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# News

## Sandals continues Dominance of World Travel Awards

**Home-grown hotel chain grabs 16 trophies**

BY DESMOND ALLEN Executive Editor - Operations  
 Sunday, December 16, 2007

**THE world tourism industry has crowned the Gordon 'Butch' Stewart-owned Sandals and Beaches resorts with a combined 16 of its top awards for outdoing many of its competitors, including four at the global level.**

Sandals Resorts International (SRI) also continued its dominance of the award for the Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand for the 14th year in a row, according to the 167,000 travel professionals in over 200 countries who voted for this year's winners of the 14-year-old World Travel Awards (WTA).



Sandals chairman Gordon 'Butch' Stewart (4th left), his sons Adam (5th left) and Bobby (6th left), along with other members of the Sandals senior management team show off eight of the 11 World Travel Awards won by the hotel chain last week. At third right is John Lynch, chairman of the Jamaica Tourist Board and a senior Sandals executive. (Photo: Karl McLarty)

In winning Caribbean's Leading Hotel Brand, Sandals elbowed out other tourism giants like Hilton, Hyatt, the Ritz Carlton, the Westin Hotels and SuperClubs.

Hailed as the "Oscars of the travel industry", the awards were presented at a glitzy affair December 12 at the Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa in Providenciales, attended by a large contingent of the globe's key tourism personalities and several Hollywood big names.

With late-season storm Olga dumping rain on the scenic archipelago, organisers hastily moved the ceremony indoors but managed to retain the glamour of the event and show off the versatility of the resort. The show featured all-time

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greats Ashford and Simpson and fast-rising American comedian Rodney Laney who brought the house down.

'Butch' Stewart, chairman of Sandals Resorts and his sons, Adam Stewart, chief executive officer and Bobby Stewart, Sandals executive, were on hand, supported by other key Sandals executives, to receive the large cache of trophies, a now familiar sight at every major awards in the tourism industry.

Tourism Minister Edmund Bartlett, Jamaica Tourist Board (JTB) chairman John Lynch and the Port Authority of Jamaica's William Tatham were also there to take home the awards for Caribbean's Leading Destination - Jamaica; Caribbean's Leading Cruise Destination - Jamaica, and Caribbean's Leading Tourist and Convention Bureau - JTB.

In the global categories, Sandals Resorts International took home the World's Leading All-Inclusive Company award for the 12th consecutive year. For the World's Most Romantic Resort, the honour belonged to Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa for the 11th straight year; Beaches Resorts copped the World's Leading Family All-Inclusive for the 10th year and the World's Leading Family Resort is Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa.

In the Caribbean categories, Sandals and Beaches hotels came out on top with the following awards:

- . Caribbean's Leading Family All-Inclusive - Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa (2nd year)
- . Caribbean's Leading Resort - Royal Plantation Ocho Rios (2nd year)
  
- . Jamaica's Leading Spa Resort - Royal Plantation Ocho Rios
- . Jamaica's Leading Resort - Sandals Whitehouse European Village and Spa
  
- . Antigua and Barbuda's Leading Hotel - Sandals Grande Antigua Resort and Spa
- . Bahamas' Leading Resort - Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa Resort and Offshore Island (2nd year)
  
- . Bahamas' Leading Spa Resort - Sandals Royal Bahamian Spa Resort and Offshore Island
- . Cuba's Leading Resort - Sandals Royal Hicacos Resort and Spa
  
- . St Lucia's Leading Resort - Sandals Grande St Lucian Spa and Beach Resort (3rd year)
- . St Lucia's Leading Spa Resort - Sandals Regency La Toc Golf Resort and Spa
  
- . Turks and Caicos' Leading Resort - Beaches Turks and Caicos Resort and Spa (3rd year)

"We are humbled and flattered that our ongoing efforts to modernise and improve have been recognised tonight," said Chairman Stewart after the ceremony. "It is our continued goal to challenge industry standards and provide our guests with the best vacation experience available."

Jamaica's Chukka Caribbean Adventures also grabbed the award for Caribbean's Leading Nature Adventure Excursion Operator, with John Byles and Marc Melville on hand to pick up the trophies.

Air Jamaica, the national airline, was in the money with the award for Caribbean's Leading Airline taken home by Paul Pennicook.

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