

Weekly Hotel Industry News Roundup from Europe, Middle East and Africa

Travelodge Adds Six New Hotels To Its UK Portfolio

UK hotel company Travelodge, which is owned by the Middle Eastern investment company Dubai International Capital, has announced that it has bought six hotels from the Menzies Group. The hotels in Edinburgh, Bath, Newcastle, Coventry, Oldham and Stevenage were previously leased to Menzies Hotels by Robert Tchenguiz's London-based private investment company R20. Travelodge has secured the leasehold of the hotels for £85 million, adding 719 rooms to its portfolio of more than 20,000 rooms. Travelodge plans to invest £14 million in converting the hotels and they are all expected to be operating under the Travelodge brand within the next 12 months. Travelodge currently operates 330 hotels in the UK, Ireland and Spain. These latest acquisitions are part of the company's expansion plans to increase its portfolio to 35,000 rooms by 2010.

Holiday Inn's Express Trip To Cape Town

The Express by Holiday Inn Cape Town City Centre, which has recently opened in the centre of Cape Town, South Africa, has the claim to fame of being InterContinental Hotels Group's (IHG) first limited service hotel in South Africa. The 175-room hotel was created at a cost of US\$16.2 million and is the first of 25 hotels to be developed in the country, for a total investment cost of approximately US\$771 million, from IHG's partnership with South African developer ISO Leisure, which acquired the Holiday Inn franchise from Southern Sun in 2007. The next three properties to open will be in Pretoria, Sandton and Umhlanga.

Accor To Send Another Ibis To Dubai

Accor has signed an agreement with the Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC) to manage an Ibis hotel which is being developed in the Dubai Trade Centre District, at the heart of Dubai city, for a cost of Dh350 million (US\$95 million). The 588-room hotel will be the second Ibis hotel Accor is managing for the DWTC group, the 210-room Ibis World Trade Centre Dubai opened in 2003. These two hotels are the first of 23 Ibis hotels which Accor plans to develop in the Middle East region by 2011.

Marriott International To Drop In On Abu Dhabi

Marriott International and Middle Eastern property developer ALDAR Properties have signed a management agreement which will bring the emirate of Abu Dhabi a 400-room Renaissance Hotel & Suites and a 200-room Courtyard by Marriott hotel. The hotels are to be developed at the Central Market retail development located in Abu Dhabi's business district. Marriott currently has 26 hotels in the Middle East region and chairman and chief executive officer of the company J W Marriott, Jr recently announced that Marriott plans to add 39 new hotels to its Middle East portfolio, bringing its number of rooms in the region to 10,000 by 2011.

Obzor To Host Bulgaria's First Marriott

As well as expanding its presence in the Middle East, Marriott International is also establishing itself in the Bulgarian hotel market. Russian investment company AKG 2000 has announced that Marriott will manage a five-star hotel in the town of Obzor, 65 km south of Varna, on the Black Sea coast in Bulgaria. The 180-room hotel will be Marriott's first property in Bulgaria and it will form part of the Obzor Black Sea Beach & Spa Resort, which is being developed by AKG 2000. Construction of the complex is to begin in September this year and the work is expected to be completed by 2012.

New Owner For The Hotel Thüringer Hof In Namibia

African hotel company Protea Hotels Group has reportedly bought the Hotel Thüringer Hof from Namib Sun Hotels for an undisclosed sum. The 43-room city centre hotel will be Protea's second hotel in Windhoek, the capital of Namibia in southern Africa, along with the 33-room Protea Hotel Furstenhof.

NH Hotel Number Two For Dresden

NH Hoteles has signed an agreement with German real estate company Prajs & Drimmer to operate a four-star hotel in the German city of Dresden. The 238-room hotel, owned by Prajs & Drimmer, is to be developed as part of a mixed-use development. This will be hotel number two for NH Hoteles in Dresden along with the 269-room NH Dresden.

Rezidor Hotel Group Announces Its First-Quarter Results

Kurt Ritter, president and chief executive officer of Rezidor Hotel Group, stated that 'The first quarter of 2008 has been yet another strong quarter for Rezidor'. Despite the forecast negative effect of this year's early Easter in March, the group has reported that its revenue has increased by 2.1% to approximately \177 million for the first quarter of 2008. Like-for-like RevPAR (for leased and managed hotels) grew by 4.2% to \70.20.

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