

# ttc

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## Britons and Argentineans in Cuba

*In the total figures for January to August 2010, the United Kingdom continues in its traditional second place among Cuba's principal markets; and Argentina is stable in eighth place in terms of foreign visitors to the island.*

page 13.



Cayo Largo del Sur

## TTC Photo Contest



page 14.



## Readers' Travel Awards 2010 in the Caribbean

Five Caribbean islands – Cuba, Saint Lucia, Barbados, Turks and Caicos and Antigua – and 13 hotels in the region were chosen according to the Readers' Travel Awards 2010, as a result of the votes by the readers of *Condé Nast Traveller UK*, the United Kingdom's most important magazine specializing in tourism and one of the first worldwide.

page 15.

## A Rooted Sense of Medical Ethics

Interview with BA Calixto Noche, marketing director of Tourism and Health Company

In an interview with *TTC*, BA Calixto Noche, marketing director of the Tourism and Health Company, introduced the subject of how health tourism operates in Cuba, explaining that "SERVIMED is an option our country has due to the medical development it has achieved, which enables it to market numerous programs abroad that can be acquired by those patients who consider them beneficial."

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## WTO Says Tourism has Grown in 2010

The World Tourism Organization reported a 7% increase, as compared to 2009, in the world tourist movement in the first half of 2010, with 420 million international arrivals, although this indicator is around 2% below the 2008 record. Growth was positive in all the world's regions, led by the Middle East (+20%) and Asia and the Pacific (+14%). The Americas showed an average 7% growth. In the Caribbean the growth has been less (+4%).

**2** from the Dominican Republic  
page 14.

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# Meliá Cohiba, on the Year of its 15th Anniversary

*Barely a few days before assuming his functions as manager of the Gran Meliá Shanghai, Ignacio Martín, then manager of Havana's Meliá Cohiba, gave an interview to TTC to talk about the transcendence of that hotel, "Sol Meliá's flagship in Cuba," as he says.*

*Mr. Martín, did the start of operations of the Meliá Cohiba in Havana, on February 24, 1995, represent a landmark in the Cuban hotel industry?*

Yes, the Cohiba is the fourth hotel inaugurated by Sol Meliá in Cuba, after the opening of three hotels in Varadero between 1990 and 1994, which were the Sol Palmares and the Meliá Varadero and Las Américas. The Cohiba was our first city hotel, which subsequently marked, and up to now, many of the steps the company has taken in the island. It has been, since the beginning, a referent in service, in standard and in excellence in catering to clients at a higher level than what was being done. Since then, many procedures and standards were marked that afterwards were extended to other beach and city hotels when the Meliá Habana, Tryp Habana Libre and Meliá Santiago were incorporated.

*How has the 15th anniversary of the Cohiba been commemorated?*

The year of the hotel's anniversary coincides with another very important one, which is also the 20th anniversary of



**Meliá Cohiba Hotel, Havana**

Sol Meliá Cuba. The Cohiba has been a banner and flagship of the company and, as such, this hotel has been the framework of the activities for the 20 years of Meliá in Cuba. Around these days we have compiled on our own a great deal of documentation about the history of the Cohiba, written as well as in photos, and we have had celebrations with the founders and workers. It has been very nice to see the development of many of them, in the internal professional development as well as what they have contributed to the opening of other Meliá hotels in Cuba. There have been very nice and moving moments, in which the four managers the hotel has had in these 15

years have participated. Here there are many who have contributed and continue doing so; when there is an event in which Sol Meliá has to give a touch of excellence, the heads of the Meliá Cohiba are there. We have greatly appealed to the sense of belonging. There are many signs of pride in working in this hotel and, above all, enthusiasm in continuing to be a banner of the hotel industry in the country. There is still a great deal of strength.

*In your opinion, is there something that typifies the Cohiba?*

Yes, when one enters through the door a style, a class, a level is impregnated... and



**Mr. Ignacio Martín**

that's how it was from the beginning. One sees it in the form, in the behavior and the uniformity of the staff, knowing how to be; a very professional service and that is what we have to continue being characterized for. Then, all this is backed with improvements in the product, but in the end what must continue distinguishing us is that class.

*Which are your principal markets?*

Europe continues being the principal market, and in it Spain, with almost 30% of the clients; Italy – always in third or fourth place -, France and Germany. During some seasons, Argentina and Brazil

have been significant and, in its time, Mexico was important; that is, the Latin market.

*Are there some specific tour operators you wish to highlight?*

There are important Spanish tour operators, such as Travel-plan, Tierra Dorada and Viajes del Corte Inglés, which have always had an important weight; Mexico's Viñales; we are working a great deal with Eden Viaggi from Italy, and with Solways at the level of any market.

*Given that your appointment as manager of the Gran Meliá Shanghai is so recent, do you want to refer to this?*

Simply that, for me, in the professional sphere, it has made me feel very proud, after 10 years working in Cuba, to have finished my stage in this country in the Cohiba, which makes anyone who passes through here a better professional. It has been a school for the workers and for the managers, it prepares you for almost any challenge.... I feel very proud about my stay in the Meliá Cohiba.

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# Mexico's CONFETUR meets in Cuba

Havana hosted a new edition of Mexico's Convention of Tourist Women's Coexistence (CONFETUR), whose agenda focused on exchanges between the sector's specialists, especially women.

In statements to TTC, Clara Toiber, CONFETUR chairwoman, defined it as "an association of women travel agents, in which we have travel agents from all over the world, especially two that represent Cuba... we chose Cuba for this meeting [it was held last September] since it seemed an interesting destination, given that in addition to beach, city, culture and gastronomy, now it is developing health tourism."

