

AUGUST 2008

Travel World

The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

NEWS®

Caribbean

BAHAMAS

Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace
Named Minister Tourism & Aviation

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Maxim Bungalows Now All-Inclusive

GRENADA

LaSource Welcomes Anthony Suttile
as General Manager



Africa



ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES Milestone—
10 Years of Transatlantic Service

KLM'S CLUB AFRICA

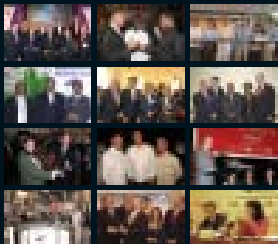
SAA VACATIONS Offers Sabi Sabi in Style

Tanzania



'All Smiles'
Celebrating
Decade-Long Successful
U.S. Promotion

2008/2009 ANNUAL
**TRAVEL
INDUSTRY
EVENTS**



COMPREHENSIVE WORLDWIDE EVENTS CALENDAR • PAGES 18-45
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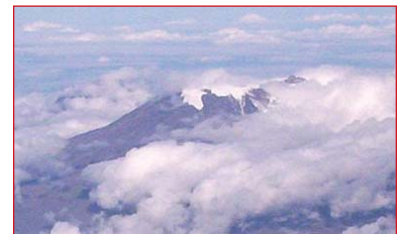
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ERIC PECHSTEIN NOW HEADING AVIAREPS IN THE U.S.



ERIC PECHSTEIN

AVIAREPS, the world's leading airline and tourism representative, has announced a new General Manager for the United States: Eric Pechstein will head the company's subsidiary in New York as well as its sales representation in Miami and Los Angeles.

His responsibilities will include all future sales and marketing activities carried out in the American market on behalf of the subsidiary's clients. The former General Manager, Fraser Teasdale, had successfully led the organizations in the U.S., Canada and Latin America since they were first established in 2001. The change of personnel followed his decision to take up new challenges.

As its new member of the subsidiary management in the United States, AVIAREPS has taken on board an accomplished senior manager with an excellent market reputation.

Eric Pechstein is an outstanding sales and marketing specialist with more than 25 years of experience in the airline industry. He received his industry expertise working for prestigious airlines such as Lufthansa, Qatar Airways and the well-known American airline brands of American Airlines, Delta and US Airways.

The AVIAREPS subsidiary in the United States was founded in 2001 as the ninth subsidiary worldwide. Today, the American office in New York and the sales units in Miami and Los Angeles manage the successful representation of 12 airline and tourism entities. Acknowledged international customers such as L'Avion, Air Greenland, Aerogal, Air Namibia, Adria Airways, Aer Lingus, Air Baltic, AirCalin, as well as the Finnish Tourist Board, Eurostar and Munich Airport already trust in the expertise of AVIAREPS USA.

AVIAREPS, www.aviareps.com

TRAVEL IMPRESSIONS NAMES CHARLES M. GALLINA VP & GM DELTA VACATIONS



CHARLES M. GALLINA

Travel Impressions has appointed Charles M. Gallina Vice President and General Manager of Delta Vacations, coinciding with the July 1, 2008 launch of Delta Vacations as a Travel Impressions managed brand.

Gallina brings more than 30 years of experience in the travel industry to his position with Delta Vacations. Prior to being named to his current post, Gallina spent three years as Vice President of New Business Development and Management for Travel Impressions.

In this capacity, he helped establish the company as a major player in the private labeling of vacation packages by offering turnkey solutions for fulfillment, product, marketing and sales of third-party brands.

Gallina joined Travel Impressions in 2000, spending his first five years as Vice President of Sales with responsibility for the company's field sales team, customer care and group sales.

During his tenure in this position, Travel Impressions received its first Travel Weekly Readers' Choice Award for "Best Tour Operator, Sales & Service." Later in his career, Gallina was director of strategic planning for Amadeus, USA where he developed strategies to advance the company's market share within the United States.

Gallina is a graduate of City University of New York Brooklyn College.

Travel Impressions, 800-284-0044, www.travelimpressions.com

CLIA APPOINTS JIM SMITH AS DIRECTOR OF MARKETING



JIM SMITH

Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) has named Jim Smith, CTIE, to the position of Director of Marketing. Bringing extensive experience in sales, marketing, branding, event planning and public relations to the job, his responsibilities will include managing all the association's consumer and trade marketing efforts, including agency membership and training, collateral production and development, e-marketing and Web content and trade advertising.

He will also take charge of CLIA's annual National Cruise Vacation Month and World's Largest Cruise Night and other CLIA promotional initiatives and programs.

As principal of Market Share, Inc. in Boca Raton, Smith was retained by leading travel companies as a consultant, motivational speaker and lecturer for over 20 years while he also held numerous executive positions in the industry.

He served as Senior Vice President of Industry Relations for Auto Europe and Vice President, Sales and Marketing for Delta Vacations/Certified Vacations Group and was President of GEM, the travel consortium based in Islip, New York. He also was Regional Director of Sales for National Car Rental in New York. Smith began his career as a retail travel agent and teenage ski tour promoter.

CLIA, www.cruising.org

STARWOOD HAWAII'S CHERYL WILLIAMS HONORED WITH FOUNDER'S AWARD



CHERYL WILLIAMS

The Aloha Chapter of Meeting Professionals International (MPI) has presented its "Founder's Award" to Cheryl Williams, Regional Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Starwood Hotels & Resorts Hawaii and French Polynesia. The award honors Williams for her achievements as the founding president of Hawaii's MPI branch: the Aloha Chapter.

"We wanted to show Cheryl our respect and gratitude for her efforts in creating such a strong organization," said Edie Hafdahl, Director of Sales and Marketing of the Kauai Visitors Bureau and current President of MPI's Aloha Chapter. "She brought MPI to Hawaii and served as our first president, and she has helped the association grow and evolve ever since."

Volunteer-based MPI is the leading association of the global meetings industry. The Awards Gala was held May 20 in the Monarch Room of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel in Waikiki.

