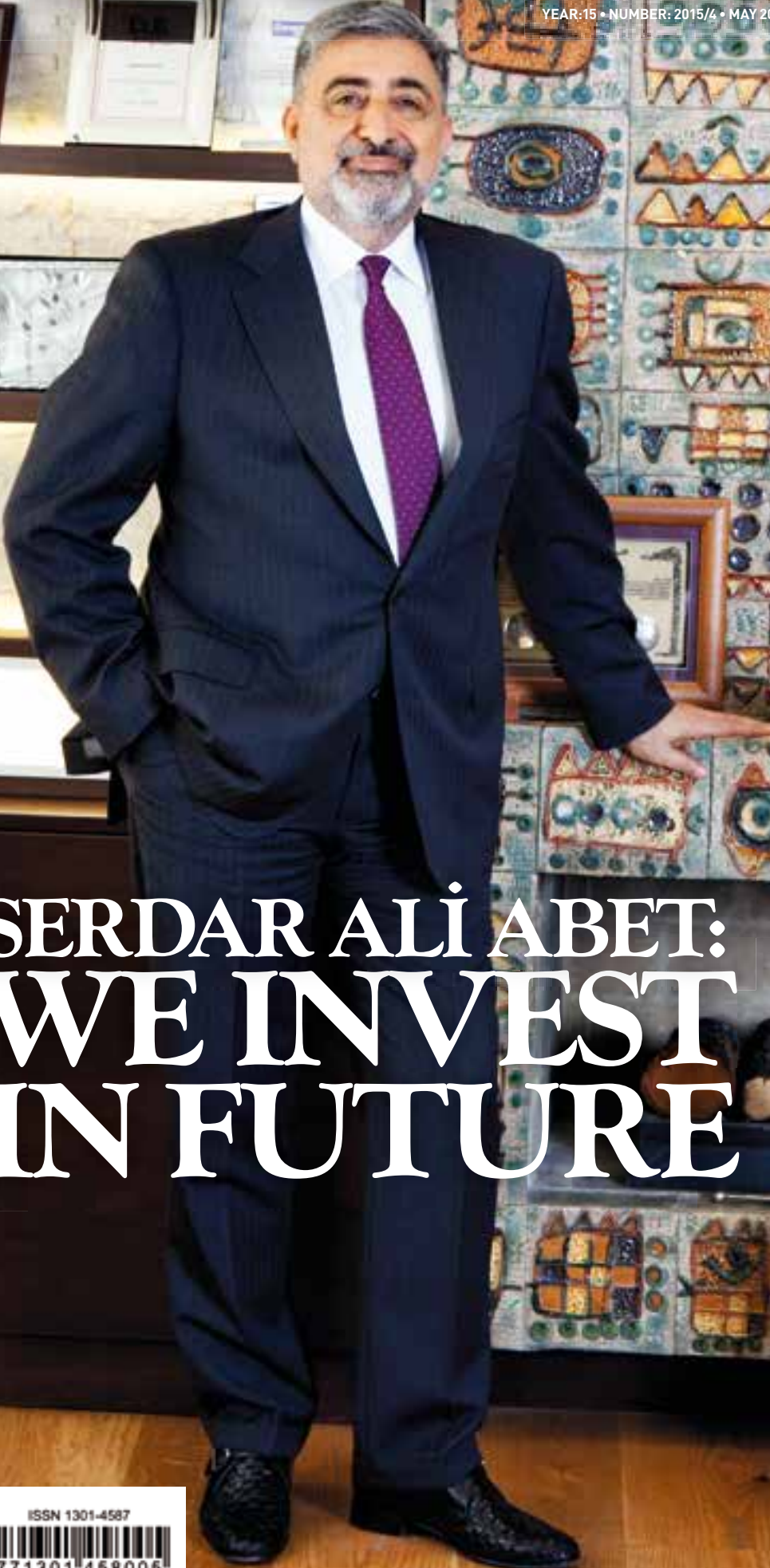




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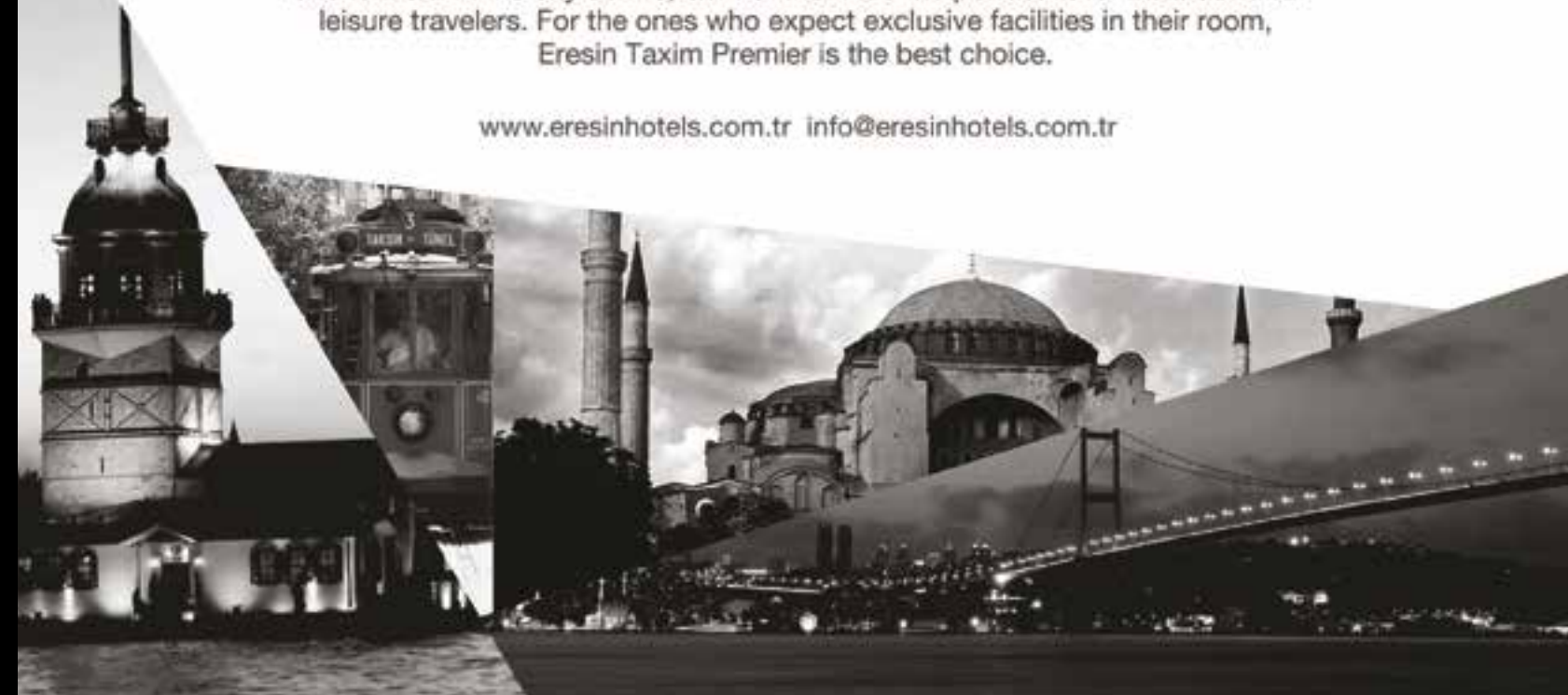
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HOW ABOUT SEEING THE BEAUTIES OF TURKEY ON SITE?

Another year has passed and as "Turizm Aktüel Magazine" we are again in Dubai. It is again time for the show, time for making an impression. Turkey, especially in the recent years, has made a breakthrough in the tourism arena. And this will continue in the same way. Bringing the world tourism industry together, Arabian Travel Market (ATM) Fair has a great significance for the tourism sector. This huge platform, where exhibitors and visitors introduce themselves, exhibit their products, new trends make a debut, and even the tendencies of the new season is determined and future strategies are formed, has great significance also for Turkish tourism.

In 2014, many things have changed both in Turkey and in the world. It was inevitable that such a dynamic sector like tourism would remain uninfluenced. We, as a sector, had challenges again but we managed to ride out the storm. 2015 will be a different year in many aspects. But it will be a year that values and balances will change... Now we are at the ATM Tourism Fair, which is considered as the biggest tourism fair of the Middle East. We will see altogether that Turkey will come into prominence also in this tourism fair. Turkey, especially in the recent years, has made a breakthrough and it has often become a byword in the world tourism arena. The important thing is to leave a mark in people's pleasant holiday memories. Hosting their most pleasant moments... Enabling them to cherish the memories of the Mediterranean and Aegean until the next holiday... They should be dreaming of İstanbul, Antalya, Bodrum, Çeşme, Marmaris, Kapadokya, Bursa, Kuşadası, and the Black sea. The most favorite name of the Mediterranean basin should be Turkey again. The only reason that prevents people coming to Turkey should be a volcano. Otherwise, what could possibly restrain a holiday in Turkey, such a unique pleasure? That's it. This must be said abroad. The Mediterranean region, the address of the youngest and most elegant facilities... Antalya, the irresistible address of a holiday with its nature, sea and sun, the most pleasant brand of Turkey... İstanbul, Antalya, Kapadokya, Çeşme, and Bodrum dream holiday towns...

And Turkey will repeat the appearance made at the ITB Berlin 2015 among the world tourism giants, now at the ATM Dubai with its Antalya, İstanbul, Bodrum, and other touristic centers and all the cultural motifs.

In our current issue you will read the latest news of the tourism sector, interviews each more interesting than the other, the newest information on hotel investments, latest developments of the world and European tourism and clues from the sector before the new season. We look forward to meeting you in our next issue...

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Mehmet Aygün, "The hotel we opened in Belek is one of the honor facilities of Turkish Tourism. On the other hand, the five star Titanic Deluxe Berlin located in a district of Berlin called Taksim, which we opened after Belek, also has 209 rooms."

The future of hotel management shall be written by Turkish chains

Representing Turkish tourism successfully both in Turkey and abroad, Titanic Hotels has initiated a new investment thrust. Getting ready to open hotels one after another in Bodrum and Kocaeli in Turkey, and in Germany and Dubai abroad, Mehmet Aygün, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Titanic Hotels explained the new investments and future plans of the group to Turizm Aktüel. **HALİL ÖNCÜ**

New projects of Titanic Hotels continue without slowing down. What do you consider when you are going to start a new investment?

As a group, we have always taken place in smart projects. Before every new investment we carry out good planning, and then we actualize it. The hotel we opened in Belek is one of the honor facilities of Turkish Tourism. On the other hand, the five-star Titanic Deluxe Berlin located in a district of Berlin called Taksim, which we opened after Belek, also has 209 rooms. Also, there is a fabulous spa and

Turkish Bath in this hotel. Additionally there are the Beef Restaurant, a patisserie and meeting rooms on the ground floor. We created a very assertive facility and we are proud of it. All in all, we determine which region needs investment and we actualize the facilities addressing such needs. Smart investment always gets its rewards.

Could you please tell us about the new investment plans of Titanic Hotels?

We are getting ready to put the Titanic signature on Bodrum. Out Hotel in Bodrum is quite an assertive project.

After that, in September we will open the doors of a 400 room hotel again in Berlin. Thereafter, we will put a hotel into service in Kocaeli.

We construct facilities where there is a need for a hotel. Opening a hotel is not that simple. We act after thinking long and hard. We decide according to the outcomes of the feasibility studies. We determine which region needs what and make out investment accordingly. However when the interest rates are high, getting the return on the investment is very difficult. As a matter of fact, the project which is not confirmed by the

expert report and funded by the bank is not smart. Currently we already have thousands of projects, but we choose the smart ones among them. Now we are considering an investment in Dubai. Next month we will have a meeting with the Sheikh of Dubai there. Insistently they say that they would like to see a 'Titanic Hotel' in Dubai.

Overseas investments of Titanic Hotels as well as other Turkish hoteliers mean the show of strength of Turkish hotel management. What do you think about that?

We would like to include the places where there is a need for a hotel in Europe within the Titanic chain. As the Titanic Group, we would like to be where there is a need for a hotel. We say; Why don't Turkish Hotel chains spread in the world? We all go around the world. We are at a level to compete in the world in terms of both our hotels and management approach. So, why not? I support the spreading of Turkish chains in the world. No one should ever hesitate. In this way, Turkish chains can take their place in history.

Why do Titanic Hotels prefer Germany for its overseas investments?

There is always a positive approach towards us in Germany. We are happy to be there. But our overseas investments will not be limited to Germany. Europe, Asia, Dubai, wherever it is needed, we will open a Titanic Hotel there. The first hotel we opened in Germany is a 3.5 star city hotel with 226 rooms. Its occupancy rate has increased up to 85-87%. It is really a cozy boutique hotel. On the other hand our new hotel in Germany offers much more comfort. This hotel is a facility where Turks travelling to Germany or our citizens living in Germany feel at home. It has characteristic features specific to us.

For instance, there is bidet nozzle in the toilets. This is a very important feature. Besides this, when you switch on the TV, you can watch at least 10 Turkish channels. You can follow Turkish TV series and news from Turkey. Additionally, the Turkish breakfast appealing to Turkish palate is offered among our irresistible features. You can enjoy a Turkish Bath, rub, foam and massage. Moreover there is the Beef Restaurant on the ground floor of the hotel serving 200 people. Here we serve 28 day-aged meat. We attach great

importance to this. Above all, there is the Turkish flag flying on your door. This flag only flies in front of our hotel, except for the Turkish Embassy.

