

*Think You Don't Know The GHL Hoteles?
In Fact, Maybe You Do!*



*For The Happy Few,
The Kiara Eco-Luxury Lodge*



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Think You Don't Know The GHL Hoteles? In Fact, Maybe You Do!

In Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Panama, GHL operates under the Sheraton, Howard Johnson and Sonesta brands as well as under two brands of its own.

MARK ZUSSMAN

Come November 1, there will be three new Sheraton hotels in South America — the Sheraton Quito, in Ecuador, with doors open as of September 1; the Sheraton Guayaquil, also in Ecuador of course, with doors open as of October 1, and the Sheraton Bogotá, with doors to open about a month after this magazine reaches its readers.

Doors open? Doors to open? A more accurate word would be reopen. All three of these hotels have already been in business under Sheraton's moderately priced Four Points brand. But, thanks to an investment of more than a million dollars in each of the three by the Colombian hotel development and management company GHL Hoteles, Quito, Guayaquil and Bogotá all now are shedding the Four Points qualifier. With upgraded swimming pools and spas, with pleasing new Sweet Sleeper beds, and with a bunch of other upscale touches, all three of these hotels will henceforth operate as Sheratons proper.

GHL Hoteles (the GHL standing for Grupo de Hoteles Limitada and the Hoteles, obviously, being nothing more or less exotic than Spanish for hotels) is a Bogotá-based company, now with 43 years of history behind it, that actually builds and owns the steel, brick and mortar buildings in which travelers bunk down at night. The total hotel count for the company is 24, of which three, as already mentioned, are — or soon will be — operated as Sheratons. Another three, in Cali and Medellín in Colombia and in Panama City, Panama, are — and will continue to be — operated under Sheraton's Four Points brand.

Three more hotels in Ecuador, specifically in Quito, in Quayaquil, and in Manta, are operated under the Howard Johnson brand. Six in Peru, in Lima, in Cusco and elsewhere, are operated under the Sonesta brand. (For details, see TWN for November 2006).

The home turf

This brings us back to GHL's home base in Colombia, where the company operates nine hotels under two brands of its very own. The GHL Windsor House is a refined and elegant property of 127 suites of various configurations and proportions up to a level designated Presidential. The hotel is on a quiet street in the upscale Chico Reservado neighborhood. It is close to the cafes and restaurants on Parque 93 and it is also close to the Bogotá World Trade Center.

Windsor House loyalists, and they are legion, tend to think of the property as a boutique hotel, but the truth is that the slightly less well-known GHL Hamilton Court, with only 41



GHL Hotel Sunrise.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Rio de Janeiro

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GHL Hotel Capital.

semi-suites, is in some respects even more boutique-y, if what boutique-y means is smallness of scale and personalized service. The Hamilton Court is inside Bogotá's Zona Rosa, so restaurants, cafes and nightlife are once again within walking distance.

The GHL Hotel Capital, with 215 rooms, meanwhile, is a comfortable place to unwind at night in Bogotá's pulsating and dynamic Ciudad Salitre, and that means close proximity to the Salitre Plaza and Gran Estación shopping centers, the Maloka Museum of Science and Technology, the U.S. and other embassies, and more.

The GHL Sunrise, the fourth of the GHL "Premium" properties, is a resort hotel (134 large rooms facing the sea, 40 family-size suites facing the sea, and another 36 perfectly nice rooms facing the city) of striking contemporary design on San Andrés Island in the Colombian Caribbean. How's the scuba diving? Why, the scuba diving is great, of course!

GHL Comfort Hotels, the company's more moderately priced brand, are the 84-room Los Heroes in Bogotá, the smaller and very charming El Belvedere in Bogotá, the towering Torre de Cali in Cali, the Costa Azul on the beach at Santa Marta, the Maysquer on the Panamerican Highway just a stone's throw short of the Ecuadoran border.

In addition, a 150 room GHL property in Colón, Panama, now under construction, is scheduled to open as a Four Points by Sheraton hotel in March 2008, and a 140-room property, brand as yet undecided, is on the drawing board for a second-semester 2009 opening in Cartagena, again in the Colombian Caribbean.

Why and wherefore

GHL's market skews to around 60 percent business travelers, 40 percent leisure travelers, though obviously there are considerable local variations, Bogotá for obvious reasons, for example, being primarily a business destination and Cusco, Peru, to pick another example, barely seeing a business traveler from one year to the next. The reasons for sending leisure travelers to Peru and Ecuador are well-known to everyone in the industry; they don't need a lot of rehearsing. Machu Picchu in the Peruvian Andes is, as everyone knows, one of the world's most awe-inspiring archeological sites; the Galapagos Islands, in the Ecuadoran Pacific, is one of the world's most thrilling wilderness and ecological sites and all the more so for people who like to get up close to unusual birds and animals.

For some years now, Colombia has been the South American country that leisure travelers don't visit because of all the noise in the media about drug trafficking and the guerilla gangsters of FARC. It also doesn't help of course that Colombia has no Machu Picchu, no Galapagos, no Eiffel Tower, no Big Ben — in short, no one single world-renowned must-see-or-die tourist attraction. Truth is, though, that Colombia has one of the most dynamic economies in all of South America, it has some great beaches along a 1000-mile Caribbean coast, it has sophisticated cities.

No one wants to pooh-poo dangers, but would you recommend to tourists that they avoid the U.S. because sometimes there's a tornado?

GHL Hoteles, www.ghlhoteles.com

TAM VACATIONS CREATES SPECIAL OFFERS TO SOUTH AMERICA

TAM Vacations, a full service travel company with more than 250 travel products covering Brazil and South America, continue their innovative approach to packaging custom South American itineraries. They have created an exciting range of special trips in 2007 to the destinations they serve in Brazil and South America from their gateways of Miami and New York.

TAM Vacations offers several unique packages to Rio de Janeiro, including multi-destination packages to Rio de Janeiro and Buenos Aires from \$789, Rio de Janeiro and Iguassu Falls from \$799, and Rio de Janeiro and Salvador da Bahia from \$863.

Packages feature air transportation on TAM Brazilian Airlines in economy class from Miami or New York, daylight service, and hotel accommodations.

All packages may be upgraded to first class or deluxe hotel accommodations, and TAM Vacations also offers a Business Class Upgrade, all at additional cost.

Also featured is an Amazon program, Classico Manaus, with five nights accommodations at the Tropical Manaus Eco Resort, a resort hotel located in the heart of the Amazon jungle, and direct service economy class travel from Miami to Manaus on TAM Brazilian Airlines, from \$899. For relaxation, mixed with some fun and entertainment, TAM Vacations offers their Classico Costa do Sauipe, featuring the Costa do Sauipe Marriott Resort and Spa. Costa do Sauipe, located in the state of Bahia in the Northeast of Brazil, is a resort complex made up of six thematic inns and five international branded resorts, portraying Salvador Bahia's lively history, and is located one hour from Salvador, the state's capital city.

The program offers seven nights accommodations at the Marriott Resort and Spa, with breakfast daily, two greens fees, one horse-back riding session, a tour of Praia do Forte, plus economy class travel from Miami to Salvador on TAM Brazilian Airlines non-stop service on Sundays. Price is from \$899 ppdo.

