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Music*

MEDITERRANEAN  
TRAVEL WORLD NEWS - SECTION SIX - MAY 2008

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## CHI APPOINTS MORTEN EBBESEN NEW GENERAL MANAGER OF CORINTHIA BEACH RESORT MALTA



MORTEN EBBESEN

Malta based Corinthia Hotels International (CHI) announced the appointment of Danish national Mr. Morten Ebbesen as the new General Manager of the Corinthia Beach Resort in Malta, comprising the five-star Corinthia Hotel St George's Bay and the adjoining Marina Hotel.

Morten Ebbesen brings a wealth of experience to his new post, having held General Manager positions at the five-star Pestana Grand Hotel Madeira, and the Millennium Mayfair and Sheraton Park Tower hotels in London. While at the Millennium Mayfair, he was instrumental in developing the celebrity chef restaurant 'Turners of Mayfair.'

Morten's earlier appointments included those of Resident Manager at the Casino Park Hotel Funchal in Madeira, Executive Assistant Manager at Sheraton Hotel Abuja in Nigeria, Front Office Manager at Sheraton Skyline Hotel in Heathrow, London, and Assistant Manager at the Sheraton Copenhagen.

As Marketing Director of the Group Pestana, with responsibility for seven five-star properties and multiple restaurant and conference operations, Morten also has considerable experience in the sales and marketing field.

Welcoming Morten's appointment, CHI Chief Executive Officer Tony Potter said: "I am really looking forward to working with Morten again and know that his extensive European experience in large scale five-star hotels will be most beneficial to our business at the Corinthia Beach Resort and its two upscale hotels."

On his part, Morten commented: "It is a very exciting time to join the Corinthia team with the new Wyndham joint venture and the expansion plans in place. I have operated extensively in similar environments to Malta and can confirm that the Corinthia Beach Resort's quality, standard, comfort and design - allow for a unique opportunity to attract high quality leisure and conference business to the island. We have the resources in place to make this a truly memorable experience for all types of visitors - and I look forward to working with the team, the local tourist board, destination management companies and tour operators to increase the awareness of this beautiful island."

Corinthia Hotels International (CHI), [www.corinthia.com](http://www.corinthia.com)

## HLO TOURS JOURNEYS TO EGYPT, MALTA AND TUNISIA

Join HLO Tours on a custom-designed 10-day private tour of the world's most mysterious civilization: "Egypt, the Gift of the Nile" from \$2,950 per person air and land from New York.

Visit all the ancient Egyptian sites, including Cairo to visit the Great Pyramids at Giza, the Sphinx, Memphis and Sakkara, and King Tut's legendary tomb. In Luxor, board one of the most luxurious Nile Cruise boats (Radamis). For the next five days travel up

the Nile River and visit more archeological sites, including Karnak Temple, the Temple of Horus at Edfu, Hatshepsut Temple, and the Valley of the Kings. HLO Tours provides the best five-star hotel and Nile Cruise accommodations, finest restaurants, air-conditioned private transportation, and professional, knowledgeable guides.

The Maltese Islands have often been referred to as the islands of sunshine and history. Home once to ancient civilization and Europe's nobles, Malta's location at the crossroads of Mediterranean maritime routes is the key to its rich history. Explore some 7,000 years back in time by delving into the island's mysterious megalithic temples. Retrace the footsteps of the Apostle Paul, and discover the ancient Phoenician roots and the eras of Roman and Arab rule.

Delight in the stunning art treasures found in museums and churches. All three islands that make up the Maltese archipelago provide a unique, inviting, and natural destination.

Amazing Tunisia is listed as number three of the 50 top destinations to be visited in 2008. It is an incredibly diverse and friendly country containing 14,000 archeological sites - many of them already designated "World Heritage." Explore the ancient ruins of legendary Carthage; visit Dougga, one of the best preserved Roman cities in Africa; or discover Tunisia's Coliseum, the third largest in the world.

Venture to the Sahara to visit the beautiful, tropical Oases; take a camel caravan across the sands; or a four-wheel drive dune vehicle to an ancient, ruined fortress deep in the Sahara.

HLO Tours, 800-736-4456, [hlotours@yahoo.com](mailto:hlotours@yahoo.com), [hlotours.com](http://hlotours.com)

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

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## DISCOVER MALTA'S HISTORIC PAST



The Mediterranean's best kept secret is an archipelago called the Maltese Islands.

At the cross roads of maritime routes, the Maltese Islands comprising of Malta, Gozo and Comino have been a home, stronghold, trading post and refuge for over 7,000 years of history. From temple builders to the seafaring Phoenicians, the time spent here by the Apostle St. Paul, the gallantry of the Knights of St. John, the short-lived occupation by Napoleon and the presence of British royalty, all have left their impressions for travelers to experience.

Malta remains passionately in the present, taking pride in the numerous archaeological and heritage sites, historical palaces and the incredible ornate churches that dot the islands.

Valletta, Malta's capital is a masterpiece of Baroque architecture. It is listed as a European Art City and a World Heritage City. Valletta is home to over 300 historical monuments, but St John's Co-Cathedral is the highlight of this city. Caravaggio's masterpiece The Beheading of St John is housed in this Cathedral.

Malta's sister island Gozo claims the world's oldest free-standing temples in the World, called Ggantija. Older than the pyramids of Egypt and pre-dating Stonehenge, the temples date between 3600 and 3000BC. The Hypogeum in Malta is a fascinating underground burial temple and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Megalithic temples Hagar Qim and Mnajdra are also listed as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Reasons to visit Malta between June – August include the UIM Powerboat P1 World Championship June 6-8; The Grand Harbour Boat Show –June 6-8; and L-Imnarja – Feast of St. Peter & St. Paul June 29.

The Malta Arts Festival will be held July 1-16. The program includes street art exhibitions and plays, as well as performances by local and international musicians. The Malta Jazz & Rock Festival forms part of the Malta Arts Festival.

