

## ILTM Cannes 2021: We are back! Why we miss ITB Berlin



Photo: Bernold Schroeder, CEO Kempinski Hotels, Peter Roth, Regional VP Hyatt NY, and Steve Renard

**ILTM - International Luxury Travel Market** - showcases the world's most desired destinations, luxurious hotels and other accommodations preferences. The exhibiting companies are hand-picked and possess impeccable reputation as the fair is directed to only the most demanding international travel corporations and travel buyers. These buyers are from literally all over the world and all of our hosted so they receive all their travel expenses and accommodation free of cost. They get an exclusive look at the latest trends, and accommodation offerings in the luxury segment from around the globe. The pandemic has led people to re-evaluate how they spend their lives as well as time and money. The previous expectations of unrestricted travel and recent inability to do so freely, have meant that there is now huge pent-up demand from people to get back out into the world. It's in this context that ILTM 2021 believed that with such fundamental changes to habit and sentiment, it is even more important for all of us in Hospitality to now understand luxury travelers' wants and needs post Covid.

When I arrived at the 2021 ILTM in December, the overall feel was very positive. Everyone was wearing a mask, but I knew that there was a smile on each of their faces.

During the show while I was formulating this article, I thought that I should focus on the words of Arnie in the movie "Terminator" where he said; "*I will be back*" .....and we in the hospitality were back!

A week after the show, Omicron hit. So, I decided to make an addendum to the title, "*I will be back, but when?*" *Not quite sure?*

Nevertheless, the ILTM in December 2021 was a great success! Everyone talked about the future and everyone was extremely optimistic. The Ritz Carlton and Marriott people shared news about their new properties, the Members of *The Leading Hotels of the World* who took most of the top floor of the Palais toasted with champagne ... free of course to the news on their members reopening's. The hotel and resort partners in Relais & Châteaux ... who were also situated on the third level and communicated on how they used the down time to renovate and strategize for the end of the pandemic.

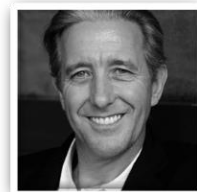
There was a larger than normal group from Saudi Arabia who were on the main level inter mixed with the USA and the Caribbean stands. The group from Saudi Arabia gave us a glimpse of some of their new developments where they are turning sand into a "New York City".

There were not many representatives from SE Asia, since most of our industry associates were in lock down or letting travelers arrive after lengthy quarantine periods.

The most frequented location was the Press Zone are where many of the key players gave demonstrations and speeches like the senior executive of Six Senses Hotels and the tourism ministers from several countries in Africa

### **In Conclusion: the 2021 ILTM was a great step towards Normalcy as all the visitors and exhibitors showed great encouraging optimism**

**Guy Heywood CEO of Habitas** in Saudi said ". I personally will not be in attendance at either Dubai or Berlin conferences this year, but did enjoy ILTM and thought that given our current Covid situation, it was a great show with good attendance and had a very positive attitude to travel and the bounce back. We certainly did very well from the show."



**Jose Siva CEO Jumeirah Hotels** shared these comments with me : "Hello Steve, ILTM, is always a great trade show for us. I find that ILTM is one off the most diverse travel shows where from a geopolitical point of view. It brings the senior travel advisors from North America, central/ South America to Asia and MEA, with mentioning Europe of course." This year I won't attend Berlin as Attend every second year. But looking forward to seeing you my friend in ATM Dubai. Warm friendship, Jose

**BOY, DO WE MISS THE ITB! THIS WILL BE THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW  
THAT HAS NOT GONE LIVE!**

ITB cannot be diminished as it is the largest travel show in the world! Almost every country on the globe participates, many using their entire years advertising and marketing budget.

Since its inception in the 1960s ITB Berlin has retained its position as the World's Leading Travel meeting place for all of our industry. In 2019, the last live show almost 115,000 visitors attended. The results of that five-day exhibition, underlined the fact that even in times of widespread uncertainty due to geopolitical and economic events such as Brexit, pandemics, and political trade conflicts, and even in a digitalized world, it is not possible for hi-tech communications and virtual meetings to replace the confidence building measure of face-to-face meetings

ITB Berlin is of great importance as direct exchange between business partners on issues concerning the global hospitality business is paramount to our continued evolution. We hope starting spring 2023, we will meet face to face and unmasked and discuss Covid like yesterday's news!

*Steve Renard, President*