



SKÅL MAGAZINE  
274



# SKÅL

INTERNATIONAL  
Connecting Tourism Globally

LIVE A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE!

SYMPHONY OF THE SEAS | WORLD CONGRESS 2019

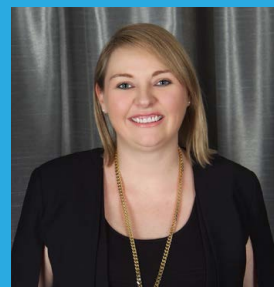


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# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

**H**ello Everyone,  
 I am writing my message from India where I attended the Asian Congress in Bangalore and before that visited the clubs of Antalya, Izmir and Kapadokya in Turkey where again I was amazed and in awe of our members and their achievements.

**My theme this year is 'Strength through Collaboration'. Are you interested or committed to enjoy this journey with me?**

Building a strong organization that is focused on collaboration is a key element for success!

We are a unique organization with different languages, cultures, beliefs, expectations and perceptions which can be either be a strength or a weakness, whichever "animal" you feed.

Our digital transformation project is "on track" to meet our deadline date of 31 December 2019 and exciting new benefits for Young Skål members are in the process of being finalized.

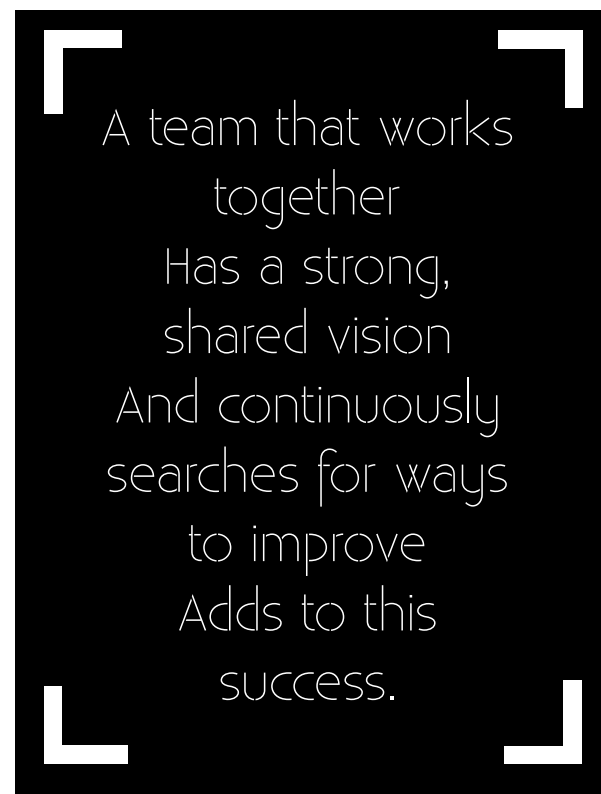
A productive and interactive ISC mid year meeting was held in Malaga in May with a record attendance where great ideas were discussed and certain tasks concluded.

The Local Organizing Committee and the Executive Committee have planned an informative and enjoyable congress in September. We have listened to members complaints and suggestions and have amended the format of our meeting, added interactive forums and networking sessions and combined this with a spectacular venue.

Let Club Presidents manage their club effectively by strategizing on the clubs objectives, unique selling points and balancing their membership demographics so as to attract quality, dedicated members.

Involving the public sector of your town, area and country which could work side by side with your members and club.

And most importantly to budget for your club to be represented on the international stage at World Congresses so each club and member can contribute to our organizations success.





WE NEED EVERY MEMBER TO BE PART OF THIS EXCITING JOURNEY.

Travel and Tourism  
is the most  
dynamic  
industry  
Ever changing and  
Growing  
exponentially.

Should it not be the logical route for Skål International to follow as well as we are the largest Travel and Tourism Organization globally and one that represents every sector of the industry?

*Change is inevitable but at times difficult.*

Adapting is uncomfortable but compulsory.

Let us all use our energy to enhance our strengths rather than "feed" our weaknesses.

The success of Skål depends on you so live the Skål brand consistently and constantly.

*See you all  
at the World  
Congress in  
September!*



Lavonne Wittmann  
President



**DISCOVER THE COSTA DEL SOL**  
[VISITCOSTADELSOL.COM](http://VISITCOSTADELSOL.COM)



# NOTE FROM THE CEO

**W**e are convinced that promoting sustainable activities, establishments and destinations improve the tourism industry.

Skål International also contributes to raising awareness and motivating such initiatives. This year's **Sustainable Tourism Awards** had 56 entries from 25 different countries.

**Three prestigious judges** from institutions such as PATA (Pacific Asia Travel Association), The Responsible Tourism Institute and CREST are currently evaluating the projects, and the awards will be presented at the next Skål International Congress.

I would also like to tell you that the club in Miami (United States) is very committed to preparing the congress to be held in September aboard a dream cruise ship.

**It will be a unique and unforgettable experience.** Those lucky enough to join us will be able to enjoy a renewed city. Miami is radiant and will be the perfect setting to receive the hundreds of members who set sail from Miami towards the Caribbean Sea aboard the ship Symphony of the Seas.

**There will certainly be time for enjoyment, sun and sea, but Congress 2019 also provides for interesting days of professional talks and B2B meetings.**

**Here** you will find more information about the next world congress. There's still time to join!

If sustainability is on the rise, even more so is the use of technology.

Technology is the main transforming force that is redefining the workings of many sectors nowadays. Its influence on the Tourism sector has been so significant that it has changed processes and business models altogether. Tourism products and services have to adapt to an International consumer who is increasingly well informed and demanding, with an excellent capacity for influence and who lives at the click of a mouse (demanding products in the digital environment). It is estimated that by 2020, there will be 7 billion people and businesses connected to the Internet through 30 billion devices, which means that our lives and our work are intrinsically linked to technology. Among the different elements that have transformed Tourism in recent years, mobile devices take the pole position.

A person's social status no longer matters. Technology has become more democratic, and now almost everyone has a Smartphone, connecting them virtually-and permanently-with the rest of the planet.

Consumers now demand two-way communication with suppliers, personalised experience and the possibility to contract and pay for products and services directly from their mobile. Purchases through mobile phones will not stop growing, and soon we will see how mobile phones are a normal means of payment in hotels, taxis, tours, restaurants or when practising leisure and entertainment activities during a trip.

The **digital transformation** that our society is undergoing means that tourist destinations and businesses have to operate in a completely digital environment and adapt to disruptive technological changes.

New technologies are changing society, culture, economy and entertainment. There is a change in paradigm and cycle, which requires a constant learning and innovation process. We have to be continually rethinking what we do to innovate and improve, bringing more value to our members.

In this context, the process we are going through within Skål could well be called **digital metamorphosis**.

In the coming months, we will make new technological tools available to our members, but our project will always be geared towards placing our partners at the centre of this transformation.

During the next 30 days, we will start testing the new system that we will be able to share with you in a few months' time.

**We are so excited!**



I would like to end with a sincere thanks to all of you. We value all the suggestions received on our [blog](#) and via [email](#), and I assure you everything is being analysed and taken into account. We will build this project together, which means your participation is and will be essential.

My warmest regards,

Daniela Otero  
CEO

# COUNCILLOR'S CORNER



Niel Els  
Councillor,  
Skål International  
South Africa

Vice President of the  
International Skål  
Council

Greetings from sunny South Africa!

As our esteemed World President – Lavonne Wittmann instructed, I am living the Skål brand constantly and consistently. Being in the hospitality business my entire life eventually directed me to this incredible network organization. Networking and marketing our beautiful country, is in my blood. I had the privilege to serve as President of the Garden Route Club and later as the Skål South Africa National President. Currently, representing South Africa on the ISC and serving as Vice-President of the board.

