

# turizm aktüel

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**WINING & DINING :** Bed & Breakfast, half board, breakfast lounge, patisserie, cafeteria, lobby bar, snack bar, pool bar, roof bar, restaurant bar, 1 A' la carte restaurant, 1 open buffet restaurant, 2 outdoor restaurants (120 pax), 4 indoor restaurants (430 pax), 1 ball room restaurant. International cuisine, Turkish cuisine.

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# London, once more

Hello from the special edition of one of the most important fairs of the tourism industry, WTM...

We are getting ready to leave behind the 2014 season. The sector is getting ready for the next season with brand new excitement and hopes. Every period has its own conditions. The stationary conditions may not be valid all the time. And this year, that is the case. We had begun the season with a great excitement. In fact things were going very well. But some unexpected troubles experienced at the end of the season have brought about little setbacks. Maybe we have paused a little. Even so, we have recovered fast. And now we are moving slowly towards the end of the season. No doubt that the numbers have begun to stand out in the meantime. The opinion of the sector representatives is that the year-end target will be met.

Once again, we have prepared a full magazine for the Turizm Aktüel's WTM London special edition. You will find an extensive interview with the general director of Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau-ICVB Özgül Özkan Yavuz on the pages of our new edition. We will hear from Özgül Özkan Yavuz all the unknowns and of course all that needs to be known about ICVB, which makes great contributions to the promotion and branding of Istanbul on the international platforms. One of the other guests of our magazine is the general director of Alkoçlar Kemer Resort Hotel, Metin Peltek. The experienced tourism professional has assessed the 2014 season for our magazine and shared with us his predictions for the 2015 season.

The chairman of Kemer Promotion Foundation (KETAV) and the general director of Kemer Ulusoy Holiday Village Volkan Yorulmaz has given information about the present condition of Antalya and specified the precautions to be taken in the 2015 season. Another interview has been made with TÜROFED's chairman of the board, Osman Ayık. Stating that the 2014 season has satisfied the expectations, Ayık evaluates, "It doesn't hurt to keep the objectives high."

The chairman of the Güray Group, Gürel Aydın, has given information about the tourism investments and future objectives of Güray Group. And also Akkanat Holding Sirene Belek Golf Hotel Sales And Marketing Director/Manager, Volkan Çavuşoğlu, is one of our guests. The successful tourism professional has shared with the readers of our magazine Sirene Belek Hotel, one of the well-established hotels of Sirene Antalya Belek, and the renovation works it has undergone.

WTM London special edition's content is including but of course not limited to these. These are just the hints. Much more than that is on our magazines' pages...

WTM London tourism fair, where almost 10,000 companies from hundreds of countries attend every year, is inundated by 150,000 professional visitors. In addition, a huge crowd of reporters follow WTM. The importance of the fair, where nearly one thousand reporters are present, thus becomes evident by itself. And Turkey is getting prepared to leave its mark on WTM just like every year.

Our next special edition will be prepared for the UTRECHT Tourism Fair in Netherlands. Hope to see you, good-bye till then.

**Hasan Arslan**

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# SAY HELLO TO CANOPY BY HILTON

Hilton Worldwide Redefines the Lifestyle Category with New Hotel Brand.

Hilton Worldwide today announced the launch of Canopy by Hilton, a new hotel brand that redefines the lifestyle category around the mindset of today's leisure and business travelers. Christopher J. Nassetta, president and CEO of Hilton Worldwide, unveiled the Canopy by Hilton concept to nearly 1,900 owners and development representatives at Hilton Worldwide's Global Partnership Conference in Orlando, Florida.

"Built on extensive market research, our highly anticipated Canopy by Hilton brand delivers a fresh approach to hospitality and the guest experience," Nassetta said. "We saw an opportunity to not only enter the lifestyle space by developing a new brand, but also to redefine this category by creating a more accessible lifestyle brand. We identified the need to take the emphasis off of capital-intensive design and deliver exactly what the target consumer desires: an energizing, comfortable stay with more included value." Canopy by Hilton represents a new hotel concept with high growth potential, a clearly defined guest offering, and a sustainable business model. Hilton Worldwide identified a viable target audience based on preferences and needs, not demographics alone. "We've launched a brand that is all about the mindset of today's traveler and creating a positive stay," said John T.A. Vanderslice, global head, luxury & lifestyle brands, Hilton Worldwide. "Canopy is the energizing new hotel in the neighborhood offering simple, guest-directed service, thoughtful

local choices, and comfortable spaces, so guests simply feel better going forward."

Through Hilton Worldwide's extensive research and analysis, Canopy by Hilton's proposition and concept has been refined and validated at every step with both guests and owners alike. Beyond simply creating a positive stay, four essential elements define what it means to be a Canopy hotel: Great neighborhoods: Canopy by Hilton is the streetlamp of the neighborhood. We are all about being local, through design, food and beverage, art, and local know-how. No two Canopy hotels will be the same, and we know that's what our guests want.

Comfort and design: We take a people first approach to design. The energy from our great neighborhoods flows through our open, welcoming lobby space. This energy gives way to warm, inviting, and comfortable just-right rooms.

More included value: We know our guests demand a more inclusive approach and surprising extras. So basic Wi-Fi and an artisanal breakfast are included, along with a local welcome gift and an evening tasting of local beer, wine, or spirits\*.

Our "positively yours" culture: With a "positively yours" service culture, hotel "Enthusiasts" will deliver a one-stop approach to front-of-house service.

"The demands and preferences of today's travelers continue to evolve, and Canopy by Hilton creates something new for consumers in the lifestyle space," said Jim Holthouser, executive vice president, global brands, Hilton Worldwide. "Canopy



by Hilton will deliver more choice and control for guests than ever before, from a mobile straight-to-room arrival to surprising extras throughout each stay."

Canopy by Hilton will develop through new-build and conversion projects in key urban neighborhoods and vibrant secondary markets around the world with properties expected to begin opening in 2015. Canopy by Hilton has 11 signed letters of intent to open in the following neighborhoods:

*Canopy Portland / Pearl District*  
*Canopy London / Neighborhood to be announced*  
*Canopy Miami / Brickell*  
*Canopy Washington, D.C. / Bethesda North*  
*Canopy San Diego / Gaslamp Quarter*  
*Canopy Nashville / Downtown*  
*Canopy Savannah / Historic District*  
*Canopy Indianapolis / City Centre*  
*Canopy Charlotte / Uptown*  
*Canopy Oklahoma City / Bricktown*  
*Canopy Ithaca / The Commons*

Canopy's strong brand value proposition and compelling operating platform have already attracted the interest of ownership groups including The Buccini/Pollin Group, KeyStone Corporation, Anish Hotel Group, Baywood Hotels, North Point Hospitality Group, J Street Hospitality, and Levine Properties.





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# TOUR OPERATORS TARGET MULTI-CHANNEL SALES

Tour operators in Germany want to step up multi-channel sales while Google and Booking.com want to offer the best results and best deals respectively, they said at this week's fvW Kongress in Cologne.

Senior tour operator managers agreed in a panel discussion that online and offline sales need to be connected in order to grow in e-commerce and compete successfully with online travel agencies. But travel agents still have a major USP in terms of customer contact, they stressed. "The travel agent has the

the (online) competitors". Marco Ryan, Thomas Cook's head of Omnichannel and Marketing, said the company is also trying to improve customer contacts but stressed that customers did not want to be flooded with information.

In a keynote speech, TUI chairman Fritz Jousen pointed out that in other

Bärwind. Asked about the search giant's plans in the tourism industry, where the hotel finder and flight search functions are being expanded, the former TUI manager responded only that: "If it helps the user, then we'll do it." He stressed the strength of brands such as TUI in the internet but admitted that only 30% of

Google searches are related to brands while 70% are general search inquiries.

Presenting Booking.com's business model, Peter Verhoeven, head of EMEA, stressed that the online retailer would remain focused on accommodation sales. The rapid growth to weekly sales of 4.5 million room nights was based on a user-friendly website that focused

on searching, filtering and booking, he emphasised.

Some 2,500 visitors attended the two-day fvW Kongress and the accompanying Travel Expo in Cologne. Decision-makers from across the industry not only attended the conference sessions and visited the 80 exhibitor stands but also used the event for business discussions, negotiations and networking.

clear advantage that he has the customer sitting in front of him and can find out his wishes and preferences very precisely. That's still not possible with online sales," said Dirk Föste, FTI's managing director for e-commerce.

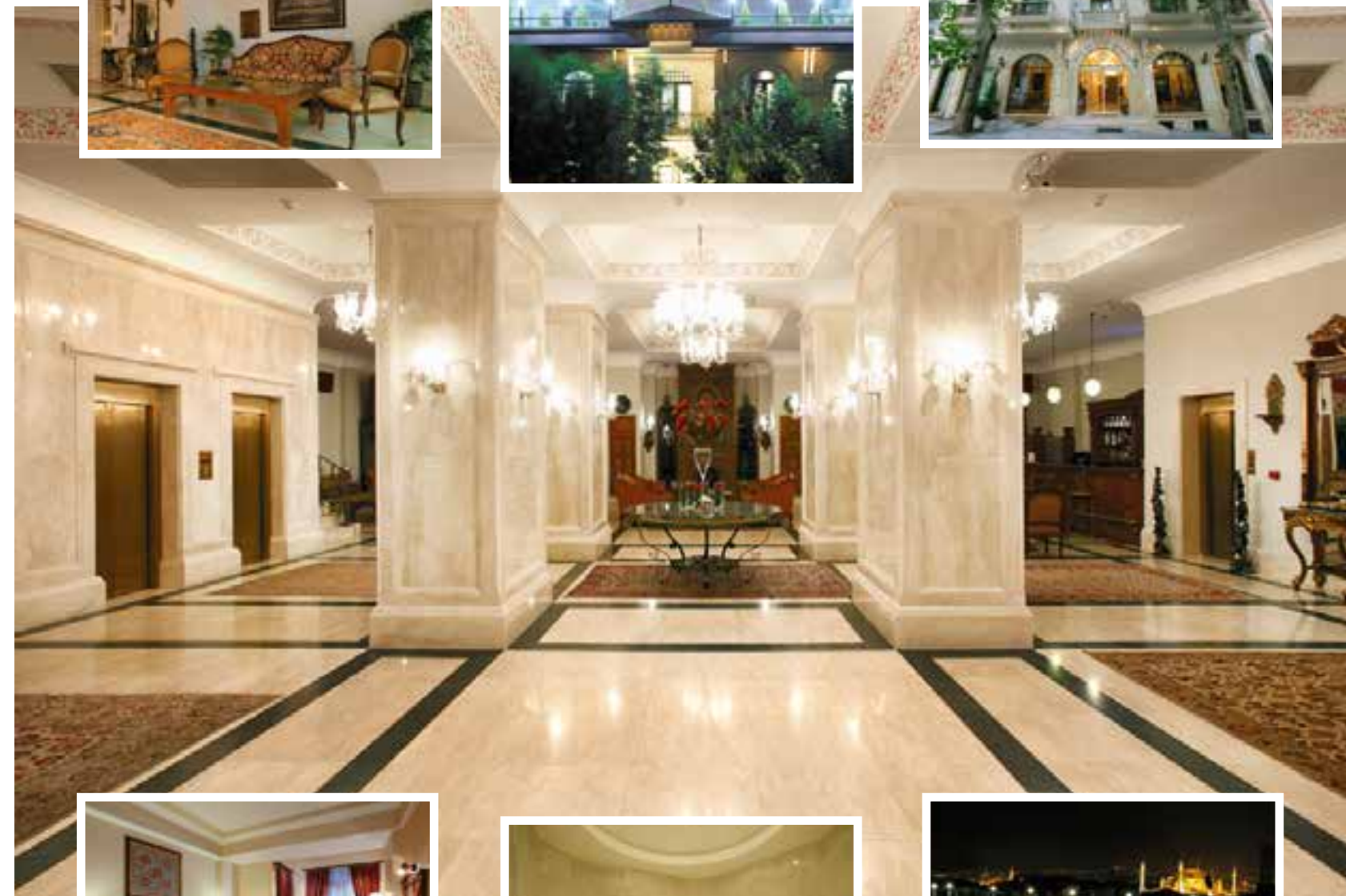
TUI Germany's Chief Digital Office, Stefanie Wählert, urged travel agencies to share their customer data with tour operators "so we can survive against

industries it was normal to share customer information but this data was still jealously guarded in the travel business. "Our biggest challenge is to find a model to share this data openly between travel agencies and tour operators," he commented.

Many searching questions but few results came in the session with Google's head of travel in Germany, Christian



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# MORE CONCEPT HOTELS

TUI Germany wants to double the number of its concept hotels and will increase the number of exclusively offered hotels by 30% next summer.



In future, TUI Germany wants to increase the proportion of exclusive and differentiated products offered by the main TUI brand to 80% from the current 70%. This will include a sharp rise in the number of own branded hotels, Chief Operating Officer Oliver Dörschuck told fvw in an interview. "Sensimar, Puravida, Magic Life, Viverde and Best Family amount to 89 hotels at present. We want to double this number in the next five years." The target is to have "30-40 hotels per brand", he said.

These concept hotels have higher repeat visitor numbers and are positioned as 'branded product', Dörschuck explained. "We give and keep a clear promise of what customers can expect on holiday – and that consistently across different destinations."

