

FEBRUARY 2009

# Travel World

The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

NEWS®

## NH Constanza

*Capital Asset in  
Barcelona*

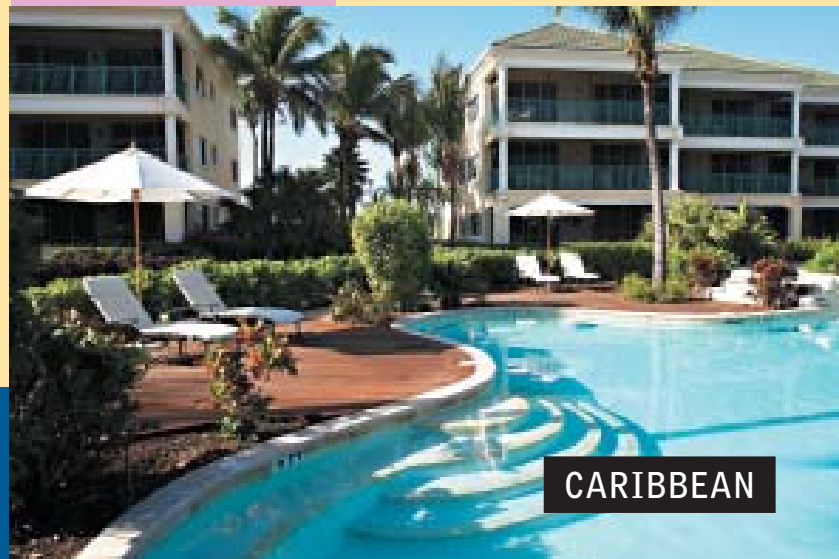
EUROPE



AFRICA



*Africa Travel Association's  
2009 Congress  
Means Business!*



CARIBBEAN

*The Sands at Grace Bay*  
A Peaceful Spot on Turks & Caicos

# Travel World NEWS<sup>®</sup>

The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

FEBRUARY 2009

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## INDUSTRY EVENTS

### NTA ANNUAL CONVENTION BREAKS RECORD AT WORLD'S GREENEST CONVENTION CENTER

The 2008 NTA Annual Convention held this past November in Pittsburgh set a record for materials recycled from a single show at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center. The center is the first and largest certified green convention center in the world.

Officials at the convention center reported that everyone who attended the NTA Convention helped to recycle 9.435 tons of material, comprised of composted materials, cardboard and bottles, cans and loose paper. Additionally, 123,500 gallons of water was reclaimed. These record numbers were not just a reflection of the amount of trash generated by the Convention. Officials attributed the record total to two factors: first, attendees were very conscious to place recyclable items in the bins around the center; and second, the composting total was much higher than other shows because NTA has more food events and larger ones than other shows.

"These numbers reflect a true partnership," says Mark J. Leahy, general manager of the convention center. "It is amazing what can be achieved when an association and a facility work so closely together to lessen the impact on the environment."

The 2008 Annual Convention was NTA's first green convention, as part of the association's ongoing efforts to support sustainability. In 2007, NTA adopted a new strategy to officially recognize sustainable travel as part of its core values, a commitment that was applied to the Annual Convention through a wide range of initiatives including an altered transportation schedule and the use of recyclable materials.

NTA Chairman and CEO Michele Michalewicz, CTP says, "The conscious effort to be more environmentally responsible made a huge impact, as evident in these astounding numbers. We learned a lot from this first effort and look forward to applying those lessons to future NTA events."

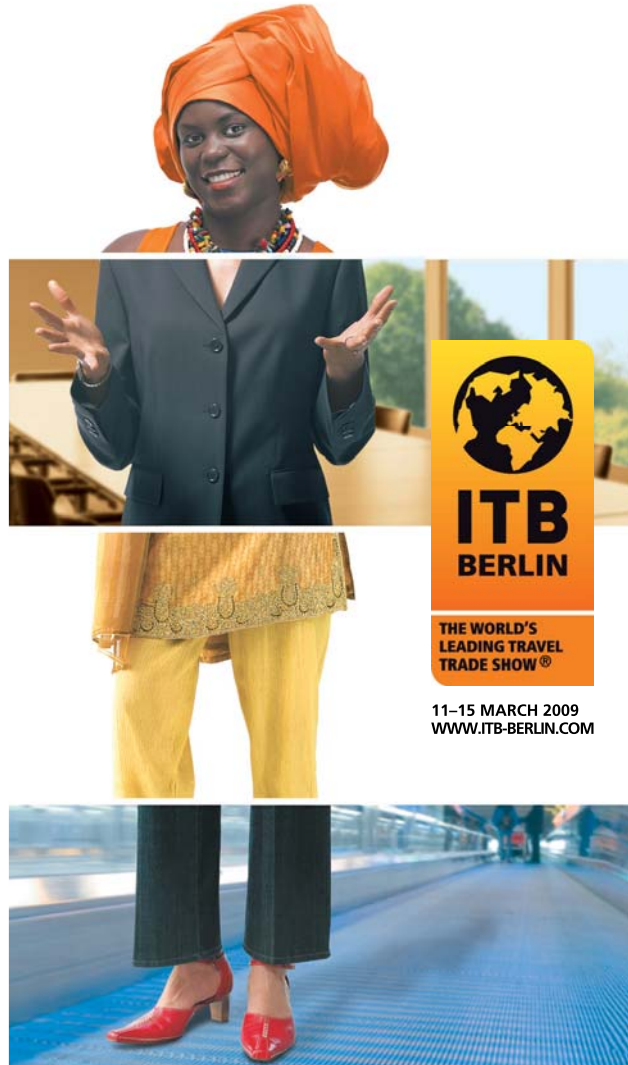
National Tour Association, [www.NTAonline.com](http://www.NTAonline.com)

### AWTA ANNUAL HOLDS HOLIDAY GALA



Association of Westchester Travel Agents recently held their annual holiday gala at the VIP Country Club. Shown pictured from left to right is the new Board of Directors: Charles DiGiacomo, Past President; Lucy Penna, Assistant Treasurer; Maureen Abrahamsen, Director; Barbara Jathas, Secretary; Doris Star, Past President; Vincent Caruso, Vice President; Corrine Mutarelli, President; Sadie Longobardi, Treasurer; Ralph Vasami, Director and Barbard Colombo, Director.

## Where Global Business Happens.



ITB Berlin is the driving force in the global travel industry. This is where business transactions and developments valued at € 5 billion took place last year. The annual event attracts key players from all segments of the travel value chain.

- Discover the latest product innovations and trends
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 **Messe Berlin**

### NEW BRAND IDENTITY FOR RTE'S GLOBAL PORTFOLIO OF MEETING AND INCENTIVE EVENTS

Reed Travel Exhibitions' group of meetings and incentive events—EIBTM in Barcelona, GIBTM in Abu Dhabi, CIBTM in Beijing and AIBTM in Baltimore, USA—have been given a brand makeover to reflect the expansion and market positioning of the portfolio and its flagship event EIBTM.

Harnessing the brand strength of EIBTM's recognizable red diamond logo, the other events now use the same diamond shape but with different colors to signify each exhibition: yellow for GIBTM, blue for CIBTM and green for AIBTM. The initials for each event sit in lower case within the diamond.

RTE organizes 14 events worldwide, including World Travel Market, Arabian Travel Market, European Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (EIBTM), Americas Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (AIBTM), Asia Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME), International Golf Travel Market, Top Resa, ICCA Exhibition, in association with the ICCA Congress, International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM), La Cumbre, City Break, China Incentive, Business Travel & Meetings Exhibition (CIBTM), Gulf Incentive Business Travel & Meetings (GIBTM) and Asia Luxury Travel Market (ALTM).

Reed Travel Exhibitions, [www.reedtravelexhibitions.com](http://www.reedtravelexhibitions.com)

### CULTOUR OPENS FOR HOSTED BUYER APPLICATION

Travel trade professionals may now apply to be fully hosted to visit the third edition of CULTOUR, Global Heritage and Cultural Travel Exhibition, scheduled for April 15–16 in Düsseldorf, Germany. The global travel trade exhibition for professionals only is directed specifically to the cultural and heritage travel niche market.

The invitation includes funding for air transportation from anywhere in the world to Düsseldorf, up to two nights in a five-star hotel, social functions and up to 20 meetings with worldwide travel trade suppliers: tourism offices, hotels, incoming agencies, attractions, etc. The pre-arranged meetings between exhibitors and hosted buyers are set up in advance. Other professional visitors—non-hosted buyers—may pre-register or register on-site to attend CULTOUR, meeting exhibitors at their own will or request appointments.

The exhibition serves as a marketplace where worldwide venues and travel and tourism-related service providers can meet with product-development managers of tour operating companies—wholesalers—and travel agencies producing and promoting cultural and heritage travel-related programs, sold either directly to the consumer or via retail travel agencies. CULTOUR is run as a serious, professional trade mart, where entertainment and food and beverage are only allowed in the stands at specific hours.

In 2008 there were 36 countries exhibiting in CULTOUR.

CULTOUR, [www.cultourfair.com](http://www.cultourfair.com)

### HOME-BASED TRAVEL AGENT SHOW AND CONFERENCE SET FOR MARCH 10-12

The Home-Based Travel Agent Show and Conference will be held March 10-12 at Chicago's Hyatt Regency. Produced by Travel Industry Shows and co-sponsored by OSSN (Outside Sales and Support Network) – the largest and most credible organization of Home Based agents with over 7,000 members – the event is geared to both home- and office-based travel agents who want to "Earn More, Learn More." The format is a "no nonsense schedule of seminars, panel discussions and keynote speakers." Participants range from thousands of agents to the most recognized corporate CEO's. Agent delegates an opportunity to sit one-on-one with more than 250 domestic and international suppliers, from such niche markets as: tours and cruises, honeymoons and romantic getaways, family travel, group travel, and hotel/resort properties.