In the past, we used to have a hard time to promote Turkey. Now we are functioning as an ambassador of Turkey in Germany. The features of our hotel are countless. On the other hand, our next hotel will have 400 rooms and also meet the wedding and meeting needs of the 400,000 Turkish citizens living in the region. In addition, there will be a spa and fitness center on the ground floor of our new hotel too.

What are the prerequisites of Titanic Hotels in terms of operation principles?

As a quality principle, we never offer our guests any food that we wouldn't eat. We

don't offer them anything that we don't consider worthy for ourselves. This is our corporate philosophy.

According to you, what is the most important problem of Turkish Tourism?

There is a personnel shortage in the sector. In addition to the personnel shortage, there is also a shortage of personnel who knows foreign languages. Tourism should be supported in our country. In consideration with the fact that the revenue obtained from tourism is 36 Billion US\$, it is also required to invest in tourism. It is very important to eliminate the qualified personnel shortage in the sector. New schools should be opened for this purpose. Everyone in the sector should do their part. I believe that good days are ahead".



Mehmet Aygün, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Titanic Hotels, "As a group, we have always taken place in smart projects."

ICVB conveyed Istanbul to Latin America

An Istanbul breeze has blown through the World Travel Market Latin America Fair, which has been taking place in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



Mr. Bahadır Yasik, Vice President of ICVB Board of Directors, made a statement and said "I would like to thank Mr. Ibrahim Caglar, the president of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce for their support of the tourism of Istanbul".



Participating in the fair for the first time under the leadership of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce (ICOC) and ICVB (Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau), Istanbul attracts all the attention. Istanbul, which sets the scene with its 150 m2 stand under the leadership of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce at the World Travel Market Latin America Fair held from April 22 to 24, has won the recognition of all the participants. Making an impression at the fair, the first-time participant Istanbul has also realized a promotion dream. Being the destination partner together with Sao Paulo at the World Travel Market Latin America Fair, Istanbul attracts the attentions not only with its stand but also with the organizations made within the scope of the fair. ICVB (Istanbul Convention & Visitors

Bureau), which plays an important role in introducing Istanbul, has also conducted the opening organization of the fair. Moreover, Mr. Ozgun Arman, Consul General in Brazil and Mr. Ramazan Kisa, Commercial Attaché, visited the Istanbul stand and thanked the delegation for their successful achievements. The Istanbul delegation was chaired by Bahadır Yasik, Vice President of ICVB (Istanbul Convention & Visitors Bureau) Board of Directors at the World Travel Market Latin America Fair which ended on April 24. Mr. Bahadır Yasik made a statement during the fair and said "I would like to thank Mr. Ibrahim Caglar, the president of Istanbul Chamber of Commerce for their support of the tourism economy of Istanbul". Mr. Aydın



Karacabay, ICOC councilor, who made a speech and cut the ribbon during the opening ceremony said "We take great pleasure in being in Sao Paulo, Brazil for the promotion of Turkey. We are more than happy that Istanbul is the destination partner together with Sao Paulo. It is very important for us to introduce Istanbul in Brazil. We are delighted with the great attention of the visitors".

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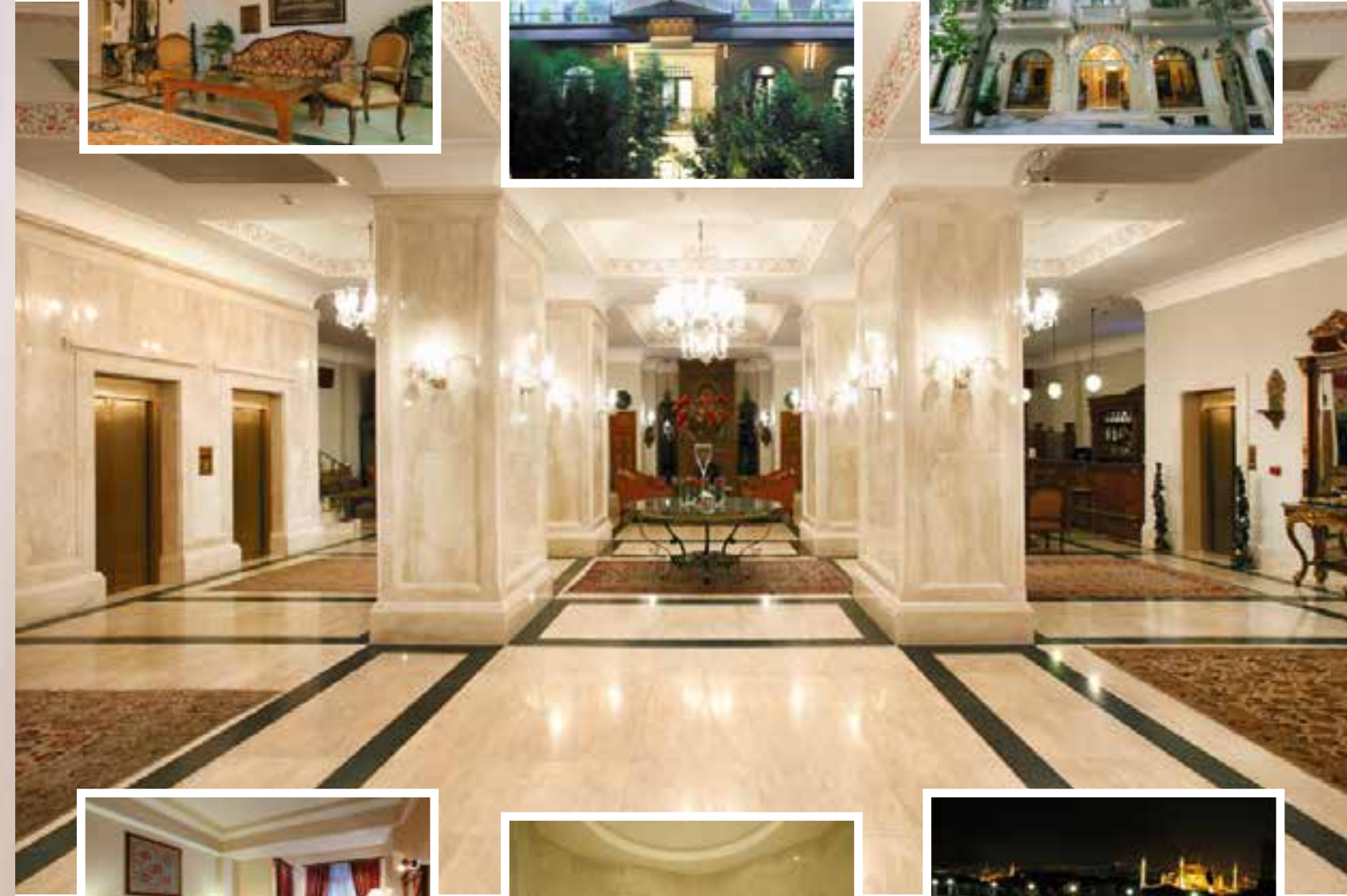
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'HOTEL BUBBLE' LIKELY TO DEVELOP IN İSTANBUL, CONTRACTOR SAYS

The vast number of hotels being constructed in Istanbul may pose a threat for the industry amid the lack of any kind of monitoring mechanism, the contractor for the newly constructed Mövenpick Hotel in İstanbul's historic Haliç district has said.



Speaking at a press conference to launch Mövenpick Hotel Golden Horn on, Volkan Öngel, the managing partner of the hotel's contractor, Akgel Real Estate Investment, said hotel investments in locations already overrun by hotels may ignite a hotel bubble.

Asked about speculation regarding the existence of a housing bubble in Turkey, Öngel quoted a real estate research company which is statistically able to prove that there is currently no housing bubble in Turkey.

However, he said: "Apart from a construction bubble, we need to talk

about a hotel bubble. A considerable amount of hotel investment is being done in Istanbul. In fact, quite a threatening amount.

Talking about the construction projects in areas that already have a large number of hotels, he noted: "The location issue must not be ignored" and added that a monitoring body should be established to forestall a possible bubble.

"Hotel investors should be very careful from now on because hotel investment has never gone as planned in Turkey. [The costs] of those investments surpass the planned budgets all the time. There are always hotel investments [in Turkey] that

fail to be completed within the planned time. ... A state authority needs to monitor the [real estate] market," Öngel stated.

Öngel said the cost of construction for the Mövenpick Hotel Golden Horn was TL 40 million.

The CEO of Mövenpick Hotels, Jean Gabriel Peres, also spoke during the conference and pointed out the way hotels are designed, saying: "The big danger in the hotel business is that we become a commodity in the same way that companies are interchangeable now, like airline companies. Apart from two or three airlines in the world, all airlines are the same."



Neyran Tan, Jean Gabriel Peres, Frank Reichenbach, Volkan Öngel, Ferruh Akgun

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TOUR OPERATORS EXPAND AND INVEST

Schauinsland-Reisen, V.Ö Travel, Olimar and DER Touristik are in the news on the German market this week.



Schauinsland-Reisen is investing in its own resort in the Maldives four years after adding the Indian Ocean destination to its programme. Following a long search the German tour operator will finance a four-star resort on Hondaafushi in the Haa-Dahaalu atoll which will be operated by the Triple A hotel chain.

Turkey specialist V.Ö Travel and online travel retailer Tropo are launching on the Austrian market. Hamburg-based V.Ö Travel has appointed Ataakan Özyavuz as country manager Austria to promote sales through travel agents while Tropo expects to start offering products online and through agents very shortly.

Southern Europe specialist Olimar is seeing good bookings this year with a 10% rise in revenues and customer numbers, according to managing director Markus Zahn. The family-owned tour operator has a 14% rise for Portugal, a 10% increase for Spain and a 5% rise for Italy, along with satisfactory bookings for the Cote d'Azur, a new destination.

DER Touristik brands ITS and Jahn Reisen have launched their winter 2015/16 programme with more than 600 hotels available for bookings, and the entire portfolio is due to follow gradually over the next two months.

The German government generated record revenues from the country's controversial flight departure tax last year. The tax, which is applied per passenger on all departures from German airports, generated €983 million, which was 3.6% more than in 2013, and also more than the previous record of €964 million in 2011. About 40% of the tax revenues were from long-haul flights, which are charged at €42.18 per person, while 83% of passengers paid the lowest rate of €7.50 for a short-haul flight.



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The hotel which combines different concepts

Generating its own regulars in a short time after its opening, Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport, has taken its place among the most popular hotels in Istanbul. The hotel, which opened its doors in 2014, enables a unique lodging experience to its guests with its elegant and pleasing decoration. Being one of the newest hotels in Istanbul, General Manager Tijen Akyol Dilber introduced Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport Hotel to the readers of Turizm Aktüel. **UĞUR KARTAL**

Combining the city hotel, fair hotel, meeting and congress hotel, airport hotel, and holiday hotel concepts under one roof, Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport Hotel is very attractive also for its three restaurants which offer distinguished flavor experiences.

Why did you prefer a modern architecture and a different design at your hotel?

We tried to comply with the architectures of the buildings in our district and surroundings, in particular with Aydin University, as well as the modern

architecture of the new constructions. Besides, our building was already there. Although it was entirely reconstructed, the building already had some characteristics. We also tried to stick to the standards of Ramada and at the end a beautiful hotel emerged. Actually we didn't implement a very different design but when a few ideas were blended, a good design has emerged.

You serve your guests with the motto of "Privileges special for you..." What are these special privileges?

We offer quite a lot of privileges. Free valet and car park service, free hotel-

airport-hotel shuttle, various massages offered by Balinese masseuses, our garden allowing a fresh breath in the city life, breakfast service suitable for each guest, world-renowned Italian restaurant, The North Shield Bar, coffee machines for the guests lodging in suit rooms, Wyndham Reward Card prizes special for Ramada and many more...

Could you please give information about the restaurants, bars, spa and meeting rooms as well as other services offered to the guests in your hotel?

We have 3 restaurants in our hotel.

These are, Fumo Italian Pizzeria & Bistro, Fumo Fine Dining World Cuisine and The North Shield Pub & Bar. Also, we have 2 meeting rooms. Turkuaz has natural daylight and it has 120 people capacity in theater style. Whereas Eflatun's capacity is 80 people, also in theater style. Also, our garden has a capacity of 250 people in a round table banquet style with platform and stage. Na'pe a Spa & Health Club is quite a relaxing place featuring steam bath, sauna, snow fountain, heated stone beds, 2 massage rooms, Vitamin bar and Fitness Center overlooking the garden.

Could you please tell us about your rooms and the comfort offered in these rooms?

We have 90 rooms in our hotel. These 90 rooms consist of 7 suit rooms with mezzanine, 1 disabled room and 5 deluxe rooms. Although our hotel is a business hotel, our rooms feature all types of comfort and conveniences. Sound-insulated windows, dim curtains, welcome trays (tea/coffee/kettle facilities), wake



Successful Tourism Professional Tijen Akyol Dilber fulfills the General Manager position at Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport Hotel.

I think that our free of charge services, good-humor and guest loyalty drives us forward and makes us distinguished. Although we are a newly opened hotel, having regulars and the high occupancy of our hotel prove that we are a distinguished and preferred hotel.