Between June and September the Islands are in full swing with the Festa Season all over the island. Each week a different village celebrates with fireworks, processions and brass band marches along the streets.

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

## THE PALACE AND VICTORIA HOTELS STRENGTHEN THEIR MANAGEMENT TEAM



MARIO DE CELIS

The Palace and Victoria Hotels have recently appointed Mario de Celis to the post of Business Development Director. Mr. de Celis will also act as a marketing consultant to the AX Holdings Group. Mr. de Celis is one of the most experienced personnel in the local tourism industry. He has a wealth of experience in the industry which he acquired through his years of employment in the hospitality sector working in various leading four- and five-star hotels on the island.



LORRAINE PACE

Mr. de Celis started his career in the hospitality industry in 1974 at the Verdala Hotel in Rabat after completing his studies at MCAST. His first post was that of a receptionist but through personal initiative and determination he was promoted to front office manager. Mr. de Celis is no new-comer to the AX Holdings Group. He was the first General Manager of The Victoria Hotel over 10 years ago and prior

to that post he was Director of Sales and Marketing at the Suncrest Hotel, a post which he has held for over seven years.

Together with Mr. de Celis, The Victoria and The Palace Hotels have also engaged Lorraine Pace to the post of secretary in the General Manager's Office. Ms. Pace comes with vast experience in this field having worked with various companies prior to her employment with The Palace and Victoria Hotels.

Speaking about the new executives Claire Xuereb, General Manager of The Palace and The Victoria Hotels said that "given their experience the newly appointed personnel are expected to contribute greatly to the vision and philosophy of the organization. In an effort to create a motivated and energetic team we have paid great attention to select the right candidates and we feel that the expertise of Mr. de Celis and Ms. Pace will be a valid asset for our team."

The Palace and Victoria Hotels, [www.thepalacemalta.com](http://www.thepalacemalta.com)

# Grand



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

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## NEW WEBSITE FOR VARIETY CRUISES

Variety Cruises have recently launched their advanced web site, [www.varietycruises.com](http://www.varietycruises.com). This new visitor friendly website will be a very useful tool to the growing number of travel agents booking their cruises.

Variety Cruises' small ships are the choice of the largest and most prestigious travel organizations in the U.S. Guests can explore Greece and now the Red Sea with their fleet of Mega Yachts and Motor Sail Yachts. Travel agents can book their seven-night scheduled departures to Greece and the Red Sea on an individual basis and also have the option to custom fit an itinerary by chartering a wide variety of yachts for their client's specific needs.

Variety Cruises are committed to the travel agency community. They are a niche market cruise line, requiring more specialists training than a traditional cruise. They are educating the travel agent community with strategic presentations throughout the United States, with a focus on agents selling premium and luxury cruises and tours.

Variety Cruises have established alliances with Niche Cruise Marketing Alliance (NCMA) and the home-based sector, National Association of Commissioned Travel Agents (NACTA). Their mission is to grow these alliances for 2008 and pursue the most prestigious travel agencies consortia.

Dave Randon, Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Variety Cruises, has over 29 years of experience and his prospective is clear: In the traditional cruise business, it's about the transportation, not the destination. In the tour business, it's about the destination, not the transportation. With Variety Cruises, it's about both - they embrace the destination with the transportation.

Variety Cruises, 800-319-7776, [drandon@varietycruisesusa.com](mailto:drandon@varietycruisesusa.com), [www.varietycruises.com](http://www.varietycruises.com)

## SONESTA NILE GODDESS RELAUNCHED AFTER EXTENSIVE RENOVATION

The Sonesta *Nile Goddess* will be relaunched in February after extensive renovation. Originally launched in 1989 as Sonesta's first ship in the collection, the Sonesta *Nile Goddess* has been completely renovated including all cabins, suites, restaurants and public spaces.

The ship features 49 standard cabins, four extravagant suites

with private terrace and four junior suites. The five deck ship was awarded the certificate of Excellence from the American Bureau of shipping (A.B.S.) and classified as A 1 river service. All cabins feature wide panoramic windows to view the Nile and passing antiquities. Cabin amenities include private direct-dial telephones, hairdryers, safety deposit boxes mini bar, music, individual climate control, wireless Internet access, plasma televisions and movies. Bathrooms are equipped with full-size bathtubs. Ship amenities include several restaurants and lounges, in-room dining available until midnight, panoramic elevator, purified water, outdoor BBQ, international telephone line and wireless internet access, jogging track, outdoor swimming pool, spa and fully equipped gym. The ships also offer evening entertainment beginning with captain's welcome cocktail party, oriental black tie "Galabeya" party, Nubian folkloric show and themed nights throughout your cruise.

Daily guided excursions visiting historic sites of mysterious ancient Egypt include the Temple of Philae, Komombo, Hatshepsut, Colossi of Memnon, Karnak and Luxor temples. In Aswan guests may also enjoy a felucca journey around Kitchener's Island and the Agha Khan Mausoleum. Sonesta's fleet of Nile River cruise ships offer three-, four-, six- and seven-night trips between Aswan and Luxor.

Sonesta, 800-Sonesta (800-766-3782), [sonesta.com](http://sonesta.com)

## TRAVEL EGYPT PRESENTS 'FANTASTIC EGYPT' TOUR

Travel Egypt's 'Fantastic Egypt' is an 11-day, 10-night fully escorted tour featuring the "A" list of sites along the Nile valley from Abu Simbel to Alexandria, including Cairo, Luxor and Aswan.

Starting at \$2,095 (from Cairo) and paying a 15 percent commission to recognized agents, the tour has guaranteed weekly departures. The tour is fully escorted from arrival to Cairo and with groups of no more than 16 guests, travelers are given close personal attention.

Tour highlights include a deluxe five-star, four-day/three-night Nile cruise from Aswan to Luxor featuring outside upper decks, and Nile view cabins with opening panoramic windows. From Ramses famous temples at Abu Simbel to Cleopatra's Alexandria, the Egyptologist will entertain and educate, bringing history to life. Travel Egypt, [www.travelegypt.com](http://www.travelegypt.com)



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## KEMPINSKI HOTEL SOMA BAY SET TO OPEN MID-2008

Kempinski Hotels has been awarded the management agreement for a new five-star luxury hotel currently being built on Soma Bay Peninsula on the Egyptian shores of the Red Sea.

