



Contact: Christine Hinz
 Phone: 212.315.2812
 Email: christine@chcommunications.biz

Tere Martinez
 Phone: 787-725-2110
 Email: tmartinez@prcb.org

HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS, RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECTS CONTINUE TO POSITION PUERTO RICO AS THE PREFERRED MEETING DESTINATION OF THE AMERICAS

-- Luxury Brands Look to Make Their Mark Throughout the Island; Serving High-End Meetings and Discerning Leisure Travelers --

SAN JUAN, August 26, 2009 – Hoteliers in Puerto Rico continue their commitment to expand and improve offerings of top hotel brands, services and amenities by pouring an estimated \$2.1 billion into new developments and \$350 million into renovation and expansion projects throughout the Island.

Many developments in the pipeline, such as the opening of the Sheraton Puerto Rico Convention Center Hotel, will look to meetings and conventions as a primary market. Others, such as JW Marriott, Regent and St. Regis branded properties are ready to serve high-end corporate groups and the incentive market along with luxury individual travelers. Investments throughout the Caribbean island will greatly benefit meeting groups by providing additional choices, new amenities and services to planners and delegates.

“Puerto Rico has a long-term vision and strategy to develop its tourism product and serve the meetings and conventions market,” stated Ana María Viscasillas, president and CEO, Puerto Rico Convention Bureau. “With more than \$900 million contributed to the Island’s local economy through group meetings and conventions each year, we understand the significance of continuing to develop and expand our tourism infrastructure to serve this important market segment.”

Following is a brief overview of some of the largest hotel developments and hotel new updates from around the Island.

San Juan

- In January, the **Doubletree by Hilton San Juan** entered Puerto Rico’s hotel portfolio following a two-year renovation project at the former Pierre Hotel at Gallery Plaza. The 184-room property features four meeting rooms for conferences, seminars and events up to 60 people, along with a Business Center and wireless internet throughout. In addition, each contemporary room features a 32” flat screen TV, MP3 clock radio, high speed Internet, in room microwave and mini-fridge to serve the needs of today’s business traveler.

-more-



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center





Puerto Rico Hotel Development.../2

- In March, the 570-room **Conrad San Juan Condado Plaza** made its debut, showing off a \$70 million dollar redesign. Completed in 2008, renovations included an intensive refurbishment of all rooms, public areas, an impressive new lobby, and 40,000 square feet of meeting space.
- In April, the 382-room **El San Juan Hotel & Casino** joined the Waldorf Astoria Collection brand of hotels following a \$52 million renovation. With meeting spaces designed by Robert Barry of Barry Design and an alluring pool and beachside experience - Encanto Beach Club, by acclaimed architect Stephane Dupoux, this famed property features 35,000 square feet of versatile event space, including 14 rooms and unique outdoor spaces, a business center with Internet access, rooftop fitness center, and La Galeria, an air-conditioned shopping arcade.
- The **InterContinental San Juan Resort & Casino** recently completed a \$40 million remodeling program. In addition to upgrades in the hotel's public spaces, the property remodeled each of its 402 guest rooms, as well as its 18,000 sq. ft. of meeting space. In addition, the property put \$4 million into renovating its casino.
- The 58-room **El Convento** recently completed an \$800,000 remodeling project aimed at blending the landmark property's Old World charm with New World technology. Upgrades included restoration of all solid-oak furniture in the guestrooms and public areas, LCD plasma televisions in each room, in-room lighting, mattress and drape replacements, as well as soundproofing of doors.
- Construction continues at the **Condado Vanderbilt Hotel**. The fully-restored property is scheduled to open in November 2010 and will feature 305 guest rooms, including 80 Commodore Suites and 40 Biltmore Suites housed within two, 11-story adjacent towers. The property will offer 15,000 square feet of flexible meeting space and four restaurants. Investment of \$106 million.
- Following a \$40 million renovation project to its Tower and Garden wings, the **Caribe Hilton** continues renovations and updates, including \$12 million to redo meeting rooms, the Expo Center and outdoor bar and beach areas. In addition, the property has just kicked off the second phase of its Laguna Villas project. Once complete in 2010, the property will offer 910 guest rooms.

