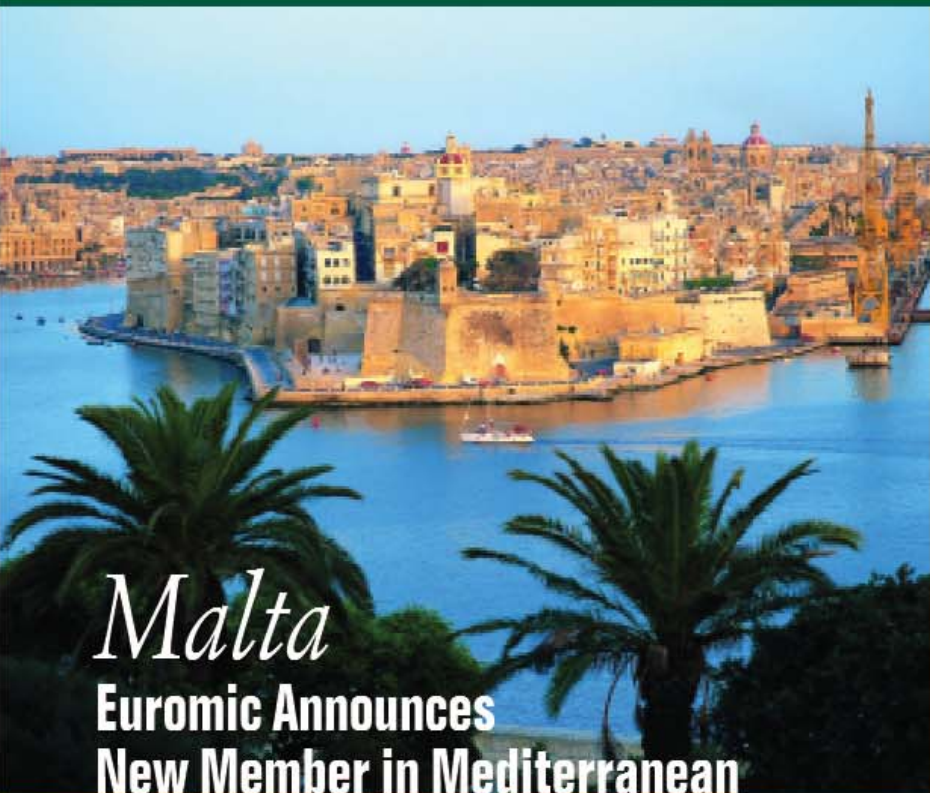


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Travel World

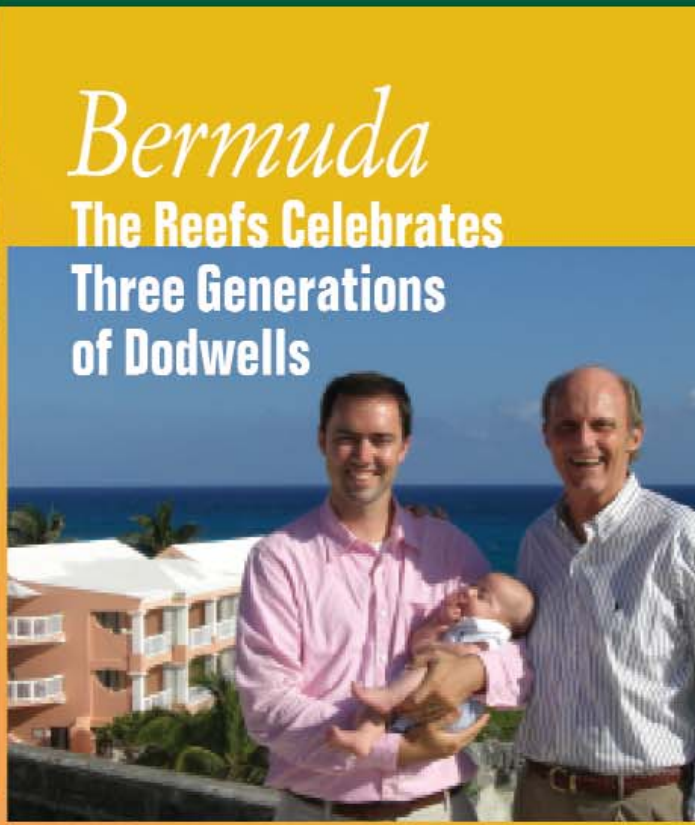
The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

NEWS[®]



Malta

**Euromic Announces
New Member in Mediterranean**



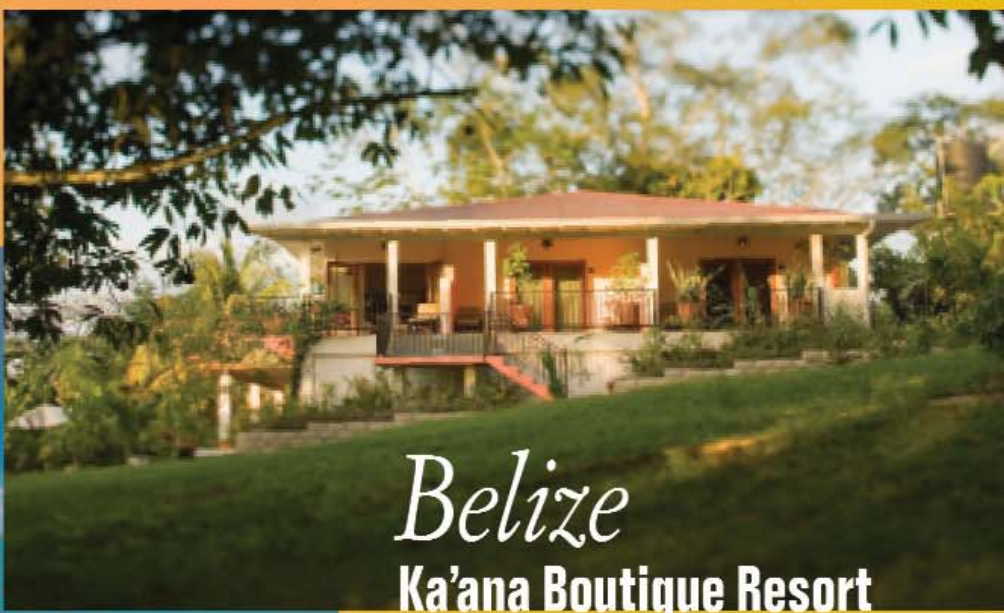
Bermuda

**The Reefs Celebrates
Three Generations
of Dodwells**



'Malaysia: Truly Asia'

*Campaign Wins
PATA Gold Awards*



Belize

**Ka'ana Boutique Resort
Named Tourism
Employer of the Year**

Travel World NEWS[®]

The Magazine for Destination Travel Specialists

OCTOBER 2008

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The United States Plays a Leading Role at Fitur '09

The USA's growing participation at FITUR has gone hand in hand with the rise in the number of international tourists it welcomes each year, especially Spanish tourists: the country witnessed a 22% increase in the number of Spanish visitors for 2007.

The United States will once again attend the next edition of FITUR, the International Tourism Trade Fair. It will participate at the fair with a strong presence, reflecting the country's interest in taking part in this established event and ideal forum for promoting the tourism business.

According to the indicators established by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the tourist industry recorded some highly favorable results over the first four months of the year, in spite of the uncertainty regarding the state of the world economy, which once again demonstrates the tourist industry's considerable stability and strength. The number of foreign tourist arrivals between January and April 2008 increased by five percent. All of the world's regions have witnessed some favorable results, including the United States, which continues to maintain its leading position as the most popular destination in the Americas, as well as the third most popular destination in the world.

The USA's growing participation at FITUR has gone hand in hand with the rise in the number of international tourists it welcomes each year, especially Spanish tourists. In 2007, out of the 56 million tourists who visited the United States, some 516,000 were Spaniards, which represented an increase of 22 percent compared to 2006.

These figures reflect Spain's growing importance as a tourist-producing market, especially bearing in mind that some 58.4 percent of the Spanish population undertakes at least one trip a year.

Furthermore, the U.S. occupies first place in the foreign tourism revenue ranking, according to the WTO. The revenue figure in 2007 rose to 96,712 million dollars, based on an increase of six percent compared to the year 2006.

At the next edition of FITUR, the USA's attendance will contribute to the growing international dimension at the fair, with the International Area accounting for some 44 percent of the event as a whole at the last edition.

FITUR '09 Promotes the Tourist Industry

Next January the International Tourism Trade Fair will renew its commitment to the industry, and make a renewed effort to improve the service it provides and to boost its international appeal and dimension.

