

MEDIA RELEASE

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GTA sourcing conference could increase New Orleans' global profile

- New Orleans will be on show to buyers from global travel distributor GTA as they host their annual Americas Sourcing Conference (2-5 February 2014) in the city
- An increasingly popular destination, 125 countries booked accommodation in New Orleans with GTA last year and 80% of them booked more room nights than in 2012
- The USA and the UK continue to be the most important source markets for New Orleans
- Chinese visitors more than doubled last year, as did those from Denmark and Sweden and the Irish Republic

With just a month to go until its famous Mardi Gras kicks off, New Orleans will be showcasing a selection of its appeals as buyers from global travel distributor GTA arrive for their annual Americas Sourcing Conference (2-5 February 2014). As ever, the conference will give attendees a brief flavour of the destination and the accommodation and experiences it offers.

Sean Bayliss, GTA's Vice President for Sourcing Americas, says: "High street and online travel agents and tour operators rely on GTA's sourcing teams to find the accommodation, services, excursions and experiences they most want to enjoy. Taking our conference to a different part of the region every year can help destinations, like New Orleans, raise their profile on a global stage."

New Orleans is an increasingly popular destination for GTA. 125 countries booked accommodation in New Orleans with GTA last year and 80% of them booked more room nights than in 2012, proving the increasing international awareness and popularity of the city. Overall, the number of room nights booked by customers increased by nearly 30% in 2013 compared to 2012.

The USA and the UK continue to be the most important source markets for New Orleans, according to booking data from GTA, while Brazil and Japan remain in the top five. New Orleans' popularity in Australia is also growing, with bookings up more than 40% last year and making Australian visitors the third most important for the city. Although not yet in the top ten, Chinese visitors more than doubled last year, as did those from Denmark and Sweden and the Irish Republic.

Although most of their days will be taken up with meetings, the buyers will get a sense of New Orleans' jazz heritage from local musicians at the Crescent City Brewhouse. They will spend an evening in the heart of the French Quarter, enjoying the hospitality of the Bourbon Orleans Hotel, and getting a sense of the excitement that Mardi Gras and a trip to the southern city brings.

Adds Sean: "GTA has been helping the world's hospitality and tourism industry reach customers in all parts of the world for nearly four decades. Our reputation for providing relevant and unrivalled global distribution, our financial stability and expertise helps businesses capture opportunities presented by growth markets, while gaining share in established ones."

With the support of New Orleans Convention & Visitor Bureau, conference delegates will hear a number of presentations from local hotel partners. Best Western, Caesars Entertainment, Choice Hotels, Hilton Hotels and Holiday Inn Downtown Superdome are all taking part this year.

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Notes to Editors

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