-more-



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center





Puerto Rico Hotel Development.../3

Convention Center District

- The 500-room **Sheraton Puerto Rico Convention Center Hotel & Casino** is scheduled to open in November 2009. The \$211 million property will feature 35,000 square feet of state-of-the-art flexible meeting space in a conference center setting, including a 16,300-square foot ballroom, divisible into eight rooms; and a smaller, 7,700-square ballroom distinctively remarked by the natural lighting and views plus seven other meeting rooms, some that can be divided.
- Groundbreaking of the \$70 million **Aloft Hotel** took place in May of 2009 for completion in Spring 2012. The 252-room property will be an extension to the headquarter Sheraton Puerto Rico Convention Center Hotel within the District and will offer 16,000 sq. ft. of commercial space.
- Later this year, the \$40 million, 300-room **Marriott Courtyard Convention District Hotel** will break ground to offer an additional 300 rooms to the District. The property is scheduled to open in late 2012
- The **Vistas de San Juan**, located in the Miramar section of San Juan, adjacent to the Puerto Rico Convention Center District is a hotel project which will bring a 48-room corporate hotel to the former Clarion Hotel, along with 197 condo-hotel rooms. A second phase includes the construction of a two tower, 480-room property, with over 300,000 sq. ft. of commercial space.

Eastern Region

- In February, the **El Conquistador Resort & Golden Door Spa** joined the Waldorf Astoria Collection of hotels. Following a \$120 million property-wide renovation completed in 2008, the property features a complete redesign to all 750 guestrooms and suites, the recently opened Coqui Water Park, the addition of an outpost of the famed NYC steakhouse Strip House and a new 21,090-square-foot Grand Atlantic Ballroom, bringing the resort's total meeting and event space to over 100,000 square feet.
- Following a \$137 million redesign project, the first Starwood-brand W property in Puerto Rico, **W Retreat & Spa** – Vieques Island is scheduled to open Spring 2010. The 156-room property will offer three meeting rooms with over 3,800 square feet of meeting space. The largest meeting space will be able to accommodate up to 180 guests, theatre-style.

-more-



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center





Puerto Rico Hotel Development.../4

- A five-star, \$172 million St. Regis property is slated to open in November 2010 in Rio Grande. The **Bahía Beach, St. Regis Resort** will feature 139 suites, distributed among a dozen buildings, all facing the Atlantic Ocean. With a sophisticated South Pacific tropical flair, the property will offer more than 5,000 square feet of ballroom and meetings space. In addition to a 10,000 square foot Rémede Spa, the resort will be home to a Trent Jones Jr. Golf Course. This distinguished property will also be home to Jean Georges, one of the top ten restaurants in the world, as well as a 90-seat St. Regis restaurant.
- **JW Marriott Hotel & Resort at Coco Beach** is slated to open in 2011 with a 371-room resort and spa. The property \$252 million property will feature 20,919 square feet of meeting space, including a 12,000 square-foot ballroom divisible into multiple sections, seven individual meeting rooms, two board rooms and five hospitality suites. In addition to a 36-hole championship, Tom Kite-designed golf course which was host of the 2009 PGA Puerto Rico Open, the property will also feature a 17,775-square-foot world-class spa and fitness center, an outdoor swimming pool, facilities for water sports, access to the championship golf course, a 6,370-square-foot casino and a kid's club. Other amenities will include an executive club lounge, 24-hour room service and a business center.
- In 2011, the 186-room **Mandarin Oriental Palmas del Mar Resort & Spa** will open. The property will include an 18,000 sq. ft signature spa; 44 Mandarin-branded Condo residences and 25 branded estate homes. Mandarin Oriental is investing \$300 million in the hotel and its amenities.
- Slated to open in 2011 the \$172 million **Regent Punta Candelero Resort & Spa**. To be located within the Palmas Del Mar community in Humacao, the 147-room property will include 96 guest rooms, 52 condo-hotel suites and five spa suites. Resort amenities will include a signature restaurant from a renowned culinary operator, three private pools, preferred tee times at nearby championship golf courses and a 16,000-square-foot spa featuring five over-water spa suites. The Regent Punta Candelero will also offer an on-site ballroom and chapel for destination weddings and events.

