funds. We cannot assure you that we will be able to identify hotel investments that meet our investment criteria, that we will be successful in completing any investment we identify or that any investment we complete using the net proceeds of this offering will produce a return on our investment. Moreover, because we have not identified these future investments at the time of this offering, we will have broad authority to invest the excess net proceeds of this offering in any hotel investments that we may identify in the future.

Investors in this offering will experience immediate and significant dilution in the book value per share.

The public offering price of our common shares is substantially higher than what our net tangible book value per share will be immediately after this offering. Purchasers of our common shares in this offering will incur immediate dilution of approximately \$3.83 in net tangible book value per common share from the price payable for our common shares in this offering.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We estimate that the net proceeds to us from the sale of the 3,500,000 common shares offered hereby will be approximately \$32.7 million, after deducting underwriting discounts and commissions and the estimated expenses of this offering payable by us. If the underwriter exercises its over-allotment option in full, we estimate that our net proceeds will be approximately \$37.6 million.

As required by the partnership agreement of our operating partnership, we will contribute all of the net proceeds to our operating partnership in exchange for additional partnership interests. We intend to use the net proceeds of this offering to fund future acquisitions, including acquisitions of newly developed hotels for which we have a right of first refusal or option to acquire, and for general corporate purposes. Pending those uses, we will repay approximately \$1.2 million of indebtedness on our revolving line of credit with Sovereign Bank. Outstanding balances on our credit line currently accrue interest at an annual rate of approximately 4.25%.

S-7

Table of Contents**CAPITALIZATION**

The following table sets forth the capitalization of Hersha Hospitality Trust as of June 30, 2004:

- (1) on an actual basis;
- (2) on a pro forma basis to give effect to the following acquisitions that occurred after June 30, 2004, as if such acquisitions occurred on June 30, 2004, and the incurrence of the acquisition related indebtedness:

the acquisition of a 50% joint venture interest in the Courtyard by Marriott, Ewing-Hopewell, New Jersey on July 1, 2004, for approximately \$1.0 million;

the acquisition of the Residence Inn, Greenbelt, Maryland on July 16, 2004, for approximately \$19.4 million; and

the acquisition of the Hilton Garden Inn, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania on July 23, 2004, for approximately \$7.7 million, including approximately \$5.5 million of indebtedness; and

- (3) on a pro forma, as adjusted basis to give effect to the transactions described under (2) above and:

the sale of the 3,500,000 common shares in this offering; and

the use of the net proceeds of this offering as described under Use of Proceeds.

This table should be read in conjunction with the section captioned Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations and our financial statements and related notes incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus.

	As of June 30, 2004		
	Actual	Pro Forma	
	(un-audited)	Pro Forma	As adjusted
	(dollars in thousands)		
Cash	\$ 1,916	\$	\$ 31,460
Debt:			
Lines of credit	1,235	1,235	
Mortgages payable	74,658	95,308	95,308
Debt related to hotel assets held for sale	8,205	8,205	8,205
Other notes payable	1,000	1,000	1,000

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Capital lease payable	587	587	587
Total debt	\$ 85,685	\$ 106,335	\$ 105,100
Minority interest(1)	\$ 17,960	\$ 17,960	\$ 19,614
Shareholders' equity(2):			
Preferred shares, \$0.01 par value, 10,000,000 shares authorized, including 350,000 Series A Preferred Shares, no shares issued and outstanding			
Class A common shares, \$0.01 par value, 50,000,000 shares authorized, 16,388,741 shares issued and outstanding, 19,888,741 shares issued and outstanding, as adjusted			
	164	164	199
Class B common shares, \$0.01 par value, 50,000,000 shares authorized, no shares issued and outstanding			
Additional paid-in capital(1)	100,792	100,792	131,833
Distributions in excess	(9,774)	(9,774)	(9,774)
Total shareholders' equity	\$ 91,182	\$ 91,182	\$ 122,258
Total capitalization	\$ 194,827	\$ 215,477	\$ 246,972

(1) Includes a \$1,653,775 adjustment to increase minority interest and decrease additional paid-in capital, which results from the accounting treatment for the contribution of the net proceeds of this offering to our operating partnership.

(2) Does not include:

2,842,437 common shares issuable upon redemption of outstanding limited partnership units in our operating partnership owned by management, trustees and other contributors of properties to our operating partnership, which units are currently redeemable; and 1,192,141 common shares issuable upon exchange of the interest in our joint venture with CNL Hotels & Resorts, Inc.

Table of Contents

ADDITIONAL FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSIDERATIONS

The following is a summary of certain federal income tax considerations with respect to the ownership of our common shares. For additional information, see the Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT section beginning on page 39 of the accompanying prospectus.

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries

As described in Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT Taxable REIT Subsidiaries in the accompanying prospectus, we may own up to 100% of the stock in one or more TRSs, and rent from hotels leased to a TRS will qualify as rents from real property as long as the property is operated on behalf of the TRS by an eligible independent contractor. We lease all of our hotels to TRSs, and all of those TRSs have engaged HHMLP, an eligible independent contractor, to operate and manage those hotels. We leased all of our wholly-owned hotels to 44 New England Management Company, a TRS owned by our operating partnership. All of our hotels owned by separate joint ventures are leased to a TRS of ours that is owned by the joint venture. We may form new TRSs in the future, and we have represented that, with respect to properties that we lease to our TRSs in the future, each such TRS will engage an eligible independent contractor to manage and operate the hotels leased by such TRS.

Taxation of Taxable U.S. Shareholders

As used herein, the term U.S. shareholder means a holder of our common shares that for U.S. federal income tax purposes is:

a citizen or resident of the United States;

a corporation (including an entity treated as a corporation for U.S. federal income tax purposes) created or organized in or under the laws of the United States, any of its states or the District of Columbia;

an estate whose income is subject to U.S. federal income taxation regardless of its source; or

any trust if (1) a U.S. court is able to exercise primary supervision over the administration of such trust and one or more U.S. persons have the authority to control all substantial decisions of the trust or (2) it has a valid election in place to be treated as a U.S. person.

If a partnership, entity or arrangement treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes holds our common shares, the federal income tax treatment of a partner in the partnership will generally depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. If you are a partner in a partnership holding our common shares, you should consult your tax advisor regarding the consequences of the ownership and disposition of our common shares by the partnership.

As long as we qualify as a REIT, a taxable U.S. shareholder must generally take into account as ordinary income distributions made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits that we do not designate as capital gain dividends or retained long-term capital gain. For purposes of

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

determining whether a distribution is made out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits, our earnings and profits will be allocated first to our preferred share dividends and then to our common share dividends.

A U.S. shareholder will not qualify for the dividends received deduction generally available to corporations. In addition, dividends paid to a U.S. shareholder generally will not qualify for the new 15% tax rate for qualified dividend income. The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003 reduced the maximum tax rate for qualified dividend income from 38.6% to 15% for tax years 2003 through 2008. Without future congressional action, the maximum tax rate on qualified dividend income will move to 35% in 2009 and 39.6% in 2011. Qualified dividend income generally includes dividends paid to most domestic non-corporate taxpayers by domestic C corporations and certain qualified foreign corporations. Because we are not generally subject to

S-9

Table of Contents

federal income tax on the portion of our REIT taxable income distributed to our shareholders (see Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT Taxation of Our Company in the accompanying prospectus), our dividends generally will not be eligible for the new 15% rate on qualified dividend income. As a result, our ordinary REIT dividends will continue to be taxed at the higher tax rate applicable to ordinary income, which currently is a maximum rate of 35%. However, the 15% tax rate for qualified dividend income will apply to our ordinary REIT dividends to the extent attributable (i) to dividends received by us from non-REIT corporations, such as a TRS, and (ii) to income upon which we have paid corporate income tax (e.g., to the extent that we distribute less than 100% of our taxable income). In general, to qualify for the reduced tax rate on qualified dividend income, a shareholder must hold our common shares for more than 60 days during the 121-day period beginning on the date that is 60 days before the date on which our common shares become ex-dividend.

A U.S. shareholder generally will take into account as long-term capital gain any distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends without regard to the period for which the U.S. shareholder has held our common shares. We generally will designate our capital gain dividends as either 15% or 25% rate distributions. See Capital Gains and Losses. A corporate U.S. shareholder, however, may be required to treat up to 20% of certain capital gain dividends as ordinary income.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long-term capital gain that we receive in a taxable year. In that case, to the extent that we designate such amount in a timely notice to such shareholder, a U.S. shareholder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain. The U.S. shareholder would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the tax we paid. The U.S. shareholder would increase the basis in its stock by the amount of its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain, minus its share of the tax we paid.

To the extent that we make a distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, such distribution will not be taxable to a U.S. shareholder to the extent that it does not exceed the adjusted tax basis of the U.S. shareholder's common shares. Instead, such distribution will reduce the adjusted tax basis of such shares. To the extent that we make a distribution in excess of both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the U.S. shareholder's adjusted tax basis in its common shares, such shareholder will recognize long-term capital gain, or short-term capital gain if the common shares have been held for one year or less, assuming the common shares are capital assets in the hands of the U.S. shareholder. In addition, if we declare a distribution in October, November, or December of any year that is payable to a U.S. shareholder of record on a specified date in any such month, such distribution shall be treated as both paid by us and received by the U.S. shareholder on December 31 of such year, provided that we actually pay the distribution during January of the following calendar year.

Shareholders may not include in their individual income tax returns any of our net operating losses or capital losses. Instead, we would carry over such losses for potential offset against our future income. Taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our common shares will not be treated as passive activity income, and therefore, shareholders generally will not be able to apply any passive activity losses, such as losses from certain types of limited partnerships in which the shareholder is a limited partner, against such income. In addition, taxable distributions from us and gain from the disposition of our common shares generally may be treated as investment income for purposes of the investment interest limitations (although any capital gains so treated will not qualify for the lower 15% tax rate applicable to capital gains of most domestic non-corporate investors). We will notify shareholders after the close of our taxable year as to the portions of the distributions attributable to that year that constitute ordinary income, return of capital, and capital gain.

Taxation of U.S. Shareholders on the Disposition of Common Shares

In general, a U.S. shareholder who is not a dealer in securities must treat any gain or loss realized upon a taxable disposition of our common shares as long-term capital gain or loss if the U.S. shareholder has held the

Table of Contents

common shares for more than one year and otherwise as short-term capital gain or loss. However, a U.S. shareholder must treat any loss upon a sale or exchange of common shares held by such shareholder for six months or less as a long-term capital loss to the extent of any actual or deemed distributions from us that such U.S. shareholder previously has characterized as long-term capital gain. All or a portion of any loss that a U.S. shareholder realizes upon a taxable disposition of the common shares may be disallowed if the U.S. shareholder purchases other shares of common shares within 30 days before or after the disposition.

Capital Gains and Losses

A taxpayer generally must hold a capital asset for more than one year for gain or loss derived from its sale or exchange to be treated as long-term capital gain or loss. The highest marginal individual income tax rate is 35%. However, the maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain applicable to most domestic non-corporate taxpayers is 15% (after December 31, 2008, the maximum rate is scheduled to increase to 20%). The maximum tax rate on long-term capital gain from the sale or exchange of section 1250 property, or depreciable real property, is 25% to the extent that such gain would have been treated as ordinary income if the property were section 1245 property. With respect to distributions that we designate as capital gain dividends and any retained capital gain that we are deemed to distribute, we generally may designate whether such a distribution is taxable to our non-corporate shareholders at a 15% or 25% rate. Thus, the tax rate differential between capital gain and ordinary income for non-corporate taxpayers may be significant. In addition, the characterization of income as capital gain or ordinary income may affect the deductibility of capital losses. A non-corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses not offset by capital gains against its ordinary income only up to a maximum annual amount of \$3,000. A non-corporate taxpayer may carry forward unused capital losses indefinitely. A corporate taxpayer must pay tax on its net capital gain at ordinary corporate rates. A corporate taxpayer may deduct capital losses only to the extent of capital gains, with unused losses being carried back three years and forward five years.

Information Reporting Requirements and Backup Withholding

We will report to our shareholders and to the Internal Revenue Service the amount of distributions we pay during each calendar year, and the amount of tax we withhold, if any. Under the backup withholding rules, a shareholder may be subject to backup withholding at the rate of 28% with respect to distributions unless such holder:

is a corporation or comes within certain other exempt categories and, when required, demonstrates this fact; or

provides a taxpayer identification number, certifies as to no loss of exemption from backup withholding, and otherwise complies with the applicable requirements of the backup withholding rules.

A shareholder who does not provide us with its correct taxpayer identification number also may be subject to penalties imposed by the Internal Revenue Service. Any amount paid as backup withholding will be creditable against the shareholder's income tax liability. In addition, we may be required to withhold a portion of capital gain distributions to any shareholders who fail to certify their non-foreign status to us. See Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders.

Taxation of Tax-Exempt Shareholders

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Tax-exempt entities, including qualified employee pension and profit sharing trusts and individual retirement accounts and annuities, generally are exempt from federal income taxation. However, they are subject to taxation on their unrelated business taxable income. While many investments in real estate generate unrelated business taxable income, the Internal Revenue Service has issued a published ruling that dividend distributions from a REIT to an exempt employee pension trust do not constitute unrelated business taxable income, provided that the exempt employee pension trust does not otherwise use the shares of the REIT in an unrelated trade or

S-11

Table of Contents

business of the pension trust. Based on that ruling, amounts that we distribute to tax-exempt shareholders generally should not constitute unrelated business taxable income. However, if a tax-exempt shareholder were to finance its acquisition of our common shares with debt, a portion of the income that it receives from us would constitute unrelated business taxable income pursuant to the debt-financed property rules. Furthermore, social clubs, voluntary employee benefit associations, supplemental unemployment benefit trusts, and qualified group legal services plans that are exempt from taxation under special provisions of the federal income tax laws are subject to different unrelated business taxable income rules, which generally will require them to characterize distributions that they receive from us as unrelated business taxable income. Finally, in certain circumstances, a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust that owns more than 10% of our shares of beneficial interest is required to treat a percentage of the dividends that it receives from us as unrelated business taxable income. Such percentage is equal to the gross income that we derive from an unrelated trade or business, determined as if we were a pension trust, divided by our total gross income for the year in which we pay the dividends. That rule applies to a pension trust holding more than 10% of our shares of beneficial interest only if:

the percentage of our dividends that the tax-exempt trust would be required to treat as unrelated business taxable income is at least 5%;

we qualify as a REIT by reason of the modification of the rule requiring that no more than 50% of our shares of beneficial interest be owned by five or fewer individuals that allows the beneficiaries of the pension trust to be treated as holding our shares of beneficial interest in proportion to their actuarial interests in the pension trust (see Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT Requirements for Qualification in the accompanying prospectus); and

either (1) one pension trust owns more than 25% of the value of our shares of beneficial interest or (2) a group of pension trusts individually holding more than 10% of the value of our shares of beneficial interest collectively owns more than 50% of the value of our shares.

Taxation of Non-U.S. Shareholders

The rules governing U.S. federal income taxation of nonresident alien individuals, foreign corporations, foreign partnerships, and other foreign shareholders (collectively, non-U.S. shareholders) are complex. This section is only a summary of such rules. **We urge non-U.S. shareholders to consult their own tax advisors to determine the impact of federal, state, and local income tax laws on ownership of our common shares, including any reporting requirements.**

A non-U.S. shareholder that receives a distribution that is not attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of United States real property interests, as defined below, and that we do not designate as a capital gain dividend or retained capital gain will recognize ordinary income to the extent that we pay such distribution out of our current or accumulated earnings and profits. A withholding tax equal to 30% of the gross amount of the distribution ordinarily will apply to such distribution unless an applicable tax treaty reduces or eliminates the tax. However, if a distribution is treated as effectively connected with the non-U.S. shareholder's conduct of a U.S. trade or business, the non-U.S. shareholder generally will be subject to federal income tax on the distribution at graduated rates, in the same manner as U.S. shareholders are taxed with respect to such distributions. A non-U.S. shareholder that is a corporation also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax with respect to the distribution. We plan to withhold U.S. income tax at the rate of 30% on the gross amount of any such distribution paid to a non-U.S. shareholder unless either:

a lower treaty rate applies and the non-U.S. shareholder files an IRS Form W-8BEN evidencing eligibility for that reduced rate with us; or

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

the non-U.S. shareholder files an IRS Form W-8ECI with us claiming that the distribution is effectively connected income.

A non-U.S. shareholder will not incur tax on a distribution in excess of our current and accumulated earnings and profits if the excess portion of such distribution does not exceed the adjusted basis of its common

S-12

Table of Contents

shares. Instead, the excess portion of such distribution will reduce the adjusted basis of such shares. A non-U.S. shareholder will be subject to tax on a distribution that exceeds both our current and accumulated earnings and profits and the adjusted basis of its common shares, if the non-U.S. shareholder otherwise would be subject to tax on gain from the sale or disposition of its common shares, as described below. Because we generally cannot determine at the time we make a distribution whether the distribution will exceed our current and accumulated earnings and profits, we normally will withhold tax on the entire amount of any distribution at the same rate as we would withhold on a dividend. However, a non-U.S. shareholder may obtain a refund of amounts that we withhold if we later determine that a distribution in fact exceeded our current and accumulated earnings and profits.

We may be required to withhold 10% of any distribution that exceeds our current and accumulated earnings and profits. Consequently, although we intend to withhold at a rate of 30% on the entire amount of any distribution, to the extent that we do not do so, we will withhold at a rate of 10% on any portion of a distribution not subject to withholding at a rate of 30%.

For any year in which we qualify as a REIT, a non-U.S. shareholder will incur tax on distributions that are attributable to gain from our sale or exchange of United States real property interests under special provisions of the federal income tax laws referred to as FIRPTA. The term United States real property interests includes certain interests in real property and stock in corporations at least 50% of whose assets consist of interests in real property. Under those rules, a non-U.S. shareholder is taxed on distributions attributable to gain from sales of United States real property interests as if such gain were effectively connected with a U.S. business of the non-U.S. shareholder. A non-U.S. shareholder thus would be taxed on such a distribution at the normal capital gains rates applicable to U.S. shareholders, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax and a special alternative minimum tax in the case of a nonresident alien individual. A non-U.S. corporate shareholder not entitled to treaty relief or exemption also may be subject to the 30% branch profits tax on such a distribution. We must withhold 35% of any distribution that we could designate as a capital gain dividend. A non-U.S. shareholder may receive a credit against its tax liability for the amount we withhold.

A non-U.S. shareholder generally will not incur tax under FIRPTA with respect to gain realized upon a disposition of our common shares as long as at all times non-U.S. persons hold, directly or indirectly, less than 50% in value of our shares of beneficial interest. We cannot assure you that that test will be met. However, a non-U.S. shareholder that owned, actually or constructively, 5% or less of our common shares at all times during a specified testing period will not incur tax under FIRPTA if the common shares are regularly traded on an established securities market. Because our common shares are regularly traded on an established securities market, a non-U.S. shareholder will not incur tax under FIRPTA with respect to any such gain unless it owns, actually or constructively, more than 5% of our common shares. If the gain on the sale of the common shares were taxed under FIRPTA, a non-U.S. shareholder would be taxed in the same manner as U.S. shareholders with respect to such gain, subject to applicable alternative minimum tax or, a special alternative minimum tax in the case of nonresident alien individuals. Furthermore, a non-U.S. shareholder will incur tax on gain not subject to FIRPTA if (1) the gain is effectively connected with the non-U.S. shareholder's U.S. trade or business, in which case the non-U.S. shareholder will be subject to the same treatment as U.S. shareholders with respect to such gain, or (2) the non-U.S. shareholder is a nonresident alien individual who was present in the United States for 183 days or more during the taxable year and has a tax home in the United States, in which case the non-U.S. shareholder will incur a 30% tax on his capital gains.

Table of Contents**UNDERWRITING**

Citigroup Global Markets Inc. is acting as the sole underwriter of this offering. Subject to the terms and conditions stated in the underwriting agreement dated the date of this prospectus supplement, the underwriter has agreed to purchase, and we have agreed to sell to the underwriter, 3,500,000 common shares.

The underwriting agreement provides that the obligation of the underwriter to purchase the shares in this offering is subject to approval of legal matters by counsel and to other conditions. The underwriter is obligated to purchase all the shares (other than those covered by the over-allotment option described below) if it purchases any of the shares.

The underwriter proposes to offer the shares directly to the public at the public offering price set forth on the cover page of this prospectus supplement. If all of the shares are not sold at the initial offering price, the underwriter may change the public offering price and the other selling terms.

We have granted to the underwriter an option, exercisable for 30 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, to purchase up to 525,000 additional common shares at the public offering price less the underwriting discount. The underwriter may exercise the option solely for the purpose of covering over-allotments, if any, in connection with this offering.

We and our officers and directors have agreed that, for a period of 45 days from the date of this prospectus supplement, we and they will not, without the prior written consent of Citigroup, dispose of or hedge any of our common shares or any securities convertible into or exchangeable for our common shares. Citigroup in its sole discretion may release any of the securities subject to these lock-up agreements at any time without notice.

Our common shares are listed on the American Stock Exchange under the symbol HT .

The following table shows the underwriting discount and commissions that we are to pay to the underwriter in connection with this offering. These amounts are shown assuming both no exercise and full exercise of the underwriter's option to purchase additional common shares.

	<u>No Exercise</u>	<u>Full Exercise</u>
Per Share	\$ 0.18	\$ 0.18
Total	\$ 630,000	\$ 724,500

In addition to the underwriting discount, the underwriter will receive a commission equivalent from investors in the amount of \$0.05 for each common share sold to those investors in this offering.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

In connection with the offering, Citigroup may purchase and sell common shares in the open market. These transactions may include short sales, syndicate covering transactions and stabilizing transactions. Short sales involve syndicate sales of common shares in excess of the number of shares to be purchased by the underwriter in the offering, which creates a syndicate short position. Covered short sales are sales of shares made in an amount up to the number of shares represented by the underwriter's over-allotment option. In determining the source of shares to close out the covered syndicate short position, the underwriter will consider, among other things, the price of shares available for purchase in the open market as compared to the price at which it may purchase shares through the over-allotment option. Transactions to close out the covered syndicate short position involve either purchases of the common shares in the open market after the distribution has been completed or the exercise of the over-allotment option. The underwriter may also make naked short sales of shares in excess of the over-allotment option. The underwriter must close out any naked short position by purchasing common shares in the open market. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriter is concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of the shares in the open market after pricing that could adversely affect investors who purchase in the offering. Stabilizing transactions consist of bids for, or purchases of, shares in the open market while the offering is in progress.