At Starwood Hotels & Resorts in Hawaii and French Polynesia, Williams has also led the renovation and re-branding of Starwood's four Waikiki properties – the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Moana Surfrider, a Westin Resort, Sheraton Princess Kaiulani and Sheraton Waikiki – the largest project the company has ever carried out. Despite the heavy load, Williams still finds time to serve on the Marketing Committee of the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB), Starwood's Regional Six Sigma Council, and Starwood's Leisure Travel Advisory Board. In January 2008, the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIA) selected Cheryl Williams as one of its "Top 25 Most Extraordinary Minds in Sales & Marketing." Starwood Hotels & Resorts, www.starwoodhotels.com

PER AQUUM APPOINTS AXEL JAROSCH GENERAL MANAGER DESERT PALM



AXEL JAROSCH

Per Aquum has announced the appointment of Axel Jarosch as General Manager, Desert Palm, Dubai. Located on a private polo estate 20 minutes from the city center, Desert Palm is a stylish alternative for those looking for a private, intimate escape from the hectic pace of this bustling city. Axel was previously General Manager of The Fortress, Per Aquum's award winning property in Sri Lanka where he successfully increased revenue and built a strong reputation as the leading resort in the country.

On his appointment as General Manager of Desert Palm, Axel commented "Dubai is an exciting destination and I am thrilled to be part of Per Aquum's latest venture here. Desert Palm is a small 24 room boutique retreat which is already causing a sensation in the Middle East for its classic lines and modern simplicity. I am looking forward to highlighting that difference and working with the already exceptional team in place."

Axel is well traveled with an outstanding career history focusing on luxury operations in the Middle and Far East. His career has encompassed successful tenures with leading high-end hotel groups and he has a solid understanding of running both small and medium sized high-end resorts and hotels.

Of German nationality, he brings keen business acumen to the role and is an exceptional communicator, being fluent in German, Spanish and English.

Per Aquum, www.peraquum.com

ISRAMWORLD LAUNCHING PRIVATE LABEL SUBSIDIARY

ISRAMWORLD is planning to offer a series of ultra-luxury individual tours under the banner of The Elite Travel Collection by Belder-Gray. "I believe the future of our business is in catering specifically to the very upscale traveler," says A. Ady Gelber, President and Chief Executive of ISRAMWORLD, the tour company founded 41 years ago that offers tours and packages to some 60 countries, "which is why we have decided to establish this private label subsidiary."

A series of a dozen individual itineraries in five countries that make up The Elite Travel Collection will be offered by ISRAMWORLD's newly acquired private label subsidiary, Belder-Gray, a company whose name and profile evoke travel from an earlier, more gracious era.

"The Elite Travel Collection will comprise itineraries that feature the finest rooms or suites at the finest hotels, a car and driver throughout, highly sophisticated touring that includes private off-hour visits to many sites, as well as a mélange of the highest quality meals and experiences...all of which speak to the expectations of the high-end and private jet traveler," says Gelber.

All of the Elite Travel Collection itineraries are templates that can be adjusted to meet clients' specific requirements, and Belder-Gray's specialists will also plan purely custom-tailored travel. "In addition," adds Gelber, "Belder-Gray will provide whatever extra services a high-profile client requires, including confidentiality, security personnel and secretaries."

"The Elite Travel Collection will be available only through travel agents," Gelber stresses. Full details of the Elite Travel Collection by Belder-Gray will be outlined in a 64-page brochure set to appear in October. The Belder-Gray website will launch at the same time.

ISRAMWORLD, www.isramworld.com

CHOICE HOTELS LAUNCHES UPSCALE ASCEND COLLECTION PROGRAM

Worldwide lodging franchisor Choice Hotels International has announced the launch of its Collection program in North America and the Caribbean, which offers upscale independent hotels the opportunity to affiliate with Choice and leverage the company's global distribution network.

Hotels that affiliate with the Ascend Collection program benefit from marketing services tailored specifically to drive property-level occupancies and revenues.

The target Ascend Collection hotels are upscale independent, unique, boutique or historic properties with strong local brand equity that want to keep their own names and identities while tapping into a broader distribution channel. Hotels that join the Ascend Collection program tap into a robust reservation and distribution system, one which delivered nearly \$2 billion last year in room revenues for its 5,600-plus hotels worldwide.

Choice is developing a number of wide-ranging consumer marketing programs designed to raise awareness of the Ascend Collection program while targeting the growing number of consumers that seek unique, one-of-a-kind hotels. The company is also embarking on a dedicated Ascend Collection-specific outreach initiative to a number of its established third-party intermediary accounts, which include travel agents and corporate, leisure, government, and motor club travelers.

"The Ascend Collection concept is designed for the growing number of travelers that are looking for upscale hotels that provide authentic, local experiences and great guest service," said Stacy Ragland, Vice President, Operations, Ascend Collection, Choice Hotels. "We've been very successful with the Clarion Collection program. By sharpening our focus with more targeted, support for these upscale properties, we anticipate strengthening owners' return on investment and reservation contribution."

Ascend Collection members participate in the Choice Privileges rewards program, which has over 6.5 million members and delivered over 20 percent of Choice franchisee's domestic room revenue last year. Clarion Collection and Ascend Collection hotels receive a number of dedicated support services from the Choice organization, including brand management, opening services, performance management, revenue management and quality assurance.

The transition to the Ascend Collection program is anticipated to occur by October 31, 2008. Choice Hotels International, www.choicehotels.com



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CS-27632



COSTA RICA

Passport Costa Rica Tours is sponsoring a deluxe FAM trip to Costa Rica, September 8 - 14. Trip is seven-days/six-nights including first-class accommodations, all tours, excursions, transfers, entrance fees and meals (MAP). All of the following tours are included: Arenal Volcano, Damas Monkey Cruise, Manuel Antonio National Park, Canopy Tour, Aerial Sky Tram, and choice of Waterfall Rappelling or Hanging Bridges. Cost is \$359 per agent land only. Space is limited and is offered on a first-come-first-serve basis. Deadline for registration is August 15.

Passport Costa Rica Tours,
877-77-COSTA,
www.passportcostarica.com

EGYPT

Travel Egypt is presenting a "Famstastic Egypt" FAM, January 5-15, 2009, 11-days/10-nights, visiting Cairo, Aswan, Luxor and Alexandria. This peak season departure includes highlights such as flights

from New York, a four-day/three-night five-star deluxe Nile cruise, all meals (from departure at JFK till return), tips for ground personnel and a special bonus of 20 percent commissions on all bookings after the trip.