TAM Vacations, 866-6BRAZIL, info@tamvacations.net, www.tamvacations.com

EXPLORE THE LOST CITY OF THE INCAS WITH AHI

AHI International is offering educational packages to Peru. This unusual and educational weeklong tour is a journey of contrasts, visiting cosmopolitan, Colonial Lima as well as Machu Picchu.

Guests will spend seven nights' at the first-class José Antonio Hotels in Lima and Cuzco, and enjoy an extensive meal plan that provides seven breakfasts, six two-course lunches and five three-course dinners. There is also a welcome reception and dinner, plus a farewell reception and dinner following the "Graduation Ceremony" at one of Lima's finest Colonial mansions.

All excursions and educational programs are developed exclusively for this tour and feature English-speaking local experts, plus the services of an experienced AHI Campus Director. Extras include a deluxe travel wallet and automatic \$250,000 flight insurance for passengers ticketed by AHI International.

Trip highlights include Qorikancha, Temple of the Sun, the hilltop temple of Sacsayhuamán, the Sacred Valley, colorful Pisac market, and the Fortress of Ollantaytambo. Guests will also visit Chinchero, a small Andean village, and San Blas, where local artisans showcase traditional techniques used in Colonial art.

In Lima, explore historic Plaza Mayor, Casa del Oidor, one of Lima's oldest homes, the President's Palace, and Lima's landmark cathedral, with Spanish mosaics and intricately carved choir stalls.

Educational focus of the itinerary includes a "Meet the People" panel discussion, an opportunity to learn about modern life in Peru from local residents drawn from all walks of life. Other learn-as-you-explore programs focus on "The History of Peru" and "Contemporary Peru" (examining political and social life, current events and culture).

There are 12 weekly departures in early 2008 from January 10 to April 10. Prices are \$3,119 per person based on double occupancy with departure from Miami. Prices from other U.S. gateways are: Atlanta \$3,219; Newark, Boston and Washington \$3,269; Chicago \$3,379; and Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle \$3,479. Price includes hotel, meals, tours, round-trip airfare via scheduled jet service to Lima, plus round-trip motorcoach transfers from the Lima airport to hotel in Miraflores, including baggage handling. Also included are flights between Lima and Cuzco.

AHI International Corporation, 800-323-7373, www.ahitravel.com

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STAYAWAY

For The Happy Few, The Kiaroa Eco-Luxury Lodge

Nature and amenity in exotic, tropical Bahia, Brazil.

MARK ZUSSMAN

For all the full-speed-ahead mega-resort development now underway on the long Brazilian coast, there are hundreds, maybe even thousands, of stretches that are still as untouched and unpolluted as on the day on which the Deity looked down and saw that it was good, where you can walk on the beach all day and not see more than a couple of well-weathered fishermen, where there are neither shopping centers nor strip malls nor even a bank or a post office.

Have you heard of the Maraú Peninsula on Camamú Bay in the Northeastern Brazilian state of Bahia? No, of course you haven't. And that's kind of the point. The Kiaroa Eco-Luxury Lodge there does indeed seek guests, but it would just as soon that its own name and the name of the bay and the name of the peninsula it is on not be bandied about by just anyone.

The Kiaroa Eco-Luxury Lodge, now three years of age, is a complex of 28 intimate rooms and bungalows whose decorating scheme might be called tropical eclectic. Focus in one direction and it's Bahia itself. From another perspective, it's Polynesia. There's a touch of Bali in a third place, Thailand in a fourth. There are whispers of Senegal and Mali and Kenya. As the Italian entrepreneur who built the Kiaroa Lodge likes to point out, if you follow the line of latitude that passes through the Maraú Peninsula far enough, Polynesia is where you are sooner or later going to wind up.

As for the beaches that the Kiaroa provides immediate access to, they are not literally interminable but they are seemingly so, and they are broad, palm-shaded, virgin, gorgeous. In addition to the beaches, there are natural pools to swim in and also pools of the man-made kind. There is in fact one private pool for each of the lodge's dozen bungalows in addition to the one large pool for everyone to share, and the bungalow pools lap at the wooden lounging decks just beyond the back doors. There are reefs, there are sweet water rivers, there are mangrove forests. Dining, with an emphasis on local seafood, is of the tropical-cosmopolitan variety. No one, needless to say, gets to a spot as gloriously out-of-the-way as this one without having to change planes. First you have to get to a Brazilian hub city, then from there to the Bahian capital of Salvador. From there, the Kiaroa Lodge people will fly you to their own private landing strip in 30 or 35 minutes of great panoramic views. Alternatively, you ferry from Salvador to Itaparica Island in the great All Saints Bay, from there you cross the bridge back to the mainland on Bahia's southern coast, you follow the BA-001 for a goodly spell, you cross by boat from Camamú to the tiny fishing village of Barra Grande. Three kilometers more and you're home, total lapsed time from Salvador being approximately six hours.



There is one private pool for each of the lodge's dozen bungalows.

The Kiaroa Lodge doesn't have to be combined with anything. It's a destination in its own right. Travelers wanting something more than pure escapism, however, might — either on the way down or on the way back — also want to put in some time in fabulous Salvador itself. Salvador is Brazil's third largest city, it is a cultural treasure house, it is the city in which even many Brazilians say they most feel their own Brazilianness.

Given the somewhat roundabout route by which most North Americans will reach the Kiaroa Lodge, no reason why it can't also be combined with São Paulo or Rio or why, rather than a destination in its own right, it can't be an extension from São Paulo or Rio for leisure travelers or for business travelers.

The Kiaroa Lodge has been featured in a big spread in the prestigious Brazilian newsweekly *Veja*, the largest-circulation news magazine in the world, as it happens, after the big three in the U.S.; it has been featured in São Paulo newspapers and in Brazilian travel monthlies. It is unsurprising, therefore, that rich São Paulo has so far been the resort's leading market. But, according to sales and marketing director Henrique Abreu, Britons have begun to find their way there. North Americans are sought.

How is the last point to be put? Children under 14 years of age are categorically not welcome at this tranquil property. Children above 14 years of age are tolerated, but please do not mistake the Kiaroa for a family resort of the kind with water toboggans, pin-the-tail-on-the-donkey sessions, and a kiddies menu in the dining room. The Kiaroa is for adults and not really for singles either; it's for couples. Truth is that, even when there are other people around, you don't necessarily notice them. They tend to disappear into the forest-green and sky-and-ocean-blue immensity of the place.

**Kiaroa Eco-Luxury Resort, kiaroa@kiaroa.com.br,
www.kiaroa.com.br**

HELSINGFORS LODGE SHOWCASES THE WONDER OF PATAGONIA

Helsingfors Lodge is synonymous with remote Patagonia. Its ideal location insures exclusive harmony with nature. Guests here will enjoy the most exquisite and unique landscapes along with exclusive service and sophisticated regional cuisine.

Since 1996, Helsingfors has been a shelter for sophisticated visitors. The Lodge is located approximately 111 miles from El Calafate and is surrounded by a majestic natural landscape, protected by lush woods which give way to a panoramic view of the lake, Mount Fitz Roy, and the Andes Mountains. The ride from the steppe to the end of Viedma Lake is magical at sunset.

