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Havana Convention Center All Set for its 30th Anniversary

The Havana Convention Center was founded in 1979 and is the leader in the professional organization of congresses and fairs in Cuba. More than 2,000 events held in its halls in almost three decades of life vouch for its internationally renowned prestige.



The Center organizes events of any type or format.

Located in a luxurious residential district, it stands on a land area of 60,000 square meters. It has 11 air-conditioned halls of different sizes, multipurpose premises, offices and spacious halls for associated exhibitions. *...continued on page 4*



Conventions Bureau of **CUBA**
Events and Incentive Trips ...

www.cubameeting.co.cu

St. Lucia to Host Caribbean Marketplace 2009

The St. Lucia Hotel & Tourism Association will host Marketplace 2009. The annual event is organized by the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) and endorsed by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO). CHA Marketplace brings together active hotel members, airlines, car rental companies and ground handlers with qualified tour operators and wholesalers. The 2009 event is scheduled to take place from January 11 to 13, 2009. *...continued on page 2*



22-24 April-Frankfurt, Germany

Mexican Caribbean: Growth in German Tourism

This year the Mexican Caribbean is expecting an increase of between 8% and 10% in German tourism, according to the assistant secretary of Tourism Promotion of the State Secretariat of Tourism, Martín Ruiz....

...continued on page 2



Barrio Chino, the Dominican Republic's New Tourist Product

Santo Domingo's Barrio Chino (Chinatown) has become the Dominican Republic's new tourist product.

The executive director of the Flor para Todos Foundation and coordinator of the Barrio Chino, Rosa Ng Báez, said this is a tourist project since tourism is one of the principal sources of income and this offer should be taken advantage of for the benefit of the country, which welcomes four million tourists a year and has some 63,000 hotel rooms. *...continued on page 4*



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From Page one: St. Lucia to host Caribbean

If St. Lucia's bid is successful it will be held at Pigeon Island with the Sandals Grande St. Lucian Spa and Beach Resort as the host hotel with expectant participation of the majority of hotels in the north of the island.

It is expected that no less than 1,500 persons will participate in this event which is the most important sales and marketing event in the Caribbean.

This will be the first time that this important event is held in an Eastern Caribbean nation. CHA Marketplace will provide a major marketing boost for St. Lucia's tourism industry.



St. Lucia's profile in the region has been very high, having held the presidency of the Caribbean

Hotel Association just recently, while two of its hotel managers received hotelier of the year awards in addition to the outstanding performances of chefs at the Taste of the Caribbean competition in recent years.

This will without a doubt inspire confidence in St. Lucia's

ability to host the event when the decision makers of the regional organization will assess the bids for the mega event.

From Page one: Mexican Caribbean



He added that 10 million pesos will be invested in the German market to promote the Quintana Roo and Mundo Maya destinations.

After attending the ITB Berlin 2008 Travel Trade Show, he indicated that during the fair a total of 12 meetings were held with wholesalers, who are interested in the destinations that offer culture and

adventure, sun and beach.

A delegation representing 35 companies from the Cancun, Puerto Morelos, Riviera Maya, Cozumel and Chetumal destinations, headed by the Mexican secretary of tourism, participated in the event.



Events Cuba

October-November 2008

Havana International Ballet Festival	Oct. 28	Nov. 06	Havana	Grand Theater of Havana	Cubatur, Havanatur and Paradiso
Four Centuries of Cuban Literature	Nov. 3	Nov. 7	Havana	Casa Humboldt	Havanatur
Marabana Race	Nov. 15	Nov. 17	Havana	Havana	Cubadeportes
Meeting of Friends of the Casa Partagás	Nov. 17	Nov. 21	Havana	Casa del Habano Partagás	Viajes Cubanacán
International Cave Painting Workshop	Nov. 17	Nov. 22	Havana	University of Havana	Paradiso
Cuba-Danzón	Nov. 20	Nov. 23	Matanzas	Sauto Theater	Paradiso
4th International Symposium of Management of Beaches and Coastal Ecosystems (VARAPLAYAS 2008)	Nov. 25	Nov. 28	Matanzas	Environmental Services Center	Havanatur
3rd Symposium on Society, Tourism and Human Development	Nov. 26	Nov. 29	Sancti Spiritus	University of Sancti Spiritus	Viajes Cubanacán



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Conventions Bureau of Cuba: 25 Years Designing and Organizing Meetings and Incentives

When it comes to designing and organizing events, the Conventions Bureau of Cuba appears as the principal agent of an activity that has been gaining prestige in the Cuban and international sphere of tourism.

This institution, a leader of events tourism and incentives travel in the largest of the Caribbean islands, is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2008 with years of efficiency, professionalism, technological logis-

combine comfort, leisure and safety.

The development achieved by the island in the spheres of health, education, sports and other varied aspects of social life has favored its recognition as a safe venue for events and congresses. And for this the Convention Bureau, with a staff of professionals, has taken on the role of uniting the organizational and consultancy work in the aforementioned matter.

standing destinations in Latin America and the Caribbean for the holding of meetings, congresses, conventions and events in general, has acquired high international recognition that places it among the first countries in the Americas in the market of the Meetings Industry.

Convention centers equipped with the most modern informatics and communications techniques, transportation, sports installations, fairgrounds, hotels and a highly qualified staff facilitates the success of the organization and holding of events in the country.

The largest of the Caribbean islands has the capacity to generate its own events thanks to its development. It is also a source of attraction and safe scenario for international associations to celebrate their congresses in this destination.

Cuba has a modern and comfortable frontline hotel network throughout the country for the organization of incentive trips or working and business meet-

ings, which together with its functionality and extra services, prides itself for its combination and variety of offers.

The golden rule will be to let



yourself be carried away, use every second and do what your heart commands; between aromas, shadows and lights, glimmers and challenges.

A spontaneous, natural, unmentionable gift, which perhaps can be described as happiness, will make you find yourself wide-eyed at sunrise, because the hours lived and life have been energized by the powerful forces of nature.

Cuba is the haven of your human essences, the precise spot to fully enjoy the Caribbean during your meeting or incentive trip.



tics and a solid services infrastructure.