When referring to other actions with the island, Toiber mentioned "a fruitful commercial exchange and our operator which promotes Cuba a great deal to bring tourists here,



**Clara Toiber, its chairwoman, speaks for TTC**

since tourism is an important locomotive for any country's economy." Regarding this, Monica Noriega, director of AS Tours, added that "a project was drawn up with the Ministry of Tourism to hold these meetings, to come to get to know what other things, apart from traditional tourism, there are in Cuba that can be



sold... the idea is that these women tour operators come and really get to know what Cuba is like so that, as women, they sell it."

Clara Toiber concluded by saying that "it has been a very interesting experience, the people have participated a lot, happy, satisfied; the most important reason for having come is this meeting."

Founded in 1977 by a group of women tourism professionals from Mexico, CONFETUR currently has branches in the states of Chihuahua, Guadalajara, Mérida, Puerto Vallarta, Veracruz and Mexico D.F., where its main office is based. Every year it organizes a National and an International Convention, whose aim is to intensify its commercial links.

## Principal Caribbean destinations connected with United Kingdom and Argentina

















### United Kingdom

-  Antigua, Antigua and Barbuda
-  Arecibo, Puerto Rico
-  Aruba, Aruba
-  Barbados, Barbados
-  Bermuda, Bermuda
-  Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands
-  Grenada, Grenada
-  Havana, Cuba
-  Holguín, Cuba
-  Kingston, Jamaica
-  La Romana, Dominican Republic
-  Montego Bay, Jamaica
-  Providenciales, Turks and Caicos
-  Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic
-  Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
-  Santa Clara, Cuba
-  St Kitts, St Kitts and Nevis
-  St Lucia (Vieux Fort), St Lucia
-  Tobago, Trinidad and Tobago
-  Trinidad, Trinidad and Tobago
-  Varadero, Cuba



### Argentina

-  Aruba, Aruba
-  Cancun, Mexico
-  Guatemala City, Guatemala, GTGU
-  Havana, Cuba
-  Kingston, Jamaica
-  Managua, Nicaragua
-  Panama, Panama
-  Port-au-Prince, Haiti
-  Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago
-  Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
-  San José, Costa Rica
-  San Juan, Puerto Rico
-  Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
-  St Maarten, St Maarten



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## Granma Becomes Consolidated in Cultural Historical Tourism

Because of the vast heritage it treasures, Bayamo offers a typical product of cultural historical tourism, attributes on which Granma's marketing policy is based, according to Ramón Cereijo Barrero, the minister of tourism's delegate in the province, in an interview with *TTC*.

"Right now, Granma province's marketing is based on highlighting the cultural and patrimonial values, which are the potentials that stand out in the territory. Cuba's history cannot be written without recognizing our cultural historical heritage."

As an example, Cereijo added: "We are working to dominate everything related to Cuban identity. There are several cultural projects, many are already functioning for daily life and others are becoming consolidated, such as Barranca de la Lizana, behind the Anthem Square,



**Anthem Square, Bayamo**



**Mr. Ramón Cereijo Barrero  
the minister of tourism's  
delegate in the province  
Granma**

and the Wax Museum; or those taken on by the House of Culture, the Hermanos Saíz Association and the Visual Arts School. In short, the historical product, in addition to nature, is available for all those who visit us."

Especially the city of Bayamo – the provincial capital –, "is fundamentally receiving circuit tourism ... the optional products are sold in the

province and in Holguín ... the Islazul hotels prevail here, and the tours predominate.... The hotel stay tourism is basically within the bounds of the Pilón area [beach and nature offers], in the Marea del Portillo and Farallón del Caribe hotels, which belong to Cubanacán."

When referring to statistics, he said that "at the close of August 2010, as compared to the same period in 2009, there was a 1% increase in tourism in the province; the Canadian market is especially doing very well... I insist on the stays in Pilón."

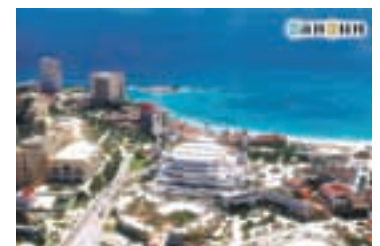
Coinciding with the image perceived by many visitors, the delegate concluded by affirming that "there is affinity between the townspeople and the tourists, since the environment, especially in the Bayamo Promenade, is one of very respectful exchange."

## Cancun, Preferred Destination for Events Tourism

This year Cancun will receive more than 600,000 visitors from the events and incentives segment, which represents a 10% growth and economic earnings of some 600 million dollars.

The importance given to promotion and having a significant infrastructure, including the most important Convention Center in Latin America and more than 23

hotels prepared to hold meetings, make Cancun a competitive and attractive destination for events organizers.



## Luxury Hotel Planned for Port-au-Prince

A seven-story and 240-room luxury hotel has been projected for 33 million dollars, precisely where the Port-au-Prince international airport's runway ends. This is one of the biggest private investment efforts since the devastating January 12 earthquake. It will include a conference center, swimming pool, spa, salons and other services, and will follow or exceed the international

standards for earthquakes. Planned on a plot of land that has not been developed for decades, those who back the hotel see it as a crucial step to attract more development and investments to the impoverished country. The new complex will not be far away by car from the destroyed center of Port-au-Prince and close to some of the poorest neighborhoods of the capital.

# Cuba to Negotiate New Golf Courses



## Varadero Golf Club

Cuba will begin negotiating in January 2011 the construction of 16 golf courses with foreign capital, according to an announcement by Minister of Tourism Manuel Marrero. Out of the 16 approved projects – which will give a boost to Cuban tourism’s leap toward a still unexplored segment, that of luxury trips, which includes the sale of houses to foreigners – there are four which are in a very advanced stage of negotiations, which will be developed in Holguín, Pinar del Río, Havana and Varadero.