IFEMA, the body that organizes the fair, has already planned a number of measures, such as conferences and co-



For the second consecutive year, FITUR '09 will once again occupy the entire exhibition space available at the fairground.

inciding activities to complement the new features that the exhibitors will be presenting.

FITUR '09 will once again occupy the entire exhibition space available at the fairground.

The last edition of FITUR '08 brought together the tourism products and services of 13,530 companies representing 170 countries/regions, distributed throughout a net exhibition space measuring 100,500 square meters, which represented growth of 12 percent. Some 255,817 visitors were recorded, of whom 157,300 were professionals. FITUR '09 aims to maintain these figures.

The 29th edition of FITUR will maintain the same organization and layout of its products and services. The fair will once again set aside Hall 2 for visitor registration.

The products and services presented by tourism companies will be distributed throughout Halls 4, 12 and 14.0. The rest of the even-numbered halls will be devoted to the international section: Asia, the Pacific, Africa, international hotel chains and global companies will all be located in Hall 6; the Americas in Hall 8; and Europe, North Africa and the Middle East in Hall 10. Spanish tourism bodies and official organizations will be distributed throughout the odd-numbered halls, namely Halls 1, 3, 5, 7 and 9. FITUR CONGRESOS, which is due to take place on January 26-27, 2009, will take place in Hall 14.1.

The 29th edition of FITUR will take place January 28 - February 1, 2009, at Feria de Madrid.

FITUR, www.fituronline.com

CHOICE HOTELS CORPORATE JOIN WTM'S GLOBAL VILLAGE



Choice Hotels are bringing their global brand together for the first time at World Travel Market 2008 and will exhibit in the Global Village. Choice Hotels International is one of the largest and most successful lodging franchisor in the world.

The hotel group currently franchises more than 5,600 hotels worldwide, representing more than 455,000 rooms. As a global brand with growth markets in Mexico, China, India, Central and South America, the Middle East and Eastern Europe the company's Global Village stand location at WTM gives senior buyers, from all of the international regions, wishing to conduct business with Choice Hotels a central location to meet. Underpinning this growth strategy, the number of Choice Hotels opened globally has grown 11 percent in the last five years, from 4,977 in 2004 to more than 5,600 in 2008.

Ranging from limited service to full service hotels in the economy, mid-scale and upscale segments, Choice-branded properties provide business and leisure travelers with a range of high-quality, high-value lodging options. As well as exhibiting together under the global brand umbrella, Choice Hotels will be talking about the recent launch of their Choice Privileges Rewards Program in Europe. The award-winning rewards program is now open and has been expanded to include over 270 Choice brand properties in Europe, including 76 in the UK.

More than 50,000 travel professionals, senior management, buyers and opinion formers from regions, countries and industry sectors throughout the world are expected to attend this year's World Travel Market at ExCeL, London. The event takes place from November 10-13, 2008.

World Travel Market, www.wtmlondon.com

ACTE ANNOUNCES MANUEL TESSI PARISI AS KEYNOTE PRESENTER AT FIRST LATIN AMERICA EDUCATION CONFERENCE

The Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE) announced that Manuel Tessi Parisi, President, INSIDE - Comunicación Interna Estratégica, will be a keynote presenter at the association's first Latin America Education Conference in Mexico City, October 29-30, 2008.

Tessi Parisi, who is from Argentina, will speak at the afternoon

General Session on Wednesday, October 29. The session, titled, 'The Roundtable Challenge: Overcoming Cultural Resistance,' will focus on three major topics: Integrating CSR Into Your Business, Online-booking Tool Adoption, and Travel Policy Compliance.

Following the keynote presentation, attendees will participate in an interactive roundtable discussion facilitated by Tessi Parisi.

Tessi Parisi specializes in internal communications, delivering his expertise through conferences, seminars, and workshops for more than 15 years. He is currently the President of INSIDE, and the author of the 1A System of internal communication.

Tessi Parisi's background in communications includes Director of RedInside, a digital magazine for internal communications since 2001, a publicity agent for the Fundacion de Altos Estudios en Ciencias Comerciales in 1989, and the creative editor of the Asociacion Argentina de Agencias de Publicidad in 1993.

The Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE), www.acte.org

MPI SETS RECORD FOR LARGEST GLOBAL GATHERING IN ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY

MPI (Meeting Professionals International)'s 2008 World Education Congress (WEC) in Las Vegas proved to be the largest global gathering of meeting and event professionals ever in its history. With over 4,500 attendees from 33 countries, the event attests to MPI's shared vision of building a rich global meetings industry community. During the 2008 World Education Congress, MPI energized members with elevated content, new programs, exciting announcements, expansive networking, and enhanced corporate social responsibility initiatives.

Upholding an ongoing commitment to a richer educational experience, MPI delivered over 100 knowledge sessions designed to enhance professional skills and increase member success. An enhanced marketplace experience also leveraged creative concepts initially pioneered at MPI's MeetDifferent event in February, featuring open environments and connection spots as an alternative to the traditional trade show.

During the opening general session, MacMillan unveiled MPI's new magazine, One +TM, which evokes MPI's revitalized brand essence – connecting members to knowledge, relationships, and marketplaces.

MPI continues to pursue robust growth opportunities in emerging markets, adopting strong collaborative industry relationships, and exploring opportunities for community expansion and content business enhancement.

MPI's commitment to lead in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) was reflected in new initiatives at WEC. Attendee volunteers from WEC participated in a community outreach program at Opportunity Village. The organization employs disabled people through several channels in Las Vegas.

July 11-14, 2009, Salt Lake City, Utah, is scheduled to host the MPI World Education Congress.

MPI, mpiweb.org

ATTA ADVENTURE TRAVEL WORLD SUMMIT-SOUTH AMERICA SELLS OUT, SETS ATTENDANCE RECORDS

The first of two 2008 Adventure Travel World Summit (ATWS) events organized by the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA) set event attendance records with more than 700 representatives from 33 countries participating in the sold-out, September 3-7 event in São Paulo, Brazil. The Summit was its first ever outside of North America.

More than a show of numbers and a reflection of growing sector interest, industry progress was made on multiple fronts. At the ATWS-South America, leaders: introduced the Adventure Tourism Development Index (ATDI) which supports responsible and sustainable development of emerging adventure travel destinations worldwide; heightened awareness of accessibility issues for handicapped adventure travelers and for community-based tourism initiatives; and increased industry attention to safety management and guide training to improve the professionalism of operators worldwide.

Additionally, an immediate outcome of the South American gathering was the formation of a new Latin-speaking network of adventure and eco-travel trade associations which will collaborate to heighten the global profile of adventure travel in South and Central America. The initiative is expected to serve as a continen-

tal model to more fully network the adventure travel trade worldwide.

Luis Baretto, Brazil's Minister of Tourism, was among the featured speakers at the opening ceremony on Thursday, along with ATTA President Shannon Stowell and ABETA (Brazil Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association) President Israel Waligora.

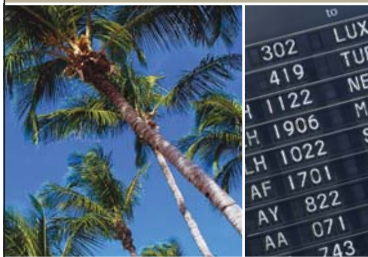
Building off the success of its ATWS-South America, the ATTA continues its 2008 networking initiatives with the introduction of its Adventure Travel World Summit-Europe to Norway, October 21-25.

Already, representatives from 25 countries are registered for the conference in Norway, an event designed specifically to strengthen North American, European and African business-to-business relationships, while further professionalizing the specialty niche and setting bearing points for businesses to pursue responsible and sustainable growth.

In 2005, the ATTA introduced the ATWS, an executive level gathering of leaders representing the sustainable growth interests of the global adventure travel community.

Since then, the Adventure Travel World Summit has become the travel industry's largest conference specializing in adventure tourism which includes physical, cultural and nature-based travel.

ATTA, www.adventuretravel.biz



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RTE'S PAUL KENNEDY VOTED ONE OF MEETING INDUSTRY'S 25 MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE



PAUL KENNEDY

Paul Kennedy, MBE, Group Exhibition Director Reed Travel Exhibitions' Meetings and Incentives Events, has been named in the top 10 of one of the meetings industry's '25 most powerful.'

The list compiled by U.S. publication Meeting News recognized the 25 individuals, forces and trends that have had the greatest impact and influence in the meetings industry in 2008. Kennedy has been recognized for RTE's flagship meetings

event EIBTM in Barcelona and for his leadership and successes in setting up two events in potentially huge meetings markets – the Middle East and China. These three, together with AIME (Melbourne), and the ICCA Congress Exhibition represent the largest portfolio of meetings industry events anywhere in the world.