According to event planners there are 100,000 home-based sellers of travel in the U.S. and this is the original tradeshow to target this audience. In addition to business-focused programs for this travel niche, the event also offers accredited training from the Travel Institute, CLIA and the Niche Cruise Marketing Alliance. It will also again present the highly successful Technology Forum, which allows travel agent delegates hands-on training on computers provided by Royal Caribbean and Celebrity Cruises.

Travel Industry Shows, [spring.homebasedagentshow.com](http://spring.homebasedagentshow.com)

### ADVENTURE TRAVEL WORLD SUMMIT SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER IN QUEBEC

With steep air discounts negotiated, the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) will hold its 2009 Adventure Travel World Summit in Canada at Québec Province's historic Fairmont Le Manoir Richelieu October 19-22.

Surrounded by the Saint Lawrence River, Le Massif and Mont Grand Fonds mountains, Le Manoir offers an excellent adventure and conference venue combined with the sophistication of a world-class resort. "Tourism Québec and the association of professional outfitters in adventure tourism and eco-tourism (AEQ) are proud to host the 2009 Adventure Travel World Summit," said Pierre Gaudreault, general director of AEQ. Affordable resort rates of C\$159 (standard per night) were negotiated for delegates' stay. In addition, Air Canada is offering 50 percent airfare discounts for delegates and their guests entering Canada.

The five-year old summit promotes a programs of executive-level networking, business and professional development programs, educational seminars and emerging adventure destination product review opportunities. Marketing, networking and best practices will drive the agenda. Delegates include tour operators, destination marketing organizations, tourism boards, lodges/resorts and transportation companies. Adventure travel agents, attractions, and travel-oriented gear manufacturers will also participate, among others.

Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA),

[www.adventuretravelworldsummit.com](http://www.adventuretravelworldsummit.com).

**ITB BERLIN SEES BOTH LUXURY AND COST-SAVING TRENDS ON HORIZON**



According to ITB Berlin, the travel industry's leading trade show, the fallout from the global economic crisis will tend to favor niche markets, in particular luxury travel, in 2009. At the same time, bargain hunting and last-minute travel will be dominant. "Whether we like it or not—the idea of saving money at all costs is back with us again," said Dr. Martin Buck, Director of the Competence Center Travel & Logistics at Messe Berlin.

According to the ITB World Travel Trends Report commissioned from IPK International, the effects of the global financial crisis, coupled with uneasiness over prices for raw materials and significant currency fluctuations, means no reliable forecasts can currently be made. This is based on the assessments of tourism experts from 30 countries meeting at the World Travel Monitor Forum in Pisa in November 2008, as well as core data supplied by the World Travel Monitor®, recognized as the largest ongoing survey on global travel trends in some 60 source countries.

The Forum indicates that short trips within Europe will become increasingly popular next year. "Higher costs and a new kind of insecurity affecting consumers will undoubtedly impact negatively on long-haul travel in 2009," said Dr. Martin Buck. City-tour vacations will not be enough to counter this trend. He noted the boom in trips to major European cities, which low-cost airlines had significantly accelerated in recent years, would tail off. According to

the Trends Report, the growth experienced by low-cost airlines has already come to an end in 2008.

Assessments by ITB Berlin indicate business travel, in particular, will suffer. According to Dr. Martin Buck: "Worldwide, international companies have begun to drastically cut their spending on business travel, meetings and incentives. The travel industry is already experiencing the effects of these measures."

He noted that by contrast, the economic downturn would affect consumer travel at a

later date.

The Trends Report is available on ITB's website under Media Centre/Publications.

ITB Berlin 2009 will take place Wednesday, March 11, to Sunday, March 15, the fair open for trade visitors from the Wednesday to Friday. Parallel to it, the ITB Berlin Convention will be March 11–14. The Convention is the world's largest travel industry convention, attracting more than 11,000 participants last year.

ITB Berlin, [www.itb-berlin.com](http://www.itb-berlin.com), [www.itb-convention.com](http://www.itb-convention.com)



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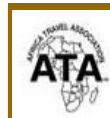


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**For more info and to register contact**

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 Email: [info@africatravelassociation.org](mailto:info@africatravelassociation.org)  
 Tel: 212.447.1357 / Fax: 212.213.4890

# 2009 • CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
<b>MARCH</b>			
11-15	ITB	Berlin, Germany	<a href="http://www.itb-berlin.com">www.itb-berlin.com</a>
16-19	Seatrade	Miami Beach, FL	<a href="http://www.cruiseshipping.net">www.cruiseshipping.net</a>
17	Moscow Intl. MICE Forum	Moscow, Russia	<a href="http://www.miceforum.ru">www.miceforum.ru</a>
18-21	MITT	Moscow, Russia	<a href="http://www.mitt.ru/en/">www.mitt.ru/en/</a>
19-22	Salon Mondial du Tourisme	Paris, France	<a href="http://www.mondialtourisme.com">www.mondialtourisme.com</a>
19-22	TUR	Gothenburg, Sweden	<a href="http://www.tur.se">www.tur.se</a>
20-22	Adventure Travel Show	London, England	<a href="http://www.adventureshow.co.uk">www.adventureshow.co.uk</a>
20-22	International Spa Show 2009	London, England	<a href="http://www.spashow.co.uk">www.spashow.co.uk</a>
25-27	UITT	Kiev, Ukraine	<a href="http://www.uitt-kiev.com">www.uitt-kiev.com</a>
27-29	Toronto's Ultimate Travel Show	Toronto, Canada	<a href="http://www.totravelshow.com">www.totravelshow.com</a>
31-Apr 2	GIBTM 2009	Abu Dhabi, UAE	<a href="http://www.gibtm.com">www.gibtm.com</a>
<b>APRIL</b>			
2-6	Cruise 3sixty	Fort Lauderdale, FL	<a href="http://www.cruise3sixty.com">www.cruise3sixty.com</a>
4-8	Travel South 2009	Kissimmee, FL	<a href="http://www.travelsouthusa.com">www.travelsouthusa.com</a>
15-16	Cultour	Dusseldorf, Germany	<a href="http://www.cultourfair.com">www.cultourfair.com</a>
15-17	IT&CM	Shanghai, China	<a href="http://www.itcmchina.com">www.itcmchina.com</a>
20-22	DATE 2009	Punta Cana, Dominican Republic	<a href="http://www.drdate.net">www.drdate.net</a>
20-22	DATE 2009	Punta Cana, Dominican Republic	<a href="http://www.drdate.net">www.drdate.net</a>
22-24	COTTM 2009	Beijing, China	<a href="http://www.cottm.com">www.cottm.com</a>
23-25	SATTE OPEN WORLD	New Delhi, India	<a href="http://www.satte.org">www.satte.org</a>
24-26	Peru Travel Mart	Lima, Peru	<a href="http://www.perutravelmart.com.pe">www.perutravelmart.com.pe</a>
26-29	Tianguis 2009	Acapulco, Mexico	<a href="http://www.tianguisturistico.com.mx">www.tianguisturistico.com.mx</a>
<b>MAY</b>			
5-8	ATM	Dubai, UAE	<a href="http://www.arabiantravelmarket.com">www.arabiantravelmarket.com</a>
7-10	SITC	Barcelona, Spain	<a href="http://www.salotourisme.com">www.salotourisme.com</a>
7-10	IGLTA Annual Convention	Toronto, Canada	<a href="http://www.iglta.com">www.iglta.com</a>
9-12	Indaba 2009	Durban, South Africa	<a href="http://www.indaba-southafrica.co.za/default.aspx">www.indaba-southafrica.co.za/default.aspx</a>
10-12	GTM 2009	Rostock, Germany	<a href="http://www.germany-travel-mart.de">www.germany-travel-mart.de</a>
13-15	Expotur 2009	San Jose, Costa Rica	<a href="http://www.expotur.travel">www.expotur.travel</a>
15-16	WTTC Global Economic Forum	Florianopolis, Brazil	<a href="http://www.globaltraveltourism.com">www.globaltraveltourism.com</a>
16-19	POW WOW 2009	Miami, FL	<a href="http://www.powwowonline.com">www.powwowonline.com</a>
17-19	Global Spa Summit 2009	Interlaken, Switzerland	<a href="http://www.globalspasummit.com">www.globalspasummit.com</a>
17-22	ATA 34th Annual Congress	Cairo, Egypt	<a href="http://www.africatravelassociation.org">www.africatravelassociation.org</a>
18-19	EMIF 2009	Brussels, Belgium	<a href="http://www.emif.ru">www.emif.ru</a>
19-22	RTD-3	Belize	<a href="http://www.icrtbelize.org">www.icrtbelize.org</a>
20-22	SMART 2009	St. Maarten, NA	<a href="http://www.shta.com">www.shta.com</a>
21	LATAM Show 2009	Miami, FL	<a href="http://www.latamshow.com">www.latamshow.com</a>
26-28	IMEX	Frankfurt, Germany	<a href="http://www.imex-frankfurt.com">www.imex-frankfurt.com</a>
<b>JUNE</b>			
4-6	NTA Tour Operator Spring Meeting	Monterey, CA	<a href="http://www.ntaonline.com">www.ntaonline.com</a>
11-14	ITE 2009	Hong Kong, China	<a href="http://www.itehk.com">www.itehk.com</a>
15-16	City Break	Gothenburg, Sweden	<a href="http://www.citybreakexpo.com">www.citybreakexpo.com</a>
15-18	Asia Luxury Travel Market	Shanghai, China	<a href="http://www.altm.com.cn/">www.altm.com.cn/</a>
<b>JULY</b>			
29-31	DMAI Annual Convention	Atlanta, GA	<a href="http://www.destinationmarketing.org">www.destinationmarketing.org</a>
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>			
8-10	CIBTM	Beijing, China	<a href="http://www.cibtm.travel">www.cibtm.travel</a>
9-11	La Cumbre	San Juan, Puerto Rico	<a href="http://www.lacumbre.com">www.lacumbre.com</a>
22-25	Top Resa	Paris, France	<a href="http://www.topresa.com">www.topresa.com</a>
23-25	Travelmart Latin America	Pantagonia, Chile	<a href="http://www.travelmartlatinamerica.com">www.travelmartlatinamerica.com</a>
29-Oct 1	The Motivation Show 2009	Chicago, IL	<a href="http://www.motivationshow.com">www.motivationshow.com</a>