In parallel, TUI will increase the number of hotels that it offers exclusively on the German market by 30% next year. "For summer 2015, a further 130 new exclusive properties will

join the existing 380 hotels," Dörschuck disclosed. This would include well-known resorts such as the Blue Waters in Side, Turkey, which alone has some 20,000 German customers a year.



TUI Germany COO Oliver Dörschuck

The main TUI brand would thus have 80% exclusive offers next year compared to 70% this year and just 20% three years ago. However, with 20% of the products remaining non-exclusive, "there are still

possibilities for long-term good partners" who do not want to link themselves so closely to just one tour operator, he emphasised.

As COO Germany, Dörschuck is responsible for products, marketing, procurement, capacity and yield management, the concept hotels and marketing TUIfly capacity. In addition, he is responsible within TUI Travel for developing the 'customer experience'.

This summer, TUI Germany has stable revenues and customer numbers on an overall basis, according to a TUI Travel pre-close trading update last week. However, the German market leader has seen strong trading since the end of the World Cup with package holidays up by 22%, overall bookings up by 9% and margins ahead of last year.

For winter 2014/15, TUI Germany currently has a 4% rise in bookings but average selling prices are 3% lower, indicating aggressive pricing in order to win back market share.

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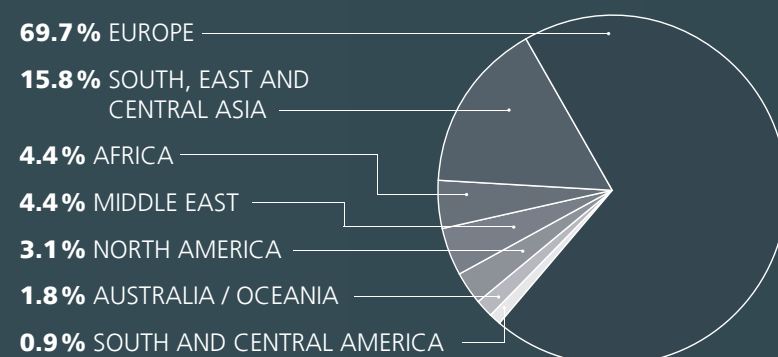
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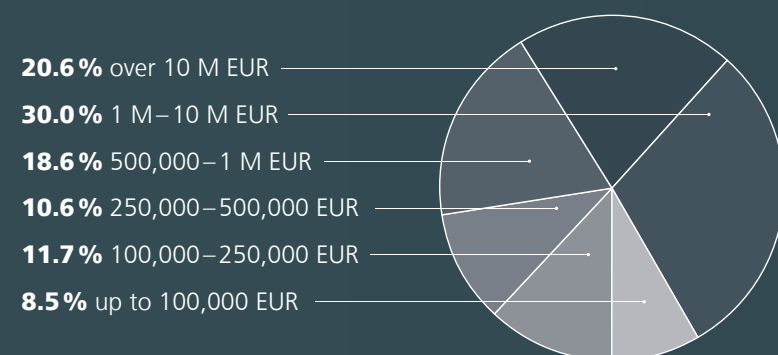
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# ROTANA EXPANDS ITS PRESENCE IN TURKEY WITH LAUNCH OF TRI G PROJECT

Rotana has announced the launch of Tri G - its latest project in the fast-growing Turkish market - located in the province of Güneşli.

The project has been launched in partnership with Mar Yapi, one of the rising stars of Turkey's vibrant real estate sector. Mar Yapi will own a 60% stake in the new project while the remaining 40% will be owned by Rotana and partners.

Located centrally with easy access to transport and in close proximity to major business and tourist attractions, Tri G project is planned with a buildable area of 38,500 square meters on a 7,000 square meter land. The landmark project will include Centro Hotels by Rotana brand with 152 rooms on eight floors, a total of 153 residences on 17 floors and 2,500 square meters of commercial space, in addition to a comprehensive range of facilities that will service the hotel rooms and serviced apartments separately.

"Turkey is a key growth market for Rotana and we are very excited to partner with Mar Yapi to further expand our presence in the country with the launch of Tri G project," said Nasser Al Nowais, Chairman, Rotana. "With its striking design, unique living spaces and extensive range of business and community facilities, Tri G will be a landmark project in the country."

Münir Özkök, Chairman of Mar Yapi, said, "Rotana is a pioneer in the hospitality sector in the region and it's a privilege for Mar Yapi to launch this ambitious project in partnership with such a reputed and long-standing player in the regional hotel scene."

The Tri G project lies on the Basın Ekspres Yolu, which connects the busiest and most important transportation axes of Istanbul - the D100 and the TEM motorway. Basın Ekspres Yolu further facilitates traffic flow to the city by linking the Atatürk International Airport to the rest of the city, being a connecting

road traversed by approximately 200,000 vehicles each day.

Designed as a single 30-storey tower by Suyabatmaz Demirel Architects, Tri G project features a unique, spectacular design that won first place in Architectural Review's Future Project Awards in MIPIM 2013. The project, to be built in an entirely triangular form pointing toward the sky, is poised to become a major city landmark with its stunning contemporary architecture and offers occupants generously spacious areas on each floor.

## CENTRO HOTELS BY ROTANA CONCEPT

Centro Hotels by Rotana is a lifestyle brand that offers convenience, style and comfort for the smart traveller on an affordable budget. As the name suggests, Centro properties are usually located at the heart of business or commercial districts in major cities across the region. The Centro hotel, which is part of Tri G project, is designed to meet the demands of the new generation of travellers who seek both finesse and functionality at reasonable rates, and offers a range of facilities including a fully-equipped gymnasium, spa, business centres, meeting rooms, complimentary Wi-Fi and more for the convenience of its guests.



# White House Hotel

White House Hotel Istanbul is located in the heart of the historical peninsula and it is within walking distance to Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Topkapı Palace, Archeology Museum, the Basilica Cistern, Grand Bazaar, Spice Bazaar, the Millennium Stone and Byzantine Hippodrome, which are the most important landmarks of the city. White House Hotel Istanbul is the ideal starting place for exploring this Ottoman capital city's endless historical sites, museums, restaurants, clubs and shops.







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This year 9 million transit passengers have passed through Istanbul airports. While the great increase in the number of hotels is bringing the hoteliers into action, the campaigns are being launched so that these passengers stay in Istanbul at least one night.

# ‘DON’T JUST PASS BY STAY OVERNIGHT’



The president of TUROB Timur Bayındır says, “With 1 million additional overnights, it is possible to earn an additional tourism income of 1.8 billion dollars.”

The president of TUROB Timur Bayındır says, “With 1 million additional overnights, it is possible to earn an additional tourism income of 1.8 billion dollars.”

The massive increase in the transit passenger numbers of Istanbul airports, which have become a very important connection point for the other international airline companies, particularly for the Turkish Airlines (THY), has brought the hotel managers into action. The research done by the Touristic Hotels and Investors Association (TUROB), based on the data of the General Directorate of State Airports Operations (DHMI) and Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism in relation to the January-September 2014 period has put forward interesting results.

According to this, while the number of transit passengers keep increasing, the share taken by the transit passengers from the overseas passengers who use the two big airports of Istanbul has reached a rate as high as 51.2 per cent. In other words, one of every two overseas passengers arriving Istanbul pass by in transit.

The hotel managers desiring to turn this great increase in the transit passenger number into an “advantage” for the sector are getting ready to start a new campaign. In this context, cooperation opportunities with THY and the other airlines will be looked for. With the said cooperation, the offering of a 1 night-stay advantageous ticket price to the transit passengers and the addition of a city tour to this package are among the plans.

## 1.8 Billion dollars may be gained

The president of TUROB, Timur Bayındır assesses the situation and says, “We are planning to perform a joint study in cooperation with the sector players, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and airline organizations, so that a part of the transit passengers stay 1 night in

Istanbul.” Bayındır has drawn attention to the fact that more than half of the total 17.6 million international (foreign) passengers using our airports between the January-September 2014 period, that is to say 9 million people, have only passed in transit through the airports and flew to other countries. He says, “We think that we can earn an additional income of 1.8 million dollars with 1 million additional overnights due to the study we will conduct.”

Pointing out that in parallel with the increase in the number of passengers using Istanbul airports the number

of transit passengers has increased considerably, Bayındır expresses, “We have detected that the increasing air traffic of many airline companies, especially THY and Pegasus Airlines, in particular at Sabiha Gökçen Airport, hosts many transit passengers as well as its contribution to the tourism of our city.” Bayındır has put forward that with this study they aim to give exact information to the public and the sector through detecting the possible effects of the passengers, who use the airports, on the city tourism.







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In the city centre, Osmanbey metro station 350 meters, Atatürk Airport 20 km., walking distance to Taksim Square, Istanbul Lütfi Kırdar Convention & Exhibition Centre. And also Sütlüce Convention Centre is only 6 km.. Biggest shopping mall in the city; Cevahir and many other shopping malls take a few minutes by car or on foot.

#### RESTAURANT & BARS:

Ege Restaurant serving open buffet breakfast & A la cart'e lunch and dinner. Sota Kebab & Pizza, Lobby lounge, Lobby Bar, Patisserie.

#### GUEST ROOM FACILITIES:

Individually controlled air conditioning system, lap top size electronic safe box, direct dial telephone, Pc & data port, wireless & cable high speed internet (60 Mbps), Interactive 32" LCD TV, minibar, hairdryer, iron and ironing board, smoke detectors and sprinklers, complimentary tea and coffee making facilities, Black - Out curtains operating by remote control, comfortable working environment, Ottoman Chair, bathroom telephone, scale, bath sound system from TV, make - up mirror, Onyx Bathroom with bathtub, rain shower, standart rooms has only shower, emergency button, electronic door key system, door lock chain, outdoor electronic display for housekeeping services, door ring, carpet ground, restricted openable window.

#### SPA CENTER:

Fitness centre, indoor swimming pool with jacuzzi ( 15m x 5m), kids pool, changing rooms, Turkish bath (hamam), male & female sauna and steam rooms, health & beauty centre, massage rooms (facial & massage treatments chargeable), women & men coiffeur.

#### HOTEL SERVICES:

Laundry and dry cleaning service, baby sitter (chargeable), doctor (chargeable), 24 hours room service, free shoe shine service, underground car park, business centre, safe deposit box, luggage store room, message delivery service, gift shop, minimarket, evening turndown service, facilities for disabled guest, wireless & cable high speed internet (20 mbps), Club floors and private lounge for this floor, concierge services, laptop rental, exchange services, VIP transfer (upon request - chargeable), satellite & Digiturk channels, pillow menu, rent a car services.

#### MEETING & BANQUET FACILITIES:

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# 2015 IS GOING TO BE A TOUGH YEAR

Alkoçlar Hotels & Resorts affixing its signature with its boutique hotels in Bodrum, Kuşadası and Çeşme to the Aegean Region, with mountain hotels to Uludağ, with the mountain hotels abroad beyond our borders and with city hotels to Istanbul, keeps its growth moving without slowing down.

**HALİL ÖNCÜ**

The experienced tourism professional Metin Peltek, appointed as the general manager of Alkoçlar Kemer Resort of the group located in Antalya Kemer, has assessed the 2014 season and shared his predictions about the 2015 tourism season.

Expressing that the tension between Ukraine and Russia has influenced the German and Russian markets, Metin Peltek has said, "2014 summer season started well but ended in frustration. The civil wars in Ukraine and Syria have upset the balances of our biggest markets Germany and Russia. Unproductive political conflicts have affected people negatively and they have lost their wish to go on holiday. A no-confidence environment has developed.



Metin Peltek, the General Manager of Alkoçlar Kemer Resort Hotel said, "2015 will be a tough year in terms of costs and guest preferences."

The agents have asked the hotels to revise their prices in order to overcome this situation. They, themselves, have taken big risks on flights.

