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CANODROS A PROVIDER OF ECUADOR AND GALAPAGOS TOURS FOR OVER 20 YEARS



Galapagos Explorer II, after its yearly maintenance period, has renewed operation in the Galapagos as of November 7 on Baltra Island.

As part of a five-year transformation master plan, this year the restaurant, coffee station and the Jacuzzi bar were remodeled. The restaurant was decorated with hand-painted images created by a renowned local artist. Walls received classic wood treatments, and the portholes were changed for picture windows. The coffee station and Jacuzzi wall panels were replaced with more modern wood panels.

Cabins were included in the refurbishment plan, and this year eight of them in the premium category added balconies, bringing total balcony cabins to 24. This is the greatest number of balcony suites available in the Galapagos touring operation.

Besides these many changes, general maintenance was performed by the technical department that included provisions for the renewal of the classification RINA, which was successfully achieved. **Canodros S.A.**, lmontalvo@canodros.com, www.canodros.com

GOWAY OFFERS PHOTOGRAPHIC TRIP TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

ADVENTURESIncorporated, Goway's exclusive adventure division, is offering an amazing opportunity in the Galapagos Islands to join biologist and award-winning wildlife photographer Pete Oxford on a week-long photography expedition.

Teeming with wildlife, much of it endemic to the islands, the Galapagos is truly a photographer's paradise. "On this exclusive Goway expedition you will benefit from Pete's experience as a former naturalist guide and frequent visitor to the Galapagos for more than 20 years to ensure you are in the right place at the right time to get the best shots" states Don Forster, Product Manager for ADVENTURESIncorporated.

The expedition has been scheduled for the best opportunity to capture a range of mating displays, including the elegant courtship dance of the Waved Albatross, and to coincide with warm waters and the best visibility conditions for underwater photography," continued Forster.

For wildlife photography enthusiasts, this is a rare master class run by a professional whose images have been featured

10 times in the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Awards and who, with his longtime partner and wife Reneé Bish, has published nine books, two of which focus entirely on the Galapagos. He is also published in many international magazines including National Geographic, BBC Wildlife, International Wildlife, GEO, Smithsonian, Nature's Best, Airone and The Geographical.

Space is strictly limited to 14 wildlife photography enthusiasts. The Wildlife Photography Expedition with Pete Oxford is slated for March 24 through April 2, 2010, and is priced at \$5,950 per person, twin share.

ADVENTURESIncorporated, 888-469 2949, info@adventuresincorporated.com, adventuresincorporated.com; **Goway Travel**, info@goway.com, www.goway.com

CASA CEIBO RESORT'S DOUBLE GRAND OPENING A SUCCESS FOR ECUADORIAN TRAVEL

On October 24, resort owners Charles Van Diver, a Destin, Florida, developer, and Daniel Jacome, Galapagos guide and drummer for Ecuador's top rock band, Tercer Mundo, hosted a ribbon-cutting party for 150 local and regional guests at Casa Ceibo Resort in Bahia de Caraquez. The co-owners hosted a second party the following Wednesday night in Quito, Ecuador's capital, where they introduced the luxury property to a crowd of 300, including tour operators, travel agents and media, plus commercial, industry and government leaders.

"Casa Ceibo delivers a superior experience, and both grand opening celebrations exemplified this, from the food to the wine, entertainment, service and overall ambiance," Jacome says. "We're receiving excellent response to promotions and are fully booked for the Bahia Anniversary in November and a period in December for a large group function. Few rooms remain for New Year's Eve—we're throwing a big celebration for hotel guests, plus Bahia's holiday visitors and residents."

For Casa Ceibo's grand opening, guests gathered to hear Jacome's welcome, and then Ecuadorian national assemblyman, Doctor Leonardo Viteri, cut the red ribbon. Van Diver toasted eloquently to the Ecuadorian people, artisans who crafted and furnished Casa Ceibo, and artists whose works adorn the halls and guest rooms.