TO LIST YOUR EVENTS EMAIL: [editor@travelworldnews.com](mailto:editor@travelworldnews.com) • FOR ADDITIONAL EVENTS VISIT: [www.travelworldnews.com/calendar](http://www.travelworldnews.com/calendar)

## SEADREAM YACHT CLUB NAMES BOB LEPISTO AS PRESIDENT



**BOB LEPISTO**

Bob Lepisto has been named President of SeaDream Yacht Club, succeeding Larry Pimentel who resigned January 5 as President and CEO.

The announcement was made by Atle Brynestad, Chairman and owner of SeaDream, who has assumed the additional role of CEO of the ultra-luxury passenger shipping company.

Lepisto has been Senior Vice President, Worldwide Marketing and Sales, for SeaDream since the company was founded in 2001. He continues with those responsibilities in his new role as President.

In making the announcement Brynestad, a Norwegian businessman with long-time interests in passenger shipping, said "Bob Lepisto is a highly experienced senior travel executive who has been part of the phenomenal growth and success of SeaDream Yacht Club since its founding. I know all of my SeaDream Yacht Club colleagues—both on our vessels and ashore—share my enthusiasm for him in his new position and are confident of our continued success with him as President."

Prior to joining SeaDream, Lepisto was Vice President of Sales, the Americas, for Cunard Line Ltd., where he was responsible for both Cunard Line and Seabourn Cruise Line. He served as President of the Institute of Certified Travel Agents (ICTA) from 1994 to 1999. Lepisto joined ICTA following a 22-year career as a sales executive with Continental Airlines.

He was voted one of Travel Agent Magazine's "People of the Year" for 1998 and also honored by Leisure Travel News as one of the "25 Most Influential Travel Executives" in 1999 and 2000.

Lepisto is a graduate of San Diego State University. He and wife Cathy reside in Miami and have three daughters.

SeaDream Yacht Club, [seadream.com](http://seadream.com)

## CARINO HOTEL GROUP WELCOMES JAN JACOBSEN AS DIRECTOR

Carino Hotels & Resorts has named Jan Jacobsen as its new Director, Sales & Development for the Europe, Middle East and Africa regions. In his new role with Carino, Jacobsen will focus on the corporate transient and group markets with emphasis on shifting market share to the member hotels, as well as the recruitment of hotels abroad to become members of Carino.

The development of Jacobsen's position is part of the company's key growth initiatives for 2009, which includes increasing its presence in the global marketplace.

"We could not ask for a better candidate to fill this extremely important role for Carino Hotels & Resorts," said Joe Carino, President. "Jan offers an extensive, well-rounded background in the hotel industry, providing him with a thorough understanding of the marketplace as a whole as well as the individual needs of our member hotels. His knowledge and experience will be critical in helping us to achieve growth in these key international markets."

Jacobsen brings more than 17 years of hotel experience to Carino. He was Cluster Director of Sales for Plaza on the River Club & Residence and Park Plaza Riverbank in London, where he managed five teams between the two hotels including team leaders, account managers, public relations and marketing executives.

Prior to that, Jacobsen served as Director of Sales for Park Plaza Riverbank, London, and held a variety of positions with Radisson SAS Portman Hotel in London.

Carino Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, [www.carinocollection.com](http://www.carinocollection.com), [www.carinohotels.com](http://www.carinohotels.com) (new in first quarter, 2009)

## SAND AND SEA MARKETING INTRODUCES 'ECONOMY BUSTER' STRATEGY IN 2009

Sand and Sea Marketing, a travel industry multi-line representative service covering Florida, taps into a rapidly growing demand for companies needing a strong sales presence in the field, providing service that reflects tremendous cost savings to clients.

With 27 years of travel industry experience, Sand and Sea Marketing offers savings of up to 70 percent (versus that of a salaried Regional Sales Manager) to their clients and represents all types of travel companies, catering to small to mid-sized companies that need to increase their product awareness and drive new business, while still keeping their costs to a minimum.

As the travel industry faces new challenges in cost-cutting against the never-ending search for new business, Sand and Sea specializes in travel agency sales calls to build alliances and increase market penetration; representation at all major trade shows and industry events creating brand awareness and recognition in the marketplace; producing product presentations, initiating staff trainings and webinars, and driving group business.

This saves clients the high costs of hiring, training and maintaining a salaried RSM/DSM. Sand and Sea Marketing is a link between clients and the all-important travel agent community, offering a quarter century of travel industry expertise, consulting, marketing, agent training/education, and rapport with the travel agent community throughout Florida.

Sand and Sea Marketing, [bwaters@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bwaters@tampabay.rr.com), [www.SandAndSeaMarketing.com](http://www.SandAndSeaMarketing.com)

### JAMES ERLACHER WILL LEAD JUMEIRAH EXPANSION, DEVELOPMENT IN AMERICAS



**JAMES ERLACHER**

Jumeirah Group, the Dubai-based luxury international hotel management group and a member of Dubai Holding, has announced the appointment of James Erlacher to the position of Senior Vice President Development–Americas for Jumeirah Group.

James will play a significant role in driving Jumeirah's expansion within the Americas region. To date, Jumeirah has two projects under development, the Jumeirah Botany Bay Resort in the US Virgin Islands and the Jumeirah Culu Culu Polo Resort, Argentina, in addition to managing Jumeirah Essex House in New York.

Prior to joining Jumeirah, Mr. Erlacher held senior development positions with several key companies in the USA and Canada, including Wyndham Worldwide Corporation, Tarragon Corporation, Marriott International, Inc. and Interstate Hotels & Resorts.

With more than twenty years of hotel, resort and luxury residential development experience, he has played a significant role in developing the full-service and luxury portfolios of various hospitality brands. Project experience includes ground-up development of hotel and residential products and strategic acquisitions of full-service and luxury assets. His development activities are international in scope, with a primary focus on gateway cities and resort destinations throughout the Americas and Caribbean regions.

Paul Macpherson, Chief Development Officer for Jumeirah Group, said: "It is with great pleasure that I welcome James and his expertise to our increasingly global team. The Americas represent an important region for us and this appointment signifies an important step forward in Jumeirah Group's growth strategy."

Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts have won numerous travel and tourism awards. The luxury hotel management group encompasses world renowned Burj Al Arab, the world's most luxurious hotel, the multi-award winning Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Jumeirah Emirates Towers, Madinat Jumeirah and Jumeirah Bab Al Shams Desert Resort & Spa in Dubai, the Jumeirah Carlton Tower and Jumeirah Lowndes Hotel in London and the Jumeirah Essex House in New York.

Jumeirah Group, [www.jumeirah.com](http://www.jumeirah.com)

### SONESTA INTERNATIONAL HOTELS ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENT OF PETER J. SONNABEND AS NEW EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD



**PETER SONNABEND**

Sonesta International Hotels Corporation has announced that Peter J. Sonnabend will succeed Roger Sonnabend as Executive Chairman of the board of directors for the company.

In his new role, Mr. Sonnabend will be responsible for overseeing board functions and will participate in key business relationships, capital transactions and significant decisions affecting Sonesta.

"Peter's transition to Executive Chairman will assure the continuation of strong family leadership and vision at the Executive and Board levels," said Stephanie Sonnabend, President and CEO of Sonesta.

Mr. Sonnabend joined Sonesta in 1987 and was first elected to the board of directors in 1995. He most recently served as co-CEO and vice chairman of the board. A 1976 graduate of Wesleyan University, Mr. Sonnabend received his J.D. from the Boston University School of Law in 1980. A native of Boston, he now resides in Weston, MA with his wife Karen and their two daughters.

For more than 60 years, Sonesta has owned, managed, designed, built and marketed hotels throughout the world. There are presently 25 Sonesta hotels and resorts, including five Nile cruise ships. The properties are located in Boston, Miami, New Orleans, St. Maarten, Brazil, Peru, and Egypt.

Sonesta, 800-SONESTA (766-3782), 617-421-5400

### OSSN PLEDGES TO FREEZE HOME-BASED AGENT DUES AT 2008 LEVELS

The Outside Sales Support Network (OSSN) will not raise its membership dues for agents in 2009, in an effort to support independent travel agents dealing with the current U.S. economic woes.

The association will keep dues at the current rates of \$105 for individual agents and \$165 for agencies.