Attendance at this year's Gulf Incentive Business Travel and Meetings Exhibition (GIBTM) grew by more than 40 percent. In China, CIBTM postponed this year because of the Olympics, has the potential to become the country's top meetings industry event.

Paul has been a major player within Meetings Professionals International (MPI) both within the UK and internationally, serving as UK Chapter Board President and International Board Member, with two years on the Executive Committee.

Paul has been honored many times with awards over the past 15 years. These include the UK's Meeting Incentive Industry personality 2001, a year he was awarded with the Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE). For the past three years, Paul has been placed in the top 10 most powerful leading figures in the industry in a Conference and Incentive Travel poll, reaching second place in 2006. He is the only European to win an International MPI Award.

This year's EIBTM takes place from December 2-4, Barcelona; GIBTM in Abu Dhabi from March 31 – April 2, 2009; and CIBTM in Beijing September 8-10, 2009.

EIBTM, www.eibtm.com;

Reed Travel Exhibitions, www.reedtravelexhibitions.com

RUSSIAN AND UKRAINIAN TOURISM MARKETS RIDING HIGH

The UN World Tourism Organization ranks Russia ninth in the world in terms of spending on travel abroad. Outbound trips increased by 17 percent in 2007. Russia itself is growing as a tourist destination, developing its tourist infrastructure and opening up to the world. Ukraine is following in Russia's footsteps. Increasing numbers of Ukrainian residents are taking holidays abroad. 23 million tourists visited Ukraine last year and this figure is expected to grow significantly.

This year, UITT was chosen as the venue for the launch of

Ukraine's 'Year of Tourism.' Confidence in the market is growing and a large number of new destinations could be seen at UITT.

Meanwhile, Ukraine International Travel Market, (UITM), also a member of ITTFA, has moved site and will celebrate its 15th edition at Brovasky Ave in Kiev. As the choice of destinations and holiday types continues to grow, many more opportunities are being created for those involved in travel and tourism in the region. Add to this the fact that some countries are canceling visa requirements for Russian citizens and it looks as though both inbound and outbound traffic is set to move up a gear.

ITTFA, www.ittfa.org

MATKA TO BE HELD JANUARY 15-18, 2009

The Nordic Travel Fair MATKA, being held at the Helsinki Fair Centre January 15-18, 2009, is the industry's largest event in Northern Europe. The theme of the MATKA 2009 fair is: "Our world? Our Responsibility." Responsible travel is seen at the MATKA fair as a wide-ranging concept which includes not only climate-related and environmental considerations, but also social and cultural aspects. A separate section focusing on the theme of responsibility will be built. Exhibitors are invited to submit brochures and other information on the responsibility-related aspects of their business for distribution in this special section. The section is meant to disseminate information to visitors on taking the theme of responsibility into consideration as part of their hobby of traveling and tourism. In 2008, the fair attracted over 1,100 exhibitors from 75 countries. Nearly 85,000 people visited the MATKA and Caravan fair, approximately 16,000 of which were travel trade professionals.

MATKA, www.matkamessut.fi

1ST EUROPEAN TOURISM CONFERENCE TO BE HELD OCTOBER 30-31, 2008

The 1st European Tourism Conference will be held October 30-31, 2008 at HELEXPO, Thessaloniki, Greece. The fact that travel and tourism, in all of its forms, is expected to grow fast over the next decade, creates an opportunity for every country in the world to be part of this process and to share the benefits that will arise. Therefore, quality in services, facilities and infrastructure is the main component that will provide businesses and their countries with a strong competitive advantage among others, resulting in further profit and development.

That is the main objective of the "1st European Tourism Conference - Quality in Tourism & Development Perspectives": to underline and indicate the importance of quality in attracting visitors either for business or leisure purposes.

The conference is considered as one of the most important events in the field of travel and tourism worldwide and will draw the attention of significant professionals of the industry and the media, as it is expected to lead in considerable results and conclusions that will affect and transform the European tourism framework.

The 1st European Tourism Conference, www.europress.gr/etc2008

CALENDAR OF EVENTS - 2008/09

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACT
NOVEMBER			
1-4	FIT 2008	Buenos Aires, Argentina	www.ifema.es/ferias/fitur
1-5	47th ICCA Congress & Exhibition	Victoria, Canada	www.iccaworld.com/dbs/congress2008
4-6	MADI Travel Market	Prague, Czech Republic	www.madi.cz
4-6	Guanacaste Marketplace	Guanacaste, Costa Rica	www.expotur.com
8-9	No. Viginia/D.C. Travel Show	Chantilly, VA	www.travelindustryshows.com
10-13	WTM 2008	London, UK	www.wtmlondon.com
10-13	Discover America Pavilion at WTM 2008	London, UK	www.discoveramericapavilion.com
15-16	Minnesota Travel Show	Minneapolis, MN	www.travelindustryshows.com
15-18	NTA Annual Convention	Pittsburgh, PA	www.nta.travel
17-20	IGTM 2008	Andalucia, Spain	www.igtmcu.uk
24-25	MITM Americas	Cartagena, Colombia	www.mitmevents.com
27-30	Travel Turkey Izmir 2008	Izmir, Turkey	www.travelturkey-expo.com
DECEMBER			
2-4	Luxury Travel Expo	Las Vegas, NV	www.vegastravelweek.com
2-4	EIBTM	Barcelona, Spain	www.reedtravelexhibitions.com
2-4	European Incentives, Bus. Travel & Meetings	Barcelona, Spain	www.eibtm.com/page.cfm
3-5	USTOA Annual Conference	Palm Springs, CA	www.ustoa.com
8-11	ILTM 08	Cannes, France	www.iltm.net
9-11	Expo! Expo! IAEE	Miami Beach, FL	www.iaee.com/events/expo
JANUARY 2009			
5-12	ATF 2009	Hanoi, Vietnam	www.asean.org
8-11	Reiseliv Expo	Lillestrom, Norway	www.biztradeshows.com/trade-events
9-11	MCTM 2009	Monte Carlo, Monaco	www.mctm.mc
15-18	MATKA	Helsinki, Finland	www.finnexpo.fi/matka/
18-20	CHA Marketplace	Gros Islet, St. Lucia	www.caribbeanhotels.org
21-25	BTL	Lisbon, Portugal	www.btl.fil.pt
22-25	SLOVAKIATOUR	Bratislava, Slovak Rep.	www.incheba.sk/
23-25	Vacation Home Expo	Atlanta, GA	www.vacationhomeexpo.com
24-25	Bay Area Travel Show	Santa Clara, CA	www.travelindustryshows.com
25-29	BTL	Lisbon, Portugal	www.fil.pt
28-Feb 1	FITUR	Madrid, Spain	www.ifema.es/ferias/fitur/default_i.html
FEBRUARY			
5-8	Holiday World	Prague, Czech Republic	www.incheba.cz
6-8	NY Times Travel Show	New York City, NY	www.nytravelshow.com
19-22	BIT 2009	Milan, Italy	www.bit.fieramilanoexpocts.it
22-24	Jordan Travel Mart	Dead Sea, Jordan	www.jordantravelmart.com
26-Mar 1	IFT	Belgrade, Serbia	www.ift-belgrade.com
26-Mar 1	UTAZAS	Budapest, Hungary	www.utazas.hungexpo.hu
MARCH			
11-15	ITB	Berlin, Germany	www.itb-berlin.com
16-19	Seatrade	Miami Beach, FL	www.cruiseshipping.net
17	Moscow Intl. MICE Forum	Moscow, Russia	www.miceforum.ru
18-21	MITT	Moscow, Russia	www.mitt.ru/en/
19-22	Salon Mondial du Tourisme	Paris, France	www.mondialtourisme.com
19-22	TUR	Gothenburg, Sweden	www.tur.se
20-22	Adventure Travel Show	London, England	www.adventureshow.co.uk
31-Apr 2	GIBTM 2009	Abu Dhabi, UAE	www.gibtm.com
APRIL			
15-17	IT&CM	Shanghai, China	www.itcmchina.com
22-24	COTTM 2009	Beijing, China	www.cottm.com
MAY			
5-8	ATM	Dubai, UAE	www.arabiantravelmarket.com
7-10	SITC	Barcelona, Spain	www.salotourisme.com
10-12	GTM 2009	Rostock, Germany	www.germany-travel-mart.de

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CAPELLA HOTELS AND RESORTS APPOINTS CRISTINA ROMERO-PERI AS REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF SALES AND MARKETING, CAPELLA MEXICO



CRISTINA ROMERO-PERI

Capella Hotels and Resorts has announced the appointment of Cristina Romero-Peri as Regional Director of Sales and Marketing, Capella Mexico. In her new position, Romero-Peri will be responsible for the planning and execution of retail strategies for the brand's three announced properties in Mexico: Capella Ixtapa, Capella Pedregal and Capella Bahia Maroma.

