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Managing Smoke-Free Expectations

Potomac Hospitality Services and the Charlestowne Hotels management group collectively are bringing 22 new 100% smoke-free properties to the FreshStay's family of 4,800+.

SAINT CHARLES, MISSOURI — OCTOBER 13, 2009 — Pineapple Hospitality is proud to announce that two new hotel management groups have joined FreshStay.com, the largest online directory of 100 percent smoke-free hotels in the world.

Potomac Hospitality Services and Charlestowne Hotels combined offer 22 properties that have completely eliminated smoking on their properties, adding to the comprehensive list of more than 4,800 other FreshStay.com hotels, motels and B&Bs.

"Potomac Hospitality and Charlestowne Hotels are two well-known, well-respected management groups in this industry, so we are excited they see the benefits and are leading their properties to be smoke-free," says Dave Janicke, FreshStay's CBO — Chief Breathing Officer. "It's clear that those guests who desire healthy travel have made finding non-smoking properties a priority, and those hotels that continue to allow smoking on site are missing out."

"Working with FreshStay.com, we hope to connect these two groups and all of their smoke-free properties to the growing ranks of socially responsible travelers everywhere."

Charlestowne Hotels

Charlestowne Hotels is a full-service hospitality management company, based in Charleston, S.C. Charlestowne offers a diverse portfolio of managed properties, featuring upscale, boutique and smaller luxury inns, as well as several branded properties. As one of the largest hotel management companies on the Southeast coast, the company employs more than 100 years of cumulative experience in the hospitality industry.

"Most of our 22 hotels are smoke-free, and the ones that are have been that way for years," explains Justin May, Corporate Revenue Manager for Charlestowne Hotels. "Over the past 6 to 7 years, we've seen a dramatic shift in what the consumer wants, and that especially includes non-smoking properties. We've seen our smoke-free properties see a greater demand as time goes on."

May says maintaining the highest levels of guest satisfaction primarily is what drives the management company's hotels to be smoke-free. Eliminating smoking eliminates a number of problematic issues, such as keeping smoking rooms clean as well as tobacco odor-free. Going 100% nonsmoking also saves housekeeping labor and money — as carpet, wallpaper and guestroom furniture typically last longer.

"Charlestowne Hotels joined FreshStay.com to partner with a company that embraces the same concern for the overall guest experience that all our properties do," says May. "It just makes sense to partner with a company that shares a similar vision and wants to provide guests with the most comfortable hotel experience as possible."

Charlestowne Hotels properties that have been added to FreshStay.com include: Anchorage Inn, Andrew Pinckney Inn, French Quarter Inn, HarbourView Inn, Best Western King Charles Inn; the Palms Hotel on the Isle of Palms, S.C.; the Rhett House Inn in Beaufort, S.C.; the Hillwinds Inn, Ridgeway Inn, and Village Inn in Blowing Rock, N.C.; The Esmeralda in Chimney Rock, N.C.; and the Planters Inn in Savannah, Ga.

Potomac Hospitality Services

Over the past 25 years, Potomac Hospitality Services has been involved in the development, ownership and management of more than 4,000 hotel rooms in the Mid-Atlantic region. The company's portfolio of 11 hotels is focused on the Washington, D.C. area, with several other properties added in Washington, Philadelphia and Chicago.

"Because of health trends and the comfort of our guests, we have a strong belief that our properties should remain completely smoke-free," says Jerry Early, Vice President of Sales & Marketing for Potomac Hospitality. "In part the move to smoke-free is being driven by the major hotel brands and local regulations. But more than that, not allowing smoking gives us a more crisp product. The rooms feel much cleaner and it's easier to maintain a consistent level of excellence throughout our properties."

Early says that because of the growing momentum toward smoking bans in public places, the need to be smoke-free is elevated more than ever. The customer's expectation is a clean, refreshing room — one that doesn't smell like smoke or heavy fragrances used to temporarily mask tobacco smell. The best smell is no smell.

"Working with FreshStay.com is a great partnership for us because healthy travelers expect non-smoking properties, and FreshStay helps them find us," says Early. "The population that wants this is growing and this is a movement we're excited to be a part of."

New Potomac Hospitality properties joining FreshStay.com include: George Washington University

Inn, Hotel Monticello, The Quincy Suites, The River Inn, One Washington Circle Hotel, Virginian Suites Arlington, and Historic Tidewater Inn in Washington, D.C. and the surrounding area; and The Windsor Suites in Philadelphia.

Extinguishing Swine Flu

If you really needed another reason to eliminate smoking from your property, you now have one, courtesy of the H1N1 virus, aka, the Swine Flu.

Studies dating back as far as the 1980s have found that smokers show an increase in flu infections and upper and lower respiratory tract infections when compared to non-smokers. This might be due to smoking suppressing immune function.

The mortality rate from the flu is also higher among smokers than for non-smokers.

So with H1N1 growing as a serious health concern among medical professionals, households, and particularly hotels, it makes sense to reduce the risk of spreading the illness among both guests and staff.

Plus, banning smoking in certain places is not enough. Inhaling secondhand smoke also makes lungs more susceptible to respiratory infections and illness. For the health and safety of all, 100 percent smoke-free is the right policy for every hotel.

For more information, visit the Centers for Disease Control's (CDC's) DC's Web site at www.flu.gov. Information on H1N1 precaution can be found from the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AH&LA) on its Web site, www.ahla.com.

About Pineapple Hospitality

Headquartered in Saint Charles, Missouri, Pineapple Hospitality™ is an EPA ENERGY STAR™ partner bringing fresh ideas to hospitality guests' doors and owner/operators' bottom lines — including FreshStay® (www.freshstay.com), EcoRooms & EcoSuites (www.EcoRooms.com) Environmentally Sensitive Amenities™, EO®, Neutrogena®, Earth Perfect and greenSPA™ amenities, AVIVA and WAVE dispensers, Energy Efficient Lighting and Controls, Custom Linen & Towel Re-Use Programs, Green Key Cards, Green Earth Key Cards, Energy Management Systems and Controls, High Performance showerheads, the Nature's Mist™ deodorization system, Zero Odor, and dozens of other products and programs. For more information, please visit www.pineapplehospitality.net, or call us at 636-922-2285.

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