Marvel at the pyramids, gaze in wonder at King Tut's treasures, be amazed at the temples along the Nile and see the city Alexander the Great built and Cleopatra made famous, all in the comfort of the luxury hotels and cruise. There will be opportunities to shop at carpet factories, cotton goods stores, the famous spice market in Aswan, papyrus shops and more. Space is limited and this is the only Travel Egypt FAM scheduled for 2009. Agents pay \$1,495 (plus air ticket taxes) while companions are \$1,695 (plus air ticket taxes). **Travel Egypt, 877-778-3497, www.travelegypt.com**

KENYA

Wildlife Safari is presenting a Lion Safari Kenya FAM. Tour cost is \$1,500 per travel agent sharing a room, \$1,800 per non-travel agent companion sharing a room, and \$400 single room supplement. Trip is November 9-15. Tour includes luxury accommodations with private bathrooms; full breakfast in Nairobi; breakfast, lunch and dinner every day while on safari; water in vehicles during game drives and with all meals; ground transportation by custom built mini-van vehicles with window seats throughout the safari; services of an experienced driver/guide throughout; safari briefing in Nairobi; all National Park fees, government taxes and charges; all airport transfers and airport portorage in Kenya; services of a Wildlife Safari tour manager in Kenya; and Wildlife Safari luggage tags and document wallet. This tour does not include air fares.

Wildlife Safari, 800-221-8118, www.wildlife-safari.com

TAHITI

Sunspots International presents travel agent independent Tahiti FAMs, valid for travel from August 19 - September 24, 2008. All prices are ppdo and include roundtrip airfare on Air Tahiti Nui, five


nights, transfers, and taxes. Sheraton Hotel Tahiti Resort & Spa is priced from LAX at \$1,233 and from JFK at \$1,273. Additional nights are \$158. Moorea Pearl Resort & Spa from LAX is \$1,366 and from JFK is \$1,406. Additional nights are \$188. Sheraton Moorea Lagoon Resort & Spa from LAX is \$1,519 and from JFK is \$1,559. Additional nights are \$245. Legends Resort Moorea from LAX is \$1,625 and from JFK is \$1,665. Additional nights are \$478. Five night minimum. St Regis Resort Bora Bora from LAX is \$2,232 and from JFK is \$2,272. Additional nights are \$314. Hotel Bora Bora Nui Resort & Spa from LAX is \$2,232 and from JFK is \$2,272. Additional nights are \$314. Manihi Pearl Beach Resort from LAX is \$2,005 and from JFK is \$2,045. Additional nights are \$235. Te Tiare Beach Resort from LAX is \$1,865 and from JFK is \$1,905. Additional nights are \$235.

Sunspots International, 800-266-6067, info1@sunspotsintl.com, www.sunspotsintl.com

VIETNAM/CAMBODIA

Singapore Airlines and Pacific Holidays are co-sponsoring a nine-day travel agent FAM trip to Vietnam leaving on March 17, 2009. The cost is \$1,995 per agent including land and air from San Francisco. Spouse or companion is \$2,195 per person. They are also offering a four-day optional extension to Angkor Wat, Cambodia for \$795 per agent and \$895 per spouse/companion. The nine-day itinerary includes a visit to the capital city of Hanoi, coastal area of Halong Bay, ancient but charming former capital Hue, famous China Beach at Danang, and Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), and all superior hotels, sightseeing, most meals in Vietnam, transfers and intra/inter Asia air/land transportation. The four-day Cambodia Extension provides the opportunity to explore the World Heritage Site of Angkor Wat and Cambodia's vibrant capital Phnom Pen.

Pacific Holidays, 800-355-8025, sales@pacificholidaysinc.com, www.pacificholidaysinc.com



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FOURTH NIGHT FREE AT AMELIA ISLAND PLANTATION



At Amelia Island Plantation, Florida's Premier Island Resort located 29 miles northeast of Jacksonville, FL, stay three consecutive nights between now and December 31, 2008, and the fourth night is free. Also receive 25 percent off recreation, including golf, tennis, on-property nature tours, bicycle rentals, award winning youth programs and more. This offer is good with a resort-view guest room or suite (rates start at \$229 per night for a resort-view room and \$259 per night for a resort-view suite.) Rates are based on two adults in a guest room or suite located adjacent to Racquet Park. Offer is good for four consecutive nights, subject to availability, and is not for conference groups.

For reservations, use the promotional code FREENET.

Built and designed in perfect harmony with nature, Amelia Island Plantation is nestled among centuries-old Live Oaks, tranquil salt marshes and the Atlantic Ocean. The 1,350-acre AAA Four Diamond island resort unites environmental sensitivity with luxury accommodations, dining and amenities, including 72 holes of championship golf, a "clean and green" spa, 23 Har-Tru tennis courts and more. Amelia Island Plantation, 888-261-6164, www.aipfl.com

THE STRAND HOTEL TO OPEN NOVEMBER 2008

The Strand Hotel, the second Manhattan property from Newport-based entrepreneur Don Glassie, is set to open in November 2008 to serve as a brand-new home base for visitors to New York. The 177-room Strand will combine state-of-the-art comfort and amenities with simple elegance in a prime location. Now under construction at 33 West 37 Street, between Fifth and Sixth Avenues, this 20-floor hotel is situated around the corner from the Morgan Library and the Empire State Building, and just blocks from Bryant Park, Grand Central Station, Herald Square, The Javits Center and the Theater District. The Strand is being designed as a modern New York classic, offering upscale accommodations in a setting of comfortable luxury. Amenities will include a convertible rooftop bar, as well as year-round terrace dining.

"We're excited about The Strand Hotel, which is in an ideal location for business or to see the sights," said Mr. Glassie, CEO of Atlantic Stars Hotels and Cruises. "We've been extremely pleased with the success of The Park South Hotel in Manhattan, where we've offered great amenities, a terrific staff, and style without pretension. For The Strand, we are mixing the same ingredients and kicking them up a couple of notches."

The Strand Hotel will be a member of the Green Hotel Association. In keeping with Atlantic Stars Hotels and Cruises dedication to creating more eco-friendly hotels, the property will incorporate many features such as high efficiency HVAC and lighting, in-house recycling programs, and use of sustainable products such as San Francisco.

Atlantic Stars Hotels and Cruises,
www.AtlanticStars.com

\$99 EUROPEAN VACATION, NEW ORLEANS STYLE

The Marriott Hotels of New Orleans are offering guests a cost-effective alternative to Europe and extending an invitation to America's most European city starting at \$99 per night.