"We see Cristina's stellar track record and extensive knowledge of sales and marketing in the luxury travel industry as essential to our growing brand," says Kit Pappas, Vice President of Sales of Capella Hotels and Resorts.

For more than 18 years, Romero-Peri has been a driving force behind the sales and marketing of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, One&Only, R&R International Hotel Groups and Kor Hotel Group. She was introduced to the Latin American market with her role as Director of Sales and Marketing at Las Ventanas Al Paraiso, A Rosewood Resort in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico. During her six years as Director of Sales at Las Ventanas, Romero-Peri was responsible for the creation of key initiatives for the resort including development of the Director of Romance position and concept for wedding and honeymoon experiences, the innovation of the world's first spa suite and capturing celebrity clientele by positioning the resort as Hollywood's elite playground.

While the One&Only Palmilla in Los Cabos underwent an \$88 million renovation, Romero-Peri was successful in repositioning the brand and individual property as Cabo's finest luxury hotel. Most recently, Romero-Peri has overseen the rebranding and repositioning of two independent properties on behalf of Kor Hotel Group, Tides Riviera Maya and Tides Zihuantanejo.

Romero-Peri holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from the University of California Berkeley and is fluent in English, Spanish and French. She resides in Los Angeles, CA.

Capella Hotels and Resorts, www.capellahotels.com

BARBARA RUBIN JOINS NYCVP STAFF

Industry veteran Barbara Rubin has been appointed Western Regional Sales Manager for New York City Vacation Packages (NYCVP).



BARBARA RUBIN

Ms. Rubin's territory will include Southern California, Arizona and Baja California.

With over 20 years of travel industry experience, Ms. Rubin is eminently qualified to represent NYCVP. A former New York resident, she now resides in Southern California and is familiar with the travel agency community. "I understand the need for education and training," says Ms. Rubin. "New York City can be a complicated product to sell, but I'm looking forward to teaching agents how easy and profitable it can be."

NYCVP's Vice President Joel Cohen agrees. "Barbara Rubin is the perfect person to carry the message about NYCVP to the travel professionals in the West. She has represented top-of-the-line tour companies like African Travel, Travcoa and Intrav so travel retailers trust her and her products." Ms. Rubin will continue to work with SIT Italy also.

NYCVP is the largest independent tour company selling New York City exclusively. The company's product line includes 30 Manhattan, New Jersey and Brooklyn hotels, all Broadway shows and hundreds of sightseeing, dining and attraction admission options. NYCVP also offers unique special events, like a one-of-a-kind 4th of July Picnic in the Park at Tavern on the Green, and Thanksgiving Insider's View party breakfasts overlooking the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade. All components, including air or rail transportation, are commissionable to travel agents.

New York City Vacation Packages is a member of ASTA, National Tour Association, NYC & Company, Greater Manhattan Chamber of Commerce and the New York State Travel & Vacation Association. The company is a preferred supplier to several trade organizations including NACTA, Ensemble Travel Group, eTravCo and IT Group.

New York City Vacation Packages (NYCVP), 877 NYC-TRiP, www.nyctrip.com

ARCTIC CIRCLE BY STEAM TRAIN WITH PAUL THEROUX FROM EXETER INTERNATIONAL

In June of 2009, the Trans Siberian Railways and Exeter International have joined forces to create a once in a lifetime train voyage across the Arctic Circle. This epic journey will be accompanied by guest speaker and best selling author Paul Theroux.

Travelers will enjoy world-class service, deluxe accommodations, and most of all the opportunity to visit some of the most magnificent and breathtaking landscapes the world has to offer.

Exeter International is offering this unique opportunity to just a few discerning travelers starting at \$12,795 ppdo. The tour starts in Moscow on June 13 and ends on June 26, 2009.

Exeter International, www.exeterinternational.com

WYNDHAM HOTEL GROUP INTERNATIONAL APPOINTS ANDREW DUFTY VICE PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL MARKETING



ANDREW DUFTY

Wyndham Hotel Group International has announced the appointment of Andrew Dufty as Vice President of International Marketing.

He is responsible for developing and executing marketing plans in Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia Pacific region including brand initiatives, advertising campaigns and promotions for Wyndham Hotel Group's nine hotel brands outside of North America.

Dufty, who is based in London and reports to Jean Thomas, Wyndham Hotel Group Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer, previously was General Manager, Marketing, for British Midland Airways in Derby, U.K., Heathrow Airport's second-largest scheduled airline, responsible for global marketing strategy.

From 2002 to 2006, Dufty was head of brand communications for Barclays Bank PLC, a global financial services provider based in London, responsible for the marketing communications strategies of the Barclays and Woolwich brands. From 2002 to 2003 he served the company as head of sponsorship.

From 1996 to 2002, he worked in a variety of roles at British Airways, the U.K.'s national airline based in London, including sponsorship and promotions manager, responsible for negotiating key company sponsorships including the 2000 Olympic Games and the 2002 World Cup.

From 1995 to 1996 Dufty was Product Manager for Haven Holidays, the U.K.'s largest amusement park company based in London. He began his career in 1992 as an executive trainee with Gardner Merchant, a contract catering company based in London.

In 1993 he was promoted to Commercial Manager and in 1994 to Client Account Manager.

Dufty received his bachelor's degree in hospitality management in 1992 from Bournemouth University, Dorset, U.K.

Wyndham Hotel Group, www.wyndhamworldwide.com

THE WHITEFACE LODGE NAMES MELISSA DEVOE STEPHENSON, DIRECTOR OF SALES & MARKETING

The Whiteface Lodge Resort & Spa has announced the appointment of Melissa DeVoe Stephenson as Director of Sales & Marketing.

Stephenson will be responsible for strategic planning and growth development of all sales and marketing activities for the 94-suite luxury resort and The Spa at The Whiteface Lodge.

"I am thrilled to be part of The Whiteface Lodge family," said Stephenson who joins The Whiteface Lodge with 15 years of experience in sales and marketing in the hospitality industry. "In taking on this new role, I plan to leverage my knowledge and experience in the industry to help continue to grow The Whiteface Lodge's legacy as a world-class resort and premiere destination in the Adirondack region."

A graduate of Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO, Stephenson brings strong accolades to the hotels and resorts she has served.

In 2000, Stephenson played an integral role in securing AAA Four-Diamond rating for the Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa in Whitefield, NH.

Stephenson has been consistently successful in boosting sales by implementing innovative marketing strategies at several renowned hotels and resorts including most recently, The Topnotch Resort and Spa in Stowe, VT where she was directly responsible for significantly increasing corporate, wedding and association sales.

She brings the same passion, tenacity and leadership talents to The Whiteface Lodge that have resulted in many admirable achievements throughout her career.

The Whiteface Lodge, 800-903-4045, www.TheWhitefaceLodge.com

TPOC AND STARS FORM A STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Peter Stilphen, MCC, Managing Director of STARS has announced the establishment of a relationship between TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS OF COLOR (TPOC), and STARS. TPOC is a minority networking organization and STARS is a non-profit organization recognizing the true travel professionals.

Mr. Stilphen stated that, "The two organizations have similar goals and each compliments the other as far as services that are offered to its agent members. We look forward to working with TPOC and are sure the benefits to our respective members will be enormous."

Charlotte Haymore and Betty Jones, the founders of TPOC welcome the strategic alliance and look forward to working with STARS. STARS, peter@stars.travel; TPOC, chaymore@tpocnetwork.com

CHI HOTELS & RESORTS APPOINTS GLENN CARROLL SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT FOR SALES AND MARKETING



GLENN CARROLL

Tony Potter, CEO and Managing Director of Malta-based hotel operator CHI Hotels & Resorts (formerly Corinthia Hotels International), has announced the appointment of Glenn Carroll in the strategic position of Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing for CHI. Glenn is expected to take up his new position in October of this year.

This senior appointment follows the reorganization of the Company's sales and marketing structure some 12 months ago. Glenn will report directly to Tony Potter, while all of the senior sales and marketing team will report directly to him. In addition to controlling all sales and marketing and branding activity, Glenn will be joining the senior team of CHI with the overall responsibility of developing the Company's strategy as it aggressively extends its portfolio of hotels under the Corinthia, Wyndham and Ramada brands. Glenn will be based in Hammersmith, London, in the Wyndham Hotels Group's international offices, where he will establish a CHI Hotels & Resorts presence following the joint venture agreement between the two companies.