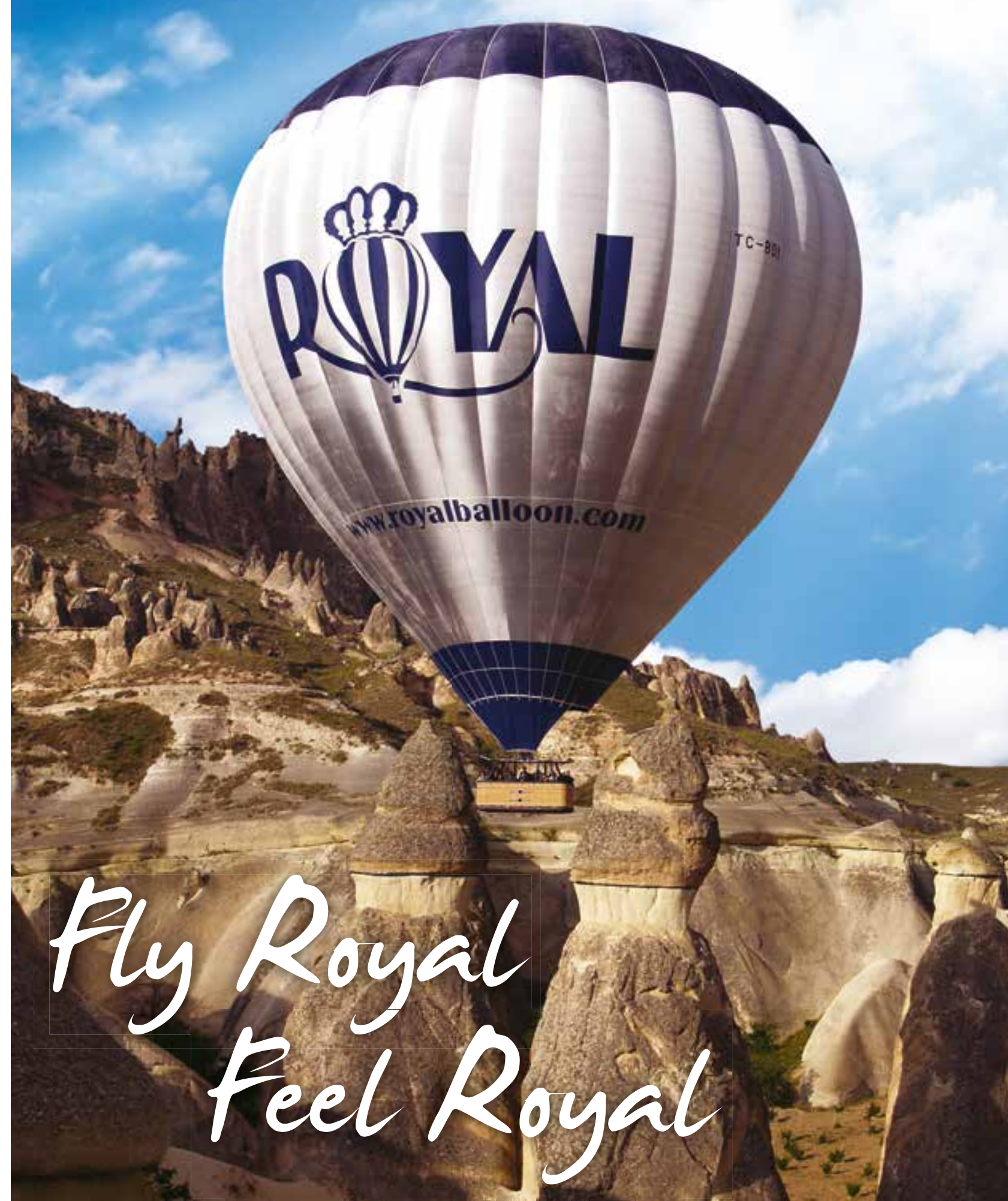
In the end, perhaps the projected numbers and occupancies will be reached but the income of all the shareholders will decline. In the recent months the aggravation of the war and showdown has forced us into more

pessimism. Eventually, the guests will recognize Turkey and will come again for the good products. But this arrival will be a costly one for the hotel managers. Although the increase in the exchange rate prevents cost increases 2015 will be a tough year in terms of costs and guest preferences."

## WHO IS METIN PELTEK?

Metin Peltek, one of the experienced people of the tourism sector has served in his working life, which started in 1988, as general manager in Marmaris Laguna Hotel, Çanakkale Kolin Hotel, Unsaphire Hotel, Kemer Daima Resort Hotel and lastly Kemer Grand Haber Hotel respectively. Still the general manager of Alkoçlar Kemer Resort Hotel, he held the presidency of KETOB (Kemer Association of Hotel Owners) between 2008 and 2012. Still vice president of the same association, Peltek is a member of AKTOB Executive Board, POYD (Professional Hotel Managers Association), SKAL (Association of International Tourism Professionals) and the ROTARY club in Çanakkale and Antalya.

Alkoçlar Hotels & Resorts keeps its growth moving without slowing down. Most recently, the group has incorporated Alkoçlar Kemer Resort located in Antalya.



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# TURKEY 6TH MOST VISITED COUNTRY STATS SAY

Turkey has now become one of the leading countries in the global tourism sector as a result of the investments it started in 1982 and increased in the 2000s.

According to data compiled by the Turizm Aktuel Magazine, while Turkey was in 20th place on the list of most visited countries in 2000, now it has leaped to sixth place, leaving 14 countries behind. While the number of tourists visiting Turkey was around 4.4 million in the 1990s, when tourism was becoming an industry, the figure increased to around 10 million in the 2000s. In 2010, Turkey obtained an important place in the world market with more than 30 million tourists visiting the country each year.

Now Turkey is one of the most preferred tourism destinations globally with its sea, sand, sun and historical and natural wonders. With important investments and by utilizing alternative tourism resources located in the country, it is expected that Turkey will reach

fifth place on the most visited countries list.

One of the targets for celebrating the 100th anniversary of the foundation of the Turkish Republic in 2023 is the aim to welcome 50 million tourists and increase tourism revenues to \$50 billion. Since Turkey is located in between Europe, Asia and Africa, it is easily accessible from these three continents with flight distances ranging around five hours.

By turning this advantage into an

opportunity and with the third airport and other similar investments, Turkey will stay ahead of the game. According to data from the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, there was a 7 percent increase in the number of tourists in the last eight months when compared to last year. While mostly Russians preferred Turkey as their holiday destination, Antalya became the region most popular among foreign tourists.

Antalya, which accounts for 75 percent of the whole tourism sector, and Istanbul and Muğla have witnessed an 8 percent increase when compared to last year. The number of Russians visiting Turkey increased by 13 percent, reaching about 3.5 million, and was followed by 3.3 million German tourists. The number of British tourists also increased by 4.4 percent, reaching 1.8 million.



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## Your Legendary Chateau in Pera...

Palazzo Donizetti Hotel, named after the musician Giuseppe Donizetti who lived in Beyoğlu in the times of the Ottoman Empire, opens an era for your accommodation rituals in Istanbul.

Palazzo Donizetti is a specially designed, boutique hotel near Istiklal Street, also suitable for business. The building that was traditionally used as a guesthouse carries footsteps throughout the years, and lives today combining elegance, luxury and comfort. Glorious Italian Carrera marbles, antique Italian Venetian colors, stained glass lighting in addition to high ceilings with classic motifs and golden foils were used in this historical hotel in Istanbul.

Palazzo Donizetti's 105 year old antique elevator also presents a nostalgic Beyoğlu experience as one of the most important hotels in Taksim.







The general director of ICVB Özgül Özkan Yavuz says, "ICVB has made great contributions to city to acquire this position which was ranked as 8th in the world ranking with 146 congresses."

# WE ARE TRYING TO REINFORCE THE ISTANBUL BRAND

ICVB's executive board consists of the leading names of public and private sectors.

**HASAN ARSLAN**

Özgül Özkan Yavuz, involved in the tourism sector since 1997 and serving as the General Manager of Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau-ICVB for four months, has shared with the *Turizm Aktüel* readers the works of ICVB, Turkey's first destination marketing office, and the future route of Istanbul tourism.

*How was ICVB, which makes great contributions to the promotion and branding of Istanbul in international*

*platforms, established? What kind of structural changes has it undergone since it was established?*

ICVB, Turkey's first destination marketing office, was established in 1997 as a non-profit, impartial destination promotion and marketing organization within TUGEV-(Tourism Development and Training Foundation). ICVB's executive board members have consisted of the leading names of the public and private sectors since it was

established. This structure has made a huge contribution to the development of ICVB. ICVB affiliates the private sector organizations. ICVB has a member profile composed of the companies active in tourism and MICE sectors such as the convention venues of Istanbul, 5 and 4-star hotels, agencies which organize congresses (PCO/DMC), restaurants and service suppliers.

ICVB's works can be summarized as increasing Istanbul's share in the related market through the promotion and marketing of destination as a whole to the national and international convention sectors, which is in general the same as the functioning and standards of international congress offices. A new development in the last period is that the management of *howtoistanbul.com*, the first official promotional website of Istanbul, has been transferred to ICVB by the Governorship of Istanbul.

With the takeover of management of *howtoistanbul.com* website, the "Visitors" department of Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau has been activated. This development is an important step for our city and tourism sector.

*What is the establishment purpose of ICVB?*

The main purpose of ICVB is to help marketing of infrastructure and organization power of Istanbul in the fields of congresses, conferences, meetings, fairs and exhibitions through promotions at home and abroad. And also to encourage congress and meeting



The general director of ICVB Özgül Özkan Yavuz





sector through branding, to ensure the development of tourism through contributing the promotion of the city and the country.

***What are the main activities of ICVB and what has been done until this day in the direction of the purpose of establishment?***

ICVB carries on promotion and marketing activities with a view to reinforcing the İstanbul brand and ensuring its recognition and market continuity in the congress-meeting sector. We can exemplify these activities as organizing the meeting-congress fairs with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, attending international workshops and sales exchanges, producing and distributing printed-visual materials such as İstanbul Meeting Planner Guide and the like, supporting national associations in the preparation phase of congress nomination files and congress presentations, hosting buyers and association representatives during their inspection and promotional tours in İstanbul, representing our city and country in international platforms as well as attending general assembly, workshops, sales trips and many similar activities of the international organizations and thus developing business opportunities. ICVB manages and maintains all the activities in the direction of its establishment purpose incessantly since it was established.

***ICVB is a member of which of the leading organizations of international meeting sector?***

ICVB is a member of ICCA (International Convention & Congress Association), ECM (European Cities Marketing)

and DMAI (Destination Marketing Association International), the leading organizations of international meeting industry. ICVB has the characteristic of being the single competent body representing İstanbul actively in these organizations.

***What is the importance of congress, fair and conference tourism for İstanbul?***

For this it is necessary to assess what importance the meeting and congress sectors have in general for the destinations. The congress sector ensures the development of the destination. The congress delegates are tourists whose purchasing powers are, depending on their socio-economic positions, 3-4 times more than those of the ordinary tourists and therefore these people, who

**howtoistanbul.com**  
life, arts & culture

have a high level of traveling culture, bring an important liveliness to the commercial life of the city including the hotels, restaurants, museums, places of entertainment, shopping malls, shops, banking and credit card companies, airlines and agencies of the city.

At the same time these delegates have the potential to return to the city again, this time with their families, friends and colleagues. Thus they can be considered as tourists with a high purchasing power, which we hope to increase in number for İstanbul. The power of the word of mouth of these people also plays an important role in the promotion of our city. For instance, in 2013 the delegate number attending 146 congresses organized in İstanbul was nearly 120,000.

It is accepted as a world standard that the average staying period per delegate is 3.8 days and the expense amount per person is 2,424 dollars. The meetings and congresses also bring the scientific world and contribute to upgrade the level of expertise in subjects and fields such as technology and medicine and the progress of academic life. It is decided a long time in advance when and where the congresses will be held and important preparations are made in this process. It is hard to cancel them. Therefore, the congress sector is not rapidly and deeply influenced by the periodical political, economic and similar crises as much as the other sectors of tourism. The convention sector requires qualified infrastructure and service together with design, architecture and technology.

This is to say urban improvement and development for the general image and life of the city. As is known, the congress

sector requires high quality service supply and specialization according to the customer profile and technical equipment and service standards expected from the facilities. This brings along the development and progress in the tourism sector related fields of man power, technology use and so on.

***What is the place and importance of İstanbul in the world congress sector?***

Both Turkey and İstanbul are in the positions of a country and city whose charm increases every passing year in international congress market with the geographical position, historical and cultural riches, developing infrastructure, intellectual capital and tourism offer. Thus, considering the distribution of

the world congress market among continents and countries, it is observed that traditional North America and Western European countries have reached a certain saturation point, on the contrary the share received by the Eastern European, Mediterranean, Middle East and Asian Pacific countries from the congress market increases every passing year. According to the 2013 ICCA data İstanbul was ranked as 8th in the world ranking with 146 congresses. According to the same data, as to the congresses of 500 and more delegates, it kept the world championship as in the previous year. ICVB has made great contributions to acquire this position. According to 2013 data, Turkey has achieved to be ranked in the first 20 in the world ranking and risen to the 18th rank.

***The official promotional website of İstanbul howtoistanbul.com has been transferred to ICVB. In this context, what kind of works ICVB will perform in order to develop the website?***

ICVB aims to reach more users through providing the visibility of İstanbul with correct, reliable and updated content in the digital age with “howtoistanbul.com”. In this direction ICVB will carry out some interface works on “howtoistanbul.com” website and make the information in the website more easily accessible and develop new devices through updating the context continuously such as mobile applications, downloadable leaflets and maps which will provide the user with reliable information flow and ensure the easiest access for domestic and foreign visitors to the information they may need about İstanbul; make infrastructure preparations so that the website starts to broadcast in German, Arabic and Russian, and ensure that the website reaches more

users through carrying out promotional activities and social media campaigns.

***What needs to be done so that İstanbul tourism reaches the level it deserves?***

İstanbul is already one of the most visited cities in Europe and the world. In general, our most important problem in İstanbul is the lack of coordination among the organizations especially in the field of marketing. As İstanbul grows, the present capacity in terms of convention sector is increasing on a regular basis. We don't have an infrastructural problem in the congress sector; we have sufficiently large

we need more than that as the sector. İstanbul needs to develop policies in the congress and tourism sectors compatible with the economic strategies of the city and work in close cooperation with the intellectual capital such as universities, research institutes etc. located in the city. One of the most important problems in İstanbul in terms of the congress sector is to collect the statistical data. We know that 146 congresses registered for the year 2013 do not reflect the truth; the number of arranged congresses is a little more than that. For instance



Özgül Özkan Yavuz says, “With the takeover of the management of howtoistanbul.com website, the “visitors” department of İstanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau has been activated.”

capacity congress centers and five-star hotels. However, we need more 3 and 4 star hotels for both the congress sector and the other fields of urban tourism.

The active usage of the historical and cultural places in the congress and meeting sectors has contributed to İstanbul in increasing its charm as a congress destination, but from now on

the universities and all the institutions arranging congresses do not work with ICVB. In this case they cannot contribute to the ranking of our city since they are not included in the statistics. Yet, if these congresses could be included in the statistics, it may even be possible that İstanbul rises a couple of ranks higher in the world ranking.



