

Gostelow Report Live

SPECIAL REPORT

Cannes, December 3rd, 2019

Today, tomorrow and Thursday, **Gostelow Report Live** – at the request of **Reed Travel Exhibitions**, organiser of **ILTM** - gives inside stories on the personalities and happenings here at the 18th ILTM in Cannes • And it all started HERE, yesterday, at the **Global Forum**. It felt like home, with cheery emcee Chris Hollins. Introduced by **ILTM**'s creative Portfolio Director Alison Gilmore ('fearless, decisive'), we heard economist Dr Kjell Nordström saying we could be at the start of the most-speedy business transformation since the mid-19th century. Wunderman Thompson global Chairman Tamara Ingram OBE explained today's eco-conscious consumers want ethics, responsibility – and innovation. Dr Richard Carmona, US Surgeon General and chief of health innovation at Canyon Ranch, shared the connection between wellness and conscious ;awareness.

There's something about Valerie, Valerie Wilson that is. After that riveting Global Forum, the entire **ILTM** roster at yesterday's Global Forum was ecstatic that she is the 2019 recipient of the *Mary Gostelow Award*. For over 35 years she has lived luxury travel that is exactly right for her friends (sorry, clients) – her company, co-owned with her daughters, Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg and Kimberly Wilson Wetty, today has over 300 advisors but she will, to this lovely industry, always be 'Valerie', no family name needed. Well done Valerie! She was up; again this morning, crack of dawn as always, to be one of the panellists at a Women in Travel breakfast, chaired by Jacqui Gifford, Editor-in-Chief of *Travel+Leisure* (the panel was power, it included her predecessor-but-one, Nancy Novograd, plus Amina Belouuzdad, CCO, **The Private Suite**; Tina Edmundson, Global Brand Officer and Luxury Portfolio Leader, **Marriott International**; Audrey Hendley, President, **American Express Travel**; Barbara Muckermann, CMO **Silversea Cruises**).

There are, indeed, what are arguably the most important people in the entire industry here in Cannes. **ILTM 2019**, which once again continues the trend of growing three percent year-on-year, has 1,884 exhibitors from 96 countries - new tourist-board representations include, in alphabetical order, Los Cabos, Maldives, Malta, Morocco, and New York. As expected, the exhibitors include an increasing experiential element – think **Croatia Yachting**, **Sleigh Tours Scotland Ltd**, **Francis Ford Coppola's Hideaways** and **Casa Malca** in Tulum. Once again, ILTM's indispensable communications partner, **Spotlight**, is bringing to Cannes, from many lands, over 100 of the best top-end travel media to find out and report on the latest in luxury travel for 2020 and beyond.

Balancing this are 1,848 buyers from 76 countries: 31% of buyers are new to the entire ILTM portfolio and 41% of the total are new to the event in Cannes. Interestingly, the number of private travel designers is up 10%, while corporate travel agents have risen 18%. It is also worth noting that the number of buyers from Germany is up 18% on 2018, with Kazakhstan recording +37%, Lebanon +80% and the USA +4%.

Thinking of the great US of A, the launch **Equinox Hotel**, in New York's Hudson Yards, is frankly more normal than some media have made out – yes, there are those who go for extreme wellness procedures but honestly, just enjoy true luxury in the fascinating new Hudson Yards part of town. From the hotel, on floors 24-38 of the 92-floor 35 Hudson Yards tower, look out at Vessel, architect-designer Thomas Heatherwick's unique 45 metre-tall open honeycomb, formed of 54 interconnecting flights of stairs, 2,500 steps, and 80 landings (climb it for extra exercise, if the hotel's three-floor Equinox Club, designed by Joyce Wang, does not use up enough calories). Dine with Manhattan's A-list at the hotel's Electric Lemon. Hotel GM Philipp Posch.

Last Saturday the new CEO of the Palais des Festivals, Didier Boidin, was one of the 200 guests at **Hotel Martinez**' 90th birthday - over a unique Cuvée Martinez by Taittinger, which at one time owned the hotel, he shared tips on buying boats with Hyatt's SVP Ops Frank Lavey, who flew in from Chicago for his first-ever ILTM. The Martinez's ever-creative GM Yann Gillet has commissioned a video-painting by Xavier de Richemont that covers the whole façade of the seven-floor hotel, every evening half hour through Thursday. The record-breaking rains Sunday stopped the show that night, or see it live, this evening or on your way to ILTM's closing party on Thursday, which once again is at the Martinez. Or, at any time, watch it streamed on Facebook. See more on <https://www.hotel-martinez-90.com/lights-ans-sounds-show> Somehow, people paddled, or nearly swam, through the torrents to get to **Swire Hotels**' annual pre-ILTM party, hosted by Chrissie Lincoln and Marcel Thoma. Among the stalwarts who made it were two former-Amanites, John Reed, now COO **SANGHA Retreat at Octave Institute**, and his new righthander, Christina Deeny.

Time for more art. **Regent Seven Seas**, whose ships have some fine art pieces personally chosen by Frank Del Rio, President and CEO of parent company NCL, is partnering with Sotheby's for five episodes of Tim Marlow's Must-See Museum Show: currently artistic director of London's Royal Academy of Arts, Tim Marlow moves across town next month to be CEO of the edgy Design Museum • Danish designer Arne Jacobsen's plans and artworks are still highlights at what was the first 'design hotel' when **Radisson Collection Royal Hotel, Copenhagen**, first opened 40 years ago: room 606 is now a museum, showing his original bespoke wood panelling and furnishings.