Glenn Carroll's previous background includes almost 20 years experience in senior sales and marketing positions with Exotel, Intercontinental Hotels & Resorts, Millennium & Cophorne Hotels, Park Plaza Hotels and more recently as Group Sales and Marketing Director for Como Hotels & Resorts and Vice President Sales and Marketing Europe for Oberoi Hotels & Resorts.

Glenn is a British citizen and has a Masters degree in marketing and a post graduate diploma from the Chartered Institute of Marketing. He is also a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing and a member of the Luxury Marketing Council in the UK.

CHI Hotels & Resorts (CHI), www.corinthiahotels.com

TERESA A. PROPECK APPOINTED TO GOVERNOR'S TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL



TERESA A. PROPECK

Teresa A. Propeck, Director of Marketing and Sales for the Verde Canyon Railroad and Blazin' M Ranch, is taking her 17 years of tourism experience straight to the Governor's office.

"With her experience and dedication to Arizona tourism, Teresa has more than fulfilled the specifications we outlined for her position at the Verde Canyon Railroad, and we are proud that she has been appointed to the Governor's council to work with other like-minded Arizona professionals," said Dave Durban, Owner of Verde Canyon Railroad.

Propeck's background is solidly based in the tourism industry where she worked for such established organizations as Grand Canyon Railway and Amfac Resorts. She has expanded her leadership skills by serving as liaison for the Verde Valley with the Arizona Office of Tourism. She was Vice President for the Tourist Rail Industry Association, and on the Citizens Advisory Board for Northland.

"Having grown up in Phoenix, spent 17 years in Flagstaff, and now representing the Verde Valley, it is evident there is no greater place to call home than Arizona. I believe in the value of tourism in the state of Arizona and am extremely honored to be part of the Governor's Tourism Advisory Council," said Propeck.

Verde Canyon Railroad, 877-674-3836, www.verdecanyonrr.com;

Blazin' M Ranch, www.blazinm.com

NATIONAL CITY BANK WELCOMES CRAIG AIR CENTER

National City Bank (NCB) recently announced that Craig Air Center, based in Jacksonville, Florida, has opened a Depository Escrow Account with the bank, in compliance with the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations for a series of public air charters.

Craig Air Center is a full service Fixed Base Operator, FBO, that has been in business for 23 years. Craig Air Center specializes in Aircraft Charter, Sales and Management. Craig Air Center also services the Bahamas by flying their Beechcraft B1900 airliners to the Abaco Island chain five days per week. The DOT has granted Craig Air Center a Part 380 Public charter operator license in addition to their FAA Part 135 Charter operator certification. Craig is an ARGUS 'Gold' safety rated operator.

NCB is one of the leading travel industry depository banks in the nation with account relationships in the U.S. and overseas. Several new clients have joined the growing number of companies that utilize its travel industry financial services programs. The banks clients are Zegram Holdings, LLC, Reformation Tours, LLC, Atlas Resources LLC, Tour Resource Consultants, LLC, and Island Pass, LLC.

NCB's expertise is in delivering customized financial programs to the travel industry, including Surety trust agreements, escrow agreements for public air charter and single entity charters, special purpose depository escrow accounts and the Travel Funds Protection Plan (TFPP) escrow program which is the only consumer protection plan endorsed by the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA), the National Tour Association (NTA), and approved by the California Seller of Travel law.

National City Bank, david.valpredo@nationalcity.com

CANARY ISLANDS

Sterling Vacations is offering a 'Canary Islands and More' cruise FAM December 5-21, 2008. Trip is 17-days/16-nights and includes Spain, Portugal, Morocco, France and Italy.

The independent cruise FAM includes 16 nights run-of-ship cruise accommodations (guaranteed inside or oceanview as purchased); all meals and snacks onboard; Captain's cocktail party and dinner; live entertainment nightly; educational talks about each port; English speaking professional host; and cancellation protection up to 30-days prior to departure.

Travel agent and companion rates (ppdo) are \$1,299 (inside), \$1,599 oceanview. Additional per person: \$310 port taxes and \$120 fuel surcharge.

**Sterling Vacations, 866-345-7755,
info@sterlingvacations.com
www.sterlingvacations.com**

COSTA RICA/PERU & MACHU PICCHU

South Star Tours is offering two independent land only FAM trips to Costa Rica for \$580 and Peru and Machu Picchu for \$799.

This special invitation applies to an agent and up to three companions. Agents should select the best dates to suit their schedule and discover the natural beauty of Costa Rica or the most renowned examples of Inca architecture.

"We believe anyone who visits these countries will be so entranced by its power they will be sending their clients and friends to the destinations," says Angelica Franca, Marketing and Sales Manager of South Star Tours, about the company's decision to offer such a reduced rate to the agents. The first companion pays an additional \$50 and each additional traveler up to two more pays \$90.

This offer is valid for travel ending by November 30, 2008, subject to space availability. Not applicable on special holidays and local events.

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

LAS VEGAS

Now from Harrah's Entertainment, travel industry employees and guests can book exclusive low industry insider rates at all eight Total Rewards casino resorts in Las Vegas and Laughlin.

These rates start at \$22/night. Even weekend dates are available at discounts. This offer is valid now through January 5, 2009.

In addition, travel agents can come to the box office at Bally's and show their IATA Card and ID and receive 50 percent off Jubilee tickets.

Offer is valid up to four tickets and cannot be combined with other discounts. Offer is for the travel agent only.

**Harrah's Entertainment, 866-523-2571,
www.harrahs.com/insider**

PANAMA

Latour is offering a travel agent deluxe educational tour to Panama...Beyond the Canal. Price is \$995 ppdo, air and land.

Trip is seven-days/six-nights, December 1-7, 2008.

Tour highlights and inclusions are: roundtrip nonstop air from MIA, JFK or LAX via Copa Airlines; two night Gamboa Rainforest Resort Deluxe River View Room; two nights Holiday Inn at the Panama Canal Deluxe Room; two nights Intercontinental Playa Bonita Deluxe Ocean View Room; 17 meals (six breakfasts, six lunches, five dinners).

In addition, comprehensive touring, including Monkey Island and Lake Gatun Tour, Aerial Tram, Embera Indian Village and Panama City Tour; partial Panama Canal Transit; all tips, including tips to guide and driver; site inspections at leading hotels; and full escort by a Latour representative.

Space is limited. No spouses. One agent per agency.

**Latour, 800-825-0825,
info@latour.com,
www.latour.com**

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MARTY WALL APPOINTED GENERAL MANAGER AT THE INN AT PALMETTO BLUFF



MARTY WALL

Auberge Resorts have announced that Marty Wall has joined the Inn at Palmetto Bluff as General Manager. Wall, who is a veteran with the luxury hotel market and the Southeast, will be responsible for all resort operations.

"Marty has distinguished himself as an excellent manager and leader and we are pleased to welcome him to The Inn at Palmetto Bluff," said Eric Calderon, Chief Operating Officer of Auberge

Resorts. "His dedication to exceptional service and fine cuisine are evident in his many professional achievements."

Wall most recently served as General Manager of The Woodlands Resort & Inn in Summerville, S.C. Under his leadership, The Woodlands received the prestigious Mobil Five-Star and AAA 5 Diamond ratings for both lodging and dining. In addition, the property was consistently recognized by *Travel + Leisure* and *Condé Nast Traveler* magazines at the top of their rankings. Prior to Woodlands he gained much of his luxury hospitality experience with Four Seasons Hotels, where he worked for 16 years primarily in Houston and Philadelphia in a variety of positions.

Wall is a product of West Virginia State College in Charleston, WV where he studied Business Administration. In 2003 the Charleston, South Carolina campus of Johnson & Wales University recognized Marty with an Honorary Doctorate Degree in Business Administration and Hospitality Management.

The acclaimed Inn at Palmetto Bluff is situated on 20,000 acres of land overlooking the May River in the Lowcountry of South Carolina. The resort features 50 spacious guest cottages, cottage suites and Village Homes that pay homage to the region's rich heritage; a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course; a world-class spa and movement studio; and signature River House Restaurant. Guests also have access to the Inn's Wilson Lawn and Racquet Club and a number of recreational activities including guided nature tours, boating, kayaking and exploring miles of biking and walking trails. Inn at Palmetto Bluff, 866-706-6565, www.palmettobluffresort.com

MAYFLOWER TOURS RELEASES NEW 2009 DOMESTIC BROCHURE

The new 2009 domestic brochure recently released by Mayflower Tours features 28 deluxe escorted holidays throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico and includes five new and enhanced itineraries including a holiday in Manitoba, Canada on the Polar Bear Discovery; the Pacific Northwest; Trains Across Colorado; California Coastal Holiday; and New York City.