Marrero affirmed that the agreement “was already approved by the Council of Ministers, is in the process of being implemented and is being concluded,” but the authorities are defining norms such as the migration status of the foreigners who will own housing in those luxury enclaves.

Moreover, the contracts and statutes of the joint ventures that, with foreign and Cuban State capital, would be created to develop the project starting next year are being analyzed.

At the inauguration of the FITCuba 2010 International TourismFair Marrero had already anticipated the Cuban policy regarding this: “The decision

to promote the development of golf in Cuba is part of tourism’s development strategy and for this we have advanced in the assessments and negotiations with several potential foreign partners, with the aim of facilitating this process, and as part of the government’s strategy to strengthen tourism in Cuba, the policy of tourism-related real estate development was approved.

This will unquestionably allow for the beginning of another stage for the development of Cuban tourism with the incorporation of new segments and investments in areas with tourist potentials that are still not being exploited.”

There are only two courses in Cuba at present, Havana Golf Club, in the capital’s Capdevila area, and the Varadero Golf Club, the most important, with 18 holes and 69 hectares and one of the most attractive in the Caribbean because of its exuberant landscape and the surrounding hotel infrastructure.

In 15 years the island hopes to have 29 golf courses throughout the country, especially in Havana, the group of keys north of Ciego de Avila, Holguín and the central-south area of Cienfuegos and Trinidad.

*Whoever sets their eyes on small details,  
will be able to understand the immensity of things*



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# ttc

## TRAVEL TRADE CARIBBEAN

# TTC Travel Trade Caribbean

May 2011 **XV Anniversary**

2011 Catalogue

Publication designed for tourism professionals. Founded in 1996, it is based in Milan, Italy and has a news office for the Caribbean region accredited in Havana, Cuba.

Its editions, designed to facilitate integrally and effectively the diffusion of news among the issuing markets and travel agencies of the tourist sector, allows for the appropriate interrelation among tourism professionals and between these and those who enjoy it.

TTC Newspaper

Caribbean Operators Book (COB) on line Tourist Directory

Continente Turismo Supplement

Caribbean Operators Book (COB) Monographic Cuba Tourist Directory

TTC News e-bulletin

www.traveltradecaribbean.com website

The general subject matter dealt with in the different editions is: news, features, interviews and articles on markets, products and tourist destinations; performance and tendencies of issuing markets and travel agencies; development projects; lodgment, gastronomy, insurance, facilities and technology for tourism; transportation, air connections; tourism modalities, events and incentives, nature, traditions, culture, sports; novelties, new products, openings, among other dissimilar subjects related to the tourist industry.

**TTC newspaper** - TTC's basic product is the printed newspaper, whose main objective is to promote the Caribbean tourist product, especially Cuba, in the issuing markets. With a comprehensive print run, it guarantees 23,000 impacts by edition. Its regular editions are distributed in Spanish, Italian, English and French at the most important tourism fairs in the world:

Edition No. 1 Fitur Spain  
Edition No. 2 BIT Italy  
Edition No. 3 ITB Germany  
MAP France

Edition No. 4 BMT Italy  
Edition No. 5 Fitcuba Cuba  
Edition No. 6 Top Resa France

Edition No. 7 TTTG Incontri Italy  
Edition No. 8 WTM United Kingdom  
Edition No. 9 Fihav Cuba

**Continente Turismo supplement** – TTC special printed supplement in Italian to be distributed in the tourism fairs in Italy.

Edition No. 1 BIT  
Edition No. 2 BMT  
Edition No. 3 TTTG Incontri

Completely dedicated to in-depth information and technical subjects of international tourism related to the Italian market and of direct interest to it, such as: Europe as a market and destination; tourist products in the region; tourist offers in the central south and central north of Italy; special features about destinations, especially in areas of India, Asia, the Arab World, Continental America, Australia; low-cost and long-distance airline companies, charter and airline flights associated with Italy.

**TTC News e-bulletin** - TTC news supplement that publishes the latest and most important news about the area's tourist activity. In Spanish, Italian and English, it is sent every week by courtesy to more than 40,000 addressees in the issuing and Caribbean markets – each weekly edition represents 120,000 hits.

**Caribbean Operators (COB) on line Tourist Directory**- Tourist Directory of Cuba and the insular Caribbean – in Spanish, Italian and English. It is based on data it compiles, classifies and organizes growing volumes of information on the Caribbean's tourist structures. On its first year on line it has already had more 10,000 hits. The entire Caribbean at click away through the <http://www.caribbeanoperatorsbook.com> site.

**Caribbean Operators (COB) Monographic Cuba Tourist Directory** - On the occasion of its XV anniversary in May 2011 and in the framework of FITCuba 2011, TTC Travel Trade Caribbean will launch the most complete printed tourist guide of Cuba that will include a description of the destination and a list of its entities. To be published in Spanish, Italian and English, with a print run of 10,000 copies, whose impact is previewed to reach some 50,000 readers.

**www.traveltradecaribbean.com web site** - TTC's web page – in Spanish, Italian and English – presents a summary of the latest weekly bulletins and the TTC newspaper, plus other sections of interest. With some 150,000 hits a month, it files the historical series of the printed editions and e-bulletins.

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# Hoteles C Plans Further Growth in Cuba

Hoteles C is the second hotel chain in number of foreign management contracts with Cuba. Present in Havana, Santa Lucía and Varadero, it operates, associated with Gran Caribe and Cubanacán, 1,936 rooms in eight hotels. Mr. José Luis Sánchez Sola, its marketing manager, speaks to TTC about the evolution and plans of Hoteles C in Cuba.