This Big Easy vacation offers jetsetters a

European-like ambiance without the big European price tag. The rate is valid now through September 30, 2008, based on double occupancy, at the New Orleans Marriott, JW Marriott New Orleans, and Marriott at the Convention Center. All hotels are centrally located and are in close proximity to the famed French Quarter, Canal and Bourbon Streets. New Orleans's European flair dates back to the early 18th century when the Spanish owned the city, influencing much of its architecture, and the French, who settled in New Orleans, began building the Vieux Carré, or the French Quarter. Modern-day NoLa has embraced its European background and it's evident in the streets of the French Quarter, the Spanish wrought iron fences featured on houses and buildings, the French-inspired cuisine, the laidback attitude and more. To book the summer rate, ask for rate code ADV.

Marriott Hotels of New Orleans,
866-530-3763,
www.neworleans.marriott.com

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NEW MANAGEMENT TEAM AT MAYFLOWER TOURS



Pictured left to right: Jeanne Czerwinski, newly appointed Vice President of Operations, hands off her recent responsibilities to Sherri Guiborat, who has been appointed Vice President of Sales. Guiborat in turn passes her duties to Mary Novak-Beatty, who has joined Mayflower as Vice President of Marketing.

When Mayflower's Vice President of Operations resigned for family reasons, a potential liability turned into an opportunity. John Stachnik, President of Mayflower Tours stated, "We have an outstanding group of executives here and wanted to take full advantage of that. So we asked Jeanne Czerwinski, our Vice President of Sales, to assume the position of Vice President of Operations."

That was just the beginning. Stachnik said, "We then asked Sherri Guiborat, our Vice President of Marketing to assume the position of Vice President of Sales. And we weren't finished yet – joining the Mayflower management team as Vice President of Marketing is Mary Novak-Beatty, a 17-year industry veteran."

Czerwinski has spent 16 years with Mayflower, working in almost every department. "Her contribution to the reorganization of the sales team has been invaluable. This sense of organization is serving us well in her new role as head of operations."

Guiborat has been with Mayflower for 17 years, with 11 of those years having been in sales. "Sherri has an unbelievable rapport with the travel agency and tour operator communities, so I know the transition will be seamless," said Stachnik. Guiborat also serves on the Board of Directors of the National Tour Association.

Novak-Beatty's career includes executive positions within the tour, cruise, package and online segments of the industry, most recently with The Mark Travel Corporation. "I tried to get Mary to join us 13 years ago – we joke that she is one tough person to convince to make a change."

Most gratifying, according to Stachnik, is that each of the three has been most instrumental in helping the other to assume their new roles. "We are thrilled to have three executives of this caliber leading us into the future."

Mayflower Tours, 800-3223-7604, www.mayflowertours.com

CELEBRATING ALASKA'S PAST WITH SUMMER EXHIBITIONS

Two communities that played a central role in Alaska statehood (Fairbanks and Juneau) are commemorating that history through exhibitions in local museums this summer.

Prior to the official statehood date of January 3, 1959, the Alaska Constitutional Convention met in Fairbanks on the campus of the University of Alaska. The rationale for meeting on a university campus was to distance the framers from the influence of politicians and lobbyists in the state capital, and provide an academic environment conducive to the free flow of ideas. Thought by many scholars to be among the best state constitutions in the United States, the creation of this formative document sealed Fairbanks' place in statehood history. Juneau's role in the spotlight came later. On July 4, 1959, the official 49-star flag was raised over the site of the former Juneau Memorial Library. Today, that same building is home to the Juneau-Douglas City Museum and is now a designated National Historical Site.

The museum is hosting an exhibit that celebrates this time in Juneau history through photos, film footage of the 1959 Independence Day parade and statehood artifacts. In downtown Fairbanks, Historic Hall is showcasing exhibits and collections of memorabilia from the gold rush days to Alaska statehood.

Fairbanks Convention and Visitors Bureau,

www.explorefairbanks.com;

Juneau Convention and Visitors Bureau, www.travejuneau.com;

Alaska Travel Industry Association, 800-327-9372,

ATIAMedia@gci.net, www.travelalaska.com

NEW SPAFACTA PACKAGE AT THE SPA AT LA COSTA

When the Del Mar Race Track goes dark on Tuesdays, the Spa at La Costa gets off and running with its new SpaFecta Package. SpaFecta guests can reenergize with a body rub or massage, pamper their 'hooves' with a spa pedicure or paraffin wax foot treatment, or get a Feng-Shui inspired cut or blow-out at the Yamaguchi Salon. The basic SpaFecta package starts at \$275 and includes a choice of two 50-minute spa treatments and lunch at the Spa Café. In addition, guests who book the SpaFecta package will receive a 25 percent discount on same-day treatments at the spa's Yamaguchi Salon.

Designed in a California Colonial architectural style, the spa features private men's and women's wet areas complete with steam, sauna, whirlpool, cold plunge, showers and luxurious lounges. Feng Shui-inspired features are found throughout the spa, including a fountain topped with an "eternal" flame that welcomes guests.

The Yamaguchi Salon at La Costa is located within the Spa at La Costa and offers an extensive menu of services ranging from a personal consultation with celebrity stylist Billy Yamaguchi to a unique menu of manicures, pedicures and other salon treatments. La Costa Resort and Spa, 800-854-5000, www.lacosta.com

ALBEE ADVENTURES OFFERS SPA GETAWAY IN COSTA RICA



Costa Rica is a perfect destination for every type of person, and for those looking to spoil themselves, there is a wide variety of hotels and resorts ready to indulge you at their spas.

There are many different types of spas available in Costa Rica, and guests can choose the type that fits their personal needs.

To combine recreational activities with a renewing spa experience, Spa Resorts are the perfect place because they offer not only the best spa services, but complement with activities (tours and sports) and healthful spa cuisine. Travelers can stop for a short period of time at the Day Spas and be pampered with treatments that last for an hour or less.

Guests will find a Spa at every tourist destination in Costa Rica: get a deep tissue massage while looking at the magnificent Arenal Volcano, relax with a mud wrap while listening to the sounds of the Cloud Forest in Monteverde, or indulge with a desired facial while listening to the Pacific Ocean in the area of Guanacaste.

Albee Adventures Inc. offers a great combination of the best Costa Rica has to offer, including special Spa Vacations in this Green Season.