"The comfort and enjoyment of our travelers is our first priority at Mayflower Tours," stated John Stachnik, CTP, CTC President

and co-owner of Mayflower Tours. "The foundation of the Mayflower experience for over 30 years is the service and quality we deliver. We measure our success by our traveler's satisfaction."

In addition to the most popular holidays that showcase the spectacular national parks of the United States and Canada and autumn foliage destinations, Mayflower Tours offers a selection of scenic rail experiences and key holiday and special events. Travelers can choose from eight itineraries that feature historic trains, cog wheel trains or rail journeys in the United States, Canada and Mexico, including an outstanding rail journey to Mexico's Copper Canyon.

There are 10 special event holidays throughout the United States and Canada including the Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C., San Antonio Fiesta, Tournament of Roses Parade and the Calgary Stampede.

Mayflower Tours, 800-323-7604, www.mayflowertours.com

SANCTUARY ON CAMELBACK MOUNTAIN FORMS ELITE PARTNERSHIP WITH FLIGHT OPTIONS

Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain, Scottsdale, Arizona's nationally-lauded boutique resort and spa, has announced a partnership with Flight Options, one of the country's leading private jet aviation companies. Now, guests of the Mountainside Estates at Sanctuary – a collection of private mountain homes – enjoy unique access to Flight Options' fleet of 120 aircraft, with no minimum leasing terms or program fees.

Flight Options' clients also enjoy preferred access to Sanctuary, including special rates, concierge services, complimentary experiences and Sanctuary's stylish Spa Casitas surrounding the resort's infinity-edge pool as well as Sanctuary Spa. Ultimately, the symbiotic partnership will offer travelers an elevated experience from start to finish.

"We're happy to partner with Flight Options – their reputation for safety and luxurious service made them an easy choice," said Mike Surguine, Vice President and General Manager of Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain. "Private air travel is becoming increasingly important to our guests, and this program gives them a flexible, no-strings-attached opportunity to use Flight Options' services."

Kenn Ricci, Founder and Chairman of Flight Options, added, "Many of our clients are looking for a unique destination during their travels, which made the Mountainside Estates at Sanctuary a natural fit. Our customers want the best, and we know Sanctuary will more than meet their expectations."

The Flight Options and Sanctuary teams are available to arrange every aspect of the unmatched travel experience, from scheduling flights to arranging ground transportation, catering and special activities, such as Sanctuary's Mi Casa, Mi Chef personalized dining program.

Sanctuary on Camelback Mountain, www.sanctuaryaz.com;
Flight Options, www.flightoptions.com

INTERCONTINENTAL CHICAGO O'HARE OPENS ITS DOORS

The sophisticated, modern design-forward 556-room InterContinental Chicago O'Hare, Chicago's newest destination hotel for meetings, events and business travelers, has celebrated its Grand Opening. The debut of the Windy City's second InterContinental Hotels & Resorts property was commemorated with a ribbon cutting ceremony attended by Rosemont Mayor Bradley Stephens, Rosemont Convention and Visitors Bureau President Billy Anderson, Rosemont Convention Center General Manager Chris Stephens, and InterContinental Chicago O'Hare General Manager David Hall.

"InterContinental Chicago O'Hare is a destination hotel with great proximity to Chicago's major hub, O'Hare International Airport" said General Manager David Hall. "Our dedication to providing the finest in the arts, culture, and lifestyle is woven throughout every element of the property. Guests will surely discover and enjoy an engaging architectural design, world-class facilities, and impeccable services."

Managed by Portfolio Hotels & Resorts in Oak Brook, IL, InterContinental Chicago O'Hare features a variety of amenities for business and leisure travelers alike, including 70 Executive and VIP suites; the exclusive InterContinental Club Lounge; a dedicated flight center where guests can check the real-time status of their flights and take advantage of online check-in; and three world-class restaurants. Most notably, the property boasts an unprecedented art gallery and displays a bi-annually rotating collection of commissioned artwork.

Daily champagne site tours of the new hotel and its original paintings and sculptures are available.

Groups and social event planners are already booking functions in InterContinental Chicago O'Hare's 53,000 square-foot of flexible meeting and event space, which includes four Grand Ballrooms and nine private boardrooms.

InterContinental Chicago O'Hare, www.ichare.com



Attending the opening ceremonies from left to right: General Manager, InterContinental Chicago O'Hare, David Hall; Sr. Vice President, Amalgamated Bank, Deborah Nisson; President, The Harp Group, Peter Dumon; Mayor Bradley Stephens, Mayor, Village of Rosemont; Vice President, Brand Management, Intercontinental Hotels & Resorts, The Americas, Janis Cannon and General Manager, Rosemont Convention Center, Chris Stephens.

EXPERIENCE THE WORLD'S FIRST GEOGREEN RESORT



The Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa goes beyond Green and promotes both Cultural Sustainability and Environmental Responsibility with its new GeoGreen initiative.

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Located on the Gila River Indian Community, the Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa has long been a beacon for how to respectfully and authentically share and showcase Native American culture at a luxury resort and has won multiple national awards for those efforts including the TIA Odyssey Award for Sustaining an Indigenous Culture or Community, National Geographic Traveler Magazine's "Stay List," and the AZ Governor's Cultural Preservation Award.

More recently, the Resort has altered internal practices to accommodate environmental needs. The first step was organizing an internal "GeoGreen Team" made up of managers and supervisors of all departments to ensure participation from the entire Resort. A comprehensive recycling program was also put in place. The Resort also recently replaced all bottled water in the guestrooms to water sourced from the Gila River Indian Community.

Leading the industry in this new Green Travel trend, the unique GeoGreen program is highlighted by a variety of exceptional offerings including a Cultural Concierge; Storytelling and Song Program sharing ancient legends; culinary items from Gila River Farms and Gila Crossing Schools; preserving and displaying Arts and Crafts of the Pima and Maricopa; energy-conserving meeting space; active associate and guest recycling program; and a guest GeoGreen educational campaign for participation.

"Our efforts in preserving the Pima and Maricopa cultures combined with the enhanced focus on shrinking our carbon footprint is what makes our GeoGreen program significant," said General Manager, Bunty Ahamed. "The integrity of our cultural authenticity is second to none and our continuously-growing Green efforts are the perfect marriage of cultural sustainability and environmental responsibility."

The Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort & Spa,
www.wildhorsepassresort.com

AQUA HOTELS BECOMES HAWAII'S FIRST 'EMPLOYEE-OWNED' HOTEL COMPANY



Mike Paulin, Owner & CEO of Aqua Hotels & Resorts, a full-service hotel management company, executed the final details of the Employee Stock Ownership Plan that converts Aqua into Hawaii's first 'employee-owned' hotel company. This significant achievement makes it possible for Aqua's 500 employees to become 'co-owners' of the growing Waikiki-based hotel company.

According to Paulin, "Aida (Mrs. Paulin) and I are sharing 30 percent of the company with our employees. Each member of the Aqua ohana is eligible to become a co-owner of Aqua after a fixed vesting period." The value of the initial percentage share of the company is just over \$8 million. At a later time, the Paulin's plan to allocate more ownership of Aqua to their employees.

Paulin believes that the company's product is its employees and its structure is the service it provides. "Our ESOP comes at a time when Aqua's excellent customer satisfaction ratings are leading Waikiki hotels."

While still a fairly 'new' company, Aqua's employees have worked very hard to provide excellent service to their guests and create a highly respected Hawaii hotel brand. "Employee ownership is our way of thanking our ohana for making Aqua the Waikiki leader in guest service and we're thrilled to make Aqua the first employee-owned hotel company in Hawaii," added Paulin. "Employee briefings to explain the benefit and qualification process are scheduled. There is no cost to the employee for their participation in this benefit."

Since January 2008, Aqua has added three hotels to its growing portfolio: Park Shore Waikiki, Aqua Waikiki Beachside and Aqua Honolulu Prince, increasing its Waikiki presence to 13 unique properties and adding new employees who will also become eligible to share in the success of the organization.

Aqua Hotels & Resorts, 866-406-2782, www.aquaresorts.com

COSTA D'ESTE BEACH RESORT OPENS FIRST RESORT SPA IN VERO BEACH

Costa d'Este Beach Resort debuts the Spa at Costa d'Este – the only resort spa in Vero Beach – offering an innovative menu of tropical treatments for resort guests, area visitors and residents alike. The resort, which opened in June, is owned by the internationally acclaimed singer/producer couple Gloria and Emilio Estefan.