"We understand that other trade organizations may need to substantiate the need to raise their membership fees to help cover overhead," said Gary M. Fee, OSSN's president and founder. "However, we are very sensitive to our members' needs and will not raise membership fees for 2009. OSSN continues to be the most affordable trade association supporting the needs of the home-based seller of travel and providing extensive benefits and services."

Founded in 1990, OSSN is the largest trade association in North America dedicated to serving the needs of home-based travel agents. OSSN represents more than 7,000 agents with 63 chapters across North America.

Outside Sales Support Network (OSSN), [info@ossn.com](mailto:info@ossn.com), [www.ossn.com](http://www.ossn.com)

## ANGUILLA

The Anguilla Tourist Board has planned an Ultimate FAMCATION to the Caribbean island for travel agents. Valued at more than \$6,000, the fam includes four nights' luxurious accommodations, airfare on American Airlines and American Eagle or another major carrier, round-trip ground transportation, spa treatments, delectable cuisine, a welcome pack, a variety of treats that capture the island's spirit and evenings to relax or party into the night. Additionally, participants will enjoy unique access to key Anguilla tourism officials who will provide a personalized perspective on the destination's vast offerings. Travel agents are pre-qualified for the complimentary FAMCATION by booking a minimum of five four-night trips and providing verifiable information on the number of their Anguilla bookings for travel completed between January 15 and May 5. This information includes client names, dates of travel, accommodations and booking numbers (if applicable). The Ultimate FAMCATION trips run May 28 through June 29, 2009, every Thursday through Monday of that period. Space is limited, so qualified travel agent partners are urged to register as soon as possible to ensure participation.

Anguilla Tourist Board,  
877-4 ANGUILLA (-426-4845),  
mwtturnstyle1@aol.com,  
www.anguilla-vacation.com,  
www.charmingescapescollection.com

## EGYPT

Travel Egypt has announced an all-inclusive spring fam to Egypt that's FAMtastic!

The trip will span 13 days/12 nights with agents paying only \$1,895 (plus air ticket taxes) and companions \$2,095 (plus air ticket taxes), and will feature top hotels with Nile cruise visiting the "A" list of sites in Cairo, Aswan, Luxor and Alexandria. There's an optional visit to see the famous temples of Ramses at Abu Simbel. Departing from New York's JFK airport on May 3 flying nonstop to Cairo on Egyptair (a star alliance member), the fam includes all meals from departure at New York until

return, five-star hotels (Starwood, Sonesta, Renaissance, Fairmont) and five-star deluxe Nile cruise, transfers, tours, even tips for ground personnel (except for one's guides). The retail value of this tour is over \$3,500. The trip is available to recognized agents with CLIA, OSSN, ASTA or IATA registration. There is no limit to the number of agents that may participate from one agency, and companions are welcome (but must share accommodations with an agent). Full details of the fam including reservations can be found on Travel Egypt's website. Space is limited and these fams sell out months in advance, so agents are advised to book space promptly.

Travel Egypt,  
www.travelegypt.com/may09fam.htm,  
www.travelegypt.com

## KENYA

A new Educational Study Tour has been planned to promote Kenya with a safari organized by Abercrombie & Kent. The tour is for an agent and adult companion, and is set for the following dates in 2009: April 22-29, April 29-May 6, May 6-13, May 13-20, and May 20-27. A spouse or adult companion is welcome. Costs are: agent land, \$1,875; companion land, \$1,975; single supplement, \$360; and internal air, \$452 (subject to change). Agents will be able to discover the wildlife and magnificent landscapes of the Masai Mara, as well as Sweetwaters Game Reserve and Samburu National Reserve during this comprehensive overview of the Abercrombie & Kent safari experience. Features will include visits to Kenya's major game reserves; a performance by traditional Maasai dancers; sightings of abundant game, including unique northern species; and lunch at Bahati, the Kent family home in Nairobi. For consideration, agents should fax a copy of agency 2008 IATA list and agent's card, and letter from agency owner/manager authorizing participation in the tour to 630-725-3401, to the attention of Grace Porter.

Abercrombie & Kent, 800-323-7308  
(x422), gaporter@abercrombiekent.com,  
www.abercrombiekent.com

## TANZANIA

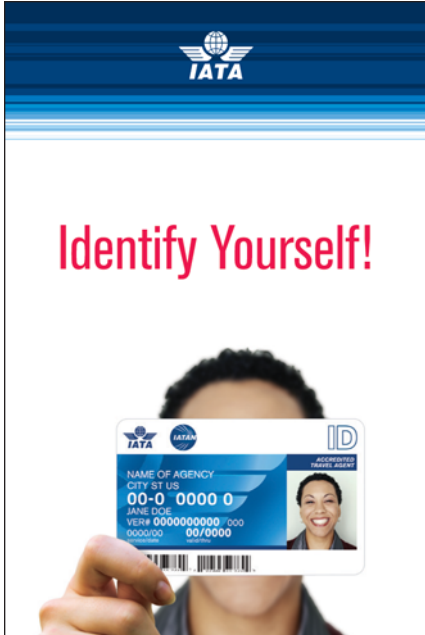
Asante Safaris is offering a fam trip to Tanzania, departing April 9, May 2, May 15 and May 23, 2009. Each group consists of five people. The seven-day/eight-night itinerary includes airport transfers; game drives; accommodations; Serengeti, Tarangire and Lake Manyara excursions and a Ngorongoro Crater visit; museums and archaeological site visits; and various meals. The price for the trip is \$1,400 ppdo, land only and is valid for Tanzania travel specialists with an offer extended to East Africa travel agents.

Asante Safaris, info@asantesafaris.com,  
www.asantesafaris.com

## TURKS & CAICOS

Agents planning to visit the Turks and Caicos this year can add The Sands at Grace Bay to their itinerary. The resort is offering 40 percent discounts off published rates to them.

The Sands at Grace Bay, 877-777-2637,  
www.thesandstc.com



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# NH Constanza: Capital Asset in Barcelona

Entering the massive, gleaming interior of NH Constanza, one knows immediately this backdrop guarantees efficiency and clear thinking. Light-filled, ample spaces surround you, making it a perfectly sophisticated venue for meetings and conventions. And with every imaginable personal comfort plus a city of rich culture to enjoy, Barcelona's NH Constanza fulfills every requirement desired in a serious hotel for business and pleasure travelers alike.

Designed by the leading architect Rafael Moneo, the brand-new hotel is the four-star flagship property of NH Hoteles' line of 17 in Barcelona, several of which offer outstanding features for conferences as well as proximity to important connections or exhibition centers. Next to Constanza, in collaboration with NH Hoteles is the "L'Auditori AXA Winterthur" (Winterthur Auditorium), a special facility that seats over 600 much like in a theater, with views overall of the stage.

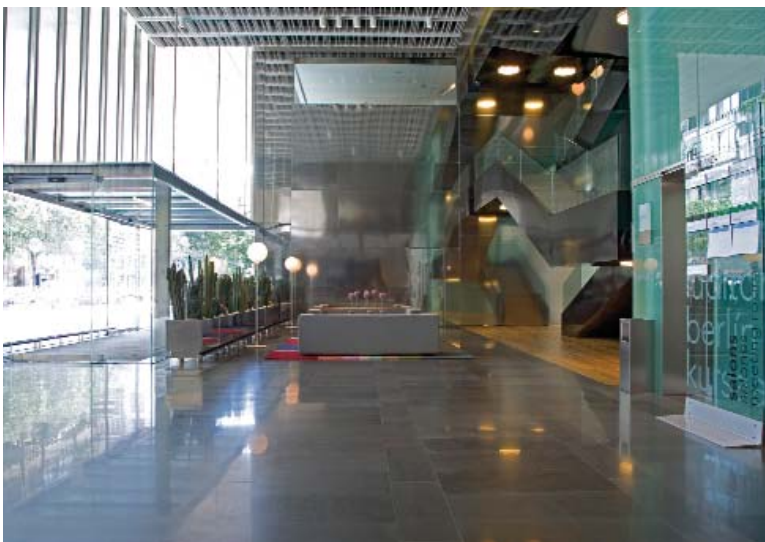
Four-star NH Numancia, close by, is strategically located next to Sants Train Station, the Montjuic Exhibition Site and has good access leading to the airport. Three-star NH Rallye is in the city's business area within easy reach of motorways and the airport. And three-star NH Les Corts is near the city's two most important exhibition centers, Montjuic and Palau de Congressos.

Sprinkled throughout the magnificent capital city, each singularly distinctive for location and other special characteristics, are the others: four-stars NH Pódium and NH Calderón; and the three-star hotels NH Belagua, NH Ciutat de Mataró, NH Cornellá, NH Cándor, NH Duc de la Victoria, NH Forum, NH La Maquinista, NH Máster, NH Porta Barcelona, NH Sant Angelo, and NH Sant Boi.

## The Impressive Constanza

The whole ambience of NH Constanza is lean and efficient. With facilities to handle enormous groups as well as small confabs of every kind, the hotel offers such a complete list of business amenities that it's effortless to set up business while enjoying the time in stimulating Barcelona. The hotel has multifunctional space with direct access to an outdoor terrace overlooking the park, and several versatile combinations for groups on its first floor.

Every convenience is provided to streamline the stays of committed professionals: conference areas that have top-of-the-line technical/audio-visual support, fax and copying services, a multilingual staff, car and limousine rental, on-site car parking, ironing and shoe cleaning services, early-riser breakfasts, Internet cafes, and spa and beauty comforts to



Glass and gloss in the open-space Constanza interior.

quiet anxieties and enhance one's image.