Part of a master-planned resort which includes a 70-berth marina, the hotel has a private beach ideal for taking advantage of the region's year-round sunshine and excellent water sports and diving opportunities. Kempinski Hotel Soma Bay is set to open mid-2008.

The hotel will offer 324 rooms and suites, including two Presidential suites. Ideal for traveling families, most suites can be combined with connecting rooms to form extended suites of up to five bedrooms. Six restaurants and bars, each with views over Soma Bay, will propose an inviting range of cuisines.

An 18-hole golf course, four tennis courts and two squash courts are also planned. A Health Club & Spa will offer a state-of-the-art gymnasium and a full range of wellness treatments. Parents will be pleased to discover a Children's Club that is staffed with professional attendants, and which has its own two swimming pools and playground.

Ulrich T. Eckhardt, President of Middle East & Africa for Kempinski, believes the property to be a distinctive new addition to the group's growing portfolio in the region, saying, "With its stunning natural location and exceptional range of leisure options, the Kempinski Hotel in Soma Bay will be one of the finest resorts on the Red Sea.

Following in the tradition of Kempinski's innovative five-star excellence, guests will enjoy superior levels of service and have privileged access to extensive luxury facilities throughout the resort."

With the addition of the Kempinski Hotel in Soma Bay, the group will soon operate three properties on the Red Sea, including Djibouti Palace Kempinski and Kempinski Hotel Aqaba, which is set to open in spring 2008.

Kempinski Hotels,  
[www.kempinski.com](http://www.kempinski.com),  
[www.globalhotelalliance.com](http://www.globalhotelalliance.com)

## GREEN VILLAGE HOTEL & RESORT OPENED APRIL 2008

Green Village Resort, the newest four-star resort at Hurghada, is located in the area between Safaga and Hurghada (Makadi). It is a resort for those who want to experience farm life, and is the first in Hurghada with an Oriental atmosphere.

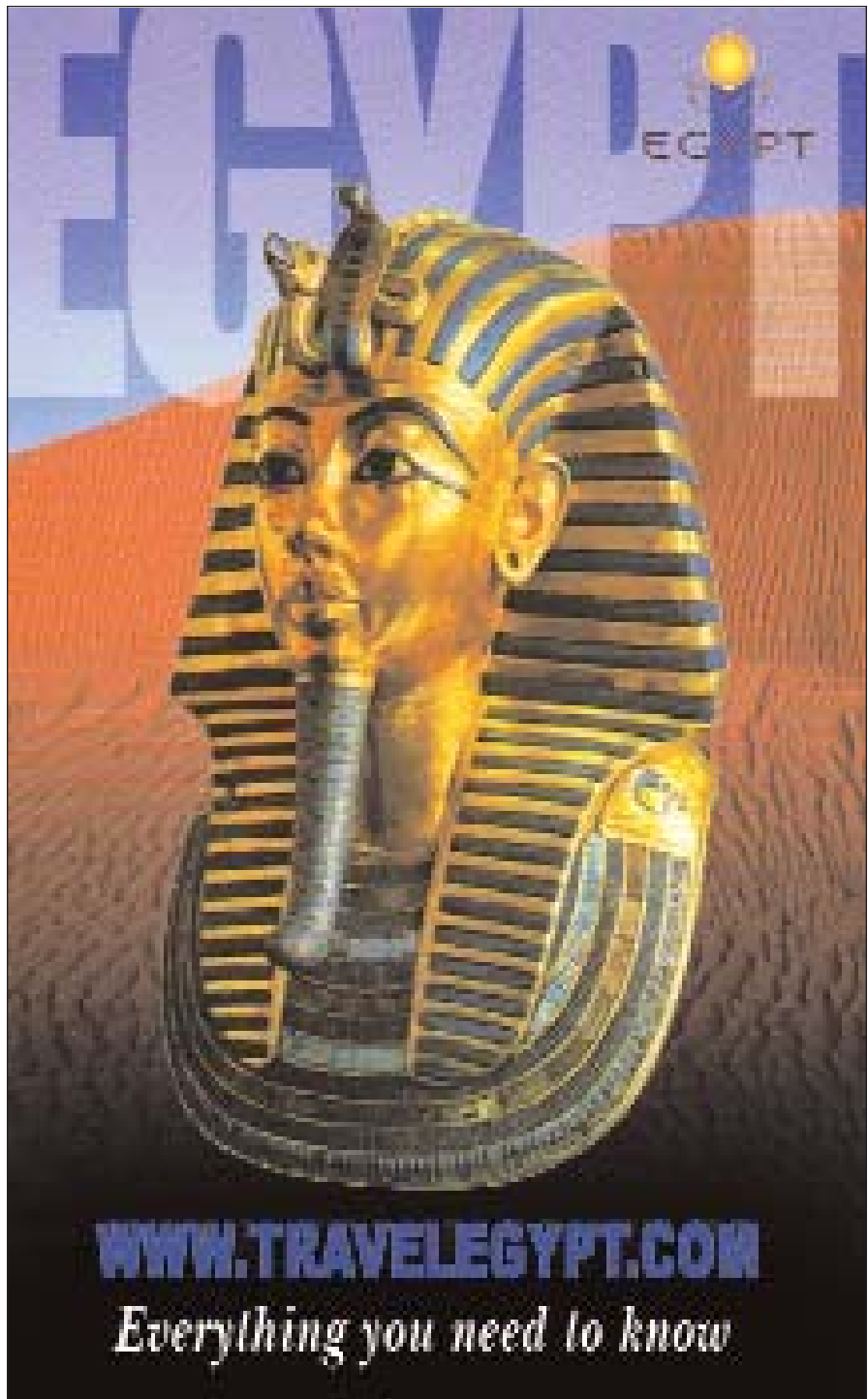
This idea was built on creating harmony between desert landscape, mountains, and one of the largest artificial lakes in the

Red Sea.

