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WRTA Opens Registrations for Second Annual World Religious Travel Expo

*"The Most Important Meeting and Tradeshow in the Religious Travel and Hospitality Industry"
Set for Nov. 14-16 in Reno, Expected to Draw 600 Participants*

LEXINGTON, Ky. (April 15, 2009) – The World Religious Travel Association (WRTA) has opened registrations for the World Religious Travel Expo & Educational Conference 2009, which will be held November 14-16, 2009 at the Reno-Sparks Convention Center in Reno, Nevada (USA). Serving as the most important meeting and tradeshow in the religious travel and hospitality industry, the event is expected to draw more than 600 tourism organizations and travel professionals from thirty-plus countries.

"As last fall's inaugural World Religious Travel Expo served as an historic event in the tourism industry, the faith-based travel and hospitality marketplace is today attracting extraordinary interest from the travel trade," said Kevin J. Wright, WRTA president. "We're seeing many more companies and agencies devoting greater resources towards cultivating their religious client-base. As such, Expo 2009 will serve once again as the world's foremost stage for organizations buying, selling, and debuting new products and services direct to the faith tourism industry."

Representing the "infrastructure" of the marketplace, the World Religious Travel Expo welcomes travel wholesalers, cruise lines, destination management organizations, hotel/lodging facilities, motorcoach operators, attractions, suppliers, media, consortiums, travel agents, and group planners along with every other sector of the industry. The one-hundred-plus exhibitors from Expo 2008 included, among others, Trafalgar Tours, Faithful Holidays (division of Mayflower Tours), CIE Tours, Collette Vacations, 206 Tours, Journeys Unlimited, Car Italy and Tours, Rainbow Tour Turkey, 7TUR, Costa Cruise Lines, Carnival Cruise Lines, Cyprus Tourism, Jordan Tourism Board, Israel Ministry of Tourism, Switzerland Tourism, Visit Britain, Africa Travel Association, Travel Guard, Pennsylvania Dutch Country CVB, CCRA International, Grande Hotel Moderne (Lourdes), Christian Hotels International, Gaylord Resort Hotels and Convention Centers, and missionary travel wholesalers/agencies MTS Travel and Raptim Travel.

The World Religious Travel Expo is also host to the industry's largest and most comprehensive educational and business program on faith tourism and hospitality. In 2008, more than 50 leading authorities and experts participated in general and educational sessions, which included topics on pilgrimages, cruising, the missions, events/conferences, adventure and safari travel, regional leisure travel, as well as on marketing, sales, public relations, and product development.

Among new highlights for the second Expo includes co-locating with the National Tour Association Annual Convention, offering members of both associations unprecedented opportunities for business growth and networking. In addition, WRTA's event will include participation in The Icebreaker networking function sponsored by the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority, as well as New York's Theatre Direct/Broadway.com-sponsored luncheon.

In October 2008, WRTA hosted the first global tradeshow and marketplace convention for the 300 million religious traveler industry. The ground-breaking event attracted sellers and buyers from six continents and featured prominent speakers, including the Honorable Vincent Vanderpool-Wallace, Minister of Tourism and Aviation, the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism; the Honorable Akel E. Biltaji, Jordan's Ambassador-at-Large for Tourism and Special Advisor to His Majesty King Abdullah II; Maurice Zarmati, President, Costa Cruise Lines; Steve Born, Vice-President, Globus Family of Brands; and Tom Lang, director of the Kissimmee Convention and Visitors Bureau.

For more information about attending or exhibiting at the World Religious Travel Expo, contact the World Religious Travel Association at 888-255-WRTA (9782) or 859-219-3529 or by email headquarters@WRTAreligioustravel.com. For more information about WRTA and the Expo, visit www.WRTAreligioustravel.com and www.WRTAexpo.com respectively.

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World Religious Travel Association:

WRTA is the leading global network for the \$18 billion faith tourism industry. WRTA's primary purpose is to guide, enrich, and expand religious travel and hospitality around the globe via the trade, consumer, and media. Its membership is comprised of accommodations, attractions, tour operators, travel agents, tourism offices, transportation services, media and other key players in the tourism industry.

National Tour Association:

The National Tour Association is the preferred association in the tourism industry for packaged travel professionals. NTA strives to provide value for its members by advancing the packaged travel industry through its advocacy efforts and progressive leadership. Connecting its members through business development, government relations, professional development and research, NTA has remained committed to serving its members with integrity and quality service since its founding in 1951. Today, the NTA membership represents 40 countries, and includes tour and travel packagers of all types.

IMG Associations:

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