



# Big step for Awards

THE WORLD TRAVEL Awards are to double in size from five to 10 events in 2008, to include nine regional events and a grand final.

The awards were established in 1993 to acknowledge, reward and celebrate achievements in all sectors of the global travel industry. Next year marks their 15th anniversary, when there will be regional specific events dedicated to South Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Australia, the Indian Ocean, Asia, North America, South America and Europe.

With votes cast by travel professionals from 167,000 travel agencies, tour and transport companies and tourism organisations in more than 190 countries, a World Travel Award has become one of the highest accolades a travel product or organisation can achieve.

World Travel Market delegates still have time to vote for the World Travel Awards, which take place on 12 December in Turks and Caicos. Regional awards have taken place throughout the year and now all the nominees worldwide are eagerly hoping to get their hands on one of the coveted trophies awarded in more than 1,000 categories.

One new sector introduced this year is the Green Awards, intended to encourage travel

companies to showcase their green credentials and ecologically friendly practices. Director of global business Sion Rapson said: "The response has been overwhelming. The issue of social and corporate responsibility is top of the agenda and we will make it a key focus next year."

Any money raised through the Green Awards will be donated to an environment-focused charity. Nominees range from a tiny bed and breakfast in England (The Old Chapel Forge) for Best Green Hotel, to Seychelles, which has two islands (North and Cousine) up for Best Green Destination, while an ecological chauffeur company is competing to win Best Green Transport.

Meanwhile, at the regional Asia, Australasia and Indian Ocean Awards event in India, Cathay Pacific was named Asia's Leading Airline. The Leela Goa scooped Asia's Leading Resort; India was named Asia's Leading Destination, Oberoi Hotels & Resorts was named Asia's Leading Luxury Hotel Brand; and Huvafen Fushi took top honours as the Indian Ocean's Leading Spa. Maldives Tourism Promotion Board, Avis, Air New Zealand and Singapore Changi Airport were also crowned the best of their kind in the region. To find out more: T: 020 7925 0000. [www.worldtravelawards.com](http://www.worldtravelawards.com)