Alexander Sinigibskiy says, "It is out of the question that the negotiations go on. There is no sale negotiation after all. We have been offered a proposal and we have given a "No" answer."



# Tez Tour is not for sale

The partner and CEO of Tez Tour, Alexander Sinigibskiy, has shed some light on the news made about the sale of Tez Tour.

Alexander Sinigibskiy has denied the news indicating that the negotiations for the sale of Tez Tour to Anı Tour continue. Sinigibskiy, verifying that they have received a proposal from Anı Tour, has said that they have given a "No" answer to this proposal. Sinigibskiy says, "It is out of the question that the negotiations go on. There is no sale negotiation after all. We have been offered a proposal and we have given a "No" answer."

**First of all, do you think about selling Tez Tour or its associates?**

Everything is sellable in commercial life. To sell or to buy is included in commercial life. Just give me a price for my cell phone that I will immediately sell it to you. However, while making news our friends in the press should first evaluate the facts about the object to be sold and the buyer. It must be reviewed whether the person who will buy an international-size company like Tez Tour has this purchasing power or not. Let alone selling, we are continuing to grow

our company. In the recent year, we have opened two new offices, one in Sardinia, Italy and the other in the Southern Cyprus. In Sardinia we have become the number 1 agency within one year. In Southern Cyprus we have taken 4th place in our first season. In addition to all these, we have got into the French market. We will also carry ourselves to a certain place there. Furthermore, we are building a hotel in Minsk. Let alone selling, we are continuing to grow through investments.

**Have you interviewed with the other companies in order to sell Tez Tour and its associates?**

Anı Tour Chairman of the Board Veli Çilsal has visited us. As hosts, we have welcomed him in our hotel. He made us an offer, saying, "We would like to take part in your work, would you sell shares to us?" Of course I said "No" to this offer right away. And on Monday there was the news that this gentleman was going to buy Tez Tour. He has made statements that the negotiations were ongoing. Here is



what happened: The gentleman made an offer and I said "no". Is this considered as a commercial negotiation? Although I have said "no", it is extremely absurd to say that the negotiations are still ongoing.

**Previously there was news about Biblio Globus. Have Biblio Globus made an offer to Tez Tour?**

First of all, I would like to say something: In Turkey Biblio Globus does not exist. Biblio Globus has made no operations on handling. It makes handlings almost nowhere. They are a company, mostly conducting activities in the Russian market and carrying out outgoing services. If there is a matter of coming to the table particularly with Biblio Globus and if a sale is at issue, instead of Turkey, this will be in the direction of purchasing the outgoing of the country sending passengers in order to dominate its market.

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# MOVING INTO HOLIDAY HOMES



HRS chief Tobias Ragge

Leading German hotel accommodation portal HRS is expanding into the holiday homes market with the takeover of Holidayinsider.

The Cologne-based company will acquire the 43% stake of DER Touristik and the holdings of investor Seven Ventures, founder Jürgen Böhm and the management for undisclosed sums, gaining 100% ownership. The deal will further broaden the portfolio of HRS which is still mostly focused on the business travel market but which has diversified more into the leisure market in recent years.



Holidayinsider markets some 880,000 accommodation locations, including holiday homes, apartments, bed and breakfast properties, farmhouses and private accommodation, and claims to have "more than 500,000 satisfied customers" along with "more than 100,000 real customer reviews".

HRS managing director Tobias Ragge said that the current Holidayinsider management team would remain

and the business would be run largely separate from HRS. "The offerings of the two companies complement each other excellently," he commented. Holidayinsider chief Niels Dörje added: "With the international reach of HRS completely new opportunities will be created for Holidayinsider."

The exit of DER Touristik marks a U-turn in its strategy. Germany's second-largest tour operator acquired a 43% stake in Holidayinsider two years ago to broaden its accommodation portfolio. DER Touristik said: "The focus of our online activities lies in DER.com, including the necessary investments."

## HOLIDAY INSIDER



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TÜROFED's chairman of the board Osman Ayık says, "The year 2014 has been very successful for Turkey. We will seize a faster growth in 2015."

# TURKISH TOURISM CONTINUES TO GROW

TÜROFED's chairman of the board Osman Ayık says 2014 season was satisfactory **HALİL ÖNCÜ**

Indicating that Turkey has delivered a very good performance in tourism, Ayık says, "Turkey's surroundings are like a boiling cauldron. There are troubles all around our borders. Despite all these problems the year 2014 has gone well."

## WE ARE TAKING FIRM STEPS FORWARD

The chairman of Turkey's Hoteliers Federation (TÜROFED) Osman Ayık states, "We used to have an increased target at the rate of 8% for 2014. The current indicators point out that this will come true at the rate of 6-7%. And this is a very positive development. If there were not the difficulties experienced by our neighbors which influenced us, this number may have reached upto 10%. In spite of all these difficulties, Turkey has shown a very good performance this year in tourism."

The main reason for Turkey's success in tourism is that there is not a location like Antalya on the Mediterranean basin. Every year Turkey puts in place approximately 20 to 25,000 new beds. Considering country-wide, we can say that this number reaches 50,000. That is to say, such a bed capacity does not exist in any of the destinations we are competing with.

## 2014 HAS BECOME A SUCCESSFUL YEAR

The increasing demand is only satisfied by Turkey. In this way, the number of tourists coming to our country is increasing. As long as there is not a huge trouble or the adverse events around us do not overflow into Turkey, it doesn't hurt to keep the objectives high. Turkey will have a growth rate in the direction of the 2014 objectives in 2015."



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Ahmet Barut, Barut Hotels Executive Board Member says, "As soon as the hotel was opened, we reached an occupancy rate of 65 per cent. Our goal is to reach 70 per cent for in the next year."

# WE ARE OPENING OUR NEW HOTEL IN 2015!

Akra Barut which brings together the city hotel concept of Barut Hotels and the spirit of a holiday has been put into service in Antalya.

Together with Akra Barut, which was opened after the thorough renovation of the old Dedeman Hotel, situated in the heart of Antalya, the number of Barut Hotels, which has been in the tourism sector for 43 years, has increased to 10. Akra Barut, renovated with an investment of 125 million dollars together with the purchase price, has the characteristic of the first city hotel experience of Barut Hotels.

Barut Hotels, offering its guests the expertise it has created over 43 years in the resort hotel management but this time in a city hotel, has opened the doors of Akra Barut, bringing together the city hotel and resort hotel concepts in the

center of Antalya.

Underlying that, Akra Barut has more than what can be expected from a city hotel, with in total 2 ballrooms, 16 meeting rooms and the Executive Floor designed for the comfort of businessmen and businesswomen on trips, Barut Hotels Executive Board Member, Ahmet Barut says "Akra Barut aims to offer its guests the key to an unforgettable holiday with its unique place and notion of service. With Akra Barut, we will reflect our 43-year experience of resort hotel management into the city hotel management."

Barut who states that Akra Barut offers a resort experience in the heart of the city has said: "Akra Barut contains within

itself everything necessary for a healthy life together with the Life Co Healthy Life Center and Akra Fit sport club inside he Akra Health Center, located in an area of approximately 5,500 m2. In addition, we believe that our restaurants in the hotel will be the new taste and meeting address of the city. We aim to make the guests of Akra Barut feel privileged with the offerings offered all day long in the Executive Lounge, from which the guests staying on the executive floor and in suite rooms can benefit from free of charge."

Emphasizing that one of the incomparable privileges offered to guests by Akra Barut is the "infinity pool" of the Ocean, Panorama and Infinity Suites on the



After purchasing Akra Barut from Dedeman for 80 million dollars, a renovation investment of 45 million dollars has been made.



Akra Barut has 471 rooms in total including Deluxe, Executive and Suite rooms.



10th floor, Barut says, "We would like to offer our guest the joy and privileges they have never experienced before. The four-star Akra Park Barut, located opposite the Akra Barut, offers its guests all the privileges promised by Akra Barut, with its 58 rooms and the "for fun" game and entertainment center underground."

Stating that they have made a renovation investment of 45 million dollars after purchasing Akra Barut from Dedeman for approximately 80 million dollars, Barut continues: Our hotel, opening its doors with 471 rooms including Deluxe, Executive and Suite rooms with a view of the Mediterranean and Bey Mountains, promises a lot of great

experiences from the sea to massages and from sports to detox programs. With Akra Barut and Akra Park Barut our personnel capacity has come close to 3 thousand. Therefore, our principal job and sector in which we invest will always be tourism. We desire to make use of opportunities compatible with our future plans and management strategies. Dedeman was such an opportunity for us and we have seized it.

Stating that they were excited in their first city hotel experience as a group that has served the sector for 43 years, Barut continues: "As Barut Hotels we have 10 resorts, and 1 city hotel in total on the Aegean and Mediterranean sea coasts. Our

group, hosting repeat guests at the rate of 47 per cent has received 257 prizes up to this time from Tripadvisor, Holidaycheck, Tui Holly and Travel Life."

## THE NEW HOTEL WILL BE OPENED IN FETHIYE IN 2015

Stating that the construction of a new hotel, having 415 rooms and a 1250 bed capacity, is in progress on the 80 decares of land in Fethiye, Barut says, "Our new hotel will open in April 2015. With the accomplishment of this investment, our group, possessing a bed capacity of 9000, will have reached a bed capacity of 10 000."





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# ICVB HAS A NEW MARKETING PLAN



The General Manager of Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau Özgül Özkan Yavuz says that: This project is supported by Istanbul Development Agency (İSTKA) under the call of the 2014 Istanbul Global Tourism Center Financial Support Programme.



The Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau will keep İstanbul on the agenda as leading congress destination during 2015 with the overseas press conferences, press trip in İstanbul and international advertising campaigns.

The aim of the new Project which will be run by the support of İstanbul Development Agency, is to represent İstanbul effectively towards meeting and congress sector, to make İstanbul as preferred destination and to contribute to increase market share of the tourism sector in İstanbul. İstanbul scored first in the category of conferences over 500 delegates however, ranks 8th in the World with 146 congresses according to 2013 statistics. In this framework, it is obvious

that to increase overall ranking it needed to be achieved also for smaller congresses.

To strengthen the brand value of İstanbul, press conferences will be organized in 2015 May in Germany & in July in UK. Additionally, İstanbul Press Trip will be held in 2015 April. For these activities, ICVB will work in cooperation with national & international PR agencies. Furthermore, ICVB will have an international media plan to promote İstanbul as a congress destination.



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# WE ARE PLANNING TO GROW IN CITY HOTEL MANAGEMENT

The chairman of the Güray Group, Gürel Aydın says that they aim to grow in city hotel management. Aydın states that they are in preparation for a hotel in Cologne and a marina in Bodrum.



Gürel Aydın: We will build a five-star hotel in Cologne, Germany. Our meetings with four big world brands are still ongoing.

Today Güray Group grows both in the construction and tourism sectors consistently. Currently possessing 4 hotels in Datça, Kuşadası, Bodrum and Tophane, the group continues its city hotel construction in Esenyurt. Speeding up the new investments, Güray Group keeps talking with the Sheraton and Hilton groups for hotel investment in Cologne, Germany and prepares to build a marina at Bodrum Haremten Bay. The chairman of Güray Group Gürel Aydın has talked about his success story and new projects in the tourism sector.

*Could you give some information about the tourism investments of your group?*

We have continued the construction works with the concept of hotels and holiday villages. Firstly, we have built a time-share holiday village in Sarıgerme. Then we carried on our activities as business manager in tourism. For instance, we have run Marmaris Palace and Simene Resort Holiday Village. Today we run Bodrum Holiday Resort, Perili Bay Resort in Datça, Kuşadası Golf Resort and Nidya Hotel in Tophane, Istanbul.

*At what stage is your project in Esenyurt?*

In Esenyurt, the construction of Akkoza residence and hotel project still continues next to Akbatı Shopping Center. We are planning to open it at the last quarter of this year. Our target market is businessmen at this area and, of course, those coming from TÜYAP due to the fair organizations. We will open it in the busy season for the tourism and fair professionals. This place will be in the concept of city hotel. However, we have tried to make it a little more different. There are also rooms suitably designed for long term accommodation. An investment cost of 22 million dollars is at issue.

*You also have a hotel project in Germany, don't you?*



We will build a five-star hotel in Cologne, Germany. Our meetings with four big world brands are still ongoing. We are going to continue as a franchise. The manager will be us. The construction will start in 2015 and end in 2017. Previously we have had constructions abroad in Turkmenistan and Bahrain. We have constructed roads and hotels. In Germany, construction work is easy. Their laws are not very different from ours. We will make an investment of 40 million Euros for the project in Germany. It will be a five-star, 350-roomed hotel.