In this, its first quarter of a century, the Bureau has channeled its management policy into preparing and guaranteeing the facilities for the good development of each one of the events held every year in conference centers and fairgrounds throughout the country and that

Twenty-five years have gone by and the experience accumulated by each one of the experts in the activity has already borne fruit, a direct result of its dedication to the development of this tourist modality and of the joint effort with Cuban institutions, which have gained excellent prestige.

Cuba, one of the most out-

Cuba Gets Ready for FITCUBA 2008

Cuba's 28th International Tourism Fair will open its doors next May 5-9 at its already usual Morro-Cabaña Park venue. This fair, which has Italy as its guest country and is dedicated to Culture-Tourism Integration, will be an incentive for the leisure industry in Cuba.

The event's inauguration will be held on May 5 at the Grand Theater of Havana, while the following morning the ribbon cutting ceremony will take place at the fairgrounds, on the other side of the bay, surrounded by the sea and in old colonial buildings declared a World Heritage Site together with



Havana's Historical Center.

Tour operators, travel agencies, airline companies, companies involved in the organization of events and the specialized press will be present at the

fair, whose aim is to promote the largest of the Caribbean island's diverse tourist destinations.

The agenda of Cuba's top tourism event includes the launch-

ing of catalogues and new products, the presentation of destinations and the signing of marketing contracts for hotel capacities.

CUBATUR is FITCUBA 2008's travel agency and Transtur and Cubana Airlines its official transportation means.

www.cubatravel.cu



From Page one: Barrio Chino, new tourist product

A guide from Barrio Chino will explain the product's details as well as the historical elements dating back to the arrival of the first Chinese immigrants to the country.

At present there are some 47 Chinese commercial establishments, among them jewelry stores, supermarkets, travel agencies, associations and the

Chinese Masonic center. An increase is expected with the project, which was conceived 10 years ago and began to materialize in 2005.

All the sculptures were made in China. The most valuable ones are made with Carrara marble and those on the promenade are made based on a bronze-steel alloy.

Gaviota Offers Facilities for Events



Gaviota Tours is the Travel Agency and the DMC of the Gaviota S.A. Tourism Group, one of the most important Cuban entities founded in 1988.

Gaviota has at its disposal the Gaviota Tourism Group's whole infrastructure that includes hotel network, tourism transportation company, rent-a-car, recreation

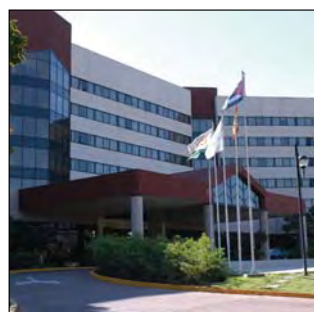
head office in the city of Havana and agencies with operational independence in Havana, Varadero, Cayo Santa María and Holguín, the former with travel agents in Santiago de Cuba and Cayo Coco. Gaviota Tours' Sales Department, located at the head office, centralizes the operations. This department is divided as follows:

- Conventional Tourism
- Events and Incentives: Specialized Tourism Department
- Agencies' Representative

Our tourist product

Gaviota Tours provides its clients with the following services:

- Travel agencies' representative
- Events and Congresses organization
- Incentives programmer's organizations
- Excursions and Tours
- Domestic and international flights
- Domestic and international helicopter charters
- Shopping facilities
- Programs for conventional and specialized tourism
- Travelers' insurance
- Experienced tour guides
- Land transportation



Occidental Miramar Hotel

centers, restaurants, shops, marinas as well as non-hotel facilities. Besides, it has a strategic alliance with well known hotel chains such as Sol Meliá, Occidental, Globalia, Blau, Iberostar, Barceló, among others. Gaviota offers facilities to carry out events, and attractive tours and trips organized by our Gaviota Tours travel agency.

Our structure

Gaviota Tours has a structure with a dynamic and flexible organization, with a

Habaguanex Already has On Line Booking

Habaguanex S.A.'s on line booking system is already available at its www.habaguanexhotels.com website. Customers will be able to have access to all Habaguanex hotels and find out about their characteristics and availabilities. They will also be able to update their information on new offers in Old Havana.

From Page one: Havana Convention Center

The Convention Center offers services that cover, from beginning to end, all the requirements for a successful meeting: technical secretariat, hall officers, translation, simultaneous interpretation, text processing, printing, audiovisual means, accreditation and setting up of exhibitions; national and international communications, Internet services, medical care, banking agency and gastronomic offers in bars, cafeterias and El Bucán Restaurant, specializing in banquets, cocktail parties, suppers and receptions.

The Centre forms part of the PALCOHABANA Company, which works under the integral concept designed for executives, exhibitors and negotiators, according to the event's characteristics. Its strength lies in the integration of highly specialized services and one of its pillars is its human resources.

PALCOHABANA also includes the four-star, 178-room Palco Hotel, which is interconnected to the Center; the Karl Marx Theater; Club Habana; the Pabexpo fairgrounds; the

Palcograf printing shop; the Palco Commercial Center; Palco Real Estate Company; a customs agency; and La Finca, El Rancho and El Palenque restaurants.

The Convention Center is a



member of the world system of congress organizers: Association of International Fairs of America (AFIDA); International Congress & Convention Association (ICCA); Union of International Fairs (UFI); International Association of Congress Centers (AIPC); and the Confederation of Organizing Entities of Congresses and Related Events of Latin America (COCAL).

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Website: www.cpalco.com

Jardines del Rey Airport Operations Highlighted

Jardines del Rey's international air terminal, located in the tourist destination by the same name, was the country's most outstanding in that activity. The sector's authorities pointed out that the most important factors were efficiency and quality services, vouched for by the fact that tourists' average stay in the terminal was 18 minutes. Located in Cayo Coco, to the north of Ciego de Avila, the airport qualifies among those preferred by vacationers with a more than 90% acceptance rate.

The traffic staff's courtesy, the fast solution of travelers' prob-

lems and the stay-over periods in the terminal support the excellence of its services. The airport, inaugurated in December



2002, receives every week some 30 flights, the majority from Canada, Jardines del Rey's first tourist market.