Guestrooms are impeccably efficient. There's a phone in the bathroom, mini-bar and satellite TV radio. Each has a handsome work desk and full connectivity to the Internet. Guests get to choose their pillow (so important for rising fully-recharged) and all the rooms have direct-dial telephone and Internet connection.

Room rates at NH Constanza begin at approximately \$258 during the business week, \$174 weekends/\$436 vacation. Rooms range from standard to suites starting at \$660.

Superior category rooms, deluxe and junior suites have the Spa entrance fee included in the room rate.

Spa Elysium's hydroludic water treatments, deluxe types of Jacuzzis and Turkish baths, and massage and body treatments serve as relaxation tools. And for lounging after the long day, outside there's a swimming pool and solarium!

Or, one can relax, read, chat, have something to eat or surf the web—spend all day, if desired, in the creative restaurant space designed by renowned chef Ferran Adria. Nhubé. It's a living room, a dining room, a library, an Internet cafe or even a kitchen, depending on the time of day, the lighting and the customer's desires.

## Out and around

Barcelona's myriad museums, beautifully-preserved historic architecture and unparalleled shopping centers can fill every spare moment with satisfying activity. And since NH Constanza is a pet-friendly hotel—yes, whose enormous list of services includes babysitting, every member of the family can come along to share the experience of a visit to this fulfilling city!

**NH Hoteles, [www.nh-hotels.com](http://www.nh-hotels.com)**

## TRAVELERS TO SAVOR THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY WITH THE IRELAND EXPERT



Patricia Preston, author of 15 books on Ireland, will lead a Springtime in Ireland tour to take place May 17–23 focusing on the scenic southern coast from Waterford to Kinsale, Bantry and Killarney.

May in Ireland presents many delights: gardens are in bloom with color, baby lambs and calves romp on the hillsides, the festival season begins, and daylight lasts till around 10 p.m.

On the itinerary, guests will get to visit the 13th century Cahir Castle, learn how Waterford Crystal is made, kiss the Blarney Stone, cruise Kinsale Harbor, ride a horse-drawn cart through Killarney National Park, savor the subtropical environment of Bantry Bay, tour Waterford with a local guide, watch sheep dogs round up the sheep on the Kerry hillsides and just feel the Irish culture—the language, the music, the dance.

Accommodations are provided at four centrally-located hotels in scenic settings: Tower Hotel, Waterford, on the River Suir; Trident Hotel; Kinsale on Kinsale Harbor, Maritime Hotel, Bantry, overlooking Bantry Bay; and the Malton Hotel, Killarney, surrounded by gardens and mountains.

During the trip, Pat operates a unique online blog so folks back home can follow the tour's progress each day in Ireland in words and pictures. The blog also enables family and friends to post comments about what is

going on back home.

The tour is specially planned to require only one week off from work, departing on a Sunday and returning the following Saturday. Its price of \$1,799 includes four-star hotel accommodations for five nights, most meals, all sightseeing admissions and entertainment, luxury motorcoach transport with CIE Tours and round-trip airfare from NY/JFK. Cost is based on current group airfare via Aer Lingus, effective until February 15, and does not include departure taxes. Airfare is subject to change, if booked after February 15.

Ireland Expert, Pat Preston,  
patpreston@mac.com,  
www.IrelandExpert.com

## GRAND EUROPEAN TOURS FIGHTS BACK WITH ENHANCED SALES PROMO EFFORT

Hans Sohlstrom knew something was different when the letters started coming in. "We're used to getting plenty of stories and photos from customers taking our tours. But now they're writing just to let us know how much our catalog has moved them," explained the president of Grand European Tours, a direct-to-consumer escorted tour company from Lake Oswego, Oregon. The company sells over 40 tours and cruises to Europe and worldwide, primarily serving travelers 50 and older across the U.S.

As hints of a souring economy began surfacing last spring, Sohlstrom led a six-month charge to strengthen the 30-year-old company. His mission was to make Grand European Tours recognized as the easiest, most enjoyable way to travel by rolling out its most robust offerings yet.

At the heart of it all: a newly-designed catalog, along with creative new services like a Towncar pickup service, called VIP Door-to-Door, that whisks travelers to the airport free of charge on every tour, and a boost in personal calls to customers as they plan for their trip.

"We are seeing our competitors cutting back on communication to their customers and that can leave those customers feeling abandoned," says Sohlstrom. "Rather than

move to more marginal efforts in these tougher times, our goal is to put forward our strongest ideas and do things differently by being creative."

The inviting new catalog reads less like a sales piece and more like a sketched travel journal. It's filled with original watercolor paintings and hand-drawn maps to help it stand out from the sea of photo-based catalogs hitting most mailboxes today. The illustrated cover is a nod to the iconic cartoons from *The New Yorker* magazine—a new scene is planned for each of the next 10 catalogs, each showing an empty-nester couple, the company's target audience, enjoying the freedom and joy of travel and inspiring a "next adventure."

"Judging by the response so far from our customers, we know what we are doing hits home. Maintaining our service and value is what is most important right now," says Sohlstrom.

Grand European Tours, 888-522-3950,  
800-522-5545, www.getours.com

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**GOBALTICEUROPE.COM/BTC REPORT ON TRAVEL AGENTS SELLING THE BALTICS**

The Baltics has come a long way as a destination, and no one knows that better than U.S. travel agents trying to sell Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania to their clients, as part of Northern Europe's Baltic Sea region—Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Poland and Germany, etc.

There's no doubt about it, US travel agents need promotional tools, educational seminars, and fam trips to experience the Baltics, and that's exactly what's on the horizon. High-quality DVDs showing the beauty of the Baltic States will help to sell the destinations. Overall, the interest in the Baltic States continues to grow in the U.S., and travel agents are selling all types of packages, the best being one-week tours to the Baltic capitals of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

New, too, are Beauty Breaks at Spa Vilnius in Druskininkai, Jewish Heritage Tours, Spiritual Journeys to The "Hill of Crosses," and Baltic-Scandinavian Adventures, and more. SAS, Finnair, and Air Baltic are major carriers to the region. Travel agents should check out the Reval Hotels, which are in all three Baltic countries.

In addition, Baltic cruises, also known as Northern Europe or Scandinavian cruises with visits to Tallinn, Estonia, Riga, Latvia, Klaipeda, Lithuania, Stockholm, Sweden, Copenhagen, Denmark, and other port cities are especially popular with Americans. They like the idea of what the Balts call "floating hotels." What better

way to see so many different European cities within a matter of days than on a Baltic-Scandinavian cruise?

Expected to make a positive impact on tourism this year will be the "Vilnius, European Capital of Culture 2009" Project. Lithuania is celebrating its 1000th anniversary. The Millennium Song Festival of Lithuania -Songs of the Century will be presented the program was organized by the Lithuanian Folk Culture Centre. The opening of the Reconstructed Palace of the Grand Dukes of Lithuania will take place on the same day.

Hundreds of cultural events, half of them free, will also be held throughout the year to celebrate "Vilnius, European Capital of Culture 2009."

Although the next BTC Conference is scheduled for the fall, GoBalticEurope.com/Baltic Sea Tourism Commission (BTC) celebrated its fifth consecutive year as an exhibitor at The New York Times Travel Show 2009. GoBalticEurope.com initiated the first Baltic exhibit, Baltic cultural performances, and Baltic Travel Seminar at the show.

Go Baltic Europe, [www.gobalticeurope.com](http://www.gobalticeurope.com)

**'OUT OF CONTEXT' SCHEDULE SET FOR SPRING/SUMMER 2009**

Context Travel has prepared the upcoming season's offerings of its critically-acclaimed Out of Context series. The series pairs scholars from the Context network with unique travel opportunities including specially curated events, visits to museums and monuments normally closed to the public or outside of opening hours, and thematic walks that provide ways to learn about some of the great cities of the world.

"The Out of Context series has ballooned into a significant part of our yearly program," says Context co-founder Paul Bennett. "I know of no other tour operator or walking tour organization that puts together these kinds of events. I mean to get into a place like the Bargello, which was a medieval prison, after hours for a lecture on torture and punishment in the Renaissance or to tour the Explorers Club in New York with a member... These things really speak to what we're trying to accomplish in the field of travel."

Other 2009 features include a walk of Naples' catacombs and churches with art historian Dr. Maria Laura Chiacchio who will discuss the Neapolitan Cult of the Dead and by-appointment visits at the Vasari Corridor in Florence, the Vatican Museums in Rome, and the Basilica San Marco in Venice.

This year, for the first time, Context will have an event just for kids: a workshop on mythology at the Villa Farnesina in Rome. Opening the villa by request after hours, Context docent and museum educator Linda Nolan will lead the group through a series of activities, using the works of Raphael and other Renaissance artists as a backdrop.

More information about the Out of Context series from March-July, 2009 is posted on the Context website.

Context Travel, [www.contexttravel.com](http://www.contexttravel.com), [www.contexttravel.com/main/product/outofcontext.php](http://www.contexttravel.com/main/product/outofcontext.php)

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**MALTA**  
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## EXOTIC GOZO – ON EUROPE'S DOORSTEP

Gozo, famed for those special warm daylight hues alluring to artists, is on the doorstep of Europe, making it a relatively quick getaway and ideal destination. Differing from mainland Malta with its cliffs and steep slopes, it still retains the greenery and rural character of the remote, insular island.

The 5,600-year-old Ggantija Temples, the oldest built structure in the world, contains art among the most advanced for Neolithic times. Over time, waves of people have added their legacies to the islands' culture. People see it now as an idyllic home offering tranquility, dreamy landscapes, alluring sea, sunny weather, hearty food, and the right mix of sophistication and somnolence.

