

MEDIA RELEASE ... FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Attention: Travel Editor/ Travel writers

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NEW HOTEL GROUP AIMS FOR GUEST WELLBEING

A new worldwide collection of luxury hotels dedicated to the holistic wellbeing of guests has been launched in Australia.

Five leading hotels - three in Victoria, one in NSW and one in WA – have joined Healing Hotels of the World (HHW), a concept originating in Germany.

Managing director Anne Biging said that HHW was formed last year in response to the rapid growth in five-star properties incorporating what was once considered ‘alternative’ health programs in their spas.

“Spas are no longer just about beauty treatments or relaxation - they aim to bring long-term improvements in their clients’ health,” Ms Biging said.

“Many travellers today are looking for something meaningful in their lives. They want to get in touch with their bodies and with the wisdom of ancient cultures that have cultivated holistic knowledge.

“People are also looking for medical facilities in hotels to combine their holiday with health evaluation, screenings and treatments.”

Ms Biging, who has more than 20 years’ experience in international tourism and destination marketing, said that the philosophy behind HHW had been embraced by leading hotels and resorts throughout the world. HHW had grown rapidly and now included hotels in Europe, the Middle East, India, Bhutan, Thailand, Bali, the Seychelles and Mexico. The five Australian members were Gaia Retreat and Spa near Byron Bay in NSW, The Lake House in Daylesford, Victoria, Moonlight Head, on the Great Ocean Road in south-west Victoria, The Lyall Hotel in Melbourne and The Richardson in Perth.

HHW members must meet strict criteria covering every aspect of the hotel including ambience, staff attitude, healthy food in the rooms as well as the restaurants, and world-class spa and health treatments, Ms Biging said.

“The hotel has to live and breathe holistic wellbeing. The aim is for guests to leave feeling uplifted, and happier and healthier than when they arrived, ” she said.

A key services offered by HHW members was a personal consultation with every guest at the start of their stay to help them focus on their health and maximise the benefits of their holiday.

HHW assisted members with marketing, a holistic health and spa consultancy and a training program for hotels wanting to develop an individual approach to holistic health. It also offered a series of retreats and master programs conducted by world leaders in their fields.

Ms Biging will visit Australia for the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE), the country's premier tourism trade event and the largest international travel trade show in the southern hemisphere. ATE 2008 will be held in Perth from 14 to 20 June.

About Healing Hotels of the World

Healing Hotels of the World (HHW) is based in Bergisch Gladbach near Cologne, Germany. Members include:

Europe - Aruna Health Center, Germany; Elbresidenz Bad Schandau, Germany; Fonteverde Natural Spa Resort, Italy; Hotel Lanserhof, Austria; Mavida Balance and Spa, Austria; Waldhaus Flims Mountain Resort and Spa, Switzerland. Kamalaya, Thailand; Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi, Thailand

Middle East - Desert Island Resort, Abu Dhabi; Park Hyatt Dubai, Dubai.

India: The Ananda, Himalayas; Neeleshwar Hermitage.

Thailand: Kamalaya; Mandarin Oriental Dhara Dhevi.

Australia: Gaia Retreat and Spa, NSW; The Lake House, Victoria; Moonlight Head, Victoria; The Lyall Hotel, Melbourne; The Richardson, Perth.

Others: Choupana Hills, Madeira; COMO Shambhala Estate, Bali; Frégate Island Private, Seychelles; Rosewood Mayakobá, Mexico; Uma Paro, Bhutan.

For more information, see www.Healinghotelsoftheworld.com.

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