When staying at Helsingfors Lodge, transfers in and out from El Calafate are included in the basic pack. The Lodge features eight rooms, six of them with Jacuzzi and two with Scottish showers. The maximum capacity at the Lodge is 18 people. This ensures that the guests will be the only ones to walk on the paths and to discover the region. Although Helsingfors is located in a remote area, it has electricity generated by a small turbine and there is 220 volts of electricity 24 hours a day.

They also offer satellite phone and an internet connection (Wi-Fi) for those who bring their own laptops. The Lodge offers an excellent view of Mount Fitz-Roy.

In addition, the Lodge features gourmet cuisine and a wide variety of activities including horseback riding, trekking, boat rides to Viedma Glacier, trout fishing, and more. Tours are exclusive for Helsingfors guests and are conducted with a bilingual guide.

The opening of the lodge is expected to take place on October 12 and will remain open until April 8.

Helsingfors Lodge, info@helsingfors.com.ar,
www.helsingfors.com.ar

PERU'S INKATERRA EXPANDS TO LAKE TITICACA, CUSCO AND LIMA

Inkaterra, Peru's foremost eco-tourism company which recently went completely carbon-neutral, is set to open three new properties by the end of this year: Titilaka (Lake Titicaca, Puno); La Casona (Cusco); and Peru Explorers Club (Lima; March 2008). These unprecedented new boutique hotels will take Inkaterra's concept of an "authentic Andean experience" to new heights, incorporating expo-

sure to Peruvian history and culture while providing top-of-the-line accommodations.

Opening November 2007, Titilaka is the first luxury hotel on the shores of Lake Titicaca. Special amenities of the all-inclusive 18-suite exploration lodge and refuge will include lake-view suites and spa bathrooms, private transport to and from the airport and train station, full board and bar and a choice of two-, three- or four-day programs with a-la-carte excursions by Land Rover, boat, on horseback or hiking. Daily activities include nature and archeology adventures, visiting living cultures, colonial churches and islands like Taquile, and the nearby man-made floating islands of the Uros people.

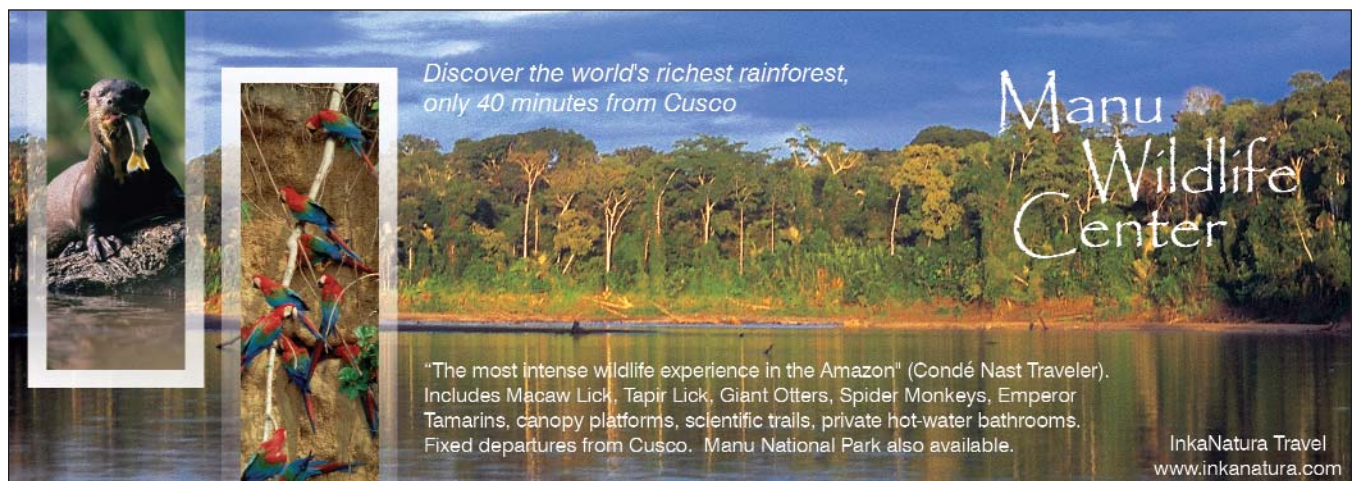
Opening December 2007 and set in a 16th-century mansion in the heart of Cusco, the 11-suite La Casona will enable travelers to re-live first-hand a crucial part of Peruvian history: the high point of the Incan Empire and the subsequent Spanish Conquest. The present-day accommodations are evocative of the area's colonial past. The hotel, which can arrange excursions to nearby attractions such as the famous Cathedral, the Museum of Pre-Colombian Art (MAP), the ancient Koricancha Temple (Temple of the Sun), and cultural activities, such as Andean dancing and coca leaf readings, is also available for private rental.

Opening March 2008 and set in an historic Belle Epoque mansion, Peru Explorers Club, the first luxury club-boutique hotel in Lima, will be located in the heart of Barranco, Lima's artistic district. It will include 15 suites with an old world explorer's club atmosphere, travel concierge service, a private travelers club, a wine bar, and spa.

It is the ideal starting point for travelers about to embark on a complete Peruvian exploration or returning from it.

Inkaterra is a Peruvian organization with more than 30 years of experience in sustainable tourism initiatives. It focuses on preserving and rescuing Peru's geography, nature, customs and cultures and sharing them with the world. The three properties currently operating are Inkaterra Machu Picchu, Inkaterra Reserva Amazónica and the Inkaterra Urubamba Villas. Inkaterra has an alliance with the NGO Inkaterra Association through which the company's profits and travelers' donations are invested in research, conservation, educational and social development programs.

Inkaterra, www.inkaterra.com



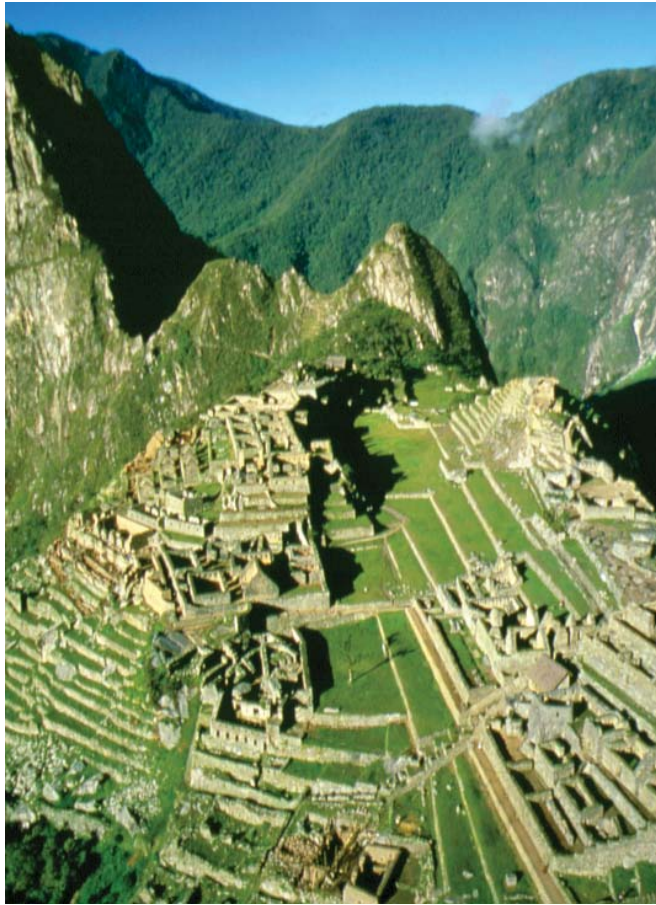
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"The most intense wildlife experience in the Amazon" (Condé Nast Traveler). Includes Macaw Lick, Tapir Lick, Giant Otters, Spider Monkeys, Emperor Tamarins, canopy platforms, scientific trails, private hot-water bathrooms. Fixed departures from Cusco. Manu National Park also available.