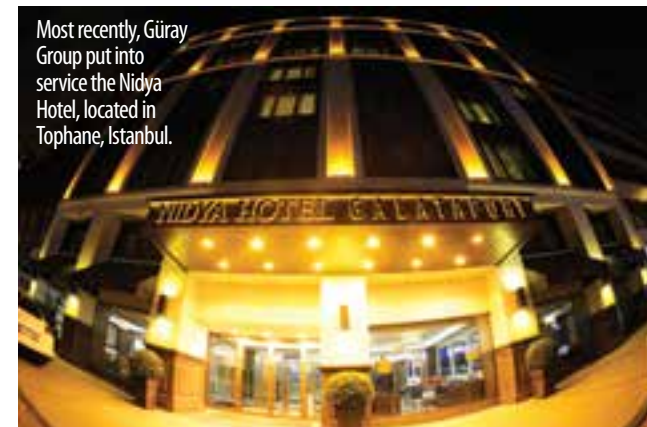
*You have said that you are planning to build a marina in Bodrum. At what stage is this project?*

We are getting prepared to build a big marina in Bodrum with an investment

of 200 million dollars. In the center of Bodrum, there is no marina where someone coming with a mega yacht will land. In the past years, famous American actor Michael Douglas came with his yacht. But he had to anchor offshore. He disembarked with a zodiac boat. This is a shame for Bodrum. When this problem is resolved, more celebrities will come to Bodrum. We will build a marina with a berth capacity of 700 at the Haremten Bay. 40 of them will be intended for mega yachts. This is a huge investment of 200 million dollars. We receive proposals from many big groups with regard to this project.

*Could you give some information about the investment plans of Güray Group?*

We aim to grow in city hotel management as it is less risky. City hotels are less risky. They are easier in terms of planning. You can employ fewer employees. If we are pleased with the first hotel we are going to open in Esenyurt, we will consider the second city hotel. In Istanbul our meetings for several more projects still continue. We review every project we approve in the central places such as Taksim, Sultanahmet and Galata districts.



Most recently, Güray Group put into service the Nidya Hotel, located in Tophane, Istanbul.





## Kenar Çıtlamalarına ve Kırılmalarına Son



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# AN EXPERT ON ISTANBUL





# TURKEY'S THERMAL SPRINGS AWAIT THOSE SEEKING ULTIMATE RELAXATION

With more than 1,000 thermal springs that are renowned for their healing, relaxation and wellness properties, Turkey calls for those who are looking for the ultimate relaxation holiday. **SENA ALKAN**

Health tourism is rapidly developing around the world and Turkey is one of the countries that is often considered by tourists travelling to find a cure for their ailments. As part of Turkey's health tourism, spending a holiday at natural thermal springs – known as kaplica in Turkish – is gaining popularity for both local tourists and people coming from abroad, especially Arab countries. Many believe these thermal springs have healing properties, which is why the elderly are particularly attracted to them, although they can provide a fun holiday for any age group.

The ancient Romans were the first to

discover the therapeutic effects of these springs in Turkey. With more than 1,000 thermal springs reflecting the country's geological and historical beauty, Turkey provides a rich experience for those who are looking for some centuries-old relaxation and health benefits at the many thermal springs scattered across western Anatolia. When the season changes and the weather turns cold, you may feel that all your choices for a relaxing holiday are over until spring. But with Turkey's thermal spring resorts, unrivaled in Europe in terms of number and curing facilities, a warming holiday continues to call out for you. With one of

the best climates in the world, a unique variety of nature and one of the healthiest diets, Turkey is the ideal destination for psychological and physical rejuvenation. If you're looking for the best spots to spend a holiday at a thermal spring resort. This article has fantastic destination suggestions for travels of all ages and budgets.

## PAMUKKALE

Known as Hierapolis in Greek, Pamukkale – cotton castle in Turkish – is seen as a gift of nature by those who visit. Pamukkale was included on UNESCO's World Heritage List in 1988 based on its natural and cultural wonders. Famous for its hot springs and travertines – terraces of carbonate minerals left by flowing waters – Pamukkale is located in western Turkey and calls for those who

for skin problems as well as seeing the amazing travertines that enable one to witness the kind of beauty that nature is able to create.

Where to stay: Richmond Pamukkale Thermal Hotel is a perfect choice for those who want to experience the thermal springs and luxury at the same time.

## ÇEŞME

Accepted as one of the most tourist-friendly cities of Turkey, Çeşme is also renowned for its thermal springs mostly in the Ilica and Sifne districts. The town is easily reachable and offers thermal springs, vivid blue Aegean waters and a mild climate. You can visit its thermal resorts during the summer and winter due to the climate, so after swimming in the picturesque Aegean Sea, you can go to your hotel's thermal pool for a relaxing dip.

destination compared to other cities in western Anatolia.

**Where to stay:** The newly established Boyalık Beach & Thermal Spa is a perfect destination to experience a summer holiday and thermal spring holiday at the same time. If you visit during other seasons, you can enjoy the tranquility and mild weather of İzmir while experiencing its thermal springs.

## YALOVA

Yalova is the closest destination to Turkey's commerce capital of Istanbul and that is why it is generally preferred for weekend getaways. A one hour ferry ride on the Sea of Marmara and a short taxi ride will take you to Yalova. Among all thermal resorts in the city, the most well-known is Armutlu Thermal Hotel. This city's thermal springs are rich in minerals such as calcium, sulphates and fluorine and it won the "Best Hot Spring with Beneficial Water" award at a competition held in Rome. The offered facilities include drinking from mineral water springs, an open-air hot thermal swimming pool and Turkish saunas. Like other thermal facilities, Yalova's hot springs are good for rheumatic diseases and arthritis. It is said that by drinking the water one can prevent teeth decay and stomach and intestinal diseases. The healing elements of the springs has also been analyzed and endorsed by Istanbul University.

**Where to stay:** Thermalium Wellness Park Hotel & Spa is located in the Uvezpinar district in Termal/Yalova with one main hotel building and three separate villas. The main hotel building consists of 80 luxurious rooms and there are four private thermal pools, two outdoors pools – one with cold water and two with hot spring water.



are looking for a relaxing experience. There are dozens of remains from the ancient city of Hierapolis as well as Greek monuments around the city. With remains from different civilizations, natural wonders and pure white travertines formed from hot calcium-filled mineral waters, Pamukkale has three different thermal regions – Sarayköy, Karahayıt and Gölemezli – that contain hot springs and mud baths. In Pamukkale, visitors can spend a day or just a few hours experiencing an organic treatment

According to research conducted by the Çeşme Hotels Union, the thermal springs in Çeşme have healing effects for diseases such as rheumatism, joint diseases, tissue rheumatism, psoriasis, acne, eczema, varicose veins, genital infections and high or low blood pressure. Pausanias, a Greek geographer from the second century A.D., wrote about thermal spring waters, and since then hundreds of articles have been written continuing to praise the thermal waters. Considering its location, Çeşme is a more popular thermal spring holiday



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# WE ARE IN NEED OF EUROPEAN TOURISTS

The chairman of Kemer Promotion Foundation (KETAV) and the general director of Kemer Ulusoy Holiday Village Volkan Yorulmaz has stated that the 2014 season has been a tough one. **HALİL ÖNCÜ**



The chairman of Kemer Promotion Foundation (KETAV) says, "Previously, we used to say that it was okay if there are no European tourists. But it is not so anymore."



The chairman of Promotion Foundation (KETAV) Volkan Yorulmaz has drawn attention to the fact that the sector has an extremely aggressive structure. Stressing that the year 2014 has been a tougher year than 2013, Volkan Yorulmaz said, "There are many reasons for this. In 2013, our biggest competitor Egypt was nearly absent."

But they have made a serious access to the market in 2014. They have applied an extremely aggressive price policy in order to recover the losses. Consequently, we have lost out a significant number of guests to Egypt. As is known, Kemer is a destination dependent on the Russian market. Especially in May and September we have frightened the Russians away. Compared to the last year, there is an increase of 80,000 people in the Russian market only in September. The Russian market, which is our principal destination, gives serious signals for all the tourism professionals working in this market.

## The tourism sector is very aggressive

We must perceive the signals correctly and make an action plan accordingly. Today you cannot work just sitting. The period of "happy surprises" has gone. The

sector is extremely aggressive. Spain, Italy, Egypt and many other destinations attack in the market aggressively. We must analyze this correctly, feature our strengths and move a move. We must improve our strengths more, fix our weaknesses and prepare for the next season. The works to be conducted in order to recover our losses in the Russian market must be long-running. Because the tiniest neglect of this market causes serious losses. And the others immediately fill the void we have created in the Russian market. We must always be active in the Russian market. Tourism is not done from where you sit. If we ask for better, we have to work for it."

Expressing that the sector must get out of the standards and create market diversity, Volkan Yorulmaz says, "Sticking to charters and agencies, it is not going anywhere. There are very serious declines in the European market. Kemer has lost the European market in the last 4-5 years. As soon as there is a little problem in the Russian market, we start to grumble, "But, where are the Europeans?" In fact we had forgotten the European tourists. We used to say "It is okay if there are no European tourists." But it is not so. We

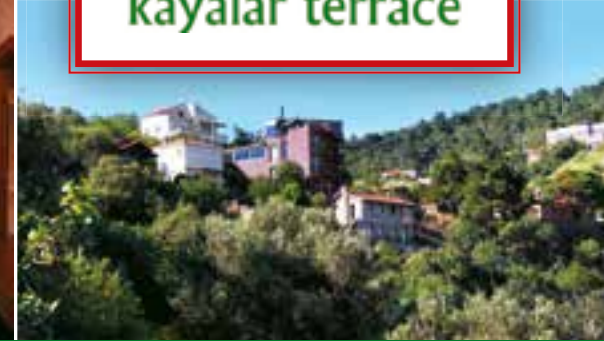
immediately feel the lack of them with the tiniest problem in the other markets. We are always in need of European tourists.

We should not pass the European tourists over. Every hotel must necessarily reserve places for the European market at the rate of 15-20. Because you never know what tomorrow will bring. We see all together what happens in the world. We must attach importance particularly to the domestic and European markets in order to spread the risk. I believe that Kemer will rise again in the European market and regain the potential it has lost.

## We can provide advantages in the Russian market

There are troubles not only in Kemer but also in the Side-Manavgat region. Also in these regions new searches have begun. This can be an advantage for Kemer. In the meantime we can seize an advantage in the Russian market. Because of the visa squeeze of the European Union the route of the Russian will turn towards Turkey. I think that in the next season we will enjoy the advantage of this situation. Yet still, we should not behave in a relaxed manner relying on this."

*You will be spoiled*



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# DEDEMAN OPENED BOSTANCI PROPERTY WITH A COLORFUL EVENT

Dedeman Group inaugurated its new property, Dedeman Bostancı, with a colorful event. The 252-room Dedeman Bostancı is the 16th hotel of the group, and offers a great accessibility to its guests thanks to its central location. **HASAN ARSLAN**



The ceremony, hosted by Dedeman Group Chairman Rifat Dedeman, Dedeman Turizm Yönetimi A.Ş. General Manager Emrullah Akçakaya and Dedeman Bostancı General Manager Nadir Kadakal, was attended by approximately 500 guests, who enjoyed a delightful evening. Murat Dedeman and Banu Dedeman were also among the hosts of the event, which was presented by Ece Vahapoğlu; while colorful socialites such as Selin Habbab Özkaynak, Hediye Güral Gür and Ebru Işık were among the guests. The evening's entertainment was enlivened by Ritim Grubu, who performed in hotel uniforms and with hotel equipment, a first in Turkey. Their performance was followed by Ceren Aksan & Eva String Trio, and finally



by the big surprise of the evening, the band Model, who wowed the audience of respected names from the business and professionals with their songs.

Rifat Dedeman thanked the guests for attending the inauguration ceremony of Dedeman's New Star Dedeman Bostancı, and expressed his pride in contributing to the Turkish tourism with their new hotel. "We are proud to add a new hotel, 'Dedeman's New Star Dedeman Bostancı' to the Dedeman brand, Turkey's first international hotel chain, which has been operating for almost 50 years. As Dedeman Group, we are proceeding with our domestic and overseas projects unabated to make our contribution to the tourism sector, which is over great strategic importance to our country," Rifat Dedeman said. "We will continue to develop creative and pioneering applications for the sector with our Dedeman and Dedeman Park brands. We are hosting approximately 1 million guests in 16 domestic and overseas hotels annually. And we are planning to serve our customers with a total of 42 hotels

in the next ten years, with 20 Dedeman and 22 Dedeman Park hotels." Rifat Dedeman also expressed his gratitude to project investor Nuh Çimento Group's Shareholders, Chairman Tevfik Bilgin and his team for making the project come true. Dedeman Turizm Yönetimi A.Ş. General Manager Emrullah Akçakaya, in his speech in the inauguration ceremony, said, "We will open Dedeman Park Bostancı and Dedeman Park İzmailovo, Moscow in the coming months. In 2015, we will begin welcoming guests in Dedeman Park Levent, our fourth hotel in Istanbul, which is currently under construction next to Kanyon Shopping Center."

Dedeman Bostancı features 178 Superior rooms, 32 Deluxe rooms, 32 Executive rooms, 9 Executive Suites and a Royal Suite. The hotel also caters for large-scale events and organizations with 13 meeting rooms ranging from 30 to 720 square meters, and offers an exceptional service to its guests thanks to its professional team.

Dedeman Bostancı has a variety of restaurants and bars, allowing for

a delightful time any hour of the day. Bostancı Restaurant, located at the lobby floor, offers a rich selection of Turkish and world cuisine in a pleasant and spacious setting. Located at the top floor with an amazing view of the Prince Islands, Adalar Roof Restaurant features a menu of local cuisine, prepared with the freshest of seasonal ingredients, while Adalar Roof Bar serves appetizers and aperitifs. With its spacious interior and garden, Lobby Lounge & Bar is the perfect place for business or social meetings with a menu of sandwiches, salads, cakes and pastries served throughout the day, while the Vitamin Bar inside the Life Style club is set to become the premier location for a boost of energy and health.

