



## Major Challenges Face Europe as a Destination

### Industry Leaders Will Speak Out at ETOA Summit

19th October 2006

Tourism in Europe is undergoing enormous change. The line between “Inbound” and “Outbound” is becoming indistinct. The function of Tour Operators is – in many cases – becoming similar to that of Travel Agent. And suppliers are attempting to approach consumers directly.

At the Annual Summit of Europe’s inbound tour operators, a panel of industry leaders will gather to discuss the market in these changing times.

The panel comprises:

**Chris Vukelich**, Chief Operating Officer, International Markets, Travelport  
**Ron Schrafroth**, CEO, Destination Management, Kuoni  
**Simon Vincent**, CEO, Opodo  
**Robyn Tauck**, President & CEO, Tauck World Discovery

The discussion will be moderated by ETOA Vice-President Jack Coronna.

In addition to the issues mentioned above, the industry’s leaders will also consider the following questions and will respond to issues raised by the audience:

- What should be done at national and European government level to improve Europe’s competitiveness as a destination?
- Where will new opportunities lie?
- How will the industry change over the next 3-5 years?
- What are the biggest threats and from where will they come?
- What can be done on an industry level to improve customer experiences?
- Should there be a code of conduct for escorted tours and greater pricing transparency?

Those attending the Summit will be senior managers from Europe’s major tour operators, hotel groups, tourist attractions, coach, rail and cruise companies and local tourist boards. Collectively, as buyers, they have a strong influence on which destinations and attractions are more or less successful, as they spend over €6bn a year on Europe’s sights, hotels and transport on behalf of their customers.

The event will take place at the Copthorne Tara Hotel, London W8 on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2006.

#### Further Information

For further information and to gain accreditation as a journalist, please contact Irena Smith, Tel: +44 (0) 20 7499 4412, Email: [ismith@ETOA.org](mailto:ismith@ETOA.org).



## **About ETOA**

Since its foundation in 1989, ETOA has grown exponentially to include over 400 member organisations, of which over 100 are Tour Operators. Collectively, ETOA represents over €6 billion spending on accommodation and travel services annually.

ETOA provides representation at the European government level for companies that bring tourists to Europe. The Association promotes greater awareness of the benefits provided by the group travel industry in Europe - particularly increased income and employment. ETOA also influences European tourism policy and legislation.

Areas of specific activity include:

- Promoting Europe as a tourism destination
- Establishing codes of conduct and guidelines for its members
- Establishing commercial opportunities between buyers and sellers
- Working with other travel & tourism associations to raise the industry's profile

**ENDS**