

World Travel Awards Grand Final Kicks off WTM 2010



London - The world's only global 'Oscars' for the travel and tourism industry - as described by the Wall Street Journal - finishes spectacularly in a grand final at the Grosvenor House, A JW Marriott Hotel, London, on Sunday 7 November, immediately before World Travel Market.

The final, watched by more than a thousand senior industry professionals worldwide, will reveal the best of the best from winners of six regional ceremonies across every sector.

Attended by Government Ministers, CEO's and directors as well as association heads gathering for World Travel Market week, the final is the culmination of World Travel Awards Grand Tour 2010 with regional presentation ceremonies taking place throughout the year.

Graham E. Cooke, Founder and President of World Travel Awards, established 17 years ago to improve standards of customer service and overall business performance of travel and tourism, said the evening will represent a sea change for the industry.

"In a world where time is judged not in days and weeks but minutes and even seconds, where consumers are under more pressure and stress than ever before, travel and tourism has also had to change", he explained.

"It's no longer just an industry that sells dreams, but one that has had to adapt to a new kind of working with instant access and instant answers. Consumer service and a more flexible approach are key to everything we do."

"Sadly, there are still horror stories out there of how consumers have not received the attention or the care that they deserve and have a right to expect from operators. But happily, these negatives are diminishing. We are recognising what the customer needs - and wants."

"World Travel Awards is a champion of universal good practice across the world. But this means increasing the level of high standards across the board, helping others to be inspired and uplifted by example. That's why the World Travel Awards Tour and the subsequent final are fundamental if the industry is to continue improving quality."

The Middle East ceremony has already taken place last month in Dubai, before Prince Bandar, Chairman of Al Khozama Management Company and attended by 600 captains of industry from the region.

Other ceremonies scheduled are: Africa & Indian Ocean (7 July, Johannesburg); North & Central America & Caribbean (Orlando, 11 September); Europe (Antalya, Turkey, 1 October); Asia & Australasia (14 October, New Delhi, India); and South America (20 October, Rio de Janeiro).

"Increasingly, consumers are using World Travel Award winners as an assurance guide of high quality, giving them peace of mind when they make their holiday choice", added Cooke.

"Only the very best will succeed at the final but the commercial benefits are worth fighting for.

Nominees are now actively canvassing for support with their business contacts.”

Thousands of professionals are expected to vote during the year by logging on to www.worldtravelawards.com/vote.

Deadlines for voting are:

- Africa - 6 June
- Indian Ocean - 6 June
- North America - 6 August
- Caribbean - 6 August
- Central America - 6 August
- Europe - 10 September
- Australasia - 17 September
- Asia - 17 September
- South America - 24 September

About World Travel Awards

The World Travel Awards was launched in 1993 to acknowledge and recognise excellence in the world's travel and tourism industry. Now celebrating its 17th Anniversary, the awards is regarded as the very highest achievement that a travel product could ever hope to receive. Votes are cast by 183,000 travel professionals which include travel agencies, tour and transport companies and tourism organizations in over 160 countries across the globe.

Votes are cast globally by fellow industry professionals in over 1, 000 different categories. Attended by senior executives from major travel companies, operators and destinations, WTA events are universally respected as providing established, top level networking opportunities, regionally and globally.

The World Travel Award's official list of worldwide media partners includes: BBC World News, eTurboNews, Breaking Travel News, CNBC Arabiya, Khaleej Times, Trav Talk, Trade Arabia, TTN, Travel Daily News International, Focus on Travel News, New Focus Travel Magazine, Tourism Review, JAX FAX, Travel & Leisure, Travel & Leisure Golf, Xenios & Xenios World.

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