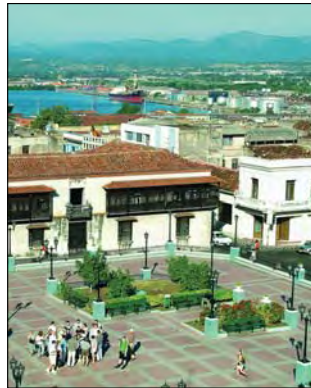
Cubanacán Travel Agency: Experience at the Service of Incentive Tourism

Cubanacán Travel Agency has guaranteed in recent years its services to more than a third of the total movement of the tourist industry in the Cuba destination.

Its prestigious team of professionals achieves a perfect combination of offers with a favorable quality-price ratio. It offers the entire gamut of tailor-made conventional and specialized tourism services with the help of recognized specialists in the matter and by its sales outlets throughout the country.

Cubanacán Travel Agency's solid associations with world tour operators and travel agencies are a guarantee of a high-quality service that is also at the disposal of cruise companies. The experience in the design and organization of a la carte incentive programs, the hold-

ing of events, congresses and business meetings distinguish Cubanacán Travel Agency in the national market. For this it



Santiago de Cuba, City

has centers and halls of diverse formats, which include hotels throughout the island, an adequate service infrastructure and a team of highly qualified specialists.

From Havana to Santa Clara with Viajes Cubanacán

The Viajes Cubanacán Travel Agency's portfolio includes the "Santa Clara, Che's City" excursion, which leaves every day from the Cuban capital to the city of Santa Clara. The excursion without minimum of pax lasts the entire day and following is the program:

- Pick up at hotel
- En route to Santa Clara, brief stops are made in the towns of Jagüey Grande or Aguada de Pasajeros
- The rural landscape typical of the southern part of Havana and Matanzas provinces can be seen during the tour, in addition to fruit and vegetable preserve factory and the Australia Sugar Mill
- Panoramic view through Santa Clara
- Visit to the Armored Train monument
- Visit to the Leoncio Vidal Park; tour of Carmen church's exterior areas, the Santa Clara Libre Hotel and La Caridad Theater
- Lunch in a restaurant in the area
- Urban life, schools and hospitals can be seen during the trip to Revolution Square
- Visit to the Che Guevara Memorial
- Return to hotels



Che Guevara Memorial

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www.sandalshicacos.com

Hotel Nacional de Cuba: Splendid Halls for Conventions and Incentives

More than seven decades of history enhance the prestige of the CLASSIC PAR EXCELLENCE of the Gran Caribe hotel group, which conserves all the splendor of its eclectic and art deco architecture. The hotel's magnificence has attracted hundreds of celebrities from the world of art, science and politics, who have left their imprint. Because of its historical and patrimonial values, in 1998 it was declared a National Monument of the Republic of Cuba.

Its splendid halls and its modern comfort make it ideal for events, conventions and incentives. The Nacional has 426 rooms with all types of facilities, an executive floor that meets all the demands and a luxurious cabaret.

Executive service

Located on the sixth floor of the hotel, the Executive Office is open every day from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Its services include bilingual secretary, photocopies, fax, cell phone



rentals, meeting rooms, audiovisual and international messenger services. This floor has 52 rooms with private recep-



**HOTEL NACIONAL
de Cuba**
☆☆☆☆

tion service, breakfast room and personalized attention.

Audiovisual equipment service

Rear projector of transparencies; Rear projector of slides; VHS Video; 20- and 35-inch color TV sets; Data show; Audio 3 Microphone System; Extra microphones; Recording of sessions; King Block; Photocopies PC; and Printer for PC.

Meeting Rooms Capacity

Halls	Cocktail	Dinner	Theater	Classroom	U Style
Vedado	350	150	200	200	80
Taganana	180	100	150	50	40
Baracoa	50	24	40	20	15
Sancti Spiritus	50	24	40	20	15
Puerto Príncipe	45	20	35	15	15
Trinidad	20	12	-----	-----	-----
1930-Compay Segundo	600	450	500	180	80

Calle O esq. A 21, Vedado, Havana, Cuba
Tel.: (537) 836 3564-67
Fax: (537) 836 5171 / 836 3899

E-mail: eventos@gcnacio.gca.tur.cu
www.gran-caribe.com
www.hotelnacionaldecuba.com

Victoria Hotel Celebrates its 80th Anniversary

The Victoria Hotel, founded as a stately mansion on July 14, 1928, is celebrating in 2008 its 80th anniversary. Designed for businesspeople and journalists, it is an at-



tractive option for business and incentive travel. CEOs and businesspeople will find a discreet, elegant, welcoming and private place characterized for providing a person-

alized treatment, as well as being centrally located in the very heart of Havana's Vedado district.

Built according to the architectural canons of its time and decorated in a colonial style, since its origins it was devoted to hotel ventures. Baptized in 1930 as the Residencial Vedado Hotel, it took its present name of Victoria in 1940 in tribute to its owners in



compensation for the profits it made. Many personalities have stayed at the

Victoria: actors Marlon Brando and Errol Flynn; Russian composer Sergey Prokofiev; Nobel Prizes for Literature Gabriela Mistral – Chilean poet – and Juan Ramón Jiménez – Spanish writer and poet -, who lived in this hotel from 1936 to 1939.

This four-star establishment, which belongs to the Gran Caribe Hotel Group, has a conference room and 31 air-conditioned rooms with communications facilities, mini bar, satellite TV and safety deposit box. It provides room service and support services for meetings and conferences, in addition to an exquisite gastronomic offer.

Calle 19 y M, Vedado, Havana
Teléfonos: (53 7) 33-3510
Fax: (53 7) 33-3109

E-mail: reserva@gvicto.gca.tur.cu



Heredia Convention Center Again Hosts ExpoCaribe

Santiago de Cuba is getting ready to host Cuba's second most important trade fair, the 15th ExpoCaribe Fair, to be held next June 1-6 at its regular venue, the Heredia Theater Convention Center.

The call for the holding of the fair has created growing interest among businesspeople from several countries. It has been favorably welcomed in the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Bolivia, Venezuela, Mexico, Trinidad and Tobago, Belgium, Italy, Spain, China and Vietnam. ExpoCaribe 2008 will contribute to expanding economic and trade ties between the nations of the Caribbean region.