**Skål South Africa is alive and well!** Growing our membership in quality as well as quantity has been our mission. Six clubs with over 300 members ensure that the Skål brand is visible, well recognized and trusted in our industry. Our focus is on young professionals with regards to Young Skål – this ensure the sustainability of Skål in South Africa.

We are extremely proud that our current World President – Lavonne Wittmann, hails from Pretoria, South Africa. This is only the 2nd time in the 85 Year history of Skål International that the President is from South Africa. We are experiencing real value in being Skål members down south. With members in almost every sector of the Travel and Tourism industry, Skål is the place to do business amongst friends. We are actively using Skål to do exactly this and the results are tangible. **South Africa is also one of the countries that has a 100% attendance record at all International Skål Council meetings.** The ISC is very important and of value to us. This is where we have a direct influence on the operation of Skål International, being the advisory body to the Executive. This is also the platform where we learn from each other's best practices and implement it in our prospective countries and Clubs.

We would also like to use this opportunity to say **THANK YOU** to all our friends all over the world who so generously contributed to the Knysna Fire Fund. Many members of the Garden Route club suffered

severe losses during the devastating fire disaster. All the money donated to this cause now has been put to good use. A Tourism Ambassador's Course was developed and successfully presented in Knysna, Sedgefield, Plettenberg Bay, Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn – funded by donations from Skål clubs over the globe. This course is aimed at grass-root level and proved to be a massive success. Wine service courses were also presented to employees of member establishments who were affected by the fire. Most of these people have been re-employed with a number of them being promoted to better positions.

Currently we are working on a Purple Skål project which involves retired members to participate in a mentorship programme. Another exiting project is International Trade Shows – to promote Skål International, but also to provide a value-add to our members. Please forward any ideas and suggestions and also best-practices to your Councillor.

***I am proud and privileged to serve on the ISC Board and looking to meet as many members as possible at World Congress on the Symphony of the Seas. I wish you happiness, good health, friendship and a long life – Skål!***

## OBITUARY HORACIO GHISOLFI



On 9 June, we said goodbye to Horacio Ghisolfi. We will always remember him. A real gentleman with exquisite manners, warm kindness, sparkling anecdotes, a constant mentor to his fellow Skålleague's and a great supporter of Skål.

A Skålleague since 1967, and a founding member of Skål Mendoza, Horacio Ghisolfi proudly represented his club wherever a Skål event was convened. He was Treasurer for 26 years, President and

distinguished as the Argentina Skålleague of the Year and awarded on several occasions for his career and commitment to Skål. Most recently during the Skål Latin American and National Congress held in Villa La Angostura, Argentina, in April 2019.

His accurate words, his cult of boundless friendship and his love for Skål will be present every time a Skålega elevates a glass with the resounding SKÅL toast.



## Boston Skål Club Member receives Skål USA's Bill Sweet Award

### 40 Year Hospitality Leader "Member of Distinction Award" Recipient

**David Colella**, a forty-year veteran of the hospitality industry, a native Bostonian and long-time member of Skål International Boston, recently received the highest honor, **"The 2019 Bill Sweet Member of Distinction Award"** given to a member of Skål International USA, a National Committee of the Skål International, a global organization of Tourism and Travel leaders, for dedication to the Skål USA movement and community support. During the past 14 years, David has been the chairman of Skål Boston's annual Holiday Luncheon Charity Event which has raised almost One million dollars during the events history. Proceeds from the event benefit Boston community charitable organizations. The 2018 event assisted the Achilles Freedom Team and Camp No Limits, with over \$57,000 donated to the two organizations.

**Achilles** is a rehab sports program for people with disabilities, with focus on marathon achievement. The **Achilles FREEDOM TEAM of Wounded Veterans** brings together wounded military for marathon competition, primarily consisting of severely wounded from Iraq and Afghanistan. Ed Fredrich, Boston Skål 2018 President, said "With the generous support from Skål Boston, the Achilles Freedom Team was able to host 36 veterans with disabilities and their families for this year's Boston Marathon Weekend!"

Camp No Limits is a non-profit organization that hosts several annual camps nationwide for children with limb loss or limb difference to receive education, mentorship, and support.

*"Colella's efforts have energized our Skål Club,"* according to Terrilynn Haak, Skål Boston's 2019 President. "Our club recently



celebrated our 80th anniversary and has a long tradition of assisting the community through scholarships and donations to local charitable groups." Past recipients have included Hope Lodge, Alzheimer's foundation, Massachusetts General Hospital children's Unit, the Fisher House and others.

**The "Bill Sweet Member of Distinction Award"** was developed in 2018 by Skål International USA, honoring, Bill Sweet, a long-time Skål member of over 50 years and hotelier in Denver Colorado. Last year's recipient of the inaugural "Bill Sweet Award" was Ian Sauer, a 30+ year hospitality leader and hotelier manager/owner in North Carolina and member of the Raleigh - Durham Skål Club.

Bill Sweet began his Skål experience in 1963 in Denver Colorado and became President in 1971. He served as the 1984-85 President of the "North American Association of Skål Clubs" (NAASC), leading an organization of then more than 100 Skål Clubs stretching across Canada, the US, Mexico, and the Affiliated Clubs of the Caribbean. From 1985 until 2001, Bill Sweet went on to serve as the Executive Secretary for both SIUSA & NAASC, coordinating the diverse administrative responsibilities on behalf of all North American clubs with Skål International's world headquarters in Spain. After being awarded the "Order of Skål Merit" in 1994, Bill was named "Honorary President" for both SIUSA & NAASC in 2006.

Bill's most treasured recognition within the world of Skål was being named **"Membre D'Honneur of Skål International"** in 2003, a distinguished honor bestowed on only a handful of SIUSA members since the organization's founding. The recipient of this award is an honor to an individual who will proudly be recognized as reflective of their time and dedication to the Skål movement, a **"Trusted Voice in Tourism."**

# Investing in Tourism

## Sustainability Conference

### THE INAUGURAL ITSC

Investing in Tourism Sustainability Conference - held 30 May through 1 June at Bulgaria's leading Sunny Beach Helena Resort focusing on new investment opportunities in the Country and neighbouring Southeast Europe destinations was organized by the Ministry of Tourism of Bulgaria in partnership with London based ITIC and Invest Tourism.

The Conference hosted by the Minister of Tourism H.E. Nikolina Angelikova under the Advisory Board Chairmanship of Dr Taleb Rifai, Former Secretary-General of the UNWTO and members of the conference organizing committee comprising of Mr. Gerald Lawless (Non-executive Director: Expo2020, Dubai, Temes Group, Greece and Founding former CEO Jumeirah Group Dubai), Skäl Mauritius President Ibrahim Ayoub and CEO Daiichi Display Ltd & ITIC Ltd, Skäl President London Paul Hoskins and Mr. Phillip Cash, Director of Daiichi Display Ltd was hailed a great success bringing together thought leaders, keynote speakers and 270 delegates from Bulgaria and Southeast Europe's tourism and hospitality sectors, international investment institutions, hotels, airlines, project owners and environmental sustainability advisors.

Moderated by BBC broadcaster and journalist Rajan Datar, the ITSC included presentations and panel discussions with the tourism ministers from Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Secretary General of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, alongside tourism, aviation, cruise and

hospitality experts from the United Kingdom, Europe, China, Canada and the USA.

In addition to key investment opportunities the Conference featured project case studies and insights into global tourism trends, environmental impacts, human resources, education, training and manpower development. Preparing Bulgaria and the Southeast European region for the next phase of visitor expansion.

In her welcoming remarks Bulgaria Minister of Tourism H.E. Nikolina Angelkova stated that "Tourism to the Southeast Europe has grown rapidly in the last five years with over 120 million tourists in 2018 with total tourism receipts of USD 118.8 billion, accounting for around 11.7% of total GDP for the Southeast European countries.