InkaNatura Travel
www.inkanatura.com

PLAN NOW FOR CHRISTMAS TO PATAGONIA AND MACHU PICCHU WITH INCA



INCA's "Deep South" year-end holiday adventure features seven-days/six-nights at the Explora Hotel Salto Chico in Patagonia, on the shores of Lake Pehóé in the heart of Torres del Paine National Park. Enjoy hiking, learning about the wildlife, horseback or mountain bike riding, and dining well. All excursions and optional activities are included. En route to the Torres, explore Santiago, Chile's capitol, and Punta Arenas, the town at the "uttermost end" of Chile, to visit a large colony of Magellanic penguins.

Christmas in Patagonia is 12 days, December 17 - December 28, 2007, and December 23, 2007 - January 3, 2008. Prices are from \$5,895. Additional Patagonia adventures include

Patagonian Spring, 16 days from \$7,795, November 5 - November 20, 2007, and November 5 - November 20, 2008; and Patagonia—The Wild South, 16 days from \$7,995, January 24 - February 8, 2008, February 21 - March 7, 2008, and March 20 - April 4, 2008.

Travelers may also spend Christmas or New Years in Machu Picchu. In Lima, visit old churches and historic buildings, explore the city's museums, and enjoy a seaside buffet of Peruvian specialties. In the Andean highlands, explore Cuzco and the Urubamba Valley to observe village life. The culmination of this adventure is three days in the ruins of Machu Picchu.

The Center of the Inca Universe Holiday is 11 days, from \$5,495, and is offered December 20 - December 30, 2007, and December 25, 2007 - January 4, 2008. Additional Peru adventures include

Mysteries of Peru, 14 days from \$5,895; Cultures of Peru, 17 days from \$6,995; Southern Peru Explorer, 17 days from \$6,995; and The Salcantay Trail, 16 days \$6,395.

INCA, adventure@inca1.com, www.inca1.com

HILTON LATIN AMERICA HELPS COUPLES SKIP SEVEN-YEAR ITCH WITH ROMANTIC GETAWAY

U.S. Census figures show the average marriage lasts seven years, when couples often get the itch to stray. Now couples can get back on track with Hilton Latin America's "7-Year Itch Antidote" package. Hilton offers couples an alternative to the traditional seventh year anniversary gift (wool) with a romantic getaway. Launching on the lucky date of 7-7-07 and available through December 31, 2007, the "7-Year-Itch Antidote" package features suite accommodations; daily in-suite breakfast; romantic all-white turndown service; one dozen roses; one bottle of chilled Champagne or sparkling wine; and chocolate covered strawberries.

Participating hotels offer the "7-Year Itch Antidote" package at the starting rates: Hilton Buenos Aires \$490; Hilton São Paulo Morumbi \$475; Hilton Belem \$270; Hilton Cartagena \$525; Hilton Barquisimeto \$215; and Hilton Margarita & Suites \$270. The package is valid now through December 31, 2007, is subject to availability and there is a minimum length of stay of two nights. Rates vary by property and are per room, per night based on double occupancy and do not include resort/service fees, taxes, incidentals or gratuities. For reservations guests should visit the participating hotel's "hotel specials" page on the website or call and request booking code PR50SY.

Hilton, 800-HILTONS, www.hilton.com

ANTARCTICA: 10% OFF EARLY BOOKING FARES AND \$0 AIR FROM VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY

Founded in 2002, Voyages of Discovery (Discovery World Cruises) offers cruise vacations to exotic destinations at affordable prices.

Voyages of Discovery is featuring 15-20 night cruise tours to the Antarctic Peninsula plus free air, including three night hotel stays in Buenos Aires, an extra 10 percent off early booking fares, and no single supplement.

Antarctic, Falklands and South Georgia from Buenos Aires roundtrip departs November 26, 2007 and is 20 nights from \$4,795 per person.

Antarctica I from Buenos Aires roundtrip departs December 12, 2007 and is 15 nights from \$4,120 per person.

Antarctic Peninsula and South Georgia I from Buenos Aires roundtrip departs December 21, 2007 and is 19 nights from \$4,975 per person.

Trips include landings ashore, rare wildlife, towering glaciers, on-board lectures and enrichment program, and an expedition team lead by Dr. Peter Carey.

Voyages of Discovery, 866-623-2689, customerservice@mvdiscovey.com, www.voyagesofdiscovery.com

MEXICO PARTICIPATES IN THE 2007 ASAE ANNUAL MEETING & EXPOSITION



Pictured left to right: Ken Torres, Cancun Convention and Visitors Bureau; Bruce MacMillan, C.A., President and CEO de Meeting Professionals International; Katie Callahan-Giobbi, Executive VP, MPI Foundation & Chief Business Architect Meeting Professionals International; Eduardo Chaillo, CMP, Director of Strategic Business, Mexico Tourism Board for US and Canada; Patricia Capetillo, Meetings Industry Director, Strategic Business Unit for US & CAN, Mexico Tourism Board.

With its scenic landscapes, beautiful beaches, and extraordinary traditions, Mexico is the ultimate place to host any type of meeting and convention. "The secret of Mexico lies in the diversity it offers, including its natural attractiveness, its extensive capacity to organize large events and its warm hospitality," said Eduardo Chaillo, Director of the Strategic Business Unit for United States and Canada of the Mexico Tourism Board.

Chaillo, who headed the presentation of Mexico during Connecting'07 American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) Annual Meeting & Exposition in Chicago, emphasized that the Mexican government contributes with 0% VAT on Meetings, Conventions and Exhibitions organized by foreign companies in Mexico. The Mexico representation at the ASAE meeting included the Mexico Tourism Board and other Mexican officials from the Visitors & Convention Bureau from Yucatan, Puerto Vallarta, Cancun, Guadalajara and Monterrey. Also on site to answer questions were Mexico's leaders in the hospitality industry including Aeromexico, Posadas Hotels and Sol Meliá Hotels, and Meeting Incentive Experts DMC.

Mexico offers over 3,000 luxury hotels with over 245,000 available rooms. There are also 55 meeting venues with almost four million square feet of space for exhibitions and over two million square feet of space for conventions.