The resort has 140 spacious rooms, chalets, and suites all with balcony or terrace.

The resort also provides numerous facilities including restaurants, bars, swimming pools, a discotheque, a Kids Club, an aqua center, diving center, health club, horse and camel rides, a shopping arcade, a volleyball court, a football field, and more.

Green Village Resort, 002-02-22629635



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## GREEK SUMMER CRUISE ESCAPES FROM HOMERIC TOURS



Homeric Tours is offering affordable summer cruise escapes to the Greek Islands and beyond.

Athens & 3-D Greek Islands and Turkey Cruise is \$1,825 (air, land and cruise). Tour is eight-days/six-nights with three nights in Athens and a three-day/three-night cruise. Trip is every Monday from June 16 - September 15.

Athens & 4-D Greek Islands and Turkey Cruise is \$1,995 (air, land and cruise). Trip is nine-days/seven-nights with three nights Athens and a four-day/four-night cruise, every Thursday from June 12 - September 18.

Athens & 7-D Greek Islands and Turkey Cruise is \$2,215 (air, land and cruise). Program is 11-days/nine-nights and features two nights Athens and a seven-day/seven-night cruise. Trip is every Tuesday from June 10 – September 16.

Athens, Mykonos & 3-D Greek Islands and Turkey Cruise is \$2,285 (air, land and cruise). Trip is 11-days/nine-nights and features two nights Athens, four nights Mykonos and a three-day/three-night cruise. Trip is every Thursday from June 12 – September 18.

Included in all packages are round trip airfare from New York; air and cruise fuel surcharges; two cabin category upgrade for all cruises; first class hotel in Athens; deluxe hotel in Mykonos; breakfast daily; all meals and entertainment on cruise; all transfers; hotel taxes and service charges; portage of one suitcase per person; assistance at the airport by Homeric Tours representative; Homeric Tours "Hospitality Hours" at the hotel; 24 hour "emergency" hotline; and USTOA \$1 million consumer protection guarantee. Mention offer code 'Greek Summer' when booking.

**Homeric Tours, 800-223-5570, [info@homerictours.com](mailto:info@homerictours.com), [www.homerictours.com](http://www.homerictours.com)**

## EUROMIC WELCOMES BARCLAY'S GROUP TRAVEL IN TUNISIA

euromic – The Destination Management Partnership in Europe and the Mediterranean, has officially welcomed Barclay's Group Travel in Tunisia. In a vote held in March, Barclay's Group Travel was accepted unanimously by euromic's membership. This addition has secured euromic's place as the largest consortium of independent Destination Management Companies (DMCs) in Europe and the Mediterranean.

Barclay's Group Travel, headquartered in Hammamet, about one

hour from the city of Tunis, was founded in 2002 and has already established a reputation for reliability, creativity and value. Tunisia – famously the location for the first Star Wars film – offers an exceptional landscape, rich in both natural beauty and ancient Roman and Phoenician architecture. The combination of luxury resorts and exciting activities, including Sand Yachting and tours of the old cities such as Tunis and Kairouan, have made Tunisia popular with both special interest tour operators as well as meeting and incentive planners looking for destination that is unusual in all the right ways. "Joining euromic is a great opportunity for us," said Moufida Ameur, Chief Office of Barclay's Group Travel. "We are honored to have been accepted by the other members and we look forward to offering our high-quality of service to euromic clients."

"euromic is proud to offer its clients options in the Baltic States," said Giancarlo Carrera, president of euromic. "These are new and exciting destinations for many planners and incentive organizers. We have the utmost confidence in the professionalism Barclay's Group Travel and their ability to make their programs alive for participants."

With the addition of this new member, euromic, which celebrates its 35th anniversary this year, has grown to include member or World Affiliate companies in 33 destinations. **euromic, [www.euromic.com](http://www.euromic.com)**

## MNT0 NAMES RACHID MAANINOU NEW DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAS

Rachid Maaninou has been named Director of the Americas for the Moroccan National Tourist Office (MNT0), which has returned to New York for the first time since closing its office in late 2001. Mr. Maaninou will be responsible for building Morocco's markets in the U.S. and Latin America. Mr. Maaninou joined MNT0 in Rabat in late 2002 as an executive in the public relations department and rose rapidly to Director of International Markets in February 2005. Prior to that, he held various positions with Moroccan hotels, tour operators and travel agencies following post-graduate studies in tourism and hospitality in Tangier and at the University of Toulouse. He completed his education with a degree in tourism management, and his research paper on marketing ecotourism in Morocco earned a special jury plaudit and recommendation for publication.

"The MNT0 is glad to be back in New York and I am proud to be named the first Director of the Americas," said Mr. Maaninou. "We've seen remarkable growth in the number of Americans traveling to Morocco since the global travel recovery began in 2003, and it makes sense to re-establish our presence here to work more closely with the industry and the media."

"Morocco is very much on the move," Mr. Maaninou concluded. "At the crossroads of the Mediterranean, linking east and west, Africa and Europe, we are proud of our rich heritage, which we will honor and protect as we evolve to fulfill the aspirations of our visitors. We cordially invite you to come and see for yourself. It will be an experience you will never forget."

**Moroccan National Tourist Office, 212-221-1583, [info@mnto-usa.org](mailto:info@mnto-usa.org), [www.visitmorocco.com](http://www.visitmorocco.com)**

## W HOTELS MAKES ENTRY INTO NORTH AFRICA WITH W MARRAKECH

Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide, Inc. has announced the introduction of its W brand to North Africa with plans to debut a new hotel and residence property in Marrakech, Morocco. Owned by Dilam Hotel Development S.A.S., W Marrakech and The Residences at W Marrakech will include a 150-room hotel and 68 whole-ownership villa residences as part of a luxurious, mixed-use development.

