

DUBAI TOURISM ANNOUNCES WINNERS OF DUBAI SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS 2017

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 26 November 2017: The winners of the inaugural Dubai Sustainable Tourism Awards have been announced by Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism). Comprising 17 different categories, the Awards recognise and celebrate the important work of Dubai's hotels and tourism companies in advancing sustainability within the emirate's tourism industry.



Held at The Westin Dubai Al Habtoor City last week, the awards ceremony was attended by His Excellency Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General of Dubai Tourism, His Excellency, Mr Ahmad Butti Al Muhairbi, Secretary General, Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, Waleed Salman, Chairman of Dubai Carbon, Engineer Nagib Mohammed Saleh, Head of Planning Department, Dubai Municipality, Yousuf Lootah, Executive Director – Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai Tourism, hospitality leaders and over 600 players within Dubai's hospitality and travel sectors.

The Dubai Sustainable Tourism Awards received 151 entries from tourism and hotel establishments ranging from five-star hotels and resorts, to guest houses and desert camps. The Awards were made up of 10 Main Awards and seven Special Awards. In addition to the 17 winners, Dubai Tourism also honoured the Awards' three Strategic Partners – Dubai Supreme Council of Energy, Dubai Municipality and Dubai Electricity and Water Authority – as well as members of the judging panel and the team of experts that carefully evaluated entries.



The Special Awards included a category recognising sustainability leadership, namely the **Sustainability Champion**. This award was won by Mr. Abdul Quddus Sheikh of Armani Hotel.

The Awards are part of the Dubai Sustainable Tourism (DST) initiative, formerly known as the Green Tourism programme, launched by Dubai Tourism with the aim of positioning Dubai as one of the world's leading sustainable tourism destinations. The DST initiative looks at ways of improving and encouraging conservation of the emirate's resources and reducing the carbon footprint of Dubai's tourism industry.

The Awards also demonstrate Dubai Tourism's commitment to supporting the United Nation's proclamation of 2017 as the 'International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development'. In collaboration with the United Nations, Dubai has created a unique 'Carbon Abatement' strategy that sets forth the city's ambitions to reduce carbon emissions by 16% by 2021, that will make Dubai the city with the lowest carbon footprint in the world.



The main objectives of the Awards are threefold: develop guidelines that enable the tourism industry to become more sustainable; create a network on sustainability and enable sharing of best practices; and recognise sustainability efforts and accomplishments within the industry.

Commenting on the Awards, **H.E. Helal Saeed Almarri, Director General, Dubai Tourism**, said: "The Dubai Sustainable Tourism Awards recognise and celebrate the work of Dubai's hotels in advancing sustainability within the city's tourism and hospitality sectors. I would therefore like to congratulate the winners and also the many hotels that participated in the awards programme, which is in line with the vision of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Vice President and Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai for sustainable development and the creation of a green economy.

“For many years now, based on the vision and wisdom of our leaders, Dubai has been growing and developing at an exponential rate. Yet with this progress comes the need to carefully manage our resources and minimise our environmental impact, and focus our efforts on creating a sustainable environment for Dubai’s residents and visitors alike. Dubai Tourism is already playing an instrumental role in shaping the way forward for sustainable tourism around the world, and if history is any indication, the city will work tirelessly to achieve the targets set, ensuring a cleaner and greener tomorrow.”

Speaking at the awards ceremony, **Yousuf Lootah, Executive Director – Tourism Development & Investments, Dubai Tourism**, said: “Tourism has always been one of the strongest pillars of Dubai’s economic growth and diversification, among others. With the goal of attracting 20 million visitors by 2020, Dubai has set clear targets for sustainable development, for which we launched the Dubai Sustainable Tourism initiative, to become the leading destination for sustainable tourism.

“The Awards are part of our toolkit for the successful rollout of the Dubai Sustainable Tourism initiative, and endeavour to recognise the hard work of our stakeholders who have invested in sustainability practices and encourage and guide other tourism businesses to follow suit and shape a more sustainable tourism sector. We are encouraged by the submissions we received, which bear testimony to the full spectrum of innovative and sustainable practices that can be implemented across all levels of the hospitality sector.