S-14

Table of Contents

The underwriter also may impose a penalty bid. Penalty bids permit the underwriter to reclaim a selling concession from a syndicate member when Citigroup repurchases shares originally sold by that syndicate member in order to cover syndicate short positions or make stabilizing purchases.

Any of these activities may have the effect of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of the common shares. They may also cause the price of the common shares to be higher than the price that would otherwise exist in the open market in the absence of these transactions. The underwriter may conduct these transactions on the American Stock Exchange or in the over-the-counter market, or otherwise. If the underwriter commences any of these transactions, it may discontinue them at any time.

We estimate that our total expenses of this offering will be approximately \$100,000.

The underwriter has performed investment banking and advisory services for us from time to time for which it has received customary fees and expenses. The underwriter may, from time to time, engage in transactions with and perform services for us in the ordinary course of its business.

We have agreed to indemnify the underwriter against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, or to contribute to payments the underwriter may be required to make because of any of those liabilities.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with this offering will be passed upon for us by Hunton & Williams LLP. In addition, the summaries of legal matters contained in the section of the accompanying prospectus under the heading "Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT" and in the section of this prospectus supplement under the heading "Additional Federal Income Tax Considerations" are based on the opinion of Hunton & Williams LLP. Certain legal matters in connection with this offering will be passed upon for the underwriter by Clifford Chance US LLP.

EXPERTS

Our consolidated balance sheet as of December 31, 2003 and our consolidated statements of operations, cash flows and shareholders' equity for the year ended December 31, 2003 incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, have been audited by Reznick Fedder & Silverman P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose report is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing. The balance sheet of Hersha Hospitality Management L.P. as of December 31, 2003 and the related statements of operations, partners' equity (deficit), and cash flows for the year ended December 31, 2003, incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have been audited by Reznick Fedder & Silverman, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose report is incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Our consolidated balance sheet as of December 31, 2002 and our consolidated statements of operations, cash flows and shareholders' equity for each of the years ended December 31, 2002 and 2001 incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, have been audited by Moore Stephens, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose reports are incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing. The consolidated balance sheet of Hersha Hospitality Management L.P. as of December 31, 2002, and the related statements of operations, partners' equity (deficit), and cash flows for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2002 incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus have been audited by Moore Stephens, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose reports are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

S-15

Table of Contents

\$200,000,000

Hersha Hospitality Trust

Common Shares of Beneficial Interest

Preferred Shares of Beneficial Interest

Debt Securities

Hersha Hospitality Trust intends to offer and sell from time to time the debt and equity securities described in this prospectus. The total offering price of these securities will not exceed \$200,000,000 in the aggregate. We will provide the specific terms of any securities we may offer in a supplement to this prospectus. You should carefully read this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement before deciding to invest in these securities.

The securities may be offered directly, through agents designated by us from time to time, or to or through underwriters or dealers.

NEITHER THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR ANY STATE SECURITIES COMMISSION HAS APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED OF THESE SECURITIES OR DETERMINED IF THIS PROSPECTUS IS TRUTHFUL OR COMPLETE. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

For a discussion of certain risks associated with an investment in the securities, see Risk Factors on Page 4.

The date of this Prospectus is April 2, 2004.

Table of Contents**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<u>HOW TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION</u>	1
<u>INCORPORATION OF INFORMATION FILED WITH THE SEC</u>	1
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS</u>	1
<u>FORWARD LOOKING INFORMATION</u>	2
<u>CERTAIN DEFINITIONS</u>	2
<u>OUR COMPANY</u>	3
<u>RISK FACTORS</u>	4
<u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS</u>	15
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	15
<u>DESCRIPTION OF SHARES OF BENEFICIAL INTEREST</u>	16
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	22
<u>LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES</u>	26
<u>CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF MARYLAND LAW AND OF OUR DECLARATION OF TRUST AND BYLAWS</u>	30
<u>CNL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE</u>	33
<u>FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF OUR STATUS AS A REIT</u>	39
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	54
<u>EXPERTS</u>	55
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	56

You should rely only on the information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus and any applicable prospectus supplement. We have not authorized anyone else to provide you with different information. If anyone provides you with different or inconsistent information, you should not rely on it. We will not make an offer to sell these securities in any state where the offer or sale is not permitted. You should assume that the information appearing in this prospectus, as well as the information we previously filed with the SEC and incorporated by reference, is accurate only as of the date of the documents containing the information.

Table of Contents

HOW TO OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and special reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission. You may read and copy any reports, statements, or other information we file with the SEC at its public reference room in Washington, D.C. (450 Fifth Street, N.W. 20549). Please call the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330 for further information on the public reference room. Our filings are also available to the public on the internet, through a database maintained by the SEC at <http://www.sec.gov>. In addition, you can inspect and copy reports, proxy statements and other information concerning Hersha Hospitality Trust at the offices of the American Stock Exchange, Inc., 86 Trinity Place, New York, New York 10006, on which our common shares (symbol: HT) are listed.

INCORPORATION OF INFORMATION FILED WITH THE SEC

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference into this prospectus the information we file with the SEC, which means that we can disclose important business, financial and other information to you by referring you to other documents separately filed with the SEC. All information incorporated by reference is part of this prospectus, unless and until that information is updated and superseded by the information contained in this prospectus or any information incorporated later. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and any future filings we make with the SEC under Sections 13(a), 13(c), 14 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), prior to completion of this offering.

We incorporate our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2003.

We also incorporate by reference all future filings we make with the SEC between the date of this prospectus and the date upon which we sell all of the securities we offer with this prospectus and any applicable supplement.

You may obtain copies of these documents at no cost by requesting them from us in writing at the following address: Hersha Hospitality Trust, 148 Sheraton Drive, Box A, New Cumberland, PA 17070, telephone (717) 770-2405.

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS

This prospectus is part of a shelf registration statement. We may sell, from time to time, in one or more offerings, any combination of the securities described in this prospectus. This prospectus only provides you with a general description of the securities we may offer. Each time we sell securities under this prospectus, we will provide a prospectus supplement that contains specific information about the terms of the securities. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with the additional information described under the heading How to Obtain More Information.

The total dollar amount of the securities sold under this prospectus will not exceed \$200,000,000.

Table of Contents

FORWARD LOOKING INFORMATION

This prospectus and the information incorporated by reference into it contains certain forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, including, without limitation, statements containing the words believes, anticipates, expects, estimates, intends, plans, projects, will continue and words of similar import. We have based these forward-looking statements on our current expectations and projections about future events and trends affecting the financial condition of our business, which may prove to be incorrect. These forward-looking statements relate to future events and our future financial performance, and involve known and unknown risks, uncertainties and other factors which may cause our actual results, performance, achievements or industry results to be materially different from any future results, performance or achievements expressed or implied by such forward-looking statements. You should specifically consider the factors identified under the caption Risk Factors and the various other factors identified in or incorporated by reference into this prospectus and any other documents filed by us with the SEC that could cause actual results to differ materially from our forward-looking statements.

Except to the extent required by applicable law, we undertake no obligation to, and do not intend to, update any forward-looking statement or the Risk Factors or to publicly announce the result of any revisions to any of the forward-looking statements contained herein to reflect future events or developments. There are a number of risk factors associated with the conduct of our business, and the risks discussed in the Risk Factors section of this prospectus may not be exhaustive. New risks and uncertainties arise from time to time, and it is impossible for us to predict these events or how they may affect us. All forward-looking statements should be read with caution.

CERTAIN DEFINITIONS

Unless otherwise indicated, the terms Hersha, we, us, our and our company refer to Hersha Hospitality Trust and its subsidiaries, including Hersha Hospitality Limited Partnership.

All brand names, trademarks and service marks appearing in this prospectus are the property of their respective owners. This prospectus supplement contains registered trademarks owned or licensed to companies other than us, including but not limited to Comfort Inn®, Comfort Suites®, Courtyard® by Marriott®, Doubletree Suites®, Fairfield Inn® by Marriott®, Hampton Inn®, Hilton Garden Inn®, Holiday Inn®, Homewood Suites by Hilton®, Mainstay Suites®, Residence Inn® by Marriott® and Sleep Inn®, none of which, in any way, are participating in or endorsing this offering and shall not in any way be deemed an issuer or underwriter of the securities issued under this prospectus, and shall not have any liability or responsibility for any financial statements or other financial information contained or incorporated by reference in this prospectus.

Table of Contents

OUR COMPANY

Hersha Hospitality Trust is a self-advised Maryland real estate investment trust that was organized in 1998 and completed its initial public offering in January of 1999. We focus primarily on owning and operating high quality, mid-scale limited service hotels in established markets in the Eastern United States. Our primary strategy is to continue to acquire high quality, mid-scale hotels in metropolitan markets with high barriers to entry in the Northeastern United States. As of December 31, 2003, our portfolio consisted of 22 hotels with a total of 2,169 rooms located in Pennsylvania, New York, Maryland, Georgia and New Jersey, which operate under leading brands, such as Hampton Inn[®], Hilton Garden Inn[®], Holiday Inn[®], Holiday Inn Express[®], DoubleTree[®], and Comfort Suites[®].

We are structured as an umbrella partnership REIT, or UPREIT, and we own our hotels through our operating partnership, Hersha Hospitality Limited Partnership, or our operating partnership for which we serve as general partner. All of our hotels are managed by Hersha Hospitality Management, L.P., or HHMLP, a private management company owned by certain of our trustees, officers and other third party investors. In response to tax law changes, we recently formed a wholly-owned taxable REIT subsidiary, or TRS, to which we currently lease twelve hotels and to which we intend to lease all of our hotels, including hotels we may acquire in the future and hotels currently leased to HHMLP as those leases expire. We believe that transitioning to this TRS structure positions us to participate more directly in the operating efficiencies and revenue gains at our hotels.

In April of 2003, we entered into a strategic alliance with CNL Hospitality Partners, L.P., a subsidiary of CNL Hospitality Properties, Inc. CNL is a public company which has been one of the most active investors in lodging properties over the past several years. The strategic alliance positions us as one of CNL's preferred partners for investing in mid-scale hotels. Our agreement with CNL provides that it will invest up to \$25 million in our operating partnership and up to \$40 million in a newly formed hotel acquisition joint venture. CNL has currently invested \$19 million in our operating partnership and \$8 million in the joint venture, which acquired its first hotel, the Hampton Inn Chelsea, New York, New York, on August 29, 2003.

We are taxed as a REIT under Sections 856 through 860 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, or the Code. REITs are subject to a number of organizational and operational requirements, including a requirement that they currently distribute at least 90% of their taxable income (excluding net capital gains). See Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as REIT.

Table of Contents

RISK FACTORS

Before you invest in our securities, you should carefully consider the following risks, together with the other information included in this prospectus, any prospectus supplement and the information incorporated by reference. If any of the following risks actually occur, our business, financial condition or results of operations may suffer. As a result, the trading price of our securities could decline, and you may lose all or part of your investment.

An investment in our securities involves significant risks, including the risk of losing your entire investment. In evaluating our business, prospective investors should carefully consider the following risk factors in addition to the other information contained in this prospectus.

Risks Relating to Our Business and Operations

We may be unable to integrate acquired hotels into our operations or otherwise manage our planned growth, which may adversely affect our operating results.

We are attempting to acquire a substantial number of hotels. If we are successful in making these acquisitions, we cannot assure you that we (or HHMLP) will be able to adapt our management, administrative, accounting and operational systems and arrangements, or hire and retain sufficient operational staff to integrate these investments into our portfolio and manage any future acquisitions of additional assets without operating disruptions or unanticipated costs. Acquisition of hotels would generate additional operating expenses that we would be required to pay. As we acquire additional hotels, we will be subject to the operational risks associated with owning new lodging properties. Our failure to integrate successfully any future acquisitions into our portfolio could have a material adverse effect on our results of operations and financial condition and our ability to pay dividends to shareholders or other payment in respect of securities issued by us.

Acquisition of hotels with limited operating history may not achieve desired results.

Many of our acquisitions are likely to be newly developed hotels. Newly-developed or newly-renovated hotels do not have the operating history that would allow our management to make pricing decisions in acquiring these hotels based on historical performance. The purchase prices of these hotels are typically based upon management's expectations as to the operating results of such hotels, subjecting us to risks that such hotels may not achieve anticipated operating results or may not achieve these results within anticipated time frames. As a result, we may not be able to generate enough cash flow from these hotels to make debt payments or pay operating expenses. In addition, room revenues may be less than that required to provide us with our anticipated return on investment. In either case, the amounts available for distribution to our shareholders could be reduced.

Our acquisitions may not achieve expected performance, which may harm our financial condition and operating results.

We anticipate that acquisitions will largely be financed with the net proceeds of securities offerings and through externally generated funds such as borrowings under credit facilities and other secured and unsecured debt financing. Acquisitions entail risks that investments will fail to

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

perform in accordance with expectations and that estimates of the cost of improvements necessary to acquire and market properties will prove inaccurate, as well as general investment risks associated with any new real estate investment. Because we must distribute at least 90% of our taxable income to maintain our qualification as a REIT, our ability to rely upon income or cash flow from operations to finance our growth and acquisition activities will be limited. Accordingly, were we unable to obtain funds from borrowings or the capital markets to finance our growth and acquisition activities, our ability to grow could be curtailed, amounts available for distribution to shareholders could be adversely affected and we could be required to reduce distributions.

Table of Contents

We own a limited number of hotels and significant adverse changes at one hotel may impact our lessees' ability to pay rent and our ability to make distributions to shareholders.

As of December 31, 2003, our portfolio consisted of 22 hotels. Significant adverse changes in the operations of any one hotel could have a material adverse effect on our lessees' ability to make rent payments and, accordingly, on our ability to make expected distributions to our shareholders.

We focus on acquiring hotels operating under a limited number of franchise brands, which creates greater risk as the investments are more concentrated.

We intend to place particular emphasis in our acquisition strategy on hotels similar to our current hotels. We invest in hotels operating under a few select franchises and therefore will be subject to risks inherent in concentrating investments in a particular franchise brand, which could have an adverse effect on our lease revenues and amounts available for distribution to shareholders. These risks include, among others, the risk of a reduction in hotel revenues following any adverse publicity related to a specific franchise brand.

Many of our hotels are located in Pennsylvania, which may increase the effect of any local economic conditions.

Eleven of our 22 hotels are located in Pennsylvania. Some of our other hotels are clustered in metropolitan areas, such as metropolitan New York and Atlanta. As a result, localized adverse events or conditions, such as an economic recession around these hotels, could have a significant adverse effect on our operations, and ultimately on the amounts available for distribution to shareholders.

We face risks associated with the use of debt, including refinancing risk.

At December 31, 2003, we had debt outstanding of \$71.8 million. We may borrow additional amounts from the same or other lenders in the future, or may issue corporate debt securities in public or private offerings. Some of these additional borrowings may be secured by our hotels. Our strategy is to maintain target debt levels of approximately 60% of the total purchase price of our hotels both on an individual and aggregate basis, and our Board of Trustees' policy is to limit indebtedness to no more than 67% of the total purchase price of all our hotels on an aggregate basis. However our declaration of trust (as amended and restated, our Declaration of Trust) does not limit the amount of indebtedness we may incur. We cannot assure you that we will be able to meet our debt service obligations and, to the extent that we cannot, we risk the loss of some or all of our hotels to foreclosure. There is also a risk that we may not be able to refinance existing debt or that the terms of any refinancing will not be as favorable as the terms of the existing debt. If principal payments due at maturity cannot be refinanced, extended or repaid with proceeds from other sources, such as new equity capital or sales of properties, our cash flow may not be sufficient to repay all maturing debt in years when significant balloon payments come due.

We do not operate our hotels and, as a result, we do not have complete control over implementation of our strategic decisions.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

In order for us to satisfy certain REIT qualification rules, we cannot directly operate any of our hotels. Instead, we must lease our hotels. As of January 26, 2003, eight of our hotels are leased to an independent management company, HHMLP, as required by the REIT qualification rules in effect prior to 2001. In addition, twelve other hotels are managed by HHMLP under management agreements with our wholly-owned TRS, who leases those hotels from us. HHMLP makes and implements strategic business decisions with respect to our hotels, such as decisions with respect to the repositioning of a franchise or food and beverage operations and other similar decisions. Decisions made by HHMLP or any other hotel operator to whom we may lease our hotels may not be in the best interests of a particular hotel or of our company. Accordingly, we cannot assure you that our lessees or HHMLP will operate our hotels in a manner that is in our best interests.

Table of Contents

Dependence on our lessees for rent may impact distributions to shareholders.

We rely on our lessees to make rent payments in order to make distributions to shareholders. Obligations under the percentage leases, including the obligation to make rent payments, are unsecured. HHMLP, the lessee of eight of our hotels, incurred a net loss of \$1,280,000 for the year ended December 31, 2003, a net loss of \$671,000 for the year ended December 31, 2002, and a net loss of \$1,104,000 for the year ended December 31, 2001, and HHMLP had a partners' deficit of \$1,107,000 as of December 31, 2003. Reductions in revenues from our hotels or in the net operating income of our lessees may adversely affect the ability of our lessees to make these rent payments and thus our ability to make anticipated distributions to our shareholders.

We depend on key personnel.

We depend on the services of our existing senior management to carry out our business and investment strategies. As we expand, we will continue to need to attract and retain qualified additional senior management. We do not have employment contracts with any of our senior management and they may cease to provide services to us at any time. The loss of the services of any of our key management personnel, or our inability to recruit and retain qualified personnel in the future, could have an adverse effect on our business and financial results.

We face increasing competition for the acquisition of hotel properties and other assets, which may impede our ability to make future acquisitions or may increase the cost of these acquisitions.

We face competition for investment opportunities in mid-scale hotels from entities organized for purposes substantially similar to our objectives, as well as other purchasers of hotels. We compete for such investment opportunities with entities that have substantially greater financial resources than we do, including access to capital or better relationships with franchisors, sellers or lenders. Our competitors may generally be able to accept more risk than we can manage prudently and may be able to borrow the funds needed to acquire hotels. Competition may generally reduce the number of suitable investment opportunities offered to us and increase the bargaining power of property owners seeking to sell.

Risks Relating to Conflicts of Interest

Due to conflicts of interest, many of our existing agreements may not have been negotiated on an arm's-length basis and may not be in our best interest.

Some of our officers and trustees have ownership interests in HHMLP and in entities with which we have entered into transactions, including hotel acquisitions and dispositions and certain financings. Consequently, the terms of our agreements with those entities, including hotel contribution or purchase agreements, percentage leases, the Administrative Services Agreement between us and HHMLP pursuant to which HHMLP provides certain administrative services, the Option Agreement between the operating partnership and some of the trustees and officers and our property management agreements with HHMLP may not have been negotiated on an arm's-length basis and may not be in the best interest of all our shareholders.

Conflicts of interest with other entities may result in decisions that do not reflect our best interests.

The following officers and trustees own collectively approximately 81% of HHMLP: Hasu P. Shah, Jay H. Shah, Neil H. Shah, David L. Desfor and Kiran P. Patel. The following officers and trustees serve as officers of HHMLP: David L. Desfor, Kiran P. Patel and K.D. Patel. Conflicts of interest may arise in respect of the ongoing leasing, acquisition, disposition and operation of our hotels including, but not limited to, the percentage leases and enforcement of the contribution and purchase agreements, the Administrative Services Agreement, the Option Agreement and our property management agreements with HHMLP. Consequently, the interests of shareholders may not be fully represented in all decisions made or actions taken by our officers and trustees.

Table of Contents

Conflicts of interest relating to sales or refinancing of hotels acquired from some of our trustees and officers may lead to decisions that are not in our best interest.

Some of our trustees and officers have unrealized gains associated with their interests in the hotels we have acquired from them and, as a result, any sale of the these hotels or refinancing or prepayment of principal on the indebtedness assumed by us in purchasing these hotels may cause adverse tax consequences to such of our trustees and officers. Therefore, our interests and the interests of these individuals may be different in connection with the disposition or refinancing of these hotels.

Competing hotels owned or acquired by some of our trustees and officers may hinder these individuals from spending adequate time on our business.

Some of our trustees and officers own hotels and may develop or acquire new hotels, subject to certain limitations. Such ownership, development or acquisition activities may materially affect the amount of time these officers and trustees devote to our affairs. Some of our trustees and officers operate hotels that are not owned by us, which may materially affect the amount of time that they devote to managing our hotels. Pursuant to the Option Agreement, as amended, we have an option to acquire any hotels developed by our officers and trustees.

Need for certain consents from the limited partners may not result in decisions advantageous to shareholders.

Under our operating partnership's amended and restated partnership agreement, the holders of at least two-thirds of the interests in the partnership must approve a sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the partnership or a merger or consolidation of the partnership. Some of our officers and trustees will own an approximately 13.46% interest in the operating partnership on a fully-diluted basis. Their large ownership percentage may make it less likely that a merger or sale of our company that would be in the best interests of our shareholders will be approved.

Risks Relating to Our Corporate Structure

A major shareholder has significant influence over our affairs.

CNL, through its ownership of Series A Preferred Units of our operating partnership and its interest in our joint venture owns approximately 22.8% of our common shares on a fully-diluted basis. In addition, CNL would be able to acquire an additional 5% of our common shares on a fully-diluted basis upon exchange of . CNL may also purchase additional Series A Preferred Units and joint venture interests. Pursuant to the terms of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units owned by CNL, and the Series A Preferred Shares into which they are exchangeable, it has a number of special rights, including, but not limited to:

certain preemptive rights with respect to any issuance by us prior to April 2006 of common shares;

certain rights to elect members of our Board of Trustees; and

certain approval rights including with respect to:

mergers;

the sale of all or substantially all of our assets;

the issuance of equity securities;

the payment of dividends while in arrears with respect to dividends relating to CNL's securities;

certain amendments to our Declaration of Trust;

filing for bankruptcy; and

terminating our REIT status.