Albee's Spa Getaway Package includes: private transportation airport – hotel – airport; welcome dinner; five-days /four-nights in Arenal Nayara Hotel & Gardens; full daily breakfast; one tour (Arenal Volcano Hike, Caño Negro Wildlife or River Rafting Tour); one body wrap (mud, chocolate, fruits, aloe vera, honey or coffee); one aroma facial; and taxes. Price starts at \$765 per person.

Albee Adventures Inc., 800-326-0202,
reservations@albeeadventures.com, www.albeeadventures.com

COSTA RICA: PURE NATURE AND EXCITEMENT FROM SOUTH STAR TOURS

Los Angeles-based South Star Tours is offering 12-days and 11-nights of guided sight-seeing through the wonders of Costa Rica. Three national parks are visited and explored, all with their own individual marvels: Tortuguero National Park, a world-renown turtle refuge; Monteverde Cloud Forest, which straddles the Continental Divide at over 4,400 feet above sea level; and finally Manuel Antonio National, the smallest of the three yet packed with a rich

diversity of fauna and wildlife. In between there will be opportunities to try canopy cruising, hiking, and even a visit to the Irazu, the highest active volcano in Costa Rica. While the days are spent experiencing the splendor of the tropics, nights can be spent relaxing at one of the many options of hotel accommodations currently available throughout Costa Rica. Wonders of Costa Rica starts at \$1,569 ppdo and is valid until November 30, 2008. Airfare is not included on the price; however discounted fares are available from most U.S. gateways upon request.

Shorter itineraries are also available to suit those with time restrictions, such as Costa Rica Sampler: six-days/five-nights featuring Arenal Volcano, hot springs and relaxation on Manuel Antonio Beach; or the All-Inclusive Holidays: six-days/five-nights featuring properties with all-inclusive meal-plan. Both programs start at \$599 ppdo (some date restrictions apply).

Passengers can take advantage of an easy interest-free monthly payment plan that can be arranged at the time of booking, while travel agents are guaranteed at least 11 percent commissions. Additionally, travel professionals and a companion are welcome to participate on Central and South America programs with 20 percent off the retail price. (Special events and Christmas holidays not available. Other restrictions may apply).

South Star Tours, Inc., 800-654-4468, info@southstartours.com, www.southstartours.com

SUNBREEZE HOTEL & SUNBREEZE SUITES

AMBERGRIS CAYE, BELIZE



The perfect combination offering facilities to suit the needs of most travelers seeking a somewhere off the beaten path. A five minute stroll apart, located in the town of San Pedro, yet out of the hustle and bustle. The SunBreeze Hotel features 43 rooms offering the facilities and services of a resort while the SunBreeze Suites has 20 oceanfront fully equipped suites. A variety of packages are available.

SUNBREEZE HOTEL
email:sunbreeze@btl.net
www.sunbreeze.net
toll free: 1-800-688-0191

SUNBREEZE SUITES
email:sunbreesesuites@btl.net
www.sunbreesesuites.com
toll free: 1-800-826-1631

SAN MIGUEL DE ALLENDE AND THE MONARCH BUTTERFLIES JOIN MEXICO'S WORLD HERITAGE SITES



The town of San Miguel El Grande and the Sanctuary of Jesús de Nazareno de Atotonilco (San Miguel Allende, Guanajuato) and the Monarch Butterfly

Biosphere Reserve (State of Mexico and Michoacán) were named Mexico's 28th and 29th World Heritage Sites by UNESCO during the 32nd annual World Heritage Committee in Canada.

Mexico now places third in the world for their amount of World Heritage Sites, after Spain and Italy.

The 16th century Mexican pueblo of San Miguel de Allende is known for its Mexican baroque architecture and cobblestone streets where natural hot springs provide for relaxation and the colorful atmosphere adds to an interesting vacation.

During a short walk around the city one can enjoy murals and paintings by local artists at the Instituto Allende, dance to the beat of the son in El Jardin, learn how to make a meal in one of its many cooking schools, relax at one of the local spas or study the Baroque architecture of its famous Parroquia and colonial mansions.

The Monarch Butterfly Sanctuaries in the State of Mexico and Michoacán, have also attracted major international tourists- almost 250 million monarch butterflies. Originally from southern Canada and northern United States, the orange butterfly with black highlighting veins has become famous for its annual travel to its winter getaway.

In 1986, the Mexican government declared the 100 square-mile winter retreat a biosphere reserve and several of the sanctuaries are open to the public.

Thousands of butterflies cluster together in the early morning and nights,

covering whole trees and branches. The best time to see the butterflies is during the months of December and January.

Before the butterflies take flight, visitors can join local festivities in the towns of Angangueo, Zitacuaro, Maravatio and Ocampo where Butterfly Festivals are held each February, featuring traditional dance, music and craft markets, in celebration of their annual winter visitors.

The Mexico Tourism Board (MTB) www.visitmexico.com;
UNESCO's World Heritage Sites, whc.unesco.org

NEWS FROM CRILLON TOURS

After 16 days of excavation, 14 metal objects, weavings, and a dozen ceramics of the

Inca Culture came to light, only one block away from the main square in the town of Copacabana by Lake Titicaca in the region La Paz.

These archeological treasures found in seven Inca graves are believed to be only a small part of what is still hidden underneath this sacred place of the Inca and Tiwanaku Cultures.

Archeologists of the Michigan University, UNAR (National Archeology Unit) and the local University Mayor de San Andres, led by the American - Peruvian Sergio Chavez and the Bolivian Eduardo Pareja are convinced that even objects from the pre-Tiwanakota era (Chipaya 1,500 B.C) can be found at this site.

The team has to prove the archeological potential of the site to prevent the local community from building a market on the area.

In other news from Bolivia, Crillon Tours continues updating their land fleet with the arrival of deluxe 10 passenger vans in June.

Crillon Tours is the pioneer of tourism in Bolivia and one of the largest and more experienced DMC (Destination Management Company) and ground operators of the continent.

Crillon Tours, www.titicaca.com

An advertisement for Albee Adventures in Costa Rica. The background is orange. On the left, there are three small images: a tropical beach with turquoise water, a toucan perched on a branch, and a sunset over a lake. The text 'COSTA RICA' is written in large white letters at the top, with 'Indulge Yourself' in a cursive font below it. The company name 'ALBEE ADVENTURES' is in the center, with a small logo above it. Below the name, it lists 'Nature and Wildlife - Family Vacations' and 'Honeymoons - Educational tours'. At the bottom, there are five small images: a jaguar, a volcano, a toucan, a toucan, and a waterfall. At the very bottom, contact information is provided: 'New York Phone: 212-695-1400 - US Phone: 1-800-326-0202' and 'reservations@albeeadventures.com - www.albeeadventures.com'.