The Heredia Theater Convention Center is a multipurpose

cultural institution that functions as a theater and as the venue for events of several formats, fairs and expositions, in addition to assuming its role as a cultural marketplace. It has



Heredia Convention Center

a plenary room with 2,500 capacities, adequate equipment and a highly trained technical staff. It was founded on August 13, 1991, and has contributed to promoting cultural and congress tourism in the city of Santiago de Cuba.

The Caribbean Present at Theater May 2008



Havana's Casa de las Américas cultural institution will hold the 7th Latin American and Caribbean Theater Season, also known as Theater May. Once again the event will gather a representative display of the varied work of the region's scenic arts.



Casa de las Américas

The event originated with the 1st Latin American Theater

Festival held in 1961, and it has been called Theatre May since 1998. It represents a bridge built by Casa de las Américas between the Latin American Festivals of the 1960s and the International Theater Meetings of the 1980s.

Every two years, and with a central idea, Theater May brings to Cuban stages plays from contemporary Caribbean and Latin American theater through shows, workshops, talks, lectures and the presentation of theater publications and books.

www.casadelasamericas.org

Sol Meliá Cuba Sol Meliá CUBA

Unforgettable and Exceptional Incentive Trips

Sol Meliá Cuba is re-launching its product for incentive trips and tourist groups, a segment for which it offers the possibility of enjoying an exceptional

and unforgettable experience. it possible to provide a diversity of destinations. Its facilities are standardized by brands, which includes added value and special attention, ban-

equipped with modern audiovisual and technical means.

They also have a varied gastronomic offer in which exquisite specialized restaurants stand out, all of which are very appreciated by the incentive travel segment.

To facilitate the organization of a tailor-made program for each client, Sol Meliá Cuba has a department specializing in attracting, negotiating, controlling and following up tourist groups and convention, congresses and incentives trips.

The program is called Meeting Sol Meliá Cuba and its principal support is credibility, trust, creativeness, imagination and professionalism.

Solways operates as the DMC. It designs, organizes and materializes incentive and tourist group programs in the most attractive Cuban destinations.

Hotels recommended for Incentive and Tourist Groups

Havana
Meliá Cohiba
Meliá Habana
Tryp Habana Libre

Varadero
Paradisus Varadero
Princesa del Mar
Paradisus Varadero
Meliá Las Américas
Meliá Las Antillas
Meliá Varadero
Sol Palmeras
Tryp Península Varadero

Cays
Meliá Las Dunas
Sol Cayo Largo
Tryp Cayo Coco

Holguín
Paradisus Río de Oro
Sol Río de Luna y Mares

Santiago de Cuba
Meliá Santiago de Cuba



and unforgettable experience.

For this it provides a selection of 16 exclusive hotels and resorts located in Cuba's principal cities and beaches, making

quiet and gastronomic services, musical formats and group and incentive coordinators.

As a whole these facilities cover an area of 9,500 square meters in 54 multipurpose halls

Expocentro Fairgrounds

Expocentro Fairgrounds is a colossal of the city of Santa Clara's events industry. The institution, created in 2002, has given poise to the city, while providing it with the indispensable space for business meetings.

Located in the beautiful outskirts's Arco Iris Recreational Complex, Expocentro has a 1,400-square-meter indoor exhibition area and a 3,200-square-meter outdoor one, in addition to halls suitable for the holding of meetings – air-conditioned rooms with capacity for 250 persons, a protocol room for 80 persons and four simultaneous interpretation booths.

Expocentro is the venue for fairs, exhibitions, business

rounds, scientific events and cultural activities.

The Central Trade Fair especially stands out; it is attended by national and foreign companies, whose number increases with every edition.

Although it was designed to promote businesses in the central Cuban region, it is currently attended by representations from the majority of the island's provinces; and especially foreign firms from Spain, Italy, France, Argentina, Chile, Canada and Uruguay. It practically covers all the economic sectors and its influence has transcended in the local development of tourism.

Bolívar Convention Center

The Bolívar Convention Center is located in the city of Santa Clara, central Cuba, a few meters away from La Granjita Hotel and close to the airport.

Equipped with the required infrastructure to organize, promote and carry out small- and medium-size events, it covers an area of approximately 400 square meters.

With pleasant installations in a healthy and natural environment, this center stands out for its beautiful gardens and cool halls.

The technical base comprises four conference rooms, with a seating capacity for 40 to 180 persons, equipped with mod-

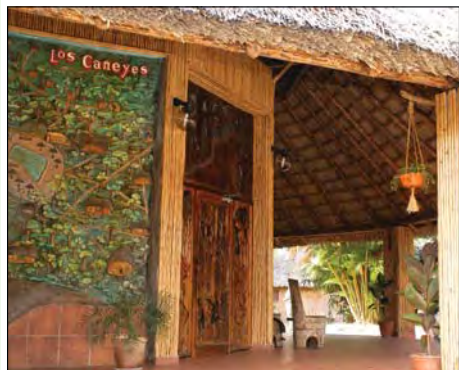
ern informatics, projection and reproduction technology, including a closed circuit TV multisystem, capable of covering a broad spectrum of types of events.

The Bolívar Convention Center's offer is complemented with general services: gastronomy – cafeteria and Los Azahares Bar-Restaurant –, specialized library, medical, photography and design services, video production, and press room.

In 2008 this center will be the venue of diverse international scientific events in the fields of social, natural and medical sciences, using Cuba's Ecotur and Viajes Cubanacán as their travel agencies.

Santa Clara Becomes Events Venue

Santa Clara, capital of the province of Villa Clara, is located precisely in the center of the island. Its privileged geographical location favors accessibility from Cuba's principal tourist destinations and makes it an obligatory stopover in tours from the western to the eastern regions.



Los Caneyes

Although it has not had much publicity, Santa Clara has gradually, but firmly, become an important hub for events tourism due to several circumstances.

On the one hand, the fast scientific-technical development generated by the Central University – one of Cuba's oldest and most integral; the higher institutes of medical sciences, pedagogy and physical culture; and the research centers. On the other, the eternal presence of Che's mortal remains in the Che Guevara Memorial, which every year attracts hundreds of visitors, academicians and specialists.

