

MEDIA RELEASE

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GTA hosts Americas sourcing, sales and operations conference in San Diego, California

- 150 GTA leaders visit San Diego, CA for combined sourcing, sales and operations conference
- San Diego is among 2015's top ten destinations in the USA according to TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards) having risen from outside the top 25 in the last year
- GTA witnessed a 35% increase in the number of room nights booked in San Diego by American travel agents for their clients, while the destination is also popular for the British, Australians and Germans
- Takes place as GTA's parent, the Kuoni Group, focuses activities on providing services to the global travel industry and to governments
- New strategic direction will lead to further investment to secure even greater profitability for GTA and the travel businesses it serves

150 senior travel representatives visited the United States this month as global travel distributor [GTA](#) held its annual Americas Sourcing, Sales and Operations conference in San Diego, California.

The world's travellers have placed San Diego among 2015's top ten destinations in the USA¹ having risen from outside the top 25. La Jolla Cove was also rated as America's sixth most popular beach. GTA itself witnessed a 35% increase in the number of room nights booked in San Diego by American travel agents for their clients, while the destination is also popular for the British, Australians and Germans. The city has seen steady year on year increases in room nights booked by Turkish travellers as this growing and increasingly confident source market seeks a wider range of destinations and experiences.

James Phillips, Vice President for Hotel Sourcing in the Americas, says: "GTA has been powering global travel for four decades. Our presence in source markets and destinations worldwide, the experience and expertise of our people, as well as the unrivalled performance of our technology and systems continue to help businesses accommodate fully independent travellers (FIT) in practically every part of the planet.

"San Diego is a great example of an exciting travel destination with wide appeal to our customers. Millions are drawn by the perfect holiday climate, protected beaches for watersports or wildlife watching, its laidback culture, great Mexican and seafood dining, as well as attractions, museums, concerts and performances for every taste and age. This brief taste of the experience to be enjoyed in San Diego will help our teams educate travel agents and tour operators and attract more visitors from both established and developing source markets."

The conference agenda explored GTA's future strategy to help retail and wholesale, high street and online travel agents and tour operators benefit from its extraordinary global distribution network. It follows news that GTA's parent, the Kuoni Group, plans to focus activities on providing services to the global travel industry; a new strategic direction that will lead to further investment in GTA's already successful business. Particular attention is being paid to the attractive, long-term growth potential of the Americas markets: whether Brazil's rising middle class with increased disposable income to the popularity of the USA's varied city, beach and mountain destinations.

Thanks to GTA's dynamic distribution partnership with Hilton Worldwide, the conference was held at the [Hilton Mission Valley](#) at the heart of San Diego and just minutes from two of the most popular attractions booked through GTA and [Travel Bound](#): San Diego Zoo and SeaWorld San Diego. After a multi-million dollar renovation, 350 guest rooms bridge the gap between classic and contemporary SoCal style. One of the best Mexican restaurants in Mission Valley, Polanco Kitchen & Bar offers Mexican-infused dishes as well as authentic 100% blue agave margaritas, local craft beers and hand-selected Spanish and California wines.

With attractive long-term growth potential and already globally leading positions, three strategic initiatives—the expansion of its footprint and its service offering and the introduction of further digitalisation – announced

by GTA's parent the [Kuoni Group](#) in January will accelerate growth and drive success for the travel, tourism and hospitality businesses that remain GTA's customers.

GTA will continue to focus on finding the right accommodation, services, tours and activities at the best possible price in 'strong hold' destinations: the travel 'hot spots' that consumers most want to visit. It will also ensure that travellers can still benefit from a growing 'long tail' of accommodation in less familiar locations away from the traditional tourism trails.

Generating tens of thousands of bookings for hotels, attractions and other tourism businesses every day, GTA sells millions of room nights in more than 25 languages online and throughout the world. Today, travel agents across the planet rely on GTA to help them provide their customers – the travelling public – with the accommodation, services, excursions and experiences they most want to enjoy.

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Notes to Editors

- ¹ source: TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Awards 2015 <http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/TravelersChoice-Destinations-cTop-g191>
- Powering global travel, GTA provides ground travel products and services for fully independent travel, supporting the biggest and best in travel. Part of the Kuoni Group, GTA is trusted to deliver because of its wealth of experience, privileged relationships and on the ground expertise. Its technology solutions easily connect travel suppliers and sellers worldwide. As well as its XML, booking sites – GTA retail, TravelCube and Travel Bound, as well as GTA wholesale – process over 21,000 bookings daily, in more than 25 languages. Connect now with GTA. www.gta-travel.com