

## Media Release

### Europe Plans Matchmaking to Promote Itself to China and the USA

14<sup>th</sup> July 2017

Europe is planning a programme of educational conferences and matchmaking events to promote itself as a tourist destination to some of the world's most important outbound travel markets. The programme, named Partnerships in European Tourism, will see a series of eight conferences and business-to-business matchmaking events, taking place within the EU and in the target markets of China and the USA. It also includes dedicated stands at international tourism trade exhibitions.

The launch event will take place in Venice on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2018. It will comprise a briefing for a delegation of Chinese tourism buyers on the European market, followed by matchmaking appointments with European suppliers. The second event will take place in Berlin in March, coinciding with ITB, the largest travel trade fair in Europe. The specific focus of the conference and matchmaking workshop will be Europe's Culture, Pan European Itineraries: River Cruising and Group Tourism. The third event will take place in April in Beijing, where the emphasis will be on Family Travel and it will appeal to European companies seeking to tap in to this core outbound business from China. Subsequent events in China and the USA are to be announced in due course.

Recognising that many intercontinental tourists see Europe as a unified destination, the programme will not focus on countries, cities or specific sights but instead on themes and routes of interest to the visitor, such as family travel, culture, film and TV, lifestyle and romance.

EU-based companies keen to market themselves to the Chinese and American markets by participating in the Partnerships in European Tourism programme are invited to register their interest at [www.EUtravelpartnerships.org](http://www.EUtravelpartnerships.org). Here they can identify their business with an initial list of themes and, in collaboration with other companies, propose additional themes.

The programme is being funded by the European Commission and delivered by a consortium made up of ETOA – the European tourism association, the European Travel Commission and ECTAA, the European Association of Travel Agents and Tour Operators.

Tom Jenkins, CEO, ETOA said: "The Partnerships in European Tourism programme is a bold and innovative EU-wide promotional initiative that recognises the high value of strong business relationships between supplier companies in the EU and potential customers in external origin markets. That's why we are engaged in professional matchmaking – to help companies establish more valuable, long-term business relationships."

"The Partnerships in European Tourism initiative targets two of the most important source long-haul travel markets for Europe: China and the United States. The programme will also have a special meaning in 2018, the EU-China Tourism Year" commented Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of the European Travel Commission.

“This initiative provides a unique opportunity to strengthen tourism relationships with strategic partners in third country markets, with a view to increasing travel and tourism. It will also foster cooperation among European tourism companies, for the promotion of EU transnational products ” said Michel de Blust, Secretary General of ECTAA.

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### **About ETOA**

Website: [www.etoa.org](http://www.etoa.org)

ETOA was founded in 1989 as an association for tour operators who sold Europe as a destination in long-haul origin markets. It has evolved since those early days to embrace regional operators, online intermediaries, wholesale travel companies and any commercial player who is interested in selling themselves as part of a pan-European product. It now numbers over 800 members, including intermediaries and European based suppliers.

### **About ETC**

Website: [www.etc-corporate.org](http://www.etc-corporate.org)

ETC was created more than 65 years ago with the aim to promote Europe as a tourist destination in long-haul markets. In recent years the organisation has shifted from focusing on established markets such as the US to exploring the potential of emerging source markets. The organization has opened an Operations' Group in China since 2011 and in the last few years has dedicated a fourth of its marketing budget to attracting Chinese tourists to the European destinations. ETC also has a dedicated press and communication agency in China, which effectively runs and manages ETC relationships with trade and local media, including sales calls, relationships meetings, roundtables and workshops.

### **About ECCTA**

Website: [www.ectaa.org](http://www.ectaa.org)

ECTAA regroups 36 national associations of travel agents and tour operators in 30 European countries as well as 3 neighbouring Mediterranean countries. In terms of figures, ECTAA represents almost 70.000 travel agencies and tour operators, engaged in both incoming and outgoing tourism business. The mission of ECTAA is to represent the travel agents and tour operators vis-à-vis the EU institutions and international organisations as well as national and local tourism authorities on all issues of a legal, economic or technical nature relating to the tourism and travel trade.

### **Further Information**

Publication date: For immediate release.

For more information, please contact:

Paolina Marone  
Project Manager  
ECTAA - Group of National Travel Agents' and Tour Operators' Associations within the EU

Rue Dautzenberg 36, B-1050 Brussels  
Tel: +32 2 644 34 50 or fax: +32 2 644 24 21 e-mail: [secretariat@ectaa.org](mailto:secretariat@ectaa.org), [www.ectaa.org](http://www.ectaa.org)

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