Dedeman Bostancı also offers an alternative take on modern and stylish weddings with its special occasion services, central location, ballroom and a wide variety of decoration options.

Located inside Dedeman Bostancı, Life Style Health Club features an indoor swimming pool with ozone sterilization, children's pool, fitness center, apparatus pilates, massage, sweat room, sauna and Turkish bath for unwinding and relaxation.

The opening of the 110-room Dedeman Park Bostancı in 2015 will mark the first time that Dedeman and Dedeman Brands will operate side by side.





# RADISSON BLU HOTEL KAYSERİ OPENS IN TURKEY

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group opened the Radisson Blu Hotel, Kayseri in Turkey. It is the group's 10th operating Radisson Blu property in Turkey.

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group opened the Radisson Blu Hotel, Kayseri in Turkey. It is the group's 10th operating Radisson Blu property in Turkey and further strengthens Europe's largest upper upscale brand known for stylish & sophisticated design, unique service concepts and the service philosophy Yes I Can!.

The Radisson Blu Hotel, Kayseri is centrally located in one of Turkey's fastest growing and most modern cities. The 244 rooms and suites provide guests with gorgeous views and with signature services such as free high-speed internet access.

Leisure and business travellers alike enjoy the hotel's beautiful wellness centre including a traditional Turkish hammam, steam bath, indoor pool with jet streams, thermal pool, solarium and gym. Four restaurants and bars delight every plate – the menus feature local and international dishes as well as famous Turkish desserts. A stunning rooftop restaurant & bar offer panoramic views over the city and the nearby Erciyes Mountains.

Kayseri is one of Turkey's industrial centers and has a rapidly growing



commercial life. With its upper upscale and well-equipped meeting & event spaces, the Radisson Blu hotel is set to become a preferred choice for conferences and private events in the city. The property comprises eight elegant meeting rooms as well as a grand 808-square-metre ballroom.

"Kayseri has always been an important business destination in Turkey and is attracting more and more visitors", comments Mehmet Mulayim, General Manager of the Radisson Blu Hotel Kayseri. "We are proud to add an outstanding product to the city's supply and look forward to hosting national and international business and leisure travellers", added Mulayim.

Kayseri also features beautiful historic monuments from the bygone days of the Seljuks and Ottomans. The ancient region of Cappadocia is only 68 km away – fascinating tourists with its unique history and famous landscapes.



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# RENOVATED, REFRESHED AND GOT YOUNGER



Akkanat Holding Sales and Marketing Director Volkan Çavuşoğlu: We have even renovated the details that are non-visible inside the walls and we call this face transplant-“Face-Off”.

This is exactly what the tourism means... Never stopping, being open to the innovations, being fresh, lively, energetic, young and reflecting all these.

**HASAN ARSLAN**

**T**he tourism professional who do these will gain, catch up with the times and not experience difficulties. One of the well-established hotels of Antalya Belek, Sirene Belek Hotel, was renovated some time ago. And it was not a habitual one. A sum large enough to build a medium scale hotel in many regions has been spent for this renovation. Later, the corporate identity of the hotel has changed. Sirene Belek Hotel is now younger and more modern. Furthermore the family, children, entertainment and sport facilities, have been more highlighted. Akkanat Holding Sales and Marketing Director Volkan Çavuşoğlu has talked to the Turizm Aktüel readers about the Sirene Belek Hotel, which renewed its vision, mission, corporate identity and as an outstanding

value added to Belek district.

***Sirene Belek Hotel has undergone a great renovation. Could you explain us why you needed this change?***

Sirene Belek Hotel, located at Belek, one of the most beautiful points where the eye-catching green of the pine trees and the fascinating blue of the Mediterranean Sea meets, opened in 1992. And since then, it has been providing services to its guests as an important value that Belek possesses. We have renovated our facility physically in order to serve our guests with our younger and more modern style as part of our intention to take this value higher. Our renovations included but were not limited to these, of course. We have designed the corporate identity of our facility over again. Bringing many innovations for the first time in Belek and



The physical change of Sirene Belek Hotel has been reflected on its corporate identity. A “mermaid” figure becomes prominent with the inspiration taken from its name.



Antalya tourism for more than twenty years, our hotel proceeds on its way with the same resolution and firm steps.

***While starting this change, with which motto did you set off?***

We have not changed the soul of Sirene Belek Hotel; we have recreated its body. We can accept this as our motto.

***Could you tell us about the details of the renovation work conducted at your hotel?***

We wanted to make a move in order to adapt rapidly to the changing dynamics of the era. Together with the renovation works conducted from head to foot, “the family, children, entertainment and sport facilities” already highly featured in the spirit of Sirene Belek Hotel, have been emphasized even more. Our lobby that welcomes the guests, villas that offer

comfy accommodation, Palace buildings and rooms, restaurants standing out with their taste and quality, bars and all the general places have been renewed. We have even renovated the details that are non-visible inside the walls and we call this face transplant-“Face-Off”. We have completely recreated the body of Sirene Belek Hotel from head to foot without changing its soul. And we will continue to offer our guests our good-humored, qualified service with our staff reaching 450 people in summer, protecting price-value balance from now on as well.

***How much has this renovation work, which has recreated Sirene Belek Hotel, cost?***

We have spent enough to build a medium scale hotel in many regions in order to render a better service to our

guests and uplift our hotel’s image.

***What kind of changes have been done in the corporate identity of Sirene Belek Hotel?***

The physical change of Sirene Belek Hotel has been reflected on its corporate identity. While a “mermaid” figure is becoming prominent with the inspiration taken from its name, a new Sirene logo symbolizing the turquoise and navy-blue sea of Mediterranean has been created. Wrapping itself in a warmer and more sincere form, the hotel will send from now on messages from the mermaid Sirene to the guests for an unforgettable holiday. Sirene Belek Hotel will continue to be one of the most sincere holiday destinations from now on as well with Antalya Golf Club at its doorsteps, green areas, large pools and special child clubs.



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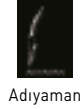
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Istanbul has ranked first for three consecutive years since 2011 for hosting congresses with 500 and more participants, says Başaran Ulusoy, on Ankara's efforts to diversify tourism products.

# 'TURKEY STILL A TOURIST ATTRACTION DESPITE REGIONAL TURMOIL'

Despite turmoil in the Middle East and recession in Europe, Turkey continues to be an attraction for tourists, says Başaran Ulusoy, the president of the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB). **BARÇIN YINANÇ**

Foreign tourists are continuing to choose Turkey as a holiday destination despite military conflicts that are continuing in the country's bordering regions.

"We expect to have 42 million tourists coming by the end of the year and tourism revenues reach \$35 billion," Başaran Ulusoy, the president of Association of Turkish Travel Agencies (TÜRSAB) told the Hürriyet Daily News, adding that this would mark a 6 percent boost in the number of tourists compared to last year.

One of the reasons why Turkey has been less affected by the adverse effects of the turmoil in the region is the changing

perception about the country, Ulusoy said. "Turkey is not the same country as it was during the first Gulf crisis [in 1991]. People know that Turkey is a secure country," he added.

## *How has the Turkish tourism sector fared in 2014?*

We live in a country whose fate is dictated by geography. We have turmoil in at least nine countries [in the vicinity] from Ukraine to Egypt and from Iraq to Libya; Europe is in recession. Yet despite all of this, we have grown around 6 percent. According to data from the Culture and Tourism Ministry, the number of tourists coming to Turkey in the month of July

reached 5,214,519 with an increase of 13.52 percent compared to last year. In the January-July period the number of tourists increased by 6.84 percent, reaching 20,452,740.

In the first seven months [of 2014] we saw serious increases in tourists coming from Iraq, Iran, Greece, Russia, Bulgaria and the United Kingdom. If we add to this the travels of Turks living abroad, we expect to have 42 million tourists coming by the end of the year and tourism revenues to reach \$35 billion. In 2000 we had only 10 million tourists.

Turkey has taken important steps to become a landmark and in fact, we have

combined all the regional landmarks from the Aegean to the Black Sea and from the Mediterranean to the southeast, creating a national brand name and promoting it at international forums.

## *To what degree has the surrounding turmoil affected tourism in Turkey?*

Obviously it has had a psychological affect; we have tried to minimize the effects, but the world knows that Turkey is not the Turkey of the first Gulf crisis [in 1991]. Turkey is a safe country. Obviously it's impossible not to be affected, so we are trying to diversify our tourism products.

## *Turkish tourism is known for the concept of sea, sand and sun. Have the efforts to diversify succeeded?*

The majority of foreign tourists' preference for Turkey continues to be sea-sand-sun. Yet the perception is changing. We have made important advances in culture, health and congress tourism. According to the data of International Congress and Conventions Association (ICCA), in 2013, Turkey ranked 18th with 221 congress while Istanbul ranked eighth with 146 congresses. Istanbul has ranked first for three consecutive years since 2011 for hosting congresses with 500 and more participants. In the health sector, we used to send our patients abroad; now foreign patients who came to receive health services continue to come for a healthy life. We have a country with 17 yacht harbors, and we have been encouraging the visits of cruise lines.

In the past, Antalya used to get nearly 40 percent [of the tourists]; now Istanbul gets 32 percent and Antalya 31 percent. Istanbul has sun and sea but it has also health, culture, shopping and entertainment. I believe we have succeeded in diversifying our tourism products.

Turks have also become more involved in tourism compared to past years. Turkey has explained to its people that a holiday is a necessity, not a luxury. The concept of early reservations are becoming more widespread. In 2013, 13 million Turks traveled; of those, 8 million went abroad. Our target is to have 35 million Turks making touristic travels by 2023.

From a country that expects tourists to come, we have turned into a country that sends tourists abroad. In the past, I could not get an appointment abroad; now those who did not even give an appointment have lined up to host us.

## *So foreign countries have started chasing Turkish tourists?*

In year the 2000 I could not get an appointment from Greece. Today Greece's best customer is Turkey.

We tell those who ask for visas from us: "Shame on you. A day will come when we will ask for a visa from you." Turkey is hosting 1.6 million refugees.



Başaran Ulusoy,  
President of Association  
of Turkish Travel Agencies

We no longer go abroad to seek jobs; those seeking jobs are coming to Turkey.

Currently we have been invited by 17 countries. Everybody wants Turkish tourists; this is what I hear everywhere I go: Bring us more Turkish tourists, Turkish Airlines (THY) should increase its flight numbers in order to carry more tourists.

## *How did the growth strategy of THY affect Turkish tourism?*

It affected it tremendously. A significant portion of tourists who visit our country come by air travel. According to the statistics of 2013, 71.25 percent of tourists who visited Turkey came by air. We are talking about an airline company which has 264 planes with the biggest number of destinations. Turkey now has 51 airports.

## *Turkey is also a tourist attraction*

*due to its historic and archaeological richness, yet there are complaints that Turkey's development is taking place at the expense of its historical and natural richness.*

It is unfortunately very difficult to conserve authentic values. We should not touch the old. Sinan [the famous Ottoman architect] could have built a 50-story building in the old town, but he did not. Those who constructed the Hagia Sofia could have built high buildings, but did they? No.

Construct a new city but don't touch the old one. We should not harm the green and wildlife. Turkey will be one of the countries that will be affected by global warming. We need to be especially careful with the use of water.

## *Tourism revenues are highly important for the country's budget. Do you have a healthy dialogue with the government about the possible adverse effects of development in the tourism sector?*

We tell them our views. But we are one of the few institutions that work in harmony with the Culture Ministry. Through our cooperation, we have secured a 50 percent increase in the number of local tourists who visit museums. We now have a big group that travels and spends money.

## *What is the profile of the Turkish tourists? What are their primary destinations and priorities?*

According to 2014 data, the first five countries that were chosen by Turks were Georgia, Germany, Greece, Bulgaria and Azerbaijan. As for Turks traveling via travel agencies, Italy, Spain, the Benelux countries, Central Europe, Russia and France are the most popular ones.

## *Does Turkey have trouble in attracting tourists from high-income levels?*

Not really; look at Istanbul; you can't find a place in five-star hotels.

## *How about tourists coming from the Middle East. Aren't there any problems there?*

No, they continue to come; the tourism sector has grown this year.

## *But aren't Arab tourists affected by politics? Turkey's image has been tarnished especially among Arab countries.*

No, Turkey is still an attractive country.



# FOURTH HOTEL BRAND FOR SUMMER 2015

German tour operator Alltours is launching its fourth hotel brand for summer 2015 and stepping up product differentiation after low growth this year.

Germany's fifth-largest tour operator will close the 2014/15 year with low growth. Revenues increased by 1.4% to €1.5 billion while customer numbers were 1.2% higher at 1.8 million. "We're very satisfied with this result. We correctly forecast the impact of the football World Cup on booking patterns and have achieved our solidly planned target," said owner Willi Verhuven at the summer 2015 brochure presentation. The company did not disclose this year's profits after a 5.1% rise to pre-tax profits of €41 million in 2012/13 but stressed that all business units were profitable.

In Germany, where 92% of sales are generated, Alltours had a strong bookings start early in the year but then only low growth until after the World Cup when bookings picked up. Bookings in Austria and the Netherlands were lower than last year. The main product winners were long-haul holidays (+20%) and Greece (+17%)



along with Egypt which generated double-digit growth. Bookings for Majorca, the Canary Islands and Turkey were stable.

