

# WINGS CHAMBER

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WORLD  
TRAVEL  
AWARDS



## AFRICA TOURISM'S GREATEST GOLDEN GOALS

### *World Travel Awards African and Indian Ocean Ceremony Coincides World Cup Semi Final*

Twelve hundred of Africa's key 'movers and shakers' will attend the most important event of the year for the travel and tourism industry on Wednesday 7 July at the Sandton Convention Centre, Johannesburg, South Africa.

The gathering for the Africa and Indian Ocean Ceremony will include CEO's and directors of some of the region's leading travel companies, Government Ministers, heads of tourism departments and destinations as well as industry association leaders.

They will be gathering many with fingers crossed hoping they are among the elite to sweep off one of the prestigious World Travel Awards, described as the 'Oscars' of travel and tourism.

"This is Africa's finest night for tourism", said Graham E. Cooke, Founder and President, World Travel Awards.

"It's a once-a-year opportunity to recognise the exceptional quality, creativity and leading edge performance of Africa's top operators."

During the past few months, industry professionals have been voting worldwide for the African companies and brands that they believe deserve the honours. Voting closes on 7 June.

African nominees are among 5,000 nominated companies, spread across more than a 1,000 categories, including airlines, cruise companies, destinations, resorts and hotels in 162 countries.

Presentation of the awards takes place at 5.00pm but guests will not miss out on the crucial

match! A giant screen will show the FIFA World Cup Semi Final immediately after the ceremony.

#### **African Nominees**

African nominations include the crème de la crème of the region's travel and tourism. South Africa Airways, Air Namibia, Egypt Air, Ethiopian Airlines, Kenya Airways and Royal Air Maroc are fighting it out to take the title of Africa's Leading Airline. In the running for Africa's Leading Beach Hotel are Camps Bay Retreat; Diaz 15, South Africa; La Gemma Dell'Est Zanzibar, Tanzania; Lagoon Beach Hotel, South Africa; Peponi Hotel Lamu Island, Kenya; The Bay Hotel, South Africa and The Z Hotel Zanzibar, Tanzania.

The fight for Africa's Leading Business Hotel title is also going to be aknuckle-biting affair. Nominations are: Alexandria, Four Seasons, Conrad Cairo, Egypt; Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at Nile Plaza, Egypt; Hilton, Durban, Mena House Oberoi, Egypt; Sandton Sun and The Westin Grand Cape Town Arabella Quays.

As the fastest growing industry sector, there's also keen interest in cruising and the Africa's Leading Cruise Line category: African Safari Club; Discover Egypt Nile Cruises; Sakkara Travel Group; Silverseas Cruises; Sonesta Nile Cruises and Travel Dynamics International.

The biggest struggle though will be among the

12 leading hotels anxious to win the coveted title of Africa's Leading Hotel.

Nominees for this much sought after category are: Camps Bay Retreat, South Africa; Cape Grace, South Africa; Four Seasons Hotel at the First Residence, Egypt; Four Seasons Hotel Cairo at the Nile Plaza, Egypt; Grand Hyatt Cairo, Egypt; Kasbah Tamadot, Marrakech, Morocco; Mena House Oberoi Hotel & Casino, Egypt; Mount Nelson Hotel, South Africa; Saxon Boutique Hotel & Spa, South Africa; The Palace of the Lost City, South Africa and The Twelve Apostles Hotel & Spa, South Africa.

In addition to overall Africa categories, there are awards for Botswana, Cape Verde, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Tunisia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

World Travel Awards, established 17 years ago, is the only global organisation encouraging improvement and development of travel and tourism.

Because consumers use the awards as a benchmark of quality, winners receive significant commercial benefits from the honour.

To vote online log on to:  
[www.worldtravelawards.com/vote](http://www.worldtravelawards.com/vote).  
Voting closes on 6th June 2010.



## ADNEC's Capital Centre to feature three brand new Rotanaproperties



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# A New Center for the Renaissance of the Ancient Labyrinth

## Taos, New Mexico



### *A Tool for the Contemplative Practice of Walking Your Spiritual Journey*

*In this region of the American Southwest where spiritual traditions have been practiced uninterrupted by the Taos Pueblo Indians for at least 1,000 years, another ancient tradition is gaining acceptance; the contemplative use of the labyrinth.*

