



VIA Outlets to introduce their premium shopping destinations to world travel leaders

With 11 centres in some of Europe's most exciting cities, the company will present its portfolio at the World Travel & Tourism Council summit, where it debuts as a new member

March 14th 2019- VIA Outlets – the newest and fastest growing owner operator of outlet shopping destinations in Europe – will introduce its exceptional portfolio of destinations at the World Travel & Tourism Council's Global Summit, being held April 3-4 in Seville.

As a new and active member of the Council, VIA Outlets is developing a dynamic strategy for lifestyle and shopping tourism across the travel industry, creating valuable alliances and setting future standards.

With the sector's most influential figures gathered in Spain, the WTTC event provides the perfect platform for the company to showcase their 'beautifully local' outlets, strategically placed across nine countries, in traveller hotspots like Prague, Lisbon, Palma, Amsterdam and Seville.

VIA Outlets will also highlight the relevance of shopping tourism for the travel industry, not only as a way to increase visitor stay and spend, but also contribute to the global, sustainable development of destinations.

'Beautifully local' travel experiences

With stylish centres located at the gateway to many of Europe's most popular and well-connected cities, VIA Outlets offers much more than just a retail experience, bringing together the best of each destination for travellers searching for special lifestyle souvenirs.

Partnerships with over 580 different brand partners means visitors access a wide range of the world's leading fashion labels but are also introduced to exciting local designers, with shops offering exceptional discounts, year-round.

As part of that 'beautifully local' feel, VIA Outlets centres offer a range of quality cafes and restaurants serving regional food, premium leisure spaces to relax in and a variety of memorable events throughout the year to enhance the guest experience.

The architecture and decor in many centres, meanwhile, reflect their area's dynamic culture and history, while others boast picture-perfect views over their surroundings, like Landquart, near Zurich, with its stunning mountain backdrop.

Across the portfolio, visitors enjoy a seamless shopping experience thanks to a wide range of personalised customer services; from VIP lounges to onsite VAT refunds, childcare to concierge desks. And dedicated shuttle buses, luggage storage, fashion alteration services, multilingual staff and extended opening hours ensure tourists make the most of every trip.

Shopping tourism is transitioning from being a complementary factor to establishing itself as a major determinant in tourists' decisions about their preferred destinations, according to the UN World Travel Organisation, a trend reflected in the six million international shoppers amongst VIA Outlets impressive 30 million visitors last year.

Its new membership of the WTTC consolidates the company's role as a natural player in the travel industry. VIA Outlet's COO, Otto Ambagtsheer, joins over 170 senior figures on the Council, which works to raise awareness of travel and tourism as one of the world's largest economic sectors.

Otto Ambagtsheer: "WTTC membership reflects our company's commitment to work with the travel industry to develop shopping tourism destinations. We craft unique, premium travel experiences that reflect their setting, increasing visitor numbers and revenue. Working alongside tourism partners, we can push forward innovative strategies that leverage benefits for both locals and travellers."

Perfectly poised to harness the huge potential of shopping tourism, VIA Outlets works closely with stakeholders in each of its destinations – from tourist boards to the local community – to maximise benefits for all parties, driving employment, economic development and enriching the area's traditional offerings.

And as a dynamic, agile young company, its innovative approach sits perfectly with this year's WTTC Global Summit theme: *Changemakers*.

WTTC President & CEO, Gloria Guevara: "The World Travel & Tourism Council is delighted to expand its membership and reach with the addition of Europe's fastest growing outlet operator VIA Outlets. We warmly welcome Otto Ambagtsheer as a Regional Member to WTTC and are proud to have such a young and vibrant organisation join us.

VIA Outlets attract 30 million visitors per year, demonstrating what an important segment shopping tourism is both to our sector and to destinations across the globe – including Seville, home to the Sevilla Fashion Outlet and to the WTTC Global Summit in April."

With brand sales of over 1 billion euros in 2018, a total of more than 30 million visitors and a rise in the average spend per guest of 5.6%, VIA Outlets is a key player in the retail industry and a rising star in the travel sector.

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About the World Travel & Tourism Council

WTTC is the body which represents the Travel & Tourism private sector globally. Members consist of CEOs of the world's Travel & Tourism companies, destinations, and industry organisations engaging with Travel & Tourism.

WTTC has a history of 25 years of research to quantify the economic impact of the sector in 185 countries. Travel & Tourism is a key driver for investment and economic growth globally. The sector contributes US\$8.8 trillion or 10.4% of global GDP, and accounts for 319 million jobs or one in ten of all jobs on the planet.

For over 25 years, WTTC has been the voice of this industry globally. Members are the Chairs, Presidents and Chief Executives of the world's leading, private sector Travel & Tourism businesses, who bring specialist knowledge to guide government policy and decision-making and raise awareness of the importance of the sector.