Bulgaria alone attracted over 9.2 million tourists with 2018 total tourism receipts at US\$7.6. Moreover, the enormous development potential remaining untapped within Southeast Europe presents great opportunities for new investment with travel and tourism, acting as the prime engine of future economic growth. Also, as a model of development that can promote self-employment among local communities throughout Bulgaria and the Southeast European destinations."

Other presentations featured HRH Princess Dana Firas, President of the Board of Directors of Jordan's Petra National Trust and a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador, Dr. Taleb Rifai, Former Secretary-General of UNWTO, Ms.

Susanna Saari former Skäl International World President, Mr. Christopher Rodrigues, Chairman of the Port of London Authority, Mr. James Hogan of Knighthood Capital, Mr. Gerald Lawless WTTC Ambassador and former President/CEO of Dubai's Jumeirah Group.

**Skäl Sofia, Bulgaria members were present during Conference plenary, breakout and business-to-business sessions at which delegates learnt many new insights into the value of branding and focused marketing promoted through a good balance of traditional media editorial coverage, social media exposure and advertising.**

Delegates and tourism officials alike were encouraged by breakout session speakers to look to the long term with clearly defined goals where a destinations identity, image and perception are involved. While

taking into account cultural and heritage considerations and the impacts on people – both national residents and visiting tourists.

Communications, transport connections and the easing of entry regulations in the Region were discussed with officials urged to look to the wider opportunities where travellers, particularly from source markets such as China and North America, are more likely to book multi-destination Southeast Europe trips where, for example, visitor arrivals into one country will then go on to travel through two, three and more countries in the region before departing for home.

Greater regional and marketing co-ordination and cooperation amongst Southeast European countries was one of the major take-aways brought to light by each of the breakout sessions. Which also included a well

attended session on the need for human resource education and training programmes headed up by Sk. Susanna Saari. in her capacity of Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering and Business, Turku University of Applied Sciences (TUAS) – Finland.

### BUSINESS-TO-BUSINESS

speed networking on the last day of the Conference lead to numerous project development and investment opportunities being brought together with valuable connections being forged between delegates seeking investment partners and investors looking for new projects.

Throughout the Conference delegates were well entertained and which included a spectacular gala evening and dinner hosted by H.E Minister Angelikova, featuring special cultural performances from Bulgaria's national dancers, musicians and singers.



The second Investing in Tourism Sustainability Conference is scheduled for May 2020



# GOOD NEWS STORIES

## MEET & GREET SUSANNA SAARI IN SOFIA

Skål International Sofia was honored to greet our former 2017-18 World President, Susanna Saari, in Sofia, Bulgaria, for a Meet & Greet on 29 May 2019.

Despite Susanna having an extremely early start including two stopovers from Finland to Bulgaria, she was in great spirits when she arrived. Lunch was served at the Hotel Budapest, and after we invited Susanna to a tour of the beautiful capital of Bulgaria.

The meet and greet was arranged for 6pm at the Intercontinental Hotel's Floret bar where with the cool summer evening, we were treated to some refreshing and well-deserved cocktails on the terrace. Susanna enthusiastically took the chair at the informal event describing the benefits and updates that Skål is doing. Skålleagues and prospective Skålleagues were encouraged to join in with a Q&A where there were some interesting topics discussed.

As a result of the evening, we signed one new membership application and we are following up with others that showed interest.

Membership development is a major goal for Skål International Sofia. We aim to grow in the capital and throughout the country to spread the spirit of "Doing business among friends". We embraced the opportunity to welcome a Past President and share more of that spirit and share experiences on how Skål helps members around the globe to connect and grow their businesses.

The next day, members of the Executive Committee of SKål International Sofia shared a nearly 600 km drive, which took Susanna through the very scenic countryside of Bulgaria from Sofia. We had a brief stop in the 2019 Cultural

Capital of Europe, Plovdiv before proceeding to Ravadinovo, to meet with the castle's land lord Georgi Tumpalov, and GM Yanko Krastev, both members of Skål International Sofia. (link: zamaka.bg) An extraordinary lunch was served including traditional Bulgarian dishes and freshly caught fish from its own reserves. The castle has its own huge lake where it farms a fantastic array of fresh water fish.

During the trip we discussed the opportunities of Eastern Europe, the Black Sea Coast, the cultural heritage which Bulgaria offers to visitors, including endless nature, historical sites from a time when Turkey, Greece and Macedonia didn't think about borders between their lands, a fusion cuisine which ranges from Lebanon to Austria, a modernity and openness for innovation in all fields. After mass tourism, hospitality, as agreed, is becoming more individual, unknown destinations outside of mass tourism become visible.

Vice President of Skål International Sofia Yanko Krastev, GM of the castle "In Love with the Winds" used the chance to discuss with Susanna during her visit about the development of the future Skål International Black Sea Coastal Club, a Club which is not limited to national borders.

Susanna was extremely motivated by this and described, due to the location that is was a great idea. It will now be initiated under Skål International Sofia until necessary membership is achieved to be a single player and a Pan Eastern European National Committee can be created.

HENNING  
KRIPPENDORFF

PRESIDENT, SKÅL  
INTERNATIONAL  
SOFIA



Stanley Stankov, Georgi Tumpalov, Susanna Saari, Henning Krippendorff.



# GOOD NEWS STORIES

CALVIN  
NOAH PAUL

SKÅL  
INTERNATIONAL  
PARIS

## PARIS MY SECOND HOME

When Skål International Paris President Karine Coulanges welcomed Young Skål member Calvin Noah Paul from Skål Bangalore to Skål Paris, she already knew that it was going to be a great asset for the Club and she immediately invited him to represent her at an event organised by the Skål Var Provence which would give him the opportunity to make contacts in Southern France.

Today she would like to congratulate Calvin Noah for his desire to achieve his goals and his parents for the excellent education.

“I never ever dreamt that one day I would even sit on a flight and live in a different country, but I just embarked on a journey to obtain a Masters’ degree, not knowing it would change my life more than anything. People I have come across, things I have seen and experienced, victories and failures, every prayer that was rendered for me, all worthwhile. With real hardships and disappointments, amidst all this I knew there was a reason God got me here to this beautiful country and I held onto the statement I will walk by faith even when I cannot see. A big Thank You to my Godmother Karine Coulanges for being pivotal in my journey!!”, says Calvin Noah.





# Success Corner

## INAUGURATION OF SKÅL INTERNATIONAL LAHORE

The inauguration meeting of Skål International Lahore was held at Faletti's Hotel Lahore on 24 May 2019. Mr. Zia H Rizvi presided over the meeting where elections were conducted and the following members elected:

**President: Zia H. Rizvi**

**Secretary General: Abdul Majeed Yousaf**

**Treasurer: Hassan Masood Mirza**

**PR, Communication & Membership Development  
Manager Aleem Javed Chaudhry**

President Zia H. Rizvi urged to bring more Travel and Tourism professionals of Lahore as members. He explained the importance of upcoming Skål International events and asked the members consent about participation in the following Skål International events: The Skål Asian Area Congress, Bengaluru, India, 27-30 June 2019. Skål Australia 100 National Assembly, Sydney, Australia, 23-25 August 2019. Skål International World Congress, Miami, U.S.A., 14-21 September 2019.

He also discussed the current Tourism policies and present governments initiatives being taken for promotion of Tourism and development of infrastructure in the Tourism sector. Secretary General Abdul Majeed Yousaf conducted the meeting. He greeted the members and motivated them to participate in Club activities vigorously.

Lahore President Zia H. Rizvi handed over the membership certificates, cards and Skål badges to the members.