Your hotel has opened its doors recently. What is the feedback you receive from your guests?

The comments received through Booking.com and tripadvisor are fantastic and pleasing. Currently we do not go below 8.5 points and even go higher. We haven't received any complaints so far. And I hope we will not. Each of our guests leave our hotel happy and satisfied. This, of course, makes us very happy.

What would you like to add as a final word?

Quality and service are the two most important factors in the sector. Without doubt, these are provided by the personnel. Success is team work and we achieve our success together with our team.

up service, IP TV, free Internet access, mini bar, and world-famous "Thomas Roth" branded amenities make the accommodation comfortable.

Our suit rooms additionally feature bathrobes and world-renowned "Hermes" branded amenities. Also, face peeling is available as an extra. As an additional service, we also distribute free of charge Turkish or English newspapers to the rooms of our VIP guests.

What are the core elements which distinguish Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport from other hotels?



Ramada Encore İstanbul Airport Hotel has 90 rooms. These 90 rooms consist of 7 suit rooms with mezzanine, 1 disabled room and 5 deluxe rooms.



There are 3 restaurants at the hotel. These are, Fumo Italian Pizzeria & Bistro, Fumo Fine Dining World Cuisine and The North Shield Pub & Bar.





JUMEIRAH GROUP WILL RUN SECOND HOTEL IN TURKEY AFTER PERA PALACE

Luxurious Gulf hotel chain Jumeirah Group will begin to run its second hotel in Turkey, the Golden Savoy Hotel, in May after the historic Pera Palace Hotel Jumeirah.

The new hotel is planned to be opened on May 1 in the Aegean resort of Bodrum in line with a deal inked by the group with Turkey's Hedef Investment and Tourism Facilities. The Golden Savoy Hotel is built on an 110,000-square-meter area and has 135 rooms, including suite rooms and villas, according to data on the hotel's website. "It is of key importance for Jumeirah Group to spread its brand in Turkey. We are pretty sure that the Golden Savoy Hotel will meet the expectations of all Jumeirah clients," said Gerald Lawless, President and CEO of Jumeirah Group in his written statement on the website.

The majority stake of the group is owned by Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, also known as Sheikh Mohammed, Prime Minister of the United

Arab Emirates (UAE), and constitutional monarch of Dubai. The new hotel will be the 23rd hotel in Jumeirah Group's portfolio. Jumeirah Group undertook the management of Istanbul's Pera Palace Hotel in 2011. The hotel originally opened in 1892 as the destination site in Istanbul for discerning travelers on the Orient Express train. Located in the Beyoğlu district, it has 115 rooms.

Room 101 in the Pera Palace Hotel Jumeirah has been registered as a museum by Turkey's ministry of culture. It was the room where Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of modern Turkey, liked to stay, and visitors can now see some of his personal belongings displayed there. The iconic building has played host to an impressive list of guests including Ernest Hemingway, Agatha Christie and Alfred Hitchcock, among others.



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From dream to reality

TOURISM GIANT WANTS TO MAKE \$20 BLN IN REVENUE



TUI Group wants to restructure its cruise businesses and airline brands and focus more on online bookings after its merger to create a giant.

TUI Group plans to restructure its airline brands and cruise businesses and drive more online bookings now its merger to create a tourism group with annual sales of over \$20 billion has completed.

“We are very clear on what we want to achieve, and we will be refining those thoughts over the next few months,” Co-Chief Executive Peter Long told analysts after TUI published first quarter results Feb. 10.

The company, formed in December from the merger of London-listed TUI Travel and German majority owner TUI AG, will provide more details of strategic measures when it publishes half-year results on May 13.

Management said it was working to organize its five charter airline brands better, which have 140 planes and together would be Europe’s seventh largest airline. The company also wants to modernize

the British Thomson Cruises business and create new ways to boost online bookings.

In the first quarter, improving profits at its hotels and cruise divisions helped TUI narrow its underlying loss before interest, tax, and amortization (EBITA) to 107.9 million euros (\$122 million) from 141.1 million a year earlier. Shareholders have welcomed the merger as it means the combined company can cut down on overlapping functions and a costly dual-holding structure. “Growth chances have improved thanks to the merger,” said Ingo Speich, a portfolio manager at TUI shareholder Union Investment, according to comments prepared for the TUI AG annual shareholders’ meeting taking place on Tuesday.

In Germany, there are fears that a combined TUI airlines business could be based in Britain, with jobs lost at the Hanover-based brand TUIFly. “We are analyzing it and then we will decide,” Co-

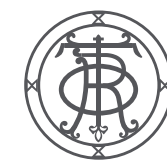
CEO Fritz Jousen told reporters. “But if you bring companies together, it is likely it will lead to job cuts.”

TUI said it was on track for underlying earnings of about 1 billion euros in the current financial year.

TUI’s Travel Sector division, which includes tour operators and airlines, was hit by the impact of currency fluctuations and slight declines in Germany and the Nordic region in the first quarter and posted a slightly wider loss of 149.1 million euros.

Long also said TUI was not getting any immediate financial benefit from low oil prices as they were being offset by negative trends in the dollar-euro exchange rate.

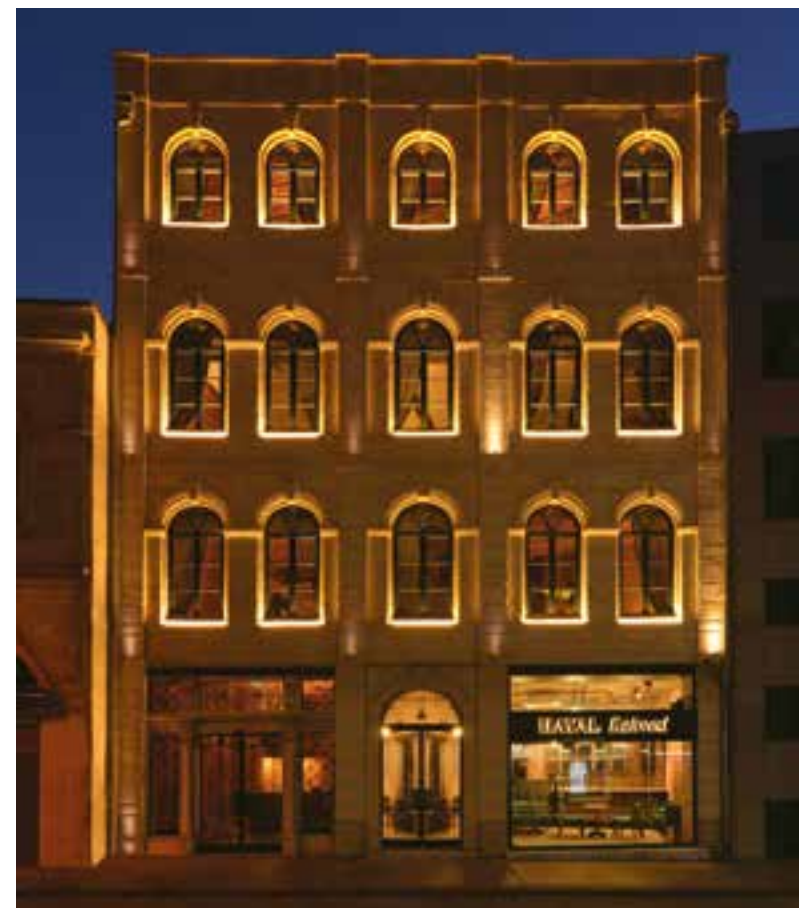
“Our assumption is that an advantage that the whole industry has is competed away, but it does have a benefit in making our customers feel good and generating more demand for holidays,” he said.



Régie Ottoman
ISTANBUL



EXPERIENCE THE ISTANBULITE WAY OF BEING A TOURIST





Karnak Holidays

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KARNAK TRAVEL: WE INVEST IN FUTURE

Being the first of the most important actors of the Middle East market including the Gulf and North African countries, Karnak Travel celebrates its 30th anniversary. Securing its place in the sector with every passing day, Karnak Travel shapes its future from today by investing in technology. Serdar Ali Abet, the owner of Karnak Travel who has taken radical decisions in 2015, is getting ready to achieve an event for the 30th anniversary celebrations which will become a byword for many years. Serdar Ali Abet explained Karnak Travel's secret of success and future plans to Turizm Aktüel.

HASAN ARSLAN





Owner of Karnak Travel, Serdar Ali Abet said 'My goal for this year is 100 thousand Arab passengers. Now we will work to achieve this goal.'

Could you please tell us about the success story of Karnak Travel since its establishment until today?

The establishment of our company dates back 30 years. Since then, we reached today by working actively and improving Karnak Travel. This has always been a way to follow the dream. First we set our goal for one thousand passengers annually. Then we ran after 5 thousand passengers. Then we targeted 10 thousand. We made progress every year with a growth rate of between 20 percent

strong team. I kept my feet on the ground whilst setting the goals and before anything else I formed the infrastructure required to achieve my goal.

After strengthening the infrastructure, we targeted new markets and new figures. The second area in which I invested is the promotion, fairs, catalogs and visits. We have been extremely generous. After so many years and effort, such a success has been achieved. However frankly speaking, we haven't been satisfied with the success and we target new successes. I am focused on the goal of 100 thousand passengers.

Arabs, to strive with Arab passengers. Yes, it is a good cake but a difficult cake. It requires enormous efforts. As I said, they don't appreciate everything. They always want to do what they have in their minds. However, Turkey has become the number 1 destination of Arabs during the last 15 years.

When we look at the fires that occurred this year, we see that there is no country other than Turkey where Arab tourists can travel. In the past it was difficult to see Arabs in Turkey during winter time. Believe me, now they come to Turkey, no

Serdar Ali Abet and the think-tank who lead Karnak Travel to success hold regular meetings and achieve successful decisions.



and 50 percent. When I look back after so many years, I see that from one thousand passengers we have reached 65 thousand passengers in 2014.

As for the secret of this success, I worked hard and I made a great deal of investment in this market. We allocated all our means, all our earnings only to promotional activities. We didn't act selfishly. We did Arabic business but we didn't do it in Arabic way. We imitated European, Turkish, and Russian tour operators and we applied such models in the Arab world. I always invested in two areas. One of which is the investment I made to the physical structure and the team of the company. I established a

Now we will work to achieve this goal. Thus, my goal for this year is 100 thousand Arab passengers.

When we go back 30 years, we coincide with a period when the foundation of Turkish tourism was just being laid down. During this development period of Turkish tourism that your company accompanied, what troubles did you encounter and how did you overcome them?

Of course I encountered some troubles. According to me, Arab tourism is the most difficult work in the world. Such difficulty is also arising from the structure of the public. It is difficult to discipline

matter rain or shine. The Arab market is an enormous one but it is not a market that everyone can deal with.

What was the most challenging event in this 30 years process?

Sometimes we had troubles at the stage of growing the business. Because this is a market which requires direct attention. Yes, we are a corporate company with a strong team but still this is "Serdar Tourism" in the eyes of people. Tour operators assign business continuously in coordination with me. This is what is distressful; everyone would like to address their comments always to me. This oppresses and tires me. But once you take this road, you can't stop. Sometimes

I say, "enough, let's become smaller". But it is not possible. You always need to go further. However you spend an enormous amount of energy while going further.

Many of our team-mates resigned and established their own companies. They have become our competitors. Thus, the number of competitors has increased. But the one and only thing that oppresses me is that I have to deal with the market directly. We are performing a business on a vast-scale. We are achieving income actively with 18 countries. We work with 1,800 agencies manually. Thus, we communicate with almost all of these

1,800 agencies every single day of the year. The more we grow, the harder the business becomes. When you start to think that you would relax, you realize that the size of the business has become too large that you can't catch up with it.

When you look back, what is the most pleasing event?

Interestingly, there are coincidental events in my life. There is a milestone in my tourism life. In 2009, I rented Abud Efendi mansion for the TV series "Gumus" and this turned over a new page in my life. This was an enormous success. 11 thousand people visited this mansion. People talked

about me and said "This man must be crazy. It's incredible to rent a mansion and open a museum. But we achieved an enormous success. This event was a milestone in my tourism life. And that year we achieved a growth rate of 60%. This success in my business life really makes me happy.

In how many locations does Karnak Travel have branches?

We have a total of 9 branches located in Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Lebanon, Jordan, Antalya, Bodrum, Marmaris and Istanbul. We will increase the number of our branches to 18.

As Karnak Travel, how many hotels do you work with?

We work with a total of 600 hotels, predominantly in Istanbul.

We proceed mainly in beauty and aesthetics areas

As Karnak Travel you also carry out business in health tourism. What is the rate of health tourism in your overall business? Could you please give us information about this?

We have been making investments in health tourism for the last three-four years. We have printed catalogs and made agreements with hospitals. We proceed

mainly in beauty and aesthetics areas. We have gained ground so far. We have 3-4 patients every week. We diversify our services as best as we can.

You were participating in the ATM Dubai fair every year with a magnificent stand and organization, which addresses your main markets. This year you decided not to participate? What is the reason of such a decision?

The reason is to focus fully on the organization of our 30th anniversary celebrations which will be at the end of the season. Besides, I don't think that the activities in the fair yield any substantial profit to us anymore.

You are celebrating the 30th anniversary of Karnak Travel. Could you please inform us about the 30th anniversary celebration events?