The Citadel, Gozo's old castle, is an omnipresent landmark built on a crag in the middle of the island. Towns are designed in concentric circles around the church and square. There are more than 50 Catholic churches, most grand baroque edifices.

Some of the old baroque townhouses have been converted into memorable restaurants, which offer creative concoctions that make use of local items—vegetables, free-range chickens, olive oil, etc., as well as impressive wine cellars. The townhouses—and farmhouses—are also the best accommodation options. Farmhouses have bare, weathered limestone walls, internal courtyards, and lots of rustic features, yet they have been converted into luxury accommodation, many complete with swimming pools. (There are also all other types of accommodations, including five-star hotels.)

The countryside is a patchwork of idyllic fields; the coast is sea cliffs, high bluffs and sandy beaches. These include Ramla Bay, often described as the nicest beach in the Mediterranean, and the Blue Lagoon in Comino. Secluded coves can be reached by chartering a skippered boat, or the adventurous way on a canoe (available for rent in many beaches). Gozo and Comino are renowned as the top place in the Mediterranean for scuba diving due to dra-

matic underwater topography, great visibility and mild winters.

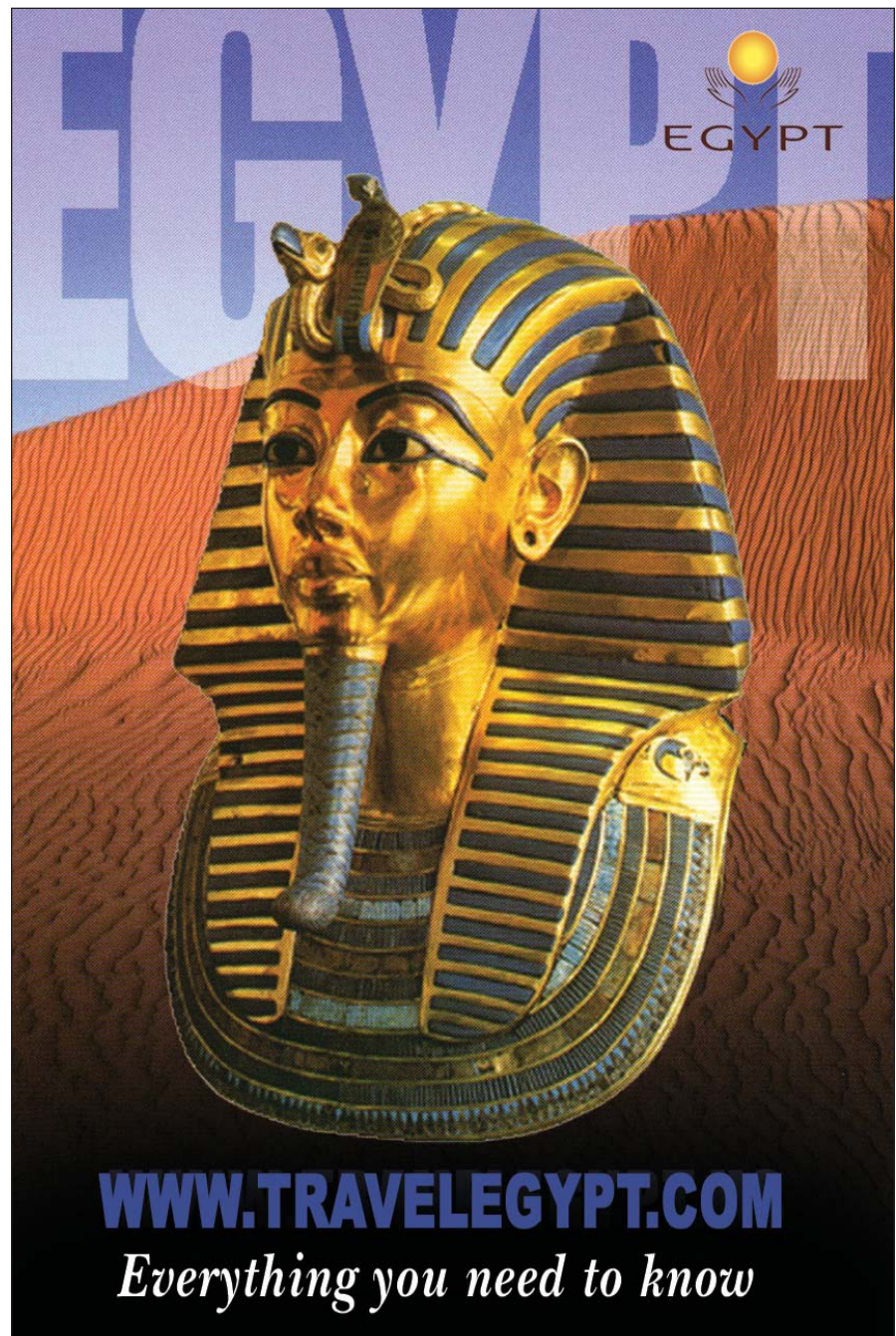
Every summer weekend, each town holds a three-day festival of brass bands and fireworks to commemorate its parish saint. Streets and churches are decorated with strings of electric lights, pennants, statues of saints mounted on wooden podiums; and the town's folk come out in force.

In winter, intermittent rains give the landscape a green cloak, but the weather's still pleasantly sunny enough for adventures like hiking. Comino, Gozo's neighbor and the

smallest island in the Maltese Islands, has a walk around its coast that takes in the military forts erected by the Knights of Malta, as well as the rugged rocky habitat. Mountain biking's an option, too, and rock climbing for adventurers.

Gozo's rural ethos can be experienced at an agro-tourism farm, a sheep farm—even fishing with a real fisherman, then cooking the fresh catch! This is what's great about a small island with a long history to share.

Malta Tourism Authority,  
[www.visitmalta.com](http://www.visitmalta.com)



**WWW.TRAVELEGYPT.COM**  
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## NEW 2009-2010 INTERACTIVE CATALOG CD NOW AVAILABLE FOR TRAVEL EGYPT

Travel Egypt has created a new 2009-2010 interactive catalog CD that's now available to agents. The CD catalog has over 350 pages of tour info including a special Nile Cruise section, and can be obtained free by calling their toll-free number or emailing Travel Egypt. Tour descriptions include full details of each day's activities, extensive info on each hotel (including a location map), cruises, and a tour comparison chart and prices. Tours depart weekly and are guaranteed to operate with no minimum number of travelers and a maximum of 16. Tours are commissionable to recognized agents. Travel Egypt, 877-778-3497, [travelegypt@gmail.com](mailto:travelegypt@gmail.com)

## ROMEO HOTEL OPENS IN NAPLES, ITALY

Romeo Hotel, Naples, is now open and provides a new accommodation option for clients seeking both a modern and authentic Italian experience. The 85-room property is the initial step of a development that will turn the area nestled by Piazza Municipio and the cruise ship terminals into an elegant promenade.

Every element of the hotel has been crafted to reflect the city's dual personalities as both a bustling commercial center and relaxing Mediterranean destination. At the heart of the project is the hotel's art collection. Inspired by a mandate to showcase Naples, contemporary artists such as Francesco Clementa, Segio Fermiello, and Lello Esposito created pieces in a variety of medi-

ums while top Neapolitan photographers such as Monica Biancardi, Antonio Biasiucci and Mimmo Jodice produced series of images for a permanent exhibition housed within the hotel— all meant to immerse guests in the city's vibrant culture in a fresh and thought-provoking way.

The location provides panoramic views of Mt. Vesuvius and the island of Capri. A full fitness center, spa and wellness center are available; and clients can dine on Neapolitan classics at the hotel's signature restaurant Il Comandante in a rooftop setting.

Romeo Hotel, [www.romeohotel.it](http://www.romeohotel.it)

## CROATIA'S REGENT ESPLANADE ZAGREB HONORED WITH FIVE-STAR DIAMOND AWARD

Regent Hotels & Resorts announces that for the second consecutive year, the American Academy of Hospitality Sciences has awarded the International Five-Star Diamond Award to The Regent Esplanade Zagreb. Last year, the hotel became the first in Croatia to ever receive the prestigious award. The hotel remains the country's only Five-Star Diamond property.

The Academy bestows the award annually to luxury properties deemed to be of pinnacle quality by its International Board of Trustees, which consists of a select group of industry leaders and world travelers. The award recognizes excellence in luxury hospitality; criteria include ambiance, cuisine, décor and service.

Regent Esplanade Zagreb, [www.RegentHotels.com](http://www.RegentHotels.com)



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 CS-27632



## CAROLYN HARBER APPOINTED DIRECTOR AT THE PORTOFINO HOTEL & YACHT CLUB



CAROLYN HARBER

Carolyn Harber has joined The Portofino Hotel & Yacht Club as Director of Sales and Marketing, it was announced by Jeannene Glenn, General Manager. Harber, has held positions at some of Los Angeles' most prestigious boutique hotels. Most recently she worked with Palisades Development Group in Santa Monica as an independent sales and marketing consultant. There, she provided marketing consultation services during construction,

pre-opening, and opening phases of Palisades' two new hotels in the Los Angeles area, Custom Hotel and Palihouse Holloway. Her accomplishments included developing the marketing plan and initiating sales action plans and revenue management strategy.

