



ttg mena
luxury

for premium travel professionals

SUMMER 2011

ASIA: AN ENIGMATIC TALE
A NATURAL PACESETTER, ASIA BEGUILLES
THE WORLD'S ELITE TRAVELLERS

NORTH AFRICA: SPIRIT OF SOLIDARITY
A GLORIOUS NEW DAWN AWAITS THE NORTH
AFRICAN NATIONS

SPAS
A LIFESTYLE, NOT A MASSAGE

PLUS
DESIGNER LABELS
TRAVEL IN STYLE

MOUTHWATERING

PACKED WITH ZEST AND ALIVE WITH INNOVATION, THE LUXURY
TRAVEL INDUSTRY IS SET TO MAKE TASTEBUDS TINGLE

As the capital of Qatar goes elevated and global, kudos as a city which can deliver the very best, it is perhaps a natural step that the prestigious Morgans Hotel Group is dipping its toes into the vast ocean of possibilities that Doha presents, with the signing of a management contract for a Mandarin property.

Already under construction, the 295-key hotel is located in West Bay Lagoon and is expected to open its doors in 2013. Composed of multiple restaurants offering regional and international cuisine, outstanding banqueting and meeting venues, and a top-of-the-line spa, the property is being considered a delightful addition to the group's collection. "Doha is a vibrant place with an impressive array of commercial and leisure attractions along with incredible growth opportunities. The developer is creating a spectacular hotel that we will be delighted to include in our collection," said Marc Gordon, president, Morgans Hotel Group. "This agreement is another example of the international appeal of our brand, and every indication is that Doha will be a launching pad for further growth for us in the region. It is also consistent with our asset-light strategy of entering into long-term management contracts that expand our brands and leverage our strong marketing and management capabilities."

We are pleased to have been selected to manage the property over multiple other contenders.



SECLUDED PALACE RETREAT

Promising to be one of the most luxurious and exclusive leisure destinations in the UAE, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah will augment Hilton Worldwide's collection in the fourth quarter of this year. The management agreement signed between Hilton Worldwide and Al Hamra Group will bring the second Waldorf Astoria Hotel & Resort to the Middle East, following the 2006 inception of Gauri Al Shiq, Jeddah. Designed as a palace and secluded oasis of relaxation, Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah will be located in the most upscale area of Al Hamra. It will be part of a mixed-use development that includes an 18-hole championship golf course, a 600m private beach and convention centre with capacity for 2,000 people. John Vandemilce, global head of luxury and lifestyle brands, Hilton Worldwide, commented: "The Waldorf Astoria brand is synonymous with timeless luxury and sophistication and we're delighted to announce the addition of The Waldorf Astoria Ras Al Khaimah to our portfolio. Guests to the hotel can expect a luxurious experience, with the highest level of service and comfort, in spectacular and tranquil surroundings." The 268-room, Arabian-themed palace hotel will offer

state-of-the-art facilities including a magnificent 1200sqft ballroom and a choice of no less than 10 restaurants and bars.

While a bespoke spa experience has been developed for the property, guests will also have access to the recently opened shopping mall located within the Al Hamra development. HH Sheikh Mohammed bin Saud Al Gasimi, chairman, Al Hamra Group said: "We are proud to welcome one of the most luxurious and prestigious hotel brands to Ras Al Khaimah. Al Hamra is an exciting new development in the Emirate, and we are creating a stunning oasis of luxury and tranquility where guests can come to relax and unwind. We now have four hotels open or under development with Hilton Worldwide and are proud to be working with them to expand the Waldorf Astoria brand to the UAE."



Dedicated to travel

The Middle East and North Africa region's first media buying service aimed specifically at the travel industry, Insignia Travel Media Group, has taken off in style.

This dedicated media-buying house is providing hotels, airlines, leisure attractions and tour operators with a host of strategic media and marketing solutions across the globe. Insignia Travel Media Group is a new initiative by Insignia, an innovative brand-marketing firm specialising in luxury travel and lifestyle brands. The first-of-its-kind service – the brainchild of Gaurav Sinha, founder and managing director, Insignia – seeks to offer a comprehensive solution to travel brands in an ever-fragmented market with rapidly expanding media channels. Sinha explained the trigger behind this move: "The launch of the new division is a result of many factors. Primarily the growth of Insignia as a brand marketing agency and its client roster of diverse hospitality and travel brands who seek effective market penetrating media solutions, as well as an increase in the agency's expertise in understanding the global media landscape over the past eight years. We have been studying travel dynamics, how feeder markets perform over different seasons and segments, how potential travellers mine for information and this empirical knowledge leads to intelligence in planning. Our media specialists evaluate the effectiveness of specific media platforms in key markets and we believe that a multi-local strategy today is more effective than a global one." According to Sinha, the current economic environment warrants media strategies that are well targeted and cut through the clutter, and Insignia has arrived at a time when the value of its services is paramount to travel brands.

"Our approach is focused on etiquette and manners perfectly complimented with intelligence and insights - not simply a 'spray and pray' strategy."