Independently that Santa Clara's scientific and higher education institutions serve as venues for many of the international events held there, the Bolívar Convention Center emerged as a result of the increasing demand.

This center is equipped with the required infrastructure to organize, promote and hold small- and medium-size format events.

Expocentro Fairgrounds is another of Santa Clara's colossal of the events industry. It is the venue for fairs, exhibitions, business rounds, scientific events and cultural activities. Santa Clara has developed on a par as a city tourist destination, based on the expansion of its infrastructure, the appearance of hotel chains and extra-hotel companies, as well as an appreciable increase in tourist arrivals.

The vertiginous tourist growth of Caibarién, on the province's northern coast – Santa María, Ensenachos and Las Brujas cays – has contributed to this, since it fosters a greater tourist flow through the provincial capital given that visitors use the Abel Santamaría International Airport or have access through the thruways.

The city's accommodation facilities include almost 300 rooms, in three two- and three-star hotels: Santa Clara Libre, property of the Islazul chain and located in the Historical Center; Los Caneyes and Villa Granjita

– both featuring a rustic architecture and similar comfort, property of the Cubanacán group and located in the rural outskirts of the city.

Visitors can travel to other places of tourist interest through the Havanatur, Cubatur and Paradiso travel agencies, located around Vidal Park. To this is added a complementary network of Palmares, Islazul and Cubanacán cafeterias and restaurants, access to Internet services, and car and motorbike rentals.



Villa Granjita

No matter how you look at it, Santa Clara is a destination that has the basic elements of an infrastructure for the development of congress tourism.

VILLA CLARA

San Cristóbal: Events and Incentives in Historical Center

Created in 1996, San Cristóbal is Habaguanex' travel agency. In exclusive, it suggests the discovery of this mythical city and other destinations in Cuba under the modality of historical-cultural tourism.



Beltran de Santa Cruz Hotel

San Cristóbal is in charge of the rigorous selection of these services and even the most minimal organizational details. Its staff is made up by a team of dynamic professionals ready to unveil new proposals. It is ideal for organizing an exclusive tour for its Incentive Groups. Its infrastructure,

the training of a specialized working team and years of experience guarantee a singular trip. Successful companies such as Mercedes Benz, Volkswagen, Porche, Alcatel, Clinique, Christian Dior, L'Oreal, Novartis, RAS, Mustela, Total Elf, Philips, Dompe, Bake-mark and Avon vouch for its experience.

San Cristóbal invites you to enjoy Cuba's cultural life, famous cabarets, classical music concerts in theaters or old convents, popular shows, ballet, dance or theater performances, as well as the traditional carnivals.

The agency guarantees the logistics and services required for the successful organization of events, congresses, meetings and conferences. Its team of professional congress organizers is at your service, as well as a wide array of halls and technical means, in the very Historical Center. San Cristóbal is the official agency for the organization of all the events convened by the Office of the City of Havana Historian.



Santa Isabel Hotel

Events such as the International Meeting of Management of Historical Centers, Meetings of Vernacular Architecture, the International Workshop of Afro-American Social and Cultural Anthropology, the Old Music Festival,



Meeting of Vernacular Architecture

the International Meeting of Archaeology, the International Meeting of Libraries and Books in the 21st Century, as well as other events, have already become a regular occurrence. The professionalism of the tourist guides, who are specialists in the historical-cultural product, and their dominion of two or more languages turn them into the agency's principal strength.

The San Cristóbal agency proposes traveling through 500 years of a history of miscegenation, religious and cultural syncretism, to discover an island of contrasts and superimposed styles. Through San Cristóbal, the clients are the ones who decide on their opportunities in Cuba.



Marqués de Prado Ameno Hotel to Open in Spring

The Habaguanex S.A. Tourist Company will get all decked out this spring when it opens the Marqués de Prado Ameno Hotel. Located on No. 253



O'Reilly Street between Cuba and Aguiar, this four-star hotel has a privileged position, in the very heart of Old Havana.

The Marqués de Prado Ameno, whose name comes from

an illustrious family that formerly lived in the large 19th century colonial mansion, will have 16 rooms – three suites and 13 standard – decorated with restored 18th and 19th century mural paintings and featuring a broad array of services, such as messenger service, information desk, taxis, luggage storage and porter.

Among other facilities, guests will have satellite TV in their rooms, room service, laundry and dry cleaning, non-smoker rooms, mini-bar, air conditioning, central safety deposit box and telephone for national and international calls. In addition, the establishment has an Internet café, a tavern with capacity for 60 persons and a small-format meeting room.

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Holguín's "Romerías" May Festivities Dedicated to Tamaulipas and Quito

The city of Holguín, in eastern Cuba, is ready to host the 15th "Romerías" May Festivities



that, dedicated to the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico, and the city of Quito, Ecuador, will be held May 2-8 under the evocative slogan "Because there is no today but rather yesterday".

Thus, the so-called City of Parks will become the Capital of Young Art, with the presence of musicians, theater people, researchers, dancers, writers, painters and cultural promoters.

Sponsored by the Hermanos Saíz Association of young artists, who will play the leading role in these festivities, this World Festival of Artistic Youths will turn the city's streets and public spaces into stages for concerts, shows, exhibits, dance, theater, workshops and dancing, as well as meetings for socio-cultural reflection during the Interactive Social Forum.

The program of activities also includes car parades, traditional pilgrimages to the Cerro de la Cruz, contests, lectures, project presentations and the planting of the Friendship Tree.



ExpoHolguín Fairgrounds

ExpoHolguín Fairgrounds was born on January 8, 1997 with the holding of the first Trade Fair. It has three air-conditioned rooms with a capacity for 200, 100 and 50 persons, audio and audiovisual services, two restaurants and a 1,120-square-meter exhibition pavilion. An exterior 5,000-square-meter

exhibition area, a hotel villa linked by a pedestrian way with the convention center and a motel area form part of its services portfolio.



Livingston to Make Commercial Stopover in Cuba

Italy's Livingston Airline, which will begin flying to El Salvador next June 15, will make a commercial stopover in Cuba before reaching its final destination.