Table of Contents

In addition, for so long as the holders of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units hold in the aggregate that number of Series A Preferred Units, common shares and any other class of our equity that represent on an as-converted or as-exchanged basis at least five percent of the issued and outstanding common shares on a fully diluted basis, a majority of the Series A Preferred Units must approve a sale of all or substantially all of the assets of the operating partnership or a merger or consolidation of the operating partnership. CNL therefore holds veto power over such extraordinary transactions, which could result in the disapproval of a transaction that would be beneficial to our shareholders.

In addition, pursuant to the terms of our joint venture with CNL, until April 21, 2004, we must present all of our proposed acquisitions to the investment committee of the joint venture, and we may only acquire such acquisition directly if the investment committee or CNL fails to approve that acquisition for the joint venture. This arrangement may make it more difficult for us to acquire suitable hotels other than through the joint venture.

As a result of its ownership of our securities and the rights described above, CNL may have significant influence over our affairs. This could potentially be disadvantageous to other shareholders' interests, which may not be aligned with the interests of CNL. For a more detailed description of CNL's rights, see the sections entitled "CNL Strategic Alliance."

Our ownership limitation may restrict business combination opportunities.

To qualify as a REIT under the Code, no more than 50% of our outstanding shares of beneficial interest may be owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals during the last half of each taxable year. To preserve our REIT qualification, our Declaration of Trust generally prohibits direct or indirect ownership of more than 9.9% of the number of outstanding shares of any class of our securities, including the common shares, by any person. Generally, common shares owned by affiliated owners will be aggregated for purposes of the ownership limitation. The ownership limitation could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control or other transaction in which holders of common shares might receive a premium for their common shares over the then prevailing market price or which such holders might believe to be otherwise in their best interests.

The Declaration of Trust contains a provision that creates staggered terms for our Board of Trustees.

Our Board of Trustees is divided into two classes. The terms of the first and second classes expire in 2004 and 2005, respectively. Trustees of each class are elected for two-year terms upon the expiration of their current terms and each year one class of trustees will be elected by the shareholders. The staggered terms of trustees may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer, a change in control of us or other transaction, even though such a transaction might be in the best interest of the shareholders.

Maryland Business Combination Law may discourage a third party from acquiring us.

Under the Maryland General Corporation Law, as amended (MGCL), as applicable to real estate investment trusts, certain "business combinations" (including certain issuances of equity securities) between a Maryland real estate investment trust and any person who beneficially owns ten percent or more of the voting power of the trust's shares or an affiliate thereof or any person who is an affiliate or associate of the trust and was the beneficial owner of ten percent or more of the voting shares of the trust within the two year period immediately prior to the date in question, are prohibited for five years after the most recent date on which this shareholder acquired at least ten percent of the voting power of the trust's shares. Thereafter, any such business combination must be approved by two super-majority shareholder votes unless, among other

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

conditions, the trust's common shareholders receive a minimum price (as defined in the MGCL) for their shares and the consideration is received in cash or in the same form as previously paid by the interested shareholder for its common shares. These provisions could delay, defer or prevent a transaction or change of control of our company in which our shareholders might otherwise receive a premium for their shares above then-current market prices or might

Table of Contents

otherwise deem to be in their best interests. CNL and some of our trustees and officers may control a sufficient percentage of the voting power to block a proposal respecting a business combination under these provisions. As part of the transaction with CNL, we exempted CNL from the application of these provisions, which could make us more vulnerable to an unsolicited acquisition attempt by CNL that would not be advantageous for all shareholders.

The Board of Trustees may change our investment and operational policies without a vote of the common shareholders.

Our major policies, including our policies with respect to acquisitions, financing, growth, operations, debt limitation and distributions, are determined by our Board of Trustees. The Trustees may amend or revise these and other policies from time to time without a vote of the holders of the common shares.

Our Board of Trustees may issue additional shares that may cause dilution or prevent a transaction that is in the best interests of our shareholders.

Our Declaration of Trust authorizes the Board of Trustees, without shareholder approval, to:

amend the Declaration of Trust to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of beneficial interest or the number of shares of beneficial interest of any class that we have the authority to issue,

cause us to issue additional authorized but unissued common shares or preferred shares and

classify or reclassify any unissued common or preferred shares and to set the preferences, rights and other terms of such classified or reclassified shares, including the issuance of additional common shares or preferred shares that have preference rights over the common shares with respect to dividends, liquidation, voting and other matters.

Any one of these events could cause dilution to our common shareholders, delay, defer or prevent a transaction or a change in control that might involve a premium price for the common shares or otherwise not be in the best interest of holders of common shares.

Future offerings of debt securities, which would be senior to our common shares upon liquidation, or equity securities, which would dilute our existing shareholders and may be senior to our common shares for the purposes of dividend distributions, may adversely affect the market price of our common shares.

In the future, we may attempt to increase our capital resources by making additional offerings of debt or equity securities, including medium-term notes, senior or subordinated notes and classes of preferred or common shares. Upon liquidation, holders of our debt securities and shares of preferred shares and lenders with respect to other borrowings will receive a distribution of our available assets prior to the holders of our common shares. Additional equity offerings may dilute the holdings of our existing shareholders or reduce the market price of our common shares, or both. Our preferred shares, if issued, could have a preference on liquidating distributions or a preference on dividend payments that could limit our ability to make a dividend distribution to the holders of our common shares. Because our decision to issue securities in any future offering will depend on market conditions and other factors beyond our control, we cannot predict or estimate the amount, timing or nature of

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

our future offerings. Thus, our shareholders bear the risk of our future offerings reducing the market price of our common shares and diluting their stock holdings in us.

Possible adverse effect of shares available for future sale on price of common shares.

At any time, CNL may elect to exchange its Series A Convertible Preferred Units for up to 2,816,460 common shares and exchange its interest in their joint venture with us for up to 1,192,141 additional common shares. To the extent CNL funds additional capital to us or our joint venture, the number of common shares

Table of Contents

issuable upon such exchange will increase. Furthermore, there are 2,842,437 outstanding limited partnership units in our operating partnership (other than the Series A Convertible Preferred Units) which currently are redeemable for common shares. Upon the exchange of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units or the redemption of common limited partnership units, the common shares received therefor may be sold in the public market pursuant to shelf registration statements that we are obligated to file on behalf of CNL and the limited partners of our operating partnership, or pursuant to any available exemptions from registration. Sales of a substantial number of common shares, or the perception that such sales could occur, could adversely affect prevailing market prices of the common shares.

There are no assurances of our ability to make distributions in the future.

We intend to pay quarterly dividends and to make distributions to our shareholders in amounts such that all or substantially all of our taxable income in each year, subject to certain adjustments, is distributed. However, our ability to pay dividends may be adversely affected by the risk factors described in this prospectus. All distributions will be made at the discretion of our Board of Trustees and will depend upon our earnings, our financial condition, maintenance of our REIT status and such other factors as our board may deem relevant from time to time. There are no assurances of our ability to pay dividends in the future. In addition, some of our distributions may include a return of capital.

An increase in market interest rates may have an adverse effect on the market price of our securities.

One of the factors that investors may consider in deciding whether to buy or sell our securities is our dividend rate as a percentage of our share or unit price, relative to market interest rates. If market interest rates increase, prospective investors may desire a higher dividend or interest rate on our securities or seek securities paying higher dividends or interest. The market price of our common shares likely will be based primarily on the earnings and return that we derive from our investments and income with respect to our properties and our related distributions to shareholders, and not from the market value or underlying appraised value of the properties or investments themselves. As a result, interest rate fluctuations and capital market conditions can affect the market price of our common shares. For instance, if interest rates rise without an increase in our dividend rate, the market price of our common shares could decrease because potential investors may require a higher dividend yield on our common shares as market rates on interest-bearing securities, such as bonds, rise. In addition, rising interest rates would result in increased interest expense on our variable rate debt, thereby adversely affecting cash flow and our ability to service our indebtedness and pay dividends.

Risks Related to Our Tax Status

If we fail to qualify as a REIT, our dividends will not be deductible to us, and our income will be subject to taxation.

We have operated and intend to continue to operate so as to qualify as a REIT for federal income tax purposes. Our continued qualification as a REIT will depend on our continuing ability to meet various requirements concerning, among other things, the ownership of our outstanding shares of beneficial interest, the nature of our assets, the sources of our income, and the amount of our distributions to our shareholders. If we were to fail to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year, we would not be allowed a deduction for distributions to our shareholders in computing our taxable income and would be subject to federal income tax (including any applicable alternative minimum tax) on our taxable income at regular corporate rates. Unless entitled to relief under certain Code provisions, we also would be disqualified from treatment as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which qualification was lost. As a result, amounts available for distribution to shareholders would be reduced for each of the years involved. Although we currently intend to operate in a manner designed to qualify as a REIT, it is possible that future economic, market, legal, tax or other considerations may cause the trustees, with the consent of holders of two-thirds of the outstanding shares, to revoke the REIT election.

Table of Contents

Failure to make required distributions would subject us to tax.

In order to qualify as a REIT, each year we must distribute to our shareholders at least 90% of our REIT taxable income, other than any net capital gain. To the extent that we satisfy the distribution requirement, but distribute less than 100% of our taxable income, we will be subject to federal corporate income tax on our undistributed income. In addition, we will incur a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the amount, if any, by which our distributions in any year are less than the sum of:

85% of our REIT ordinary income for that year;

95% of our REIT capital gain net income for that year; and

100% of our undistributed taxable income from prior years.

We have paid out, and intend to continue to pay out, our income to our shareholders in a manner intended to satisfy the distribution requirement and to avoid corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax. Differences in timing between the recognition of income and the related cash receipts or the effect of required debt amortization payments could require us to borrow money or sell assets to pay out enough of our taxable income to satisfy the distribution requirement and to avoid corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax in a particular year. In the past we have borrowed, and in the future we may borrow, to pay distributions to our shareholders and the limited partners of our operating partnership. Such borrowings subject us to risks from borrowing as described herein.

Recent changes in taxation of corporate dividends may adversely affect the value of our common shares.

The Jobs and Growth Tax Relief Reconciliation Act of 2003, which was enacted into law on May 28, 2003, among other things, generally reduces to 15% the maximum marginal rate of tax payable by domestic noncorporate taxpayers on dividends received from a regular C corporation. This reduced tax rate, however, will not apply to dividends paid to domestic noncorporate taxpayers by a REIT on its stock, except for certain limited amounts. Although the earnings of a REIT that are distributed to its shareholders still generally will be subject to less federal income taxation than earnings of a non-REIT C corporation that are distributed to its shareholders net of corporate-level income tax, this legislation could cause domestic noncorporate investors to view the stock of regular C corporations as more attractive relative to the stock of a REIT than was the case prior to the enactment of the legislation, because the dividends from regular C corporations will generally be taxed at a lower rate while dividends from REITs will generally be taxed at the same rate as the individual's other ordinary income. We cannot predict what effect, if any, the enactment of this legislation may have on the value of the stock of REITs in general or on our common shares in particular, either in terms of price or relative to other investments.

Risks Related to the Hotel Industry

The value of our hotels depends on conditions beyond our control.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Our hotels are subject to varying degrees of risk generally incident to the ownership of hotels. The underlying value of our hotels, our income and ability to make distributions to our shareholders are dependent upon the ability of our lessees to operate the hotels in a manner sufficient to maintain or increase revenues in excess of operating expenses to enable our lessees to make rent payments. Hotel revenues may be adversely affected by adverse changes in national economic conditions, adverse changes in local market conditions due to changes in general or local economic conditions and neighborhood characteristics, competition from other hotels, changes in interest rates and in the availability, cost and terms of mortgage funds, the impact of present or future environmental legislation and compliance with environmental laws, the ongoing need for capital improvements, particularly in older structures, changes in real estate tax rates and other operating expenses, adverse changes in governmental rules and fiscal policies, civil unrest, acts of terrorism, acts of God, including earthquakes, hurricanes and other natural disasters, acts of war, adverse changes in zoning laws, and other factors that are beyond our control. In particular, general and local economic conditions may be adversely affected by the recent

Table of Contents

terrorist incidents in New York and Washington, D.C. Our management is unable to determine the long-term impact, if any, of these incidents or of any acts of war or terrorism in the United States or worldwide, on the U.S. economy, on us or our hotels or on the market price of our common shares.

Our hotels are subject to general hotel industry operating risks, which may impact our lessees' ability to make rent payments and on our ability to make distributions to shareholders.

Our hotels are subject to all operating risks common to the hotel industry. The hotel industry has experienced volatility in the past, as have our hotels, and there can be no assurance that such volatility will not occur in the future. These risks include, among other things, competition from other hotels; over-building in the hotel industry that could adversely affect hotel revenues; increases in operating costs due to inflation and other factors, which may not be offset by increased room rates; reduction in business and commercial travel and tourism; strikes and other labor disturbances of hotel employees; increases in energy costs and other expenses of travel; adverse effects of general and local economic conditions; and adverse political conditions. These factors could reduce revenues of the hotels and adversely affect the lessees' ability to make rent payments, and therefore, our ability to make distributions to our shareholders.

Competition for guests is highly competitive.

The hotel industry is highly competitive. Our hotels compete with other existing and new hotels in their geographic markets. Many of our competitors have substantially greater marketing and financial resources than we do. If their marketing strategies are effective, our lessees may be unable to make rent payments and we may be unable to make distributions to our shareholders.

Our investments are concentrated in a single segment of the hotel industry.

Our current business strategy is to own and acquire hotels primarily in the mid-scale segment of the hotel industry. We are subject to risks inherent in concentrating investments in a single industry and in a specific market segment within that industry. The adverse effect on rent under the percentage leases and amounts available for distribution to shareholders resulting from a downturn in the hotel industry in general or the mid-scale segment in particular could be more pronounced than if we had diversified our investments outside of the hotel industry or in additional hotel market segments.

The hotel industry is seasonal in nature.

The hotel industry is seasonal in nature. Generally, hotel revenues are greater in the second and third quarters than in the first and fourth quarters. Our hotels' operations historically reflect this trend. We believe that we will be able to make distributions necessary to maintain REIT status through cash flow from operations; but if we are unable to do so, we may not be able to make the necessary distributions or we may have to generate cash by a sale of assets, increasing indebtedness or sales of securities to make the distributions. Risks of operating hotels under franchise licenses, which may be terminated or not renewed, may impact our lessees' ability to make rent payments and our ability to make distributions to shareholders.

Risks of operating hotels under franchise licenses, which may be terminated or not renewed, may impact our lessees' ability to make rent payments and our ability to make distributions to shareholders.

The continuation of the franchise licenses is subject to specified operating standards and other terms and conditions. All of the franchisors of our hotels periodically inspect our hotels to confirm adherence to their operating standards. The failure of our partnership, our lessees or HHMLP to maintain such standards or to adhere to such other terms and conditions could result in the loss or cancellation of the applicable franchise license. It is possible that a franchisor could condition the continuation of a franchise license on the completion of capital improvements that the trustees determine are too expensive or otherwise not economically feasible in light of general economic conditions, the operating results or prospects of the affected hotel. In that event, the trustees may elect to allow the franchise license to lapse or be terminated.

Table of Contents

There can be no assurance that a franchisor will renew a franchise license at each option period. If a franchisor terminates a franchise license, we, our partnership, our lessees and HHMLP may be unable to obtain a suitable replacement franchise, or to successfully operate the hotel independent of a franchise license. The loss of a franchise license could have a material adverse effect upon the operations or the underlying value of the related hotel because of the loss of associated name recognition, marketing support and centralized reservation systems provided by the franchisor. Although the percentage leases require our lessees to maintain the franchise licenses for each hotel, our lessees' loss of a franchise license for one or more of the hotels could have a material adverse effect on our partnership's revenues and our amounts available for distribution to shareholders.

Operating costs and capital expenditures for hotel renovation may be greater than anticipated and may adversely impact rent payments by our lessees and our ability to make distributions to shareholders.

Hotels generally have an ongoing need for renovations and other capital improvements, particularly in older structures, including periodic replacement of furniture, fixtures and equipment. Under the terms of our leases and management agreements with HHMLP, we are obligated to pay the cost of expenditures for items that are classified as capital items under GAAP that are necessary for the continued operation of our hotels. If these expenses exceed our estimate, the additional cost could have an adverse effect on amounts available for distribution to shareholders. In addition, we may acquire hotels in the future that require significant renovation. Renovation of hotels involves certain risks, including the possibility of environmental problems, construction cost overruns and delays, uncertainties as to market demand or deterioration in market demand after commencement of renovation and the emergence of unanticipated competition from hotels.

Adjustments to the purchase price to our hotels may lead to substantial shareholder dilution.

Five of the hotels currently owned by us were purchased pursuant to agreements that provide for post-closing purchase price adjustments based on the hotel's performance in relation to the purchase price. In the event that any of the purchase prices of these hotels are increased on an adjustment date and the purchase price adjustment is paid in common limited partnership units, owners of the common shares at such time will experience dilution.

Risks Related to Real Estate Investment Generally

Illiquidity of real estate investments could significantly impede our ability to respond to adverse changes in the performance of our properties and harm our financial condition.

Real estate investments are relatively illiquid. Our ability to vary our portfolio in response to changes in operating, economic and other conditions will be limited. No assurances can be given that the fair market value of any of our hotels will not decrease in the future.

If we suffer losses that are not covered by insurance or that are in excess of our insurance coverage limits, we could lose investment capital and anticipated profits.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Each lease specifies comprehensive insurance to be maintained on each of the our hotels, including liability and fire and extended coverage in amounts sufficient to permit the replacement of the hotel in the event of a total loss, subject to applicable deductibles. Leases for hotels subsequently acquired by us will contain similar provisions. However, there are certain types of losses, generally of a catastrophic nature, such as earthquakes, floods, hurricanes and acts of terrorism, that may be uninsurable or not economically insurable. Inflation, changes in building codes and ordinances, environmental considerations and other factors also might make it impracticable to use insurance proceeds to replace the applicable hotel after such applicable hotel has been damaged or destroyed. Under such circumstances, the insurance proceeds received by us might not be adequate to restore our economic position with respect to the applicable hotel. If any of these or similar events occur, it may reduce the return from the attached property and the value of our investment.

Table of Contents

REITs are subject to property taxes.

Each hotel is subject to real and personal property taxes. The real and personal property taxes on hotel properties in which we invest may increase as property tax rates change and as the properties are assessed or reassessed by taxing authorities. Many state and local governments are facing budget deficits which has led many of them, and may in the future lead others to, increase assessments and/or taxes. If property taxes increase, our ability to make expected distributions to our shareholders could be adversely affected.

Environmental matters could adversely affect our results.

Operating costs may be affected by the obligation to pay for the cost of complying with existing environmental laws, ordinances and regulations, as well as the cost of future legislation. Under various federal, state and local environmental laws, ordinances and regulations, a current or previous owner or operator of real property may be liable for the costs of removal or remediation of hazardous or toxic substances on, under or in such property. Such laws often impose liability whether or not the owner or operator knew of, or was responsible for, the presence of such hazardous or toxic substances. The cost of complying with environmental laws could materially adversely affect amounts available for distribution to shareholders. Phase I environmental assessments have been obtained on all of our hotels. Nevertheless, it is possible that these reports do not reveal all environmental liabilities or that there are material environmental liabilities of which we are unaware.

Costs associated with complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act may adversely affect our financial condition and operating results.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1993 (ADA), all public accommodations are required to meet certain federal requirements related to access and use by disabled persons. While we believe that our hotels are substantially in compliance with these requirements, a determination that we are not in compliance with the ADA could result in imposition of fines or an award of damages to private litigants. In addition, changes in governmental rules and regulations or enforcement policies affecting the use and operation of the hotels, including changes to building codes and fire and life-safety codes, may occur. If we were required to make substantial modifications at the hotels to comply with the ADA or other changes in governmental rules and regulations, our ability to make expected distributions to our shareholders could be adversely affected.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND OF EARNINGS TO COMBINED****FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS**

The following table sets forth the Company's consolidated ratios of earnings to fixed charges and of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends for the nine months ended September 30, 2003, and for each of the last four fiscal years.

	Year Ended December 31,				
	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999
Ratio of earnings to fixed charges	1.57	1.84	1.65	1.64	3.13
Ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends.	1.26	1.84	1.65	1.64	3.13

The ratio of earnings to fixed charges was computed by dividing earnings by fixed charges. The ratio of earnings to combined fixed charges and preferred stock dividends was computed by dividing earnings by the sum of fixed charges and dividends on preferred stock. Fixed charges consist of interest costs, whether expensed or capitalized, amortization of line of credit fees and amortization of interest rate caps and swap agreements. Preferred Stock Dividends consist of the amount of pre-tax earnings that is required to pay the dividends on our outstanding preferred stock.

USE OF PROCEEDS

Unless indicated otherwise in a prospectus supplement, we expect to use the net proceeds from the sale of these securities for general corporate purposes.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF SHARES OF BENEFICIAL INTEREST

The following summary of the terms of our shares of beneficial interest does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to our Declaration of Trust and Bylaws, copies of which are exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus is a part. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

General

Our Declaration of Trust provides that we may issue up to 50,000,000 Class A common shares of beneficial interest, \$0.01 par value per share, up to 50,000,000 Class B common shares of beneficial interest, \$0.01 par value per share, and up to 10,000,000 preferred shares of beneficial interest, \$0.01 par value per share. As of March 18, 2004, 13,571,665 Class A common shares were issued and outstanding and no Class B common or preferred shares were issued and outstanding. Effective as of January 26, 2004, the Class B common shares were automatically converted into Class A common shares, any differences between the Class A common shares and Class B common shares disappeared, and we now have only one class of common shares. As permitted by the Maryland REIT Law, our Declaration of Trust contains a provision permitting our Board of Trustees, without any action by our shareholders, to amend the Declaration of Trust to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of beneficial interest or the number of shares of any class of shares of beneficial interest that we have authority to issue.

Our Declaration of Trust provides that none of our shareholders is personally liable for any of our obligations solely as a result of his status as a shareholder. Our Bylaws further provide that we shall indemnify each shareholder against any claim or liability to which the shareholder, subject to certain limitations, may become subject by reason of his being or having been a shareholder or former shareholder and that we shall pay or reimburse each shareholder or former shareholder for all legal and other expenses reasonably incurred by him in connection with any claim or liability.