*Mr. José Luis Sánchez, by way of introduction, we would like you to speak in general about Hoteles C.*

We are a very personal company, from Costa del Sol, Malaga, one of the places where vacation packages tourism began, which opened travel to workers and not-so-rich persons; I had the pleasure of starting there in the late 1960s. In 1992 we jumped to Cuba, which at the time was unknown to me; before the development of tourism, the island was even less known. For me it represented an opportunity to correct mistakes we had made in Costa del Sol, and life gave me a second chance to develop tourism, and I have enjoyed it.

*What is the sequence of the company's expansion in Cuba?*



**Playa Caleta Hotel**

We began in Santa Lucía with the Cuatro Vientos Hotel, subsequently we financed the remodeling of the Presidente, we opened Arenas Doradas and we were proposed the reform of a tower of the Puntarena. We defrayed the reforms of Playa Caleta, which has turned out beautifully – close to six million dollars. We put in 3.4 million and the rest the owner, Gran Caribe. We had already



**Mr. José Luis Sánchez Sola, its marketing manager**



incorporated the Atlántico and Villa Los Pinos in Playas del Este; both have been reformed and have great acceptance and a high occupancy rate, even when charging very high prices. The Atlántico has been full for several months, so we have asked Gran Caribe to give us a small plot adjacent to the hotel to add some 50-100 rooms.

*How do you see the future of Hoteles C in the island?*

We are in negotiations to assume the Plaza and do a general renovation to turn it, according to Cuba's idea, into a five star or four plus; we are studying the investment's feasibility. Moreover, Cuba and our president, Fernando Puche, are involved in talks to create a joint venture with the Cuban Cubanacán and Gran Caribe chains, with a view to building a five-star, 350-room hotel, an investment of around 45-50 million dollars; we are considering Varadero or Havana. That is our immediate future in Cuba; we are very pleased to work with the human teams, who are fantastic and are very well trained.

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# Havana International Ballet Festival

Havana is the world capital of dance when it hosts from October 28 to November 7, 2010 the 22nd Havana International Ballet Festival, just when it is arriving at its 50th anniversary. This event, which emerged in 1960, is among the oldest of the genre held in the world.

The main venues will be the Grand Theater of Havana and the Mella and Lázaro Peña theaters, in the capital; and, as the subvenue, Tunas Theater in the city by the same name. The most favorite classics will be staged; in addition to five world and four Cuban premieres. The first dancers and the famous

corps de ballet of the National Ballet of Cuba will be the focus of the performances, together with stars from the Royal Ballet of London, the English National Ballet, the Scala of Milan, the Teatro Colón Ballet, the American Ballet Theatre and the New York City Ballet. The Festival is held on alternate

years and is not competitive. Up until the last edition (2008), 63 foreign companies and almost a thousand guests, representing 61 countries from the five continents, especially Europe, have attended the festival. This event has put on 880 choreographic premieres, 219 of them at a world level.



[www.festivalballethabana.cult.cu](http://www.festivalballethabana.cult.cu)

## Culturar Habana 2010

Cultural Footbridge from Argentina to Cuba



Culturar Habana 2009

A display of Argentine art and culture... tango and milonga dance lessons, lectures, stands, exhibitions, videos, crafts, sculpture, arrabal (poor areas of a town) short stories, dance couples, by Argentine and local artists, will be exhibited in the framework of the Culturar Habana International Meeting of Culture, Art and Tourism, from November 24 to 28.

Organized by the TIP Travel Tour Operator, this second edition of Culturar Habana's main venue will be the Tryp Habana Libre Hotel, and the



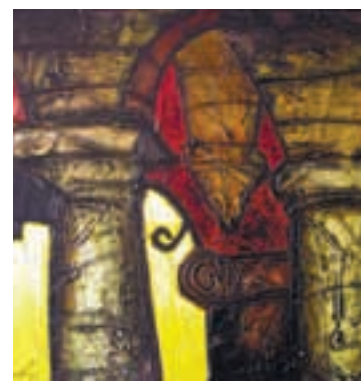
Comodoro and Club Acuatico Marina Hemingway hotels as sub-venues, although Havana, with its theaters, bars, squares, museums, streets and its seaside drive will be the scenario of several proposals.

Since Culturar Habana has active participation or simple observation activities, it is designed for any person who has artistic and cultural interests. Visual arts, oral narration, literature, poetry, dance, music and tango, as a cultural expression in its broadest sense, come together in Culturar Habana.

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## Alonso Fleitas' Allegros de Habaneras

A painter since the 1970s and a graduate of painting and engraving in 1975 from the San Alejandro National Academy of Visual Arts, Nicolás Humberto Alonso Fleitas (La Salud, 1954) complemented his artistic profile as a restorer at the National Museum of Fine Arts, a photo reporter, an illustrator of books and magazines and an art instructor. His curriculum covers more than a hundred



personal and collective exhibits in Cuba and abroad; several prizes and distinctions and works in private collections in around 20 countries.

Since 1998 Alonso has made Havana a vital theme in his work, devoid of man because he attributes greater connotation to the legacy left

by the passing of life than to the physical presence. He places the colonial city in the foreground and later, at the end, some straight line elements that symbolize the modern city, to mix the figurative with the abstract, using fillings, lines, graffiti and other effects. Alonso further contributes symbolic elements of the city... half point arches, stained-glass windows, colonial grilles, lampposts, lines that look like windows or stairs.