Western Region

- The **Mayagüez Resort & Casino** recently completed the first phase of a \$7 million expansion project, including renovations to the property's River Pool Village as well as adding a new fine-dining option, along with the Veranda Terrace Bar and El Castillo Restaurant. The property offers meeting and banquet space for 600 people, hi-speed Internet service and business services for guests and meeting attendees, as well as a 10,800 square-foot casino.

-more-



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center





Puerto Rico Hotel Development.../5

- The 112-room **Rincón Beach Resort** recently announced plans for a multi-million expansion to the property. The boutique property will add meeting space and conference facilities to accommodate groups of up to 300 people. Future plans include a water park and the addition of guest rooms.

Airlift

- According Puerto Rico government officials, 11,400 annual flights have been added to local airlift. Other improvements include approximately \$300 million over the next 10-12 years at Rafael Hernández Airport in Aguadilla.
- **American Airlines** is adding additional daily flights to Puerto Rico from Boston, Chicago and Washington/Dulles as well as adding an additional weekly flight to Los Angeles, starting November 19, 2009.
- On May 1, **American Eagle** added 109 weekly flights from San Juan to points in the Caribbean. Destinations include additional daily flights to St. Martin, Tortola, St. Thomas, St. Croix, Guadelupe, Martinica, Trinidad and Tobago and an additional weekly flight to Grenada.
- Other airlines which have increased service to the Island include **Spirit Airlines, JetBlue, Insel Air** and **Virgin Atlantic**, with service from Puerto Rico to other Caribbean locations, the U.S., South America and Europe.
- The **Isla Grande Airport** will undergo nearly \$7 million in expansions and improvements, including the extension of the runway to allow the addition of 100 daily flights to the airport. Other elements of the project include repaving runways, repairing drainage, improving signage and installing Precision Approach Path Indicator lights. The Isla Grande Airport is a major component to the Golden Triangle project, which includes the Puerto Rico Convention Center and surrounding District.

#



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center





Editor's Note:

The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau (PRCB) is a non-profit organization established in 1962 to drive meetings, conventions, trade shows and incentive groups to Puerto Rico. With offices in San Juan, Chicago, New York, Miami, and Washington DC, the Bureau strengthens Puerto Rico's competitive position in the Americas and abroad by increasing awareness of the Island's outstanding meeting facilities and services, and produces approximately \$126 million to the local economy. The Bureau can be reached electronically through the Internet at info@meetpuertorico.com or at its website www.meetpuertorico.com. The PRCB is the official marketing and sales agent for the new Puerto Rico Convention Center (PRCC) opened November 2005. For more information on the new Convention Center visit www.prconvention.com. The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau is the **only** Bureau to have accreditation by both Lloyds Registered Quality Assurance through the BestCities Global Alliance and the Destination Marketing Association International (DMAI) as an elite destination marketing organization. The Puerto Rico Convention Bureau, representing the capital city of San Juan, is a proud member of Best Cities Global Alliance, the first convention bureau alliance that represents the highest standards of service in the meetings and convention industry. For more information, visit www.bestcities.net. DMAI is the world's largest association of CVBs, representing more than 600 destination management organizations in more than 25 countries.



Chicago | Miami | New York | San Juan | Washington, D.C.

Sales and Marketing Agent for the Puerto Rico Convention Center