Prior to working with Palisades Development Group, her career path included business development and hospitality account management at BrandCulture Company and at Kor Hotel Group's Viceroy in Santa Monica, where she was director of sales and marketing. In the late 1990s, she joined Ian Schrager Hotels' Mondrian, holding roles of Director of Sales and Director of Revenue Management. She started her career in San Francisco working for some of the leading luxury and historic hotels including the St. Francis, Ritz-Carlton, and The Palace Hotel.

Located in the beach town of Redondo Beach at King Harbor only seven miles from Los Angeles International Airport, Portofino is the only Los Angeles area property located directly on the Pacific. **The Portofino Hotel & Yacht Club, 800-468-4292, [www.hotelportofino.com](http://www.hotelportofino.com)**

## WESTERN LEISURE INC.'S MICHELE MICHALEWICZ WILL CHAIR NATIONAL TOUR ASSOCIATION



MICHELE MICHALEWICZ

Michele Michalewicz, CTP, a Salt Lake City travel professional, and President of Western Leisure, Inc. has been inducted as the 2009 chairman and CEO of the National Tour Association. NTA is the industry's premier packaged travel association made up of more than 3,000 members from around the globe.

"The coming year is a critical one for the travel and tourism industry," Michalewicz said. "The new administration will be coming into office as America is dealing with an economic crisis, but travel and tourism has the ability to change that.

In 2009, NTA will continue reaching out to President-elect Obama and key members of Congress to assist in accelerating the economy through travel and tourism and I look forward to working with industry colleagues in the creation of a travel stimulus package.

Additionally, as chairman and CEO of NTA, I will continue to find better ways to increase business for our members as we find new ways of dealing with today's economy."

A long-time supporter of the travel industry, Michalewicz has actively served NTA on various committees and has volunteered in many roles since 1988. Michalewicz has been with Western Leisure Inc. since 1987. Western Leisure is a tour operator offering customized tour programs in the United States and Canada.

"Michele is a strong leader and will be serving the association as the travel and tourism industry faces many new challenges," said NTA President Lisa Simon, CTP. "With the leadership of Michele and the entire NTA Board and Leadership Team, I am confident NTA will continue to bring new business to its members and make its voice heard in Washington, for the betterment of NTA members and their travelers from around the world."

NTA membership represents 36 countries, and tour and travel packagers of all types including group, independent and more. **Western Leisure, 800-532-2113, [www.westernleisure.com](http://www.westernleisure.com); National Tour Association, [www.NTAonline.com](http://www.NTAonline.com)**

## UNIQUE '2 FOR 1' VACATION DEAL OFFERED AT MYRTLE BEACH

Sands Resorts of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, has announced a Two-for-One vacation package for spring and summer guests of their seven Myrtle Beach resorts. Sands CEO Lee Rawcliffe described the offer as a response to our current economy and a chance to introduce new and returning guests to the many renovations and new amenities he's added since purchasing the iconic hotel group in early 2008. The promotion is unique in that it offers a free two-night spring or fall vacation and an additional free night in the summer to those booking a three-night or longer summer stay. The free two-night spring or fall vacation can be used as a two-night trip or as two individual night stays. These two nights can also be gifted or as their ad states, sold on "eBay." This may allow some creative families to secure a Myrtle Beach vacation for very little expense. Rawcliffe believes the program rewards intelligent shoppers and entrepreneurs, who he believes, are growing in number as the recession continues.

"Sure the economy is having an impact on leisure travel," says Rawcliffe, "I think anyone in our business would tell you that." Rawcliffe goes on to say, "Our main focus has always been the 'Experience,' and since our purchase we have invested heavily in remodeling, upgrades, and improved services. During my twenty years in the business, I have never experienced a day when we were not building or remodeling something. I like our guests to see that and many return the next year curious to witness the finished product."

Sands Resorts has a thirty-six year history as a major lodging provider in the Myrtle Beach market. They have been pioneers in packaged golf and family entertainment. **Sands Resorts of Myrtle Beach, 800-726-3783, [www.SandsResorts.com](http://www.SandsResorts.com)**

### VON DE LUNA JOINS HOTEL MONACO DENVER AS GENERAL MANAGER



VON DE LUNA

Kimpton's Hotel Monaco Denver has appointed Von de Luna to the position of General Manager.

De Luna has a 17-year, progressive career in the hospitality industry, working his way up from assistant front office manager/assistant housekeeping manager at the Hyatt Arlington in Rosslyn, Virginia. Most recently, he held the position of General Manager at Kimpton's Hotel Burnham in Chicago. De Luna

has managed hotels for more than seven years, including Kimpton's Hotel Rouge and Kimpton's Hotel Madera, both in Washington, D.C.

Before beginning his career in hospitality, de Luna was an Aircraft Armament Systems Specialist for the U.S. Air Force and served in the first Gulf War.

"Kimpton hotel guests have benefited from Von's expertise and leadership for many years, and we're confident that he will bring even greater success to the Hotel Monaco Denver," said Ron Vlastic, Regional Vice President of Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants. "Von's style will complement the style and fun that the Hotel Monaco Denver delivers to guests daily."

Hotel Monaco, a pet-friendly Kimpton Hotel, is within easy walking distance of all the urban adventures that downtown Denver offers. Voted one of the "Top 500 Best Hotels in the World" by Travel & Leisure and one of Conde Nast's "Gold List," the sophisticated, stylish hotel offers guests complimentary nightly wine hour, themed suites, and one of the top restaurants in Denver—Panzano.

Hotel Monaco Denver, 800-990-1303, [www.monaco-denver.com](http://www.monaco-denver.com)

### NEW YORK CITY LUXURY HOTELS OFFER THIRD NIGHT FREE THIS WINTER

NYC & Company, the City's marketing, tourism and partnership organization, has announced that nine luxury hotels, part of the Signature Collection, has a Third Night™ promotion this winter. The program gives visitors a complimentary third night free at nine participating hotels after booking and paying for two consecutive nights. The promotion runs through February 27, 2009.

"Now more than ever, visitors are looking for great value. The Third Night promotion will give visitors access to some of the world's most distinguished hotels, with New York City as the backdrop," said George Fertitta, CEO of NYC & Company.

The luxury hotels participating in the program this winter are: Jumeirah Essex House, Loews Regency, the London NYC, the New York Palace, the Sherry-Netherland Hotel, Trump International Hotel & Tower, the Plaza, the Waldorf Towers and the Carlyle, A Rosewood Hotel.

NYC & Company also today announced that luxury retailer Saks Fifth Avenue has confirmed its participation for the Third Night

program this winter by offering a VIP shopping package at its New York flagship store in Manhattan to Third Night guests. The package includes an exclusive personal shopping experience in the Fifth Avenue Club, a special offer to save a percentage on any regularly priced purchases made and complimentary coffee and dessert in Saks Fifth Avenue's Café SFA.

"Saks Fifth Avenue is pleased to offer a VIP shopping experience at our flagship store during this winter's Third Night luxury hotel promotion," said Kimberly Grabel, Senior Vice President Marketing for Saks Fifth Avenue.

NYC & Company, [nycgo.com/thirdnight](http://nycgo.com/thirdnight)

### MILITARY HERITAGE AT ITS FINEST ON EXHIBIT IN FAYETTEVILLE, NC

A quick visit to Fayetteville is all it takes for visitors to see why it was named as 'America's most pro-military city' by Time magazine. Outside of Washington, D.C., Fayetteville is the place to go for those interested in American and military heritage. From its 59,000-square-foot Airborne and Special Operations Museum to 750-plus miles of Revolutionary and Civil War driving and walking trails, to exceptional restaurants, hotels and meeting facilities, Fayetteville has it all.

"Fayetteville offers a special experience for visitors, something much different than what they'd get in Washington, D.C. While D.C. celebrates the most famous historical icons, Fayetteville is where the very seeds of American pride and patriotism are sown," says John Meroski, Fayetteville Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (FACVB) president.

Fayetteville's \$22.5-million Airborne & Special Operations Museum allows guests to experience the feel of real-life combat through impressive displays ranging from a Vietnam-era "Huey" helicopter to full-size action dioramas. And with over 5,300 hotel rooms, meeting facilities of all shapes and sizes, over 400 restaurants and the 107,000-square-foot Crown Center complex, the area is well-equipped to handle groups of any size or need.

"All visitors will enjoy their time here. We have something that caters to every type of guest. Our exceptional restaurants serve up everything from Southern favorites to international cuisine. It's a win-win situation for visitors traveling for business or pleasure," says Meroski.

Fayetteville's driving trails stretch over 750 miles and 250 years of history and include themed itineraries ranging from the "Civil War" to "Patriots, Past & Present." Points of interest include the historic Market House, Freedom Memorial Park and the JFK Special Warfare Museum.

The town, once thought of as the home to Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base, now offers much more than the military installations that made it famous. Fayetteville is the place to go to restore, revitalize and reaffirm pride in America.

Fayetteville Convention & Visitors Bureau, 800-255-8217, [www.visitfayettevillenc.com](http://www.visitfayettevillenc.com)

## TWO APPOINTMENTS ANNOUNCED FOR THE NEW LORIEN HOTEL & SPA



DONALD ANDERSON

Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants and the DSF Group have announced General Manager Donald Anderson and Director of Sales Joy Whiddon to the executive team at the 107-room Lorien Hotel & Spa, a Kimpton Hotel to debut in Old Town, Alexandria, February 12. Kimpton's 11th property in the area, the Lorien Hotel & Spa will be the company's crown jewel of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region.

As general manager, Anderson will be responsible for overseeing all personnel, business development and guest relations at the hotel.