THE MAJORITY OF LAHORE CLUB MEMBERS ATTENDED  
THE MEETING.

**PHOTO GALLERY** >>>





# SKÅL HOBART

## BEACH CLEAN UP DAY

The Skål International Hobart Beach Clean Up Day was held on Sunday 31st March. Running for 5 years in conjunction with Robert Pennicott and the Pennicott Foundation, the Beach Clean-up Day is the result of a partnership between Skål Hobart club and Pennicott Wilderness Journeys. It raises money for the Pennicott Foundation to help protect the marine environment. Robert donates his time, crew and vessel so that we can undertake this fantastic day.

As an organisation, Skål has a commitment to supporting not only tourism, but also community support, particularly sustainable tourism. Robert and his business, Pennicott Wilderness

Journeys, passionately advocate for sustainability and the environment in Tasmania, which is at the heart of the Pennicott Foundation. It was a natural fit for Skål to work together to support the great work of Robert and his foundation.

**The Skål Club of Hobart raises money for the Foundation not only by participating in the annual Beach Clean Up Day, but also by contributing \$4000 a year.** These funds go directly towards supporting projects such as Save the Seabirds, which facilitates the eradication of pests such as rats on Georges Rocks in the NE of Tasmania where rats are killing an average of 50,000 seabirds per year. Research in Australia shows that seabirds have an average of at least 30

pieces of plastic resting in their stomach – they can also mistakenly ingest bottle tops, pen lids and a wider variety of small plastic pieces, many of which we found along the shores of Bruny Island where we conducted this year's clean up.

At the Beach Clean-up Day 35 volunteers collected approximately 15 industrial size bags of rubbish, some of which were filled with small pieces of plastic – testament not only to the value of the Beach Clean Up but also how much more can be done to ensure that our waterways and beaches are kept clear of the types of rubbish that can drastically impact the marine life in Tasmania.

SKÅL HAS A COMMITMENT TO SUPPORTING NOT ONLY TOURISM, BUT ALSO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Community Support





Volker Brand, Nik Racic, Ray Bloom, Hans-Jürgen Thien

# WHERE IMAGINATION COMES ALIVE

IMEX 2019

This year new records have been reached: almost 3500 exhibitors representing 172 countries were ready to receive thousands of senior buyers from around the globe doing business with destinations, venues hotels and event technology providers. Walking around the show buyers and other visitors were impressed by spectacular new venues, sensational, creative stand designs and by the great energy stemming from animated discussions in the hall. Only personal meetings can create such an inspiring atmosphere and environment to do business and take away new ideas and experiences. Ray Bloom and Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group, particularly acknowledged the engagement of many exhibitors following the group's Sustainability Pledge making significant contributions to reduce the show's environmental footprint. Imagination is the talking point for this year.

It is the force behind all new ideas, such as the group's new Technology, the new Discovery zone and other new highlights. Imagination is the driving force behind all new ideas supported through education sessions which already started as "EduMonday" one day before the show.

**The Skål International stand was visited and used by many Skål members from abroad and from Germany. They were greeted and assisted by various members of Skål International Frankfurt am Main, traditionally headed by Frankfurt's Treasurer Volker Brand.**

The Skål IMEX Breakfast on Thursday 23 May was again a highlight for almost 100 participants, representing many Clubs from all over the world. The audience was welcomed by Honorary President Hans-Jürgen Thien of Skål International Frankfurt am Main, and by Nik Racic, former President of

Skål International. IMEX Chairman Ray Bloom voiced his deep satisfaction about the general success of IMEX 2019 and the ongoing popularity of the Skål IMEX Breakfast which celebrated its 14th anniversary this year.

Ray Bloom, Chairman of IMEX, reflected on his own accumulated observations gathered during the 4-day exhibition for Incentive Travel, Meetings and Events as follows: "The power of live experiences and the unique impact that meeting face to face can achieve are outstanding features of IMEX this week".



# SKÅL INTERNATIONAL ASIA CONGRESS 2019

" [A bright light in Skål](#) "



By Andrew J Wood

**Bangalore: The 48th Skål Asia Congress was officially opened by Skål International President Lavonne Wittman and local tourism dignitaries recently.**

The congress took place in what is often referred to as India's I.T. city – Bangalore. The headquarters hotel was the Taj MG Road Hotel during 27th-30th June 2019.

President Lavonne said, "I am honoured to be part of your congress and proud to be your President. My Presidential theme for this year is strength through collaboration.

**"Are you interested or committed to enjoy this journey with me?"**

"Building a strong organisation that is focused on collaboration is a key element for success. A team that works together, has a strong shared vision and continually searches for ways to improve and adds to the success," President Lavonne commented.

In front of 300 delegates a spectacular flag parade was followed by a dazzling cultural performance and the traditional lamp lighting ceremony signifying the opening of the congress. Skål Asia with over 2,500 members in 43 Clubs, 28 grouped in five national committees and 15 affiliated, the Skål Asian Area is the most diverse Area in the world of Skål, reaching from Guam in the Pacific Ocean more than 10,000 km to Mauritius in the Indian Ocean with clubs in 19 countries in between. During his opening address acting Asia Area President Jano Mouawad announced that membership in Asia continues to grow with 2,525 members today and new clubs are formed. President Jano went on to thank congress organiser and President of Skål Bangalore, Manoj Matthews for a job well done.

Following elections, the new committee elected for a 2 year term, is listed below:

.....

## SKÅL ASIA EXCO 2019-21

- Sanjay Datta** - President (India)
  - Andrew J Wood** - VP Southeast Asia (Thailand)
  - Keethi Jayaweera** - VP West Asia (Sri Lanka)
  - Fabien Clerc** - VP East Asia (Japan)
  - Saravanan Palanivelu** - Treasurer (India)
  - Shekhar Divadkar** - Secretary – (India)
  - Michelle Sandhu** - International Councillor (Singapore)
  - P K Mohankumar** - PR & Comms (India)
  - Dushy Jayaweera** - Membership Development (Sri Lanka)
  - Shalini Khanna Charles** - Young Skål and Student Exchange (India)
  - Sunil Acharya** - Senior Auditor (India)
  - Felix Fernandez** – Junior Auditor (Malaysia)
- .....

THE 49TH SKÅL  
ASIA AREA  
CONGRESS WILL  
TAKE PLACE IN  
THAILAND IN  
PHUKET 25TH-  
28TH JUNE 2020.  
FOR DETAILS:

**HERE** [>>>](#)





Francisco Rivero,  
Skål  
International  
Madrid (Spain)

## PEOPLE

### FRANCISCO RIVERO RECEIVES THE "EXCELENCIA PROFESIONAL" AWARD

The Journalist and Tourism Professional Francisco Rivero has been awarded with the 2019 Gold Star by the Governing Council of the Institute for Professional Excellence, for his work as President of Skål International Madrid. The award ceremony was held on 14 June 2019 during a gala dinner at the Westin Palace Hotel in the capital of Spain.

Among the personalities awarded with this award are the Spanish soccer coach, Vicente del Bosque; the radio journalist Luis del Olmo; priest Father Angel, creator of the Messengers of Peace; the tennis player Manuel Santana; the director of the Merida Theatre Festival, Jesús Cimarro, and the recently deceased Monsignor Clemente Martin, who was President of the Knights of the Monastery of Yuste.

ADOLFO SUAREZ,  
PRESIDENT OF  
THE SPANISH  
GOVERNMENT,  
MONTSERRAT  
CABALLE,  
LYRICAL SINGER  
AND ANTONIO  
MINGOTE,  
DRAFTSMAN AND  
MEMBER OF THE  
ROYAL SPANISH  
ACADEMY ARE  
MEMBERS OF  
HONOUR "IN  
MEMORIAM".