According to Claudia Arenas, TACA communications director in El Salvador, the route will be Milan-Cuba-El Salvador-Milan. Livingston's flights will operate every Sunday and will land in the afternoon. Livingston signed a commercial agreement with the TACA



Group for the latter to be its principal seller in the Central American region. It also boosted its alliance with TACA to offer connections to other countries in the region.

Islazul Operates Events Tourism Modality

Several of the Islazul hotel chain's establishments have small- and medium-format meeting rooms, especially the Villa Panamericana, in Havana; the Mar del Sur Apartment Hotel (Varadero); Pasacaballo Cienfuegos), Morón (Ciego de Avila), Camagüey (in the city by the same name), Pernik (Holguín), and San Juan (Santiago de Cuba).

These tourist-class hotels are equipped with the facilities to organize and carry out events. Their portfolio includes air-conditioned rooms for meetings, banquets and cocktail parties, as well as rooms that can be adapted as classrooms, theaters and plenary halls. They offer services associated to the modality: access to the Internet, fax, national and international telephone service, press rooms, medical services, currency exchange, tourism desk and parking.

Villa Panamericana - This 81-room hotel is located east of Havana, in the vicinity of the town of Cojimar. It is especially recommended for organizers and participants in sports events because of its proximity to important installations such as the Olympic stadium, swimming pool complex, cycling track and tennis courts.

It has meeting rooms for working events, workshops or professional exchanges.

Mar del Sur Apartment Hotel - Designed for family tourism, it is conceived to enjoy Varadero's attractions. Its infrastructure is made up by 146 one- and two-room apartments, 60 equipped for long stays and 130 hotel rooms, for a total of 366.

Pasacaballo Hotel - Located at the entrance to the bay of Cienfuegos, guests have access to the Escambray Mountains from its installations. Its 188 rooms have a beautiful view.

Islazul Morón Hotel - The 144-double-room and eight-junior-suite Morón Hotel is located two kilometers from the center of the city of Morón and 50 minutes away from Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo.

Camagüey Hotel - With a lodgement capacity of 142 rooms, it is the venue of numerous social and cultural events. It is 12 kilometers away from the Ignacio Agramonte International Airport and four kilometers from the Historical Center of the city of Camagüey.



Islazul Pernik Hotel - Located in a district with a busy social and cultural life in the modern part of the city of Holguín. Varied recreational offers are harmoniously complemented with tours of places of historical-cultural, anthropological and tourist interest. It has 200 rooms.



Pernik Hotel

Islazul San Juan Hotel - Neighboring the Military Historical Park of Loma de San Juan and only four kilometers away from the center of the city, this hotel - 111 double rooms in cabanas and other complexes - mimics in architecture and forms the singular Caribbean grace of Santiago de Cuba.

Gaviota's Following Nature's Footprints Program

Gaviota Tour's exciting Following Nature's Footprints Trekking Program is a nature tourism circuit that goes from Havana to central Cuba and concludes in Varadero. It comprises seven nights, with MAP accommodations in the Kolhy – Havana; Hanabanilla – Santa Clara; Topes de Collantes – Sancti Spiritus, four nights; and Mar del Sur – Varadero – hotels. A six to 25 pax is required per tour and trekkers are recommended to take appropriate clothes and footwear for mountain trekking.

The program is designed for eight days. On the second day excursionists come into contact with nature and travel to the Hanabanilla area in Villa Clara's Escambray Mountain Range. Activities have a low degree of difficulties until the third day. The follow two days are of medium complexity; and high during the sixth day. The

tours last from four to six hours, covering from 12 to 20 kilometers.



Topes de Collantes

The first six expeditions include treks through Hanabanilla Dam, the Guanayara, Codina, Caburní and Vegas Grande parks; tours of thematic paths, La Batata Cave, the Caburní Waterfalls and swimming in waterfalls and pools. The seventh day is set aside for cultural tourism via a tour of the city of Trinidad and a panoramic tour to Cienfuegos during the journey to Varadero, as the conclusion to this enjoyable excursion.

Villa Clara Tourist Installations Up Comfort

Some of the actions designed to improve the comfort and operational possibilities of the Hanabanilla Hotel, located on the banks of Cuba's only lake between mountains, include the repair of 32 rooms and the nautical base. The rehabilitation of vessels and piers in places of tourist attraction for navigation on the lake, surrounded by mountains, favors the offer in this beautiful place located in the Escambray Mountain Range, in Villa Clara province.



Hanabanilla Hotel

Tomás Vázquez, Ministry of Tourism delegate in the province, said that the improve-

ment of the hotel installations forms part of the effort to raise the quality of tourist services. Work is also underway in the remodeling of a group of cabanas of Los Caneyes Motel, as well as the thermal station at the Elguea mineral-medicinal waters spa, Vázquez added that together with the improved comfort there exists the policy of greater savings and efficiency in management.

Villa Clara has more than 2,700 rooms, the majority of them in the tourist destination comprising the group of cays to the northeast of the province, in full development. The territory also has attractive historical, cultural and ecological proposals linked to the rich biodiversity of the Guamuhaia mountains; Remedios, the eighth township founded by the Spaniards in Cuba; and Santa Clara, the provincial capital, among other attractive options.

Vistamar

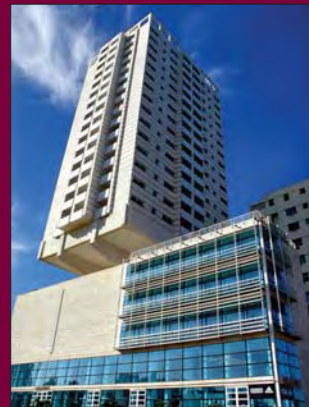
It is located 15 minutes far from the center of the city on the top of hill. VistaMar has 74 one-room and two-room apartments, 55 are vacant.

There are different services our clients may enjoy including a barbecue area, Gym, grocery store, underground parking garage and open-air parking. Also, there is an emergency power plant, among other services.

These apartments have air conditioners, electronic appliances, hot water, telephone, cable TV, complete kitchen set, china, bed set and towels, automatic fire alarm system, and intruder alarm.