The newly constructed property is scheduled to open in mid 2010 in a prime location at the heart of the city's emerging luxury hotel district.

"W continues to extend beyond the boundaries of everyday travel, offering a magical mix of sophisticated destinations and sublime design," said Ross Klein, President of Starwood's Luxury Brands Group. "W Marrakech will offer exclusivity, escape, and indulgence for travelers in the bustling landscape of one of Africa's most dynamic cities. From Marrakech to Milan, Barcelona to Beijing, Hoboken to Hong Kong, W is going global as the influential and innovative lifestyle authority."

W Marrakech will be a core element of the Al Maaden Resort development and will overlook an 18-hole championship golf course. The hotel's 150 rooms will include 14 W Suites, three WOW Suites, and an Extreme WOW Suite, all decorated in the W signature style including the W bed.

The vibrant hotel will feature all of W's signature comforts, including its Living Room experience, two exclusive restaurants, a destination bar as well as a unique poolside bar. W Marrakech will also offer travelers approximately 1,000 square meters of meeting space, indoor and outdoor pools, fitness center, luxury spa and gift shop. Villa residents will enjoy access to services and amenities available to hotel guests.

"Marking the entry of the W brand in North Africa, W Marrakech will provide a unique alternative for our customers, inviting them to discover one of the most charismatic destinations in the world," said Roeland Vos, President of Starwood Hotels and Resorts, Europe, Africa & Middle East. "I would like to thank Dilam Hotel Development S.A.S. for the trust they have shown in Starwood and the W brand."

W Hotels, [www.whothels.com](http://www.whothels.com)

## CORINTHIA HOTELS TO OPERATE FIRST WYNDHAM HOTEL IN MOROCCO

Corinthia Hotels International (CHI) and Essential Developments, a development company based in the Isle of Man, announced the signing of a technical assistance agreement and a 15-year hotel management agreement of the new "Wyndham Port Lixus Resort" an approximately \$86.77 million upscale hotel project to be built by Essential Developments on the northern Atlantic coast of Morocco.

The resort location is adjacent to the city of Larache and 40 minutes south of Tangier International Airport.

CHI will be giving its technical assistance and advice in the planning and design of the Wyndham Port Lixus Resort and will take

on the full management of the hotel on completion. The hotel will include a state of the art Spa, three restaurants, four bars that include a health bar and a Tapas bar, and extensive landscape and water features.

The 418-room hotel project falls within phase one of the Moroccan Government backed "Vision 2010" plan of turning the historical Port Lixus area into an upscale tourist resort, complete with two 18-hole golf courses, a 700-berth marina, a 120-berth pleasure port with shopping and residential "Water Homes," extensive sporting and leisure facilities, and upscale international hotels.

Development of the planned resort will be in the hands of Salixus, a Belgian consortium development company led by Thomas & Piron.

"Both CHI and Wyndham are delighted to be involved in this very exciting new project. We have recognized Morocco to be a priority for expanding our African presence and building on CHI's already excellent management reputation and standing in Libya and Tunisia. We are also honored to be contributing to Morocco's Vision 2010 program and are confident that the resort hotel will be a resounding success," stated Tony Potter, Corinthia Hotels International's Chief Executive Officer.

Construction work on the Wyndham Port Lixus Resort is scheduled to commence in April of 2008, with the hotel set to open its doors in June 2010.

Corinthia Hotels International (CHI), [www.corinthiahotels.com](http://www.corinthiahotels.com)

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## EXPAND YOUR MUSICAL MIND AT THE 14TH FÈS FESTIVAL OF WORLD SACRED MUSIC



The Fès Festival of World Sacred Music is an annual event held in Morocco's spiritual capital that promotes peace through musical sharing and exploration. This year's nine-day musical extravaganza takes "Creative Pathways" as its theme and is sure to lure international music lovers and musicians seeking fresh ideas and renewed inspiration. International stars and celebrities come to listen as much as to play, such as classical composer Osvaldo Golijov, Queen Rania of Jordan, and the Irish rock band, U2, all who have spoken passionately about the Festival. This year's program showcases the creativity in every musical form from grass roots folk to formal European classical music. The following tour operators offer reasonably priced air/hotel inclusive packages to the Fès Festival:

### IMAGINE ADVENTURES

From June 1 – 15, Imagine Adventures is offering their "Fès Festival of World Sacred Music Tour." Starting at \$2,475, the package includes accommodations; all concert tickets and passes to Fès Colloquium; lectures; special sessions with Sufi teachers or musicians; ground transportation; and a complimentary copy of the documentary film "Sound of the Soul."

Imagine Adventures, 541-301-7469,

[www.imagine-adventures.com/tours/fes\\_music](http://www.imagine-adventures.com/tours/fes_music)

### ADVENTURES IN ROCK

Adventures in Rock (AIR) is offering a 14-day trip full of concerts, lectures, exhibitions and intellectual and artistic exchanges.

Starting at \$2,685, this package includes roundtrip airfare; accommodations; land transportation; full time assistance from guides and escorts; all entrance fees to monuments, museums and festival activities; Sufi music gatherings in Moroccan homes; baggage handling and taxes in the tour restaurants.

Adventures in Rock, 877-788-ROCK,

[www.adventuresinrock.com/fez2008](http://www.adventuresinrock.com/fez2008)

### SARAH TOURS, INC.

Sarah Tours, Inc. offers a World Sacred Music Festival & Tour package from June 3 –17. Starting at \$2,685, this package includes round trip airfare; accommodations; land transportation; assistance from guides and escorts; fees of monuments, museums and the festival activities; Sufi music gatherings in Moroccan homes at the labyrinth of the Medina of Fès; and baggage handling, and taxes in the tour restaurants.

