

Ascend Collection From Choice Hotels International Celebrates Two Years of Growth

PR Newswire
SILVER SPRING, Md.

SILVER SPRING, Md., Oct. 14 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH) celebrates the second anniversary of Ascend Collection this month. With 37 currently open member properties and more than a dozen others under development in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean, the program is exceeding its goals across the board, company executives reported recently.

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"This elite network of independent hotels boasts a reservation contribution of 40 percent through Choice Hotels," said Stacy Ragland, vice president of Ascend Collection for Choice Hotels.

Member properties have an average daily rate of approximately \$123.* Despite the challenging economy, revenue per available room year to date is \$66*. Guest satisfaction scores are favorable as well. Ascend Collection hotels rank well above par at 8.5 on a 10-point scale in Likelihood to Recommend (LTR), a key indicator of overall guest satisfaction. Scores are even higher at 8.8 in the category of Staff Service, one of the program's priorities.

"Ascend Collection can drive growth for both Choice Hotels and its member properties," Ragland explained. "The company benefits by providing travelers with a wider selection. For the hotels, it's an opportunity to retain their unique ambience and style, with the support of Choice Hotels and its vast global resources."

Through their membership with Ascend Collection, hotels participate in the award-winning *Choice Privileges* rewards program, which can help to drive reservations in business, leisure

and group markets. The properties gain exposure before a network of 10 million *Choice Privileges* members. Additionally, member hotels become part of the company's worldwide distribution system. They also are featured on one of the hospitality industry's largest websites, ChoiceHotels.com, where travelers can go to learn more about the properties and make reservations.

Personalized Support

To help travelers in their hotel selection, Ascend Collection is divided into three categories: Historic, Boutique and Unique. Member properties appeal to a growing number of business and leisure travelers who like to stay at upscale lodgings with distinctive local character when visiting new destinations.

As part of Ascend Collection, the hotels maintain their individuality. At the same time, they gain marketing and operational support from a team of hospitality veterans and a suite of industry-leading tools designed to enhance reservations and performance.

"Belonging to Ascend Collection means having an experienced, creative support staff that works together to make our property the best it can be and to market it effectively," said Donna Herrick, owner of the Norfolk Lodge & Suites, an Ascend Collection hotel, of Norfolk, Neb., the 2010 Inn of the Year for Ascend Collection. "Choice Hotels has a fabulous e-marketing program, with attractive virtual tours. Plus, they're making great strides in building visibility in the booming smartphone and PDA world."

"As an independent hotelier, we seek a company who will provide tools, information and assistance, while also allowing us to keep our individuality," explained Jennifer Rota, general manager, Distrikt Hotel, an Ascend Collection hotel, of New York City. "Ascend Collection goes a long way in reaching that goal with a property management system that, in my opinion, leads the industry. The system allows us to manage reservations and make real-time decisions based on the latest information. In an unpredictable economy, this ability to manage quickly online is indispensable."

To foster success and growth, Ascend Collection hoteliers have opportunities throughout the year to participate in conferences and webinars featuring industry leaders in key areas of hospitality.

"Choice is a big company with a great deal of history," Rota commented. "There always seems to be someone listening, eager to suggest workable solutions and make a change for

the better."

"Ascend Collection is in active engagement with hotels in gateway cities and top business and leisure markets throughout the United States, Canada and the Caribbean," Ragland added.

Among the network's current markets are: New York City; Chicago; Golden, Colo.; Bloomington, Minn., near Minneapolis; Little Harbor, Anguilla; San Juan, P.R.; Fall River, N.S., outside Halifax; and destinations throughout Hawaii, California and Florida, among others.

*See June 1, 2010 Ascend Collection Franchise Disclosure Document.

About Ascend Collection

Ascend Collection made its debut in late 2008 and now has more than 35 hotels throughout the United States, Canada and the Caribbean. Members include The GEM Hotels with three properties in New York City; Inn of Chicago, one-half block from The Magnificent Mile; O'Brien Historic Hotel, Tex., one block from the lively San Antonio River Walk; the historic Hotel Bothwell, Sedalia, Mo.; Royale Caribbean Resort, opening in early 2011 in Little Harbor, Anguilla; and Le Consulat, within walking distance from Condado Beach, San Juan, P.R. For more information on this collection of Historic, Boutique and Unique and hotels, visit www.ascendcollection.com.

About Choice Hotels

Choice Hotels International, Inc. franchises more than 6,000 hotels, representing more than 490,000 rooms, in the United States and more than 35 other countries and territories. As of June 30, 2010, more than 580 hotels are under construction, awaiting conversion or approved for development in the United States, representing more than 47,000 rooms, and approximately 100 hotels, representing approximately 8,700 rooms, are under construction, awaiting conversion or approved for development in 20 other countries and territories. The company's Comfort Inn, Comfort Suites, Quality, Sleep Inn, Clarion, Cambria Suites, MainStay Suites, Suburban Extended Stay Hotel, Econo Lodge and Rodeway Inn brands serve guests worldwide. In addition, via its Ascend Collection membership program, travelers in the United States, Canada and the Caribbean have upscale lodging options at historic, boutique and unique hotels.

Additional corporate information may be found on the Choice Hotels International, Inc. Web site, which may be accessed at www.choicehotels.com.

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