Sri Lanka's President, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, elected 19 November, is positive news, says md **Resplendent Ceylon**, Malik Fernando, who expects better security as a basic requirement: Rajapaksa's plans include better infrastructure, management of tourism and moving it up the value chain. Fernando is here at Cannes representing Dilmah Tea's Relais & Chateaux small luxury resort circuit - Ceylon Tea Trails, Cape Weligama, Wild Coast Tented Lodge • **Relais & Châteaux** is not only luxury hotels but free-standing restaurants. In Menton, France, **Mirazur**, under Argentinian-Italian Chef-Patron Mauro Colagreco, is current top of the S. Pellegrino list of the World's 50 Best Restaurants: as well as guest-cheffing at Athens' **Grande Bretagne** in February Mauro Colagreco is permanently overseeing much of the food at **One&Only Le Royal Mirage, Dubai** (led by French foodie, Olivier Louis).

Four Seasons' second London hotel, **Four Seasons London at Ten Trinity Square** a conversion of the classical 1912 Port of London Authority building, is already a regular base for weekday top business, but, any day, it is the closest luxury lodging to The Tower of London, 300 yards away (hotel memories include in-room carpets that are as sexy as those at Four Seasons DIFC in Dubai) • **Four Seasons Athens Astir Palace**, new GM Philippe Roux-Dessarps, is a revamp of the 60-year old hangout of Bardot through to Nixon: today, with, possibly, year-round gorgeous weather and its private beaches and bays, this idyllic place is actually diverting travellers away from Greek islands (why leave when you have, here, private terraces looking out at blue sea and sky and, in the presidential suites, significant just-for-you swimming pools?).

But Mykonos, Santorini and some of Greece's 3,000-plus other islands continue to be a magnet, though Tim Ananiadis, MD of Athens' city-centre neighbouring **Grande Bretagne and King George** hotels, both Luxury Collection, urges giving the city a bit more time. Instead of merely overnighing in the Greek capital before going on to the islands, or boarding a cruise, he says a two-night stay allows jetlag recovery, time for spa and shopping, and sightseeing that his teams can personalise (book an Acropolis-facing room, on an upper floor, and definitely dine and breakfast rooftop at the GB for one of the world's most memorable dining experiences – on a Thursday, then head down to the Winter Garden for professional opera enjoyed by Athens' A-listers • There's a Japanese garden at the 18th century (Palladian) **Grantley Hall**, a 47-room Relais & Châteaux hotel in England's Yorkshire Dales – opened July 2019, the hotel is, thanks to a little financial help from her first husband, a lifetime work of owner Valeria Sykes, now married to a canon at Ripon Cathedral, five miles to the East.

Private jet specialist Doug Gollan, who also writes regularly for *Forbes*, says he's keen to talk to as many DMCs as possible to discuss the experiences scene • Talking of which, at **Beau-Rivage, Geneva**, GM Lars Wagner, a watchmaking package, working with Initium, finishes with your own-crafted time-piece to take home • Stay in a four-bedroom residence in Bavaria's most famous palace – **The Langham Residence, Nymphenburg, Munich**, is in the 490-acre imperial estate of Nymphenburg Palace, a 15-minute drive from Munich city centre (you have enough space to entertain up to 100, and privacy and exclusivity with a privileged location next to the Royal Nymphenburg Porcelain Manufactory). Elsewhere, **The Langham, Boston**, formerly the Federal Reserve Bank, re-opens summer 2020 (GM Michele Grosso): a new Lincoln Ballroom, which can accommodate up to 200 guests, and will feature natural light by way of a skylight flanked by chandeliers, and proximity via its pre-function space to windows overlooking Norman B. Leventhal Park.

Food and drink: The **Apurva Kempinski, Nusa Dua**, has Bali's only underwater restaurant – Koral is lined with *Majapahit* bricks, teak and royal *tegel* tiles, but windows look out to the water (the menu is predominantly seafood, and as an alternative to wines of the world and Indonesian beer try a Spiced Ink Mojito, spiced rum with squid ink mint syrup, lime fruit ginger and kaffir leaves) • **Rosewood Hong Kong**, justifiably lauded for a myriad of reasons, has the industry's only female-only speakeasy, XX Bar, find fluffy pink slippers and, admittedly male, impressive mixologists • This month **Las Ventanas al Paraiso**, also Rosewood, opens Los Cabos' first speakeasy, reached via a Coca Cola-look lobby-set door: manager-mixologist Philippe Zaigue has been lured from Mexico City's famous Hanky Panky bar • Obviously all Ritz-Carlton loyalists are longing to see what they will be offered aboard *Evrina*, the first Ritz-Carlton yacht: food and drink are in the hands of Matthew Kiner, Senior Manager, Food & Wine, and Culinary Director Matthieu Godard • On 20 December, **Royal Mansour, Marrakech**, opens *Sesamo*, a partnership with Massimiliano Alajmo, who has five Michelin stars in Padua and Venice, and with *Domaine Agricoles*, to make sure the hotel has the finest quality of local-everything from mozzarella to olive oil.

Go for kids: At **The Chatwal, New York**, go behind-scenes at FAO Schwarz for a tour hosted by a Toy Soldier, raid the FAO Schweetz candy bar, craft a new tune on the dance-on piano • **Acqualina**, north of Miami, adds night-time turtle-hatching and there are now seven marine things-to-do for kids five to 12 – plus, for all ages, enjoy painting by the sea and, adults only, there's a tranquillity pool, with photographer Pipe Yanguas on hand if you want a romantic souvenir (and/or enjoy a massage for two, or a picnic on the dunes) • So, have a great day – and watch out for more **Gostelow Reports Live**, tomorrow and Thursday.

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