Sarah Tours, Inc, 800-267-0036, [www.morocco-fezfestival.com](http://www.morocco-fezfestival.com)

Fès Festival of World Sacred Music, [www.fesfestival.com](http://www.fesfestival.com)

## MOROCCO TOUR PACKAGES FROM SITA WORLD TRAVEL

Sita World Travel is taking guests on a journey through some of Morocco's most captivating cities with the "Imperial Cities" luxury package. This seven- or 10-day trip departs for Casablanca every Sunday from numerous gateways. First stop on the tour is the capital city of Rabat, where attractions include the Casbah of the Oudayas and the Hassan Tower. Fès, a living Medieval city, unfolds its ancient, labyrinthine medina, with age-old handicraft souks, magnificent architecture and delicious cuisine. After crossing the Atlas Mountains through Berber villages and the town of Beni Mellal, the tour arrives in Marrakech with its famous Djemaa el Fna Square, Dar Si Said Museum, Saadien Tombs and the Menara and Agdal Gardens.

Starting at \$1,295, this package includes option of luxury or deluxe hotels with private facilities; meals; arrival and departure transfers; transport by air-conditioned vehicle with English speaking driver/guide; tour Rabat, Meknes, Fès and Marrakech; special Moroccan dinner with folklore show; travel by land rover over the sand dunes at Merzouga (10 day only); optional night under the stars in a Bedouin camp (10 day only); local English speaking guides for sightseeing; and entrance fees to monuments per the itinerary.

Sita World Travel, 800-421-5643, [www.sitatours.com](http://www.sitatours.com)

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World  
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*The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists*

## CORPORATE DETOX AT KEMPINSKI HOTEL BARBAROS BAY, TURKEY



Kempinski Hotel Barbaros Bay Bodrum and its award-winning Six Senses Spa are launching a new and innovative detox program. The Corporate Detox concept combines the modern and luxurious business meeting services at Kempinski Hotel Barbaros Bay with a unique detox program prepared by Six Senses Spa, all in the beautiful and peaceful setting of Bodrum.

The basic idea of the program is to assist decision-makers to enhance their sensory and analytical abilities through the purification and rest of their minds and bodies through Six Senses Spa treatments, gentle exercise, meditation, sound nutritional therapy, and a specially designed "Brain Food" menu; using this mind boost in business-focused brain-storming sessions to improve the productivity and quality of the meeting.

Aimed at small groups of 10 to 15 people, this program is ideal for intensive planning sessions, executive committees or board meetings. Beside the business meetings, which take place in a tranquil and undisturbed environment, the focus lies on the breaks, the time before and after the meetings. In the morning, the group will have a daily yoga session, to get in the right mindset for the meeting ahead. During meeting breaks, therapists will give mini head and shoulder massages, to enhance energy flow and remove any stiffness and tension. During the meeting, each participant will get a full body detox massage and one Thai head, shoulder and foot acupressure massage. Each day ends with an evening meditation session to unwind and relax. The food served throughout the program is well balanced and slow in releasing energy during the day, to keep concentration levels constant. A consultation with the nutritionist will give participants a better understanding of their eating and drinking habits and how to change them for improved overall well-being.

Prices start from approximately \$1,230 for single and approximately \$1,890 for double occupancy during low season. This includes three nights' accommodation, all meals, the Six Senses Spa treatments, state-of-the-art meeting facilities, airport transfers, welcome amenities, VAT and service charges. Kempinski Hotel Barbaros Bay, [www.kempinski-bodrum.com](http://www.kempinski-bodrum.com)  
[www.kempinski.com](http://www.kempinski.com)

## ADVENTURES IN TURKEY WITH INCA

Join INCA for an unforgettable journey of discovery to Turkey. Room is still available on their 19- or 14-day adventures; each includes a five-night blue water cruise of the Turquoise Coast aboard an elegant, traditional Turkish gulet, four days exploring exotic Istanbul, and more. Turkey - Origins of Civilization is 19-days featuring Cappadocia, a Turquoise Coast cruise, famous ruins, and Istanbul. Dates are May 12, May 26, September 8, and September 22. Turkish Adventure is 14-days featuring a Turquoise Coast cruise, famous ruins, and Istanbul. Dates are May 17, May 31, September 13, and September 27.

Turkey is diverse and fascinating. It offers friendly people, old and complex history, incredible archeological ruins, glorious art, intricate crafts, and splendid scenery. Get to know Turkey by strolling through villages and ruins, ballooning in Cappadocia, hiking in the countryside, and spending days exploring remote coastlines from fine, live-aboard gulets (the Turkish version of yachts).

Their adventure in Turkey explores the Origins of Civilization and focuses on Turkish culture and human history in the region west of the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers. Learn from viewing the ruins and artifacts of the Hittites, Greeks, Romans, Lycians, Carians, Seljuks, Ottomans and others. Also learn from the modern Turks as they straddle the span between East and West.

Istanbul lives up to its reputation—exotic, old, mysterious yet sophisticated, modern and dynamic. Here, spend four days exploring its most fascinating attractions.

INCA, 510-420-1550, [adventure@inca1.com](mailto:adventure@inca1.com), [www.inca1.com](http://www.inca1.com)

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For more than 16 years FLO USA has pioneered in exciting explorations of Turkey's greatest natural and cultural sites, especially Istanbul, Ephesus and Cappadocia. Known today as the leader in travel to Turkey, FLO USA is now paying 16 percent commission on all shore excursions in Turkey's ports such as Kusadasi (Ephesus), Izmir, Dikili, Istanbul, Antalya and Bodrum. Services include (but not limited to) private guided tours, group tours, transfers, and hotel accommodations. Carnival Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Royal Caribbean, Norwegian Cruise Line, Disney Cruise Line, Oceania Cruises have ports of call in Turkey, Greece and Egypt.

Shore excursions in Greece and Egypt are 12 percent commissionable as well as all escorted tour packages to those destinations. For groups of eight or more passengers, FLO USA offers special group rates.

FLO USA, 888-435-687, [info@flo-usa.com](mailto:info@flo-usa.com), [www.flo-usa.com](http://www.flo-usa.com)

## PARK HYATT ISTANBUL-MAÇKA PALAS TO OPEN SUMMER 2008

Maçka Palas, one of the finest buildings in the city, is soon to become home to Park Hyatt Istanbul-Maçka Palas, following the hotel's scheduled opening in summer 2008. Ideally located in the Nipantabi residential and shopping district, the hotel uniquely combines the historic architecture of an Art Deco building with innovative interior design.

