



CARIBBEAN
HOTEL
ASSOCIATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Photos and captions available at end of release)

**CARIBBEAN HOTEL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES
PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS WITH THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL TRADE
Gala raises US\$40,000.00 for CHA Education Foundation**

LONDON, UK -- November 12, 2007 -- The Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA) marked the 10TH anniversary of the Crystal Palm Awards of Excellence by paying tribute to four travel companies and two individuals that have made a significant and positive contribution over the past year to the development of Caribbean tourism in the United Kingdom and Europe. The awards were presented at the gala dinner on Saturday, November 10, 2007, at the Riverbank Park Plaza in London.

More than 250 delegates from major supplier companies in the United Kingdom and Europe and the private and public sectors of the Caribbean tourism industry gathered to recognize the 2007 winners of the Crystal Palm Awards. "The award winners are playing a major role in the growth of tourism in the Caribbean - and have been a solid partner in the region's development," said CHA President Peter J. Odle. "This recognition is our way of recognising them for their continuing support," he added.

Virgin Holidays, Winner, UK Operator

Virgin Holidays, winner of the Crystal Palm Award in the category for Large UK-based Caribbean Tour Operator serves 13 Caribbean destinations and enjoys the distinction of realizing outstanding passenger figures and sustained growth from year to year.

A longstanding partner of the Caribbean, in 2005 Virgin Holidays also became the first private organization to establish a corporate scholarship program through the Caribbean Hotel Association Education Foundation, to provide financial assistance to Caribbean students wishing to pursue a career in hospitality.

British Airways, Winner, Airline

In addition to serving ten Caribbean destinations, British Airways has also forged agreements with Caribbean Airlines, American Airlines, Liat, and Cayman Airways – which means that most of the Caribbean is accessible to the UK traveler through one of the airline's ten hubs.

Above and beyond an aggressive marketing campaign combining print and electronic advertising, British Airways offers travelers a Caribbean-specific website, www.ba.com/caribbean, which highlights the hidden treasures of the Caribbean and helps consumers select the destination that best matches their interests.

Anguilla, Winner, Caribbean Tourist Board

Based on official statistics from the Caribbean Tourism Organization covering 2004-2006, Anguilla emerged the undisputable winner of the Crystal Palm Award in the Caribbean Tourist Board category. Through marketing and promotional efforts in the UK market, the Anguilla Tourist Board achieved in 2006 a remarkable growth of 35.8%.

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CARIBBEAN HOTEL ASSOCIATION CELEBRATES PARTNERING FOR SUCCESS WITH THE EUROPEAN TRAVEL TRADE / P2

Caribbean Hotels Ltd., Winner, Caribbean Specialist

Caribbean Hotels, a UK-based company with an office also in Barbados, features over 400 hotels spanning 29 Caribbean destinations. With 100% of the business dedicated to the Caribbean, Caribbean Hotels Ltd. has seen a phenomenal growth over the past two years that shows no sign of stopping.

David Jessop, Winner, Outstanding Individual

David Jessop is the Director of the Caribbean Council, publisher of Caribbean Insight, and adviser to the Caribbean Hotel Association on trade policy and related issues with the European Union and the United Kingdom government. Under his guidance, CHA has strengthened its advocacy agenda in Europe. In the past year alone, Jessop has helped CHA pave the way for a climate conducive to the sustainable development of tourism in the Caribbean, with efforts geared to ensure that recommendations for the liberalization of regional tourism services are included in external trade negotiations that the Caribbean is involved in. Meanwhile, on the issue of climate change, he orchestrated a meeting hosted by CHA, its environmental subsidiary, the Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism (CAST), along with the Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), to discuss recent developments in UK government policy affecting the travel industry, aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change.

Sarah Macefield, Winner, Travel Writer

Sarah Macefield has built a prolific career as a travel journalist. Although her expertise spans the globe, Macefield's work as the Caribbean features writer for Travel Trade Gazette and a frequent contributor to consumer and travel-related publications is exemplary. Through her writing, she has raised awareness about the Caribbean, generating interest and excitement about the diverse and eclectic travel experiences that the region offers. In 2006, she won an award from the Caribbean Tourism Organization for best feature article in a trade publication in Europe for the story entitled "The Caribbean Limbers Up for Cricket Fiesta."

In what has become a tradition at Crystal Palm Awards, guests were treated to a true taste of Caribbean hospitality, with a special Caribbean fusion dinner prepared especially for the occasion by the 2007 Caribbean Chef of the Year, Chef Fernando Parrilla from Puerto Rico. Meanwhile, the evening featured a performance of Antigua's award-winning Soca band El-A-Kru, renowned for their skill at bringing not only Soca straight-up, but blending it with other genres into delightful concoctions.

In the spirit of partnership, CHA held a benefit auction at the gala, raising US\$40,000.00 for the CHA Education Foundation, through which scholarships and special assistance is made available for the education of Caribbean hotel industry personnel and students pursuing hotel careers.

The Crystal Palm Awards of Excellence is CHA's premier event in the European Marketplace. It was established in 1997 to recognise the Caribbean's leading travel partners in the United Kingdom and Europe.





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Caption - <http://www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com/CHApix/3127.jpg>:

Left to right: Alec Sanguinetti, Caribbean Hotel Association (CHA); Donna Banks, Anguilla Tourist Board; John Taker, Virgin Holidays; Paula Martin, Travel Trade Gazette UK & Ireland; David Jessop, Caribbean Council; Alison Nichols, British Airways; CHA President Peter J Odle; and Adam Daniels, British Airways.

Caption - <http://www.caribbeanhotelassociation.com/CHApix/3086.jpg>

CHA President Peter J. Odle and Paul Samuda



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