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Inspiring and Educating Sellers of Affluent Travel

MAY 2014

# LUXURY

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## ULTRA LUXURY EXCHANGE

# LUXURY TRAVEL ADVISOR'S ULTRA SUMMIT

The world's elite travel advisors and suppliers came together for an exclusive gathering on the latest research and trends in ultra-luxury or "affluent travel."

LUXURY TRAVEL ADVISOR'S ULTRA SUMMIT 2014, held in March at the Park Hyatt Chicago, brought together a hand-selected group of ultra-luxury advisors and suppliers, invited for their expertise as the world's top purveyors of affluent travel. They participated in the invitation-only, three-day program, which featured intimate, prescheduled appointments, strategic networking functions and expert presentations about high-net-worth travelers, trends and business opportunities.

Ruthanne Terrero, Questex Hospitality + Travel vice president of content and editorial director, presented the results of an exclusive survey of ultra-travel advisors. A key finding was the fact that personal contact still matters in sales, as evidenced by more than a third of respondents who said they conduct 75 percent of their business by phone and in person.

Clayton Reid, president & CEO of MMGY Global, told the group that traveler intent, a measure of consumer plans to travel, is "picking up very dramatically," to its highest point since 2004.

"Eight in 10 U.S. travelers are suggesting they will take an international trip in the next two years," he said. "That is double what it was 12 years ago."

Kate Lorenz, content strategy director for Leo Burnett Group in Chicago, provided a primer for marketing through social media. Her advice included devoting a half hour to social media in the morning and again at the end of the day.

John Wallis, chief marketing officer for Hyatt Hotels Corp., joined Anthony Ingham, vice president of North American brand management for St. Regis Hotels & Resorts, The Luxury Collection, W Hotels Worldwide and Le Meridien, to discuss how their respective companies are redefining the luxury experience.

Peter Yesawich, vice chairman of MMGY Global, provided assurance to advisors that 29 percent of affluent travelers plan to use advisors to plan their next trips. Their attitude is, "If I'm going to travel, it had better be good," he said.





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1. **Lia Batkin** of In the Know Experiences is flanked by **Andrea Smagacz** of Emirates and **John Mannion** of Starwood Hotels & Resorts after winning a luxury vacation to Dubai. 2. **Michelle Pragnell** of Jet Set World Travel (center), with **Denise Harvill** of Etihad Airways and **Andrew Rein** of Shangri-La Hotels. 3. **Denise Pragnell** ups an "Ultra" experience to Abu Dhabi courtesy of Etihad and Shangri-La. 4. **Ken Naibaur** of Cardoza-Bungey Travel and **Barbara Nichuals** of Bayside Travel Group confer with **Nikheel Advani** of Grace Bay Club in a pre-scheduled meeting. 5. **Jack Bloch** of JB's World Travel Consultants catches up with **Vo Tomulitch** of Morgans Hotel Group. 6. **Andrew Rein** of Shangri-La Hotels & Resorts listens to input from **Roger Kershaw** of Roger Kershaw Custom Travel and **Amanda Kilimak** of Largay Travel. 7. **Timothy Krenzien** of Paul Klein Travel chats with **Ruthanne Terrero** of *Luxury Travel Advisor* and **Bob Malmberg** of Malmberg Travel. 8. **Alexis Romer** of The Ritz-Carlton Hotel Company gears up for a series of pre-set meetings with Ultra travel advisors. 9. **Mark Kazlauskas** of FROSCHE, **Geoff Pearson** of Halekulani and **Bob Romano** of Fugazi Travel catch up at the opening reception at the Park Hyatt Chicago. 9. **Mary Ann Ramsey** of Betty Maclean Travel and **Bob Watson** of Watson & Watson (an affiliate of Valerie Wilson Travel) greet **John McMahon** of *Luxury Travel Advisor* on opening night.

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10. Redefining the Luxury Hotel Experience for advisors are **Anthony Ingham**, vice president, North America Brand Management, St. Regis Hotels & Resorts, The Luxury Collection, W Hotels Worldwide and Le Méridien, and **John Wallis**, chief marketing officer, Hyatt Hotels & Resorts International. 11. **Michael Holtz** of SmartFlyer and **Jessica Griscavage** of McCabe World Travel exchange insights with **Geoff Pearson** of Halekulani. 12. Dealing with the Ultra-Luxury Client was the topic covered by **Kristian Anderson**, senior vice president of sales and general manager, North America, Silversea Cruises, and Etihad Airways' vice president of guest services, **Aubrey Tied**. 13. **Jamie Martinez** and **Carlos Fernandez** from CasaMar Tulum show off updates to their resort. 14. **Kimberly Newbury** of *Luxury Travel Advisor* (center) is flanked by **Carrie Wallace** of MoonRings Travel and **Jill Taylor** of Jet Set World Travel. 15. **Jody Bear** of Bear & Bear Travel engages with the content program at the Ultra Luxury Summit.