The bi-level spa is contemporary in design and features four treat-

ment rooms and relaxation areas. The Zen-like décor is calm and serene punctuated with the soothing and restorative sounds of rippling water.

Treatments reflect the Estefans' Cuban heritage and include an Orange Mojito & Honey Facial, Moji-toe-ssage, Mojo Manicure, Mojo Pedicure, Oriente Zen-ssage and Oriente Glow Indulgence. Oriente, which is also the name of the resort's restaurant, is a region in the northwest of Cuba. The resort's signature Mojito body care products are used in services and are available for purchase at the spa reception desk. A fitness center equipped with state-of-the-art cardio, circuit- and strength-training equipment, plus free weights is located opposite the spa.

Costa d'Este Beach Resort, 877-662-9919, www.costadeste.com

"HAPPY HOLI-STAYS" AT MARKET PAVILION HOTEL

With the rising popularity of domestic travel, Charleston, South Carolina's 70-room Market Pavilion Hotel has unveiled a host of special value-added "Happy Holi-Stays" packages.

"Shop 'Til You Drop Holiday Package" features two reflexology foot massages or pedicures for tired shoppers, as well as a variety of services and amenities. The package also includes complimentary package pick-up at nearby King Street's boutiques, and once at the hotel, items will be expertly gift wrapped. Guests can also enjoy a private horse-drawn carriage ride. Rates begin at \$275 per room, per night, with a two night minimum stay, and are valid from November 28 through December 25, 2008.

Families will enjoy a new holiday tradition with the Family Holiday Get-Away. This package includes young guests' (ages 4 and above) participation in the hotel's Children's Christmas Cookie Decorating Classes. A visit with Santa will also take place. Families will also enjoy a complimentary horse-drawn carriage ride. Rates at \$295 per room, per night, with a two night minimum, and are valid from December 5 - 21, 2008.

The seven-night Home for the Holidays package is ideal for families to relax together. Featuring a guestroom for two adults and two children, Home for the Holidays also includes a traditional Christmas Day Feast; a Christmas tree or menorah ensuite; complimentary horse-drawn carriage ride; shopping package in-store pick-up, gift wrap and delivery; and signature holiday gifts. Rates are \$389 per room per night, and are valid from December 19-26, 2008.

The five-night Charleston New Year package for couples features luxury Concierge Floor accommodation beginning December 30; access to First Night Charleston; a gourmet New Year's Eve dinner; ensuite holiday decorations and a bottle of champagne; breakfast in bed on New Year's Day; complimentary carriage ride for two; daily breakfast, afternoon tea and evening hors d'oeuvres; and use of the cordless Panasonic Extreme Phone. Rates are \$320 for Concierge Floor rooms and \$280 for Luxury Guestroom per person per night, based on double occupancy plus tax.

Market Pavilion Hotel, 877-440-2250, www.marketpavilion.com

SCENIC TOURS' INAUGURAL EUROPEAN RIVER CRUISES DEEMED "A HUGE SUCCESS"



"Our brand new ships are in the water – and the reaction has been fantastic!" says Nicole De Wilde, Scenic Tours' Vice-President of Sales and Marketing for North America. Both the *Sapphire* and *Emerald* are enjoying a busy first season on their sailings between Amsterdam and Budapest, and from all accounts, passengers are having a great time.

According to De Wilde, passengers are also commenting how much they enjoy the Scenic "FreeChoice" shore excursions. In Amsterdam, for example, they have their choice of a canal cruise or a visit to the Van Gogh Museum included in their cruise price. In Vienna, travelers can tour the Schonbrunn Palace or relax with coffee and cake in one of the city's famous coffee houses. A highlight for many is the private concert for Scenic passengers in Vienna featuring musicians, singers and ballet dancers.

Scenic even provides bicycles for those who choose to do their day trips on two wheels. While this season is virtually sold out, there's excellent availability for next year. Scenic's options for 2009 will expand significantly with the addition of one-day city stay plus weeklong cruises, and a new 24 day Amsterdam to the Black Sea itinerary.

Scenic Tours, 866-689-8611, www.scenictours.com

GERMANY'S HISTORIC CITIES OFFER CHRISTMAS MARKETS OF YESTERYEAR

Old World holiday traditions come to life as the 14 members of Historic Highlights of Germany capture the best of the holiday season with a portfolio of Christmas markets epitomizing the very best of the season.

From late November until Christmas, the markets fill with the sounds of musicians and the aromas of mulled wine, German sausages, gingerbread and roasting chestnuts – amid hundreds of booths in each city evoking the holiday season. Travelers will find nativity scenes, fancifully decorated Christmas trees, carolers singing yuletide carols and hymns, and local craftsmen displaying ceramics, candles, wooden toys, pewter and pottery.

New events for 2008 include Augsburg's fairy tale street, depicting "The Nutcracker" in 10 intricately decorated shop windows; Würzburg's medieval Christmas Market, complete with jousting knights and a nativity scene from the 14th century within the walls of the Marienberg Fortress; and Koblenz's Christmas Market's ex-

pansion into the Liebfrauenkirche and Münzplatz area, offering special family attractions such as a toboggan run, nostalgic carriage rides and a merry-go-round. Other cities - Münster, Heidelberg, Osnabrück and Rostock – feature activities for children including amusement park rides, ice-skating and games.

Perennial crowd pleasers include the Christmas Markets of Erfurt, where public tours are guided by Father or Mother Christmas, St. Nicholas or a Christmas angel; a hand-carved nativity crib with life-sized figures in Mainz; and Osnabrück's 19-foot nutcracker and a music box, thought to be the largest in the world, that plays 25 Christmas songs. Regional arts and crafts are showcased in Freiburg, including a candle workshop on Franziskanerstrasse; and Potsdam, whose Sternenmarkt ("Star Market") includes handicrafts from both Germany and its Polish neighbors to the east. Two markets are even set in royal courtyards: in Regensburg with appearances by Her Highness Gloria of Thurn und Taxis, who reads a Christmas tale; and in Wiesbaden, where a robust selection of arts and crafts mixes with culinary treats and toy-train rides for children.

Historic Highlights of Germany, info@historicgermany.com, www.historicgermany.com

EUROMIC ANNOUNCES NEW MEMBER IN MEDITERRANEAN

Euromic, The Destination Management Partnership in Europe and the Mediterranean, has welcomed Unconventional Malta Ltd. as its 29th member. In a vote held in late August, Euromic members officially inducted Unconventional Malta Ltd. into the association. The addition of a Maltese DMC is an important step for Euromic, which is now able to offer its clients consistent and high quality destination management services in nearly every major destination with shores on the Mediterranean Sea.

The Republic of Malta, a sunny archipelago lying to the south of Sicily, offers luxury, perfectly preserved natural beauty, and a rich cultural experience. Spoken of in connection with both Homer and St. Paul, ancient and modern history has shaped this idyllic country into one of Europe's most fascinating destinations. Thousands of years of inhabitants under Greek, Phoenician, Byzantine, and Sicilian rule have left Malta with a rich legacy of ancient structures and artifacts, as well as several Christian heritage sites of import. Declared a part of the British Empire in the 19th century, Malta became an independent commonwealth nation in 1964, the flag still proudly displaying the George Cross awarded collectively to the Maltese People by King George VI for bravery under fire during World War II.

Air Malta conveniently operates over 200 flights per week from Europe into the capital city of Valetta, making Malta the perfect choice for a unique itinerary or even just an extension.

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 34 destinations.

Euromic, www.euromic.com

BRITRAIL OFFERS 20% LOW SEASON DISCOUNT



Train travel in Britain is comfortable, efficient and a great way to kick back and relax. Paying one low price in local currency before leaving home buys a personal passport to the best of Britain. When you purchase a BritRail Consecutive Day Pass or a BritRail FlexiPass for travel between November 1, 2008 and February 28, 2009, you will receive a 20 percent discount on the pass' retail price current at the time of purchase. Low season prices start at approximately \$52 per day (based on a standard class Low Season 4 Day BritRail Consecutive Pass at 2008 prices). The Pass must be purchased before February 15, 2009.

With high-speed, frequent service, even an extended weekend or quick weeklong jaunt allows enough time to savor the flavor of modern London and appreciate the ancient heritage that makes Britain special. And the 'Low Season' is one of the best times to travel to Britain. The weather is mild and crowds have thinned. Train travel is also environmentally friendly: trains emit approximately 50 percent less harmful Green House gases per passenger kilometer than cars and 75 percent less compared to a plane traveling the same distance.

