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New Deal Europe - Press release:

## **New Deal Europe Successfully Concludes 'Essential Balkans' Campaign**

**New Deal Europe (NDE) is delighted to announce the successful culmination of the 'Essential Balkans' campaign, a pivotal initiative delivered in partnership with Visit Europe. The campaign, promoting the allure of The Balkans to the North American traveller, focused on Montenegro, Serbia, and Romania. Selected earlier this year by Visit Europe, New Deal Europe delivered this exciting new project to spotlight the enchanting Balkans, with the support of the European Union, the Tourism Boards of Montenegro and Serbia, and the Association of Romanian Incoming Agencies.**

Delivered over only six months, from July to December, the project made significant strides in reaching out to all major areas of the North American travel trade, with sales missions covering New England, New York, D.C., the Midwest, the Northwest, California, Ontario, Nova Scotia and Quebec. Results included crafting potential cross-border itineraries based on client feedback and rooted in extensive research and knowledge gained from visits to the region by the NDE team in early summer 2023.

A notable highlight of the year was New Deal Europe's presentation to major North American outbound operators as special guests at the 'Around The World' breakfast during the *2023 USTOA Annual Conference and Marketplace* in Los Angeles in December. The team also engaged, as an affiliate member, in over 40 meetings with leading partners in the North American travel industry at this event. This followed on from the highly successful 'Limitless Travel' event in the Summer, where New Deal Europe's video presentation on the Essential Balkans destinations was watched by over 300 luxury travel advisors followed by a full day of B2B meetings with agents who were inspired by this to promote the region.

The culmination of the months' long programme was a virtual marketplace, in collaboration with the European Travel Association (ETOA) – a day of B2B meetings which included educational destination presentations on each of the three countries highlighting their unique selling points to the trade.

A comprehensive report based on surveys and research, evaluating the activities undertaken and identifying future opportunities is currently being undertaken, and will inform the shape of the 'Essential Balkans' programme moving forward.

**Tine Murn**, Director of New Deal Europe, commented, *'Despite the ambitious programme and tight timeframe, we're thrilled to report that numerous North American travel and tourism businesses are now considering these three destinations, and the broader Balkans, for their future programmes. We firmly believe that the continuation and growth of this programme is essential in order to realise its full potential. We extend our sincere thanks to all our partners and collaborators for their support in making this campaign a resounding success'*.

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