

Mobil Travel Guide Introduces Star Ratings to the Caribbean

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New partnership with FreemanGroup brings the 'gold standard' to one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world and sets the stage for global expansion

Mobil Travel Guide, originator of the prestigious Five-Star ratings and certifications program for hotels, restaurants, and spas, today announced a partnership in the Caribbean with FreemanGroup, a hospitality and tourism service evaluation and improvement company with more than 20 years experience in the region. The deal is part of FreemanGroup's new offering called FG Destinations and marks the beginning of Mobil Travel Guide's plans to apply its internationally respected Star rating system to properties worldwide.

Mobil Travel Guide has been providing the most comprehensive and objective hotel ratings and reviews in the United States and Canada since 1958, using more than 750 criteria, which are updated annually. As FG Destinations expands its program into the Caribbean, hotel properties in the region will be evaluated using Mobil Travel Guide's proprietary and industry-leading process, which involves using a combination of its highly trained field inspectors and undercover service evaluators. The public will have access to Mobil Travel Guide's reviews of the Caribbean properties online at <http://www.mobiltravelguide.com/>, just as they currently do for hotels, restaurants, and spas in the United States and Canada. FreemanGroup's quality improvement consulting services comprise the other component of FG Destinations.

"We are excited to be launching our worldwide expansion efforts in the Caribbean and ultimately intend to help all travelers -- regardless of where they are from or where they are going -- make better-informed travel decisions," said Shane O'Flaherty, Vice President of Quality Assurance for Mobil Travel Guide.

FG Destinations will serve to enhance the overall service levels tourists can expect when traveling to the Caribbean, and in doing so, allow the islands to maintain their competitive advantage in the global tourism market. FG Destinations will also use other FreemanGroup Standards of Performance to evaluate additional destination services, ranging from customs/immigration and transportation to dining and yachting, in order to create a comprehensive, integrated solution for island governments and tourism boards looking to enhance the overall travel experience for tourists.

"With the introduction of Mobil Travel Guide's ratings to the Caribbean, tourists, meeting and convention planners, and travel agents will -- for the first time -- have a way to make an 'apples to apples' comparison of hotel properties throughout the region using an objective system that is already broadly accepted, trusted, and respected," said O'Flaherty.

"The playing field is finally leveled," said Bill Freeman, Founder and CEO, FreemanGroup Destinations. "With Mobil Travel Guide now setting internationally recognized service standards in the region, smaller, independently owned properties can have the opportunity to compete with larger properties on quality of service."

For a detailed explanation of how Mobil Travel Guide arrives at its Star ratings, visit HowStuffWorks, the exclusive online publisher for Mobil Travel Guide, at www.howstuffworks.com.

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