Maçka Palas was built in 1922 by the Italian architect Giulio Mongeri. The relationship between old and new is displayed throughout the hotel and fills the guest experience with what they call "unexpected pleasures."

The Palas Lounge, designated for breakfast, will feature all-day dining, a lounge, as well as Park Afternoon High Desserts. The hotel will also house a steakhouse, The Prime. Outdoors, guests will be able to luxuriate in a multi-level pool/terrace area, featuring wild bamboo, private cabanas and a stream. At night, the yard will come alive with music and will be lit exclusively by candlelight.

The stylish hotel will house the most spacious rooms in town equipped with latest technology. There will be a total of 90 generously sized deluxe rooms, including seven Park Suites, one Executive Suite, one Diplomatic Suite and a Presidential Suite. The residential top-floor suites will offer a private terrace and large

rain sky showers. Each guestroom will be equipped with high-speed broadband Internet access, a digital telephone, a flat-screen television, a DVD player and JBL i-Pod stations. Ergonomic work areas cater to the needs of the global business traveler.

For additional pampering, the hotel spa will be available exclusively for hotel guests. Separate male and female sections will feature two steam baths, three treatment rooms and a relaxation room. Other recreational facilities will include a gymnasium and a fitness center.

The hotel will have two boardroom-style meeting rooms ideal for private functions and small exclusive meetings. All meeting rooms will feature state-of-the-art technology.

Park Hyatt Istanbul-Maçka Palas represents a further step in Hyatt's development in Europe and will strengthen the global network of the award-winning Park Hyatt brand.

Global Hyatt Corporation, 800-233-1234, [www.hyatt.com](http://www.hyatt.com)

## RAGOSTA HOTELS COLLECTION OPENS BOUTIQUE PROPERTY IN SICILY

Ragosta Hotels Collection has launched the collection's newest boutique resort, La Plage Resort. La Plage Resort heralds the arrival of the first new luxury boutique resort complex in Taormina, Sicily. It is expected to open for business early June 2008.

The company recently unveiled its new Define Your Lifestyle brand that provides customized hospitality experience mirroring the daily lifestyles of the discerning traveler. This ideal forms the cornerstone of the company's Define Your Lifestyle brand-wide concept, easily identifiable throughout Ragosta Hotels Collection by signature amenities, services, architecture and design, location and culinary offerings.

Situated in Taormina Isola Bella, a small island near Taormina, Sicily also known as "The Pearl of the Ionian Sea," La Plage Resort will open as a five-star property, featuring 62 guestrooms and suites.

Designed by the architecture firm of Pantha, La Plage Resort was created to co-exist with the natural surroundings of Isola Bella and to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. The resort will also feature Ragosta Hotels Collection's signature spa line, Expure Spa. Fitness facilities along with water sports and family programs will be offered as well.

More importantly, the resort will be known for the various AI Fresco public areas such as fragrant gardens and solariums, gathering spaces for guests to relax and unwind. But perhaps the most exciting facility will be the exclusive Marine and Beach Club, accessible only to guests and housing an extensive menu of water sports and activities such as boating.

Guests can expect a multitude of services and signature amenities. In addition to enjoying the uber-luxury items in the guestrooms and villas, travelers will be able to customize their hotel stay in the manner in which they are accustomed but with an element of surprise and pure decadence.

La Plage Resort will enjoy membership in the Preferred Boutique division of Preferred Hotels & Resorts when it opens.

Ragosta Hotels, [www.ragostahotels.com](http://www.ragostahotels.com)

## EL AL SHOWS RECORD 2007 REVENUES

EL AL, the national airline of Israel, continues its profit trend, as revenue rose by 16 percent in 2007 when compared with 2006, totaling approximately \$1.93 billion. This is the highest revenue in the 60 years that EL AL has been in service. The net profit for 2007 is \$31.7 million, compared to a loss of \$33.9 million in 2006.

Operational profit reached \$71.4 million as compared to a loss of \$8.5 million in 2006. Revenue for the fourth quarter totaled \$524.3 million, an increase of 26 percent, compared to the same quarter in 2006. The 2007 cash flow totaled \$231.2 million, an increase of 136 percent compared to 2006.

This increase in record revenue was achieved despite a steep upsurge in competition in the skies, the dramatic increase in fuel costs, the sharp drop of the dollar to a low of 3.4 shekels and geopolitical conditions worldwide.