INDIGO LODGES OPENS NORTH AMERICA SALES OFFICE

Indigo Lodges has announced the opening of its North American sales and marketing operations in Vancouver, Canada.

Indigo Lodges, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, is known amongst the world's wealthiest families as the leading purveyor of luxury villas with services in the most prestigious holiday destinations. Indigo Lodge's collection of villas consists of Europe and Asia properties, traditional as well as contemporary in design, accommodating parties ranging from two to 25 persons.

The properties are supplied with butlers, Michelin class chefs, and a variety of other services in accordance with the needs of each client.

"The North American market is an important one for our company as we know our resorts and properties better than anyone and believe we can build a loyal customer base through our services and our guarantee of satisfaction. Our key differentiating factor is our service. Having a North American office also helps us to overcome time differences and get back to our clients quicker and more effectively than we could from Switzerland," notes the company's Managing Director, Ivan Sellers.

Currently, the company is actively building a portfolio of destinations that appeal to clients based in North America such as Mexico, and the Caribbean. Indigo intends to start its first North American destination in Whistler in time for the 2008/09 ski season.

Indigo booked over 500 weeks of holidays for their clients in 2007, a figure that has been doubling each year for the past five years. The company expects this trend to continue.

Indigo's average family booking is approximately \$40,000 per week including staff.

"At this price," states Sellers "it does not matter that the house or villa is exceptional: you have to have excellent service for the customer to return." This explains Indigo's return rate of 60 percent for bookings at or above this price range. Indigo's weekly rental prices go as high as \$230,000 per week.

Indigo Lodges, www.indigolodges.com

KEMPINSKI SIGNS FIRST PROPERTY IN SLOVENIA

Kempinski Hotels announces its first property in Slovenia. Europe's oldest luxury hotel group has signed an agreement with Istrabenz Hoteli Portorož d.o.o. to manage the historic Hotel Palace, at the very heart of the cosmopolitan tourist town of Portorož, renowned for its mild climate and a century of spa traditions.

The hotel, which dates back to 1910, is completing a five-year restoration program and is scheduled to reopen during 2008, with an historic building and a newly built modern section. The Kempinski Palace Portoroz will offer 185 spacious and superbly furnished rooms and suites. The property is set to be Slovenia's leading luxury hotel - a true landmark.

Kempinski Palace Portoroz embodies the 'old meets new' concept by incorporating the different architectural styles which influenced the historic building as it was built. The 185 rooms and suites are located in both the renovated historic Palace building (107 rooms) and the newly built section (78 rooms).

The Palace also houses the property's restaurant, including a champagne bar, a unique historic ballroom, state-of-the-art conference and event facilities, shopping and the Presidential Suite. The modern section is where the wellness and recreation facilities are located.

"We are very proud to add this historic jewel to Kempinski's portfolio. Kempinski Palace Portoroz recalls Portorož' glorious days at the turn of the previous century as a top resort destination. Careful renovation brings this luxury property firmly into the 21st century, once more making it a top destination for the affluent traveler," said Reto Wittwer, President and CEO of Kempinski Hotels.

"This new project perfectly complements the Kempinski Hotel Adriatic, in the same bay, just half an hour away, in Croatia. It gives the distinctive traveler the choice to enjoy a vibrant city atmosphere in Portorož, Slovenia, or tranquility in what will be Croatia's leading luxury resort," added Rupert Simoner, Regional Vice President Southern Europe of Kempinski Hotels.

Kempinski Hotels, www.kempinski.com

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www.visitmalta.com

GUOMAN HOTELS NAMES ANDREW CONEY AS GENERAL MANAGER FOR THE TOWER HOTEL, LONDON



ANDREW CONEY

Guoman Hotels has announced the appointment of Andrew Coney as General Manager of The Tower, one of six central London hotels comprising the deluxe Guoman collection. Coney will be responsible for the day to day operations and leadership of commercial activities for The Tower, one of London's most prestigious properties located adjacent to the Tower of London and Tower Bridge.

Coney will oversee a staff of 400 at this 800-bedroom property with 9000 square foot of meeting space and also featuring two restaurants and a bar.

Coney brings a wealth of experience in U.K. and London hospitality to his new position. Most recently he served as General Manager of the Slaley Hall Hotel & Golf Resort in Northumberland, a 142-room hotel with two championship golf courses. For three years prior to that, he was General Manager of The Cavendish Hotel in London where he repositioned the property to attract business and corporate clientele.

After beginning his career as a management trainee with Forte Hotels in Portugal, Coney quickly assumed management positions with several hospitality companies in the U.K., including Le Meridien, Posthouse Hotels and Forte Hotels. He served as General Manager of both the Le Meridien Waldorf in central London and Le Meridien Excelsior at Heathrow.

Married with two children, Coney was educated at Oxford Polytechnic and St. Olave's Grammar School, Kent.

Guoman Hotels, www.guoman.com

BERLIN CONVENTION OFFICE RECEIVES PINNACLE AWARD

The Berlin Convention Office (BCO) has been named the best international convention bureau and will receive a prestigious 2008 *Successful Meetings* Pinnacle Award—the mark of excellence for meeting destinations. The Pinnacle Award is based upon reviews by *Successful Meetings* readers and given annually to organizations that have done an exceptional job servicing their meetings, incentive travel programs, trade shows and conventions during the previous year.

Hanns Peter Nerger, President and CEO of Berlin Tourism Marketing, appreciates the recognition. "The Pinnacle Award is a major achievement for us, and a much appreciated acknowledgment of our work."

For the Berlin Convention Office – a division of Berlin Tourism Marketing – the Pinnacle Award underscores yet another outstanding result: recently announced statistics by the International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA) ranked Berlin at second place worldwide behind Vienna, for hosting the highest num-

ber of prestigious association conferences in 2007.

The Pinnacle Award for Convention Bureaus is one of the most highly esteemed prizes of the convention industry in the USA. For 18 years, the trade magazine *Successful Meetings* has presented this annual award to national and international convention offices. Informed readers of the magazine have rated convention bureaus on the basis of specific categories like "Quality of information" and "Diversity of services". In 2007, VisitLondon, Melbourne and the Bermuda Convention Bureau ranked amongst the prize-winners.