Common Shares

All common shares offered through this prospectus will be duly authorized, fully paid and nonassessable. As a shareholder, you will be entitled to receive distributions, or dividends, on the shares you own if the Board of Trustees authorizes a dividend out of our legally available assets. Your right to receive those dividends may be affected, however, by the preferential rights of any other class or series of shares of beneficial interest and the provisions of our declaration of trust regarding restrictions on the transfer of shares of beneficial interest. For example, you may not receive dividends if no funds are available for distribution after we pay dividends to holders of preferred shares. You will also be entitled to receive dividends based on our assets available for distribution to common shareholders if we liquidate, dissolve or wind-up our operations. The amount you, as a shareholder, would receive in the distribution would be determined by the amount of your beneficial ownership of us in comparison with other beneficial owners. Assets will be available for distribution to shareholders only after we have paid all of our known debts and liabilities and paid the holders of any preferred shares we may issue which are outstanding at that time.

Voting Rights of Common Shares

Subject to the provisions of the Declaration of Trust regarding the restriction of the transfer of shares of beneficial interest, each outstanding common share entitles the holder to one vote on all matters submitted to a vote of shareholders, including the election of trustees. There is no cumulative voting in the election of trustees, which means that the holders of a majority of the outstanding common shares, voting as a single

class, can elect all of the trustees then standing for election and the holders of the remaining shares are not able to elect any trustees.

Table of Contents

Under the Maryland REIT Law, a Maryland REIT generally cannot amend its declaration of trust or merge unless approved by the affirmative vote of shareholders holding at least two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote on the matter unless a lesser percentage (but not less than a majority of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter) is set forth in the REIT's declaration of trust subject to the terms of any other class or series of shares of beneficial interest. Our Declaration of Trust provides for approval by a majority of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter in all situations permitting or requiring action by the shareholders except with respect to: (a) our intentional disqualification as a REIT or revocation of our election to be taxed as a REIT (which requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the number of common shares entitled to vote on such matter at a meeting of our shareholders); (b) the election of trustees (which requires a plurality of all the votes cast at a meeting of our shareholders at which a quorum is present); (c) the removal of trustees (which requires the affirmative vote of the holders of two-thirds of our outstanding voting shares); (d) the amendment or repeal of certain designated sections of the Declaration of Trust (which require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the outstanding shares entitled to vote on such matters); (e) the amendment of the Declaration of Trust by shareholders (which requires the affirmative vote of a majority of votes entitled to be cast on the matter, except under certain circumstances specified in the Declaration of Trust that require the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter); and (f) our termination (which requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of all the votes entitled to be cast on the matter). Under the Maryland REIT Law, a declaration of trust may permit the trustees by a two-thirds vote to amend the declaration of trust from time to time to qualify as a REIT under the Code or the Maryland REIT Law without the affirmative vote or written consent of the shareholders. Our Declaration of Trust permits such action by a majority vote of the trustees. As permitted by the Maryland REIT Law, our Declaration of Trust contains a provision permitting our trustees, without any action by our shareholders, to amend the Declaration of Trust to increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of beneficial interest or the number of shares of any class of shares of beneficial interest that we have authority to issue.

Preferred Shares

Preferred shares may be offered and sold from time to time, in one or more series, as authorized by the Board of Trustees. The Declaration of Trust authorizes our Board of Trustees to classify any unissued preferred shares and to reclassify any previously classified but unissued preferred shares of any series from time to time in one or more series, as authorized by the Board of Trustees. Prior to issuance of shares of each series, the Board of Trustees is required by the Maryland REIT Law and our Declaration of Trust to set for each such series, subject to the provisions of our Declaration of Trust regarding the restriction on transfer of shares of beneficial interest, the terms, the preferences, conversion or other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends or other distributions, qualifications and terms or conditions of redemption for each such series. Thus, our Board of Trustees could authorize the issuance of preferred shares with terms and conditions which could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change in control in us that might involve a premium price for holders of common shares or otherwise be in their best interest.

You should refer to the prospectus supplement relating to the offering of any preferred shares for specific terms, including the following terms:

the title and stated value of those preferred shares;

the number of preferred shares offered and the offering price of those preferred shares;

the dividend rate(s), period(s) and/or payment date(s) or method(s) of calculation of any of those terms that apply to those preferred shares;

the date from which dividends on those preferred shares will accumulate, if applicable;

the terms and amount of a sinking fund, if any, for the purchase or redemption of those preferred shares;

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

the redemption rights, including conditions and the redemption price(s), if applicable, of those preferred shares;

any listing of those preferred shares on any securities exchange;

Table of Contents

the terms and conditions, if applicable, upon which those preferred shares will be convertible into common shares or any of our other securities, including the conversion price or rate (or manner of calculation thereof);

the relative ranking and preference of those preferred shares as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs;

any limitations on issuance of any series of preferred shares ranking senior to or on a parity with that series of preferred shares as to dividend rights and rights upon liquidation, dissolution or the winding up of our affairs;

the procedures for any auction and remarketing, if any, for those preferred shares;

any other specific terms, preferences, rights, limitations or restrictions of those preferred shares;

a discussion of federal income tax consequences applicable to those preferred shares; and

any limitations on direct or beneficial ownership and restrictions on transfer in addition to those described in **Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer**, in each case as may be appropriate to preserve our status as a real estate investment trust.

The terms of any preferred shares we issue through this prospectus will be set forth in an articles supplementary or amendment to our declaration of trust. We will file the articles supplementary or amendment as an exhibit to the registration statement that includes this prospectus, or as an exhibit to a filing with the SEC that is incorporated by reference into this prospectus. The description of preferred shares in any prospectus supplement will not describe all of the terms of the preferred shares in detail. You should read the applicable articles supplementary or amendment to our declaration of trust for a complete description of all of the terms.

Rank

Unless we say otherwise in a prospectus supplement, the preferred shares offered through that supplement will, with respect to dividend rights and rights upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, rank:

senior to all classes or series of our common shares, and to all other equity securities ranking junior to those preferred shares;

on a parity with all of our equity securities ranking on a parity with the preferred shares; and junior to all of our equity securities ranking senior to the preferred shares.

The term **equity securities** does not include convertible debt securities.

Dividends

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Subject to any preferential rights of any outstanding shares or series of shares and to the provisions of our declaration of trust regarding ownership of shares in excess of the ownership limitation described below under Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer, our preferred shareholders are entitled to receive dividends, when and as authorized by our Board of Trustees, out of legally available funds.

Redemption

If we provide for a redemption right in a prospectus supplement, the preferred shares offered through that supplement will be subject to mandatory redemption or redemption at our option, in whole or in part, in each case upon the terms, at the times and at the redemption prices set forth in that supplement.

Table of Contents

Liquidation Preference

As to any preferred shares offered through this prospectus, the applicable supplement shall provide that, upon the voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up of our affairs, the holders of those preferred shares shall receive, before any distribution or payment shall be made to the holders of any other class or series of shares ranking junior to those preferred shares in our distribution of assets upon any liquidation, dissolution or winding up, and after payment or provision for payment of our debts and other liabilities, out of our assets legally available for distribution to shareholders, liquidating distributions in the amount of any liquidation preference per share (set forth in the applicable supplement), plus an amount, if applicable, equal to all distributions accrued and unpaid thereon (not including any accumulation in respect of unpaid distributions for prior distribution periods if those preferred shares do not have a cumulative distribution). After payment of the full amount of the liquidating distributions to which they are entitled, the holders of those preferred shares will have no right or claim to any of our remaining assets. In the event that, upon our voluntary or involuntary liquidation, dissolution or winding up, the legally available assets are insufficient to pay the amount of the liquidating distributions on all of those outstanding preferred shares and the corresponding amounts payable on all of our shares of other classes or series of equity security ranking on a parity with those preferred shares in the distribution of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding up, then the holders of those preferred shares and all other such classes or series of equity security shall share ratably in any such distribution of assets in proportion to the full liquidating distributions to which they would otherwise be respectively entitled.

If the liquidating distributions are made in full to all holders of preferred shares entitled to receive those distributions prior to any other classes or series of equity security ranking junior to the preferred shares upon our liquidation, dissolution or winding up, then our remaining assets shall be distributed among the holders of those junior classes or series of equity shares, in each case according to their respective rights and preferences and their respective number of shares.

Voting Rights

Unless otherwise indicated in the applicable supplement, holders of our preferred shares will not have any voting rights, except as may be required by applicable law or any applicable rules and regulations of the American Stock Exchange.

Conversion Rights

The terms and conditions, if any, upon which any series of preferred shares is convertible into common shares will be set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to the offering of those preferred shares. These terms typically will include:

the number of common shares into which the preferred shares are convertible;

the conversion price (or manner of calculation thereof);

the conversion period;

provisions as to whether conversion will be at the option of the holders of the preferred shares or at our option;

the events requiring an adjustment of the conversion price; and

provisions affecting conversion in the event of the redemption of that series of preferred shares.

The Series A Preferred Shares

On April 21, 2003, in connection with the CNL transaction, our Board of Trustees classified and designated 350,000 preferred shares of beneficial interest as Series A Preferred Shares of beneficial interest, par value \$.01 per share. The Series A Convertible Preferred Units held by CNL in our operating partnership are

Table of Contents

exchangeable for our Series A Preferred Shares on a one for one basis. As of the date hereof, no preferred shares are outstanding. The Series A Preferred Shares are senior to the common shares as to payment of dividends, distributions of assets upon liquidation, dissolution or winding-up, whether voluntary or involuntary, or otherwise.

The terms of the Series A Preferred Shares are described in more detail under the heading *CNL Strategic Alliance Investment in Series A Convertible Preferred Units of Our Operating Partnership*.

Classification or Reclassification of Common Shares or Preferred Shares

Our Declaration of Trust authorizes the Board of Trustees to classify or reclassify any unissued common shares or preferred shares into one or more classes or series of shares of beneficial interest by setting or changing the preferences, conversion or other rights, voting powers, restrictions, limitations as to dividends or distributions, qualifications or terms or conditions of redemption of such new class or series of shares of beneficial interest.

Restrictions on Ownership and Transfer

Our Declaration of Trust, subject to certain exceptions described below, provides that no person may own, or be deemed to own by virtue of the attribution provisions of the Code, more than 9.9% of (i) the number of outstanding common shares of any class or series of common shares or (ii) the number of outstanding preferred shares of any class or series of preferred shares. For this purpose, a person includes a group and a beneficial owner as those terms are used for purposes of Section 13(d)(3) of the Exchange Act. Any transfer of common or preferred shares that would (i) result in any person owning, directly or indirectly, common or preferred shares in excess of the ownership limitation, (ii) result in the common and preferred shares being owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution), (iii) result in us being closely held within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code, or (iv) cause us to own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of the ownership interests in a tenant of our or our partnership's real property, within the meaning of Section 856(d)(2)(B) of the Code, will be null and void, and the intended transferee will acquire no rights in such common or preferred shares.

Subject to certain exceptions described below, any common shares or preferred shares the purported transfer of which would (i) result in any person owning, directly or indirectly, common shares or preferred shares in excess of the ownership limitation, (ii) result in the common shares and preferred shares being owned by fewer than 100 persons (determined without reference to any rules of attribution), (iii) result in our being closely held within the meaning of Section 856(h) of the Code, or (iv) cause us to own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of the ownership interests in a tenant of our or our partnership's real property, within the meaning of Section 856(d)(2)(B) of the Code, will be designated as shares-in-trust and transferred automatically to a trust effective on the day before the purported transfer of such common shares or preferred shares. The record holder of the common or preferred shares that are designated as shares-in-trust will be required to submit such number of common shares or preferred shares to us for registration in the name of the trust. The trustee will be designated by us, but will not be affiliated with us. The beneficiary of a trust will be one or more charitable organizations that are named by us.

Shares-in-trust will remain issued and outstanding common shares or preferred shares and will be entitled to the same rights and privileges as all other shares of the same class or series. The trust will receive all dividends and distributions on the shares-in-trust and will hold such dividends or distributions in trust for the benefit of the beneficiary. The trust will vote all shares-in-trust. The trust will designate a permitted transferee of the shares-in-trust, provided that the permitted transferee (i) purchases such shares-in-trust for valuable consideration and (ii) acquires such shares-in-trust without such acquisition resulting in a transfer to another trust.

The prohibited owner with respect to shares-in-trust will be required to repay to the record holder the amount of any dividends or distributions received by the prohibited owner (i) that are attributable to any

Table of Contents

shares-in-trust and (ii) the record date of which was on or after the date that such shares became shares-in-trust. The prohibited owner generally will receive from the record holder the lesser of (i) the price per share such prohibited owner paid for the common shares or preferred shares that were designated as shares-in-trust (or, in the case of a gift or devise, the market price (as defined below) per share on the date of such transfer) or (ii) the price per share received by the record holder from the sale of such shares-in-trust. Any amounts received by the record holder in excess of the amounts to be paid to the prohibited owner will be distributed to the beneficiary.

The shares-in-trust will be deemed to have been offered for sale to us, or its designee, at a price per share equal to the lesser of (i) the price per share in the transaction that created such shares-in-trust (or, in the case of a gift or devise, the market price per share on the date of such transfer) or (ii) the market price per share on the date that we, or our designee, accepts such offer. We will have the right to accept such offer for a period of 90 days after the later of (i) the date of the purported transfer which resulted in such shares-in-trust or (ii) the date we determine in good faith that a transfer resulting in such shares-in-trust occurred.

Market price on any date shall mean the average of the last quoted sale price as reported by the American Stock Exchange for the five consecutive trading days (as defined below) ending on such date.

Any person who acquires or attempts to acquire common or preferred shares in violation of the foregoing restrictions, or any person who owned common or preferred shares that were transferred to a trust, will be required (i) to give immediately written notice to us of such event and (ii) to provide to us such other information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of such transfer on our status as a REIT.

All persons who own, directly or indirectly, more than 5% (or such lower percentages as required pursuant to regulations under the Code) of the outstanding common and preferred shares must, within 30 days after December 31 of each year, provide to us a written statement or affidavit stating the name and address of such direct or indirect owner, the number of common and preferred shares owned directly or indirectly, and a description of how such shares are held. In addition, each direct or indirect shareholder shall provide to us such additional information as we may request in order to determine the effect, if any, of such ownership on our status as a REIT and to ensure compliance with the ownership limitation.

The ownership limitation generally does not apply to the acquisition of common or preferred shares by an underwriter that participates in a public offering of such shares. In addition, the trustees, upon receipt of advice of counsel or other evidence satisfactory to the trustees, in their sole and absolute discretion, may, in their sole and absolute discretion, exempt a person from the ownership limitation under certain circumstances. The foregoing restrictions continue to apply until (i) the trustees determine that it is no longer in our best interests to attempt to qualify, or to continue to qualify, as a REIT and (ii) there is an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the number of common and preferred shares entitled to vote on such matter at a regular or special meeting of our shareholders.

We granted limited waivers of these ownership limitations as follows:

a limited waiver to CNL allows CNL to own 100% of the outstanding Series A Preferred Shares and up to 60% of the outstanding common shares on a fully diluted basis, subject to CNL's compliance with certain representations and warranties (see CNL Strategic Alliance);

a limited waiver to RREEF America L.L.C., Deutsche Asset Management, Inc., and their related mutual funds and accounts, specifically including Scudder RREEF Real Estate Fund Inc., Scudder RREEF Real Estate Fund II Inc. and Scudder RREEF

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Securities Trust (collectively, the Scudder RREEF Group) to own 15% of the outstanding common shares, subject to their compliance with certain representations and warranties, including that no single person will own more than 9.9% of the outstanding common shares; and

a limited waiver to K.G. Redding & Associates, and its managed accounts to own 15% of the outstanding common shares, subject to their compliance with certain representations and warranties including that no single person will own more than 9.9% of the outstanding common shares.

Table of Contents

All certificates representing common or preferred shares bear a legend referring to the restrictions described above.

This ownership limitation could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a change in control or other transaction in which holders of some, or a majority, of shares of common shares might receive a premium for their shares of common shares over the then prevailing market price or which such holders might believe to be otherwise in their best interest.

Other Matters

Our transfer agent and registrar for our common shares is Wachovia Securities, N.A., Charlotte, North Carolina.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

The following description, together with the additional information we include in any applicable prospectus supplements, summarizes the material terms and provisions of the debt securities that we may offer under this prospectus. While the terms we have summarized below will apply generally to any future debt securities we may offer, we will describe the particular terms of any debt securities that we may offer in more detail in the applicable prospectus supplement. If we indicate in a prospectus supplement, the terms of any debt securities we offer under that prospectus supplement may differ from the terms we describe below.

The debt securities will be our direct unsecured general obligations and may include debentures, notes, bonds and/or other evidences of indebtedness. The debt securities will be either senior debt securities or subordinated debt securities. The debt securities will be issued under one or more separate indentures. Senior debt securities will be issued under a senior indenture, and subordinated debt securities will be issued under a subordinated indenture. We use the term *indentures* to refer to both the senior indenture and the subordinated indenture. The indentures will be qualified under the Trust Indenture Act. We use the term *debenture trustee* to refer to either the senior trustee or the subordinated trustee, as applicable.

The following summaries of material provisions of the debt securities and indentures are subject to, and qualified in their entirety by reference to, all the provisions of the indenture applicable to a particular series of debt securities.

General

We will describe in each prospectus supplement the following terms relating to a series of debt securities:

the title;

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

any limit on the amount that may be issued;

whether or not we will issue the series of debt securities in global form, the terms and who the depository will be;

the maturity date;

the annual interest rate, which may be fixed or variable, or the method for determining the rate and the date interest will begin to accrue, the dates interest will be payable and the regular record dates for interest payment dates or the method for determining such dates;

whether or not the debt securities will be secured or unsecured, and the terms of any secured debt;

the terms of the subordination of any series of subordinated debt;

the place where payments will be payable;

Table of Contents

our right, if any, to defer payment of interest and the maximum length of any such deferral period;

the date, if any, after which, and the price at which, we may, at our option, redeem the series of debt securities pursuant to any optional redemption provisions;

the date, if any, on which, and the price at which we are obligated, pursuant to any mandatory sinking fund provisions or otherwise, to redeem, or at the holder's option to purchase, the series of debt securities;

whether the indenture will restrict our ability to pay dividends, or will require us to maintain any asset ratios or reserves;

whether we will be restricted from incurring any additional indebtedness;

a discussion on any material or special United States federal income tax considerations applicable to the debt securities;

the denominations in which we will issue the series of debt securities, if other than denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof; and

any other specific terms, preferences, rights or limitations of, or restrictions on, the debt securities.

Conversion or Exchange Rights

We will set forth in the prospectus supplement the terms on which a series of debt securities may be convertible into or exchangeable for common shares or other securities of ours. We will include provisions as to whether conversion or exchange is mandatory, at the option of the holder or at our option. We may include provisions pursuant to which the number of common shares or other securities of ours that the holders of the series of debt securities receive would be subject to adjustment.

Consolidation, Merger or Sale

The indentures do not contain any covenant which restricts our ability to merge or consolidate, or sell, convey, transfer or otherwise dispose of all or substantially all of our assets. However, any successor to or acquirer of such assets must assume all of our obligations under the indentures or the debt securities, as appropriate.

Events of Default Under the Indenture

The following are events of default under the indentures with respect to any series of debt securities that we may issue:

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

if we fail to pay interest when due and our failure continues for a number of days to be stated in the indenture and the time for payment has not been extended or deferred;

if we fail to pay the principal, or premium, if any, when due and the time for payment has not been extended or delayed;

if we fail to observe or perform any other covenant contained in the debt securities or the indentures, other than a covenant specifically relating to another series of debt securities, and our failure continues for a number of days to be stated in the indenture after we receive notice from the debenture trustee or holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of the applicable series; and

if specified events of bankruptcy, insolvency or reorganization occur as to us.

If an event of default with respect to debt securities of any series occurs and is continuing, the debenture trustee or the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series, by notice to us in writing, and to the debenture trustee if notice is given by such holders, may declare the unpaid principal of, premium, if any, and accrued interest, if any, due and payable immediately.

Table of Contents

The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of an affected series may waive any default or event of default with respect to the series and its consequences, except defaults or events of default regarding payment of principal, premium, if any, or interest, unless we have cured the default or event of default in accordance with the indenture. Any waiver shall cure the default or event of default.

Subject to the terms of the indentures, if an event of default under an indenture shall occur and be continuing, the debenture trustee will be under no obligation to exercise any of its rights or powers under such indenture at the request or direction of any of the holders of the applicable series of debt securities, unless such holders have offered the debenture trustee reasonable indemnity. The holders of a majority in principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of any series will have the right to direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the debenture trustee, or exercising any trust or power conferred on the debenture trustee, with respect to the debt securities of that series, provided that:

the direction so given by the holder is not in conflict with any law or the applicable indenture; and

subject to its duties under the Trust Indenture Act, the debenture trustee need not take any action that might involve it in personal liability or might be unduly prejudicial to the holders not involved in the proceeding.

A holder of the debt securities of any series will only have the right to institute a proceeding under the indentures or to appoint a receiver or trustee, or to seek other remedies if:

the holder has given written notice to the debenture trustee of a continuing event of default with respect to that series;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series have made written request, and such holders have offered reasonable indemnity to the debenture trustee to institute the proceeding as trustee; and

the debenture trustee does not institute the proceeding, and does not receive from the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of that series other conflicting directions within 60 days after the notice, request and offer.

These limitations do not apply to a suit instituted by a holder of debt securities if we default in the payment of the principal, premium, if any, or interest on, the debt securities.

We will periodically file statements with the debenture trustee regarding our compliance with specified covenants in the indentures.

Modification of Indenture; Waiver

We and the debenture trustee may change an indenture without the consent of any holders with respect to specific matters, including:

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

to fix any ambiguity, defect or inconsistency in the indenture; and

to change anything that does not materially adversely affect the interests of any holder of debt securities of any series.