*Found in cultures spanning the globe, the earliest known labyrinth design was discovered on a clay tablet in Pylos, Greece, dating from 1,200 BCE. The Greek isle of Crete is also known for its labyrinth, the maze used to entrap the mythical Minotaur. During the Middle Ages labyrinth designs were incorporated into the floor patterns of Europe's grand cathedrals, most notably in Chartres, and in the Renaissance, "branching" garden mazes became popular in the palaces of royalty. [Labyrinthsociety.org/](http://Labyrinthsociety.org/)*

*Today, labyrinths are being constructed around the world as a tool for personal growth and spiritual transformation. Practitioners use these sacred, earth-based paths to conduct walking meditations, focusing on an issue or concern that is addressed through contemplation or prayer.*

*This Summer in Taos, eight labyrinths will be available to walk, without charge, in connection with the town's "Return to Sacred Places" travel destination theme. Beginning July 1<sup>st</sup>, and continuing through October, visitors are invited to be part of the reawaking of this spiritual tradition.*

*"New Mexico is one of the centers for this transformative spiritual energy," says Sandra Wasko-Flood, visionary artist and founder of The Living Labyrinth Center for Peace.*

*<http://www.livinglabyrinthsforpeace.org> "And Taos, with its 1,000 year old Pueblo, is at the heart of this blossoming Renaissance."*

*Wasko-Flood is curating many of the labyrinth-related activities including a photo exhibit of labyrinths from around the world that was first exhibited in the rotunda of the US House of Representatives in Washington, DC.*

*Rev. Wayne Mell, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church in Taos, is also an advocate for this form of walking prayer and has supported the construction of a labyrinth in the church's front yard that will be dedicated on July 18. "Walking the labyrinth can be symbolic of a journey to the sacred center," he says. "It's a practice that can appeal to all ages and faiths, as more and more people explore their spiritual pathways."*

*Katherine Costabel, who with her husband own the Adobe and Pines B&B, have constructed a beautiful 66-foot diameter labyrinth made of 4,670 pieces of slate and rimmed by 225 native plants. Having experienced her first labyrinth in Sedona, Arizona, Ms.*

*Costabel believes that walking the path reminds one of her earthly journey. "Take something into the circle," she says. "Walk, think and pray and see if you can come to a conclusion." [www.adobepines.com](http://www.adobepines.com)*

## Taos Labyrinth Events

**June 14 - July 31, 2010**

Classic Seven-Circuit Labyrinth at El Monte Sagrado Resort and Spa. Open to the public day and night. 317 Kit Carson Road, Taos, NM. [www.elmontesagrado.com](http://www.elmontesagrado.com)

**July 1 - October 31, 2010**

66-foot Diameter Slate Rock Labyrinth at Adobe and Pines Inn. Open daily dawn to dusk.

Yoga every Saturday with Paul Kelly at 10 am. 4107 N.M. 68, Ranchos de Taos, NM.

[www.adobepines.com](http://www.adobepines.com)

**July 1 - October 31, 2010**

Stone Labyrinth at San Geronimo's Lodge, 1101 Witt Lane, Taos, NM Full moonwalks during summer months (June - Sept)

[www.SanGeronimolodge.com](http://www.SanGeronimolodge.com)

**July 4, 2010, 3 pm**

Drumming Labyrinth Walk in the Cretan Labyrinth at Touchstone Inn facing Taos Mountain.

110 Mabel Dodge Lane, Taos, NM [www.touchstoneinn.com](http://www.touchstoneinn.com)





## The 2011 Mekong Tourism Forum

*The 2011 Mekong Tourism Forum will take place in the emerging destination of Pakse, Champasak province, southern Laos, in May 2011.*

*The announcement was made by the Lao National Tourism Administration at the end of a revitalised Mekong Tourism Forum, which attracted a larger-than-expected audience of 213 delegates and closed 8 May in Siem Reap, Cambodia.*

*Mr Sounh Manivong, Director General, Planning & Cooperation, in the LNTA, told delegates that Champasak was an emerging destination with the largest waterfall in Southeast Asia and attractions such as Four Thousand Islands in the Mekong River. The area is known as an ecotourism retreat with wild nature, ancient temples and quiet riverside lodges.*

*Closing this year's forum, which was hosted by Cambodia, the country's Minister for Tourism, Dr Thong Khon, told delegates that Cambodia was committed to enhancing intraregional connections and diversifying its own offerings. "In 2009, we strived hard to diversify from the cultural sites of Siem Reap-Angkor to the coastal zones," said Minister Thong. "We hope that more flights will be connected to the coastal zones as well as cruise ships. Railway links from Phnom Penh to Sihanoukville are under reconstruction."*

