

The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd.

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THE LEADING HOTELS OF THE WORLD, LTD. TOUGHENS QUALITY STANDARDS

Global luxury hospitality leader helps its members stay ahead of the competition

NEW YORK (January 5, 2009) – Dedicated to delivering the utmost value to its member hotels, as well as unparalleled hospitality offerings to its discerning clientele, The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. has announced a complete overhaul of its quality standards template. Serving as the benchmark for the luxury hospitality industry, the meticulous standards by which The Leading Hotels of World, Ltd. judges and accepts its members have become more stringent and rigorous than ever to adapt to the changing landscape and guest expectations.

The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. first launched its existing product and service standards eight years ago via Leading Quality Assurance, a joint venture that conducts anonymous property inspections for the world's most prestigious hospitality organizations. The detailed point system was designed to cover all phases of the guest experience, from reservation to check out, including every aspect of the hotel product from reception, to back-of-house. The revamped standards criteria, takes a more honed and refined approach that simultaneously streamlines and strengthens the original system while integrating new, forward-thinking categories.

In evaluating the current environment and evolving expectations and purchasing patterns of high-end consumers, it became apparent that in order to accurately measure a hotel's performance, it had to be done on a behavioral and intuitive level as well. New standards such as, "Did the employee personalize the interaction in any way (i.e. engage in polite conversation) and relate to the guests as individuals?" evaluate the genuine understanding of guests on a personalized level; the goal being to eliminate mechanical interaction and ensure an authentic connection between staff and guest.

Commenting on the changes, Ted Teng, president and chief executive officer, noted, "In our efforts to ensure our members excel and outstrip their competition, we undertook a thorough reevaluation of our standards criteria that obliges our hotels to continually deliver an even more outstanding luxury experience to their guests."

Mr. Teng continued, "This concentrated approach reduces the number of repetitive and redundant points that were enabling a hotel to achieve a higher score than was truly warranted. By enhancing and further defining product standards, and adding staff behavioral factors, we have substantially raised the bar. In order to attain higher scores, hotels will definitely have to pay even greater attention to precision, and focus closely on personnel training and empowerment."

Trent Walsh, managing director of Leading Quality Assurance added, "By evaluating other noted luxury brands including Mandarin Oriental, Four Seasons and Ritz-Carlton, at LQA we have amassed the most comprehensive set of global benchmarking data in the industry. Armed with this information, and using the revised, more exacting set of inspection standards, Leading Hotels is in a unique position to offer its members a distinct advantage, by enabling them to raise their own quality profiles to overmatch their competition."

Throughout its 80-year history, The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. has always prized the individuality and authenticity of each of its member hotels. This new set of standards, reworked to a higher international level, is designed to help them best showcase those qualities, and to attract and retain a loyal clientele in these highly competitive times.

About The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd.

The Leading Hotels of the World, Ltd. is the prestigious luxury hospitality organization representing more than 450 of the world's finest hotels, resorts and spas, and is the operator of www.lhw.com and www.lhwspas.com – the online sources for your luxury lifestyle. As the largest international luxury hotel brand, the firm maintains offices in 22 major markets across the globe.

Since 1928, the company's reputation for excellence derives from the exacting levels of quality it demands of its members, each of which must pass a rigorous, anonymous inspection covering hundreds of meticulous criteria spanning from product to behavioral standards. This set of standards is the most stringent in the industry.

High resolution images and press information on individual member hotels are available for downloading at www.lhw.com/press. For reservations and information, visit www.lhw.com or telephone toll-free from the USA, Canada, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands, (800) 223-6800.

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