Successful Meetings reaches corporate/sales/marketing executives who plan meetings, meeting professionals and event planners, trade show directors, and association executives who are involved with planning conventions and meetings.

Berlin Convention Office, www.berlin-convention-office.de

UNIQUE BAVARIAN SPA TREATMENTS

Visitors to Bavaria this year can indulge themselves in a range of spa experiences and treatments that are not expensive and yet are unique to the Alpine state in southern Germany.

The spa town of Bad Koetzing offers a classic Kneipp "cure" for seven nights, including two treatments per day for approximately \$714. Only 25 miles from Bad Fuessen, is the site of Germany's highest altitude sulphur spring where Hotel Prinz-Luitpold-Bad offers two nights with breakfast and three different treatments for approximately \$302. Packages at the Alpenhof Murnau are an excellent year round choice and currently offers a week for approximately \$941 including breakfast and access to the spa.

With its WellVital branding, Bavarian Tourism Marketing is making spa hotel choices and special deals ever more accessible. The combination of barley and malt in the "Blues Busting Beer Bath" in the Allgaeu improves the metabolism and is a fantastic exfoliator. Oberstaufen's Schroth treatment entails a three week adherence to vegetarian, low-protein, salt-free, high carbohydrate diet with drinking and dry days. Garmisch Partenkirchen is capitalizing on its natural heights and has been creating various healing and scientifically developed Alpine breathing exercises designed to improve the functioning of lungs and circulation. Close by in Bad Kohlgrub, Bernd Trum offers three day course on "Cooking with Wild Herbs" with tips and tricks on planning a healthy diet.

Moving east along the Alpine Road, in Berchtesgaden, Schnapps baths are made with the Alpine Gentian plant and go beyond the usual after-dinner drink. Bad Reichenhall surprises visitors with its enormous salt mines. The salt rocks cut from these mines are made into rooms where visitors lie and revive their respiratory systems. Not far from Passau, Bad Griesbach offers packages for golfers and spa seekers where you can pay approximately \$477 for two overnights and massages.

Kempinski Hotel's Fit and Fly Spa at the Munich Airport features an enormous swimming pool, and saunas and treatments from physiotherapists are part of the package.

German National Tourist Office, www.cometogermany.com, www.bayern.by

RETREAT PACKAGE AT HOTEL RAITO



Located along the shores of Italy's picturesque Amalfi Coast, the newly-renovated Hotel Raito invites guests to escape from the stress of everyday life and retreat to one of the world's most idyllic destinations with its special Retreat Package. With rates starting at approximately \$570 double occupancy, per night valid now through October 31, 2008, Hotel Raito's Retreat Package features luxury accommodations, exquisite gourmet cuisine highlighting local wines, a stress-relief massage and complimentary airport transfers.

Hotel Raito's Retreat Package includes deluxe accommodations in standard double guestroom with a sea view; welcome Champagne cocktail; one welcome dinner (gourmet menu, local wine, and beverages included) for two; buffet breakfast for two; limo transfer to and from Naples Airport; complimentary spa entrance for two; and a complimentary anti-stress massage for two.

Originally opened in 1958, Hotel Raito continues to be the crown jewel of the Amalfi Coast, located in the quaint town of Vietri sul Mare. After completing a recent renovation, the hotel now features Italian-contemporary décor and luxury amenities. Many of the 77 guest rooms and suites offer balconies and terraces with stunning views of the Bay of Salerno and the villages of Vietri sul Mare.

The hotel features three sea-view dining rooms and exquisite spa facilities in its Expure SPA. Treatments included Turkish baths, sensory beds, hydromassage seats, coiffeur, relax area, solarium and massage rooms. The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle service to and from both Vietri sul Mare as well as the beach, and boat rentals, with or without a sailor, are also available for a cost.

Ragosta Hotels, www.ragostahotels.com

Summit Hotels & Resorts, www.summithotels.com

AIR BERLIN LOWERS FARES FOR SUMMER TRAVEL

Air Berlin, Germany's second largest airline has lowered fares for summer travel available now. Air Berlin offers the only nonstop service to Düsseldorf from Los Angeles, New York, Miami and Ft. Myers. Fares are based on roundtrip travel and start from \$498

from New York, \$798 from Los Angeles, and \$598 from Miami valid for travel from now through August 31. These fares are also valid to most of Germany's premier cities such as Munich, Berlin, Stuttgart and Hamburg. (Taxes and fees from \$380 are not included and total depends on final destination. Check CRS for other rules and restrictions.)

In addition Air Berlin offers connections from this centrally located airport to numerous European cities. Enjoy Air Berlin's award winning service and, for those looking to travel in extra comfort, Air Berlin's new business class features enhanced seat comfort, selection of multi-course gourmet meals specially created in one of Germany's exclusive restaurants on the Island of Sylt, individual entertainment systems and more.

Air Berlin has consistently been recognized world-wide for its excellent service, friendliness and safety standards receiving numerous awards from industry experts such as Business Travel World and Skytrax.

Air Berlin, 866-266-5588

TCS EXPEDITIONS REINVENTS THE EUROPEAN VACATION

The once-forbidden countries of Georgia, Albania, Latvia and Lithuania are regarded by seasoned travelers as the continent's hottest emerging destinations. For those who want to see them and six other spectacular countries before the masses, TCS Expeditions' groundbreaking itinerary, "Eastern Europe and Beyond by Private Jet" is available this year only.

TCS Expeditions designed this never-before-offered journey to 10 countries of formerly communist Europe exclusively for 2008. Such an itinerary is only possible with TCS' privileged access.

"We'll fly in and out of Romania in a day to explore the country's world-famous painted monasteries," said Martha Wharton, Vice President of Marketing. "And later in the trip we land in Irkutsk, the heart of Siberia. There's no other way to combine these remote destinations at this level of comfort and efficiency for this price."

During the expedition, guests are treated to a stay at the Ritz-Carlton in downtown Moscow, a private reception in the Houses of Parliament in Budapest, and a boat ride on Lake Baikal. But the real luxury is enjoying each experience while TCS staff handles the logistical details, such as transporting luggage, filling out customs forms and exchanging money.

Guests will be led on an architectural tour through downtown Riga, Latvia; an underground journey through salt-carved chapels and sculptures in Poland's Wieliczka mine; and an exploration of UNESCO World Heritage sites including the Ottoman-style city of Gjirokastra and Butrint National Park in Albania. Experts will also give lectures on the jet between destinations.