We will make our 30th anniversary celebration events at the end of the 2015 season. For the first time this year, we decided not to participate in the Emitt Fair and ATM Dubai Fair. And there is one single reason for such decision. At the end of the season we will celebrate our 30th anniversary by making a very magnificent, very elegant organization in Istanbul. We have already started the preparations. I won't give any details in order not to spoil the surprise. But I can tell that our 30th anniversary celebrations will make a tremendous impact and will become a byword.

Do you have any messages to anyone who would like to work with Karnak Travel?

Karnak Travel is the primary address of the newly opened hotels, especially in Istanbul. The starting point of newly opened hotels has always been Karnak Travel. Many of our hotelier colleagues come to our company at the beginning of the season to make an evaluation and to ask for our opinion. They share their season price lists with us. This makes me

very happy. Besides, this indicates that our word is respected in the market.

As a current problem, the B2B prices given to foreign tour operators by the hotels are simultaneously quoted to B2C. And, this being lower than the price given to us, it is a sad situation that our prices remain higher towards the online companies that are connected with them. Therefore, our hotelier colleagues should show sensitivity for this issue.

Could you tell us about your future plans?

Technology is advancing and this influences and changes tourism as

well as other business branches. Therefore we are making serious investments online in order to get ready for the future. On the contrary to what is said, the cake is not getting smaller but bigger. We should be ready for the future.

Is there anything you would like to add as a final word or do you have any messages to the sector?

Anyone who knows Arabic tries to make Arab tourism. But this market is a difficult market and it is not so easy to make business here. All our competitors

are watching us with envy. They wonder how we achieve this success. We carry our business in a world class and we focus on big targets. We consider success as a process. If you aim to earn money by adopting a "hit and run" strategy, you can never proceed.

In order to be successful in this business, therefore, you should proceed with slow but secure steps and invest what you earn to your business. I believe that the tourism sector will have a good season this year. As long as the environment of peace and trust continues in our country, there shall not be any problems. Especially, during the period between the two religious festivals, our country will have an influx of tourists. I would like to take this opportunity to wish a good season to all my colleagues in the tourism sector.

Canan Ali Abet, Vice President of Karnak Travel



Serdar Ali Abet mentions that he owes his success to hard work and making a great deal of investments in this market.

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LOCATION:

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 Kebap & Pizza, Loby lounge, Loby 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:

19 Meeting Rooms, Ballroom at roof, Alsancak meeting room can be partitioned into two soundproof sections. All rooms are equipped with state of the art audio visual and meeting equipment, secretarial services.



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TURKEY DEMAND RISES STRONGLY ON GERMAN MARKET



Turkey is growing strongly on the German market again and Egypt is continuing its recovery but demand has dropped sharply for Greece and Tunisia, according to new figures on destination bookings in March.

After weak demand at the start of the year with a 12% drop in package holiday bookings to Antalya, Turkey has made a clear comeback with a strong 20% rise in bookings last month after a 14% recovery in February, figures from leading German holiday reservations provider Traveltainment show. As a result, the Turkish Riviera gateway saw its share of German package holiday bookings strengthen to 33% last month, in terms of market share among the ten largest holiday destination airports.

The main Egyptian destination airport of Hurgada had a 57% surge in bookings through the travel agency reservation system in March following similarly strong increases in recent months, with 54% in February, 52% in January, 35% in December and 22% in November. These figures demonstrate that the destination is making a strong comeback after the dramatic slump in bookings last year. Hurgada was the third-largest destination airport for package holidays from Germany last month with a 8% share of bookings among the ten largest holiday destination airports.

Spain was also a popular destination

for German holiday bookings last month. Sales to Palma were up by 15% following a 12% rise in February, leaving the airport with a 30% share of top ten airport bookings. But the Canary Islands saw mixed demand, with increases for Arrecife (+16%) and Fuerteventura (+5%), but a 4%



drop for Las Palmas and just a fractional 1% rise for Tenerife South, according to the Traveltainment figures.

The two big losers last month were Tunisia and Greece. Package bookings to Heraklion (Crete) fell by 16%, following an 8% drop in February, pushing the airport's share of destination bookings down to 4%.

Tunisia's main holiday airport of Enfidha suffered a 36% fall in German package holiday bookings last month after demand

slumped following the terrorist attack in Tunis. The country already saw high double-digit declines in February (-20%) and January (-24%).

In contrast, there was a 16% rise in bookings to the Bulgarian airport of Varna. This may well have been the

result of beach holidaymakers switching bookings away from Tunisia to the Black Sea destination instead.

Traveltainment's Bistro system is used by some 11,000 travel agencies in Germany to make package holiday bookings from 130 tour operators, while its Internet Booking Engine is used by more than 350 online travel agents and portals. In total, the Amadeus subsidiary processes more than 250,000 holiday bookings per month.

EUROSTARS
Hotel Old City



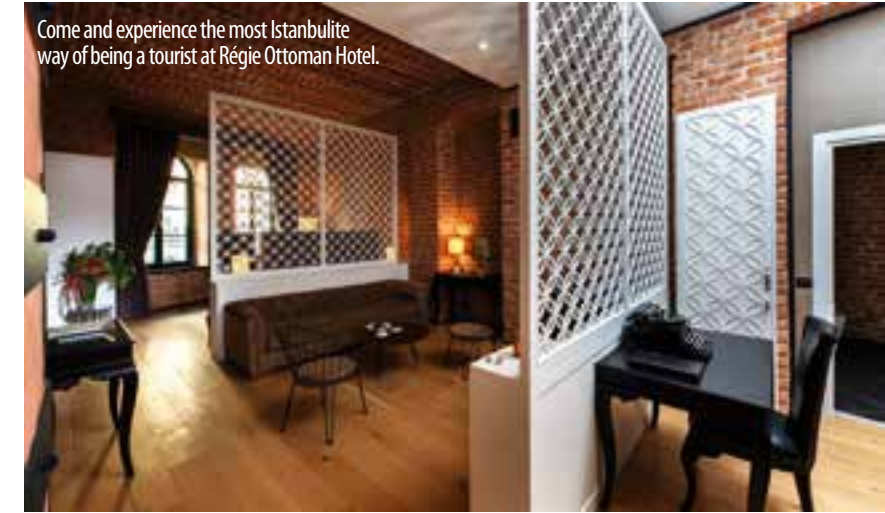


Once one of the most important structures in the Ottoman Empire, the Regie Company Building now welcomes new hosts as Régie Ottoman Hotel in Sirkeci, Istanbul.



HISTORY OF YESTERDAY, MODERNITY OF TODAY

Régie Ottoman Hotel, where you can experience the historical texture of Istanbul in the most comfortable place, welcomes its guests in rooms of varying size options. **UĞUR KARTAL**



Come and experience the most Istanbulite way of being a tourist at Régie Ottoman Hotel.



Régie Ottoman Hotel Manager Hatice Özcan

Situated in The Regie Tobacco Ottoman Company Building, one of the most important structures in the Ottoman Empire, welcomes guests right at the heart of Istanbul's Historical Peninsula. The authentic texture of the building is preserved to the finest detail.

Traces of history, minimal design and a concept of comfort are integrated in the decoration. In addition to its historic significance, updated special architecture and invaluable location advantage.

Can you tell us the main lines of Régie Ottoman Hotel?

Régie Ottoman Hotel was opened in September 2014, situated in the heart of Istanbul's Historical Peninsula in Sirkeci. Régie Ottoman Hotel offers an

unforgettable luxury accommodation with 34 rooms, including Attic, Superior, Deluxe, Suite and Family room options) with its stylish and contemporary design in a superb location, including Fitness and Sauna.

With the cooperation of Hayal Kahvesi Restaurant&Café, our guests can taste an organic open buffet breakfast, the most exclusive flavors of Turkish and World cuisine. Delicacies prepared with daily, local ingredients leave a pleasant flavor on your taste buds as well as in your memories.

Since opening your hotel, such as what was the reaction from your guests?

As a Special Category hotel, guest satisfaction is our first aim. We are having great reviews from our guests

about the property including the atmosphere in the hotel with its an original and historical brick walls as well as the service quality and the hospitality of the experienced hotel staff.

Among other hotels in your area, what are the main elements brings to the fore your hotel?

Our region already has a beauty of its own with a historical touch. We have only tried to add comfort and make them feel and live in a local atmosphere.

We are trying to meet all kinds of demands and expectations of our guests to make their stay unique.

Why, Régie Ottoman name? These names come from and represent your hotel in what sense?

Régie Ottoman Hotel was Régie Ottoman Tobacco Company building before 150 years ago, one of the most important structures of the Ottoman Empire.

The Régie Company was a parastatal company formed in the later Ottoman Empire by the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, with backing from a consortium of European banks.

The company had a monopoly over tobacco production. Revenue from the Regie Company was supposed to help overcome the Ottoman state's persistent shortage of income.

The Regie Company constituted the largest foreign investment in the Ottoman Empire, and it attempted to introduce more efficient production methods - against local resistance.



NEW HOTEL UNEXPECTED HIGH STANDART HOSPITALITY



Ersin Durgun: We concluded our first year successfully

Radisson Blu Hotel, İstanbul Şişli, opened its doors last year. Accomplishing many organizations during the recent year, the hotel showed a performance above its competitors with an average occupancy rate of 73%. **YILMAZ KELES**

Radisson Blu Hotel İstanbul Şişli, one of the successful hotel investments in İstanbul, left its first year behind. Hosting many organizations during the recent year, the hotel showed a performance above the İstanbul average with an occupancy rate of 73%. Managed by a professional team, the hotel takes firm steps towards its goals despite the big competitors by its side...

We spoke with Ersin Durgun, general manager of the hotel about the year left behind and their goals.

Could you please evaluate your first year within the framework of your goals set and realized?

We started out to achieve an occupancy rate of 70% and concluded with an average of 73%. In consideration with the fact that the occupancy rates in the district and in

İstanbul remained at about 60-65 percent, we can say that we achieved a successful rate.

In the same period, two hotels with the highest capacity in İstanbul opened by your side. Despite your location advantage, the competition is high in your district. What are your 2015 forecasts?

Hilton Bomonti opened in January, whereas we opened in February and Marriott Şişli opened in March. The supply in the district increased by 72 percent in three months. Despite this fact, I think that we attained a good success. We attained a better occupancy in comparison with our competitors. I think that we will continue to increase our occupancy and profitability in 2015 as well.

What kind of a marketing and sales strategy did you apply?

One of the important factors of our success was planning... When we opened, we already had many works organized from abroad. During the construction, our sales team had already started to work in an office rented in the apartment next to us. By virtue of the support of the sales, human resources and management teams, investors and architectural teams established before the opening, the seeds of this success have been planted by planned work. The success has become sustainable when the synergy and positive impression created by our team is supported with the hotel service. .

What about banquets, meetings, SPA and restaurants?

We are trying to make innovations continuously in these areas. Now, we are serving full capacity with our restaurants, Spa, meeting halls and rooms. We have a good congress hotel systematics with our 16 meeting rooms, ballroom and escalators. We had one imperfection regarding a hall with daylight. We transformed our "business lunch" to

a meeting room in order to meet the demand and we started to receive very positive feedback.

Could you give us some information about your customer profile?

Thanks to the advantage of our location and the reservation support of the foreign offices of The Rezidor Hotel Group to which our brand is connected, we have guests from various countries. Our sales director spends most of his time visiting the corporate companies in America. 30-35% of our guests comes as meeting groups. We also have guests coming for a holiday. Especially our middle-eastern guests choose us for our vicinity to shopping malls, in particular to Cevahir. Besides, the size of our rooms gives us an advantage for this market.

What is the share of reservations through online channels in your total occupancy?

According to a list published recently, we rank as the 12th out of 100 hotels in terms of online reservation. We are in a struggle for a dynamic work in online channels; we make daily and instant pricing. We generate almost 30% of our occupancy through online channels. Actually, we are aware that we can increase it to even higher rates but we are trying to maintain it between 30-35%. We do not want to neglect our other channels while gaining through on-line channels. In consideration of the risk created by going through one channel, we prefer to manage the process in a balanced way.

According to you, which tools should a manager of a city hotel use whilst determining a road map and feeling the pulse of the city?

First of all, it is necessary to see the figures and analyze them well. In recent years, no hotel has been sharing their figures with each other. This need is met by a system called STR. By affiliating with STR, you can see the figures of the hotels which you consider as a competitor and determine your strategy accordingly. You can see the occupancy rate in your district through ADR or RevPAR. You can evaluate your current status in the market by virtue of such data and plan your actions accordingly. For congresses and organizations, you should make use of the event calendars published for İstanbul. Most important of all, however, you should

have the experience to be able to make the right move at the right time...

Could you please tell about your management approach?

In order to provide good service to your customers, above all you should satisfy your employees, which we refer to as "internal customers". We care about the satisfaction of our employees; we listen to them carefully and we try to respond to their requests. We share their troubles and happiness. We hold a meeting to listen to our employees on a quarterly basis. We listen to their troubles, wishes and requests concerning the operation. We take notes and we definitely provide feedback about the matter.

We value them and we don't refrain

What do you think about the increasing competition in 2015 both in your district and in İstanbul?

Şişli district, where we are located, is saturated in terms of hotel investments. According to me, the biggest problem in the district is the apart style places which operate informally. Last year there was an increase in the number of inbound tourists. But there is a decrease in the number of in-house tourists. Thus, a great deal of visitors started to rent short-term apartments. We notice that especially middle-eastern guests prefer apart or short-term rental apartments. We do not have any objections to such options to the extent that they are handled in a legal and secure platform, however I believe



Ersin Durgun, "We planted the seeds of success by planned work. The success has become sustainable when the synergy created by our team is supported with the hotel service."



