

Hotel checks in with top travel award

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A NORTH hotel and spa has been crowned the best of its kind in the country.

Seaham Hall Hotel and Serenity Spa in County Durham was named England's best spa resort at the European finals of the World Travel Awards held in Newcastle on Tuesday.

While it was crowned the North-East's best small hotel last month, the luxury hotel's latest accolade is its most prestigious since opening in 2001.

Last year the hotel achieved five-star status while its restaurant, The White Room, was awarded a Michelin star.

The resort is part of Tom's Companies, which also includes The Samling, a boutique, hotel and restaurant overlooking Lake Windermere, The Fisherman's Lodge restaurant in Jesmond Dene, and Serenity in the City, an urban day spa in Newcastle.

Tuesday's event was held at the Marriott Gosforth Park Hotel and was screened around the world by the BBC to 250 million homes in 200 countries. Chief executive of Tom's Companies, Debrah Dhugga, said: "We are absolutely delighted to have won such a huge accolade. This is a fantastic achievement, not only for Tom's Companies, but also to have the recognition as a worldwide leading hotel and spa resort and situated in the North-East. I am sure it will help boost tourism in the region."

The awards ceremony has been held since 1993 in exotic locations such as Miami and Barbados.

This year saw the first ever European leg before the world final takes place in the Caribbean.

Meanwhile, ferry operator DFDS Seaways was named Europe's best North Sea ferry provider, beating five competitors to land the award.

The North-East was chosen to host the event on the back of the success of the Passionate People Passionate Places advertising campaign, created by regional development agency One NorthEast.