Prominent and distinguished judges to evaluate responsible projects



**As both the natural environment (beaches, forests, waterways) as well as the built environment (historic buildings, ruins) is of great importance to tourism, it is obvious that these areas are preserved and sustained for future generations and locals to not only benefit from but enjoy.**

With the exponential growth in tourism over the past few decades, tremendous strain has been put on the tourism industry as a whole so it is imperative that all sectors of the industry adhere to all aspects of Sustainable tourism.

Since 2002, Skål International Sustainable Tourism Awards has highlighted best practices in tourism around the world while serving to acquaint the world with this new concept that puts emphasis on the importance of the interaction of the physical, cultural and social environment, the travellers' responsibility and the need for active community participation for sustainability.

A total of 56 entries from 25 countries from all over the world have this year competed. You can view the full list of participants [here](#).

We are honoured that three prominent and distinguished judges are in the process of evaluating the entries received according to leadership criteria in sustainability that encompass tangible, measurable benefits to the environment, enhance business, and the society and communities in which they operate.

»» **2019 SKÅL SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AWARDS JUDGES**



**Tomas de Azcarate Bang**  
President, [Responsible Tourism Institute](#)  
[Professional career](#)



**Mario Hardy**  
CEO, [PATA](#)  
[Professional career](#)



**Samantha Bray**  
Managing Director, [Center for Responsible Travel \(CREST\)](#)  
[Professional career](#)

**SPECIAL AWARD 2019**

This year Skål International has established a partnership with [Biosphere Tourism](#) and the [Responsible Tourism Institute](#), to give the "Special Skål Biosphere Award" that will be presented to one of the submissions received.

The winner will be selected based on the pillars of sustainability of the Responsible Tourism Institute. Biosphere Tourism will present the winner with a one-year free Biosphere Certification in one of their available categories (except Tourism Destinations and special cases).

Biosphere Tourism develops certifications that guarantee an adequate long-term balance between the economic, socio-cultural and environmental dimensions of a Destination, reporting significant benefits for a tourism entity, society and the environment.

Ensuring compliance with a series of requirements based on the principles of sustainability and continuous improvement, Biosphere Tourism offers the opportunity to companies in the sector to design products and services with a new model

of non-aggressive tourism, satisfying the current needs of customers and users, without compromising future generations. The Responsible Tourism Institute (RTI) is an international organization that promotes, for more than 20 years, responsible tourism at the international level.

The 18th Sustainable Tourism Awards ceremony will take place on 15 September during the Opening Ceremony of the 80th Skål World Congress, to be held onboard the Royal Caribbean "Symphony of the Seas" from 14 to 21 September 2019.

Thank you to all the participants for their interest and the time spent in completing their entries!





# 80TH SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS

## Live a unique experience!

### **Exciting Activities and Mouth-watering Dining Await Us**

Royal Caribbean's newest and largest ship, Symphony of the Seas® will be our home for the duration of Skål International's 80th World Congress this September. The state-of-the-art vessel cost more than \$1.3 billion to build. It holds more works of art than the Louvre, a twisting 10-story slide that is the tallest at sea (taller than Mount Rushmore), and a miniature version of Central Park with over 20,000 plants.

Being the world's largest cruise ship, Symphony of the Seas accommodates over 6,000 passengers, including over 800 Congress attendees. This world record-breaking vessel offers plenty of onboard activities for everyone. From an exciting zip line to glow-in-the-dark laser tag, the new Symphony of the Seas is overflowing with exciting ways to fill your time between islands.

And with a staggering 65 restaurants, cafés, bars, and lounges, Royal Caribbean makes sure that every Skålleague will be eating and drinking very well aboard Symphony of the Seas. There 65 restaurants, cafés, bars, and lounges on board offering everything

from authentic Maine lobsters rolls to gourmet American classics like braised short rib with creamy mascarpone polenta, and a fried cheesecake for dessert.

On board Symphony of the Seas you'll never run out of things to do or places to treat your taste buds. Let's take a look at the top activities and wonderful food choices that are complimentary aboard the World Congress cruise.

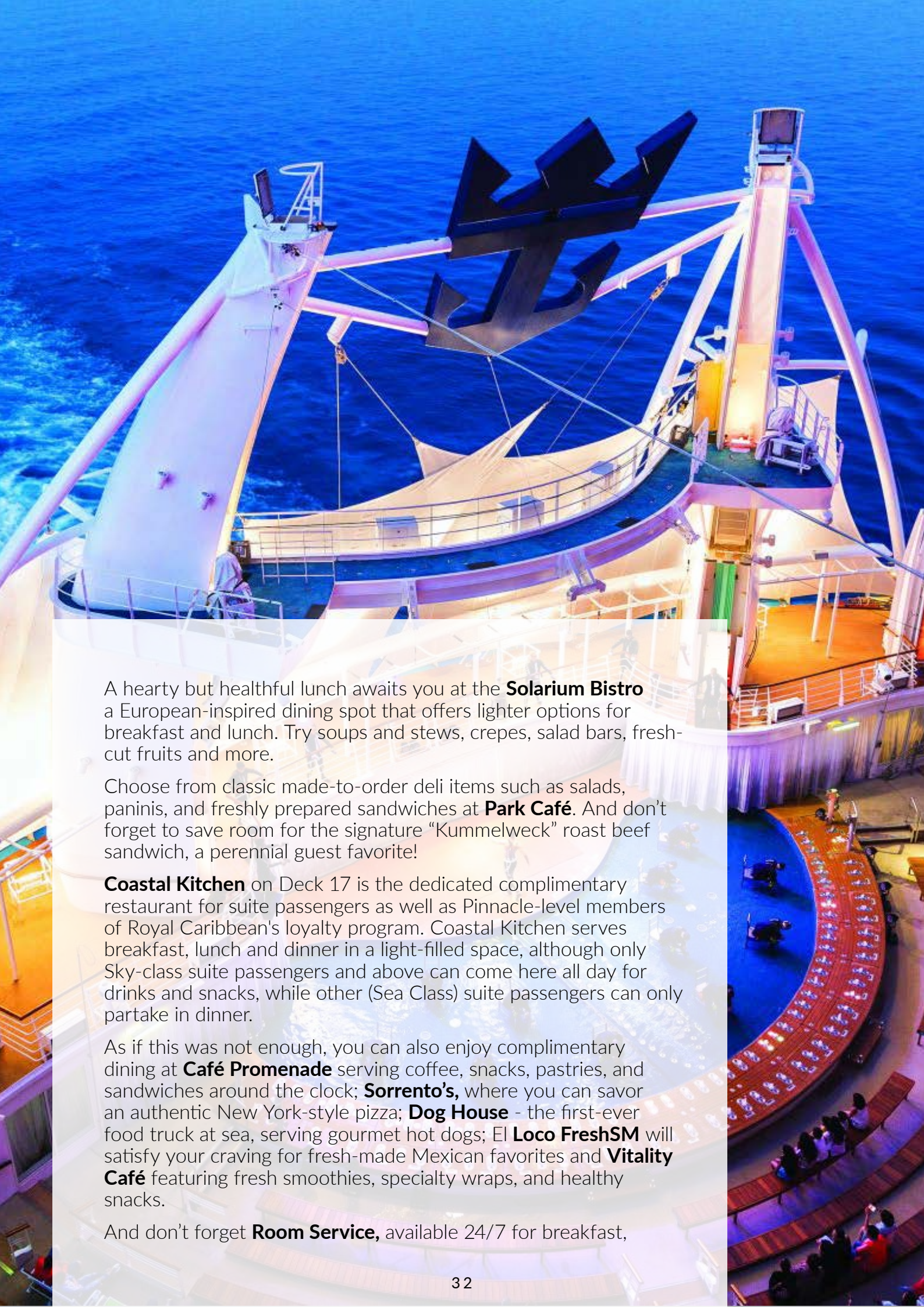
### **COMPLIMENTARY DINING OPTIONS**

Royal Caribbean offers a myriad of casual dining options and quick bites for meals on the run. You can also enjoy buffet-style dining and delicious sit-down dinners in the Main Dining Room all included with your fare.