An Alexandria native, he offers an intimate understanding of the local area that will be instrumental in creating an authentic old-town experience. Anderson has a hospitality career spanning two decades. Most recently, he served as general manager of Kimpton's

Hotel Rouge in Washington, D.C., providing him with a deep knowledge of the brand's individual service. Anderson will also draw from luxury experience with five years at the Park Hyatt Washington.

Another key player of the opening team is Joy Whiddon, who provides an invaluable mix of regional knowledge and travel industry experience over 10 years. In her new role, Whiddon will oversee all sales and marketing efforts for the hotel. She's held sales positions at D.C. area hotels for over seven years, and was most recently the director of business and travel industry sales for The Fairmont, Washington, D.C.

Previously, Whiddon was director of business travel sales for the Capital Hilton and the Hilton Washington. Whiddon is fluent in German and proficient in Spanish and French, key attributes for attracting international clientele.

With more than 3,500 square feet of sophisticated meeting and event space, the Lorien Hotel & Spa will be courting business travelers, executive retreats and intimate meetings.

Customized menus and meeting breaks, including private wine tastings and chef dinners directed by celebrated chef Robert Wiedmaier, can be arranged with the hotel's meeting professionals. The design of the event space, including outdoor access and large windows providing plenty of natural lighting, lends itself to productive meetings and a wide array of social events and weddings.

Lorien Hotel & Spa, 877-856-7436, [www.lorienhotelandspa.com](http://www.lorienhotelandspa.com); Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, 800-KIMPTON (546-7866), [www.kimptonhotels.com](http://www.kimptonhotels.com); DSF Group, [www.thedsfgroup.com](http://www.thedsfgroup.com)

## NEW ORLEANS CVB MARKETING TOOL TO ATTRACT MOTOR COACH VISITORS

In order to showcase the unique history and culture of the Crescent City, the New Orleans Convention and Visitors Bureau (New Orleans CVB) has announced the launch of the "NOLA Destination Fun Kit," an innovative and interactive learning tool designed specifically for motorcoach tour participants.

This new initiative was launched as part of the New Orleans CVB's commitment to tour operators and leisure visitors to the city, specifically to motorcoach groups.

Beginning this year, tour operators are encouraged to notify the New Orleans CVB of future motorcoach groups visiting the city. Tour escorts will be presented with an informational package by mail that will include a "Jazzed about New Orleans" music CD, a "Forever New Orleans" promotional video as well as an Official Visitors Guide and the New Orleans CVB's Motorcoach Rules and Regulations brochure.

In addition to providing learning materials to tour escorts, the New Orleans CVB will also deliver the "NOLA Destination Fun Kit," a set of New Orleans trivia questions and prizes designed to create interaction between tour guides and their passengers while informing visitors of New Orleans' unique culture.

"The New Orleans CVB recognizes the importance of initiating and building partnerships with tour operators as well as relationships with visitors to our city," said Lisa Holland, tourism sales manager for the New Orleans CVB.

"By providing fun and interactive ways for the visitor to experience New Orleans, we believe they will appreciate the history and culture of the city and therefore return to learn more. After all, seeing is believing."

New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau,  
[lholland@neworleanscvb.com](mailto:lholland@neworleanscvb.com), [www.neworleanscvb.com](http://www.neworleanscvb.com)

## ROYAL KONA RESORT EXTENDS LOW BAY TOWER RATES

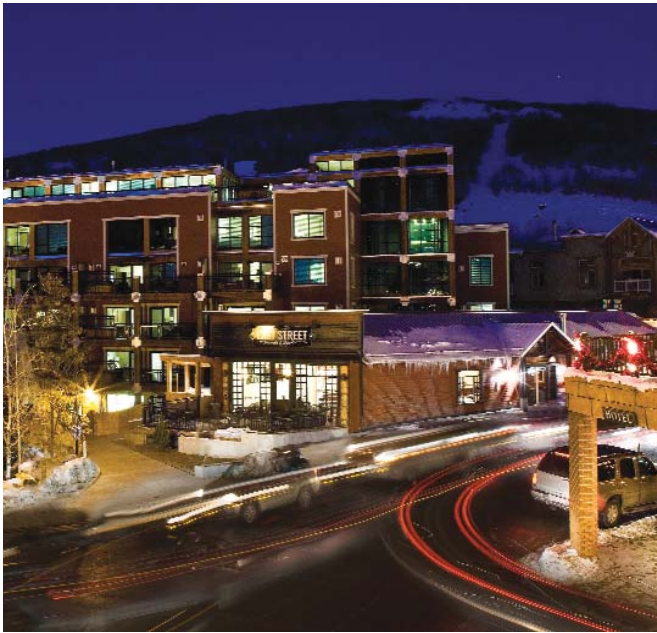
The Royal Kona Resort has extended its low nightly rates for Standard and Ocean View rooms in its Bay Tower for travel now through June 7, 2009.

The Aloha reduced rates begin at \$115 per night pppo for the Bay Tower Standard View accommodations and \$135 nightly for the Bay Tower Ocean View rooms. Rates do not include taxes and the special is subject to availability and blackout dates. The offer is not combinable with any other specials.

The Royal Kona Resort overlooks Kailua Bay in the heart of Kailua-Kona on Hawaii's Big Island. The full-service property features 436 guest rooms with views ranging from garden to ocean-front. The Resort offers a wide variety of amenities and services, including its signature restaurant Don the Beachcomber and Don's Mai Tai Bar.

Royal Kona Resort, 800-22-ALOHA (222-5642),  
[www.RoyalKona.com](http://www.RoyalKona.com)

### THE SKY LODGE IS INVITED TO JOIN VIRTUOSO NETWORK



The Sky Lodge, Park City's finest boutique resort, recently joined the industry's leading luxury travel network: Virtuoso. The Sky Lodge, with its unique location in Old Town, views of the snow-capped Wasatch Mountains, and contemporary environmental design, features a vast array of amenities for guests including spacious, 33 one-, two- and three-bedroom suites, outstanding dining options including Easy Street Brasserie and Easy Street Bakery, the private Sky Club, and the soothing spa, Amatsu.

This by-invitation-only organization, Virtuoso comprises over 300 agencies with more than 6,000 elite travel specialists in 22 countries, as well as over 1,000 of the world's best travel providers and premier destinations. For travelers who depend on experts to reduce complexity and ensure smart choices, Virtuoso® travel advisors design customized travel experiences using the resources and relationships available exclusively through their network membership.

"We are delighted to be part of the Virtuoso network," says The Sky Lodge General Manager Bill Shoaf. "Our goal has always been to provide guests with an impeccable level of hospitality. Being chosen to join Virtuoso affirms that we deliver the highest quality service and a premier experience to our clientele."

The Sky Lodge in Park City, Utah, a distinguished member of Small Luxury Hotels of the World, honors the traditions of the finest boutique resort hotels throughout the world, where a limited number of rooms and an ample, superbly trained staff combine to deliver a highly personalized experience. With 33 exclusive suites and residences of traditional craftsmanship and high-tech conveniences, this luxury hotel was featured in *Condé Nast Traveler* magazine's Hot List 2008, as well as *Robb Report's* "Best of the Best."

The Sky Lodge, [www.theskylodge.com](http://www.theskylodge.com)

### WINTER-SEASON INITIATIVE OFFERED TO AGENTS FOR CAPELLA TELLURIDE

Capella Telluride, the much-anticipated ski resort opening in Colorado this season, is offering a special initiative for travel agents who book stays beginning February 12 through April 15, 2009.

This offer has great value for both agents and clients—double the typical commission (20-percent commission on bookings) is granted to travel agents, and special winter rates starting at \$295 represent outstanding price breaks for their clients.

Capella Telluride is located in the heart of Mountain Village with ski in/ski out access to Telluride Ski Resort and will consist of 100 hotel guestrooms and 60 residential condominium suites.

Capella's renowned services will be available to both hotel guests and residential owners and amenities will include three gourmet restaurants, a world-class spa and fitness center, indoor pool, ski valet services and an outdoor ice-skating rink.

Capella Telluride, [www.capellatelluride.com](http://www.capellatelluride.com)

### WARWICK DENVER HOTEL NAMES SCOTT OSTRANDER NEW GENERAL MANAGER



SCOTT OSTRANDER

Warwick Denver Hotel announced that Scott Ostrander has become General Manager of the stylish boutique hotel, located at the crossroads of Denver's trendy Uptown and Capitol Hill neighborhoods.

Mr. Ostrander takes the helm as the hotel prepares to unveil the final phase of an extensive, multi-year, \$25 million hotel-wide renovation in the first quarter of 2009.

As general manager, Mr. Ostrander will oversee operations of both the hotel and its award-winning restaurant, Randolph's Restaurant & Bar.

Mr. Ostrander has extensive experience and knowledge in the hotel industry. Most recently he was director of hotel operations and business development with Ace Parking Management in San Diego.

He has also served as General Manager of the former Beverly Plaza Hotel, now The Orlando, in Los Angeles and as the Asset Manager of Hotel Waterfront Ivy in Scottsdale, AZ.

He has also served as General Manager at both the CopperWynd Resort and Club in Fountain Hills, AZ, and The Portofino Hotel and Yacht Club in Redondo Beach, CA. Previously, he was also resident manager at the Adolphus Hotel in Dallas, Texas.

Warwick International Hotels is a collection of more than 40 four-star and five-star hotels, resorts, and spas in Europe, the United States, Asia, Africa, Bali and the South Pacific.

Warwick Denver Hotel, [www.WarwickDenver.com](http://www.WarwickDenver.com)