He defines his work thus: "Very much to the contrary of other painters that make a sketch and organize the work to paint later, I stand before the virgin canvas and begin working because the canvas for me is a laboratory, a process of experimentation." His personal satisfactions... "I have enjoyed each painting I have made in my life, because I face each one like a first time." Marked within abstractionism in his beginnings, which still hangs over him, he considers that his work is figurative. "In fact, the first thing I do when facing the canvas is abstractionism and then I start incorporating elements and it already starts being figurative."

[www.uneac.org.cu](http://www.uneac.org.cu)

# Barceló

HOTELS & RESORTS

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## Blau's Future Development is in the Caribbean

Interview with Juan M. Quetglas, marketing director of Blau Hotels & Resorts

When particularizing about the presence in Cuba, he highlighted that “the interest and the faith we have in the Cuba destination is demonstrated in the hotels we have here, which already total four.” The Majorcan chain manages in Cuba the Blau Arenal in Havana’s Playas del Este; Blau Colonial in Cayo Coco; and Blau Costa Verde, on the northern coast of Holguín; in addition to the Blau Varadero, which is a joint venture, Cubanablau.

“We are constantly seeking to expand the number of rooms in Cuba, but at times the expansion needs do not coincide with what we want, which are four- and five-star installations, in year-round destinations, and that is not easy... I hope we will be able to expand our portfolio of



**“Blau is growing a lot in the Caribbean, so much so that the possible development we will have in the future will be in the Caribbean; we are in Cuba and the Dominican Republic, which are two very consolidated destinations where we have great perspectives,” Mr. Juan M. Quetglas, marketing director of Blau Hotels & Resorts, said to TTC.**

**Blau**  
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hotels in the island.” Blau’s principal market in Cuba is Canada, followed by the UK. Quetglas explained that “that also depends on the destination where the hotel is located.

In Varadero we had contracts with many nationalities; on the other hand, in Cayo Coco and Holguín there are countries that have no air connection, which is why it is not easy to get clients from those markets.”

When asked how the Italian market behaves in the Blau hotels in Cuba, he answered: “We are great connoisseurs of the Italian market; in Majorca we have important contracts with Italian operators.

We are working with them in Cuba and it seems they are experiencing some growth in the destination.”

## Martinique



### New Director of Tourism Authority

The Martinique Tourism Authority announced the appointment of Karine Roy-Camille as director of that official entity. Previously she had been the president of the Cruise Tourism Association of Martinique, before joining the local Tourism Authority. She has 20 years of experience in the sector.

## Equestrian Tourism in Cuba

Havana’s proximity to the Finca Charco Azul farm, the exclusive landscapes of Viñales Valley and the excellent Finca La Guabina farm in Pinar del Río are the ideal combination for an equestrian week in Cuba... that’s how the British



GrandSlam agency offers it. Accompanied by specialized guides, clients will be able to enjoy, in a week, 20 hours of horseback riding with tours of different duration and degrees of complexity among valleys, mountains, reservoirs and rivers. The farms, specializing in the breeding of Percheron, Pinto Cubano and Appaloosa horses,



also has facilities for lodgment and rest that guarantee visitors an agreeable and comfortable stay. Charco Azul has 10 rooms with private bathroom and hot water; restaurant, bar-grill and swimming pool. La Guabina, with more than 1,000 hectares and close to 200 horse specimens, has a ranchón thatched-roof restaurant for lunches, a house with five rooms and three cabanas, restaurant, grill and bar. The program includes a one-day stay in Cayo Levisa and a tour of the city of Havana.

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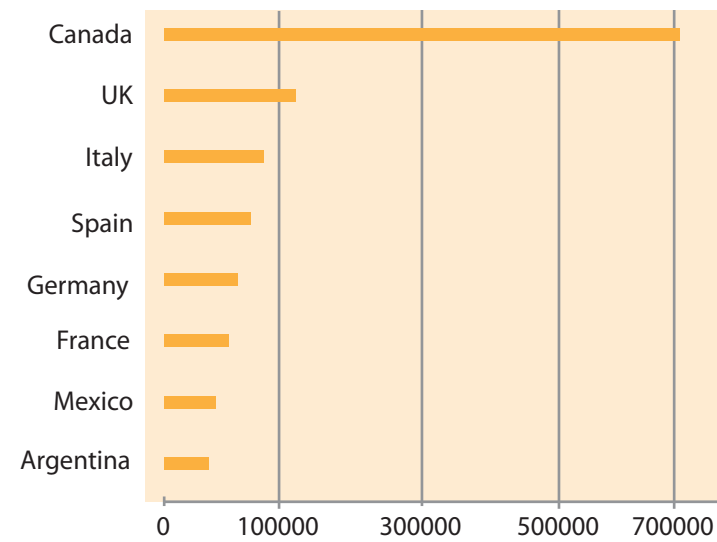
**From page one- Britons and Argentineans in Cuba**

In particular, in August 2010 both the British and Argentine markets grew as compared to the same month in 2009, 11.6% and 59%, respectively. Between January and August 2010, 116,722 tourists came from the UK and 43,375 from Argentina, representing, respectively, 98% and 115.4% more than the previous year.

At the close of August 2010, Cuba registered a 1.8% increase with the arrival in the country of 1,769,058 visitors, 32,000 more than the same period last year. Specifically in August, the latest available figures at the close of this edition, there had been 172,772 visitors, which represented 5.4% more than the same month in 2009; 2.9% more than the same month in 2008; and 12% more than in 2007.

The UK contributed 292,918 tourist-days from January to June 2010, equal to 3.2% of the total overnight stays registered in Cuba's lodgments. A total of 85% of these overnight stays

**Arrivals to Cuba by markets, JANUARY –AUGUST 2010**



were registered in the island's western region, 9% in the central part and 6% in eastern Cuba, according to the National Office of Statistics (ONE).