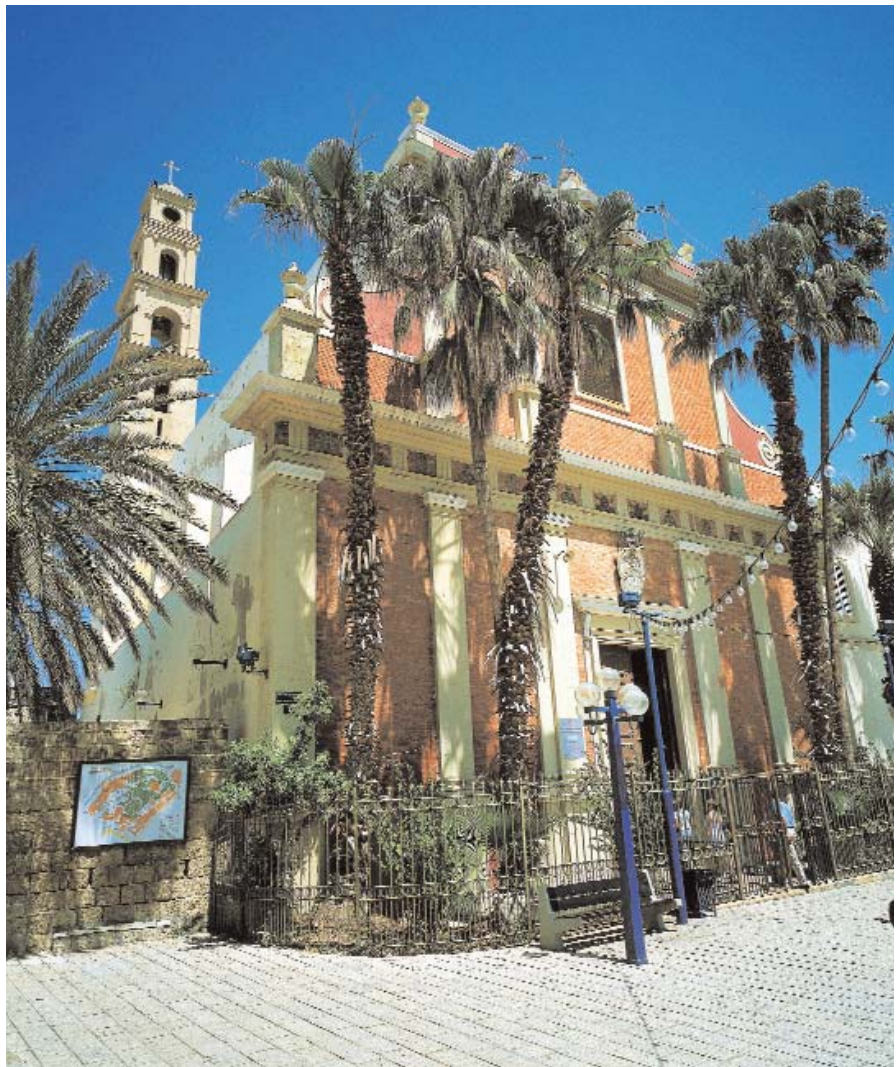
EL AL also succeeded in absorbing a rise in passenger traffic and increased the load factor on its planes to better than 85 percent. During 2007, the airline increased the number of passengers and increased seat availability by 2 percent, while at the same time efficiently using the aircraft fleet.

"The ability of EL AL to show profits is the result of the determined effort to reduce expenses while increasing revenue, particularly through the growth engines the airline defined for itself, such as business passengers and increased tourism to Israel," stated Haim Romano, President, EL AL Israel Airlines.

The year 2007 can be characterized as a year of growth for EL AL. In the summer of 2007, EL AL added two new state-of-the-art Boeing 777 aircraft. A fourth weekly nonstop flight from Los Angeles to Israel was also added to the regular flight schedule.

In early fall of 2007, EL AL opened new First and Platinum Business Class luxury King David Lounges at JFK airport. In Los Angeles, a new modern lounge for Premium Class passengers equipped with a business center also opened.

EL AL, 800-223-6700, [www.elal.com](http://www.elal.com)



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## TOURISM TO ISRAEL SOARING AS 60TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR BEGINS

Tourism to Israel in the first two months of 2008 rose a whopping 51 percent over the first two months of 2007, according to Arie Sommer, Israel Tourism Commissioner for North and South America. The first two

months of 2008 were 34 percent up over the same months of 2006.

"This is very encouraging," observed Sommer, "especially as 2007 was the best year ever for American tourism to Israel." Some three million visitors are expected to visit Israel in 2008; Israel will mark its 60th anniversary on May 8.

Israel, [www.goisrael.com](http://www.goisrael.com)

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## LOUIS CRUISE LINES: 2008 OUTLOOK STRONG FOR CRUISING IN THE MED

Louis Cruise Lines is getting ready for what looks like another banner season in the Mediterranean.

In a recent statement, Senior Vice President of Marketing & Sales George Stathopoulos was pleased to point out that "bookings from the United States are strong, in spite of a weak U.S. Dollar."

Louis Cruise Lines remains firmly committed to a strong presence in Greece. In fact, it is now the only company operating Greek flagged ships, with Piraeus as their home port. Following in the footsteps of a great cruising tradition, the Louis product combines the warmth and energy of the Greek spirit, with the solidity of the group's 70 year history in tourism and its vast experience in operating Mediterranean resorts.

The *Aquamarine*, formerly under charter to Transocean, now joins *Cristal* and *Perla* to further enhance the company's popular Aegean Islands and Turkey cruise offering out of Piraeus. Three, four, and seven-day itineraries allow call times in select ports, such

as Mykonos, Kusadasi, Patmos, Rhodes and Heraklion (Crete), Santorini.

In addition, *Cristal* will also be doing weekly overnight calls on the seven-night cruise itinerary in Istanbul in addition to the other ports of call across the Greek Isles and Turkey. Towards the end of the season, *Cristal* is introducing four new itineraries that will include Egypt's Alexandria.

During this season, the *Orient Queen* visits the islands of the Aegean Sea and Turkey on 10-day cruises from Genoa/Marseilles with calls to Naples, Piraeus, Kusadasi, Patmos, Mykonos, Santorini, Katakolon and Messina. After completing an extensive refit, the *Coral* returns to the Western Mediterranean with the popular seven-day Spanish Odyssey cruise.

Louis Cruise Lines has also unveiled its new 2008 brochure. The full-color publication features the complete range of Louis Cruise Lines programs, deck plans, shore excursions available, and a cruise calendar detailing sailing dates.

Louis Cruise Lines, 877-LouisUS, LCLUSA@louiscruises.com, www.louiscruises.com

# MEDITERRANEAN

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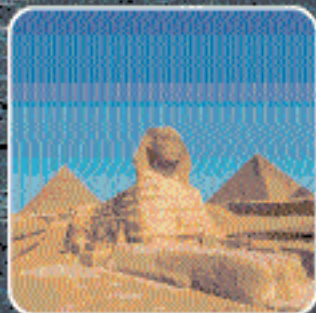


**Orient Queen**



**Perla**

For Louis Cruise Lines brochure and information send e-mail request to: [LCLUSA@louiscruises.com](mailto:LCLUSA@louiscruises.com) or visit [www.louiscruises.com](http://www.louiscruises.com)



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