"Eastern Europe and Beyond by Private Jet" departs from London on October 9, 2008 and travels to Hungary, Romania, Albania, Latvia, Lithuania, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Mongolia, Russia and Poland. The expedition starts from \$49,950 per person.

TCS Expeditions, 206-727-7300, www.tcs-expeditions.com

VARIETY CRUISES ANNOUNCES PREFERRED PARTNERSHIP WITH VACATION.COM



Variety Cruises, one of the world's largest small ships cruise companies, announced that it has partnered with Vacation.com, North America's largest vacation-selling network.

"We are thrilled to become a preferred partner with the largest travel agency marketing organization in the industry," said Dave Randon, VP Sales and Marketing, Variety Cruises. "This is a huge step forward for us in the North American market, and for unique yacht cruises in the Greek Islands and in the Red Sea."

Variety Cruises ships and programs are very different from the traditional cruises available to clients. "97 percent of our U.S. passengers are booking through travel agents. They need the travel agent assistance to understand our product and in turn we are providing agents the tools and training, and building slowly but steadily a database of agents knowledgeable about our small ships cruise programs. Our partnership with Vacation.com will surely add tremendous value to our business by increasing our database of knowledgeable agents as well as awareness and exposure of our unique product," says Randon.

Through this preferred partnership, Vacation.com travel agents who book Variety Cruises vacations are entitled to a rewarding commission structure starting at 13 percent.

Variety Cruises offers premium cruises in a casually sophisticated, yacht-like atmosphere to well-known destinations, as well as smaller ports at an accessible price point. Guests enjoy flexible itin-

eraries, journeys to off the beaten path locations, easy access to the sea from swimming platforms, delicious local cuisine, and the rare opportunity to experience old world culture and history in the utmost comfort and style.

Variety Cruises, 800-319-7776, www.varietycruises.com

GOWAY TRAVEL'S EGYPT - LAND OF THE PHAROHS TOUR IN DEMAND

Goway Travel, one of Canada's leading tour operators, has announced increasing demand for Egypt. Egypt - Land of the Pharaohs - is drawing record numbers of Canadians to its country.

"Egypt has taken off for many travelers wanting that 'deluxe vacation' at a reasonable cost to an exotic and interesting destination," commented Christy Fraser, Product & Marketing Manager, Africa. "Consumers see that Egypt offers an affordable vacation permitting them to visit cities such as Cairo, Alexandria, Luxor and Red Sea resorts - to name just a few. Pre or post extensions to Israel and Jordan are also popular choices. The colorful bazaars, fascinating history, amazing monuments and holy cities make for a memorable travel experience."

One of Goway's biggest sellers this year is their Mysteries & Magic of Egypt tour. This 15-day trip starting and ending in Cairo includes extensive sightseeing in this city, a seven-night Nile Cruise and a visit to an oasis, and starts from \$1,718. A bonus offer of up to six free night's accommodation in a Deluxe resort in the Red Sea town of Ein Sokhna is available.

The traditional Classic Egypt tour includes Cairo sightseeing and four-night Nile Cruise. This nine-day tour is priced from \$1,136 and offers the flexibility of adding extensions to Abu Simbel, Alexandria, Red Sea beach stays or a visit to Israel and Jordan. Easy add-ons are the five-day Jordan tour starting from \$717 or the eight-day Holyland tour to Israel.

Some of the new programs being offered this year are the nine-day Highlights of Egypt and Israel tour that starts in Cairo and ends in Jerusalem and includes Cairo, Luxor, the Dead Sea, Massada, Qumran and Jerusalem.

AFRICAExperts, 800-245-0920, info@africaexperts.com, AFRICAExperts.com

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CRUISE INDUSTRY THRIVES IN MALTA

2007 surpassed all targets and expectations for the Cruise Industry in Malta with over 479,000 passengers passing through the terminal. All major cruise liners are now visiting the Islands in one way or another. Carnival Cruises, Aida Cruises, Princess Cruise Liner and Holland America are using Malta as a port of call. Costa Crociera will be visiting Malta no less than 62 times in 2008. MSC Cruises is one of Malta's most important clients and has been increasing its visits to up to two weekly turn-around operations through *MSC Sinfonia* and *MSC Rhapsody*. Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines representing *Celebrity*, *RCC*, *Pulmantur* and *Island Cruises* are also frequent visitors with *Pulmantur's TSS Skywonder* having no less than 21 turn around at the port of Valetta between June and November 2007. This number is sure to be surpassed when its sister ship *Pacific Star* begins operations this May until October with anticipated 25 turn-around operations.

Day excursions for cruise passengers stopping in Malta are usually concentrated around the City of Valletta. However one can hop onto the Harbour Air Company seaplane and take a 15 minute flight to the Island of Gozo, or simply enjoy a scenic aerial tour of the Islands. The service is conveniently located alongside the terminal.

Cruise Holidays starting from Malta makes the concept of Valetta Port becoming a permanent hub for major liners more of a reality. Winter Cruising in the Mediterranean is becoming more feasible for the larger companies who are seeing the competitive advantage of the Maltese Islands and their convenient positioning in the Mediterranean. The possibility of Malta being used as a permanent hub for Eastern, Western and Southern Mediterranean Winter Cruises draws closer especially when the island offers such a proximity to major European Cities, a multi-lingual resident population, stable economic and commercial investment and a pleasant year-round climate.

Malta, www.visitmalta.com



MALTA'S GRAND HARBOUR

JASPE HOTEL: THE MOST PRECIOUS HOTEL IN SARDINIA

There is a word in Sardinian which means "the most precious": Jaspe. For elite tourism it denotes the most precious hotel in Sardinia. It is a resort of princely suites, eminent hotel rooms and services, luxury residences, a beauty spa, pools, restaurants and boutiques, all radiating from the central piazzetta along winding footpaths graced by gardens, olive groves and

bougainvilleas. An exclusive marina and a private beach, diving center and charter services create the perfect mix for an ideal holiday. Facing Caprera Island of the Maddalena archipelago, Jaspe Hotel is an authentic Sardinian village nestled in a pristine Mediterranean setting. The genius of French architect Jean Claude Le Suisse lends flair and distinction to this out of the ordinary resort.

Jaspe Hotel,
www.poltu-quatu.com

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