In addition, under the indentures, the rights of holders of a series of debt securities may be changed by us and the debenture trustee with the written consent of the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of the outstanding debt securities of each series that is affected. However, we and the debenture trustee may only make the following changes with the consent of each holder of any outstanding debt securities affected:

extending the fixed maturity of the series of debt securities;

reducing the principal amount, reducing the rate of or extending the time of payment of interest, or any premium payable upon the redemption of any debt securities; or

Table of Contents

reducing the percentage of debt securities, the holders of which are required to consent to any amendment.

Discharge

Each indenture provides that we can elect to be discharged from our obligations with respect to one or more series of debt securities, except for obligations to:

register the transfer or exchange of debt securities of the series;

replace stolen, lost or mutilated debt securities of the series;

maintain paying agencies;

hold monies for payment in trust;

compensate and indemnify the trustee; and

appoint any successor trustee.

In order to exercise our rights to be discharged, we must deposit with the trustee money or government obligations sufficient to pay all the principal of, any premium, if any, and interest on, the debt securities of the series on the dates payments are due.

Form, Exchange and Transfer

We will issue the debt securities of each series only in fully registered form without coupons and, unless we otherwise specify in the applicable prospectus supplement, in denominations of \$1,000 and any integral multiple thereof. The indentures provide that we may issue debt securities of a series in temporary or permanent global form and as book-entry securities that will be deposited with, or on behalf of, The Depository Trust Company or another depository named by us and identified in a prospectus supplement with respect to that series. See *Legal Ownership of Securities* for a further description of the terms relating to any book-entry securities.

At the option of the holder, subject to the terms of the indentures and the limitations applicable to global securities described in the applicable prospectus supplement, the holder of the debt securities of any series can exchange the debt securities for other debt securities of the same series, in any authorized denomination and of like tenor and aggregate principal amount.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Subject to the terms of the indentures and the limitations applicable to global securities set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, holders of the debt securities may present the debt securities for exchange or for registration of transfer, duly endorsed or with the form of transfer endorsed thereon duly executed if so required by us or the security registrar, at the office of the security registrar or at the office of any transfer agent designated by us for this purpose. Unless otherwise provided in the debt securities that the holder presents for transfer or exchange, we will make no service charge for any registration of transfer or exchange, but we may require payment of any taxes or other governmental charges.

We will name in the applicable prospectus supplement the security registrar, and any transfer agent in addition to the security registrar, that we initially designate for any debt securities. We may at any time designate additional transfer agents or rescind the designation of any transfer agent or approve a change in the office through which any transfer agent acts, except that we will be required to maintain a transfer agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of each series.

If we elect to redeem the debt securities of any series, we will not be required to:

issue, register the transfer of, or exchange any debt securities of that series during a period beginning at the opening of business 15 days before the day of mailing of a notice of redemption of any debt securities that may be selected for redemption and ending at the close of business on the day of the mailing; or

Table of Contents

register the transfer of or exchange any debt securities so selected for redemption, in whole or in part, except the unredeemed portion of any debt securities we are redeeming in part.

Information Concerning the Debenture Trustee

The debenture trustee, other than during the occurrence and continuance of an event of default under an indenture, undertakes to perform only those duties as are specifically set forth in the applicable indenture. Upon an event of default under an indenture, the debenture trustee must use the same degree of care as a prudent person would exercise or use in the conduct of his or her own affairs. Subject to this provision, the debenture trustee is under no obligation to exercise any of the powers given it by the indentures at the request of any holder of debt securities unless it is offered reasonable security and indemnity against the costs, expenses and liabilities that it might incur.

Payment and Paying Agents

Unless we otherwise indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will make payment of the interest on any debt securities on any interest payment date to the person in whose name the debt securities, or one or more predecessor securities, are registered at the close of business on the regular record date for the interest.

We will pay principal of and any premium and interest on the debt securities of a particular series at the office of the paying agents designated by us, except that unless we otherwise indicate in the applicable prospectus supplement, we will make interest payments by check which we will mail to the holder. Unless we otherwise indicate in a prospectus supplement, we will designate the corporate trust office of the debenture trustee in the City of New York as our sole paying agent for payments with respect to debt securities of each series. We will name in the applicable prospectus supplement any other paying agents that we initially designate for the debt securities of a particular series. We will maintain a paying agent in each place of payment for the debt securities of a particular series.

All money we pay to a paying agent or the debenture trustee for the payment of the principal of or any premium or interest on any debt securities which remains unclaimed at the end of two years after such principal, premium or interest has become due and payable will be repaid to us, and the holder of the security thereafter may look only to us for payment thereof.

Governing Law

The indentures and the debt securities will be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of New York, except to the extent that the Trust Indenture Act is applicable.

Subordination of Subordinated Notes

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

The subordinated notes will be unsecured and will be subordinate and junior in priority of payment to certain of our other indebtedness to the extent described in a prospectus supplement. The subordinated indenture does not limit the amount of subordinated notes which we may issue. It also does not limit us from issuing any other secured or unsecured debt.

LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

We can issue securities in registered form or in the form of one or more global securities. We describe global securities in greater detail below. We refer to those persons who have securities registered in their own names on the books that we or any applicable trustee maintain for this purpose as the holders of those securities. These persons are the legal holders of the securities. We refer to those persons who, indirectly through

Table of Contents

others, own beneficial interests in securities that are not registered in their own names, as indirect holders of those securities. As we discuss below, indirect holders are not legal holders, and investors in securities issued in book-entry form or in street name will be indirect holders.

Book-Entry Holders

We may issue securities in book-entry form only, as we will specify in the applicable prospectus supplement. This means securities may be represented by one or more global securities registered in the name of a financial institution that holds them as depositary on behalf of other financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system. These participating institutions, which are referred to as participants, in turn, hold beneficial interests in the securities on behalf of themselves or their customers.

Only the person in whose name a security is registered is recognized as the holder of that security. Securities issued in global form will be registered in the name of the depositary or its participants. Consequently, for securities issued in global form, we will recognize only the depositary as the holder of the securities, and we will make all payments on the securities to the depositary. The depositary passes along the payments it receives to its participants, which in turn pass the payments along to their customers who are the beneficial owners. The depositary and its participants do so under agreements they have made with one another or with their customers; they are not obligated to do so under the terms of the securities.

As a result, investors in a book-entry security will not own securities directly. Instead, they will own beneficial interests in a global security, through a bank, broker or other financial institution that participates in the depositary's book-entry system or holds an interest through a participant. As long as the securities are issued in global form, investors will be indirect holders, and not holders, of the securities.

Street Name Holders

We may terminate a global security or issue securities in non-global form. In these cases, investors may choose to hold their securities in their own names or in street name. Securities held by an investor in street name would be registered in the name of a bank, broker or other financial institution that the investor chooses, and the investor would hold only a beneficial interest in those securities through an account he or she maintains at that institution.

For securities held in street name, we will recognize only the intermediary banks, brokers and other financial institutions in whose names the securities are registered as the holders of those securities, and we will make all payments on those securities to them. These institutions pass along the payments they receive to their customers who are the beneficial owners, but only because they agree to do so in their customer agreements or because they are legally required to do so. Investors who hold securities in street name will be indirect holders, not holders, of those securities.

Legal Holders

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Our obligations, as well as the obligations of any applicable trustee and of any third parties employed by us or a trustee, run only to the legal holders of the securities. We do not have obligations to investors who hold beneficial interests in global securities, in street name or by any other indirect means. This will be the case whether an investor chooses to be an indirect holder of a security or has no choice because we are issuing the securities only in global form.

For example, once we make a payment or give a notice to the holder, we have no further responsibility for the payment or notice even if that holder is required, under agreements with depositary participants or customers or by law, to pass it along to the indirect holders but does not do so. Similarly, we may want to obtain the approval of the holders to amend an indenture, to relieve us of the consequences of a default or of our obligation

Table of Contents

to comply with a particular provision of the indenture or for other purposes. In such an event, we would seek approval only from the holders, and not the indirect holders, of the securities. Whether and how the holders contact the indirect holders is up to the holders.

Special Considerations for Indirect Holders

If you hold securities through a bank, broker or other financial institution, either in book-entry form or in street name, you should check with your own institution to find out:

how it handles securities payments and notices;

whether it imposes fees or charges;

how it would handle a request for the holders' consent, if ever required;

whether and how you can instruct it to send you securities registered in your own name so you can be a holder, if that is permitted in the future;

how it would exercise rights under the securities if there were a default or other event triggering the need for holders to act to protect their interests; and

if the securities are in book-entry form, how the depository's rules and procedures will affect these matters.

Global Securities

A global security is a security held by a depository which represents one or any other number of individual securities. Generally, all securities represented by the same global securities will have the same terms.

Each security issued in book-entry form will be represented by a global security that we deposit with and register in the name of a financial institution or its nominee that we select. The financial institution that we select for this purpose is called the depository. Unless we specify otherwise in the applicable prospectus supplement, The Depository Trust Company, New York, New York, known as DTC, will be the depository for all securities issued in book-entry form.

A global security may not be transferred to or registered in the name of anyone other than the depository, its nominee or a successor depository, unless special termination situations arise. We describe those situations below under "Special Situations When a Global Security Will Be Terminated." As a result of these arrangements, the depository, or its nominee, will be the sole registered owner and holder of all securities represented by a global security, and investors will be permitted to own only beneficial interests in a global security. Beneficial interests must be held by means of an account with a broker, bank or other financial institution that in turn has an account with the depository or with another

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

institution that does. Thus, an investor whose security is represented by a global security will not be a holder of the security, but only an indirect holder of a beneficial interest in the global security.

If the prospectus supplement for a particular security indicates that the security will be issued in global form only, then the security will be represented by a global security at all times unless and until the global security is terminated. If termination occurs, we may issue the securities through another book-entry clearing system or decide that the securities may no longer be held through any book-entry clearing system.

Special Considerations for Global Securities

As an indirect holder, an investor's rights relating to a global security will be governed by the account rules of the investor's financial institution and of the depository, as well as general laws relating to securities transfers. We do not recognize an indirect holder as a holder of securities and instead deal only with the depository that holds the global security.

Table of Contents

If securities are issued only in the form of a global security, an investor should be aware of the following:

An investor cannot cause the securities to be registered in his or her name, and cannot obtain non-global certificates for his or her interest in the securities, except in the special situations we describe below;

An investor will be an indirect holder and must look to his or her own bank or broker for payments on the securities and protection of his or her legal rights relating to the securities, as we describe under *Ownership of Securities* above;

An investor may not be able to sell interests in the securities to some insurance companies and to other institutions that are required by law to own their securities in non-book-entry form;

An investor may not be able to pledge his or her interest in a global security in circumstances where certificates representing the securities must be delivered to the lender or other beneficiary of the pledge in order for the pledge to be effective;

The depositary's policies, which may change from time to time, will govern payments, transfers, exchanges and other matters relating to an investor's interest in a global security. We and any applicable trustee have no responsibility for any aspect of the depositary's actions or for its records of ownership interests in a global security. We and the trustee also do not supervise the depositary in any way;

The depositary may, and we understand that DTC will, require that those who purchase and sell interests in a global security within its book-entry system use immediately available funds, and your broker or bank may require you to do so as well; and

Financial institutions that participate in the depositary's book-entry system, and through which an investor holds its interest in a global security, may also have their own policies affecting payments, notices and other matters relating to the securities. There may be more than one financial intermediary in the chain of ownership for an investor. We do not monitor and are not responsible for the actions of any of those intermediaries.

Special Situations when a Global Security will be Terminated

In a few special situations described below, the global security will terminate and interests in it will be exchanged for physical certificates representing those interests. After that exchange, the choice of whether to hold securities directly or in street name will be up to the investor. Investors must consult their own banks or brokers to find out how to have their interests in securities transferred to their own name, so that they will be direct holders. We have described the rights of holders and street name investors above.

The global security will terminate when the following special situations occur:

if the depositary notifies us that it is unwilling, unable or no longer qualified to continue as depositary for that global security and we do not appoint another institution to act as depositary within 90 days;

if we notify any applicable trustee that we wish to terminate that global security; or

if an event of default has occurred with regard to securities represented by that global security and has not been cured or waived.

The prospectus supplement may also list additional situations for terminating a global security that would apply only to the particular series of securities covered by the prospectus supplement. When a global security terminates, the depositary, and not we or any applicable trustee, is responsible for deciding the names of the institutions that will be the initial direct holders.

Table of Contents

**CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF MARYLAND LAW AND
OF OUR DECLARATION OF TRUST AND BYLAWS**

Classification of the Board of Trustees

Our Bylaws provide that the number of our trustees may be established by the Board of Trustees but may not be fewer than three nor more than nine. As of August 31, 2003, we have seven trustees. The trustees may increase or decrease the number of trustees by a vote of at least 80% of the members of the Board of Trustees, provided that the number of trustees shall never be less than the number required by Maryland law and that the tenure of office of a trustee shall not be affected by any decrease in the number of trustees. Any vacancy will be filled, including a vacancy created by an increase in the number of trustees, at any regular meeting or at any special meeting called for that purpose, by a majority of the remaining trustees or, if no trustees remain, by a majority of our shareholders.

Pursuant to our Declaration of Trust, the Board of Trustees is divided into two classes of trustees. Trustees of each class are chosen for two-year terms and each year one class of trustees will be elected by the shareholders. We believe that classification of the Board of Trustees helps to assure the continuity and stability of our business strategies and policies as determined by the trustees. Holders of common shares have no right to cumulative voting in the election of trustees. Consequently, at each annual meeting of shareholders, the holders of a majority of the common shares are able to elect all of the successors of the class of trustees whose terms expire at that meeting.

The classified board provision could have the effect of making the replacement of incumbent trustees more time consuming and difficult. The staggered terms of trustees may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer or an attempt to change control in us or other transaction that might involve a premium price for holders of common shares that might be in the best interest of the shareholders.

Removal of Trustees

The Declaration of Trust provides that a trustee may be removed with or without cause upon the affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast in the election of trustees. This provision, when coupled with the provision in the Bylaws authorizing the Board of Trustees to fill vacant trusteeships, precludes shareholders from removing incumbent trustees, except upon a substantial affirmative vote, and filling the vacancies created by such removal with their own nominees.

Business Combinations

Under Maryland law, certain business combinations between us and any person who beneficially owns, directly or indirectly, 10% or more of the voting power of our shares, an affiliate of ours who, at any time within the previous two years was the beneficial owner of 10% or more of the voting power of our shares (who the statute terms an "interested shareholder"), or an affiliate of an interested shareholder, are prohibited for five years after the most recent date on which they became interested shareholders. The business combinations that are subject to this law include mergers, consolidations, share exchanges or, in certain circumstances, asset transfers or issuances or reclassifications of equity securities. After the five-year period has elapsed, a proposed business combination must be recommended by the Board of Trustees and approved by the affirmative vote of at least:

80% of our outstanding voting shares; and

two-thirds of the outstanding voting shares, excluding shares held by the interested shareholder,

unless, among other conditions, the shareholders receive a fair price, as defined by Maryland law, for their shares and the consideration is received in cash or in the same form as previously paid by the interested shareholder for its shares.

Table of Contents

These provisions do not apply, however, to business combinations that the Board of Trustees approves or exempts before the time that the interested shareholder becomes an interested shareholder.

Pursuant to a resolution of our Board of Trustees, CNL's ownership of our securities are exempt from the Maryland Business Combination Statute.

Control Share Acquisitions

Maryland law provides that control shares acquired in a control share acquisition have no voting rights unless approved by a vote of two-thirds of our outstanding voting shares, excluding shares owned by the acquiror or by officers or directors who are employees of ours. Control shares are voting shares which, if aggregated with all other shares previously acquired by the acquiring person, or in respect of which the acquiring person is able to exercise or direct the exercise of voting power, other than by revocable proxy, would entitle the acquiring person to exercise voting power in electing trustees within one of the following ranges of voting power:

one-tenth or more but less than one-third;

one-third or more but less than a majority; or

a majority of all voting power.

Control shares do not include shares the acquiring person is then entitled to vote as a result of having previously obtained shareholder approval. A control share acquisition means the acquisition of control shares, subject to certain exceptions.

A person who has made or proposes to make a control share acquisition, upon satisfaction of certain conditions, including an undertaking to pay expenses, may compel our Board of Trustees to call a special meeting of shareholders to be held within 50 days of demand to consider the voting rights of the shares. If no request for a meeting is made, we may present the question at any shareholders meeting.

If voting rights are not approved at the shareholders meeting or if the acquiring person does not deliver the statement required by Maryland law, then, subject to certain conditions and limitations, we may redeem any or all of the control shares, except those for which voting rights have previously been approved, for fair value. Fair value is determined without regard to the absence of voting rights for the control shares and as of the date of the last control share acquisition or of any meeting of shareholders at which the voting rights of the shares were considered and not approved. If voting rights for control shares are approved at a shareholders meeting, and as a result thereof the acquiror may then vote a majority of the shares entitled to vote, all other shareholders may exercise appraisal rights. The fair value of the shares for purposes of these appraisal rights may not be less than the highest price per share paid by the acquiror in the control share acquisition. The control share acquisition statute does not apply to shares acquired in a merger, consolidation or share exchange if we are a party to the transaction, nor does it apply to acquisitions approved or exempted by our Declaration of Trust or Bylaws.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Our Bylaws contain a provision exempting from the control share acquisition act any and all acquisitions by any person of our shares. There can be no assurance that this provision will not be amended or eliminated at any time in the future.

Amendment

Our Declaration of Trust provides that it may be amended with the approval of at least a majority of all of the votes entitled to be cast on the matter, but that certain provisions of the Declaration of Trust regarding (i) our Board of Trustees, including the provisions regarding independent trustee requirements, (ii) the restrictions on transfer of the common shares and the preferred shares, (iii) amendments to the Declaration of Trust by the trustees and our shareholders and (iv) our termination may not be amended, altered, changed or repealed without the approval of two-thirds of all of the votes entitled to be cast on these matters. In addition, the Declaration of

Table of Contents

Trust provides that it may be amended by the Board of Trustees, without shareholder approval to (a) increase or decrease the aggregate number of shares of beneficial interest or the number of shares of any class of beneficial interest that the Trust has authority to issue or (b) qualify as a REIT under the Code or under the Maryland REIT law. Our Bylaws may be amended or altered exclusively by the Board of Trustees.

Limitation of Liability and Indemnification

Our Declaration of Trust limits the liability of our trustees and officers for money damages, except for liability resulting from:

actual receipt of an improper benefit or profit in money, property or services; or

a final judgment based upon a finding of active and deliberate dishonesty by the trustees or others that was material to the cause of action adjudicated.

Our Declaration of Trust authorizes us, to the maximum extent permitted by Maryland law, to indemnify, and to pay or reimburse reasonable expenses to, any of our present or former trustees or officers or any individual who, while a trustee or officer and at our request, serves or has served another entity, employee benefit plan or any other enterprise as a trustee, director, officer, partner or otherwise. The indemnification covers any claim or liability against the person. Our Bylaws and Maryland law require us to indemnify each trustee or officer who has been successful, on the merits or otherwise, in the defense of any proceeding to which he or she is made a party by reason of his or her service to us.

Maryland law permits a Maryland real estate investment trust to indemnify its present and former trustees and officers against liabilities and reasonable expenses actually incurred by them in any proceeding unless:

the act or omission of the trustee or officer was material to the matter giving rise to the proceeding; and

was committed in bad faith; or

was the result of active and deliberate dishonesty; or

in a criminal proceeding, the trustee or officer had reasonable cause to believe that the act or omission was unlawful.

However, a Maryland real estate investment trust may not indemnify for an adverse judgment in a derivative action. Our Bylaws and Maryland law require us, as a condition to advancing expenses in certain circumstances, to obtain:

a written affirmation by the trustee or officer of his or her good faith belief that he or she has met the standard of conduct necessary for indemnification; and

a written undertaking to repay the amount reimbursed if the standard of conduct was not met.

Certain Provisions of Maryland Law

Maryland law also provides that Maryland real estate investment trust that are subject to the Exchange Act and have at least three outside trustees can elect by resolution of the Board of Trustees to be subject to some corporate governance provisions that may be inconsistent with the real estate investment trust declaration of trust and bylaws. Under the applicable statute, a board of trustees may classify itself without the vote of shareholders. A board of trustees classified in that manner cannot be altered by amendment to the declaration of trust of the real estate investment trust. Further, the board of trustees may, by electing into applicable statutory provisions and notwithstanding the declaration of trust or bylaws:

provide that a special meeting of shareholders, will be called only at the request of shareholders, entitled to cast at least a majority of the votes entitled to be cast at the meeting,

reserve for itself the right to fix the number of trustees,

Table of Contents

provide that a trustee may be removed only by the vote of the holders of two-thirds of the shares entitled to vote, and

retain for itself sole authority to fill vacancies created by the death, removal or resignation of a trustee.

In addition, a trustee elected to fill a vacancy under this provision will serve for the balance of the unexpired term instead of until the next annual meeting of shareholders. A board of trustees may implement all or any of these provisions without amending the declaration of trust or bylaws and without shareholder approval. A real estate investment trust may be prohibited by its declaration of trust or by resolution of its board of trustees from electing any of the provisions of the statute. We are not prohibited from implementing any or all of the statute. If implemented, these provisions could discourage offers to acquire our shares and could increase the difficulty of completing an offer.

Possible Anti-takeover Effect of Certain Provisions of Maryland Law and of our Declaration of Trust and Bylaws

The business combination provisions and, if the applicable exemption in the Bylaws is rescinded, the control share acquisition provisions of the MGCL, the provisions of our Declaration of Trust on classification of the Board of Trustees, the removal of trustees and the restrictions on the transfer of shares of beneficial interest and the advance notice provisions of the Bylaws could have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing a transaction or a change in the control that might involve a premium price for holders of the common shares or otherwise be in their best interest.

CNL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

The following summary of the terms of the CNL strategic alliance does not purport to be complete and is subject to and qualified in its entirety by reference to the described agreements, which are exhibits to the Registration Statement of which this Prospectus is a part. See [Where You Can Find More Information](#).

