



PRESS RELEASE

THE FUTURE OF LUXURY HOSPITALITY

Drivers and trends of luxury hospitality were the focus of the forty-third General Meeting Ehma held on April 7 to 10 in Limassol, Cyprus



From left to right: Stephanos Stephanou, Andreas Georgiou, Hans E. Koch, Nick Aristou

The world of luxury is rapidly evolving: affluent travelers are no longer just looking for lavish facilities, swimming pools and spas, but for experiences and new and unusual emotions linked to an aspirational destination. The hotel industry must understand the dynamics that drive this market in order to ride them in the most efficient and effective way. It was in fact "Drivers and Trends of Luxury Hospitality" the theme of the forty-third General Meeting of the European Hotel Managers Association (EHMA) held in Limassol (Cyprus) from 7 to 10 April (www.ehmacyprus2016.com).

During the meeting **Hans E. Koch** was re-elected as **President for the term 2016/2018** together with the new **Vice President Verena Forstinger**, General Manager Radisson Blu Style Hotel in Vienna and the **2nd Vice President Albert Rouwendal**, General Manager Mövenpick Hotel Amsterdam City Center. Arbiters and Auditors were also elected. **The French Pierre Ferchaud** was announced as **winner of the Hotel Manager of the Year Award 2015** for outstanding achievements and the Italian **Ivan Artolli**, Managing Director & Group Operations Rocco Forte Hotels and Managing Director Verdura Resort in Sciacca (Sicily), was announced as **winner of the Sustainability Award by Diversey Care 2016**, dedicated to corporate social responsibility.

The 43rd ordinary General Meeting of Friday, April 8, was opened by Chairman of the Organizing Committee **Andreas Georgiou**, General Manager of the Amathus Beach Hotel, who welcomed aall participants in beautiful Cyprus. **Five new members** joining the general Assembly for the first time were officially presented and inducted among whom 3 vouchers for PDP (Professional

Development Program) intensive management courses at the famous American University of Cornell were drawn. The lucky winners were Fanny Guibouret, GM Hotel du Louvre Paris; Harry Georgiou, GM Adams Beach Hotel Cyprus; and Bernard Lensink, GM Landgoed Duin & Kruidberg The Netherlands. The present number of members has now increased to 424.

Albert Rouwendal together with Bernard Lensink and Stephan Stokkermans announced that **The Netherlands will host the 44th annual General Meeting in 2017 which will be held from 17 to 19 March at the Grand Hotel Huis ter Duin**, a 5-star property with a 1 Michelin star Restaurant located in Noordwijk aan Zee on the North Sea, 40 minutes from Amsterdam.

Susanne Kraus-Winkler, President of HOTREC, Hotels, Cafés and Restaurants in Europe, presented an **update on the current situation** in the European Hospitality Industry faced with new surroundings and suffering from terrorist threats and security issues. Other challenges are the new digital economy, online distribution and new business models outside of our existing, in particular the **emergence and extension of a shadow hospitality economy** representing unfair competition since the current legislation is not suited to the shared economy.

During the “Open Forum” Patrice Monti, Vice President - International Circulation **International New York Times** presented the **new digital INYT**. Valérie de Corte of **École Hôtelière de Lausanne** drew among participants **2 modules of its Summer courses** that were won by Costas Papachristophorou, GM Astir Palace Resort (Greece) and Helena Thomsen, GM Rolighed in Denmark. The **new edition of the Profile Book** focused on Master Students was then presented by Craig Thompson of the **Stenden University**, The Netherlands.

The **Minister of Commerce, Economics and Tourism**, H.E. Yiorgos Lakkotrypis, welcomed the Assembly on Saturday April 8, emphasizing the importance of tourism on Cypriot economy, that represents 21% of GDP with 2,5 million arrivals in 2015, a 9% increase over previous year.

The first keynote speaker was **Prof. Dimitrios Buhalis**, Head of the Tourism and Hospitality Department, University of Bournemouth (UK), and strategic and marketing and management expert, who talked about **Social Context Mobile (SoCoMo) marketing**, a new framework that enables marketers to increase value for all stakeholders at the destination.

