



EUROPEAN TRAVEL COMMISSION
COMMISSION EUROPEENNE DU TOURISME
Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61 - 1000 Brussels - BELGIUM
tel +32 2 - 548 9000 fax +32 2 - 514 1843
info@visiteurope.com www.visiteurope.com www.etc-corporate.org

PRESS RELEASE

ETC'S TRANSATLANTIC CONFERENCE EXPLORES BRAND EUROPE'S PATHWAYS TO FUTURE GROWTH

The conference presented market analysis, trends and perceptions, and focus on aspects of the ETC's European Commission-funded "Destination Europe 2020" strategy for sustaining Europe's position as the world's number one tourist destination.

Keynoters Richard Bangs and Andrew McCarthy Explore Travel as a Transformative Force for Europe and Travellers Alike.

BRUSSELS-NEW YORK, May 15, 2013 – Noting the critical contribution tourism makes to European economies, demonstrated by sustained growth even during the Continent's continuing downturn, the European Travel Commission (ETC) brought back its popular Transatlantic Conference on Thursday, May 9, 2013 in New York. The conference was attended by representatives of the ETC's 33 national tourism organization members, industry partners who market Europe as a top tourist destination for North American travellers, and noted media who cover the business of travel and tourism.

"At this our first Transatlantic Conference in three years," said Manuel Butler, President of ETC, "we considered consumer trends and the transformative power of travel in Europe, where adventure travel was born. We anticipate sustained growth of up to four per cent per year leading up to 2020. This represents approximately 43 million new tourists every year and as many as 1.8 billion new tourists by 2030."

The full-day Transatlantic Conference, held in the Edna Barnes Salomon Room of The New York Public Library, included three different panels on travel market and consumer trends in the North American market. The speakers included representatives of the public and the private tourist sector; including international tourism organisations like UNWTO and WTTC as well as the European Commission, National Tourism Organisations, Amadeus, TripAdvisor, European, US and Canadian tour operators, airlines and research institutions, who shared their knowledge and expertise to the audience. Captivating repeat visitors with

new experiences in Europe, cultivating new visitors for trips with bragging rights, reaching younger audiences through social media and developing new destinations in emerging markets were highlighted as key to developing a successful strategy of growth and competitiveness for Destination Europe.

During the Conference, keynote speaker Richard Bangs, PBS host and adventure traveller, underscored what ETC research shows: individually tailored travel responding to the personal interests of travellers is the future of travel. “We are all looking for the story that ‘stars us’ when we travel,” noted Bangs. “Human DNA is programmed to seek exploration and transformative experiences.”

Actor turned travel writer, Andrew McCarthy, continued this theme at an evening social networking reception at the Loft and Garden in Rockefeller Center. It was here where he revealed a personal epiphany during a trip across northern Spain. This experience not only changed the way he travels but also refined the lens through which he views life. “It was profound and I decided I needed to write about it.” McCarthy then charged the audience of travel professionals with the mission and privilege of helping travellers discover the nuances of Europe and to look beyond the usual stories.

The Transatlantic Conference 2013 was part of the “Destination Europe 2020” initiative – now in its 18-month ‘consideration’ phase, ending in March 2014. This program was designed by ETC together with the European Commission to involve the tourism industry in defining a long-term strategy for Europe as a tourist destination. According to UNWTO, Europe tallied more than half of all international tourist arrivals in 2012, or 535 million foreign visitors. With 20.6 million from the U.S. and 4.2 million from Canada, Europe is expected to maintain its dominant status despite growing competition from emerging destinations.

For more information on the ETC’s Transatlantic Conference, click on the Transatlantic Conference website: www.transatlanticconference.com.

Note to editors:

The European Travel Commission is an association of National Tourism Organisations (NTOs). It was created in 1948 and currently has 33 member NTOs, including 9 from outside the European Union.

For further information: ETC’s corporate website www.etc-corporate.org. Tourists seeking travel-specific information and ideas are directed to ETC’s consumer portal www.visiteurope.com.

Contact: ETC Executive Unit - Rue du Marché aux Herbes 61 - 1000 Brussels - BELGIUM.
T: + 32 2 548 9000 F: + 32 2 514 1843 e-mail: press@visiteurope.com