In April of 2003, we entered into a strategic alliance with CNL Hospitality Partners, L.P., a subsidiary of CNL Hospitality Properties, Inc. CNL is a public company, which has been one of the most active investors in lodging properties over the past several years. Since its inception in 1996, CNL has invested over \$2.2 billion in hotel properties. The strategic alliance positions us as one of CNL's preferred partners for investing in mid-scale hotels. Our agreement with CNL provides that it will invest up to \$25 million in our operating partnership and up to \$40 million in a newly formed hotel acquisition joint venture. CNL has currently invested \$19 million in our operating partnership and \$8 million in the joint venture, which acquired its first hotel, the Hampton Inn Chelsea, New York, New York, on August 29, 2003.

Investment in Series A Convertible Preferred Units of Our Operating Partnership

On April 21 and May 21, 2003, CNL purchased a total of 150,000 units of a newly created series of convertible preferred limited partnership units of our operating partnership (the Series A Convertible Preferred Units) in exchange for CNL's payment of \$15,000,000 in cash, net of certain transaction costs. CNL purchased an additional 40,266 Series A Convertible Preferred Units on August 29, 2003, for approximately \$4 million. CNL may be obligated to purchase up to an additional 59,734 Series A Convertible Preferred Units, also at a per unit price of \$100.00.

Dividends

Each Series A Convertible Preferred Unit provides for a quarterly cumulative preferred dividend of 10.5% per annum on the \$100 original issue price per share and a liquidation value of \$100 per share, plus any accrued but unpaid dividends.

Table of Contents

Preemptive Rights

Each Series A Convertible Preferred Unit has preemptive rights during the three-year period after their date of issuance in the event our operating partnership sells additional partnership units, provided that no such approval shall be required in the event of (i) an issuance of common operating partnership units in exchange for a contribution of properties to the operating partnership approved by our Board of Trustees, (b) the issuance of operating partnership units in connection with an approved employee benefit plan, including issuance of partnership units to our company in connection with the issuance of up to 650,000 common shares pursuant to an approved employee benefit plan, or (c) the issuance of operating partnership units to our company in connection with the issuance of common shares pursuant to a dividend reinvestment plan.

Exchange and Conversion

Each Series A Convertible Preferred Unit is exchangeable or convertible at the option of its holder for either (i) one Series A Preferred Share or (ii) approximately 14.8 common shares or ordinary operating partnership units, based on an initial conversion price of \$6.7555 per common share or ordinary operating partnership unit. The initial conversion price represents the volume weighted average closing price for the common shares for the 20 trading days preceding April 21, 2003. The exchange or conversion price is subject to anti-dilution adjustments upon the occurrence of certain events, including share splits and combinations, reclassifications, reorganizations, mergers, consolidations or asset sales, or the sale of common shares or operating partnership units below 85% of the then effective conversion or exchange price (initially \$5.74).

Redemption

Upon a vote of a majority of the members of our Board of Trustees, we may redeem all or any part of the outstanding Series A Convertible Preferred Units for a per Unit redemption price equal to the sum of the original issue price, all accrued but unpaid dividends and a premium which is initially \$10.50 per unit and declines annually on a straight line basis over a ten-year period. A Series A Convertible Preferred Unit holder who has received a redemption notice will have the opportunity in lieu of redemption to exchange or convert its Series A Convertible Preferred Units into Series A Preferred Shares, common shares or ordinary operating partnership units.

Voting Rights

The holders of Series A Convertible Preferred Units have the right to vote as a single class with holders of ordinary operating partnership interests on all matters upon which they are entitled to vote. The holders of operating partnership units are entitled to a number of votes equal to the number of common shares for which their units would then be exchangeable.

Approval Rights

We must obtain the approval of the holders of a majority of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units to effect the following actions:

any creation, or increase in number of, securities senior to the Series A Convertible Preferred Units;

the issuance of any class or series of equity interest in our operating partnership prior to the first to occur of (i) the issuance of an aggregate of 250,000 Series A Convertible Preferred Units in accordance with the terms of the CNL strategic alliance or (ii) certain terminating events defined in the agreement pursuant to which CNL purchased its Series A Convertible Preferred Units; provided that no such approval shall be required in the event of (i) an issuance of common operating partnership units in exchange for a contribution of properties to the operating partnership approved by our Board of Trustees, (b) the issuance of operating partnership units in connection with an approved employee benefit plan, including issuance of partnership units to our company in connection with the issuance of

Table of Contents

up to 650,000 common shares pursuant to an approved employee benefit plan, or (c) the issuance of operating partnership units to our company in connection with the issuance of common shares pursuant to a dividend reinvestment plan;

during any period when distributions with respect to the Series A Convertible Preferred Units are in arrears, any purchase, redemption or other acquisition for value (or payment into or setting aside as a sinking fund for such purpose) of any operating partnership units junior to the Series A Convertible Preferred Units;

during any period when distributions with respect to the Series A Convertible Preferred Units are in arrears, any action that results in the declaration or payment of distributions, direct or indirect on account of any junior units;

any action that results in any amendment, alteration, or repeal (by merger or consolidation or otherwise) of any provisions of the amendment to the operating partnership agreement designating the Series A Convertible Preferred Units, any provisions of our Declaration of Trust, as amended, or our By-laws which eliminates, amends or affects any term (adversely or otherwise) of the Series A Preferred Shares and/or the common shares or shares of any series ranking senior to the Series A Preferred Shares, including, without limitation, the redemption, dividend, voting, preemptive, anti-dilution and other powers, rights and preferences of such shares or adversely affects any holder thereof;

any action where our company or the operating partnership or any of our or its material subsidiaries files any voluntary, or consents to the filing of any involuntary, petition for relief under title 11 of the United States Code or any successor statute or under any reorganization, arrangement, insolvency, readjustment of debt, dissolution or liquidation law with respect to our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries;

any action where our company, the operating partnership or any of our material subsidiaries appoints or consents to, or acquiesces in, the appointment of a receiver, conservator, trustee or other similar official charged with the administration, control, management, operation, liquidation, dissolution or valuation of our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its material subsidiaries, or any of their respective businesses or assets; and

any agreement to do any of the transactions set forth above.

We are also required to obtain the approval of the holders of a majority of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units to effect the following actions, but only for so long as the holders of Series A Convertible Preferred Units hold in the aggregate that number of Series A Convertible Preferred Units, common shares and any other class or series of our equity that represents, on an as converted or exchanged basis, at least five percent of the common shares then outstanding on a fully diluted basis, assuming the conversion or exchange for common shares of all convertible or exchangeable securities of our company and our operating partnership:

any action where our company or the operating partnership merges with or into or consolidates with any other entity, but excluding any merger effected exclusively for the purpose of changing the domicile of our company or the operating partnership;

any action where the operating partnership or any of its subsidiaries directly or indirectly sells, leases, transfers, conveys or assigns (whether in a single transaction or series of related transactions) all or substantially all of its assets, other than transactions involving leases by the operating partnership of its hotel properties in the ordinary course of its business;

all transactions involving our company or the operating partnership of the type referred in paragraph (a) of Rule 145 under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and all transactions involving our company or the operating partnership constituting a change-in-control within the meaning of Rule 14(f) under the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended;

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

any action where our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries, or HHMLP, on the one hand, engages in any transaction with an affiliate of our company or the operating

Table of Contents

partnership on the other hand, provided, however, to the extent such transactions are of the type which, but for their affiliated nature, would fall within the ordinary course of business and day-to-day affairs of the operating partnership, such actions need not be approved on a transaction-by-transaction basis but may be entered into pursuant to annual budgets and purchase plans approved by the holders of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units. For purposes of these provisions, affiliate has the meaning set forth in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act and includes, without limitation, (a) the trustees and senior officers of our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries, his or her spouse, parent, sibling, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother-in-law, sister-in-law, aunt, uncle, or first cousin, (b) any person directly or indirectly owning, controlling or holding the power to vote 5% or more of the outstanding voting securities of our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries, and (c) any person 5% or more of whose outstanding voting securities are directly or indirectly owned, controlled or held with power to vote by our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries;

for our company, the operating partnership or any of our or its subsidiaries to engage in any business where either the operation of such business or ownership of the assets related to such business will result in our company failing to satisfy the provisions of Section 856 of the Code;

conducting any business activities or the ownership of any asset of our company (other than operating partnership interests) in each case other than through the operating partnership or one or more subsidiary partnerships as contemplated by the operating partnership agreement; and

admission of a substitute or additional general partner of the operating partnership.

We are not required to obtain the approval of the Series A Convertible Preferred Unit holders regarding any of the foregoing actions if such action provides that all holders of Series A Convertible Preferred Units shall as a result of and simultaneously with such action receive no less than the liquidation preference plus the applicable premium to which such Units are entitled under the operating partnership agreement.

Series A Preferred Shares

The Series A Preferred Shares, into which the Series A Convertible Preferred Units are exchangeable, entitle the holders thereof to substantially similar rights as those attendant to the Series A Convertible Preferred Units in our operating partnership with respect to dividends, preemptive rights and redemption by us. In addition, holders of the Series A Preferred Shares have substantially similar approval rights as those held by holders of the Series A Convertible Preferred Units.

Each Series A Preferred Share is convertible at the option of its holder into approximately 14.8 common shares, based on an initial conversion price of \$6.7555 per common share and subject to anti-dilution adjustments upon the occurrence of certain events, including share splits and combinations, reclassifications, reorganizations, mergers, consolidations or asset sales, or the sale of common shares or limited partnership units below 85% of the then effective conversion price (initially \$5.74).

Subject to the terms of the standstill agreement described below, holders of Series A Preferred Shares have the right to vote, on an as converted basis, and as a single class, with holders of our common shares on all matters other than the designation, election or removal of trustees. The holders of a majority of the outstanding Series A Preferred Shares have the right to nominate an observer to our Board of Trustees. For so long as the holders of Series A Preferred Shares hold at least five percent of the common shares on an as-converted and fully diluted basis, a majority of the Series A Preferred Share holders will have the right, voting as a separate class, to nominate and elect at least one member of our Board of Trustees, and in no event less than 11.1% of the total members of the Board of Trustees, if (i) they receive a favorable ruling from the Internal Revenue Service which permits CNL to continue to qualify as a REIT under certain circumstances, (ii) there is a change in the law providing for

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

relief comparable to that sought from the IRS as described in clause (i) above, (iii) they receive an opinion of counsel consistent with such relief or (iv) there is a transfer of the Series A Convertible Preferred

Table of Contents

Units whereby the holder of a majority of the Series A Preferred Shares was a transferee of Series A Convertible Preferred Units which were converted into Series A Preferred Shares and could hold such shares without causing such holder to violate certain IRS rules relating to qualifying as a REIT. In addition, upon the failure of our company or our operating partnership to pay two consecutive dividends or distributions on the Series A Preferred Shares or the Series A Convertible Preferred Units, or our failure to maintain its status as a REIT, the holders of the Series A Preferred Shares will have the right to nominate and elect 40% of the members of our Board of Trustees.

Excepted Holder Agreement

In connection with the strategic alliance, we and CNL entered into an Excepted Holder Agreement pursuant to which we exempted CNL from compliance with the 9.9% ownership limitation regarding any class or series of our equity securities set forth in our Declaration of Trust. Under the Excepted Holder Agreement, and in compliance with its terms, CNL may own up to 100% of the outstanding Series A Preferred Shares and up to 60% of the outstanding common shares (assuming redemption of the outstanding common limited partnership units for common shares), provided that the 60% ownership limit will rise to 100% if our company or our operating partnership fails to pay in full for two consecutive calendar quarters the dividends or distributions due on the Series A Preferred Shares and Series A Convertible Preferred Units or if we fail to maintain our status as a real estate investment trust.

Standstill Agreement

We have entered into a Standstill Agreement with CNL pursuant to which CNL and its affiliates have agreed not to acquire any additional securities of ours other than as contemplated by the CNL transaction, participate in any solicitation of proxies, call meetings of our shareholders, seek representation on our Board of Trustees or vote its securities in excess of 40% of the total issued and outstanding voting shares. Securities of ours owned by CNL in excess of the 40% limit are voted by proxy in the same manner and proportion as the common shares held by all other holders. The Standstill Agreement provides that it will remain in effect until April 21, 2009 unless terminated earlier by CNL upon:

the failure by our company or our operating partnership to pay two consecutive quarterly dividends or distributions on the Series A Preferred Shares or the Series A Convertible Preferred Units;

our failure to maintain our status as a REIT;

another person acquiring beneficial ownership in excess of 9.9% of our equity shares that are issued and outstanding;

our Board of Trustees authorizing certain business combinations involving us;

another person's submission of a proposal to us relating to such business combinations that is not rejected by our Board as not in the best interests of our shareholders;

in connection with any business combination, our removal of any impediments in our Declaration of Trust or Bylaws to any business combination;

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

CNL's ownership of our securities, on a fully diluted basis, decreases to less than 9.9% of the common shares then outstanding, on a fully diluted basis and the termination of the Excepted Holder Agreement or other exception to the ownership limit set forth in our Declaration of Trust applicable to CNL and its affiliates; and

the material failure by our company or our operating partnership to comply with any of the terms of the Series A Preferred Shares or the Series A Convertible Preferred Units.

Upon the occurrence of any of the aforementioned events, the 60% ownership limit on CNL's ability to acquire common shares set forth in the Excepted Holder Agreement and the restrictions set forth in the Standstill Agreement on CNL's ability to acquire additional securities of our company will terminate and CNL will be permitted to acquire any amount of additional securities of our company or our operating partnership.

Table of Contents

Registration Rights

We have also entered into a Registration Rights Agreement with CNL pursuant to which CNL may, subject to certain cutbacks and restrictions, cause us to register the common shares and Series A Preferred Shares owned by CNL under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and under state securities laws of any jurisdiction requested by CNL.

Hotel Acquisition Joint Venture

We have also have formed a joint venture limited partnership with CNL, in which our operating partnership is serving as the sole general partner and in which CNL is the sole limited partner. The joint venture agreement provides that CNL will invest up to \$40 million, and HT will invest up to \$20 million in the joint venture to acquire hotel real estate assets approved by an investment committee comprised of an equal number of representatives from Hersha and CNL. The investments in the joint venture will be subject to satisfaction of the conditions to closing set forth in the joint venture agreement.

On August 29, 2003, the joint venture made its first acquisition, the Chelsea Hampton Inn, New York, New York and accepted a \$4 million capital contribution from us and an \$8 million capital contribution from CNL.

Net cash flow from operations of the joint venture will be distributed: first, to CNL to provide a 10.5% per annum return on its unreturned capital contributions; second, to us to provide an annual administrative fee of .35% of the cost of the joint venture's assets; third, to us to provide a 13% per annum return on our unreturned capital contributions; and thereafter to CNL and us in proportion to our respective capital contributions to the joint venture. Proceeds from a sale of a joint venture property or other capital event for the joint venture will be distributed: first, to CNL to return its capital contributions; second, to us to return our capital contributions; third, to CNL to provide a 10.5% annual return on its unreturned capital contributions; fourth, to us to provide a 13% annual return on our unreturned capital contributions; and thereafter to CNL and us according to our respective capital contributions.

CNL's limited partnership interest in the joint venture generally will be exchangeable, at CNL's option, for common limited partnership units of our operating partnership or common shares, based on an initial exchange price of \$6.7555 per share, subject to adjustment.

As part of the joint venture, until April 21, 2004, we must present all of our proposed acquisitions to the investment committee of the joint venture, and we may only acquire such acquisition directly if the investment committee or CNL fails to approve that acquisition for the joint venture.

Table of Contents

FEDERAL INCOME TAX CONSEQUENCES OF OUR STATUS AS A REIT

This section summarizes the federal income tax issues that you, as a holder of our securities, may consider relevant. Hunton & Williams LLP has acted as our counsel, has reviewed this summary and is of the opinion that the discussion contained herein fairly summarizes the federal income tax consequences that are likely to be material to a holder of our securities. Because this section is a summary, it does not address all of the tax issues that may be important to you. In addition, this section does not address the tax issues that may be important to certain types of holders of our securities that are subject to special treatment under the federal income tax laws, such as insurance companies, tax-exempt organizations, financial institutions or broker-dealers, and non-U.S. individuals and foreign corporations.

The statements in this section and the opinion of Hunton & Williams LLP are based on the current federal income tax laws governing qualification as a REIT. We cannot assure you that new laws, interpretations of law or court decisions, any of which may take effect retroactively, will not cause any statement in this section to be inaccurate.

WE URGE YOU TO CONSULT YOUR OWN TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE SPECIFIC TAX CONSEQUENCES TO YOU OF INVESTING IN OUR SECURITIES AND OF OUR ELECTION TO BE TAXED AS A REIT. SPECIFICALLY, YOU SHOULD CONSULT YOUR OWN TAX ADVISOR REGARDING THE FEDERAL, STATE, LOCAL, FOREIGN AND OTHER TAX CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH INVESTMENT AND ELECTION, AND REGARDING POTENTIAL CHANGES IN APPLICABLE TAX LAWS.

Taxation of Our Company

We elected to be taxed as a REIT under the federal income tax laws beginning with our taxable year ended December 31, 1999. We believe that we have operated in a manner qualifying us as a REIT since our election and intend to continue to so operate. This section discusses the laws governing the federal income tax treatment of a REIT and its shareholders. These laws are highly technical and complex.

In the opinion of Hunton & Williams LLP, we qualified to be taxed as a REIT under the federal income tax laws for our taxable years ended December 31, 2000 through December 31, 2003, and our organization and current and proposed method of operation will enable us to continue to qualify as a REIT for our taxable year ending December 31, 2004 and in the future. You should be aware that the opinion is based on current law and is not binding on the Internal Revenue Service or any court. In addition, the opinion is based on customary assumptions and on our representations as to factual matters, all of which are described in the opinion. Our qualification as a REIT depends on our ability to meet, on a continuing basis, qualification tests in the federal tax laws. Those qualification tests involve the percentage of income that we earn from specified sources, the percentages of our assets that fall within specified categories, the diversity of our share ownership and the percentage of our earnings that we distribute. Hunton & Williams LLP will not review our compliance with those tests on a continuing basis. Accordingly, no assurance can be given that the actual results of our operation for any particular taxable year will satisfy such requirements. For a discussion of the tax consequences of our failure to qualify as a REIT, see [Failure to Qualify](#).

If we qualify as a REIT, we generally will not be subject to federal income tax on the taxable income that we distribute to our shareholders. The benefit of that tax treatment is that it avoids the double taxation, or taxation at both the corporate and shareholder levels, that generally results from owning shares in a corporation. However, we will be subject to federal tax in the following circumstances:

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

We will pay federal income tax on taxable income, including net capital gain, that we do not distribute to shareholders during, or within a specified time period after, the calendar year in which the income is earned.

We may be subject to the alternative minimum tax on any items of tax preference that we do not distribute or allocate to shareholders.

Table of Contents

We will pay income tax at the highest corporate rate on:

- net income from the sale or other disposition of property acquired through foreclosure (foreclosure property) that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business, and
- other non-qualifying income from foreclosure property.

We will pay a 100% tax on net income from sales or other dispositions of property, other than foreclosure property, that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business.

If we fail to satisfy the 75% gross income test or the 95% gross income test, as described below under Requirements for Qualification-Income Tests, and nonetheless continue to qualify as a REIT because we meet other requirements, we will pay a 100% tax on:

- the gross income attributable to the greater of (1) the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test, and (2) the amount by which 90% of our gross income exceeds the amount of income qualifying under the 95% gross income test, in each case, multiplied by
- a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

If we fail to distribute during a calendar year at least the sum of:

- 85% of our REIT ordinary income for the year,
- 95% of our REIT capital gain net income for the year, and
- any undistributed taxable income from earlier periods,

we will pay a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of the required distribution over the amount we actually distributed.

We may elect to retain and pay income tax on our net long-term capital gain. In that case, a U.S. shareholder would be taxed on its proportionate share of our undistributed long-term capital gain (to the extent that we made a timely designation of such gain to the shareholders) and would receive a credit or refund for its proportionate share of the tax we paid.

We will be subject to a 100% excise tax on transactions with a taxable REIT subsidiary that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis.

If we acquire any asset from a C corporation, or a corporation that generally is subject to full corporate-level tax, in a merger or other transaction in which we acquire a basis in the asset that is determined by reference either to the C corporation's basis in the asset or to another asset, we will pay tax at the highest regular corporate rate applicable if we recognize gain on the sale or disposition of the asset during the 10-year period after we acquire the asset provided no election is made for the transaction to be taxable on a current basis.

The amount of gain on which we will pay tax is the lesser of:

- the amount of gain that we recognize at the time of the sale or disposition, and
- the amount of gain that we would have recognized if we had sold the asset at the time we acquired it.

Requirements for Qualification

A REIT is a corporation, trust, or association that meets each of the following requirements:

1. It is managed by one or more trustees or directors.
2. Its beneficial ownership is evidenced by transferable shares, or by transferable certificates of beneficial interest.

Table of Contents

3. It would be taxable as a domestic corporation, but for the REIT provisions of the federal income tax laws.

4. It is neither a financial institution nor an insurance company subject to special provisions of the federal income tax laws.

5. At least 100 persons are beneficial owners of its shares or ownership certificates.

6. Not more than 50% in value of its outstanding shares or ownership certificates is owned, directly or indirectly, by five or fewer individuals, which the federal income tax laws define to include certain entities, during the last half of any taxable year.

7. It elects to be a REIT, or has made such election for a previous taxable year, and satisfies all relevant filing and other administrative requirements established by the Internal Revenue Service that must be met to elect and maintain REIT status.

8. It meets certain other qualification tests, described below, regarding the nature of its income and assets and the amount of its distributions to shareholders.

We must meet requirements 1 through 4 during our entire taxable year and must meet requirement 5 during at least 335 days of a taxable year of 12 months, or during a proportionate part of a taxable year of less than 12 months. If we comply with all the requirements for ascertaining the ownership of our outstanding shares in a taxable year and have no reason to know that we violated requirement 6, we will be deemed to have satisfied requirement 6 for that taxable year. For purposes of determining share ownership under requirement 6, an individual generally includes a supplemental unemployment compensation benefits plan, a private foundation, or a portion of a trust permanently set aside or used exclusively for charitable purposes. An individual, however, generally does not include a trust that is a qualified employee pension or profit sharing trust under the federal income tax laws, and beneficiaries of such a trust will be treated as holding our shares in proportion to their actuarial interests in the trust for purposes of requirement 6. We have issued sufficient common shares with sufficient diversity of ownership to satisfy requirements 5 and 6. In addition, our Declaration of Trust restricts the ownership and transfer of our shares of beneficial interest so that we should continue to satisfy these requirements.

