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PRESS RELEASE

Where are the Japanese?

Japan has been one of the most important origin markets for Europe over the last 30 years. Japanese visitors' enthusiasm and discriminating taste have influenced the whole of the European service economy. Attractions, hotels and shops have all been affected by the need to cater to the Japanese.

Amidst all the discussion of "emerging markets", the most important Asian market continues to be Japan. But the steady growth which characterised this market can no longer be assured. Japan has had its own economic problems and the Japanese consumer is evolving.

As a continuation of a series on origin markets, the ETOA Conference will address Japan. A new study on the market will be unveiled. A panel of experts, including Mr. Kei Morishita, JTB Europe, Mr. Ikuo Shibuya, Director of Miki Travel and Mr. Yoshida, Director of ANA Sales will discuss aspects of this market.

In particular they will explore how Japanese travel law affects the market, particularly its strictures on any changes to a package. We will also look at how Japanese tourists are changing and how the Japanese travel industry is evolving in answer to this change.

Delegates at the ETOA conference comprise senior managers from Europe's major tour operators, hotel groups, tourist attractions, coach, rail and cruise companies and local tourist boards. Collectively, as buyers, they have a strong influence on which destinations and attractions are more or less successful, as they spend over €7bn a year on Europe's sights, hotels and transport on behalf of their customers.

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About the Global European Marketplace

ETOA's Global European Marketplace (GEM) is the most important gathering of the European inbound tourism industry. It takes place on Thursday November 6th, at the

Copthorne Tara hotel in Kensington, immediately before World Travel Market in London and all the major players participate, including Accor, American Express, British Airways Holidays, Collette Vacations, Cosmos, Eurostar, Expedia, Globus, Gullivers, Hilton, Historic Royal Palaces, Kuoni, London Eye, Maritim, Marriott, Sixt, Sol Melia, Residor, Royal Collection, Starwood, Tauck World Discovery and Tussauds Group.

The GEM comprises a conference, workshop, exhibition and black tie dinner at the Café Royale. The conference is attended by over a hundred top executives, high-level consultants and the media. The workshop facilitates approximately 7,500 one-on-one meetings between senior-level buyers and sellers, with the buyers seated at tables and sellers circulating to meet them.

About ETOA

Since its foundation in 1989, ETOA has grown exponentially to include over 400 member organisations, of which more than a hundred are Tour Operators. Collectively, ETOA represents over €7 billion spending on accommodation and travel services annually.

ETOA provides representation at the European government level for companies involved in bringing tourists to Europe. The Association promotes greater awareness of the benefits provided by the group travel industry in Europe - particularly increased income and employment. ETOA also influences European tourism policy and legislation.

Areas of specific activity include:

- Promoting Europe as a tourism destination
- Establishing codes of conduct and guidelines for its members
- Establishing commercial opportunities between buyers and sellers
- Working with other travel & tourism associations to raise the industry's profile