“An essential aspect of ensuring the realisation of our sustainable tourism strategy is the strength of Dubai’s public-private partnerships that have paved the way for unique ideas and successful initiatives. Today’s awards ceremony is also our way of expressing appreciation to all our partners for their unwavering support”.

The event also featured a motivational talk delivered by international speaker, Dr. Leyla Acaroglu. A sustainability provocateur and cultural protagonist, Dr. Acaroglu challenges people to think differently about how the world works. An award winning designer, UNEP Champion of the Earth, sociologist, and entrepreneur, she developed the Disruptive Design Method and designs cerebrally activating experiences, gamified toolkits, and unique educational experiences that help people make the status quo obsolete. Her mainstage TED talk on sustainability has been viewed over a million times across social media platforms, and she leads presentations around the world on activating positive social change through creative

interventions and systems thinking.

Award winners together with H.E. Helal Saeed Almarri participated in a special painting activity called ‘The Sustainability Pledge Tree’ that was painted throughout the event by an Emirati artist, Ahmed Al Hosani and dedicated to promote sustainability within the tourism industry.

The winners and guests also visited the onsite ‘Future Sustainable Hotel Room’ exhibition. The stand is a mock-up model of a hotel room which presents the different innovative solutions that hotels can implement to create a more enjoyable and sustainable experience for the hotel guests.

Expert Panel

All submissions were evaluated by a special team of expert assessors from Dubai Tourism, Dubai Municipality and Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA). The top three submissions in each category were then presented to an eminent panel of judges made up of industry experts from DST’s partner organisations. The criteria for selecting the winners revolved around five elements that are crucial for sustainable practices –the optimal use of water, energy and carbon, waste and environmental protection, responsible practices, training and awareness and continuous improvements made by the establishment.

The judging panel comprised Ms. Laila Abdullatif, Director General of EWS-WWF; Ms. Habiba Almarashi, Co-founder and Chairperson of Emirates Environment Group (EEG); Mr. Ivano Iannelli, CEO of Dubai Carbon Centre of Excellence; Mr. Ali Aljasseem, CEO of Etihad ESCO Energy Services; and Eng. Faisal Rashid, DSM Director of Dubai Supreme Council of Energy.

Winners were awarded a trophy and will receive a number of additional accolades and benefits. These include being highlighted as ‘Dubai’s Preferred Sustainable Hotel’ within publications, having the opportunity to be part of further DST-certified sustainability training programmes, and being invited to take part in sustainability thought leadership platforms.

Dubai Tourism is charged with implementing the DST initiative with the support of key partners Etihad ESCO, Dubai Carbon, Emirates Environmental Group and Emirates Wildlife Society – WWF. Together, these strengthen collaboration and jointly support in achieving and maintaining the sustainability standards that are aimed at further enhancing the hospitality sector and the visitors’ experience through

a range of newly introduced policies and industry standards, which will be part of the hotel establishments' classification criteria in the near future.

WINNERS OF DUBAI SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS 2017

MAIN AWARDS

5-STAR (CITY): Sheraton Dubai Mall of the Emirates Hotel

5-STAR (RESORT): Sofitel The Palm Hotel

4-STAR: Radisson Blu Hotel – Media City

3-STAR: Suite Novotel Mall of the Emirates

2-STAR: Holiday Inn Express – Dubai Jumeirah

1-STAR: Al Arraf Hotel

HOTEL APARTMENT DELUXE: Savoy Suites

HOTEL APARTMENT STANDARD: Savoy Central Hotel Apartments

GUEST HOUSE: Al Khail Guest House

DESERT CAMP: Arabian Adventures

SPECIAL AWARDS

SUSTAINABILITY CHAMPION: Mr. Abdul Quddus Sheikh of Armani Hotel

BEST GREEN TEAM: TIME Grand Plaza Hotel

CONSERVATION CHAMPION: Accor Hotel Services Middle East

CSR RECORD HOLDER: Ibis-Novotel-Adagio Al Barsha

GREEN PROCUREMENT PATRON: Fairmont The Palm

BEST RETROFIT IMPLEMENTATION: Fairmont The Palm

RENEWABLE ENERGY LEADER: Platinum Heritage

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About Dubai's Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world's leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism's mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai's tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate's commerce sector, and is responsible for

the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment (formerly known as Dubai Events and Promotions Establishment).

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