A corporation that is a qualified REIT subsidiary (i.e., a corporation that is 100% owned by a REIT with respect to which no TRS election has been made) is not treated as a corporation separate from its parent REIT. All assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of a qualified REIT subsidiary are treated as assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of the REIT. A qualified REIT subsidiary is a corporation, all of the capital stock of which is owned by the REIT. Thus, in applying the requirements described herein, any qualified REIT subsidiary that we own will be ignored, and all assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit of such subsidiary will be treated as our assets, liabilities, and items of income, deduction, and credit.

An unincorporated domestic entity, such as a limited liability company, that has a single owner, generally is not treated as an entity separate from its parent for federal income tax purposes. An unincorporated domestic entity with two or more owners is generally treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes. In the case of a REIT that is a partner in a partnership that has other partners, the REIT is treated as owning its proportionate share of the assets of the partnership and as earning its allocable share of the gross income of the partnership for purposes of the applicable REIT qualification tests. Thus, our proportionate share of the assets, liabilities and items of income of our operating partnership and any other partnership, joint venture, or limited liability company that is treated as a partnership for federal income tax purposes in which we have acquired or will acquire an interest, directly or indirectly (a subsidiary partnership), will be treated as our assets and gross income for

purposes of applying the various REIT qualification requirements.

A REIT may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more taxable REIT subsidiaries, or TRSs. A TRS is a fully taxable corporation that may earn income that would not be qualifying income if earned directly by the

Table of Contents

parent REIT. However, a TRS may not directly or indirectly operate or manage any hotels or health care facilities or provide rights to any brand name under which any hotel or health care facility is operated. The subsidiary and the REIT must jointly elect to treat the subsidiary as a TRS. A TRS will pay income tax at regular corporate rates on any income that it earns. In addition, the TRS rules limit the deductibility of interest paid or accrued by a TRS to its parent REIT to assure that the TRS is subject to an appropriate level of corporate taxation. Further, the rules impose a 100% excise tax on transactions between a TRS and its parent REIT or the REIT's tenants that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis. We currently have four TRSs, (i) 44 New England Management Company, which leases four of our hotels, (ii) HHM Leasehold Interests, Inc., which leases 14 of our hotels, (iii) Hersha CNL TRS, Inc., which is owned by our joint venture with CNL and leases the one hotel owned by that joint venture, and (iv) Hersha PRA TRS, Inc., which is owned by our PRA Glastonbury, LLC joint venture and leases the one hotel owned by that joint venture. See Taxable REIT Subsidiaries.

Income Tests

We must satisfy two gross income tests annually to maintain our qualification as a REIT. First, at least 75% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of defined types of income that we derive, directly or indirectly, from investments relating to real property or mortgages on real property or qualified temporary investment income. Qualifying income for purposes of that 75% gross income test generally includes:

rents from real property;

interest on debt secured by mortgages on real property, or on interests in real property;

dividends or other distributions on, and gain from the sale of, shares in other REITs;

gain from the sale of real estate assets; and

income derived from the temporary investment of new capital that is attributable to the issuance of our stock or a public offering of our debt with a maturity date of at least five years and that we receive during the one-year period beginning on the date on which we received such new capital.

Second, in general, at least 95% of our gross income for each taxable year must consist of income that is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, other types of interest and dividends, gain from the sale or disposition of stock or securities, income from hedging instruments or any combination of these. Gross income from our sale of property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of business is excluded from both the numerator and the denominator in both income tests. The following paragraphs discuss the specific application of the gross income tests to us.

Rents from Real Property. Rent that we receive from our real property will qualify as rents from real property, which is qualifying income for purposes of the 75% and 95% gross income tests, only if the following conditions are met:

First, the rent must not be based, in whole or in part, on the income or profits of any person, but may be based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Second, neither we nor a direct or indirect owner of 10% or more of our shares may own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of a tenant from whom we receive rent other than a TRS. If the tenant is a TRS, such TRS may not directly or indirectly operate or manage the related property. Instead, the property must be operated on behalf of the TRS by a person who qualifies as an independent contractor and who is, or is related to a person who is, actively engaged in the trade or business of operating lodging facilities for any person unrelated to us and the TRS. See Taxable REIT Subsidiaries.

Third, if the rent attributable to personal property leased in connection with a lease of real property is 15% or less of the total rent received under the lease, then the rent attributable to personal property will qualify as rents from real property. However, if the 15% threshold is exceeded, the rent attributable to personal property will not qualify as rents from real property.

Table of Contents

Fourth, we generally must not operate or manage our real property or furnish or render services to our tenants, other than through an independent contractor who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive revenue. However, we need not provide services through an independent contractor, but instead may provide services directly to our tenants, if the services are usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not considered to be provided for the tenants convenience. In addition, we may provide a minimal amount of noncustomary services to the tenants of a property, other than through an independent contractor, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property.

Pursuant to percentage leases, our lessees lease the land, buildings, improvements, furnishings and equipment comprising our hotels, for terms of five years, with options to renew for terms of five years. The percentage leases provide that the lessees are obligated to pay (1) the greater of a minimum base rent or percentage rent and (2) additional charges or other expenses, as defined in the leases. Percentage rent is calculated by multiplying fixed percentages by gross room revenues and gross food and beverage revenues for each of the hotels. Both base rent and the thresholds in the percentage rent formulas are adjusted for inflation. Base rent and percentage rent accrue and are due monthly or quarterly.

In order for the base rent, percentage rent and additional charges to constitute rents from real property, the percentage leases must be respected as true leases for federal income tax purposes and not treated as service contracts, joint ventures or some other type of arrangement. The determination of whether the percentage leases are true leases depends on an analysis of all the surrounding facts and circumstances. In making such a determination, courts have considered a variety of factors, including the following:

the intent of the parties;

the form of the agreement;

the degree of control over the property that is retained by the property owner, or whether the lessee has substantial control over the operation of the property or is required simply to use its best efforts to perform its obligations under the agreement; and

the extent to which the property owner retains the risk of loss with respect to the property, or whether the lessee bears the risk of increases in operating expenses or the risk of damage to the property or the potential for economic gain or appreciation with respect to the property.

In addition, federal income tax law provides that a contract that purports to be a service contract or a partnership agreement will be treated instead as a lease of property if the contract is properly treated as such, taking into account all relevant factors, including whether or not:

the service recipient is in physical possession of the property;

the service recipient controls the property;

the service recipient has a significant economic or possessory interest in the property, or whether the property's use is likely to be dedicated to the service recipient for a substantial portion of the useful life of the property, the recipient shares the risk that the property will decline in value, the recipient shares in any appreciation in the value of the property, the recipient shares in savings in the property's operating costs or the recipient bears the risk of damage to or loss of the property;

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

the service provider bears the risk of substantially diminished receipts or substantially increased expenditures if there is nonperformance under the contract;

the service provider uses the property concurrently to provide significant services to entities unrelated to the service recipient; and

the total contract price substantially exceeds the rental value of the property for the contract period.

Since the determination whether a service contract should be treated as a lease is inherently factual, the presence or absence of any single factor will not be dispositive in every case.

Table of Contents

Hunton & Williams LLP is of the opinion that the percentage leases will be treated as true leases for federal income tax purposes. Such opinion is based, in part, on the following facts:

we and the lessees intend for our relationship to be that of a lessor and lessee and such relationship is documented by lease agreements;

the lessees have the right to the exclusive possession, use and quiet enjoyment of the hotels during the term of the percentage leases;

the lessees bear the cost of, and are responsible for, day-to-day maintenance and repair of the hotels, other than the cost of maintaining underground utilities, structural elements and capital improvements, and generally dictate how the hotels are operated, maintained and improved;

the lessees bear the costs and expenses of operating the hotels, including the cost of any inventory used in their operation, during the term of the percentage leases, other than real estate and personal property taxes and property and casualty insurance premiums;

the lessees benefit from any savings in the cost of operating the hotels during the term of the percentage leases;

the lessees generally have indemnified us against all liabilities imposed on us during the term of the percentage leases by reason of (1) injury to persons or damage to property occurring at the hotels, (2) the lessees' use, management, maintenance or repair of the hotels, (3) any environmental liability caused by acts or grossly negligent failures to act of the lessees, (4) taxes and assessments in respect of the hotels that are the obligations of the lessees or (5) any breach of the percentage leases or of any sublease of a hotel by the lessees;

the lessees are obligated to pay substantial fixed rent for the period of use of the hotels;

the lessees stand to incur substantial losses or reap substantial gains depending on how successfully they operate the hotels;

we cannot use the hotels concurrently to provide significant services to entities unrelated to the lessees; and

the total contract price under the percentage leases does not substantially exceed the rental value of the hotels for the term of the percentage leases.

Investors should be aware that there are no controlling Treasury regulations, published rulings or judicial decisions involving leases with terms substantially the same as the percentage leases that discuss whether such leases constitute true leases for federal income tax purposes. If the percentage leases are characterized as service contracts or partnership agreements, rather than as true leases, part or all of the payments that our operating partnership and its subsidiaries receive from the lessees may not be considered rent or may not otherwise satisfy the various requirements for qualification as rents from real property. In that case, we likely would not be able to satisfy either the 75% or 95% gross income test and, as a result, would lose our REIT status unless we qualify for relief, as described below under "Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests".

As described above, in order for the rent that we receive to constitute rents from real property, several other requirements must be satisfied. One requirement is that the percentage rent must not be based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. The percentage rent, however, will qualify as rents from real property if it is based on percentages of receipts or sales and the percentages:

are fixed at the time the percentage leases are entered into;

are not renegotiated during the term of the percentage leases in a manner that has the effect of basing percentage rent on income or profits; and

conform with normal business practice.

Table of Contents

More generally, the percentage rent will not qualify as rents from real property if, considering the percentage leases and all the surrounding circumstances, the arrangement does not conform with normal business practice, but is in reality used as a means of basing the percentage rent on income or profits. Since the percentage rent is based on fixed percentages of the gross revenue from the hotels that are established in the percentage leases, and we have represented that the percentages (1) will not be renegotiated during the terms of the percentage leases in a manner that has the effect of basing the percentage rent on income or profits and (2) conform with normal business practice, the percentage rent should not be considered based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. Furthermore, we have represented that, with respect to other hotel properties that we acquire in the future, we will not charge rent for any property that is based in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person, except by reason of being based on a fixed percentage of gross revenues, as described above.

Second, we must not own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of the stock or the assets or net profits of any lessee (a related party tenant) other than a TRS. The constructive ownership rules generally provide that, if 10% or more in value of our shares is owned, directly or indirectly, by or for any person, we are considered as owning the stock owned, directly or indirectly, by or for such person. We do not own any stock or any assets or net profits of any lessee directly or indirectly, other than our indirect ownership of our TRS lessees, 44 New England Management Company, HHM Leasehold Interests, Inc., Hersha CNL TRS, Inc., and Hersha PRA TRS, Inc. In addition, our Declaration of Trust prohibits transfers of our shares that would cause us to own actually or constructively, 10% or more of the ownership interests in a lessee (other than a TRS). Based on the foregoing, we should never own, actually or constructively, 10% or more of any lessee other than a TRS. Furthermore, we have represented that, with respect to other hotel properties that we acquire in the future, we will not rent any property to a related party tenant (other than a TRS). However, because the constructive ownership rules are broad and it is not possible to monitor continually direct and indirect transfers of our shares, no absolute assurance can be given that such transfers or other events of which we have no knowledge will not cause us to own constructively 10% or more of a lessee other than a TRS at some future date.

As described above, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more TRSs. A TRS is a fully taxable corporation that is permitted to lease hotels from the related REIT as long as it does not directly or indirectly operate or manage any hotels or health care facilities or provide rights to any brand name under which any hotel or health care facility is operated. However, rent that we receive from a TRS will qualify as rents from real property as long as the property is operated on behalf of the TRS by an independent contractor who is adequately compensated, who does not, directly or through its stockholders, own more than 35% of our shares, taking into account certain ownership attribution rules, and who is, or is related to a person who is, actively engaged in the trade or business of operating qualified lodging facilities for any person unrelated to us and the TRS lessee (an eligible independent contractor). A qualified lodging facility is a hotel, motel, or other establishment more than one-half of the dwelling units in which are used on a transient basis, unless wagering activities are conducted at or in connection with such facility by any person who is engaged in the business of accepting wagers and who is legally authorized to engage in such business at or in connection with such facility. A qualified lodging facility includes customary amenities and facilities operated as part of, or associated with, the lodging facility as long as such amenities and facilities are customary for other properties of a comparable size and class owned by other unrelated owners. See Taxable REIT Subsidiaries.

We have formed several TRSs to lease our hotels. Our TRSs have engaged an eligible independent contractor, HHMLP, to operate the related hotels on behalf of such TRSs. Furthermore, we have represented that, with respect to properties that we lease to our TRSs in the future, each such TRS will engage an eligible independent contractor to manage and operate the hotels leased by such TRS.

Third, the rent attributable to the personal property leased in connection with the lease of a hotel must not be greater than 15% of the total rent received under the lease. The rent attributable to the personal property contained in a hotel is the amount that bears the same ratio to total rent for the taxable year as the average of the fair market values of the personal property at the beginning and at the end of the taxable year bears to the average

Table of Contents

of the aggregate fair market values of both the real and personal property contained in the hotel at the beginning and at the end of such taxable year (the personal property ratio). With respect to each hotel, we believe either that the personal property ratio is less than 15% or that any rent attributable to excess personal property will not jeopardize our ability to qualify as a REIT. There can be no assurance, however, that the Internal Revenue Service would not challenge our calculation of a personal property ratio, or that a court would not uphold such assertion. If such a challenge were successfully asserted, we could fail to satisfy the 75% or 95% gross income test and thus potentially lose our REIT status.

Fourth, we cannot furnish or render noncustomary services to the tenants of our hotels, or manage or operate our hotels, other than through an independent contractor who is adequately compensated and from whom we do not derive or receive any income. However, we need not provide services through an independent contractor, but instead may provide services directly to our tenants, if the services are usually or customarily rendered in connection with the rental of space for occupancy only and are not considered to be provided for the tenants' convenience. Provided that the percentage leases are respected as true leases, we should satisfy that requirement, because we do not perform any services other than customary ones for the lessees. In addition, we may provide a minimal amount of noncustomary services to the tenants of a property, other than through an independent contractor, as long as our income from the services does not exceed 1% of our income from the related property. Finally, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more TRSs, which may provide noncustomary services to our tenants without tainting our rents from the related hotels. We will not perform any services other than customary ones for our lessees, unless such services are provided through independent contractors or TRSs. Furthermore, we have represented that, with respect to other hotel properties that we acquire in the future, we will not perform noncustomary services for the lessee of the property to the extent that the provision of such services would jeopardize our REIT status.

If a portion of the rent that we receive from a hotel does not qualify as rents from real property because the rent attributable to personal property exceeds 15% of the total rent for a taxable year, the portion of the rent that is attributable to personal property will not be qualifying income for purposes of either the 75% or 95% gross income test. Thus, if such rent attributable to personal property, plus any other income that is nonqualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, during a taxable year exceeds 5% of our gross income during the year, we would lose our REIT status. If, however, the rent from a particular hotel does not qualify as rents from real property because either (1) the percentage rent is considered based on the income or profits of the related lessee, (2) the lessee either is a related party tenant or fails to qualify for the exception to the related party tenant rule for qualifying TRSs or (3) we furnish noncustomary services to the tenants of the hotel, or manage or operate the hotel, other than through a qualifying independent contractor or a TRS, none of the rent from that hotel would qualify as rents from real property. In that case, we might lose our REIT status because we would be unable to satisfy either the 75% or 95% gross income test. In addition to the rent, the lessees are required to pay certain additional charges. To the extent that such additional charges represent either (1) reimbursements of amounts that we are obligated to pay to third parties, such as a lessee's proportionate share of a property's operational or capital expenses, or (2) penalties for nonpayment or late payment of such amounts, such charges should qualify as rents from real property. However, to the extent that such charges do not qualify as rents from real property, they instead will be treated as interest that qualifies for the 95% gross income test.

Interest. The term interest generally does not include any amount received or accrued, directly or indirectly, if the determination of such amount depends in whole or in part on the income or profits of any person. However, an amount received or accrued generally will not be excluded from the term interest solely by being based on a fixed percentage or percentages of receipts or sales. Furthermore, to the extent that interest from a loan that is based on the profit or net cash proceeds from the sale of the property securing the loan constitutes a shared appreciation provision, income attributable to such participation feature will be treated as gain from the sale of the secured property.

Prohibited Transactions. A REIT will incur a 100% tax on the net income derived from any sale or other disposition of property, other than foreclosure property, that the REIT holds primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business. We believe that none of our assets are held primarily for sale to customers

Table of Contents

and that a sale of any of our assets will not be in the ordinary course of our business. Whether a REIT holds an asset primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business depends, however, on the facts and circumstances in effect from time to time, including those related to a particular asset. Nevertheless, we will attempt to comply with the terms of safe-harbor provisions in the federal income tax laws prescribing when an asset sale will not be characterized as a prohibited transaction. We cannot assure you, however, that we can comply with the safe-harbor provisions or that we will avoid owning property that may be characterized as property that we hold primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of a trade or business.

Foreclosure Property. We will be subject to tax at the maximum corporate rate on any income from foreclosure property, other than income that otherwise would be qualifying income for purposes of the 75% gross income test, less expenses directly connected with the production of that income. However, gross income from foreclosure property will qualify under the 75% and 95% gross income tests. Foreclosure property is any real property, including interests in real property, and any personal property incident to such real property:

that is acquired by a REIT as the result of the REIT having bid on such property at foreclosure, or having otherwise reduced such property to ownership or possession by agreement or process of law, after there was a default or default was imminent on a lease of such property or on indebtedness that such property secured;

for which the related loan was acquired by the REIT at a time when the default was not imminent or anticipated; and

for which the REIT makes a proper election to treat the property as foreclosure property.

We have no foreclosure property as of the date of this prospectus. Property generally ceases to be foreclosure property at the end of the third taxable year following the taxable year in which the REIT acquired the property, or longer if an extension is granted by the Secretary of the Treasury. However, this grace period terminates and foreclosure property ceases to be foreclosure property on the first day:

on which a lease is entered into for the property that, by its terms, will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test, or any amount is received or accrued, directly or indirectly, pursuant to a lease entered into on or after such day that will give rise to income that does not qualify for purposes of the 75% gross income test;

on which any construction takes place on the property, other than completion of a building or any other improvement, where more than 10% of the construction was completed before default became imminent; or

which is more than 90 days after the day on which the REIT acquired the property and the property is used in a trade or business which is conducted by the REIT, other than through an independent contractor from whom the REIT itself does not derive or receive any income.

Hedging Transactions. From time to time, we or our operating partnership may enter into hedging transactions with respect to one or more of our assets or liabilities. Our hedging activities may include entering into interest rate swaps, caps, and floors, options to purchase such items, and futures and forward contracts. To the extent that we or our operating partnership enters into an interest rate swap or cap contract, option, futures contract, forward rate agreement, or any similar financial instrument to hedge our indebtedness incurred to acquire or carry real estate assets, any periodic income or gain from the disposition of such contract should be qualifying income for purposes of the 95% gross income test, but not the 75% gross income test. To the extent that we or our operating partnership hedges with other types of financial instruments, or in other situations, it is not entirely clear how the income from those transactions will be treated for purposes of the gross income tests. We intend to structure any hedging transactions in a manner that does not jeopardize our status as a REIT.

Failure to Satisfy Gross Income Tests. If we fail to satisfy one or both of the gross income tests for any taxable year, we nevertheless may qualify as a REIT for that year if we qualify for relief under certain provisions of the federal income tax laws. Those relief provisions generally will be available if:

our failure to meet such tests is due to reasonable cause and not due to willful neglect;

Table of Contents

we attach a schedule of the sources of our income to our tax return; and

any incorrect information on the schedule was not due to fraud with intent to evade tax.

We cannot predict, however, whether in all circumstances we would qualify for the relief provisions. In addition, as discussed above in *Taxation of Our Company*, even if the relief provisions apply, we would incur a 100% tax on the gross income attributable to the greater of (1) the amount by which we fail the 75% gross income test and (2) the amount by which 90% of our income exceeds the amount of income qualifying under the 95% gross income test, in each case, multiplied by a fraction intended to reflect our profitability.

Asset Tests

To maintain our qualification as a REIT, we also must satisfy the following asset tests at the end of each quarter of each taxable year. First, at least 75% of the value of our total assets must consist of:

cash or cash items, including certain receivables;

government securities;

interests in real property, including leaseholds and options to acquire real property and leaseholds;

interests in mortgages on real property;

stock in other REITs; and

investments in stock or debt instruments during the one-year period following our receipt of new capital that we raise through equity offerings or offerings of debt with at least a five-year term.

Second, of our investments not included in the 75% asset class, the value of our interest in any one issuer's securities may not exceed 5% of the value of our total assets.

Third, we may not own more than 10% of the voting power or value of any one issuer's outstanding securities.

Fourth, no more than 20% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of one or more TRSs.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Fifth, no more than 25% of the value of our total assets may consist of the securities of TRSs and other non-TRS taxable subsidiaries and other assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test.

For purposes of the second and third asset tests, the term securities does not include stock in another REIT, equity or debt securities of a qualified REIT subsidiary or TRS, mortgage loans that constitute real estate assets, or equity interests in a partnership. The term securities, however, generally includes debt securities issued by a partnership or another REIT, except that certain straight debt securities are not treated as securities for purposes of the 10% value test (for example, qualifying debt securities of a partnership or REIT in which neither we nor any TRS of ours owns an equity interest or of a partnership if we own at least a 20% profits interest in the partnership).

We believe that our existing assets are qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. We also believe that any additional real property that we acquire and temporary investments that we make generally will be qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test. We will monitor the status of our acquired assets for purposes of the various asset tests and will manage our portfolio in order to comply at all times with such tests. If we fail to satisfy the asset tests at the end of a calendar quarter, we will not lose our REIT status if:

we satisfied the asset tests at the end of the preceding calendar quarter; and

the discrepancy between the value of our assets and the asset test requirements arose from changes in the market values of our assets and was not wholly or partly caused by the acquisition of one or more non-qualifying assets.

