

# Pre-Show Press Information



## MITT & UITT in the spotlight

Two of Eastern Europe's most influential tourism markets, Russia and Ukraine, will be in the spotlight in March. The main players in the travel and tourism industry will gather at MITT and UITT – both major events for the region's travel industry.

This year's partner destination for both events is Dubai, which has participated at MITT since its launch in 1993 and UITT since 2000. Mr. Abdullah bin Suwaidan, Deputy Director of Overseas Promotions at the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce explains, "Between January and September 2008, Russia, CIS and Baltics sent almost 319,000 tourists to Dubai, a growth of 11.2% compared with the corresponding period in 2007. Russians alone accounted for 195,000 tourists during the same period, a growth of 3.4%. In 2009, we expect to see similar growth from this vast market, where Dubai remains a sought-after business and leisure destination. DTCM will have an impressive Dubai stand at MITT 2009, where key players of Dubai's tourism industry will network with their Russian counterparts. We will utilise MITT 2009 to highlight new developments in the emirate, the new tourism promotions and create more brand awareness".

**MITT, the Moscow International Travel & Tourism Exhibition**, is rated one of the top five travel exhibitions in the world by the UN World Tourism Organisation. The event caters for all aspects of the industry and provides a valuable insight into Russia's tourism market. MITT hosts a range of national tourism organisations, national groups, private companies, service providers, hotels and destinations.

Maria Badakh, Event Director, explains, "MITT is a vibrant exhibition, where exhibitors make a real effort to simulate the main attractions of their destination by using enticing images, stimulating music and friendly staff. The exhibition reflects its visitors' tastes and trends, and our exhibitors tell us that participation in the event makes a significant impact on visitor numbers to their countries".

Russia has the ninth largest outbound market in the world, growing by an impressive 17% in 2007. As such, it has an important role to play in the international tourism market. The country has a population of over 140 million, and its reputation for hosting many of the world's richest people has made it an attractive target market.

Countries that feature highly in the Russian traveller's holiday plans, such as Turkey and Egypt, have, for some time, witnessed a change in the average Russian tourist. As incomes have risen in the country, the growing middle classes have 'caught the travel bug', following where their compatriots led and discovering new destinations that cater for their tastes and budget.

New passenger transport routes to and from Russia are helping to make tourism a much less expensive pastime. Europe, in particular, is reporting continued rises in Russian visitors. At the 2008 show, Carlo Biraschi, Director of ENIT, the Italian State Tourist Board confirmed this, saying, "There is an increased interest in the Italian destination and it is constantly growing. The Russian market accounts for 12% of our incoming tourism. Three or four years ago, only 3% of all foreign visitors came from Russia, so we are very happy with the results".

Recent estimates for 2008 predict strong growth, with the number of tourists from Russia expected to overtake those from Germany by 2010. MITT exhibitors remain optimistic about the Russian market, as Miss Badakh explains, "Although the global economic will have an impact on the tourism sector, few Russians are dropping holidays from their spend, preferring to economise in other areas. Instead, they are demanding more from their holidays – they want to try something new and have truly memorable holidays. They are looking for value for money – but this doesn't necessarily mean spending less".

MITT is the ideal place to find out more about the Russian travel market, catering for inbound and outbound travel and promoting a wide range of destinations. According to Ismail A. Hamid Amer, Egyptian Tourist Attaché, "It's one of the best exhibitions that I have ever seen in the world... I know that if we want to work with the Russian market, we should start here at MITT". Zorica Jovanov, Head of International Marketing in Serbia agrees, "The Russian tourism market is one of the priority markets for Serbia. We have participated in MITT for more than ten years in a row and we find this exhibition very useful for the promotion of Serbia and for making new contacts, first of all with trade, but also with journalists and press. The whole world is here". The event boasts a visitor attendance that exceeded 90,000\* and, with 3,000\* exhibiting companies from 80\* countries, MITT reflects the increasingly diverse demands of the Russian tourist.

Every year, more and more countries see MITT as an effective gateway into the Russian market. MITT will welcome Colombia, Japan, Costa Rica and Panama for the first time this year. A number of destinations are also increasing their participation at the exhibition, in particular those from India, Asia and Latin America.

A new section for technology within the travel and tourism market will be launched this year, which is expected to draw a great deal of attention from MITT's visitors. Confirmed exhibitors include: Amadeus, HRS, Megatek, Infoport Bronni.ru, Travelbox, MD Services, Begun, Turbi.ru and Horse21. The exhibitors will also have the opportunity to hold a conference or presentation during the exhibition.

**UITT, the Ukraine International Travel & Tourism Exhibition**, celebrates its fifteenth year serving the Ukrainian travel and tourism market in 2009. The UITT exhibition is similar to its Russian counterpart MITT), catering for the entire travel and tourism market. In 2008, the event featured 688 exhibitors from 58 countries and regions, and attracted an attendance of 13,240. Olena Holota from Coral Travel affirms that "UITT in Ukraine is the most efficient tool for selling travel services by big operators".

Ukraine is widely considered to be the second most attractive tourism market in Eastern Europe after its larger neighbour, Russia. In 2007, 17 million Ukrainian tourists travelled abroad and they are fast becoming known as big spenders. Ukrainian tourists are beginning to see past the attractions of their neighbouring countries to venture further afield and discover the world. At this stage of development, there are huge opportunities for destinations and international service providers to make an impact on the Ukrainian tourism market. This is one of the main reasons Pattara Anong Na Chiang Mai, Deputy Director of the Thailand Tourist Board, takes part in the exhibition, "Ukraine is one of the major markets we work with. Our main purpose here is to tell the UITT visitors about excellent tourist opportunities Thailand offers. There is nothing secret that Ukrainians prefer active rest, and we can offer them a lot!"

UITT has proven an extremely effective platform from which to launch a promotional drive in Ukraine. Every year, the exhibition features new destinations. Miss Badakh explains, "The exhibition follows trends within the market and, this year, we are welcoming more exotic destinations, including Indonesia, Lebanon and Sri Lanka. We are sure that the event will generate a great deal of business for their participant companies and make a big impact on their promotional activities in the region". She continues, "Travel events provide a rare opportunity for our exhibitors to meet the market face to face, for which there really is no substitute. Our exhibitors tell us that it is important to exhibit at MITT & UITT, especially now, to show that they are still very much active in the Russian market. Exhibiting is seen as a sign of the quality of their service or destination and many feel they would lose out to a competitor if they were not at the event".

MITT & UITT are organised by ITE Group Plc, a leading organiser of exhibitions and conferences in fast-developing markets. MITT takes place on 18–21 March 2009 in Expocentr, Moscow, Russia, shortly followed by UITT on 25–27 March 2009 in IEC, Kiev, Ukraine. Recently, ITE has added another two exhibitions to its portfolio: EMITT (Turkey) and TourSib (Siberia). For more information about any of ITE's travel events, please visit [www.travel-exhibitions.com](http://www.travel-exhibitions.com).

\*Figures from 2008

Ends

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### Notes to editors

More information and photographs from the exhibitions are available on request.

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