Ersin Durgun, Radisson Blu Hotel İstanbul Şişli General Manager: We make our guests feel valued...

from making them feel valued. My room's door is always open to my colleagues. They can reflect all the problems to me in compliance with the management channel. Besides, personally I am always on the move within the hotel. Naturally I meet most of them every day, I greet them and have the opportunity to make conversation. Especially, I also pay attention to addressing them with their names.

Primarily, I try to find out the real reasons of the resignation requests. For instance, resignation requests due to managerial reasons annoy me very much. But, pleasingly such resignations are scarce. Generally, we encounter resignations arising from position or wage offers. Frankly, if the reason is a positive offer for the career of our employee or moving to another place, we try to make the things easier as best as we can. In the event of managerial reasons, I don't take prompt decisions and I try to understand and find a solution for the problem.

that an inspection and control should be maintained with regard to the image of the tourism of the country.

I think that our district would be stable in 2015. The agencies and companies with which we are in contact have opinions in the same direction. This situation will make the market more competitive. It will be a year that everyone who would like to get a slice of the cake should be working harder.

The gap between hotel supply and demand is increasing each year. What would you suggest as the general manager of a right and successful investment?

I would like to believe that the investors are making strides upon right and detailed feasibility studies... The major determinative of hotel investment is the location. Although there is an increase in hotel supply in İstanbul, I think that the investments made at the right location would still bring in a good profit.

TOURISM, LUXURY FIRMS COUNT COST OF RUSSIA'S RECESSION



Russia's lurch into recession has hit many tourism and luxury goods companies hard, forcing them to cut prices and in turn costs in an attempt to limit the damage.

And there are few signs things will get better soon, with a fragile ceasefire in eastern Ukraine doing little to ease international tensions over Moscow's support for pro-Russian separatists in the region.

The ruble lost almost half of its value against the U.S. dollar last year after oil prices crashed and the West imposed sanctions on Moscow. That has crushed Russians' spending power, forcing them to cut back and put pricey holiday plans on hold. Spending on international travel by Russians fell by 6 percent in 2014, according to the UN World Tourism Organization, a sharp drop from growth of more than 20 percent previous years.

Russian tourists are major buyers of luxury goods, particularly in European capitals such as Milan where they are regular customers of brands such as Ferragamo, Moncler and Kering's Italian tailor Brioni. Clerks at the menswear

department of posh Milan department store Rinascente said Russian clients had virtually disappeared. According to tax-refund company Global Blue, spending by Russian tourists fell 17 percent last year, and plunged 51 percent in January following a 44 percent fall in December.

Although there was an unexpected spike in sales for some in December as Russians offloaded the fast-depreciating roubles for durable luxury goods such as Cartier watches, many brands are preparing for a tough 2015.

Italian fashion group Roberto Cavalli expects Russian sales to drop 20 percent this year, while LVMH's watch brand Hublot has already seen sales decline 20 percent in Russia since January, a source close to the company said. It's been a similar story for airlines, tour groups and hotels with a big exposure to Russia.

Some hotels in Turkey have slashed prices to fill beds after arrivals from



Russia dropped by more than 21 percent in 2014, and by 22 percent in January.

"We believe that the Russians won't come (to Turkey)," said Markus Daldrup, managing director at German tour operator Alltours, which is offering price cuts of up to 24 percent on summer trips to Turkey. Egypt, whose tourism sector gets 30 percent of its business from Russia, saw a 50 percent plunge in visits from Russians in December, and another 20 percent in January year-on-year.

The country waived the \$25 dollar visa fee for Russians through the end of April and plans to launch a massive campaign in Russia in the next months to win back customers. Several airlines, such as Emirates, have responded to the decline in Russian travel abroad by offering fewer flights or seats to the country.

The posh ski resort of Courchevel estimates its Russian clientele has shrunk by 20-30 percent this year, and those that have come have spent less.

"Before you would often see Russian clients buying bottles of wine at 6,000 euros, now they only get those for a few hundred euros," said Adeline Roux, head of tourism at the resort.



BLACK BIRD HOTELS

ISTANBUL & YALOVA



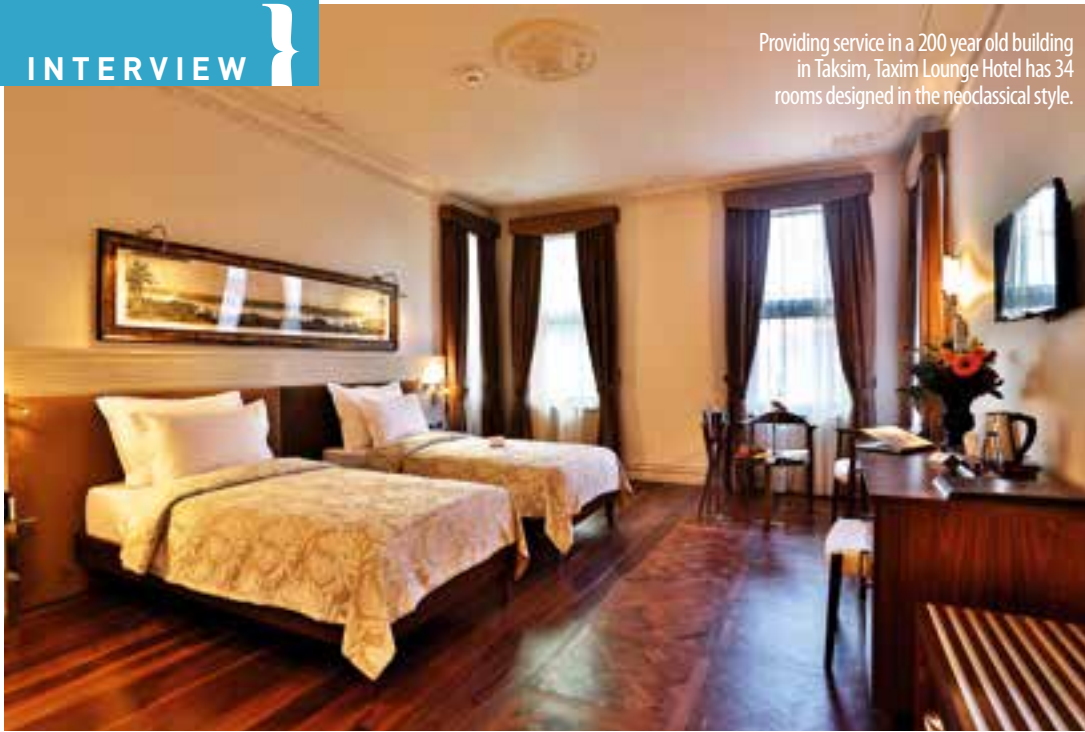
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Providing service in a 200 year old building in Taksim, Taxim Lounge Hotel has 34 rooms designed in the neoclassical style.



Taximet Steak House is able to serve 80 guests at the same time, both hotel guests and outside visitors.



Kenan Dündar, General Manager of Taxim Lounge Hotel, said 'Taxim Lounge Hotel has 34 rooms designed in the neoclassical style and in 5 different categories.'

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HASAN ARSLAN



Our hotel is situated in Beyoglu, which is considered the center of Istanbul. Beyoglu is the place where Istanbul's heart beats.

Taxim Lounge Hotel, which came into service this year in a 200 year old building in Beyoglu, the heart of Istanbul, has attained its privileged place among the Istanbul hotels. Offering its guests a unique lodging experience embraced by history, General Manager Kenan Dündar introduced Taxim Lounge Hotel to the readers of Turizm Aktüel.

Taxim Lounge Hotel is located in Beyoglu, the heart of Istanbul. Why did you choose Beyoglu to open a hotel?

You can best feel the rhythm of life here. Beyoglu incorporates all the colors of life. It is vivid, exciting, smells of history and reflects the traces of the modern age at the same time. Beyoglu is a mystical western. Thus, we opened such a special hotel in such a special district, in such a special building. We are very happy and pleased with it. Taxim Lounge Hotel features all the advantages of its location. We are situated in such a location that allows transportation to everywhere conveniently and in a short time. Our hotel is located 250 meters from Istiklal Street.

Taxim Lounge Hotel has a different architectural structure than the other

hotels located in Beyoglu. Could you please tell us about this feature of the hotel?

Beyoglu is a district with historic fabric. Istanbul has signed Beyoglu with one of its most characteristic signatures. Thus, our hotel's building is a historical one which carries the traces of history to today. We haven't destroyed any feature of the building of our hotel. We combined this historical structure with a modern decoration and offered to our guests with an impeccable service approach.

Our building is approximately 200 years old. There is also a cistern inside. We have taken this cistern under a diligent preservation. Our guests, who stay at the hotel, can also see this cistern

Could you please tell about the general service features of Taxim Lounge Hotel?

Providing service in a 200 year old building in Taksim, Taxim Lounge Hotel has 34 rooms designed in the neoclassical style. Equipped with technological equipment, the rooms have free WI-FI access. Offering its guests a lodging experience in the center of the city

in touch with history, Taxim Lounge Hotel's reception provides 24 hours uninterrupted service. Our hotel has a free open buffet breakfast service. Also, a secure and economical car-rental service is available for the guests who may require it. We also offer one-way or two-way airport transfers, fast and economic laundry, ironing and dry cleaning services to our guests who may require them.

We provide our guests the opportunity to experience Istanbul fully, either by participating in our cultural and entertaining tours or custom-made tour programs. We offer inner or outer city tours upon the request of our guests. We offer 24 hour room service. Daily local and foreign newspapers and magazines are available at the request of our guests. There are various shops, cafes, restaurants and art galleries around our hotel. It is very pleasant to spend time at the winter garden surrounded by openable high windows. Taxim Lounge Hotel is 19.3 km from Ataturk Airport.

Could you tell about the rooms of your hotel as well as the services offered in the rooms?

Taxim Lounge Hotel has 34 rooms designed in the neoclassical style and in 5 different categories. Equipped with technological equipment, the rooms have free WI-FI access. Each room features air-condition, safe box, ironing facilities, electrical water heater, mini bar and sitting area. There are hair dryers and bathrobes at the special bathroom with shower. The guests have the possibility to prepare tea or coffee in their rooms thanks to the supplies replaced every day free of charge.

Taxim Lounge Hotel also has a restaurant called Taximet Steak House. Could you please inform us about the concept of this restaurant?

Taximet Steak House, the restaurant of Taxim Lounge Hotel is a meat restaurant. Being a candidate of one of the newest taste stops in Istanbul, our restaurant already has its regulars. Besides, an open buffet breakfast is served here every day. Lunch and dinner is also served in the restaurant. Our hotel also has a garden and wine cellar. Taximet Steak House is able to serve 80 guests at the same time, both hotel guests and outside visitors. Taxim Lounge Hotel's Menu consists of

world-renowned flavors to special steaks, burger varieties and cheese platters, each one more delicious than the other.

Taximet Steak House is situated on a 200 year old cistern. The illuminated floor supported with a transparent view offers a different experience to our guests. Feeling themselves as a part of the historic fabric among the firebrick walls, our guests enjoy our delicious menu. Distinguished flavors from the wine cellar of Taximet, as well as unique cocktails are also awaiting our guests.

What do you think about today's hotel management which occurs generally in the digital mediums?

Technology is advancing, this is a fact. The advancing technology also effects

the operation of hotel management. Today, almost all the hotel personnel, in particular managers, should have an understanding of technology. But hotel management is not just that. We serve people here. And people mean senses. It is very important to be sensuous and sentimental in the service sector. And you can achieve this only by means of trained personnel who have an understanding of human psychology. It is important to adapt technology to our job, but no technology can replace the human factor. Unfortunately, today the hotel management sector has been confided to inexperienced managers. I hope that it doesn't become too late when they recognize its disadvantages.



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Number of Russian tourists to Turkey to increase in 2015

Despite fears that Turkey will lose a large number of its Russian tourists this year, some sources argue that this will not be the case, according to a report in the Moscow Times on Sunday.

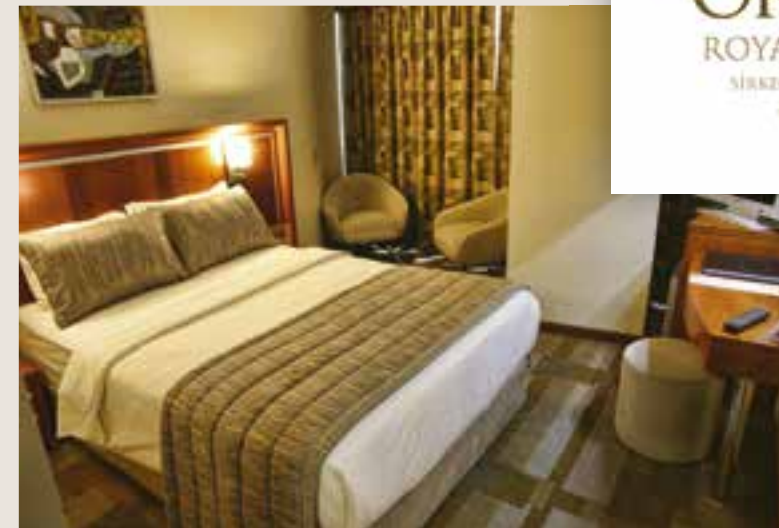


According to the report, Russia's top tourist destination of Turkey will not lose visitors in 2015 but will instead continue to rise in popularity, while the same will be the case for Russian tourists' second most popular destination, Egypt. Russian tourism to Turkey and Egypt has in fact risen by 15 percent thus far in 2015, which is due to a close partnership between Turkey and Egypt and Russian tour operators, ensuring that a constant stream of tourists are entering the two countries, and because Russians are leaning more toward all-inclusive package trips, an area in which both Turkey and Egypt specialize. On the other hand, the number of Russian tourists visiting EU

countries is likely to decline and already has done so in the beginning of this year. While travel to Spain, Greece and Italy is in a slump, tourists are more likely to visit cheaper Balkan countries such as Bulgaria and Montenegro. Western sanctions on trade with Russia followed by self-imposed Russian embargoes of Western goods in conjunction with plunging global oil prices dealt a major blow to the Russian ruble, especially as the dollar grew stronger against major currencies.