With a sweeping, multi-level ambiance, world-class cuisine, and extraordinary personal service, Symphony of the Seas' the **Main Dining Room** serves exceptional, multi-course meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner each day. A section of the dining room is reserved for our Skål World Congress group so you can choose to dine with your fellow Skålleagues or explore more intimate options.

Enjoy an assortment of global cuisines and American favorites at **Windjammer Café**. This casual dining destination offers spectacular views and a comfortable atmosphere that welcomes Skålleagues and guests for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.





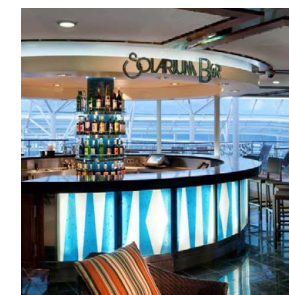
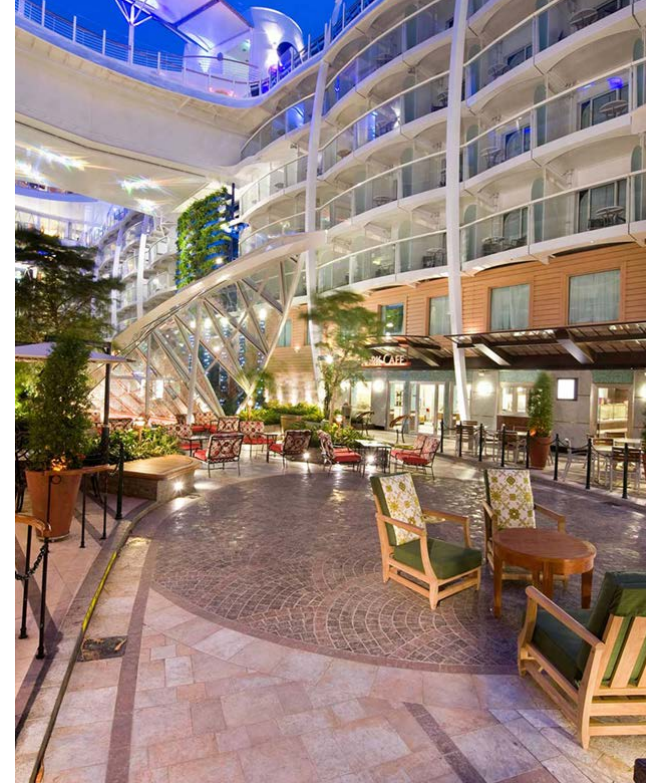
A hearty but healthful lunch awaits you at the **Solarium Bistro** a European-inspired dining spot that offers lighter options for breakfast and lunch. Try soups and stews, crepes, salad bars, fresh-cut fruits and more.

Choose from classic made-to-order deli items such as salads, paninis, and freshly prepared sandwiches at **Park Café**. And don't forget to save room for the signature "Kummelweck" roast beef sandwich, a perennial guest favorite!

**Coastal Kitchen** on Deck 17 is the dedicated complimentary restaurant for suite passengers as well as Pinnacle-level members of Royal Caribbean's loyalty program. Coastal Kitchen serves breakfast, lunch and dinner in a light-filled space, although only Sky-class suite passengers and above can come here all day for drinks and snacks, while other (Sea Class) suite passengers can only partake in dinner.

As if this was not enough, you can also enjoy complimentary dining at **Café Promenade** serving coffee, snacks, pastries, and sandwiches around the clock; **Sorrento's**, where you can savor an authentic New York-style pizza; **Dog House** - the first-ever food truck at sea, serving gourmet hot dogs; **El Loco FreshSM** will satisfy your craving for fresh-made Mexican favorites and **Vitality Café** featuring fresh smoothies, specialty wraps, and healthy snacks.

And don't forget **Room Service**, available 24/7 for breakfast,



lunch, dinner or an afternoon snack, no matter what you crave, you can get it delivered to the comfort of your suite. Delivery fee and gratuity charge applies for Room Service.

### TOP 10 FREE ACTIVITIES - NOT TO BE MISSED!

Symphony of the Seas offers guests a lot of fun activities, entertainment and things to do onboard that will us and our guests busy throughout the World Congress.

**Hairspray** – Did you know the hit Broadway show, "Hairspray" is included in your cruise fare? Welcome to the 60s! Hairspray is set in Baltimore in 1962 where Tracy Turnblad, a big girl with big hair, only has one passion – to dance. After winning a spot on the local TV dance program "The Corny Collins Show", she is transformed from outsider to irrepressible teen celebrity.

**Zip line** – On Symphony of the Seas, you can zip line 9 decks above the Boardwalk on a path that measures 82 feet from start to finish. Height restrictions do apply, and you must sign a waiver to participate.

**Ultimate Abyss** – Skålleagues and guests wanting a thrill will be sure to check-out the Ultimate Abyss slide on Symphony of the Seas. More than 150 feet above sea level abyss offers side-by-side slides that send guests down 10 decks at a rate of 9 miles per hour.

**Laser Tag** – Royal Caribbean transforms Studio B into a glow-in-the-dark arena that invites everyone to see if they can conquer the, "Battle for Planet Z".

**AquaTheater** – enjoy a performance of "AquaNation", which features something Royal Caribbean calls "4D harnessing" for its aerialists, who can move up and down, side to side and forward and back into the audience space.





AquaTheater features two 10-meter high platforms and the hydraulic-floored pool, the largest and deepest freshwater pool at sea, below serves as podiums for high-diving, hair-raising aerobatics that audiences have come to love.

**Water Slides** – The Perfect Storm trio of water slides offer two racer slides and a champagne bowl slide that are included in your cruise fare. As you slide down any of the slides, you will twist and turn three decks into a splashy finish.

**Ice-Skating** – While on Symphony of the Seas, you can don a pair of ice-skates and try ice-skating at sea. Regardless of your previous ice-skating

experiences (or lack thereof), anyone can put on a pair of skates and join in. Free skates are offered throughout the cruise along with special time for advanced skaters. Be sure to catch the complimentary ice show in Studio B too!