In the first half of 2010, 107,573 Argentine tourist-days were registered, 1.2% of Cuba's total; out of this total, 92% were in the western region. Since 2005

the UK has established itself as the second issuer of tourists to the island, which from 2000 until August 2010 has received more than 1.8 million British tourists, around 8% of the total of arrivals during that period. The record amount of Britons in Cuba was in 2006, with 211,075 arrivals. In the case of the Argentine market, there has

been a fluctuation since early this century, from 9th to 18th place, to then start recovering gradually starting 2003.

Cuba hopes to break the record of Argentine tourists in 2010, reached in 2000 when 54,185 Argentineans landed in Cuba. The island has not received again such an amount of tourists from the South American country, but

UK and Argentina as issuers to Cuba 2000 – August 2010		
Year	Position	
	UK	Argentina
2000	6	9
2001	7	8
2002	6	18
2003	6	14
2004	3	12
2005	2	12
2006	2	11
2007	2	9
2008	2	8
2009	2	9
Up to August 2010	2	8

the Cuban authorities forecast the possibility of establishing a new record at the close of this year.



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# Two from the Dominican Republic

## Best Golf Destination in Caribbean and Latin America

The International Association of Golf Tour Operators (IAGTO) elected the Puntacana Resort & Club as “Best Golf Resort of 2010” in the Caribbean and Latin America, according to the vote of more than 345 tour operators specializing in golf from 51 countries. The IAGTO’s recognition strengthens the image of the Dominican Republic as the region’s most important golf destination. The recognition ceremony will take place in the framework of the Golf Travel Market 2010



The IAGTO is the global trade organization for the world’s most important golf tourism industry, made up by 1,473 golf tour operators – resorts, hotels, golf courses, airlines and tourism offices in 80 countries.

International Fair, to be held November 15-18 in Valencia, Spain. Puntacana Resort has several golf courses and one under construction, which will be finished by 2011.



Puerto Plata

## Attracting British Tourists

The Dominican Republic is attractive as a tourist destination for the British, since between 180,000 and 250,000 UK citizens visit it every year. British ambassador to the Dominican Republic H.E. Steven M. Fisher, cited by the local press, said the number of visitors could increase if the tourist promoters make certain changes in the offer. He indicated that there is a great potential in the development of a tourist destination, with a higher level and different activities,

which will contribute to more British visiting the Caribbean island.

He highlighted that up to now the majority only wants to spend one or two weeks at the beach, but that there are tourists who want other things and the Dominican Republic has an enormous and extensive potential to have fun in other ways. At least 500 British citizens live in the country, the majority on the north coast, specifically in Sosúa, Puerto Plata.

## TTC launches XV Anniversary of TTC Photo Contest

- All interested persons will be able to participate, regardless of age, sex or place of birth, professionals as well as aficionados.
- The chosen theme is “Cuba Destination”; any photo taken in Cuba associated with its attributes can be included.
- The photos have to be taken in Cuba, from 2007 until the date of the contest’s entry.
- The authors can send up to five works, which should be presented printed in 30 x 40 cm format and the digital version, 300 DPI in .tiff format, in DVD/CD, by email or FTP, with the following data about the author: Titles of the works, Author’s complete names and surnames, Home address, Telephone, Email address, Place of work or study
- The closing date for entries expires on March 31, 2011
- A GRAND PRIX, two prizes and mentions will be awarded
- The results will be announced in May 2011, at the Central Activity for the 15th anniversary of TTC, coinciding with the holding of FITCuba 2011.
- As the contesting works begin arriving they will be exhibited in the 15th Anniversary of TTC Photo Contest Photo Gallery, on the [www.traveltradecaribbean.com](http://www.traveltradecaribbean.com) website
- The contesting works will form part of TTC’s photo collection for their possible publication, always with the author’s name; and a selection will be on display in a gallery

### The jury

President: Julio Ángel Larramendi  
Members: Fernando Francisco Valdés  
Hubert Delestre Carmell



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# Occidental Hotels & Resorts in Cuba

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Cuba, where its clients' satisfaction is the *raison d'être*. To achieve its goals the company is immersed in the facilitation of hotel services that surpass its guests' expectations in the destinations of Varadero, Havana and the group of keys north of Villa Clara. The Allegro Varadero, located

on Varadero's Autopista Sur, has just opened after a significant remodeling. This 534-room four-star all-inclusive installation is especially recommended for families because of the distribution of its rooms and its El Principito (Little Prince) Children's Club.

Occidental also operates two hotels in Havana, both in the luxurious district of Miramar, a commercial, diplomatic and residential area: The Occidental Miramar – designed for leisure and business stays, which recently reopened its remodeled round-the-clock Snack Bar; and the Occidental Montehabana, whose design, facilities and infrastructure make it very appropriate for those who opt for long stays; plus the nearby Occidental Miramar, so that its

guests can have access to several of the latter's services.

Designed for a deluxe segment, the 506-room, five-star Royal Hideaway Ensenachos, is located in Cayo Ensenachos, north of Villa Clara, and is the only hotel on this key. The majestic architecture of the principal building and its three areas – Royal Hideaway, Royal Spa and Royal Suites – harmonize with the exuberant gardens and the biodiversity of its environment. Oriented at incentive tourism, it is being equipped to host increasingly more events and incentive groups of several formats and dissimilar demands; meanwhile, it has specialized in the segment of weddings and renewal of vows.