The Mexico Tourism Board (MTB), www.visitmexico.com

AMERICAN AIRLINES COLOMBIA TRAAVEL EXCHANGE TO BE HELD IN COLOMBIA DECEMBER 4-8

Peter J. Dolara, Senior Vice President American Airlines, announced that American Airlines will hold an important Travel Industry Business Development Event for Colombia December 4-8, 2007 at the Plaza Mayor Convention Center in Medellin. Over 200 travel agents from the United States and Canada and 75 suppliers from all of Colombia are expected to participate. The format will include detailed seminar presentations about the primary Colombia travel destinations, "How to Sell Colombia" workshops, a Travel

Exposition featuring pre-scheduled meetings between travel agents and Colombia exhibitors/suppliers and Medellin city tours. Special hosted pre and post trips to Cartagena and Bogota will be an important part of the American Airlines Colombia TrAAvel Exchange.

Travel agent registration fees are \$145 which includes all official scheduled business and social activities, seminars, pre-scheduled supplier meetings during the Exposition, and three nights' double room accommodations at the participating host hotels that include the Inter-Continental, Sheraton Four Points, The Holiday Inn, and the Hotel Dann Carlton. Colombia supplier registration fees will be \$895 including one delegate, one stand with a table, four chairs, lights, sign, and pre-scheduled meetings with travel agents. Additional supplier delegates will pay \$165. American Airlines is offering registered travel agents special discounted air fares.

In making the American Airlines Colombia TrAAvel Exchange announcement, Mr. Dolara said: "Medellin has become an important part of our American Airlines service to Colombia, and we think this is the right time to help promote this beautiful country by focusing attention on this very special destination. We believe this Colombia TrAAvel Exchange can have a significant impact on increasing North America tourism business to Colombia, and we are proud to be working with our Colombia Travel Industry Partners to make it a success."

The American Airlines Colombia TrAAvel Exchange Event Management Firm is William H. Coleman, Inc.

American Airlines Colombia TrAAvel Exchange,
www.colombiatravelexchange.com

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NEW WEBSITE FOR CORAL LAGOON LODGE SHOWCASES ECO-LODGE FOR DIVERS IN VENEZUELA

Coral Lagoon Lodge has created a new self-named website, www.CoralLagoonLodge.com, to share more details about this unique dive eco-lodge in Venezuela. Located along the shores of the tropical sea lagoon La Cienaga, the Lodge is three hours from Caracas' airport and is nestled between the mountains of Henri Pittier National Park and the Caribbean coastline. The Lodge's waterfront location allows visitors to enjoy snorkeling, diving and kayaking right from the Lodge's doorstep.

"We are extremely excited to promote the Lodge through the new website," said owner Paul Stanley of Angel-Eco Tours, which has been operating in Venezuela since 2000. "The secluded La Cienaga bay lends a special mystique to Coral Lagoon Lodge, which is only accessible by a 20-minute boat ride from the local fishing village. Often you'll find no other people there except on weekends and Venezuelan national holidays!"

Stanley announced key "eco" characteristics of the eco-lodge: "The Lodge was cleverly designed and built on the framework of a previous building that dated back to the 1960s. All refurbishment work of the lodge was carried out by local residents and maximized the use of local building materials. We also recycled the building's existing timber elements.

This ecolodge is self sufficient. All our freshwater supply comes from rainwater collection and our toilets flush with saltwater. Power is presently generated through generator but we already store surplus power in batteries, thus increasing the efficiency of the system over 200 percent. We are currently switching to a solar power system with a generator as back-up to reduce noise, increase operational efficiency and reduce CO2 emissions."

Coral Lagoon Lodge offers accommodation in two cabins with a total of six rooms for two to four people each, with fans and ensuite facilities. A multilingual host serves meals under the shade of the mangrove trees. Hammocks, deckchairs, kayaks and snorkeling equipment are available, as is an open bar with local drinks.

Coral Lagoon Lodge offers professional hands-on dive services with multilingual PADI and SSI-qualified instructors for experienced divers and beginners interested in a full diving course or a snorkeling induction.

Just a small distance from the lodge are more than a dozen unique diving sites where the accented coastline hides underwater grottos and canyons, including two locally renowned wrecks, the Carmen Fabiana and the Gran Roque.

The coral lagoon's reefs and its bordering mangroves teem with colorful parrot fish, angel fish, trumpet fish, lobsters, squid and octopus amongst many others, not to mention many types of flourishing hard and particularly soft corals.

Nature lovers might catch a glimpse of sea turtles or could venture into virgin tropical forest and mangrove swamps and see puma and jaguar tracks, deer, scarlet ibis, ospreys, wild pigs, snakes, and capuchin and howler monkeys.

Coral Lagoon Lodge, stanley@angel-ecotours.com,
www.CoralLagoonLodge.com

SURROUND YOURSELF WITH NATURE WITH A VISIT TO FRONTIER PATAGONIA LODGE IN CHILEAN PATAGONIA

In the southernmost tip of the earth, between two immense oceans, is the Patagonian Frontier. There are no roads here, nor telephones nor electricity, only mountains and woods, rivers and lakes. Frontier Patagonia offers a lodge with bungalows for four and five guests, set in the majestic landscape of woods, mountains, rivers and lakes with opportunities to engage in a wide variety of open-air activities.

The bungalows make for an unforgettable stay. They are heated by log-fires, and have full bathrooms, exceptional views, and an environment-friendly décor. They offer amenities including a kitchen, maid's service, and Patagonian Frontier breakfasts of berry preserves, homemade bread, and an assortment of delicious specialties to taste while relaxing. At the private cozy restaurant enjoy fine cooking and desserts, and at the charming bar guests will be treated to a fine assortment of drinks and homemade liqueurs.

Frontier Patagonia welcomes travelers to enjoy a great number of open-air activities and to plunge into the fabulous world of virgin nature.

Suggested activities include trout and salmon fly-casting (catch and release), horseback-riding, white-water rafting, canoeing, trekking, walking tours to enjoy and photograph nature, and photographic safaris. For bold adventurers, go rafting on the Futaleufú River, for family fun, go rafting on the quieter Espolón River.

Frontier Patagonia, info@fronterapatagonica.com,
www.fronterapatagonica.com

DESTINATION VENTURES PRESENTS "COME TO KNOW COLONIAL TREASURES, MEXICO" SEMINARS

Travel professionals are invited to attend an educational seminar series called "Come to Know Colonial Treasures." These events unite Mexico's important tourism suppliers and tour operators serving the central Mexico states of Aguascalientes, Durango, Guanajuato, Michoacán, Querétaro, San Luis Potosí, and Zacatecas. The evening seminars are being coordinated and taught by Oregon-based Destination Ventures, Ltd.

For agent attendees, the program offers a highly interactive experience. Agents can expect small-group, face-to-face supplier meetings, a sit-down dinner, classroom-style education (a 90-minute seminar), worksheet, and a full-color, seven state Study Guide on CD. The planned events are sponsored by Mexico's "Colonial Treasures Tourism Trust." Exhibitors will include various airlines, tour operators, Colonial Mexico hotels, and seven Mexican state tourism boards. Special Winter 2008 packages will be announced, and several vacation stays will be raffled at each event. The events will be held November 13 in Los Angeles, CA and November 15 in Houston, TX. The cost to attend is \$8. The events run from 5:15 pm - 8:30 pm.