Jason McDonald, Director of International Client Services StringCan Interactive, a consulting company in digital marketing, stressed the importance of **open innovation** in order to adapt to the future. Greek philosophy is the basis of the unique **anthropocentric and ethical approach** to corporate training developed by **Dr. John Kalogerakis**, CEO & Principal Trainer, JMK Ltd., who explained its principles to the assembly. **Alexander Bard**, philosopher and lecturer, co-author of "The Futurica Trilogy books" and "Syntheism - Creating God in the Internet Age", songwriter, artist, record producer and TV star entertained the audience with its **innovative approach to the future** and spoke in particular about the characteristics of **Generation Y**, its mentality and modus operandi, that will strongly influence and modify the world of hospitality in the next years. Generation Y was also the subject of the **project “Young Ehma”** which was presented after lunch to the Assembly: the future of the Association lies in this new generation and EHMA in collaboration with **“Mise-en-Place”** and **“Service Center 4 Hospitality”** has decided to sponsor a program for young people who have potential to become members in the future. **Guglielmo L. Brentel**, President of Ecole Hôtelière de Lausanne then presented to the audience “Supporting the Global Hospitality Trends”. Afterwards, **Michael McKay**, communicator of international fame, moderated the **panel discussion** on the conference theme with the participation of the aforementioned Guglielmo Brentel and Dimitrios Buhalis, in addition to **Dr. Ilham Kadri**, President Diversey Care and Vice President & Officer Sealed Air, a group specializing in providing sustainable and innovative solutions for cleaning and hygiene; **Mark Lomanno**, Executive Board Member at newBrandAnalytics and Cornell University Advisor, and **Piotr Lipiec**, Hotel TV Business Development Manager Europe – Samsung Electronics European HQ. The Educational Day was concluded by the speeches of **Christopher Michau**, Vice President, Global Partner Group at Expedia, about the **influence of digital on luxury sales worldwide** and the increase of

transactions on mobile, and of **Mark Lomanno** about “Demystifying the Digital Marketplace”.

The working sessions and the welcome evening took place at the Amathus Beach Hotel Limassol. The gala dinner was held instead at the Four Seasons Hotel Cyprus.

The beautiful **Amathus Beach Hotel**, located on the sea front in a residential area of Limassol, is surrounded by tropical gardens and has two private beaches, indoor and outdoor pool with Jacuzzi, restaurants, bars and a Spa. The luxurious **Four Seasons Hotel** reopened for the season of 2016 completely renovated. It offers a private beach, two outdoor pools, indoor pool, restaurants, bars, a Shiseido Spa, gym with personal trainers, and two lighted tennis courts.

Like every year, there was a rich **social program**, which included a visit to the old city and Limassol Marina. The Medieval Castle and the old Carob Mill were the scenario of the typical evening of Friday, April 8. **Limassol**, famous for its long cultural tradition, is a bustling maritime center and boasts museums and archaeological sites. Accompanying persons were able to follow a **Cypriot cooking lesson**, organized by the presenter **Tonia Buxton** at the Four Seasons and to visit **Omodos**, a typical, quiet village in the north-west of Limassol, in the Troodos Mountains, at over 800 meters above sea level. During the **Gala Dinner** of Saturday, April 9 at the Four Seasons, the **award ceremonies** were held for the European Hotel Manager of the Year 2015, Pierre Ferchaud, as well as of the Ehma Sustainability Award by Diversey Care 2016, dedicated to the best project of sustainable hospitality of the year, won by **Ivan Artolli**.

A very intense schedule, in short, it would not have been possible without the support of an exceptional **organizing committee** composed of the General Managers Andreas Georgiou (Amathus Beach); Nick Aristou (Four Seasons Hotel); Stephanos Stephanou (AKS Hotels); Michalis Evangelides (Marismare Hotels); Harry Georgiou (Adams Beach Hotel); Giorgos Ioannou (Le Meridien Limassol Spa & Resort); Petros Machalepis; Nicos Michaelides (Hotel Atrium Zenon); Christos Papamiltiadous (Elysium Hotel); Petros Theodoulou (Atlantica Hotels & Resorts).

Not to forget, finally, the invaluable contribution of the **traditional and local sponsors** without whom this event would not have been possible.

EHMA in brief

EHMA was founded in Rome in 1974 by a small group of top quality hotel properties general managers of the Italian capital. The European Hotel Managers Association aims to improve qualification of professionals through training in view of increasing the standards of services to be provided to guests. At present the Association gathers about 424 general managers of the most prestigious hotels in 29 countries that make a total of 350 represented hotels, 92,000 rooms, and 72,000 employees. Members meet once a year to discuss about shared themes such as: new technologies, trends, issues, relations, European hotel data and market search. EHMA admission requires a minimum of ten years' experience in the hotel sector.

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