## From page one- Readers' Travel Awards 2010 in the Caribbean

The standards to elect The Best Islands in the World are: fine white sandy beaches, gastronomic offer, landscapes, lodgment, attractions and entertainments, staff, inhabitants' hospitality and quality-price ratio. In The Best Hotels in the Americas & the Caribbean category, readers evaluate

standards of design, facilities, gastronomy, location, rooms and services. Out of the 20 top hotels, all five stars with high standards, 13 are in the Caribbean: the Jalousie Plantation, Anse Chastenet and Ladera, in Saint Lucia; Peter Island Resort & Spa and Rosewood Little Dix Bay, the British Vir-

gin Islands; Hôtel Saint-Barth Isle de France, Saint Barthelemy; Sandy Lane, Barbados; Parrot Cay, Turks and Caicos; Carlisle Bay, Antigua; Cap Juluca, Anguilla; Cotton House, Mustique; One&Only Ocean Club, Paradise Island, Bahamas; and Saratoga Hotel, Havana. This is the Saratoga's

fourth mention in these awards: in 2009 it ranked 16th on the list of Best Hotels in the Americas & the Caribbean; in 2008 it was included on that year's Gold List in the category of Best for Ambience & Design; and in 2006, 24th among the 60 new Best Hotels in the World, on the Hot List for that year.



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el especialista de Cuba



From page one

# A Rooted Sense of Medical Ethics

## Interview with BA Calixto Noche, marketing director of Tourism and Health Company

In an interview with *TTC*, BA Calixto Noche, marketing director of the Tourism and Health Company, introduced the subject of how health tourism operates in Cuba, explaining that “SERVIMED is an option our country has due to the medical development it has achieved, which enables it to market numerous programs abroad that can be acquired by those patients who consider them beneficial.”



BA Calixto Noche



Cira García Central Clinic

“Tourism and Health is a company under the umbrella of the Ministry of Tourism, belonging to the Cubanacán Group [which operates under the SERVIMED brand], and has five fundamental business lines in which we, who work in it, are immersed to raise quality standards and meet financial commitments. The first line includes the group of international medical services, that is, to bring patients to Cuba to be treated in the health system’s installations, making their hospitalization more viable.”

BA Noche explained that two of the lines are related to the sale of medicines and optician’s, backed by the network of pharmacies and optician’s offices in throughout country, in all the tourist destinations and provincial capitals. Another business line are medical services for tourists, which serves as a health guarantee for tourists entering the country and who stay in the different hotels, thus guaranteeing primary healthcare;

if there were any complications they are transferred to a hospital. The fifth is quality of life: “We have three centers: Cayo Coco’s SPA Talaso, with very modern programs based on the benefits of the marine environment; the Plaza América SPA, in Varadero beach resort; and a SPA Hotel in the Riviera Hotel, in the capital.”

“It should be said that there are star products that form part of our sales abroad portfolio, which are very popular, like the Cuban Program for the Rehabilitation of Addictions, which we have been working on for 20 years with good results; it has a team of very experienced professionals. The same happens with Retinitis Pigmentosa, known as ‘night blindness,’ treated by Cuban scientists with a novel technique that has been perfected and has a great deal of clients; the Neurological Restoration Center has great international prestige given the results obtained throughout these years; and the Cira García Clinic, with very good international reference on a clinical-surgical level. In addition to other health centers

of international reference which are at our disposal.” In reply to the question of what foreigners must do to have access to SERVIMED, he explained: “We have agencies [some specialize in health tourism and others are conventional operators] in almost all the countries of Latin America and in several in Europe which market our products; what they have to do is go there and apply for our services and they will be responsible for taking patients through the established system until they reach us. They can also contact us by telephone or through the [www.servimedcuba.com](http://www.servimedcuba.com) website.”

Further on he said that the agencies and the Tourism and Health Company conciliate the medical treatments with the lodgment and stay in Cuba of foreign patients, depending on their pathology. Those who do not require hospitalization stay in hotels and carry out

their normal lives as tourists, which they continue with their treatment.

BA Calixto Noche finished the interview with a very special message: “I could tell you that we are at the world level of medicine’s technical scientific development; we have cutting-edge technology, a great team, very professional, and I’m referring to the general public health team in Cuba; and especially the fact that the human capital devoted to this task has a very high sense of nobleness and humanism, which does not market any pathology as happens in other countries that see the patient as a merchandise and not as a human being who needs appropriate care ... we are used to being sensitized, to form part of their rehabilitation and we’re not happy until the patient is completely reestablished... there’s a very rooted sense of medical ethics.”

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## TTC Presents Program for its XV Anniversary

*Travel Trade Caribbean*, *TTC*, presented the Program for its 15th Anniversary, whose basic design includes the launching of the *COB Caribbean Operators Book “Monographic Cuba,”* recognition for its collaborators and clients and a Photo Contest, to conclude with the Central Activity for the 15th Anniversary, in the framework of FITCu-

ba 2011. The activity, held last September 10 in the Rum Museum, was attended by officials from the Italian Embassy in Cuba, the International Press Center and the Communication Department of the Ministry of Tourism, as well as representatives of tourist entities and collaborators.

# Indissoluble Duet of Holguín and Mayabe Donkey

On the outskirts of the city of Holguín, high up on a hill, stands the Mirador de Mayabe, from where the vast valley by the same name can be seen and where there is a very likable, charismatic and popular character: Pancho, the beer-drinking donkey. Hugo Huguet Blanco, manager of the Villa Islazul Mirador de Mayabe, for whom being the manager of this hotel is like a dream come true, spoke to TTC about the Mayabe's emblematic characteristic for the Holguín destination.



I don't get tired of enjoying it so much... I'm very happy." At a quick guess it is evident that in Mayabe there has been a strong investment process to improve its installations, apropos which the manager explained: "We are renovating the Mirador, recovering what the hotel used to be. It is the pride of

mentioning Mayabe, as well as its parks.... Since last year we have been carrying out a group of improvements, starting with the open-air areas, the kitchen, new freezers, infrastructure; the farm, which we have made new; the remodeled cabanas with new furniture."



