

PRESS STATEMENT

For Immediate Release

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International Brand Partners Add Prestige to the Inaugural Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards 2011

Kuala Lumpur. 14th April 2011 – The Mayor of Kuala Lumpur, Datuk Seri Ahmad Fuad Bin Ismail at a press conference held today announced Christofle, Mouawad and the Shangri La Hotel as the partners for the inaugural Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards 2011. Also present were the co-chairpersons of the Organizing Committee; Datuk Seri Michael Yam and Datuk Normah Malik, together with the partner representatives; Mr. Antoine Bakhache, Managing Director of Mouawad and Christofle - Malaysia and Mr. Lothar Nessmann, Vice President and General Manager of the Shangri La Kuala Lumpur.

The award plaques to be presented to all winners at the Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Award's Gala Dinner has been custom designed exclusively crafted by the internationally renowned French brand of silverware, Christofle. The work on the plaques was meticulously done by Christofle's very own master silversmiths in Paris. Established in Europe in the mid 19th century by Charles Christofle, the brand – a symbol of luxury and elegance arrived on Malaysian shores 2 years ago. Originally renowned as a luxury silver tableware brand, Christofle has always been a major player in the evolution of trends. The company has worked with renowned artists Man Ray and Jean Cocteau and avant-garde architects like Gio Ponti as well as present day designers such as Andre Putman, Martin Szekely and Ora Ito to name a few. These collaborations have produced a fine collection of gifts, flatware, tableware, decorative items and jewellery that are available in Christofle boutiques worldwide.

The Mayor, together with the co-chairpersons of the Organizing Committee and Mr. Antoine Bachache, unveiled the Award Plaque for Outstanding Achievement.

At the Gala Dinner a special one off "*Lifetime Achievement Award*", will be presented to an outstanding individual who has greatly contributed to the development of the Kuala Lumpur Tourism industry. Befitting the status of this special award, a custom designed trophy comprising of a silver stand that holds a removable diamond studded star shaped lapel pin will be crafted by the renowned international jeweller, Mouawad. The inspiration of the star design comes from the Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards logo.

Founded in 1890 by master craftsman, David Mouawad, the celebrated jeweller has firmly established itself as a global industry leader in *haute joaillerie* where collections have held the world's most iconic and magnificent cache of diamonds that include The Taylor Burton 69.42 carat flawless fashion-cut diamond and The Jubilee, ranked the world's 6th largest diamond at 245.35 carat. From its early days in Lebanon, Mouawad has delighted jewellery aficionados worldwide for over 120 years; from 19th century kings to modern day 'royalty' – supermodels, singers, actresses and women of style. Among the stars to dazzle in Mouawad's diamonds are Jennifer Lopez, Elizabeth Taylor, Nicole Kidman, Heidi Klum, Kate Winslet, Eva Longoria, Giselle Bundchen, Tyra Banks, Liz Hurley and Kylie Minogue.

The venue partner for this inaugural Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards 2011 is the 5-star hotel, the Shangri La Kuala Lumpur. Hailed as one of the pioneer 5-star hotels in the city, the Shangri La has continuously reinvented itself to keep up with the times and the demands of discerning travellers.

In September 2009, the hotel successfully completed a year-long renovation of all their facilities that included the meeting rooms and the grand ballroom that was equipped with the latest state-of-the-art sound system as well as sophisticated lightings and technologies from United Kingdom. The ballroom is also fitted with 120 pieces of pin-spot lighting which can be focused on individual tables to create an elegance and stylish mood for the Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards 2011 Gala Dinner.

In his address the Mayor said, "*We chose to work with these partners because their brands represent the essence of what we want to achieve in Kuala Lumpur's tourism industry, and that is the level of excellence that will boost the image of our city and make it truly the preferred international tourist destination*". He also thanked the programme partners for their generous sponsorship, citing that their contributions would lead to the success of the programme and achieving the desired outcome for the long term.

The Mayor also said that the response in the number of nominations received so far, was very encouraging. "*We have a total of nine categories of awards that will be contested in this inaugural award programme, and we have already received a good number of nominations for all the categories. This is very encouraging because it shows that the awards programme is well received by all the sectors of the Kuala Lumpur tourism industry*", he said. "*I have seen some of the nominations and I'm confident that the panels of judges will have their work cut out for them to determine the award recipients*".

Nominations have been open since the launch of the programme on the 11th of March 2011 and tourism industry players have until the 21st of April 2011 to submit their nominations. Nominations can be made by third parties or by the nominees themselves and the forms for all the categories are available at the official programme website at www.klmayorstourismawards.com. The deadline to submit the completed nominations form together with the supporting documents is on the 21st of April 2011. The judging process will begin on the 2nd of May 2011 and will continue until the 23rd of May 2011.

Earlier, the Kuala Lumpur Mayor's Tourism Awards 2011 organizing committee held their 3rd meeting together with the panels of judges, which was co-chaired by Datuk Seri Michael Yam (Kuala Lumpur City Hall Advisory Board member) and Datuk Normah Binti Malik (Kuala Lumpur City Hall Deputy Director General for administration). The awards programme secretariat reported that a combined total of over 2,000 invitations were sent out to selected hotels, restaurants, magazines, international airlines, tour operators, tourism associations, nightspots and shopping malls regarding nominations to the awards programme.

At the meeting, the judging criteria set by each of the judging panels were confirmed in preparation for the judging sessions that will begin on the 2nd of May 2011. Each category of award will have stringent judging criteria for the panel of judges to follow. These lists of criteria will be published on the awards website before the judging sessions begin.

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