Atlantic



The Atlantic is facing Havana's Malecón. It is a 25-story building with 96 apartments that come with one to two bedrooms, commercial sites and offices. It has a swimming pool, a five-story parking lot, electronic porter, reinforced entrance door and security locks. Furthermore, it has a satellite dish for TV, a fire alarm system and intruder alarm.

All apartments have air conditioning system, hot water and outlets for telephone, Internet access and Email. They are furnished and decorated and come with electric appliances, china, kitchen set, bed set and towels.



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Caribbean Destinations Among the World's Best

Among the 130 countries analyzed by the World Economic Fund, Barbados was the best Caribbean destination, ranking 29th on its list, followed by Costa Rica, in 44th place, Puerto Rico in 46th, Panama in 50th and Mexico in 55th.

According to the 2008 Tourist Competitiveness Report



drawn up by the Economic Fund, the criterion used to analyze the different nations in the world consisted in verifying their tourist policy and regulations, environmental sustainability, safety, health and hygiene, priority given to tourism, information provided, prices, human capital, natural and cultural resources, as well as the tourist in-

1st Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit in June

The Caribbean Tourism Development Company (CTDC) has announced the first Annual Caribbean Tourism Summit (ACTS) bringing together leaders from political, tourism and investment communities and the diaspora. ACTS will take place in downtown Washington, DC, June 21-25, 2008.

ACTS has been created by leaders of Caribbean governments and the Caribbean hotel and tourism industry and will consist of several functions including a groundbreaking high level Conference focusing on Investment and Marketing, an Awards Gala Dinner & Ball and an



frastructure and air and land transportation.

The international agency issues information for people who plan to make business decisions and add value to governments in order for them to improve their tourist environments. For the World Tourism Organization, this study is a platform for dialogue among this sector's participants.

Sustainable tourism is the focus of the study, due to the debate that has been generated about the responsibilities of governments that attract tourists from different parts of the world, which turns them into contributors to climate change.



Exhibition. Over 1,000 leaders from more than 32 Caribbean countries as well as U.S. government officials and the tourism and investment communities are expected.

The CTDC, formed by the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) and the Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA), has created several organizing Committees to collaborate on this special event. Additional details on all events including the Conference program will be available shortly.

Hoteliers Propose Investing in Puerto Plata

Four hotel chains in Puerto Plata have presented proposals to the Dominican Republic's Secretariat of Tourism (SECTUR) to renovate their services and installations, benefiting from a more than 150-million-dollar investment program.

Dominican Secretary of Tourism Félix Jiménez highlighted the importance of the refurbishing process to guarantee tourism's sustained growth in that destination located to the country's north.

The official noted that some 6,000 hotel rooms, out of the approximately 16,000 existing in Puerto Plata,

needed to improve their installations.

"Out of those 6,000 there are already four hotel chains that own several thousands of rooms and they have presented their renovation plans. Our goal is for Puerto Plata to have this year the growth registered last year by Punta Cana and Santo Domingo," he explained.

He recalled that up to this date international tourist arrivals have increased in Puerto Plata as compared to 2007, and that the refurbishing of the infrastructures will contribute to a significant upturn in the area.

Bahamas Pumps 12 Million Dollars into Tourism Promotion

Bahamas Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham said the government is expected to pump an additional 12 million dollars into the promotion of the country's tourism product, in response to the sector's "subdued" performance over the last two years.

"We believe that the tourism performance is below expectation, and we are going to address this issue decisively by allocating additional funds for tourism. Its performance remained subdued in 2007, with both air and sea arrivals trending lower," added Prime Minister Ingraham.

Ingraham said that the "greatest slippage" occurred in the nation's second city, Grand Bahama, and in the Family Islands. In New Providence, the prime minister reported that a dip of 1.8% was less severe. However, he noted that the challenge with quantifying the problem was that reliable, accurate, comprehensive and

timely tourism data was not available. "Indeed, our tourism sector needs urgent attention



to review its competitiveness, its attractiveness and its capacity."

According to the most recent figures released by the Ministry of Tourism, November 2007 registered a 3% decline in air and sea arrivals by a total of 11,900 compared to the same month a year earlier. While New Providence's numbers increased by 7,473 arrivals — a rise of nearly 4% — Grand Bahama's dived by 12%, with a loss of 5,734 visitors to the destination. The Family Islands recorded a falloff of about 11% in visitor arrivals.

WTTC Praises CARICOM Focus on Caribbean Tourism

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) commended this week CARICOM's decision to dedicate a full day to analyzing tourism during the Summit of Heads of State and Government of that organization, to be held next July in the Caribbean island of Antigua.

This is the first time that tourism will be given such a high priority in a top Caribbean meeting, despite the tremendous incidence of the so-called smokeless industry in the region's economies.

Adventure Park Opens in Costa Rican Caribbean

A new adventure and research park in the rainforest of Costa Rica's Caribbean will be inaugurated in May. It will have a frog pool, an area for butterflies and a serpent zoo, as well as a hummingbird garden, among other attractions. The project, called Veragua Rainforest, is being developed in a 1,300-hectare farm, on the outskirts of the city of Limón – 190 kilometers east of the capital –, next to the International Amistad Park.

The new park will offer guided visits to a serpent zoo with more than 30 species native to the area and a frog pool that was fitted



The tourist sector contributes every year close to 15% of the Caribbean's Gross Domestic Product, guarantees sources of employment for approximately 13% of the labor force with two million job posts, as well as close to a fifth of all the region's economic revenues, according to figures published by the WTTC.

out with daytime and evening environments. Costa Rica ranks as one of the favorite destinations for ecological tourism in the world.

Mall Group Markets 90% of Campeche Condominiums

The Mall Group has marketed 90% of the first 725 condominiums being built in the Campeche Playa Golf Marina & Spa Resort tourist mega project, where close to 600 million dollars are being invested. The construction of the condominiums in the tourist complex is 60% finished; the following short-term task is to establish

two monthly promotion flights to Campeche with a stopover in Central America.

The project offers condominiums worth between 250,000 and 750,000 dollars. It will have a total of 3,046 apartments, of which 750 will be ready by next August 5, when the first stage will be inaugurated.