Meanwhile, other reports were less than optimistic about Turkey's Russian tourist prospects for this year in light of Russia's economic woes. A report released by the World Travel and Tourism Council on

Tuesday regarding the economic impact of tourism in 2015 forecast that outbound spending from Russia will decrease this year, negatively impacting tourism to Turkey, as well as other European countries such as Montenegro. Furthermore, a recent report from the Turkish Hoteliers Federation (TÜROFED) estimated that the number of Russian tourists coming to Turkey may decrease by between 1 and 1.5 million this year, which could lead to a loss of \$4.5 billion. The southern Mediterranean province of Antalya is Turkey's most popular tourist destination and is known particularly as a favorite among Russians. The number of Russians visiting Turkey has increased every year since 2010.



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ICVB HOSTS INTERNATIONAL PRESS IN ISTANBUL

The Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau (ICVB) works hard to bring the most important conventions and meetings in the world to Istanbul as its promotional work continues to gather pace.

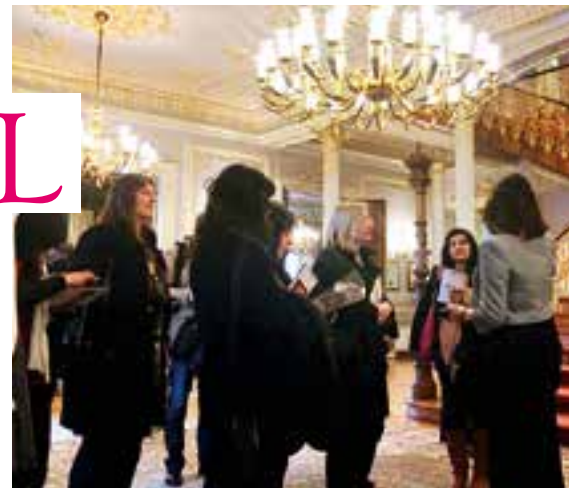
The ICVB has brought together high profile editors and journalists from the highest circulating and most read publications around the world within the convention, event organisation and incentive sector to Istanbul; to showcase and demonstrate the city's huge business potential in the international meeting and convention market.

14 International Media Representatives from the USA, Europe and Asia met in Istanbul for the first time, hosted by ICVB between 25 and 28 March.

Commenting on the 4-day press visit Ozgul Ozkan Yavuz, General Manager of the Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau, said: "We are focussing our promotional activities with the aim of Istanbul reaching the pinnacle of the international arena. The majority of the visiting press who participated on our

tour were travelling to Istanbul for the first time, expressing how happy they were to be here. Istanbul is a unique and excellent location for the convention and meetings sector due to its accessibility and its dynamic and distinctive atmosphere."

Editors and journalists from the USA, France, UK, Belgium, Germany, Slovenia and India from a total of 14 convention, event and incentive publications were hosted as part of the press tour programme between 25 and 28 March by ICVB. The representatives of the most prominent magazines in the sector mainly explored convention centres, together with various hotels, arts and cultural centres, as well enjoying the city's wining and dining. - They also explored Istanbul's historical quarters and discovered the city's natural beauty while meeting colleagues from the sector.



Chaired by Ibrahim Caglar, President of the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, and including representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Istanbul Chamber of Commerce, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, THY (Turkish Airlines), TÜRSAB (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies), TUROB (Touristic Hotels and Investors Association), TYD (Tourism Investors Association) and SKÅL Istanbul and managed under the umbrella of TUGEV (Tourism Development and Education Foundation), the Istanbul Convention and Visitors Bureau is continuing its dynamic promotion of Istanbul on the international stage.



Taxim
LOUNGE
Hotel



Welcome to Taxim Lounge Hotel

Taxim Lounge Hotel's 200 years old building, has been restored as originally look as it is. Neoclassic designed 34 rooms were supported with technological equipments. We offer our guests notable and unique vacation.





Zipcar Launches in Turkey

Zipcar, the world's leading car-sharing network, today launches its service in Istanbul. Istanbul marks Zipcar's sixth European city and with Istanbul straddling Europe and Asia, its first footstep into Asia.

Today's launch is a further step in Zipcar's international expansion, which already includes an established presence in the United Kingdom, Spain, France and Austria. The expansion to Istanbul celebrates Zipcar's third new European market in seven months as it accelerates growth and increases its footprint to meet increasing consumer demand.

Founded in 2000 in the United States, Zipcar has long pioneered a new model of vehicle ownership. With global car-sharing members forecast to reach 12 million by 2020, up from 2.3 million in 2013, Zipcar's 15 years' experience combined with its global network of over 10,000 vehicles across seven countries, 30 cities and 400 university campuses is helping to transform urban living. As consumers and businesses across the globe seek a sustainable and economic alternative to car ownership, Zipcar provides its 900,000 strong member base with a simple and streamlined user experience with access to vehicles by the hour or by the day, in locations close to where they live, work and travel. Zipcar is helping to ease the pressure of congestion and pollution in the urban hubs in which it operates with each car club vehicle helping to eliminate the need for around 17 privately owned cars from the streets.

Massimo Marsili, President, Zipcar International, said:

"With a population of over 14 million, Istanbul is one of the largest cities in the world, and like many of the cities where we operate, is challenged with increasing pressure on the transport infrastructure and the environmental impact of congestion in the city. We are delighted to be able to provide an alternative mobility solution to residents in Istanbul and to play our part in helping to reduce congestion in the city. Our service is environmentally friendly, complementary to public transportation and ideal for a new generation of smart consumers who are looking for goods and services that are available on demand."

Launching today as Zipcar's first licensee, Zipcar Turkey will be operated by Otokoç Otomotiv, a unit of Koç Holding. İnan Ekici, Assistant General Manager, Otokoç, said: "Today's launch of Zipcar in Istanbul represents an exciting opportunity for us to meet the needs of the city dweller by providing a convenient and flexible mobility solution that saves money, reduces hassle and improves urban living. As a vibrant destination for both tourism and business, Istanbul is an increasingly popular travel destination. We are excited to be launching our first wave of locations across the city today and look forward to providing Zipcar's existing member base with access to Zipcars when they travel to the city."

What to eat in Istanbul?

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Doner wraps available throughout Europe?
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Tourism sector loss might be lower than expected

Notable names in the Turkish tourism sector attended the Moscow International Exhibition Travel and Tourism (MITT) Fair held in Russia, which is currently suffering from sanctions imposed by the U.S. and the EU.



Yet Russians showed great interest in Turkey's stand at the fair, which is the largest one held in Russia. Attending the fair, Culture and Tourism Minister Ömer Çelik said, "We are taking measures to prevent the economic situation in Russia from affecting Turkey. Ministry officials came to Russia four times in the last five months. We are engaging in crisis management.

We do not want to generate any losses here." Sector experts also commented on the possible loss in the tourism market. They said that Russians were last-minute customers, adding, "Maybe there will be no decrease at all. The net situation will be clear in May and even if there is a loss, it will be around 15 percent at most." Limak Hotels Tourism Coordinator, Kaan Kavaloglu, said that Russians have made early reservations for the last five years, but they suspended it this year due to the economic problems they are facing. Emphasizing that this is creating a panic in the sector, Kavaloglu said, "The decrease from the Russian market will not reach 40 percent, contrary to expectations. It



Güral Premier Chairman, İsmet Güral, said that the tourism sector has entered into an early panic. Saying that this panicked climate might have been created in order to reduce prices, Güral

will be 15 percent maximum." In addition to saying that hotels in Turkey will reduce their prices by nearly 10 percent, Kavaloglu noted, "Turkey gained an advantage in the parity of the euro-dollar. We are returning this advantage to the customers in the market." Kavaloglu also added that 10 percent of the Russian tourists that would normally go to Europe, could shift to Turkey.

stressed, "It has been exaggerated in the market. We expect the loss to be around 10 percent." Kaya Holding Vice Chairman, Doruk Kaya, said the decrease from the Russian market was being reversed every month. "While the loss in February was around 70 percent compared to the previous year, the loss in March dropped to 40 percent. This gives us the message that Russians delay their holiday plans to the last minute," Kaya said.

Emphasizing that the situation might change at the last moment, Kaya stated that the market could reach the same rates as last year's.

Sueno Hotel Vice General Manager, Yüksel Gürhan, said "While one dollar equaled 32 rubles last year in Russia, it equals 61 rubles this year. There has been serious inflation in the country. However, the Turkish tourism sector was more panicked than the Russian one. Deluxe hotels in Turkey provide services for the segment that we call 'A plus.' There is a serious demand from Russia for these hotels right now, and this gives us the message that the rich Russian tourists are shifting to Turkey."



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DELICIOUS THIRD PRIZE OF MATBAH RESTAURANT

The 6th Ottoman Cuisine competition, where the modernized up-to-date versions of Ottoman Palace dishes have competed, was held at CNR EDT EXPO Fair on March 27.



At the end of the competition, which is arranged for the purpose of contributing to the globalization of Ottoman and Turkish Cuisine, Kadir Yılmaz, Executive Chef of the Ottoman Hotel Imperial, and his team were awarded with third prize. During the competition four presentations were prepared under the category of starter, main dish, desert and Sherbet. Located within the Ottoman Hotel Imperial, Matbah Restaurant competed with 7 teams consisting of 5 star hotels and quality restaurants.

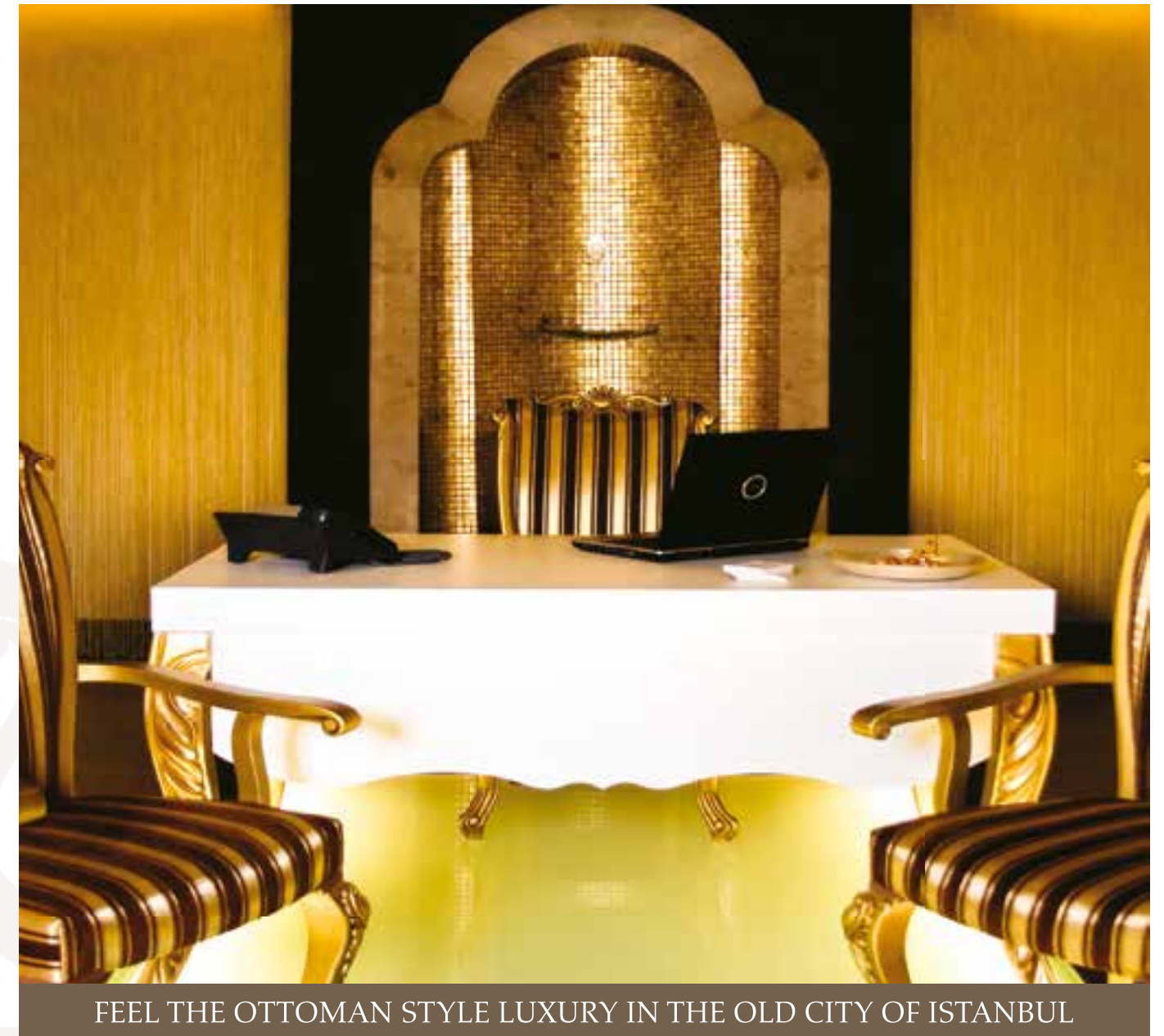
As well as the 3rd prize, Matbah Restaurant also received the 'Best menu' award at the competition. Matbah Restaurant, which received 2 awards at the competition, is renowned as one of the rare places serving Ottoman Palace Cuisine in İstanbul. The competition jury chaired by Turkish Cuisine Researcher,