Cocktails and delicacies were prepared by international award-winning chef Hugo Jimenez. Tercer Mundo provided entertainment, and dancing lasted all night. Wednesday's party, held at Quito's Swissotel, was attended by travel professionals, local business owners and government officials.

Stephany Reeson, Casa Ceibo's Quito-based sales/marketing director, gave the welcome, followed by a short speech by Jacome and Van Diver's toasting his new Ecuadorian "family." Guests enjoyed entertainment by Tercer Mundo, plus a presentation on the resort and coastal attractions emceed by Maria Susana Rivadeneira, former Miss Ecuador, who's now a fashion designer.

Casa Ceibo Resort, www.casaceibo.com

MINIMAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT IN A NATURAL SETTING FOR GUESTS OF DUPLOOY'S JUNGLE LODGE



duPlooy's Jungle Lodge in Western Belize offers a satisfying way to send clients to Belize whether an agent is familiar with the area or not, with duPlooy's "Create Your Own Vacation" fully-commissionable package.

Each evening guests receive assistance in choosing tours and activities for the next day from a long list of things to do. Simply booking the number of days needed is all that has to be done—duPlooy's handles the rest. Packages include transfers, accommodation, meals, a full day or 2 half-days' guided activities and tours on non-transfer days, guided or self-guided tour of Belize Botanic

Gardens, and gratuities to staff and all taxes. Entrances to sites, Guatemala border fee and bar are not included, but can be for an additional \$35 per day per person. Guests pay for a six-night package and get the seventh free (accommodation only).

The group rate for 10–24 people is \$119 a day per person. There's a minimum stay of four days and this low rate includes round-trip transfers between duPlooy's and Belize City, double- or triple-occupancy accommodation in duPlooy's Belize River House, three meals daily, Traditional Healers' Workshop and Tour at Belize Botanic Gardens and daily excursion on non-transfer days plus all taxes, and use of classroom for student groups. Lectures can be arranged. A beautiful onsite feature is the 45-Acre Belize Botanic Gardens, horses, canoes, tubes, lovely river beach, hiking trails, daily birding from the deck, spa services, restaurant and bar.

Major Maya sites are in the area, as well as waterfalls and caves, birding (over 300 species within a 5-mile radius). One unique tour is a horseback ride to Flour Camp Cave (an hour and a half), guided tour of the cave and then the option of canoeing or tubing back downstream to duPlooy's after a picnic by the Macal River. This can also be done by road. Another is an overnight to Tikal with a stop at Yaxcha on the way. These are major Maya sites and an overnight makes it possible to experience both of them. There's an additional \$150 per person charge for this trip.

duPlooy's Jungle Lodge, info@duplooy.com, www.duplooy.com; Belize Botanic Gardens, www.belizebotanic.org

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PANAMA'S BRISTOL BUENAVENTURA WELCOMES JOHN BLANCO AS GENERAL MANAGER



JOHN BLANCO

The recently opened Bristol Buenaventura in Panama has appointed John Blanco as General Manager.

Blanco brings with him over two decades of experience in all aspects of the luxury hospitality industry. He joins Bristol Hotels having previously served as the managing director of The Landmark Hotels Group in Hawaii for the past three years, where he was responsible for all operations at Honolulu's Kahala Hotel &

Resort and Mexico City's Embassy Suites. Prior to his work at Landmark, Blanco was a key management member at a number of Ritz-Carlton properties, including The Ritz-Carlton, Penha Longa in Portugal; The Ritz-Carlton, Key Biscayne in Florida; and the Ritz-Carlton Bali in Indonesia, among others. Blanco's impressive tenure and knowledge of six languages—English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Italian and German—will assist in making guest experiences unique and personalized.

Blanco earned his Hotel and Restaurant Management degree from Switzerland's Centre International de Glion in 1986. From there, he underwent further extensive training under Chef Gualtiero Marchesi at the Michelin three-star restaurant, Marchesi Ristorante in Milan, as well as the Hotel Excelsior and The Dolder Grand Hotel in Switzerland.