Colonial Treasures Tourism Trust, 800-599-6633,
www.colonialtreasures-seminars.com;
Destination Ventures, Ltd, www.destinationventures.com

CHAA CREEK RANKS AMONG WORLD'S BEST HOTELS

The Lodge at Chaa Creek ranks among the best hotels in the world and the best in Mexico, Central and South America according to the 2007 Travel and Leisure survey released on July 10.

Chaa Creek ranked 18th from a total of 25 hotels surveyed in Mexico and Central and South America with a total of 85.50 points. Chaa Creek also ranked 15th in the Top 15 Hotels for \$250 or less category.

A questionnaire developed by the editors of Travel and Leisure Magazine was made available to its subscribers from January to March, 2007. Subscribers were asked to rate hotels in rooms/facilities, location, service, restaurants/food and value. Respondents reported where they had traveled worldwide, and rated only the destinations, properties, and companies that were relevant to their recent travel experiences. Respondents were asked to rate hotels, cities, islands, spas, hotel spas, outfitters/safari operators, cruise lines, airlines, and car-rental companies on several characteristics.

Chaa Creek was also named as one of Trip Advisor's Top Ten International Eco-Escapes. In May of this year, Chaa Creek was also rated as one of the world's top hotels by a Zagat survey and was listed in the 2007/2008 Zagat's World's Top Hotels, Resorts and Spas guidebook.

Located within 365 acres of private, pristine rainforest along the banks of the Macal River, Chaa Creek offers the traveler an unforgettable nature experience.

Chaa Creek hosts 23 luxury cottage rooms, suits and villas, an internationally recognized state-of-the art spa, Natural History Centre, Butterfly Farm, Rainforest Medicine Trail, miles of trails for walking, birding, mountain biking and horseback riding, canoeing in the Macal River, an organic Maya Farm, adventure tours, and easy access to Belize's richest Maya archaeological sites and national parks.

The Lodge at Chaa Creek, 877-709-8708, www.chaacreek.com

NEW ALL-INCLUSIVE PACKAGES AT BELIZE'S INN AT ROBERT'S GROVE

The Inn at Robert's Grove is celebrating its 10th anniversary with four new all-inclusive packages through December 15, 2007. All packages include round trip local airfare from Belize International Airport to Placencia airstrip, local ground transfer from Placencia airstrip to the resort, daily breakfast buffet, lunch and dinner, and local beer, rum and tropical drinks.

The Romance Getaway Package provides romantic time and a little adventure. The seven-day/six-night package for \$4,200 per night includes an Oceanview Deluxe suite, a candlelight dinner on the pier, massage treatments for two, an evening cruise to watch the sunset over the Mayan mountains, snorkeling trip with picnic lunch, and trip to the Cockscomb Jaguar Preserve and waterfall swim.

The Girls Just Want to Have Fun Package includes three days massage for two, spa facials, pedicures, and manicures for two, dinner for two at a local restaurant, snorkeling and picnic lunch for two, and an excursion to the Cockscomb Jaguar Preserve and wa-

terfall swim. The Girl's Just Want to Have Fun Package features seven-days/six-nights in an Oceanview Deluxe suite for \$3,100.

The Learn to Dive Package is a seven-day/six-night package for \$5,200 for two divers and is ideal for those who have always wanted to learn to scuba dive. It has everything needed to get started including a one day classroom, one day pool, two days open water training and a graduation dive following certification. Guests will stay in a beachview suite. The dive shop at The Inn is PADI certified and stocked with state of the art gear.

The Best of Belize Adventure Package combines luxury and adventure, including one-day/one-night on a private island. The package includes daily massage treatments for two, a day snorkeling at the Laughing Bird Caye with picnic, Cockscomb Jaguar Preserve and waterfall swim, one-day fishing trip with boat and guide, Maya Ruins Tour and cave tubing, and a day at the spa featuring facial, manicure, and pedicure for two. The Best of Belize Adventure Package is six-days/five-nights in an oceanfront one bedroom Grand Villa Suite plus one-day/one-night on a private island for \$5,500.

The Inn at Robert's Grove is a full service 52-room luxury resort that features two restaurants, PADI Dive & Snorkel Center, Fly Fishing Shop and Sea Spa and offers a host of complimentary amenities and activities including three swimming pools, rooftop Jacuzzis, tennis court, gym, canoes, kayaks, windsurfers, pedal boats, Hobie Cats, sailboats and bicycles. The Inn operates all of its own Reef & Rainforest tours.

The Inn at Robert's Grove, 800-565-9757, www.robertsgrove.com

SUNBREEZE HOTEL & SUNBREEZE SUITES

AMBERGRIS CAYE, BELIZE



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

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

SPECIAL PROMOTIONS IN BELIZE AT THE PRINCESS HOTEL & CASINO

The Princess Hotel & Casino in Belize is offering two special packages available now into 2008. The "Unbelievable Promotion in Belize" is priced at \$75 plus tax for a single room and \$100 plus tax for a double room.

This package includes breakfast, lunch and dinner (buffet style), and a free coupon worth \$25 at the casino every day.

The "Special Promotion in Belize" features seven nights accommodations, breakfast, lunch and dinner (buffet style), and a free coupon worth \$10 at the casino every day. Price is \$350 plus tax per person. Both packages also offer free access to the semi-Olympic swimming pool, gymnasium and club.

The Princess Hotel & Casino offers live Belizean music daily at the Calypso, special shows nightly, and Russian Dancers.

Guests can visit their Las Vegas style casino, which features over 400 slot machines and table games, such as American

Roulette, black jack, Caribbean Poker, draw and ride poker, and craps. The Texas Hold 'Em room opens every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. Enjoy their midnight buffet and free drinks for all players.

Princess Hotel & Casino,
salesmanager@princessbelize.com,
www.princessbelize.com

CAYO ESPANTO OFFERS WELCOMES BACK DEAL TO GUESTS

Cayo Espanto, a private island off the coast of Belize, sustained almost no damage as a result of Hurricane Dean. Landscaping and beaches were the only areas affected by the wind and rain, with no damage to the villas, bungalows or docks. Following some landscaping and beach clean-up efforts, Cayo Espanto is welcoming back guests starting August 24 with an airfare credit of \$350 on five-night stays and \$600 on seven-night stays for travel through July 2008.

Cayo Espanto, 888-666-4282,
www.aprivateisland.com

dramatic increase in wildlife sightings. These exclusive activities include interactions with animals, wildlife experts and scientific researchers, night hikes to see nocturnal animals, "safari-style" paddling on flat-water rivers, hiking in eight National Parks and Wildlife Preserves, sea-kayaking with dolphins, and snorkeling at night in the bioluminescence.

Even Wild Planet's accommodations, breathtaking rainforest lodges, are as highly acclaimed. The sought after lodging establishments are known not only for the equally-outstanding access they offer to prime wildlife viewing, but their creature comforts as well.

Costa Rica is the ideal destination for Wild Planet's special wildlife focus. In this unspoiled country, travelers are sure to experience the thrill of seeing more wildlife-up close and intimately. Wildlife sightings regularly include over 200 species of mammals, as well as over 600 species of birds. With such tremendous biodiversity, the knowledge of local, expert naturalist guides is essential. Wild Planet's Master Naturalist Guide, Koky Porras, even possesses the rare ability to call birds to his group.