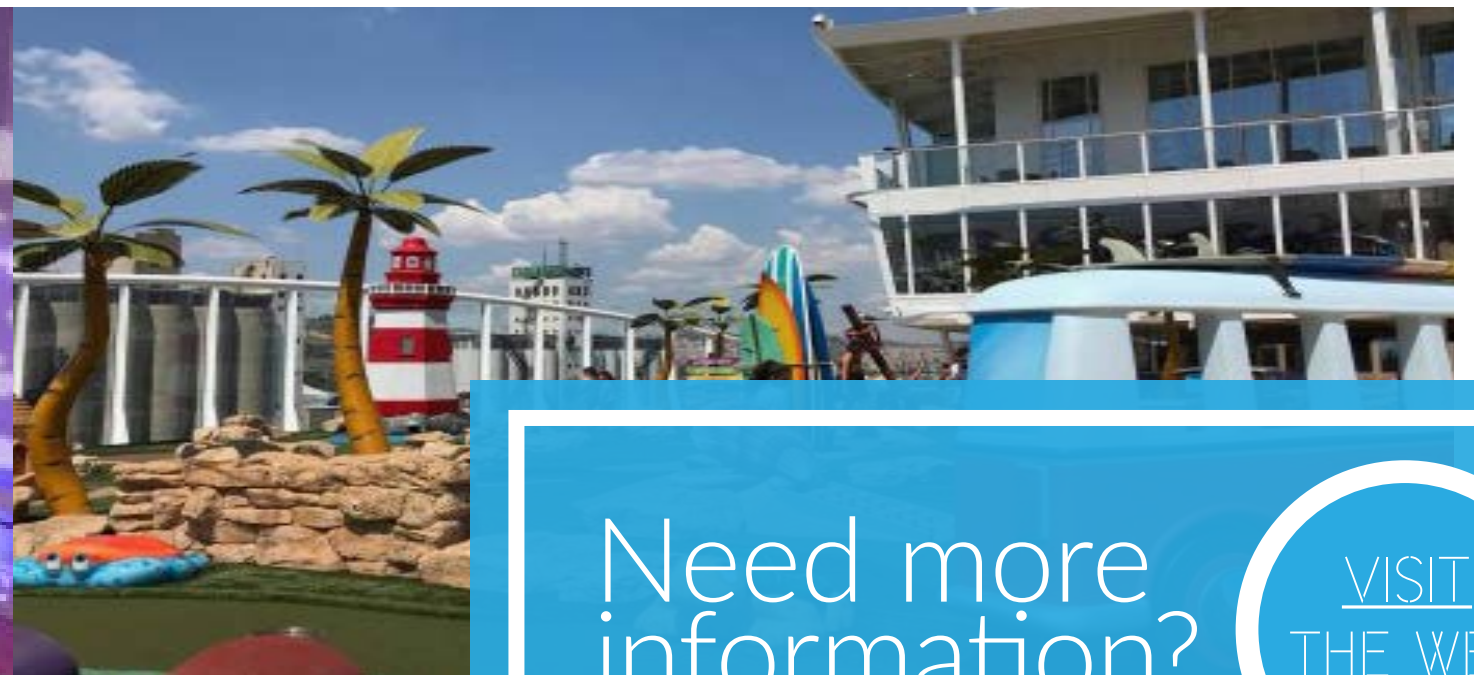
**Splashaway Bay** – If you are bringing kids along, they will spend a lot of time at Symphony of the Seas' aquatic adventure park. Splashaway Bay is the focal point of the pool area and has plenty of splashing, with fountains, buckets, sprays and even slides for kids to enjoy to their heart's content.

**Carousel Ride** – In the Boardwalk neighborhood, guests young and old can enjoy a ride on a classic carousel.

The carousel on Symphony of the Seas is a one-of-a-kind, hand-crafted and especially designed by Carousel Works for Royal Caribbean.

**Mini-golf** – Craving the green? Miniature golf has been a timeless family activity, and on Symphony of the Seas you can put your putting skills to test. You can play on the green as often as you like, while enjoying some beautiful views of the ocean. No reservations are required and be sure to try out night-time mini golf one evening to mix things up.

***Symphony of the Seas is head of its class when it comes to top-deck activities, and everything out here is included in the cruise fare. And whether you're looking to indulge in fine dining, or just tempt your sweet tooth you'll find endless ways to please your palate onboard the ship. We look forward to seeing you onboard for Skål International's 80th World Congress this September.***



Need more information?  
skalworldcongress2019.com

VISIT  
THE WEB





# 2019 SKÅL INTERNATIONAL WORLD CONGRESS PROGRAMME

## DAY 1 - SEPTEMBER 14<sup>th</sup>

Miami, Florida

12:00pm - 4:30pm

Registration

Location: Conference Centre

7:00pm - 8:00pm

Welcome Cocktail Reception

8:30pm - 10:30pm

Welcome Dinner

Location: Main Dining Room

## DAY 2 - SEPTEMBER 15<sup>th</sup>

Cruising

9:00am - 12:00pm

Opening Ceremony

12:00pm - 2:00pm

Lunch at Leisure

2:00pm - 10:30pm

Free Afternoon and Evening

## DAY 3 - SEPTEMBER 16<sup>th</sup>

Roatan, Honduras

9:00am - 6:00pm

Free Day

Explore Roatan

## DAY 4 - SEPTEMBER 17<sup>th</sup>

Costa Maya, Mexico

9:00am - 5:00pm

General Assembly

Location: Theatre or Studio B

8:30pm - 10:30pm

Dinner

Location: Main Dining Room

(Optional)

## DAY 5 - SEPTEMBER 18<sup>th</sup>

Cozumel, Mexico

9:00am - 6:00pm

Free Day

Enjoy Cozumel

8:30pm - 10:30pm

Dinner

Location: Late Seating Dining

(Optional)

## DAY 6 - SEPTEMBER 19<sup>th</sup>

Cruising

9:00am - 11:00pm

Open Forum of Executive Committee

Location: Studio B

1:00pm - 4:00pm

B2B Business Forum

Location: Conference Centre

7:00pm - 8:00pm

Skål Cocktail Reception

## DAY 7 - SEPTEMBER 20<sup>th</sup>

CocoCay, Bahamas

9:00am - 6:00pm

Free Day

Enjoy CocoCay

## DAY 8 - SEPTEMBER 21<sup>st</sup>

Miami, Florida

10:00am - 12:00pm

Disembarkation

8:30pm - 10:30pm

Gala Dinner

Location: Main Dining Room

(Assigned Seating)

Questions or comments?  
[info@skalworldcongress2019.com](mailto:info@skalworldcongress2019.com)





## OPENS LATEST GLOBAL PEACE PARK AT THE ICONIC Q STATION MANLY, SYDNEY HARBOUR NATIONAL PARK

**SYDNEY, Q Station Manly – The dedication of the second IIPT (International Institute for Peace through Tourism) Global Peace Park in Australia was celebrated on Wednesday at Q Station, Sydney, Australia, in collaboration with Skål International.**

Gail Parsonage, President of IIPT Australia presented the IIPT plaque to Suzanne Stanton, Director of Q Station, with special guest Hon. James Griffin, Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Veterans, who did the honours for the official opening of the IIPT Global Peace Park, joining about 450 other IIPT Peace Parks around the world. Valued partners and coalition members, Sue Badyari, World Expeditions and Sandra Vardanega, Flight Centre Travel Group, travelled from interstate

to Sydney for this special occasion with Alfred Merse, President of Skål International Australia, also attending the celebration.

The purpose of IIPT Global Peace Parks, is to form throughout the world, a dedicated piece of land which is a demonstration of our commitment to building a Culture of Peace. By putting aside space for these Peace Parks, we believe it will help to focus the visitors and host: To nurture the growth of peace and understanding at home and throughout the world; To enhance the awareness of the community's commitment to peace and a healthy environment; To create common ground for the community to come together for celebration of their people's land, heritage and culture and the common future of all mankind; To reflect on our connectedness as a Global

Family and the power of Tourism which can make this happen.

Q Station in Manly is a significant historic and iconic tourism location, which once served as the Quarantine Station for migrants arriving in Australia. Visitors of the Q Station Peace Park can sit on the bench for reflection time, while listening to the soothing sounds of the waves from Sydney Harbour. They can also read the IIPT Credo of the Peaceful Traveler which is pinned up on the outside wall of one of the historical buildings.

IIPT's objective is to harness the powerful tourism industry into becoming the World's First Global Peace Industry, and that every Host and Visitor is in fact an Ambassador for Peace. You can also visit Australia's first IIPT Global Peace Park at Lone Pine Avenue and Park in Leura, Blue Mountains.



Left to Right: Sandra Vardanega (Flight Centre Travel Group), Suzanne Stanton (Q Station), Alfred Merse (Skål International Australia), Scott Thomson (Skål International Sydney North), Hon. James Griffin (Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment and Veterans), Gail Parsonage (IIPT Australia), Max Player (Q Station), Representative of NSW Nationals Parks and Wildlife Service, Sue Badyari (World Expeditions).