Restaurant Manager and Chef Vedat Başaran consisted of; D-reams Kitchens Coordinator Mehmet Gök, Gourmet Writer Ahmet Örs, Professional Kitchen Consultant, Gourmet Osman Serim, Gourmet Writer Nedim Atilla, Kitchen Chef Maxmillian Thomae, Le Meridien Hotel Food & Beverage Director Tarkan Özdemir, and Food Historian Asst. Prof. Dr. Özge Samancı. A total of 8 teams, namely The Marmara İstanbul Hotel, Matbah Restaurant, Crown Plaza Asia, Maxx Royal Hotel, Radisson Blu Hotel İstanbul Asia, Four Seasons Sultanahmet, Wyndham Grand Levent Hotel, and Hilton Ankara, competed in the competition. The Ottoman Cuisine Competition is regarded as one of the most prestigious and reputable cuisine competitions held in Turkey. The meticulously prepared menu prepared by Executive Chef Kadir

Yılmaz and his team for the jury members consisted of;

TARHANA SOUP WITH CHESTNUT, SAILOR'S PASTRY WITH HONEY, ZİRE -BA MUNTANJANA, TAMARIND HALVA and Cinnamon Sherbet, a must of Ottoman cuisine.

The Marmara Hotel became the winner of the competition, where diverse interpretations are added to classical Turkish and Ottoman dishes, by virtue of modern techniques and new information without changing the fabric of the dish. The second prize was received by the Four Seasons Hotel whereas the Matbah Restaurant was ranked as third. The fourth prize given in the memory of Tugrul Savkay was awarded to the Wyndham Grand Hotel, and the Aydın Yılmaz award, which refers to the fifth prize, was received by the Maxx Royal Hotel.



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A QUICK START TO 2015



Dedeman Group Vice Chairman Rifat Dedeman stressed their quick start to 2015 together with the opening of the Dedeman Park Izmailovo Moscow. He noted that with the new hotels opening in 2015, including Park Dedeman Levent, and those planned for the upcoming period, they will continue to offer traditional Dedeman hospitality domestically and internationally.

We wouldn't be mistaken if we said the first half of 2015 has been a quick start for Dedeman Group, would we?

We really have made a quick start to the year with two new Park Dedeman hotels, developed with a business and city concept, scheduled to open in 2015. In addition, we have centralized Dedeman Hotels & Resorts International's business

plan and investment objectives in the tourism sector with the Dedeman and Park Dedeman brands.

Would you like to share anything about the Park Dedeman Izmailovo Moscow Hotel, scheduled to open in April?

We strongly believe that with the hotel, located in one of Moscow's important emerging regions, Izmailovo, we will add

value to the hospitality industry in the region. The first Turkish hotel chain in Moscow and Dedeman Group's 16th hotel, the Park Dedeman Izmailovo will carry Dedeman's approximately 50 years of experience. We believe the Park Dedeman Izmailovo Moscow will greatly contribute to the promotion of Turkey in Russia and in large part meet the need for business hotels in the region. With the increasing trade volume between Turkey and Russia we believe the Park Dedeman Izmailovo Moscow will be very convenient for those travelling to Moscow on business. We want to take advantage of the fact that the majority of our guests are Turkish. We are also starting to do research for a second hotel in Moscow.

Are there any new projects in Istanbul?

As Dedeman Hotels & Resorts International we are continuing growth strategies with mainly business hotels. In particular, we think there is serious potential in Istanbul and we are evaluating

that potential on both the Anatolian and European sides of Istanbul.

In June we will open the Park Dedeman Levent Hotel. We signed a 10-year lease contract with Halk GYO (Public REIT-Real Estate Investment Trust) for this project. Located in Levent, the heart of the business world, the Park Dedeman Levent will serve guests with a total of 240 rooms. We believe our hotel will be an important contribution to business and city hotel management. With its architecture and location, the Park Dedeman Levent is poised to become a great example of the hotel industry in the city. At the Park Dedeman Levent we aim to accommodate 670 thousand visitors in 10 years.

Outside of Istanbul, do you have plans for any other new hotel projects in the country?

We want to grow in every part of Anatolia and on behalf of the hospitality sector we see opportunities in every district of Anatolia, understand those opportunities and follow them. With the Park Dedeman Tokat Hotel, which is currently under construction and scheduled to open in the first half of 2016, we will be the first hotel chain in Tokat. For new hotel projects we are currently in discussion for certain areas in Istanbul and Anatolia.

We are also keeping an eye on opportunities in the Turkish Republics. We also see those areas as areas with high

potential. We have a hotel in Oskemen Tavros, in Kazakhstan. Our negotiations for a new project in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, are ongoing.

Can you talk about Dedeman Hotels' growth objectives?

We are planning on putting 30% of our investment abroad, with focus on Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Middle East, and Central and North Africa. As part of our target we aim to reach 42 hotels by 2023 within the Dedeman Group, 20 of which will be Dedeman, 22 of which will be Park Dedeman. By targeting to achieve a

We made a small change to our Dedeman Hotels & Resorts International logo to reflect today's aesthetics and convey our recently rapidly rising corporate energy and express our excitement towards change. In order to gather the strength of our brand under one roof we updated the Dedeman Park logo by changing its name to Park Dedeman. In order to further reflect Dedeman's powerful and established position in our new brand we carried this change to our crest as well. By enlarging our crest, and making the font bolder, we reflected our past experience in



capacity to accommodate nearly 6 million guests with our new projects, we plan to increase our turnover 5-fold and employ 4 thousand people.

We believe this rate of change and renewal has also shown itself in your logo. Can you give us some information about it?

a young and dynamic manner. In the wake of this fundamental change, we started to redesign and update the corporate identity of Park Dedeman and Dedeman Hotels & Resorts International. I believe that with the excitement of this change and renewal, which started with our corporate identity, our business will also gain momentum



Number of tourists visiting Turkey increases 5.4 percent

According to the Tourism Support Package Report of the Association of Turkish Travel Agencies, Turkey hosted 38.6 million tourists last year, and steps are currently being taken to recover the loss of visitors from the Commonwealth of Independent States, mainly Russia, and Iran due to economic troubles in these countries.

These 13 countries mean an income of \$8 to \$9 million for Turkey and over 10 million tourists. A support package issued by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for the Commonwealth of Independent States and Iran will provide \$6,000 to each plane arriving from these countries.

While the number of tourists visiting Turkey in January and February

increased by 5.4 percent, the numbers of tourists from Commonwealth of Independent States decreased by 3.5 percent. The biggest loss - 26.5 percent - was suffered in the number of visitors from Russia, and the decline is expected to continue in March. Turkey is expecting to keep the loss at around 10 to 15 percent despite the losses in the Russian markets.



In April and May \$6,000 fuel support will be provided for each plane. Last year, a total of 10.4 million tourists from these 13 countries visited Turkey, while the number of Russians was around 4.4 million. This figure is anticipated to be around 4 million with the fuel support this year.

Further, the leading names in global tourism will visit Istanbul for the first World Tourism Forum (WTF) organized by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. On April 30, the forum will host executives from leading global companies from Facebook to Expedia, along with 600 local and foreign experts. With participants from Europe, Russia, Turkic countries and Gulf countries, the future of global tourism will be discussed at the forum.



The Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Istanbul Tuzla, is located by the sea in the outskirts of the Asian side of Istanbul and is only 3 kms from Sabiha Gokcen International Airport- Istanbul's second largest air travel hub. The hotel is perfect for a family holiday, group getaway or a romantic weekend. Guests can enjoy the soft colors and wood finishes that exude a calming aura. 249 contemporary rooms, including 20 Business Class rooms, 17 stylish Junior Suites, 14 spacious one bedroom suites and 3 comfortable Executive Suites with a terrace attract both leisure and business travellers.

The hotel offers extensive possibilities to host events and conferences with over 3,300 m² of meeting facilities. The crown jewel however is the 4,000 m² spa with an indoor and outdoor pool, a whirlpool and a sauna for an opulent retreat.

The Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Istanbul Tuzla, features a variety of eateries and exiting bars for visitors to the area. Restaurants include an a-la carte option, Casa Grill, which serves Mediterranean cuisine for dinner. The all day dining choice, Turca, serves breakfast, lunch and dinner and offers Turkish and international selections. The Lobby Lounge & Bar opens until late evening serving coffee, small snacks and afternoon tea. Along with a relaxing atmosphere and friendly service, the Aqua Pool Bar boasts an extensive selection of cocktails during the summer in the beautiful gardens by the outdoor pool and pool deck. The Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa, Istanbul Tuzla offers a convenient location close to Istanbul's Formula One race track, hailed the best race track in the world by Formula One supremo Bernie Ecclestone.

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TURKEY SEES RISE IN MEDICAL TOURISM

Out of the roughly 40 million tourists who visited Turkey last year, around half a million came for surgical procedures ranging from hair transplants and liposuction to cancer and orthopedic treatment, according to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK).



The number of medical tourists who visited Turkey totaled 414,658, including 86,011 Turkish citizens who live in foreign countries, bringing nearly \$1 billion into the economy, an increase of 75 percent in foreign medical visitors to the country compared with 188,295 in 2013. While Turkish government spending has been focusing on developing public healthcare infrastructure and treatment, private healthcare spending has been driving much of the growth.

A total of 34 city hospitals are slated to be built for about 30 billion Liras (\$11.6 billion). Private equity investors favor Turkey's fast-growing service industries, including healthcare, retail and education because of a near tripling of the nominal per capita gross domestic product over the past decade and a young population of 77 million. Turkey provides affordable, high-quality healthcare thanks to its well-educated workforce and its location in the world, according to sector representatives.

The Health Ministry said that only

The number of medical tourists who visited Turkey totaled 414,658 in 2014, compared with 188,295 in 2013.



about 30 percent of patients received their treatment in public hospitals in the country, with the remainder receiving treatment in private hospitals.

Compared with many other countries, the transplant cost of about 5,000 liras (\$1,929) is a relatively low price. A sector representative said most customers come from Europe and the Middle East.

"Turkey's location, only a 2-3 hour flight from major cities in Europe and the Middle East – and also its evolved holiday industry – are advantages that are bringing in more patients," said Feyman Duygu Oktar, the

founder of the Ankara Hair Center.

"Another advantage is that Turkey does not require a visa to more than 70 countries, and people from more than 110 countries can reach the country on a non-stop ticket," she added.

People from countries with heavily congested health systems welcome the opportunity to choose the time of their surgeries together with making savings of between 60 and 70 percent, which makes treatment more affordable than in European countries, according to sector representatives.



RECITAL

boutique hotel



Luxury Small Boutique Hotel

Recital Hotel is located in Old City-Sultanahmet which is a very central part of the historical peninsula, offer its luxury and Turkish hospitality to the guests with its 31 elaborately decorated, spacious rooms that consist of 3 Corner Suites, 2 Superior Sea View, 3 Deluxe Partial Sea View and Superior, Standard Rooms.

All of them are fully equipped with individually controlled air conditioning, heating, telephone, satellite LCD television, electronic safe Lap top size, a mini bar, coffee-tea set, a fully equipped bathroom with shower or bathtub, a hair dryer, wireless internet access, direct dial phone, fireproof doors, smoke detector and fire sprinklers, black-out curtains, a comfortable reading corner, daily housekeeping service.

Facilities

- Lobby
- Restaurant
- Terrace
- Bar & Cafe
- Airport Transfer
- Concierge
- Fitness
- Laundry & Dry Cleaning
- Room Service
- 24 Hours Reception
- Express Check-in/Check-out
- Currency Exchange
- Tour Desk, Ticket Service
- Baggage Storage
- Business Center
- Daily Newspapers

Location

- Hippodrome 280 mt
- Hagia Sophia 350 mt
- Blue Mosque 300 mt
- Topkapi Palace 550 mt
- Basilica Cistern 330 mt
- Grand Bazaar 100 mt
- Turkish & Islamic Museum 200 mt
- Cemberlitas Tram 70 mt
- Sea Bus 1 km
- Railway Station 2.5 km
- Taksim Square 4 km
- Atatürk Airport 14 km
- CNR (World Trade Center) 14 km
- Sabiha Gökçen Airport 60 km



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TURKEY HOSTED THE LARGEST DISPLAY AT ITB

ITB Berlin was able to cement its position as the world's largest travel trade show. From 4 to 8 March 2015 10,096 exhibitors from 186 countries, more than two-thirds of whom were from abroad, were represented in 26 display halls which were fully booked. Overall, some 115,000 trade visitors (2014: 114,000) travelled to Berlin. The share of trade visitors from abroad increased to 43 per cent (2014: 40 per cent). These visitors also remained longer at ITB Berlin because they did good business, with the average duration of a stay rising to 2.4 days (2014: 2.1 days). According to estimates by Messe Berlin the volume of sales at the world's leading travel trade show increased from around 6.5 billion euros in 2014 to 6.7 billion euros.