Bristol Buenaventura, www.thebristol.com/buenaventura

LOS ALTOS BEACH RESORT & SPA IS NEWEST LUXURY RESORT IN MANUEL ANTONIO, COSTA RICA

Los Altos Beach Resort & Spa, the latest luxury boutique resort on the Pacific Coast of Costa Rica, has officially opened in Manuel Antonio. The condo-resort combines five-star services and the rain-forest, with its abundance of Costa Rican wildlife for neighbors.

The 21-acre property, part of the Grace's Distinctive Properties Ltd collection, has one-, two-, three- and four-bedroom suites outfitted with large grand salons, gourmet kitchens and elegant furnishings of modern Balinese design. The premier location neighbors Manuel Antonio National Park, the region's largest national park world renown for its natural beauty. It is home to exotic wildlife, various species of birds, as well as multiple nature trails that lead to the most spectacular white sand beaches of Costa Rica, noted as some of the best in the world. Opening Specials include stay for seven nights and pay for five or stay for four nights and pay for three, including daily breakfast and transfers. Specials are valid on seven-night stays over the Christmas holiday period.

Grace's Distinctive Properties, Ltd., 888-98-ALTOS (982-5867), gdistinctivelt@aol.com, Los Altos Beach Resort & Spa, www.losaltosresort.com

LA MANSION INN IS INVOLVED IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

Harry Bodaan, owner of La Mansion Inn, chairs Quepos [Costa Rica's] Sister Cities International, he's Vice President of the Chamber of Commerce, Special Law Enforcement Assistant to Oscar Monge, Mayor of Quepos and the City Council, and is liaison between Jack Seiler, Fort Lauderdale's mayor [Quepos' Sister City], and various departments. The cities have shared knowledge and experience about law enforcement, Ocean Rescue programs, the Chamber of Commerce, the Marine Industry, the Library, and Humanitarian programs.

Mr. Bodaan chairs the Security Committee of the Chamber as well, and has overseen many efforts contributing to Costa Rican overall security this year.

Cornelio Mesén, the Inn's Administrative Assistant, acts as Chairman of the Tourism Committee. This year, it coordinated representation of Quepos/Manuel Antonio at the Fort Lauderdale International Boat Show, the Annual Sister Cities International "Dinner on the River" celebration (renamed "The Quepos Boat Show Celebration"), and offered Aguirre Chamber members free participation in a Fort Lauderdale Trade Show.

The Inn supports the well being of homeless and troubled stray animals, with a long-term goal of developing sustainable care through intensive neutering and spaying programs, pet rehabilitation and adoption, owner education, and the eventual building of an animal refuge facility. Guests may participate in the "Amigos de los Animales" program by adding an extra dollar per night to the guest room rates.

La Mansion Inn, reservations@lamansioninn.com, www.lamansioninn.com

BOUTIQUE HOTEL CALA MIA ON ISLA BOCA BRAVA, PANAMA, IS ECO-ISLAND RESORT

At the Boutique Hotel Cala Mia, without effort one can experience dolphins, sea turtles, monkeys, beautiful birds and more. Isla Boca Brava, minutes from the mainland, is part of the Chiriqui Marine National park that includes more than 20 islands.

Land activities include hiking through jungle, prairies and beaches—and a guaranteed view of howler monkeys. Travelers can visit the hotel's organic farm and watch cheesemaking—Gouda made by Dutch owner Max and Fior de Latte, the best mozzarella, made by his Italian wife Vittoria. Water activities include deep-sea fishing, scuba diving, kayaking, snorkeling, humpback whale watching (during their migration), exploring mangroves and outer islands. Plus there are spa treatments, beaches and a freshwater pool.

One-bedroom bungalow suites start at \$220 per night in high season, \$180 per night in low season. Rates include breakfast; 10-percent local tax not included.

Boutique Hotel Cala Mia, Panamonte Inn and Spa, 800-783-6904, ml@tvmarketing.com, www.boutiquehotelcalamia.com