# SKÅL CLUB OF THE YEAR 2018-2019

ALL CLUBS WORLDWIDE WILL SHORTLY BE INVITED TO VOTE FOR THE CLUB THEY CONSIDER SHOULD BE DECLARED "SKÅL CLUB OF THE YEAR 2018/2019".

This year, 14 clubs have been nominated, however, a couple of them have withdrawn from the competition and others still have to confirm their participation:

**Canada**

Skål Halifax  
Skål Montreal  
Skål Victoria

**France**

Skål Paris

**Ireland**

Skål Dublin

**Italy**

Skål Roma

**Mexico**

Skål Bahias de  
Huatulco  
Skål Cancun  
Skål Cozumel  
Skål Guadalajara  
Skål Taxco

**Thailand**

Skål Bangkok

**USA**

Skål Northern New  
Jersey

**Korea**

Skål Seoul

The Clubs who have accepted to enter the competition are currently producing a video to convince the clubs worldwide why they should be this year's winner.

The Clubs' Presidents will soon receive an e-mail with instructions for the online voting that will take place during August.

As usual, the winner will be announced during the Opening Ceremony of the 80th Skål World Congress. We will keep you informed.



# IMEX

## FRANKFURT 2019

An outstanding week of business and experiences to stir the imagination” says Ray Bloom, Chairman of the IMEX Group

“This has been an outstanding week of business, learning and experiences to stir the imagination” says Ray Bloom, Chairman of the IMEX Group, as IMEX in Frankfurt 2019 came to a close.

*“The spectacular destinations and venues, the investment in sensational, creative stand designs and the great energy in the hall have created an inspiring environment to do business and to learn; and from all the business being done, there is evidently a strong, positive, forward-looking mood at the show and optimism around the industry.”*

This growing confidence was also reflected by the high level of engagement between exhibitors and buyers at the show. Close to 70,000 individual and group appointments were made with 72 per cent having a mini RFP attached.

For Carina Bauer, CEO of the IMEX Group, the experiences in the new Discovery Zone, the fresh ideas in the Red Lab and the new technology have stood out.

# #IMEX19

## THE POWER OF IMAGINATION

“Imagination, the IMEX Talking Point for this year, is the force behind these ideas and behind the concepts in the Discovery Zone like the holographic show and the 360 degree photography booth which are truly mind-stretching experiences.

“What’s more, sitting on live grass in our Central Park with the sound of birdsong nearby is a wonderful experience, a tranquil moment away from a busy, buzzing show floor nearby.”

Collaborative waste reduction was one of the sessions in The Red Lab. This typifies the ideas challenging the industry to think about how it operates and give everyone fresh perspectives on key topics such as sustainability, a keystone of the IMEX Talking Point.

**The IMEX Policy Forum continues to increase understanding and engagement between the political world and the business event industry. This year 35 political representative and policy makers from national and regional government organisations worldwide were among more than 130 participants who learnt from keynote speaker Dr Julie Grail how to put placemaking plans into action and shared experiences of how business events can act as a catalyst in developing inspiring locations.**

**EduMonday** has developed into a day packed with high quality free education for everyone including several specialist groups. Open to all, 1100 people including many exhibitors are now taking advantage of this superb opportunity for professional development.



Exclusively Corporate brought together more than 120 senior corporate event planners from companies such as Allianz, Amazon, Bayer, Estee Lauder, Mastercard, Nestle Purina, Nokia and PepsiCo to exchange insights and hear fascinating keynote speakers from the International Olympic Committee, Barclays, Cisco, Microsoft and KPMG.

Throughout the week over 250 education sessions covered a vast range of engaging topics in a variety of formats. 47 per cent of speakers were women and 96 per cent of the sessions were assigned with CEs for CMP certification.

The annual 5km **IMEXrun** was a great success. This was one of the many events including Association Evening, SITE Nite, cim-clubbing (supporting the MPI Foundation) and the IMEX Gala Dinner that brought the industry together.

Collaboration is a key element of the IMEX Talking Point and Carina Bauer highlighted how it has once again contributed significantly to IMEX in Frankfurt.

“From the many specially created activities on EduMonday and the learning sessions in the Inspiration Hub to the Discovery Zone and the operations of the whole event, our partners have played a crucial collaborative role in creating such an engaging show.

*Collaboration is a key element of the IMEX Talking Point and Carina Bauer highlighted how it has once again contributed significantly to IMEX in Frankfurt.* said Carina Bauer.

**The new date for IMEX in Frankfurt 2020 will be 12-14 May, avoiding a clash with newly changed dates of another industry event. IMEX, Messe Frankfurt and Frankfurt hotel partners have collaborated swiftly to arrange this for the benefit of exhibitors and buyers.**

#IMEX19



**Ray Bloom** concluded by adding. “This has been an exceptionally successful and enjoyable week and we’re looking forward to meeting everyone at **IMEX America**, this year in September, and here again next year in May.”





**LAS VEGAS SANDS EXPO**  
SEPTEMBER 10-12, 2019

# WIELD YOUR POWER WISELY

Here's something mind-blowing: YOU are in charge at IMEX America, the country's biggest trade show for incentive travel, meetings and events.

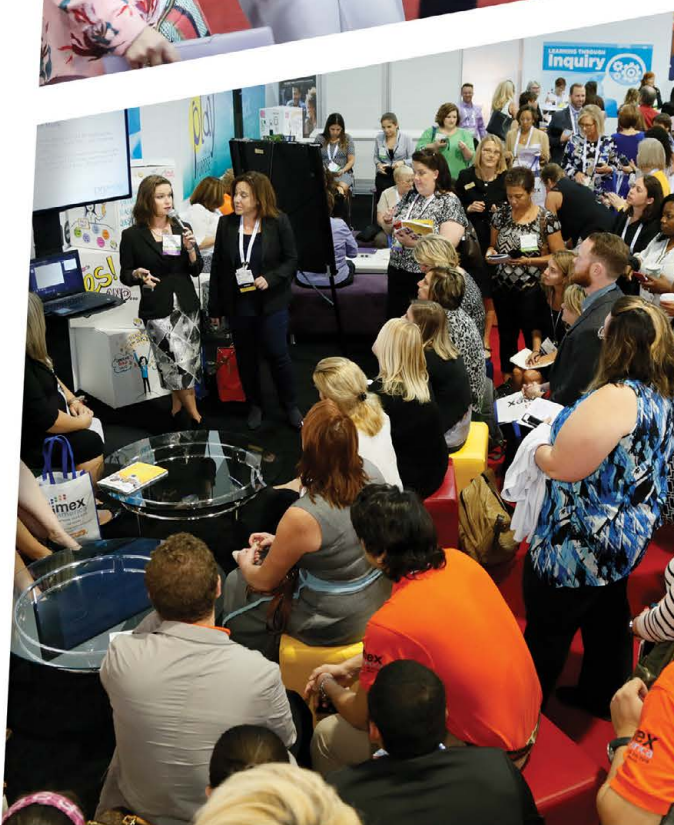
Because as a buyer, you can set appointments with your choice of 3,500 destinations, venues and suppliers from 150 countries, right there on the show floor.

Tap into our system. Control your own schedule. Complete RFPs in advance, so both parties arrive ready to maximize face time and get down to business.

You'll also connect with brand-new ideas, tech, trends and research during booth presentations, launches, demos, social engagements and learning sessions.

**Who will you go see? Appointments do fill up, so register ASAP—totally free!**

[IMEXAMERICA.COM/REGISTER](http://IMEXAMERICA.COM/REGISTER)  
**#IMEX19**



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