Next year Verhuven hopes to increase revenues and customer numbers by a further 2% but he warned that the overall tour operator market might stagnate in



2015. Alltours has "satisfactory" winter bookings at present and is aiming for a 2% rise for winter 2014/15.

For summer 2015, the company is launching its fourth hotel brand to step up its product differentiation. The new 'Sunline' hotels are budget hotels in beach or city locations, and 11 properties will be offered under this brand next summer. In parallel, the other brands have been slightly re-positioned. The 22 'Allsun' hotels, mostly located in Spain, are up-market properties for couples and families with broader product offerings such as sports and wellness. The seven exclusive 'Alltours' properties offer club holidays while the five exclusively offered mid-market 'Holiday Hotels' are targeted at families with children. All other hotels have been sorted into different product categories covering active holidays, comfort and premium properties.

Alltours is keeping prices stable on average for next year, with moderate 2% increases for Majorca and Turkey. After this year's strong growth for Greece, Alltours is cutting prices for the destination by 7% next summer and has added capacity to secure further growth. Overall, the tour operator has increased capacity to more than 2,200 hotels, while new summer destinations include Morocco and Slovenia.



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# EACH ROOM OPENS TO A SEPARATE WORLD

While the hotel was being decorated, all the rooms were created in different and various styles. The fairy chimneys and this unique atmosphere make you feel as if you are in a fairy tale.

**HALİL YÜCEER**

**M**iras Hotel, located at one of the most beautiful holiday destinations of Turkey, Cappadocia Göreme serves with 8 carved rock rooms. The hotel manager, Serkan Aydoğan, has talked about Miras Hotel to Turizm Aktüel.

*Could you tell us about the Miras Hotel?*

Miras is a boutique hotel with 8 carved rock rooms, each one decorated differently, sticking to the unique natural structure of Göreme, where the history and the present time meet and transform into comfort.

*Where does the name “Miras” come from?*

Cappadocia is a unique, different region listed on the UNESCO’s World Heritage List. We have decided on the name “Miras Otel” considering all these natural beauties as the most precious treasure from the past.

*What kind of features does your hotel have?*

Each one of our 8 carved rock rooms has been decorated taking into account the ease and comfort of the guests. We have paid attention to offering various options from hot tubs to Turkish baths. One of my favorite features is the pictures decorating our walls, created with the hand work of our stone masters. The works belonging to the Traditional Turkish Art and these pictures add a magical and mystical air to the rooms.

*How do you offer the cave hotel to your guests with a different point of view?*

Our hotel has been put in service after a difficult renewal process lasting 2.5 years. We host our guests in a point between the past and present by offering a different point of view to the carved rock hotels. By offering this natural beauty and comfort at the same time, we provide our guests with a unique experience.

*How does each door of your rooms open to a different world?*

Yes, we can say that the door of each room opens to a different world. While decorating the hotel, we paid attention to that each one of them offered different, various tastes. It is possible to meet different beauties and surprises at each room. You can see from the window of your room colorful balloons exactly like a rainbow at the first light of the morning and the dance of pigeons at sunset in the evening. The fairy chimneys and this unique atmosphere make you feel as if you are in a fairy tale.

*What differentiates your hotel from the others located in your region?*

Our region already has a beauty of its own as a whole. We have only tried to add comfort and ease to the beauty we were in. We are trying to meet all kinds of demands and expectations of our guests so that they have the experience of staying in these unique carved rock rooms in an unforgettable and pleasant manner.

All rooms of Miras Hotel are made up of carved rocks which bring about a different point of view.

The hotel manager Serkan Aydoğan says, “We host our guests in a point between the past and present.”



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# THE APPLE OF THE BOSPORUS' EYE SU MERDUM BOUTIQUE HOTEL

A new deluxe hotel has come to the Bosphorus. Su Merdum Boutique Hotel, put into service by the young woman entrepreneur Selda Uluğ, has been opened in Beylerbeyi.

The 13-deluxe room hotel which has taken its name from the word “Merdum”, meaning “apple of the eye” in Persian, has cost 15 million dollars. Su Merdum Boutique Hotel, the project of a young woman entrepreneur Selda Uluğ, has been put into service on the asian side of Istanbul. For this 13-room hotel, located in Beylerbeyi, an investment of 15 million dollars has been made. The accommodation prices at the hotel vary between 300 Euros and 1000 Euros. This project was realized with the restoration of Sakine Hanım kiosk and has an Ottoman feel. The kiosk, restored faithfully in the historic fabric, has been decorated in the Neo-Ottoman style. The chandeliers used at the hotel, which stands out with the gilded faucets in the rooms, are crystal. The paintings decorating the hotel walls and some other accessories have been brought from France. There is an open swimming pool at the hotel whose garden, set in an area of 15 decares, is surrounded with historic trees. There is a spa service within the hotel.

Selda Uluğ, the owner of one of the ambitious companies of the construction sector, Otyum Construction Co., is taking a step into the tourism sector with the Su Merdum Boutique Hotel project. Pointing out that the hotel has been put into service after an investment process of 2.5 years, Selda Uluğ said that she has taken care of the decoration personally. Saying, “This hotel is the apple of my eye”, Uluğ has drawn attention to that the name SU is the initials of Selda Uluğ and Merdum means “apple of the eye” in Persian. Expressing that this project is the start, Uluğ has noted that new hotel projects will go ahead.



Pointing out that the hotel has been put into service after an investment process of 2.5 years, Selda Uluğ has said that she has taken care of the decoration personally.

Stating that they aim to create a hotel chain in the hotel sector, Uluğ has given the following information about the new projects: “We have places in Balat, Gayrettepe and Kavacık. We are also looking for a place in Karaköy, a new popular destination in Istanbul. We will have hotels in these places as well. We are planning a hotel which will include a shopping mall in Kavacık. We have a

150-200 roomed residence project in Gayrettepe. In Balat, it will be a boutique hotel project. I mean we aim to be a hotel chain in the hotel management business.

## THE AIR OF AN OTTOMAN PALACE

Stressing that Su Merdum is open to all walks of life and expressing that their main target market is the Arabian, Azeri, Russian and European businessmen,



This project realized with the restoration of Sakine Hanım kiosk has an Ottoman feel.



There is an open swimming pool at the hotel and a garden, set in an area of 15 decares, surrounded with historic trees.



Uluğ has expressed that they offer VIP service at the hotel. Saying, “Our objective is to render services to the domestic and foreign tourists, businessmen and company meetings in Istanbul and to lead the field” Uluğ continues, “Su Merdum Boutique Hotel where you will feel the Ottoman magnificence as if on a trip into history and which has 13 deluxe rooms bearing the names of Ottoman sultans

offers 24/7 quality-oriented service to its guests. In the rooms, prepared to meet all the needs and comfort of the guests, there are hot tubs, special cash boxes, special security system, Led TV, Satellite broadcasting and free Wi-fi. You can watch

the silhouette of the Bosphorus from the Terrace by Merdum, designed to hold six tables with a portable front. We provide the convenience of arrival to the Su Merdum Boutique Hotel by the sea with the boats from a special port, as well as by land.



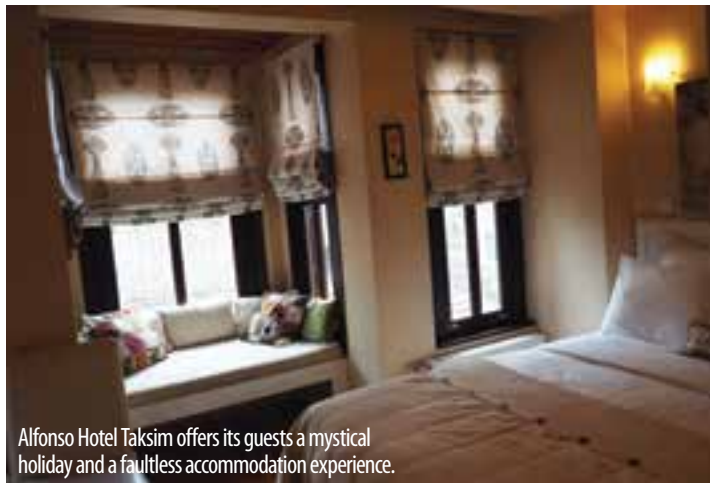


Otçu carrying his success in hotel management to business management has put Alfonso Hotel Taksim in service.



# THE SUCCESSFUL HOTEL MANAGER HAS BECOME A BUSINESS MANAGER

One of the successful people of the tourism sector Haluk Otçu will now use the 34-years of experience he has gained in the sector for the success of his own hotel. **HALİL TUNCER**



Alfonso Hotel Taksim offers its guests a mystical holiday and a faultless accommodation experience.

The tourism professional Haluk Otçu having 34-years of experience in the tourism sector and having worked at various hotels as the general manager has become a hotel manager with Alfonso Hotel Taksim. Otçu, who will keep the success he has achieved in hotel management in business management, has brought into service Alfonso Hotel Taksim.

There are 8 rooms at Alfonso Hotel

Taksim, located in Üftade Sokak opposite the Hotel İstanbul. Specifying that the hotel was renovated from top to bottom before the opening, Haluk Otçu said that they have given İstanbul a very clean cozy otel. Expressing that Alfonso Hotel Taksim also creates a difference with its rich breakfast menu; Haluk Otçu said that there is also a breakfast service to the rooms in the hotel.

Located in Taksim, where the heart of

İstanbul beats, and therefore having all the advantages of its position, Alfonso Hotel Taksim is of 300 meters from the nearest underground station. Stating that it provides a great convenience for the guests that the hotel is close to the city center and walking distance to the charming places of İstanbul, Haluk Otçu emphasizes that they try to make their guests have the perfect accommodation experience.



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# FLAGSHIP OF CANAKKALE TOURISM

The only 5-star hotel of Çanakkale, Kolin Hotel, continues to be the flagship of Çanakkale tourism.



The General Director of Kolin Hotel Ahmet Pinar says, "Kolin Hotel, the only five-star hotel in Dardanelles and the only five-star hotel within the triangle of Izmir, Bursa and Istanbul, is a privilege for the guests all by itself."

The General Director of Kolin Hotel located on the historical Gallipoli Peninsula, Ahmet Pinar has talked to Turizm Aktüel.

## Can we get to know Kolin Hotel?

Kolin Hotel is perfectly a five-star hotel, located in central Çanakkale, having 274 rooms with 670 bed capacity, located on the beach with 650 meters of coastline, providing services for all kinds of congress/meeting organizations, accommodation with its activities and professional staff.

Our hotel, located at a distance of only 3 km from the airport, is at a distance of 20 minutes from Martyrs' Memorial and Troy, 60 km from Assos /Behramkale / Kestanol, 60 km from Kaz Mountains where the first beauty contest in history

was held, and 30 minutes from Bozcaada ferry quay.

Owing to the location of the hotel, 80% of the rooms overlook the Gallipoli Peninsula, which has an important place in the glorious history of our Republic, and Dardanelles Strait and we are proud of rendering top level services to our guests with both the modern decoration and the comfort our hotel offers.

## What services do you offer in terms of congress and seminar organizations?

The Megaron Convention Center is in a position to host congress, seminar, training sessions and launching organizations with its 250 square meters foyer area, 16 pillar-free separate meeting rooms which can provide services to 1850 people, and the technical equipment suitable for any needs in every room. Megaron Hall enables automobile companies to exhibit their vehicles to be introduced in the hall with its 650 m<sup>2</sup> space and 6 meters of ceiling height.

The organization enables the participants to spend a pleasant time with the flood-lit football pitches, basketball, volleyball and tennis courts, beach and heated outdoor and indoor swimming pools, and open-air grass activity areas. That our hotel is close to the natural, historic and cultural areas constitutes an advantage for it provides richness to the contents of the social programs.

Kolin Hotel is the only five-star hotel in

Çanakkale and the only thorough five-star hotel within the triangle of Izmir, Bursa and Istanbul, which is a privilege for the guests all by itself.

The first distinctive features that springs to mind are the presence of sports activities in different options, outdoor and indoor swimming pools, Turkish baths that the world has been fascinated with throughout history, Finnish Bath, Sauna and SPA centers and walking tracks, à la carte restaurants offering specialties from Turkish and international tastes for special dinner parties. The fact that these features combine with a wonderful panorama overlooking the Dardanelles Strait and Gallipoli Peninsula, which comprises the martyrs' monument, helps to keep the positive feedback coming from our guests on a high level.

## Could you evaluate the guest profile of your hotel for us?

We are carrying out our activities in the tourism sector with a portfolio consisting of incoming groups making Anatolian tours, guests of corporate companies, adult and student groups of the domestic market, incentive, meeting and congress groups and additionally individual guests.

In the first years, we used to offer services intensively to tourist groups consisting of student groups and ANZAC countries. In the process of time, in addition to the tourist groups arriving from the USA, Australia and New Zealand and visiting Dardanelles, many Far and

Middle Eastern countries, particularly Japan have been added to this portfolio. Furthermore, the Latin American market has gained an increase in the recent years.

Our hotel has 16 pillar-free separate meeting rooms, with a person capacity changing between 20 and 850, at the Megaron Convention Center with the simultaneous interpretation infrastructure and all the technical equipment.

Since 2003, our hotel has become the first choice of many institutions and organizations in this market as a result of the intense works conducted on domestic incentive organizations and eventually put its signature under the international organizations.

## What do you do as the hotel management to provide a qualified service and make it sustainable?

The physical competence of our facility, trained professional staff, fast operation capability, qualified service and employment continuity enable us to make this possible. I would like to emphasize that we are a hotel with a sustainable sense of quality where the guest satisfaction is primarily taken as a basis; our staff work in a healthy and secure environment, hygienic food production and service are made, our resources are used carefully depending on the principle of respect for nature, waste sorting is carefully applied for recycle.







