



Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa

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HILTON SANDESTIN BEACH GOLF RESORT & SPA'S FRANK FLAUTT NAMED HOTELIER OF THE YEAR

Destin, Fla. (Feb. 2, 2009) – The Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association (FRLA) names Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa's Frank Flautt as Hotelier of the Year, as part of its 2008 Hospitality Hall of Fame inductions.

Flautt accepted the honor during an FRLA awards gala held on Jan. 25, in Orlando. The organization also named Coca-Cola Systems as Supplier of the Year and Robert Johnston, president and COO of The Melting Pot Restaurants Inc. as Restaurateur of the Year for 2008.

The FRLA Board of Directors, which is comprised of the nation's leading restaurateurs and hoteliers, chose the winners based on their personal record of industry achievements over a period of at least 20 years and only those nominees who have attained career distinctions of the highest level and are held in high esteem for their distinguished service to their industry, community, charitable organizations and family are considered.

"We are honored to present this top industry honor to three of the most respected and deserving members of our industry," said Carol Dover, president-CEO of FRLA.

Flautt is co-founder of Sandcastles Resorts & Hotels, which developed and operates the Hilton Sandestin Beach – the Southeast's premier Gulf-front resort hotel – and the Bay Point Marriott Resort & Spa in Panama City.

"Over the years, it has been Frank's drive, insight, focus and pursuit of perfection that has made Sandcastles Resorts & Hotels the great hotel company that it is today," said Robert Kamm, president and CEO, Sandcastle Resorts & Hotels. "It was his vision some 26 years ago that grew into the Hilton Sandestin, one of the finest resort hotels in the country. I know that each and every one of us that have worked with Frank have learned and grown not only as hoteliers but as individuals," Kamm added.

Flautt embarked on a successful career in the hospitality industry after graduating from The University of Memphis in 1963. He joined Holiday Inns Inc. and eventually became National Franchise Director of International Sales, a position in which he was responsible for granting the rights to build all Holiday Inns outside of the

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Continental United States. In 1969, Flautt left Holiday Inns to join W.B. Johnson Properties, where he served as president until 1974.

In 1975, Flautt formed Flautt Properties Inc. (formerly Flautt & Mann), which offered a full range of real estate services including development, construction supervision, management and accounting. Executives of Holiday Inns Inc. named eight of the hotels managed by Flautt Properties in its worldwide system's Top Twenty Inns. In addition, the company won numerous development awards. In December 1990, when he sold his interest in Flautt Properties Inc. to more actively pursue the expansion of Sandcastle Resorts & Hotels, the company was managing 18 hotels.

In 1990, Flautt began developing condominium projects, the first of which was Beachwalk Villas at Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. He has since completed the development of many other successful projects, including The Summit and The Tides at Tops'l Beach & Racquet Resort in Destin as well as the acquisition and total renovation of what is now the Bay Point Marriott Resort & Spa in Panama City.

Flautt is also a generous patron of his alma mater, The University of Memphis. He spearheaded a \$3 million fundraising effort for the university's Kemmons Wilson School of Hospitality and Resort Management, named for the founder of Holiday Inns. Flautt also serves on the school's Board of Visitors and its Athletic Committee. He is currently building a multimillion-dollar 7,000 square-foot golf training center on the campus that will bear his name.

Photo Description: (Left to Right) Robert Kamm, President & CEO, Sandcastle Resorts & Hotels; Kurt Robertson, Senior Director of Brand Performance, Hilton Hotels Corporation; Frank Flautt; and Mike Chouri, General Manager, Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa.

About the Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa:

The Hilton Sandestin Beach Golf Resort & Spa, managed by Sandcastle Resorts of Sandestin, Inc. and located directly on the sugar-white sands of the Gulf of Mexico within the 2,400-acre Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort community, celebrates its 25th anniversary in 2009 as the Southeast's premier Gulf-front resort hotel. The Hilton Sandestin Beach has continued its quest to improve and upgrade to ensure that guests' expectations are exceeded during all hours of their stay. Whether in search of a leisurely getaway or an extraordinary wedding destination, the Hilton Sandestin Beach is the perfect retreat, offering a variety of amenities and activities including more than 32,000 square feet of meeting space, an unparalleled resort spa and fitness center, elegant dining venues and much more. For more information, visit www.HiltonSandestinBeach.com.

About the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association:

In existence since 1946, the Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association is Florida's premier non-profit, hospitality industry trade association. FRLA safeguards the needs of the hospitality industry, improves the business climate, promotes the highest levels of quality and safety for its patrons, provides legislative advocacy, and eases navigation of government regulation. The Association represents and serves more than 10,000 independent and household name members, including theme parks and the largest casual theme restaurant company in the world.