New Air Routes Expected in Campeche

The Mexican state of Campeche is searching to promote the tourist sector with the opening of new air connections. The start up of a new Campeche-Cancun and Campeche-Puebla service, by the low-budget Alma de México airline, is already previewed. It will start operating between May and June with a daily flight between Campeche and Cancun, and a month later, the Campeche-Puebla flight.

The construction of the exclusive Playa Golf, Marina & Spa Resort tourist complex in Champotón by the Mall Group has boosted national and international air companies' inter-

est. Negotiations are underway with Continental Airlines to establish routes to the United States and it was announced



Campeche's Airport

that the Spanish Globalia Group's AirEuropa, after having carried out special flights during the promotion of the Mall Group's project, would be interested in opening routes from London, Madrid and Milan to Campeche.

Tourism in the Caribbean Boosts Construction Sector

The Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) will continue stressing the vital importance of the travel and tourism industry for the region, especially highlighting the catalytic role played by investments in the infrastructure for the advance of the construction sector.

Capital investments in tourism amounted to 9.4 billion dollars last year, for an almost 20%

increase as compared to 2006.

Despite a great deal of obstacles, Caribbean tourism is known at present, according to Caribbean Hotel Association data, as one of the principal sources of employment, foreign investment and economic development, which has substantially contributed to raising the living standards of the region's countries.

Jamaica Wants to Beef Up Tourism



Jamaica is working today in a vast program to boost tourism in the country's south and east and in its capital, placing emphasis on improvements in the cruise sector, said Prime Minister Bruce Golding.

The construction of a financial sector, a large shopping center and installations for cruise tourism, that will join this capital with the city of Port Royal, form part of the plan.

A favorite place for pirates, two-thirds of Port Royal col-

lapsed due to an earthquake in 1692, turning it into the "the most wicked place in the Caribbean", in "the sunken city", as the archaeologists call it.

The project includes draining the city's ruins, now covered by eight meters of seawater, to show visitors how it used to be, said Golding. In east Jamaica the plans include the expansion of the Duckenfield airport and several stretches of road.

Direct Flight from Italy to Bahamas



The Malpensa-Freeport Grand Bahama charter flight will again be in the air this summer season, in collaboration with the Bahamas Tourist Office and the Teorema tour operator. The direct connection with aircraft from the Blue Panorama Airlines will make it possible for Italy-Bahamas trips to be faster.



varied daytime and evening entertainment programs with

games, dancing lessons, tournaments and shows. The recent debut of "Viva Circus" is one of the place's novelties.

The Viva Wynndham Fortuna Beach all-inclusive resort is located on the Grand Bahama paradise, the most important of the islands making up the Bahamas archipelago. The complex is surrounded by luxuriant tropical vegetation and has 276 comfortable rooms decorated in the island's style.

It is a circus where guests can view acrobatic acts and exhibitions and the most daring can attend lessons to experience the secrets of circus art. The villa also features sports such as tennis, beach volleyball, aerobics, archery or snorkeling, as well as organized excursions to discover Grand Bahama.

The resort offers a wealth of

www.vivaresorts.com

EIBTM 2008 Convenes for December 2-4



The Global Meeting and Incentives Exhibition (EIBTM 2008) – the leader in the conference, incentives, events, business travel and meetings industry – will take place from December 2-4 in Barcelona, Spain, at the Fira Gran Via fairgrounds.

The official ABC audit for EIBTM 2007 (an independent verification process) is now complete certifying a rise in attendance of over 20% compared to 2006, with a total of 7,218 visitors and hosted buyers.

Confirming its status as a truly international event, EIBTM 2007 welcomed an increased number of visitors from a host of destinations which included Argentina, Australia, China, Croatia, India, and South Africa, alongside those from the key European markets. Demonstrating the show's worldwide appeal, a wide range of new buyer markets – comprising Ecuador,

Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Taiwan and Vietnam – were also represented for the first time.

EIBTM has gained in excess of 400 new exhibiting companies since 2006. Over 2,000 attendees benefited from the extensive education programme which included the well established Association, Agency and Corporate Programmes for Hosted Buyers, and the introduction of the new Daily Technology Hour.

The full breakdown of the EIBTM 2007 attendance figures is as follows: visitor attendance (7,218), trade visitors (3,892), hosted buyers (3,326), other attendance: press, VIPs and speakers (291).

www.eibtm.com

Presstours Convokes Special Golf Tournament for Cuba



The Presstours firm's new turismogolf.it specialized division for golfers has convoked the SuperClubs 9th Open Golf Tournament 2008, which will be held at Varadero, one



of Cuba's most spectacular beaches, next November 17-20 and 24-27.

All the participants staying at

the famous Breezes Varadero super-inclusive resort will have the opportunity to enjoy a week of activities and three days of the tournament at the Varadero Golf Course. The Breezes Varadero is a four-star complex located directly on the fine white sandy beach line, in the midst of exotic tropical vegetation. Accommodations will be in junior suites.

The Varadero Golf Course, the only 18 hole par 72 in Cuba, hosted in 1999 and 2000 the Grand Final of the PGA European Challenge, where professional players from all of Europe participated. The Breezes Varadero is

located just 150 meters away from the fourth tee of the Varadero Golf Course.

Presstours offers special nine days/seven nights and 16 days/14 nights packages – with departures on November 15 and 20 – for persons wishing to participate in the tournament, with flights from Milan or Rome to Havana with Blue Panorama or Volare Airlines, on Sundays and Mondays, and accommodations at the Breezes Varadero.

The Special Golf Cuba Breezes Tournament's fee is 210.00 euros per person, and is paid on arrival at the hotel. The organizers have specified that players must use their own equipment (golf clubs, balls and tees) and the availability of capacities is



limited. Registration closes on September 30, 2008.



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TRAVEL TRADE CARIBBEAN

TTC Travel Trade Caribbean is an Italian tourism publication founded in 1996 with the aim of creating a series of editorial products to promote the Caribbean tourist destinations as a multicultural entity that group together the area's different nations.

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Another of TTC's most important products is the "Caribbean Operators Book, COB", whose pages contain a detailed list of the Caribbean islands' tourist entities. The COB includes a map of the island of Cuba with a mini guide, followed by thorough information on the tourist structures of each of the region's islands.

COB

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