# TURKISH MARK ON JATA

JATA, the biggest tourism fair of Asia, held successfully in Japan's capital Tokyo **HALİL YÜCEER**



JATA, the biggest tourism and travelling fair of Asia, was held between September 25 and 28, in Tokyo, the capital of Japan.

In the fair, where Turkey has also been represented, the Turkish stands have attracted great interest of the Japanese.

JATA, organized every year uninterruptedly since 1964, was attended by 730 companies, organizations, institutions and establishments, 131 tourism professionals and visitors from 154 countries.

This year Turizm Aktüel Magazine has attended the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) Tourism Fair as the single magazine attending it from Turkey. The magazine prepared by Turizm Aktüel as the special edition for JATA Tourism Fair has attracted a great deal of attention. Turizm Aktüel's special edition has been distributed to the visitors and participants during the fair free of charge.

On the fair special edition of Turizm Aktüel, in addition to the history, culture and touristic riches of Turkey, destinations such as Istanbul, Cappadocia, Çanakkale, and Pamukkale have been given wide coverage to.

As well as many agencies and hotel representatives from Turkey, the municipalities of the provinces such as Şanlıurfa, Sivas, Balıkesir, Mardin, Diyarbakır, Kastamonu, Bursa, Gaziantep, Burdur, Konya and Isparta have opened stands and taken part at the fair. Among the recently rising trends in tourism Turkey's stand has attracted great attention at the fair.

At Turkey's stand, which has attracted the greatest attention, promotional videos presenting the worth-seeing historical and natural beauties of Turkey have been shown to the visitors.



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## LOCAL STREET FLAVOURS FROM PERA PALACE HOTEL JUMEIRAH



Pera Palace Hotel Jumeirah has added the local street flavours of the Pera region not only to its main menu, but to the room service menu as well. Karaköy's fish and bread duo, the roll and the Damascus Dessert (Şam tatlısı) of Istiklal Street and many other flavours can be ordered by the hotel visitors. The same dishes are also served in Orient Terrace, the open space of the hotel. İlke Alpaslan, the Food and Beverage Director of Pera Palace, said: 'We prepared our street flavours menu so that our touristic visitors staying at our hotel could taste these flavours of our culture and the Pera region without going out of the comfort of their rooms. Our menu includes 'Fish and Bread', 'Adana Roll', 'Chicken Roll', 'Turlish ravioli', 'pide with minced meat' and 'Şam tatlısı' (Damascus Dessert) which could be found in places near our hotel and our guests are highly interested in trying them.

## Lazzoni Hotel enters into the sector ambitiously

Lazzoni, transferring its leading stance in the furniture sector to the tourism sector has made an ambitious entrance into the sector with its five-star hotel, which draws attention with its architecture. The most important locomotives that will take Lazzoni Hotel to the heights of the fields of accommodation and service are Gürhan Sayar, an experienced director in the sector and Swedish Andreas Erni, considered as one of the best 10 foreign chefs in Turkey.



## Turkey's Müzekart available via online ticket company

Müzekart, a card that provides yearlong free entrance to more than 300 state-run museums and archeological sites across Turkey, will now be available for purchase through the ticket seller Biletix. Representatives from the Turkish Association of Travel Agents' (TÜRSAB) museums branch, the Istanbul Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, and online ticket company Biletix signed a new agreement this week enabling Biletix to sell the ministry-issued Müzekart as well as single entry tickets to state-run museums and archeological sites, according to a press release issued Tuesday. Previously, Müzekart could only be obtained from kiosks at ministry-run museums, the Ankara Müzekart head office and selected travel agencies, and online at [www.muzekart.com](http://www.muzekart.com) with a credit card.



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# HEALTH TOURISM SECTOR SETS ITS EYES ON ELDERLY EUROPEANS

A recent informational panel session held by the Turkish Association of Travel Agents (TÜRSAB) in İstanbul has encouraged travel agents to focus on the elderly population of Europe, where there is growing interest in medical treatments in Turkey, with various government grants also being introduced via presentations to businesses by specialists from government agencies. **HALİL TUNCER**

**T**he focus on the ageing population of Europe was underlined by all the speakers at the panel session, who took to the floor on separate sessions and drew great attention from sector representatives. It was mentioned repeatedly during the presentations that the number of people seeking medical treatment in Europe is 150 million annually, comprising a great opportunity for the Turkish health tourism industry.

The panel session was organized by the health tourism subcommittee of TÜRSAB, which was established in 2006 and has 60 members. Speaking at the event, Davut Günaydın, one of the board members of the health tourism committee under TÜRSAB, lamented on the lack of a strong union for companies in the sector which can bring everyone together, saying that TÜRSAB has long been working on this issue in order to fully utilize the potential of the country.

Günaydın also demonstrated a SWOT analysis of health tourism in Turkey. The strengths of the country include

relatively cheaper prices of services, a young population and a wide range of products offered by health centers in Turkey, according to Günaydın. The lack of coordination among companies in the sector, however, was cited as Turkey's weakness. While the ageing population of Europe forms an opportunity for Turkey, the main threats against it are competitive markets abroad and infectious illnesses such as Ebola, said Günaydın.

The event, which was held at İstanbul's Lutfi Kirdar Congress Hall on Wednesday, hosted a great number of travel agents who are interested in health tourism and were keen on learning more about the opportunities for receiving grants in the industry from specialists from government agencies who were encouraging businessmen to expand their operations.

An assistant specialist on small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) at the Small and Medium Industry Development Organization (KOSGEB), Erkan Muratoğlu, spoke at a panel session

on promoting grants within KOSGEB for business owners operating in the health industry in Turkey. Mentioning that the organization does not provide grants specifically for health tourism, Muratoğlu stated, however, that travel agents can benefit from support from KOSGEB within the health industry.

According to Muratoğlu, companies can apply to KOSGEB to receive grants for the cost of sectoral fair expenditures abroad or can seek support for business trips where the organization covers the entire or half the costs under certain conditions. Enterprises may also be supplied with qualified staff by KOSGEB for their operations in the health industry as well as benefit from consultation programs that will guide them in terms of business strategies, according to Muratoğlu. However, he added, the quotas for grant programs are limited so companies need to apply for them as soon as possible.

Foreign trade specialist from the Economy Ministry Sedat Erdoğan also presented the ministry's support and grant programs to the attendees. The ministry's assistance programs include advertising support on search engines on the Internet in addition to conventional financial grants for marketing activities.

The very first session of the panel session began with a speech by TÜRSAB Chairman Başaran Ulusoy, who outlined a sector analysis based on recent statistics collected by the organization. Ulusoy emphasized the increasing demand for health tourism around the world and called on sector representatives in Turkey to take advantage of this.

Mentioning that the number of people coming to Turkey in 2013 for healthcare services was 300,000, Ulusoy said the number is expected to reach 400,000 at the end of this year, adding that even this figure is insufficient given that the ratio of

revenue generated from health tourism as a proportion of all tourism activities is 20 percent in some countries. The ratio in Turkey is around 8 percent, with health tourism revenues standing at \$2.5 billion compared to total tourism receipts of \$32.3 billion. TÜRSAB's health tourism revenue target for 2023, according to Ulusoy, is \$20 billion. Turkey needs to take advantage of its potential as it is not only a country of sun, beaches and sea, Ulusoy added.

Health tourism is categorized by TÜRSAB as thermal, medical and elderly and disabled tourism. Medical tourism deals with tourists visiting a country for treatment and rehabilitation. While thermal tourism is defined as all activities related to hot springs and hotel services, disabled and elderly tourism is specifically focused on treatments and rehabilitation services for those who are either disabled or elderly.







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## SURGING GROWTH AND A SUNNY LOGO

Fast-growing German tour operator Schauinsland Reisen has grown by a dramatic 24% this year and is celebrating with a 'sunny' new logo.

The family-owned company has regularly grown at double-digit rates in recent years to become one of the country's largest tour operators but has stepped up the pace this year. Schauinsland Reisen expects to increase revenues by as much as 24% to €970 million in the year ending October 31 while customer numbers will rise by nearly 27% to 1.25 million.

This growth has been driven by strong bookings for the Canary Islands, Greece and Egypt.

Schauinsland has had more than 300,000 bookings for the Spanish islands in the Atlantic this year, and over 100,000 customers in Greece and Egypt. Other 'winners' this year include Bulgaria, the UAE and the Maldives while Cyprus has made a strong comeback, with a 60% rise. The

company said it has made a "satisfactory" start to winter 2014/15 with bookings up by 8% and revenues up by 3%. However, average prices have fallen due to strong sales for Egypt which has lower prices. Overall, the company plans moderate revenue growth of 5% in the forthcoming business year. Owner Gerald Kassner said: "We have a very successful and eventful year behind us, and we have again won market share. We see ourselves well-positioned for competition in the coming years."



## Turkish tourism numbers on rise

Turkey witnessed a 7 percent rise in the number of tourists visiting the country in the first eight months of 2014, the Turkish tourism minister has reported.

Minister Ömer Çelik said Sept. 27 that nearly 25.7 million tourists came to Turkey between January and August, compared to 23.7 million over the same period last year.

"This is a very good record because the World Tourism Organization has forecast world tourism growth at 4 to 5 percent this year, but Turkey's growth is exceeding 7 percent," he said. "Tourism in Turkey continues to break records despite there being so much instability surrounding the country," he added.

Germans topped the list of foreign visitors to Turkey, followed by Russians and Britons, according to figures provided by the minister.



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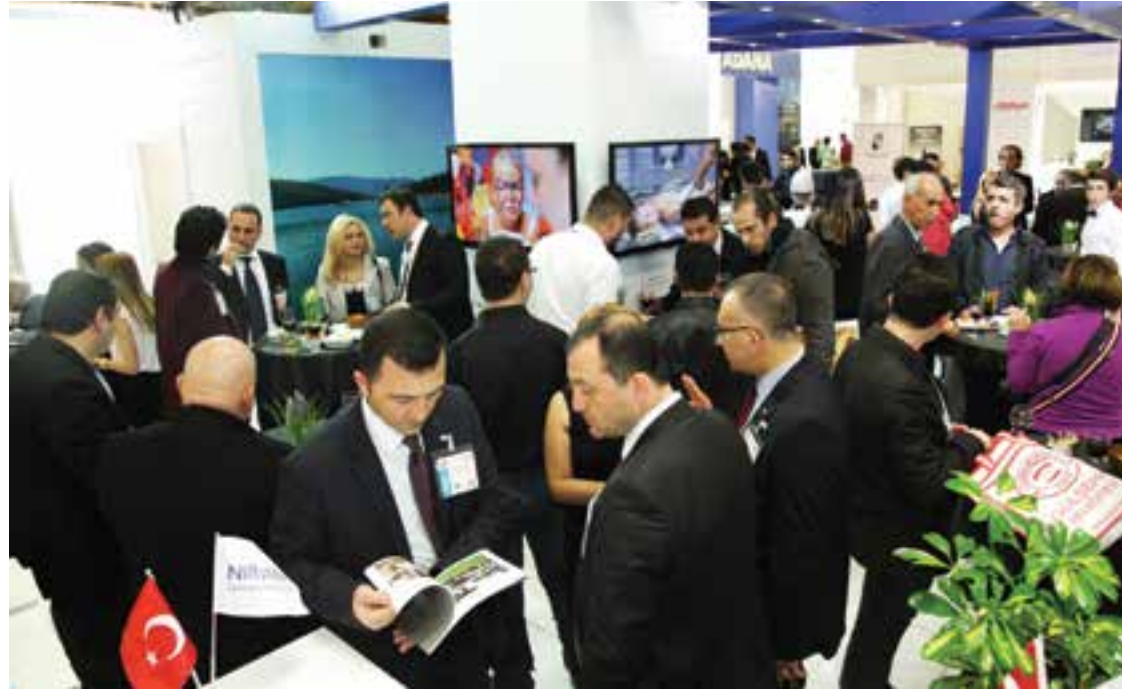


## The German and Austrian media welcomed in Izmir

Swissôtel Büyük Efes has introduced İzmir to the German and Austrian press members after the British and Irish press members. The reporters from Home & Lifestyle Magazine, Darmstädter Echo, Badisches Tagblatt, Lübecker Nachrichten, Business Traveller and one of the most popular bloggers in Germany, Leni Garibov have found the opportunity to explore Kemeralı, the Historical Elevator, Karşıyaka, Ephesus, House of Virgin Mary and Şirince.



## EMITT ISTANBUL FOR WINTER AND MICE



The 19th EMITT Exhibition will place its stamp on health, winter and convention tourism 22 – 25 January 2015 in Istanbul. Rising to the ranks of becoming the world's 5th largest tourism fair, the Eastern Mediterranean International Tourism Exhibition (EMITT) will further emphasize Turkey's vast tourism potential in 2015 with three exclusive halls, dedicated to convention, health and winter tourism. EMITT, the 19th East Mediterranean International Tourism and Travel Exhibition, will take place at TÜYAP on 22 – 25 January 2015.



## ICVB represents Istanbul at the IMEX Las Vegas Fair

The organization of Turkey's stand at the IMEX Las Vegas Fair was carried out again by ICVB-Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau as is the case since 2011. Turkey has been represented this year with a 200 square meters stand at the IMEX Las Vegas Fair, the first of which was arranged in 2011.



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