Trends at ITB Berlin 2015 included the massive rise in the use of mobile devices to book trips, a phenomenon that has now become the norm. Improved software means that travel websites are becoming more attractive and easier to use. Hotels are also witnessing the impact of digital trends. Smartphone functions are increasingly taking over from room keys. Travel apps are developing rapidly and becoming evermore widespread with the use of latest-generation smartphones. At the eTravel World numerous experts debated the latest developments in digital marketing, social media and mobile travel services. The 40 per cent increase in

papers and discussions held on the eTravel Stage and at the eTravel Lab showed how important these topics have become for the travel industry.

Dr. Tahsin Yilmaz, Embassy Counsellor responsible for Culture, Embassy of the Republic of Turkey: "Turkey hosted the largest display at ITB and our participation was an all-round success. We had excellent meetings with the travel industry and the press. Our 120 exhibitors also said the show was the world's most important meeting place for the industry. For Germans Turkey is a very important travel destination, and the keen interest shown by visitors underlined this once again."

The Turkish Village is a newcomer to Hall 3.1, where tourist boards, tour operators (including first-time exhibitors novissima Touristic, Suay Tour and Afrodit Tour) as well as those representing the culture and wellness segments are

gathered under one roof.

HASAN ARSLAN

According to Messe Berlin all the main travel destinations will benefit from the prevailing positive mood: big European cities, Mediterranean countries and faraway destinations. A fact particularly worth noting is that Germany as a travel destination continues to break all records. The tourism market in Germany has grown for the fifth year in succession in every single federal State, and this positive trend is set to continue in 2015. For North Americans the cost of travelling to Germany has fallen to unprecedented low levels due to the strength of the dollar. Other popular destinations include Egypt and Greece. Whereas Egypt's economic revival has been slow, Greece reported double-digit growth for the third year running and despite the controversy surrounding its national debt continues on the path to recovery.



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Best Western

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Best Western Citadel Hotel Leaning against the historical city walls of Istanbul, Best Western Citadel Hotel offers its pink and white colored facade to the fluorescent blue of the Marmara Sea. A wonderful location, the hotel is situated at Sultanahmet, the heart of Istanbul (Old City), 5 walking minutes from Blue Mosque, Topkapı Palace, St. Sophia. You will have a pleasant stay in our authentic, yet well-equipped 25 rooms and 6 suites. In these rooms with air-conditioning, minibar, cable TV, Wireless, direct dial phone, hair dryer, you will feel at home. An additional restaurant with 90 persons capacity continues in the millennia old building tradition of Anatolia. Marmara Cafe, with a stained glass roof and facade, offers a beautiful view of the Marmara Sea. Here you can enjoy the view while listening to the music of water splashing down from a magnificent fountain. The Best Western Citadel Hotel welcomes you with traditional Turkish hospitality



SHIFTING CURRENCIES SHAKE UP TOURISM LANDSCAPE

Whether it's the soaring Swiss franc, the plummeting ruble or the sliding euro, recent currency chaos has thrown the travel sector into turmoil, as holidaymakers dodge costly tourist traps and hunt for bargains

Nowadays, as fears grow about whether Greece will stay in the euro and the possible domino effect this could cause, many prospective holidaymakers appear to be having second thoughts about visiting that country and other economically troubled members of the 17-nation Eurozone, such as Spain or Portugal. "In principle, currencies always have an impact on travel and tourism," said Taleb Rifai, head of the UN World Tourism Organization, at the Berlin tourism fair (ITB) this past week. The rule is simple, he said: "A weaker currency attracts people to your country and prevents you from travelling. A stronger currency encourages you to travel," making vacationing at home

operators for Swiss sites in Swiss francs. Switzerland Tourism is also seeking to convince the Swiss to spend their holidays in their own country.

Russia's recent standoff with the West over Ukraine and the punishing impact of sanctions and falling oil prices have also made for some cheap holidays for those undeterred by the geopolitical tensions. For only about 90 euros or \$100, visitors can buy a three-night package in a four-star Moscow hotel with breakfast, a city bus tour and museum admissions thrown in. Sergei Korneyev of the Russian federal tourism agency said the recent fall of the ruble is a "rare opportunity" to attract tourists to Moscow, Saint Petersburg

hopes to take advantage of the weakening Canadian dollar against the greenback to attract more U.S. tourists.

To draw visitors from south of the border, the tourist office has launched advertising campaigns and joint programs with tour operators and purchased banner ads on the websites of major online travel agencies.

Germany too expects American, Swiss and British travelers to arrive in greater numbers to take advantage of their currencies strengthening against the euro, which Friday fell to an 11-year low against the dollar. "But it would be too simple to say that demand depends solely on the development of exchange rates," insisted Petra Hedorfer, head of the German National Tourist Board. "We have long-term strategies" that do not change with every wobble of the euro," said Hedorfer. UNWTO chief Rifai advised, "What you need is a solid industry, to keep moving, keep adjusting (to currency fluctuations), but never be deterred and never try to make dramatic changes in your strategy because of this." German tour operators argue that some of the best deals can be had in packages as the mass-market providers have often already factored in, or hedged against, currency fluctuations.

"In the current main booking phase for the summer, these price and exchange rate developments actually play into the hands of the tour operators," said Norbert Fiebig, president of the DRV federation of travel agents. He said: "The package deals can be offered through travel agents at low prices as the tour operators have generally hedged against fluctuating foreign currencies. Individual services such as flights, hotels or rental cars ... may at times cost significantly more than the complete packages of the tour operators. That means package tourists enjoy a clear advantage.



costlier in relative terms.

When the Swiss franc suddenly soared against the euro after the Swiss National Bank abandoned attempts to hold down the currency in January, leisure and travel provider Pierre & Vacances-Center Parcs Group soon found that Swiss customers hunted euro-priced holidays in France and Germany. "Naturally, we had to react," said Joachim Quadt, sales director for Germany and Switzerland. In February the company offered discounts to tour

and the "Golden Ring" of ancient cities northeast of the capital.

"We don't know what the situation will be tomorrow, that's why we have to use this chance today," he said, welcoming an unusual influx of travel professionals to the Russia stand at the ITB. A major exchange rate shift "is one element whose effects are felt quickly," as the rise or fall in purchasing power becomes "immediately apparent," said Dan Nguyen of Canadian regional agency Tourism Quebec. Thus Quebec

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Tourism Cartoon Competition Awards Distributed

The awards of the Sixth International Tourism Cartoon Competition, organized with the cooperation of Anatolia Turizm Araştırmaları Dergisi and Association of Tourism Writers and Journalists (TUYED) and with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism in order to increase the recognition of Turkey in tourism and to comprehend how tourism facts look from the cartoonists' world, have been distributed to the winners at the award ceremony. Pavel Gabriel Virgil was ranked as the first, whereas Ukrainian Cartoonist Oleksy Kustovsky came second and Bulgarian cartoonist Trayko Popov received the third prize.



We host 1.2 million tourists annually

Hosting 1.2 million tourists annually at their hotels, Limak plans to increase the number of its facilities to 15 by 2023. Limak Holding, which entered the tourism sector with Arcadia Hotel in 1995, today serves with a total of 8 hotels, 4 of which are located in Antalya, 2 in Istanbul and 1 each in Yalova and Ankara. Kaan Kavaloğlu, Tourism Coordinator of Limak Hotels, said that Limak Tourism Group hosts 1.2 million tourists annually in Turkey.

Hilton Garden Inn Çorlu is ready for service

Hilton Garden Inn Çorlu, the 31st hotel of Hilton Worldwide in Turkey has opened its doors to visitors. Owned by Santeks İplik ve Brode A.Ş., the new Hilton Garden Inn Çorlu is managed by AB Consultancy – Ahmet Bilgin.



Internet Sales Technologies by Hotel Linkage

Hotel Linkage, which offers 360 degrees online channel management and develops technology solutions, has introduced "Online Channel Management Technologies" to the hoteliers. During the event held at The Parma Hotel Taksim, the technological products used by the world's leading chains, and which increase the online sales have been introduced.



Tourism professionals are making a promotion spurt in Germany

The number of Russian tourists, which showed an increase in 2014 tends to decrease this year. Such fact lead Turkish tourism professionals to the familiar markets. Steering towards Germany, our tourism professionals participated for the first time in the workshop organized by "Independent Travel Agencies Organization" held in Berlin, Germany under the leadership of TUOFED (Turkey Hoteliers Federation).



One of the province of Canakkale hotels, our hotel is serving since 1974; Sadıkoğlu Heat Tech Tourism Investment San.Tic. Ltd. Sti. is a part of a chain of hotels. Büyük Truva Otel, with its seafront location in the heart of the city at the weekend on holiday, business meetings and summer holiday in the most beautiful example of hospitality gives you the Dardanelles ... Soothing architecture, a beautiful work of art and history can shed light on. Our hotel in the majestic beauty of the Bosphorus, experienced staff is proud to serve you throughout the four seasons.



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Olbia Travel hosted TISAB members in Istanbul



Members of the Turkey-Switzerland Travel Agencies Association (TISAB), who visited Turkey at the invitation of Olbia Travel, made an info trip to Istanbul. Members of the Turkey-Switzerland Travel Agencies Association (TISAB), who came to Turkey from Switzerland between March 15 and 18 at the invitation of Olbia Travel, visited the historical sites on the historical peninsula Sultanahmet under the guidance of expert guide Filiz Gökçe Şener and made observations. They also had the opportunity to visit all the hotels working with Olbia Travel and obtained information.

D-Hotel Maris opened with innovations

Being one of the most extraordinary hotels in the world thanks to its location at Datca Peninsula, D-Hotel Maris has come into the new season with the warming weather. Exceeding the standards with the fresh breath it brings to the holiday, entertainment and flavor life of our country, D-Hotel Maris attracts attention with its panorama overlooking to the point where the Mediterranean meets the Aegean as well as its five private beaches, each featuring a different concept and the snow-white sands.



Crowne Plaza Istanbul Oryapark has its fingers on the pulse of the business world

It offers every detail required for the success of the guests at the meetings featuring 14 meeting rooms with natural daylight, spacious rooms with broad windows, free car park that eliminates parking problems, a free and fast Internet service, Spagoa and delicious meals. It aims to bring a breath of fresh air to the hotel management of the Asian side thanks to its personnel focused on anticipating and meeting the needs of the guests.

Siesta Hotel

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LOCATION

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Yakup Dinler becomes the new president of KAPTID

The 23rd Ordinary General Assembly of Cappadocia Touristic Hoteliers and Operators Association (KAPTID) was convened. Yakup Dinler was elected as the new president at the General Assembly.

New Board of Directors of KAPTID: Yakup Dinler (President - Dinler Group), Canan Kutlu (General Secretary - Argos in Cappadocia), Dilek Yulaf (Vice President - Kapadokya Lodge), Ahmet Tok (Vice President - Yiltok Hotel), Ragıp Özalın (Vice President- Altınöz Hotel), Selami Fener (Vice President - Terme Hotel and Club Ürgüp) and Cengiz Uzgören (Treasurer - Altinyazı Hotel).



We can achieve the 2023 target together

Timur Bayindir, President of TUROB (Touristic Hotels & Investors Association) emphasized that the 2023 tourism targets can be achieved with the support of the government as well as the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. Stating that today the number of tourists is 41.4 million and the bed capacity is 1 million, Timur Bayindir, President of TUROB added "This great progress of the tourism sector made in 30 years, of course, gives us great hope for the future. We continue to work especially with the purpose of achieving the 2023 targets".



Best Western Empire Palace hotel has been awarded for excellence in service and standards. This S-Class boutique hotel offers comfort and pleasure for all travelers. Its perfect location is within walking distance of all major historical, cultural and touristic attractions of magical Istanbul like Hagia Sophia, Blue Mosque, Topkapi Palace, the Egyptian Spice Bazar, the Golden horn and many others. No matter if for a business trip or a family holiday, the loveliest and most convenient place to stay.



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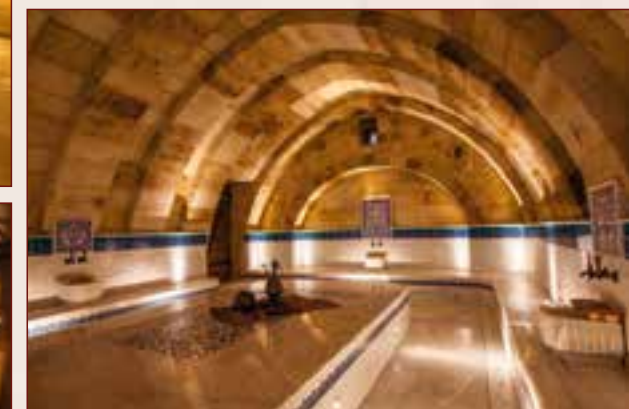


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