Table of Contents

If we did not satisfy the condition described in the second item, above, we still could avoid disqualification by eliminating any discrepancy within 30 days after the close of the calendar quarter in which it arose.

Distribution Requirements

Each taxable year, we must distribute dividends, other than capital gain dividends and deemed distributions of retained capital gain, to our shareholders in an aggregate amount at least equal to:

the sum of

- 90% of our REIT taxable income, computed without regard to the dividends paid deduction and our net capital gain or loss, and
- 90% of our after-tax net income, if any, from foreclosure property, minus

the sum of certain items of non-cash income.

We must pay such distributions in the taxable year to which they relate, or in the following taxable year if we declare the distribution before we timely file our federal income tax return for the year and pay the distribution on or before the first regular dividend payment date after such declaration.

We will pay federal income tax on taxable income, including net capital gain, that we do not distribute to shareholders. Furthermore, if we fail to distribute during a calendar year, or by the end of January following the calendar year in the case of distributions with declaration and record dates falling in the last three months of the calendar year, at least the sum of:

85% of our REIT ordinary income for such year,

95% of our REIT capital gain income for such year, and

any undistributed taxable income from prior periods,

we will incur a 4% nondeductible excise tax on the excess of such required distribution over the amounts we actually distribute. We may elect to retain and pay income tax on the net long-term capital gain we receive in a taxable year. If we so elect, we will be treated as having distributed any such retained amount for purposes of the 4% nondeductible excise tax described above. We have made, and we intend to continue to make, timely distributions sufficient to satisfy the annual distribution requirements and to avoid corporate income tax and the 4% nondeductible excise tax.

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

It is possible that, from time to time, we may experience timing differences between the actual receipt of income and actual payment of deductible expenses and the inclusion of that income and deduction of such expenses in arriving at our REIT taxable income. For example, we may not deduct recognized capital losses from our REIT taxable income. Further, it is possible that, from time to time, we may be allocated a share of net capital gain attributable to the sale of depreciated property that exceeds our allocable share of cash attributable to that sale. As a result of the foregoing, we may have less cash than is necessary to distribute taxable income sufficient to avoid corporate income tax and the excise tax imposed on certain undistributed income or even to meet the 90% distribution requirement. In such a situation, we may need to borrow funds or issue additional common or preferred shares.

Under certain circumstances, we may be able to correct a failure to meet the distribution requirement for a year by paying deficiency dividends to our shareholders in a later year. We may include such deficiency dividends in our deduction for dividends paid for the earlier year. Although we may be able to avoid income tax on amounts distributed as deficiency dividends, we will be required to pay interest to the Internal Revenue Service based upon the amount of any deduction we take for deficiency dividends.

Table of Contents

Taxable REIT Subsidiaries

As described above, we may own up to 100% of the stock of one or more TRSs. A TRS is a fully taxable corporation that may earn income that would not be qualifying income if earned directly by us. A TRS may provide services to our lessees and perform activities unrelated to our lessees, such as third-party management, development, and other independent business activities. However, a taxable REIT subsidiary may not directly or indirectly operate or manage any hotels or health care facilities or provide rights to any brand name under which any hotel or health care facility is operated.

We and our corporate subsidiary must elect for the subsidiary to be treated as a TRS. A corporation of which a qualifying TRS directly or indirectly owns more than 35% of the voting power or value of the stock will automatically be treated as a TRS. Overall, no more than 20% of the value of our assets may consist of securities of one or more TRSs, and no more than 25% of the value of our assets may consist of the securities of TRSs and other taxable subsidiaries and other assets that are not qualifying assets for purposes of the 75% asset test.

Rent that we receive from our TRSs will qualify as rents from real property as long as the property is operated on behalf of the TRS by a person who qualifies as an independent contractor and who is, or is related to a person who is, actively engaged in the trade or business of operating qualified lodging facilities for any person unrelated to us and the TRS lessee (an eligible independent contractor). A qualified lodging facility is a hotel, motel, or other establishment more than one-half of the dwelling units in which are used on a transient basis, unless wagering activities are conducted at or in connection with such facility by any person who is engaged in the business of accepting wagers and who is legally authorized to engage in such business at or in connection with such facility. A qualified lodging facility includes customary amenities and facilities operated as part of, or associated with, the lodging facility as long as such amenities and facilities are customary for other properties of a comparable size and class owned by other unrelated owners.

We have formed four TRSs to lease hotels in which we own interests. We lease four of our hotels to 44 New England Management Company, a TRS owned by our operating partnership. A subsidiary of HHMLP, HHM Leasehold Interests, Inc., which is a TRS in which HHMLP owns a 99% interest and in which our operating partnership owns a 1% interest, leases 14 of our hotels. Our joint venture with CNL has formed Hersha CNL TRS, Inc., which is one of our TRSs and leases the hotel owned by that joint venture. Similarly, our PRA Glastonbury, LLC joint venture has formed Hersha PRA TRS, Inc., which is one of our TRSs and leases the hotel owned by that joint venture. We may form new TRSs in the future. Each of these existing TRSs has engaged HHMLP, an eligible independent contractor, to operate the related hotels on its behalf. Furthermore, we have represented that, with respect to properties that we lease to our TRSs in the future, each such TRS will engage an eligible independent contractor to manage and operate the hotels leased by such TRS.

The TRS rules limit the deductibility of interest paid or accrued by a TRS to us to assure that the TRS is subject to an appropriate level of corporate taxation. Further, the rules impose a 100% excise tax on certain transactions between a TRS and us or our tenants that are not conducted on an arm's-length basis. We believe that all transactions between us and each of our existing TRSs have been and will be conducted on an arm's-length basis.

Recordkeeping Requirements

We must maintain certain records in order to qualify as a REIT. In addition, to avoid a monetary penalty, we must request on an annual basis information from our shareholders designed to disclose the actual ownership of our outstanding shares of beneficial interest. We have complied, and we intend to continue to comply, with these requirements.

Failure to Qualify

If we fail to qualify as a REIT in any taxable year, and no relief provision applies, we would be subject to federal income tax and any applicable alternative minimum tax on our taxable income at regular corporate rates.

Table of Contents

In calculating our taxable income in a year in which we fail to qualify as a REIT, we would not be able to deduct amounts paid out to shareholders. In fact, we would not be required to distribute any amounts to shareholders in that year. In such event, to the extent of our current and accumulated earnings and profits, distributions to most domestic non-corporate shareholders would generally be taxable at capital gains tax rates. Subject to certain limitations of the federal income tax laws, corporate shareholders might be eligible for the dividends received deduction. Unless we qualified for relief under specific statutory provisions, we also would be disqualified from taxation as a REIT for the four taxable years following the year during which we ceased to qualify as a REIT. We cannot predict whether in all circumstances we would qualify for such statutory relief.

Tax Aspects of Our Investments in Our Operating Partnership and the Subsidiary Partnerships

The following discussion summarizes certain federal income tax considerations applicable to our direct or indirect investments in our operating partnership and any subsidiary partnerships or limited liability companies that we form or acquire (each individually a Partnership and, collectively, the Partnerships). The discussion does not cover state or local tax laws or any federal tax laws other than income tax laws.

Classification as Partnerships. We are entitled to include in our income our distributive share of each Partnership's income and to deduct our distributive share of each Partnership's losses only if such Partnership is classified for federal income tax purposes as a partnership (or an entity that is disregarded for federal income tax purposes if the entity has only one owner or member) rather than as a corporation or an association taxable as a corporation. An unincorporated entity with at least two owners or members will be classified as a partnership, rather than as a corporation, for federal income tax purposes if it:

is treated as a partnership under the Treasury regulations relating to entity classification (the check-the-box regulations); and

is not a publicly traded partnership.

Under the check-the-box regulations, an unincorporated entity with at least two owners or members may elect to be classified either as an association taxable as a corporation or as a partnership. If such an entity fails to make an election, it generally will be treated as a partnership (or an entity that is disregarded for federal income tax purposes if the entity has only one owner or member) for federal income tax purposes. Each Partnership intends to be classified as a partnership for federal income tax purposes and no Partnership will elect to be treated as an association taxable as a corporation under the check-the-box regulations.

A publicly traded partnership is a partnership whose interests are traded on an established securities market or are readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof. A publicly traded partnership will not, however, be treated as a corporation for any taxable year if 90% or more of the partnership's gross income for such year consists of certain passive-type income, including real property rents, gains from the sale or other disposition of real property, interest, and dividends (the 90% passive income exception). Treasury regulations (the PTP regulations) provide limited safe harbors from the definition of a publicly traded partnership. Pursuant to one of those safe harbors (the private placement exclusion), interests in a partnership will not be treated as readily tradable on a secondary market or the substantial equivalent thereof if (1) all interests in the partnership were issued in a transaction or transactions that were not required to be registered under the Securities Act of 1933, as amended, and (2) the partnership does not have more than 100 partners at any time during the partnership's taxable year. In determining the number of partners in a partnership, a person owning an interest in a partnership, grantor trust, or S corporation that owns an interest in the partnership is treated as a partner in such partnership only if (1) substantially all of the value of the owner's interest in the entity is attributable to the entity's direct or indirect interest in the partnership and (2) a principal purpose of the use of the entity is to permit the partnership to satisfy the 100-partner limitation. Each Partnership qualifies for the private placement exclusion. We have not requested, and do not intend to request, a ruling from the Internal Revenue Service that the Partnerships will be classified as partnerships for federal income tax purposes.

Table of Contents

If for any reason a Partnership were taxable as a corporation, rather than as a partnership, for federal income tax purposes, we likely would not be able to qualify as a REIT. See *Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT-Requirements for Qualification-Income Tests* and

Requirements for Qualification Asset Tests. In addition, any change in a Partnership's status for tax purposes might be treated as a taxable event, in which case we might incur tax liability without any related cash distribution. See *Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT Requirements for Qualification Distribution Requirements*. Further, items of income and deduction of such Partnership would not pass through to its partners, and its partners would be treated as shareholders for tax purposes. Consequently, such Partnership would be required to pay income tax at corporate rates on its net income, and distributions to its partners would constitute dividends that would not be deductible in computing such Partnership's taxable income.

Income Taxation of the Partnerships and their Partners

Partners, Not the Partnerships, Subject to Tax. A partnership is not a taxable entity for federal income tax purposes. Rather, we are required to take into account our allocable share of each Partnership's income, gains, losses, deductions, and credits for any taxable year of such Partnership ending within or with our taxable year, without regard to whether we have received or will receive any distribution from such Partnership.

Partnership Allocations. Although a partnership agreement generally will determine the allocation of income and losses among partners, such allocations will be disregarded for tax purposes if they do not comply with the provisions of the federal income tax laws governing partnership allocations. If an allocation is not recognized for federal income tax purposes, the item subject to the allocation will be reallocated in accordance with the partners' interests in the partnership, which will be determined by taking into account all of the facts and circumstances relating to the economic arrangement of the partners with respect to such item. Each Partnership's allocations of taxable income, gain, and loss are intended to comply with the requirements of the federal income tax laws governing partnership allocations.

Tax Allocations With Respect to Contributed Properties. Income, gain, loss, and deduction attributable to appreciated or depreciated property that is contributed to a partnership in exchange for an interest in the partnership must be allocated in a manner such that the contributing partner is charged with, or benefits from, respectively, the unrealized gain or unrealized loss associated with the property at the time of the contribution. The amount of such unrealized gain or unrealized loss (built-in gain or built-in loss) is generally equal to the difference between the fair market value of the contributed property at the time of contribution and the adjusted tax basis of such property at the time of contribution (a book-tax difference). Such allocations are solely for federal income tax purposes and do not affect the book capital accounts or other economic or legal arrangements among the partners. The U.S. Treasury Department has issued regulations requiring partnerships to use a reasonable method for allocating items with respect to which there is a book-tax difference and outlining several reasonable allocation methods.

Under our operating partnership's partnership agreement, depreciation or amortization deductions of our operating partnership generally will be allocated among the partners in accordance with their respective interests in our operating partnership, except to the extent that our operating partnership is required under the federal income tax laws governing partnership allocations to use a method for allocating tax depreciation deductions attributable to contributed properties that results in our receiving a disproportionate share of such deductions. In addition, gain or loss on the sale of a property that has been contributed, in whole or in part, to our operating partnership will be specially allocated to the contributing partners to the extent of any built-in gain or loss with respect to such property for federal income tax purposes.

Basis in Partnership Interest. Our adjusted tax basis in our partnership interest in our operating partnership generally is equal to:

the amount of cash and the basis of any other property contributed by us to our operating partnership;

increased by our allocable share of our operating partnership's income and our allocable share of indebtedness of our operating partnership; and

Table of Contents

reduced, but not below zero, by our allocable share of our operating partnership's loss and the amount of cash distributed to us, and by constructive distributions resulting from a reduction in our share of indebtedness of our operating partnership.

If the allocation of our distributive share of our operating partnership's loss would reduce the adjusted tax basis of our partnership interest below zero, the recognition of such loss will be deferred until such time as the recognition of such loss would not reduce our adjusted tax basis below zero. To the extent that our operating partnership's distributions, or any decrease in our share of the indebtedness of our operating partnership, which is considered a constructive cash distribution to the partners, reduce our adjusted tax basis below zero, such distributions will constitute taxable income to us. Such distributions and constructive distributions normally will be characterized as long-term capital gain.

Depreciation Deductions Available to Our Operating Partnership. To the extent that our operating partnership acquired its hotels in exchange for cash, its initial basis in such hotels for federal income tax purposes generally was or will be equal to the purchase price paid by our operating partnership. Our operating partnership depreciates such depreciable hotel property for federal income tax purposes under the modified accelerated cost recovery system of depreciation (MACRS). Under MACRS, our operating partnership generally depreciates furnishings and equipment over a seven-year recovery period using a 200% declining balance method and a half-year convention. If, however, our operating partnership places more than 40% of its furnishings and equipment in service during the last three months of a taxable year, a mid-quarter depreciation convention must be used for the furnishings and equipment placed in service during that year. Recently enacted tax legislation provides a first-year bonus depreciation deduction equal to 50% of the adjusted basis of qualified property placed in service after May 5, 2003, which includes qualified leasehold improvement property and property with a recovery period of less than 20 years, such as furnishings and equipment at our hotels. Qualified leasehold improvement property generally includes improvements made to the interior of nonresidential real property that are placed in service more than three years after the date the building was placed in service. Under MACRS, our operating partnership generally depreciates buildings and improvements over a 39-year recovery period using a straight line method and a mid-month convention. Our operating partnership's initial basis in hotels acquired in exchange for units in our operating partnership should be the same as the transferor's basis in such hotels on the date of acquisition by our operating partnership. Although the law is not entirely clear, our operating partnership generally depreciates such depreciable hotel property for federal income tax purposes over the same remaining useful lives and under the same methods used by the transferors. Our operating partnership's tax depreciation deductions are allocated among the partners in accordance with their respective interests in our operating partnership, except to the extent that our operating partnership is required under the federal income tax laws governing partnership allocations to use a method for allocating tax depreciation deductions attributable to contributed properties that results in our receiving a disproportionate share of such deductions.

Sale of a Partnership's Property

Generally, any gain realized by a Partnership on the sale of property held by the Partnership for more than one year will be long-term capital gain, except for any portion of such gain that is treated as depreciation or cost recovery recapture. Any gain or loss recognized by a Partnership on the disposition of contributed properties will be allocated first to the partners of the Partnership who contributed such properties to the extent of their built-in gain or loss on those properties for federal income tax purposes. The partners' built-in gain or loss on such contributed properties will equal the difference between the partners' proportionate share of the book value of those properties and the partners' tax basis allocable to those properties at the time of the contribution. Any remaining gain or loss recognized by the Partnership on the disposition of the contributed properties, and any gain or loss recognized by the Partnership on the disposition of the other properties, will be allocated among the partners in accordance with their respective percentage interests in the Partnership.

Our share of any gain realized by a Partnership on the sale of any property held by the Partnership as inventory or other property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of the Partnership's trade

Table of Contents

or business will be treated as income from a prohibited transaction that is subject to a 100% penalty tax. Such prohibited transaction income also may have an adverse effect upon our ability to satisfy the income tests for REIT status. See Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT Requirements for Qualification Income Tests. We, however, do not presently intend to acquire or hold or to allow any Partnership to acquire or hold any property that represents inventory or other property held primarily for sale to customers in the ordinary course of our or such Partnership's trade or business.

State and Local Taxes

We and/or you may be subject to taxation by various states and localities, including those in which we or a shareholder transacts business, owns property or resides. The state and local tax treatment may differ from the federal income tax treatment described above. Consequently, you should consult their own tax advisors regarding the effect of state and local tax laws upon an investment in our securities.

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We may sell the securities being offered hereby in one or more of the following ways from time to time:

through agents to the public or to investors;

to underwriters for resale to the public or to investors;

directly to investors; or

through a combination of any of these methods of sale.

We will set forth in a prospectus supplement the terms of the offering of securities, including:

the name or names of any agents or underwriters;

the purchase price of the securities being offered and the proceeds we will receive from the sale;

any over-allotment options under which underwriters may purchase additional securities from us;

any agency fees or underwriting discounts and other items constituting agents' or underwriters' compensation;

any initial public offering price;

any discounts or concessions allowed or reallocated or paid to dealers; and

any securities exchanges on which such securities may be listed.

Agents

We may designate agents who agree to use their reasonable efforts to solicit purchases for the period of their appointment or to sell securities on a continuing basis.

We may also engage a company to act as our agent (Offering Agent) for one or more offerings, from time to time, of our common shares. If we reach agreement with an Offering Agent with respect to a specific offering, including the number of common shares and any minimum price below which sales may not be made, then the Offering Agent will try to sell such common shares on the agreed terms. The Offering Agent could make sales in privately negotiated transactions and/or any other method permitted by law, including sales deemed to be an at-the-market offering as defined in Rule 415 promulgated under the Securities Act, including sales made directly on the American Stock Exchange, or sales made to or through a market maker other than on an exchange. At-the-market offerings may not exceed 10% of the aggregate market value of our outstanding voting securities held by non-affiliates on a date within 60 days prior to the filing of the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part. The Offering Agent will be deemed to be an underwriter within the meaning of the Securities Act, with respect to any sales effected through an at-the-market offering.

Table of Contents

Underwriters

If we use underwriters for a sale of securities, the underwriters will acquire the securities, and may resell the securities in one or more transactions, including negotiated transactions, at a fixed public offering price or at varying prices determined at the time of sale. The obligations of the underwriters to purchase the securities will be subject to the conditions set forth in the applicable underwriting agreement. We may change from time to time any public offering price and any discounts or concessions the underwriters allow or reallow or pay to dealers. We may use underwriters with whom we have a material relationship. We will describe in the prospectus supplement naming the underwriter the nature of any such relationship.

Direct Sales

We may also sell securities directly to one or more purchasers without using underwriters or agents. Underwriters, dealers and agents that participate in the distribution of the securities may be underwriters as defined in the Securities Act and any discounts or commissions they receive from us and any profit on their resale of the securities may be treated as underwriting discounts and commissions under the Securities Act. We will identify in the applicable prospectus supplement any underwriters, dealers or agents and will describe their compensation. We may have agreements with the underwriters, dealers and agents to indemnify them against specified civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act. Underwriters, dealers and agents may engage in transactions with or perform services for us in the ordinary course of their businesses.

Trading Markets and Listing of Securities

Unless otherwise specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, each class or series of securities will be a new issue with no established trading market, other than our common shares, which is listed on the American Stock Exchange. We may elect to list any other class or series of securities on any exchange, but we are not obligated to do so. It is possible that one or more underwriters may make a market in a class or series of securities, but the underwriters will not be obligated to do so and may discontinue any market making at any time without notice. We cannot give any assurance as to the liquidity of the trading market for any of the securities.

Stabilization Activities

Any underwriter may engage in over-allotment, stabilizing transactions, short covering transactions and penalty bids in accordance with Regulation M under the Exchange Act. Over-allotment involves sales in excess of the offering size, which create a short position. Stabilizing transactions permit bids to purchase the underlying security so long as the stabilizing bids do not exceed a specified maximum. Short covering transactions involve purchases of the securities in the open market after the distribution is completed to cover short positions. Penalty bids permit the underwriters to reclaim a selling concession from a dealer when the securities originally sold by the dealer are purchased in a covering transaction to cover short positions. Those activities may cause the price of the securities to be higher than it would otherwise be. If commenced, the underwriters may discontinue any of the activities at any time.

EXPERTS

Edgar Filing: HERSHA HOSPITALITY TRUST - Form 424B5

Our consolidated balance sheet as of December 31, 2003 and our consolidated statements of operations, cash flows and shareholders' equity for the year ended December 31, 2003 incorporated by reference in this prospectus, have been audited by Reznick Fedder & Silverman, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose report is incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing. The balance sheet of Hersha Hospitality Management L.P. as of December 31, 2003, and the related statements of operations, partners' equity (deficit), and cash flows for the year ended December 31, 2003, incorporated by reference in this prospectus have been audited by Reznick Fedder & Silverman, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose report is incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

Our consolidated balance sheet as of December 31, 2002 and our consolidated statements of operations, cash flows and shareholders' equity for each of the years ended December 31, 2002 and 2001 incorporated by reference in this prospectus, have been audited by Moore Stephens, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose reports are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing. The consolidated balance sheet of Hersha Hospitality Management L.P. as of December 31, 2002, and the related statements of operations, partners' equity (deficit), and cash flows for each of the two years in the period ended December 31, 2002, incorporated by reference in this prospectus have been audited by Moore Stephens, P.C., independent certified public accountants, whose reports are incorporated by reference in this prospectus and given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

LEGAL MATTERS

Certain legal matters in connection with this offering will be passed upon for us by Hunton & Williams LLP. In addition, the summary of legal matters contained in the section of this Prospectus under the heading "Federal Income Tax Consequences of Our Status as a REIT" is based on the opinion of Hunton & Williams LLP.

Table of Contents

3,500,000 Shares

Hersha Hospitality Trust

Common Shares Of Beneficial Interest

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

September 20, 2004

Citigroup