The BritRail Pass provides total access no matter what the route or who the train operator may be. With 18,000 daily train departures traveling to over 2,500 destinations throughout England, Scotland and Wales, passengers can take as many trains in a single day as they want.

BritRail Passes must be purchased before you arrive; they are not available in Britain.

BritRail, 866-BRITRAIL, www.BritRail.com

ESCAPE TO STORM-FREE MADEIRA WITH AZORES EXPRESS

With a record Hurricane season predicted in the Caribbean, travelers are seeking alternative places with warm sunny temperatures, fine hotels, and ocean views. Sunny Madeira island sits about 400 miles west of North Africa and Azores Express is now offering air and six-night hotel packages starting at \$1,169 per person to Portugal's Madeira Islands for the first time, beginning this fall

and winter.

Flights will leave Boston's Logan Airport each Tuesday and Friday. Kids under six stay free and pay a child's airfare. Passengers will have a choice of six hotels, each with daily breakfast. Upgrades to SATA plus Business-Class are a few hundred dollars each way.

The islands of Madeira and Porto Santo form an archipelago with a nearly perfect climate—warm and clear in winter with temperatures in the 70s.

Hotels included in the package deal are the new CS Madeira, Cliff Bay, Tivoli Madeira, and the Madeira Regency Palace, all five-star properties. Four-star hotels include Alto Lido and Baia Azul. All hotels offer seaside views, outdoor saltwater pools and resort facilities. Prices range from \$1,169 to \$2,949 ppdo depending on hotel and travel dates. Rates are valid for select travel November 1, 2008- April 17, 2009. Taxes, fees and fuel surcharges are additional.

Visitors come for the natural beauty, and they stay to experience the ocean, golf, hiking, deep sea fishing, diving, and old world charm of the islands and its mountains and seaside towns.

Azores Express has connected New England with Portugal for more than 20 years. Today it offers direct flights on wide-body A310 aircraft to São Miguel, the main island in the Azores archipelago. Connecting flights from São Miguel to Lisbon, Porto and/or the islands of Madeira are available. The company is part of the SATA Group.

Azores Express, 800-762-9995, www.sata.pt

AVIS OFFERS FALL SAVINGS ON EUROPEAN RENTALS

Avis Rent A Car has announced that customers traveling to Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, France, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom can now save up to 15 percent on rentals of three days or longer.

"The fall is a great time to visit Europe - the weather is nice, it's less crowded and there are many festivals and events scheduled throughout the season," said Kaye Ceille, Senior Vice President of Global Travel and Partnership Sales for Avis Budget Group, parent company of Avis. "Now, with this special promotion, Avis is making it that much more attractive for those planning to take in the great fall events and activities that Europe is famous for."

The promotion is open to U.S. and Canada residents and is valid at participating locations. Customers reserving a vehicle on www.avis.com must reference Avis Worldwide Discount (AWD) number D730300 at the time of reservation. Those reserving vehicles via the Avis Reservation Center at 800-331-1084 or a local travel agent, must reference AWD number D784200 at the time of reservation. Reservations must be made on or before October 31, 2008 and rentals must begin on or before November 30, 2008. Offer is subject to availability and blackout dates may apply.

Avis, www.avis.com/europe

DEILMANN CRUISES CELEBRATES HÄNDEL'S 250TH ANNIVERSARY



In honor of German-born Baroque composer Georg Friderich Händel and to note the 250th anniversary of his death, Peter Deilmann Cruises has put together a 13-night Baroque Music Festival with an array of top musicians who will perform on board and concerts to choose from while ashore. The May 21-June 3, 2009 sailing, aboard the ocean-going deluxe *MS Deutschland*, features port-intensive itineraries and a variety of shore excursions in London, Scotland, Ireland, Germany and Belgium. Cruise fares range from \$5,965 to \$16,815 ppdo and include \$125 port charge as well as the on-board festival and London performance. Deilmann is also offering a \$99 airfare package that includes roundtrip air from 73 North American gateways as well as pre-arranged shore excursions and transfers, representing a \$725 value. Guests booking their own air receive a \$750 credit; business-class upgrades are \$2,800.

Guests sailing aboard *MS Deutschland* are treated to performances by Professor Thomas Seedorf, a renowned expert on Händel and an accomplished vocalist; Professor Nachum Erlich, who plays the violin and will conduct a three-musician ensemble; Professor Christian Ruvolo, pianist and harpsichordist; and Professor Wolfgang Meyer, a member of the Trio di Clarone. Guests will also be able to choose one of three shore concerts during two days in London when ordering the \$99 air/excursion package: a Royal Philharmonic concert at the Royal Festival Hall; the London Symphony Orchestra at Barbican Hall; or an evening performance of *L'Elisir D'Amore* at the Royal Opera House.

The Hamburg roundtrip itinerary calls at London; Aberdeen and Ullapool, Scotland; Dublin and Cobh, Ireland; and Brugge, Belgium. Shore excursions, many of them included in the fare, are offered at nearly every port.

Peter Deilmann Cruises, 800-348-8287,
pdcmail@deilmann-cruises.com, www.deilmann-cruises.com

ORIENT LINES DEBUTS 2009 EUROPE CRUISES ABOARD MARCO POLO II

In 2009, Orient Lines will visit Amalfi, St. Tropez, Mykonos, Mallorca, Monte Carlo and Santorini in addition to a host of new ports in the Baltic, Black Sea, British Lake District, Croatia, North Cape and Northern Europe. Cruise vacations from 11 to 37 days are priced from \$2,399 ppdo, including free air from selected North American gateway cities. New for 2009, the line will en-

hance each itinerary with a free shore excursion in selected ports. Highlights for 2009 include cruise-tours which begin or end with an included hotel stay in Berlin, plus calls at the lesser-known ports of Szczecin, Poland; Villagarcia and Bilbao, Spain; Bordeaux and Hornfleur, France; Murmansk, Russia; Sarande, Albania; and Barrow-in-Furness in Cumbria, England.

The destination cruise specialists at Orient Lines have carefully planned each new itinerary to include overnight stays on board the ship in selected ports. With two full days, guests have time to see the pyramids from Port Said, shop for bargains in Istanbul and Lisbon, explore the classical treasures of Rome and Athens, or visit St. Petersburg and Copenhagen.

Orient Lines' new 650-guest *Marco Polo II* is larger in size yet carries nearly 200 fewer guests than the brand's former flagship. Aboard *Marco Polo II* guests enjoy the intimacy and charm of a European boutique hotel while offering the comforts of a modern cruise liner.

Orient Lines, 800-333-7300, www.orientlines.com

PRE-HOLIDAY BREAKS FROM THE ROCCO FORTE COLLECTION

Travelers can treat themselves to a pre-Holiday mini-break with The Rocco Forte Collection. Offerings include a pre-Christmas cultural treat with Hotel Savoy, Florence, and visit the spectacular "Caterina and Maria de' Medici" exhibition. Taking place at the Palazzo Strozzi from October 24, 2008 to February 8, 2009, the exhibition will feature 15 monumental tapestries commissioned by Caterina de' Medici in the mid 16th century and completed by Maria de' Medici. Rocco Forte's Hotel Savoy is including entrance to the exhibition and an exhibition catalogue as part of a package, starting from \$541 per room, per night. Also a 'White Day' at Hotel Astoria, St. Petersburg, which is truly magical in wintertime. Guests stay warm under furs on a traditional trokia ride, explore the Hermitage museum or take in a heart-warming opera or ballet at the famous Mariinsky Theatre. The hotel's White Days package costs \$1,821 and includes three nights' accommodation, breakfast, entrance ticket to the Hermitage, city tour, Russian Classical massage, and Russian buffet. Hibernate in Style at The Balmoral, Edinburgh, making the most of its spa and Michelin-starred restaurant. The Balmoral's Luxury Winter Escape package costs \$1,022 per room per night, based on two people and includes accommodation, hearty Scottish breakfast, chef's tasting menu dinner, whisky turndown, and one ESPA Ultimate Body Wrap.

Have a 'Chestnut Treat' at Hotel de Russie, Rome. Chestnut extract has been proven to have anti-inflammatory and soothing properties and is great for nourishing the skin after the summer. The Wellness Zone at Rocco Forte's Hotel de Russie is offering several treatments over the winter, including a Satiny Body Scrub, massage, and facial. Combine all three treatments for \$341. Overnight stays cost from \$567.

The Rocco Forte Collection, 888-667-9477,
www.roccofortecollection.com