

Walk the Future Talk

4th "World Tourism Forum Lucerne" opens up to emerging markets



Brainstorming about the future of tourism: WTFL 2015 welcomes over 400 guests.

Lucerne (March 20, 2015). The 4th "World Tourism Forum Lucerne" (WTFL) to be held on 23 and 24 April 2015 will again attract some 400 top decision makers from the international fields of tourism, politics, business, finance and science. This year also sees the participation of Azerbaijan as the first-ever guest country to be invited to this event at the KKL Culture & Convention Centre. For the first time, the "Start-Up Innovation Award" will be launched - aimed at promoting creative and innovative new business ideas in the global tourism industry. Once again, hospitalityInside.com is a

media partner of the event.

"It is important that, in addition to welcoming large established tourism regions, we bring emerging markets into our discussions," says Martin Barth, General Manager of the WTFL. In 2014, Azerbaijan attracted some 2.3 million tourists, of which 1,800 were Swiss. In 2012, the capital city of Baku was chosen to hold the "European Song Contest". In Lucerne, the Azerbaijan Minister of Culture & Tourism, Abulfaz Garayev, will participate personally.

The second premiere will give attention to the "Start-Up Innovation Award" encouraging creative and innovative new business ideas in the international tourism sector. The award finalists will be invited to present their ideas to Forum participants, who will then choose the prizewinner and runners-up. First prize is worth USD 10,000; the two runners-up will each receive USD 5,000.

The World Tourism Forum Lucerne 2015 will take place under the slogan: "Talents, Innovation & Sustainable Development – Walk the Talk". The event focuses strongly on the future generation of decision-makers. Participating managers are therefore encouraged to invite their top up-and-coming young talents to the two-day event.

Talent Focus continues

Also, the most qualified students from the Forum's international partner universities are also being invited to attend and three will receive the "Young Talent Award".

Reto Wittwer, former CEO of Kempinski Hotels, initiated the talent focus at WTFL and will continue to support it again in his role as Chairman of the Advisory Board of WTFL. This year, the Rezidor Hotel Group will also join the talent initiative as another supporter.



Talent initiator Reto Wittwer (left) and WTFL organiser Martin Barth.

The participants of the exclusive WTFL "Think Tank" will debate key concerns facing the future of global travel and tourism, after which selected topics will be discussed within the wider Forum.

The line-up of eminent international speakers will include the Queen Mother Sangay Choden Wangchuck from Bhutan, Amel Karboul (Tunisia's first woman Minister of Tourism), Swiss Economics Minister Johann Schneider-Ammann, Dr Michael Frenzel (Chairman of the World Travel & Tourism Council), Paul Griffiths (CEO Dubai International Airport), Samih Sawiris (Chairman and CEO Orascom Development) and the American economic and social theorist Jeremy Rifkin.



Organiser Martin Barth: "Since its founding we have developed into a platform embracing also other exclusive events within Switzerland and abroad. As part of a strategic partnership with Shanghai, for example, we will be staging a forum in China's largest city in 2016". (<http://wtflucerne.org>) / kn

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