Also on display to curious travelers will be the Sloth Wildlife Sanctuary, Arenal Volcano and hot springs, Monteverde Cloudforest, and the remotely secluded Sarapiquí and Puerto Viejo rivers, as well as the fabled dark sand Pacific and Caribbean beaches of volcanic origin.

Travelers seeking a shorter, yet equally impressive experience should explore Wild Planet Adventures' additional tour options. They include the nine-day "Ultimate Wildlife Eco-Tour," 10-day "Every Paddler's Dream Trip," the 10-day "Costa Rica Explorer Tour," and custom designed programs for independent travelers, small groups and families.

Serving groups of only six to 12 people, including custom trips for individuals, families and organizations, Wild Planet Adventures' tours fill fast. Commissions are offered to travel agents, tiered depending on volume (with the exception of Christmas or Holy week trips).

Wild Planet Adventures,
www.wildplanetadventures.com

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MONKEYS, MACAWS & MORE: DISCOVER COSTA RICA UP CLOSE WITH WILD PLANET ADVENTURES

A destination like no other, Costa Rica is a wildlife lover's paradise, boasting tropical birds and exotic mammals around every corner. Only here, among miles of unspoiled beaches, rainforests, rivers, and volcanoes, can travelers experience the adventure of 12 distinct ecological zones. Teeming with biological diversity, each zone offers an opportunity to further explore the depths of Central America's tropics.

For nearly 17 years Wild Planet Adventures has offered an entirely unique wildlife focus on tours such as their in demand 14-Day "Ultimate Wildlife Eco-Tour," chosen by Fodor's travel experts as one of their "Top 10 Must-Do Trips." Due to a completely sold-out season in 2007, an increased number of departures are currently scheduled for 2008.

Specially arranged activities on Wild Planet Adventures' 14-Day "Ultimate Wildlife Eco-Tour" enable guests to see a

SAFER ENVIRONMENT BOOSTS U.S. TRAVEL TO EL SALVADOR

The government's heightened security efforts have substantially contributed to boost U.S. travel to this Central American nation, asserted El Salvador's Minister of Tourism, Ruben Rochi.

A study conducted by the World Tourism Organization shows that the number of visitors to El Salvador increased by 17 percent in 2006, compared to the previous year.

Rochi attributes this growth to the government's 2014 National Tourism Plan, which includes holistic measures to ensure a safer environment to both locals and foreign visitors. This year, the number of U.S. tourists traveling to El Salvador has increased by 24 percent and the number of Canadians by 51 percent, said Rochi. Additionally, international visitors' average daily spending has increased from \$91.30 in 2005 to \$93.90 in 2006 due to an increase in daily consumption, as well as in the number of days per visit, which is averaging 6 to 7.3 days.

"There is no doubt in my mind that El Salvador's safer environment has had a positive impact on tourism," said Rochi. "The government has implemented various measures destined to increase tourism, including the establishment of a larger, better-trained and better equipped security force charged with assisting visitors."

"We have put into place a series of security mechanisms to ensure the safety of tourists who visit our country," says Rene Figueroa, Minister of Security. "To date, we have not had any incidents involving tourists."

"The idea is to change the erroneous perception that our country has been taken hostage by gangs," said Figueroa. "That is far from the truth. This phenomenon only impacts 15 of the 262 municipalities, similarly to the situation experienced by the city of New York."

Additionally, Figueroa explained how President Antonio Saca's "Social Peace" initiative, a holistic program which involves several of the country's public institutions working together, has reduced homicides by eight percent compared to last year, according to a report by the National Civil Police

(PNC). According to Figueroa, these figures demonstrate the government's commitment to combat crime through its "Social Peace" initiative.

"This initiative focuses on implementing preventive measures that reduce the level of violence and increase peace and tranquility in the country," added Figueroa.

The Economist magazine's Global Peace Index placed El Salvador as the third most peaceful country in Central America. The index takes into consideration 24 factors including access to fire arms, military budgets, corruption levels and respect for human rights.

El Salvador, www.elsalvadorturismo.gov.sv

VISIT DOORWAYS NEWEST DESTINATION FROM A VILLA IN COSTA RICA

Doorways, Ltd. has been renting villas in Europe since 1994. Costa Rica Villa Vacations is their first non-European destination. Their home base is on the Pacific, with some of Costa Rica's most beautiful coastline. Tamarindo, a bustling beach town made famous by the film "Endless Summer II" is famous for its surf, its laid-back vibe, its magical sunsets, and its many open-air restaurants. Doorways' villas are located within a mile of Tamarindo, within walking distance of a small grocery store, fine dining, an internet café, a hotel with a casino, and a beach. Guests can go zip-lining through the rainforest canopy one day and climb a volcano the next. There are rushing rivers, live volcanoes, rainforest, cloudforest, mountains and beaches, with horseback riding, world-class fishing, golfing, surfing, hiking, kayaking and bird-watching. Or, visitors can just relax on the beach where they are living. Experience Costa Rica beach living in a luxury villa with a pool that overlooks the ocean (Casa Elena), a condo with a rooftop Jacuzzi (El Quetzal), or a hanging treehouse bed (Casa de León).


Casa Elena is located in Playa Langosta, near Tamarindo, Guanacaste. With location, amenities and attention to detail, Casa Elena captures the essence of Costa Rican beach living. The Villa sleeps eight, has four bedrooms, four and a half baths, central air conditioning and has a private pool and

beach access. 2008 weekly prices range from \$6,244 to \$10,126.

El Quetzal is located near Tamarindo, Guanacaste. It has everything you would expect in a luxury vacation rental and more. El Quetzal sleeps six with three bedrooms, three and a half bathrooms, central air conditioning, a private pool, and a rooftop deck with Jacuzzi. 2008 prices range from \$2,214-\$4,680 per week or \$6,210-\$7,316 per month.

Located high on a hill overlooking Tamarindo, Casa de León, an elegant yet whimsical Mediterranean villa, offers unparalleled views all the way south to Playa Langosta and north to Playa Grande. This villa sleeps nine, has five bedrooms, four bathrooms, partial air conditioning, an infinity pool and boasts panoramic ocean views. 2008 prices range from \$5,468 to \$8,876 a week and \$15,310 a month. All of Doorways Costa Rica villas are commissionable to travel agents at five percent.

Doorways, Ltd., 800-261-4460,
info@doorwaysltd.com,
www.villavacations.com



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KA'ANA BOUTIQUE RESORT & SPA OFFERS SPECIAL PACKAGE FOR GRAND OPENING



Nestled in a valley between the Maya Mountains of Belize's Cayo District, Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa opened its doors in April, but will launch the hotel with an official grand opening on September 22, 2007.

To celebrate this event, Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa is offering guests a special grand opening package.

The Grand Opening Package offers guests a savings of nearly 40 percent and includes accommodations for two, airport transfer upon arrival, Ka'ana signature welcome drink, daily breakfast, romantic candlelight dinner, bottle of wine, and a tour of the Xunantunich Mayan Ruins. Package starts at \$833 per room for a four-night stay and is valid between August 1 and October 31, 2007.

Located just outside San Ignacio near cultural, historical and eco-adventure attractions, Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa offers breathtaking scenery and luxurious accommodations. The boutique resort features 15 first-class cottages with spacious sitting area, LCD TV, large private bathroom and veranda.

