

ILTM is the Oscars of Hospitality Trade Events

As they say in Hollywood, if you make it to the Oscars, you have reached the luxury plateau!



ILTM is in the same category as the Oscars. Few conferences can attract as many CEO's as ILTM. The reason being is that the ILTM is a hosted event where the exhibitors pay for the buyers to attend. This brings out a higher category of travel event people. As well, only those in the luxury accommodation class can attend and for the costs, it makes no sense unless you are at the Oscars level. At last count there were in excess of 100 Hospitality Travel, Trade, Culinary Conferences, Trade Shows and Events including a Food Truck Show and several shows in China that I have been invited to recently. I do not know the object of these Chinese gatherings as the invitation was in Chinese.

I was fortunate to be invited to attend the International Luxury Travel Market (ILTM) in Cannes. Touted as a showcase for the global luxury travel community, buyers who, as I mentioned, are invited and expenses covered and suppliers who pay hefty fees for their booths to woo meet buyers they all meet to exchange ideas, discuss new products and hopefully, find a convergence of needs which will lead to increased sales for both. In addition, the CEO's of major brands attend to promote their hotels and leaders in the travel media such as myself cover this event to ensure sufficient hype.

I enclose comments from a Hosted Buyer to highlight what is offered to those whom can provide business to the luxury market.

"As a vetted buyer, I was flown to Nice, France, met by a helicopter that flew me to Cannes. Checking into the Art Deco dream of a hotel the Martinez, (pronounced with the "z", since named after a Spanish explorer, which I learned only after being corrected). I was escorted to a beautiful room with a balcony overlooking the blue Mediterranean. Champagne arrived shortly thereafter with new surprises delivered every night.

What followed was the work to justify the luxury in which I was living. My appointment diary for the next three days included over 50, 20-minute appointments, determined by a combination of my requests and the requests of suppliers. In reality, I spent three fascinating days (and nights-the parties are as legendary as the locale) exploring the world for all that was new and exciting in travel. Equally valuable was spending time with my "buyer" colleagues, the most expert of experts in the world of selling travel. I was humbled, inspired and hot to introduce everything at once to my clients."

As a member of the press, I asked many of the senior executives why they attended. Their answers were always the same "This is a serious show that produces". What more can be added? In my next articles, I will highlight some of the executives and products they were representing and their comments.