Answering a first obliged personal question about what Hugo felt being the manager of the Mirador de Mayabe, he said with a broad smile: "Look, let me tell you something: the hotel recently celebrated its 50 years; there isn't a person from Holguín who doesn't have a story related to Mayabe, those who live here and even those who don't. I sometimes ask myself how many of us exist thanks to Mayabe, because our

parents met here, because we fell in love here; in short, there are thousands of stories. I had my stories as a child...it never occurred to me that at a given moment in my life I would be the manager of this hotel, which I visited as a child, an adolescent, a youth and already as an adult." To round off, in an anecdotal way he said: "People ask me if I'm going to take vacations, and I tell them that I live a vacation;

Huguet underlined that the economic results are increasing even during the low season. They welcome tourists from the traditional markets who come to Cuba, such as Canada, Germany and Italy, and specified that "many Italians come," and they like Mayabe; the national market is an increasingly important segment.

"The hotel has characteristics to welcome free, direct tourism; one of the marketing strategies is based on this. We are carrying out a big electronic marketing campaign for individual tourism...*Only, Fly and Drive*. The Mirador de Mayabe is ideal for that," he affirmed.

Holguín residents, it is a natural museum; the people of Holguín can't speak of Holguín without

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# Jardines del Rey

Jardines del Rey, on the northern coast of Ciego de Avila, is one of the most important group of keys surrounding the Cuban archipelago. Considered one of the strongest tourism markets in the country, this destination has on Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo its principal tourist cell, with 14 hotels and 4,147 rooms.

The Cuban Cubanacán, Gran Caribe, Gaviota and Islazul chains are present in this destination. It is a modern hotel network, 79% of which are four- and five-star installations. Gran Caribe has six hotels, one of its own brand, the Villa Cojímar, and five under joint management, four with Sol Meliá and one with Iberostar. Cubanacán and Gaviota operate three each, of which four are under management contracts, two

with Oasis and two with NH and Blau. Islazul has two economical lodgments on Cayo Coco.

The destination receives an annual average of around 12% of the arrivals to Cuba. Canada and the UK make up more than 80% of the guests and markets; Argentina is the third market.

Chain	Total Rooms	%
Cubanacán	1 656	39,9
Gran Caribe	1 616	38,9
Gaviota	683	16,4
Islazul	192	4,8
Total	4 147	-

The Jardines del Rey International Airport, located on Cayo Coco, is connected with Canada (Montreal, Toronto, Quebec, Halifax and Ottawa), the UK (London and Manchester) and Argentina



(Buenos Aires), as well as with Havana on local flights. The policy is to recover the air connections with Germany, Italy, France, Mexico and Portugal; as well as increasing the amount of Circuits, Events and Incentives, and Specialized Tourism (Nature, Scuba Diving, Bird Watching and Quality of Life).

## Novelties...

- Dolphin aquarium to swim with the dolphins, on Cayo Guillermo
- Jardines del Rey Nautical Club
- New Tourist Bus service to the city of Morón
- Remodeling of 102 rooms and 24 suites of the Blau Colonial Cayo Coco Hotel and 68 wooden cabanas in Villa Cojímar, on Cayo Guillermo.

Chain	Total hotels	Categories			Location	
		5 *	4 *	2-3 *	Cayo Coco	Cayo Guillermo
Cubanacán	3	1	2	-	3	-
Gran Caribe	6	2	3	1	2	4
Gaviota	3	-	1	2	3	-
Islazul	2	-	-	2	2	-
Total	14	3	6	5	10	4

## New Air Connections

### New Latin American Airline

Chile's LAN and Brazil's TAM companies announced they are analyzing a draft bilateral agreement that, if signed, will open the doors to creating a new Latin American airline, which would be the first air transportation group in Latin America and the 11th in the world in terms of size, income and market coverage. The consortium under study would operate under

the name of LATAM Airlines Group; would coordinate the LAN Chile operations in Peru, Argentina and Ecuador; and would manage LAN CARGO and its subsidiary companies, TAM Airlines, TAM Mercosur and all the branches of both companies. It would service 115 destinations in 23 countries with a fleet of 220 aircraft and a staff of 40,000 employees.

### Costa Rica Negotiates with Eight Airlines



Costa Rican Minister of Tourism Carlos Ricardo Benavides revealed that his ministry is currently negotiating with eight airlines for them to fly to that country; the names were not given, but it was said that five of them are from South America, one from the United States and two from Europe. These new flights would attract travelers from California and the so-called Southern Cone – Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and southern Brazil.

### Direct Route to St. Martin



Copa Airlines announced a direct route from Panama City to the Caribbean island of St. Martin starting next December 18. The new flight to St. Martin will depart from Panama on Tuesdays and Saturdays at 12:22 p.m. and will arrive in St. Martin at 4:17 p.m. The return flights leave from St. Martin on the same days at 5:30 p.m. and land in Panama at 7:44 p.m.

### AeroRepública Takes On Other Destinations



Mexico City and Havana form part of the itinerary of the Colombian AeroRepública Airline, a subsidiary of Copa Airlines. For Mexico it will use new generation Boeing 737-700s, while for Cuba it will fly on Embraer 190s – the Bogotá-Havana flights will have a weekly frequency on Saturdays. With these two cities,

AeroRepública is already flying to eight destinations in Latin America and is meeting its expectations of extending international operations. Guatemala City and San José, Costa Rica, were the latest destinations assumed by the airline, which flies from Bogotá to Panama, Caracas, Quito and Guayaquil.

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