Luxury resort amenities include La Ceiba, the resort's fine dining restaurant; The Frieze Lounge and Wine Cellar, a popular attraction to both guests and local residents; and Ka'ana's petite spa, which offers an assortment of massages and treatments to help guests relax and unwind.

Catering to those seeking both world-class accommodations and adventure, Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa also offers guests fully guided excursions to nearby rainforests, Mayan ruins and nature reserves. Tours include hiking, canoeing, bird watching, caving, horseback riding, mountain

biking, and more, and can be tailored to fit the preferences of each guest.

Ka'ana Boutique Resort & Spa, www.kaanabelize.com

NICARAGUA'S 'SLEEPING BEAUTIES' 6-DAY TOUR BY GRAYLINE TOURS

Travelers can experience the best of Nicaragua's history, colonial architecture, and nature with a six-day tour that combines visits to Managua, Granada, and Leon with soft adventure trips to the cloud forests of the Mombacho Volcano in Granada and the active volcanoes of the Masaya Volcano National Park. Package includes five-nights at a hotel in Managua, round-trip airport transfers, daily breakfast and lunch (during excursions), bilingual guides, insurance, taxes and full-day tours. Prices range from \$1,130 (single occupancy) to \$495 (triple occupancy).

Gray Line Tours,
info@graylinenicaragua.com,
www.grayline.com

HILTON HOTELS SIGNS FIRST HILTON GARDEN INN FRANCHISE AGREEMENT IN CENTRAL AMERICA

Hilton Garden Inn, the award-winning mid-priced brand that is part of the Hilton Family of Hotels, has announced that the first Hilton Garden Inn franchise agreement in Central America has been signed with Hoteles Aeropuerto H.A.L., S.R.L., of which Enjoy Group and DWL are partners. The Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport located in Liberia, Guanacaste, Costa Rica is scheduled to open in Fall 2008.

With Hoteles Aeropuerto H.A.L., S.R.L., Enjoy Group is extending its relationship with the Hilton Family of Hotels. Enjoy Group is also a partner in the Hilton Papagayo Resort and the Doubletree by Hilton Puntarenas Resort, deals signed as management agreements with Hilton Hotels Corporation in December of 2006. The two hotels are conversions from hotel properties that previously had been independently owned and operated by Enjoy Group.

"We look forward to debut our upscale mid-priced brand in Costa Rica with the

Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport. This new property signifies our brand's continued growth in new regions where we have the opportunity to introduce Hilton Garden Inn and our key brand attributes like complimentary Wi-Fi, 24-hour business center, the Garden Sleep System bed and Mirra chair by Herman Miller, to both business and leisure travelers in Central America," said Adrian Kurre, Senior Vice President – Brand Management, Hilton Garden Inn.

Located in close proximity to the Liberia International Airport, the newly built Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport will be situated in the Solarium Technology Park, the most important mixed-use development in the area with commercial, residential, office spaces and industrial park also developed by DWL, and within close driving distance to the tropical beaches and rainforests of the burgeoning tourist destination of The Gulf of Papagayo.

The hotel will feature 160 guest rooms including 10 suites and will offer signature Hilton Garden Inn brand attributes including complimentary Wi-Fi, 24-hour business center, a full service restaurant, evening room service, the 'Pavilion' lobby, and the Pavilion Pantry shop. Guest room offerings will include the Garden Sleep System bed, Mirra chair by Herman Miller, high definition television, clock that allows guests to play their MP3 or portable CD player, a spacious work desk, air conditioning, and a "hospitality center" that features a microwave, mini refrigerator and coffee maker.

Travelers to the Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport will also enjoy flexible meeting spaces, a complimentary workout facility, and swimming pool.

"We are confident that the launch of our new mid-market Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport will complement the growing demand of corporate and leisure travelers seeking quality accommodations in Central America. We are delighted to be working with Hilton, one of the most recognized names in the hospitality industry in introducing this exciting brand into Costa Rica," said Javier Pacheco, Operations and Marketing Director for Enjoy Group.

Hilton Garden Inn Liberia Airport,
www.StayHGI.com

GIVING BACK AT THANKSGIVING: BELIZE ECO-LODGE WELCOMES VOLUNTEER-MINDED GUESTS



This Thanksgiving, consider combining an adventure vacation in the mountains of Belize with important volunteer work with the not-for-profit Casa Avian Support Alliance.

Casa del Caballo Blanco Eco Lodge is a six-casita accommodation on 23 hilltop acres near San Ignacio, Belize. It shares space with the avian rehabilitation and release center called Casa Avian Support Alliance and offers voluntourism and adventure opportunities on premise and throughout the region. This is the first avian voluntourism program of its kind in Belize.

The special four-night/five-day Thanksgiving package, dubbed the "Toucan Tour" is priced at \$815 ppdo. Included are a supervised participatory avian/biodiversity learning/volunteer experience, breakfasts, dinners and some lunches, accommodations, off-site archeological tours, and airport transfers. Local taxes, bar tab, optional activities and service charges are not included.

Lodge visitors are encouraged to assist with on-site nest-box building, general maintenance and feeding, as well as habitat restoration, nature trail building, wild bird identification and signage.

In addition, lodge guests can access numerous Mayan ruins and indigenous villages in Belize and across the border into Guatemala including Flores on Lago Peten, the World Heritage site of Tikal, and the recent Survivor site at Yaxha/Topoxte.

Casa's hacienda-style Main House celebrates the region's Hispanic culture. The guest quarters- six thatch-roofed, fully screen cabanas- all have en-suite bathrooms, refrigerators, hand-crafted furniture and Mayan-inspired fabrics.

On-site facilities provide a haven for avian wildlife recently freed from captivity or treated for injury or illness. Lodge guests are also welcome to join its Passport Program that over time will showcase a half dozen other properties in the Americas with organizations who have similar goals and missions such as avian support.

This tour, as well as other various packages offered (ala carte stays and set packages), is fully commissionable to travel agents at 15 percent (before taxes). Agents wishing to visit CDCB for research and familiarization receive a special 50 percent discount on lodging and meals.

Casa del Caballo Blanco Eco Lodge,
sales@CasaCaballoBlanco.com, www.casacaballoblanco.com;
Casa Avian Support Alliance, www.casaavian.org

JIM SCARLATA JOINS CORAL STAR IN 2008



JIM SCARLATA

The 'Master Caster' Jim Scarlata will be joining the crew of the M/V Coral Star for two exclusive weeks in 2008, January 5-10 and March 1-6.

Jim has been in the fishing industry for some 40 years and has been a keynote speaker at sports conventions all over the world.

He is known for his in-depth fishing knowledge and skills and his casting skills are something to see. Jim is also a past

"Master Instructor" for Western Outdoor News.

Each year, Jim conducts a "big game" fishing school aboard the Coral Star where each evening different topics are discussed, such as casting, knots, fighting techniques and different lines (including spectra). He will teach guests how to join dissimilar lines, and instruct them on four or five of the most important knots for both fresh and saltwater applications. Attendees will come away with great, new knowledge.

M/V Coral Star, 866-924-2837, info@coralstar.com,
www.coralstar.com

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