*During the forum, themed "New Roads, New Opportunities," businesses such as The Gibbon Experience, Khiri Travel, Asian Overland Travel, Hanuman Travel and Green Discovery, and Bangkok Airways stressed the importance of innovation.*

*Organisations such as the Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV), the Wildlife Conservation Society, and Thailand's Community-Based Tourism Institute stressed the crucial role of sustainable, small-scale community based projects. Altiva Hospitality and The Pavilion (Cambodia) showed how responsible private sector initiatives could make a profit, respect the environment and create jobs in a region where average income in rural areas can be less than US\$2 a day.*

*Other speakers expressed concerns about border crossings.*

*Luzi Matzig, Group CEO of Asian Trails, told the forum that governments could easily boost cross-border tourism by slashing the red tape that makes it difficult or impossible to drive to a neighbouring country. "If you want to easily boost tourism, liberate cross-border road traffic," he said.*

*Some red tape is being cut. During the forum, Myanmar announced that effective 1 May it was offering visas on arrival at Yangon and Mandalay international airports.*

*After speaking at the forum this year, Bangkok Airways' Vice President for Corporate Communications, ML Nandhika Varavarn, said:*

*"It is great that the Mekong Tourism Forum has come back so strong with a big and enthusiastic audience. The forum is once again a relevant meeting place for Mekong region tourism cooperation and innovation."*

*The Mekong Tourism Forum was hosted by the Ministry of Tourism Cambodia with financial support from the USAID-funded ASEAN Competitiveness Enhancement project and the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office.*

*The 25 booths at this year's Mekong Tourism Forum sold out quickly and were popular with sustainable tourism operators.*

*For further information email to: [mtf@mekongtourism.org](mailto:mtf@mekongtourism.org) or call the Mekong Tourism Coordinating Office at: (+66) 2-612-4150.*

*The Mekong Tourism Forum provides a cooperative platform for stakeholders in the tourism industry to discuss the development, marketing and promotion of travel to, from and within the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). It is an inclusive, interactive and results-oriented opportunity aiming to encourage public and private sector participants to work together to represent the GMS as a single destination.*



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Almost 300,000 local and foreign travelers visited one of the largest tourist destinations in the GCC in early 2009

## Oman's Ministry of Tourism prepares for influx of summer visitors to the city of Salalah

The Sultanate of Oman's Ministry of Tourism is preparing for the large number of visitors expected to travel to Salalah, the capital of Dhofar Province and the country's second largest city, during Al Khareef season extending from June to early September. Last year, Salalah welcomed almost 300,000 local and international guests during the said period.

Salalah has emerged as a popular tourist destination due to its wide array of historical, natural, and heritage sites. The summer palace of the Queen of Sheba found at the city's ancient port of Sumhuran has already been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Adventurers can also visit the lost desert city of Ubar, the Baobab Forest which has a tree that is more than 2,000 years old, and the fortified ruins of Al Balid. The annual Salalah Tourism Festival held at the Municipality Showground during Al Khareef is another favorite tourist attraction. The city is also known for having the best football clubs in the country. "Aside from its numerous fascinating locations, Salalah also has cooler weather compared to other parts of Oman during the summer, so it has strong potential as a tourism hub. The Ministry has lined up several initiatives which will further boost the city's appeal to local, regional and international travelers. We have commissioned a specialized company to draw up a concrete strategy for attracting more

Gulf travelers into the city especially during the festive months," said Salem Al Mamari, Director General of Tourism Promotions, Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Tourism.

The World Travel and Tourism Council predicts a 7.8 per cent compound annual growth rate for Oman's tourism sector over the next 10 years. The Council expects Oman to emerge as the Middle East's top tourism growth market and third globally in 2010. The Omani Government plans to generate 3 per cent of the national GDP from tourism and match 80 per cent of tourism jobs with citizens by 2020.

Oman's Ministry of Tourism recently appointed Al Ketbi Consultancy, a leading specialist in regional tourism with over 25 years of collective industry experience, to enhance the country's position within the GCC tourism market and boost its global appeal. Al Ketbi will start developing promotional campaigns for new hospitality destinations in Oman such as the Swiss-Belhotel Resort Masirah Island, Salalah Marriott Resort, and the Six Senses Hideaway Zighy Bay.

Oman is renowned among travelers for its clean mountains, wadis, deserts and beaches. The festivals, held each year in the cities of Muscat and Salalah, have also transformed the country into a unique events venue. Muscat mixes sports, exploration, leisure and history to provide a memorable travel experience with an old-world charm.



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## Outrigger Hotels and Resorts Launches Room Bookings on Facebook