

ABU DHABI-BASED DESERT ISLANDS REVEALS NEW TOURISM OFFERINGS AT ITB BERLIN AFTER SUCCESS OF PHASE ONE

***Sir Bani Yas Island, part of an archipelago of eight natural islands situated off
the Abu Dhabi coast, to launch lodges in 2010***

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates-March 10, 2010_ Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), a master developer of cultural, residential and tourism destinations in Abu Dhabi, is showcasing the latest additions to its nature-based Desert Islands tourism destination at ITB Berlin. On Sir Bani Yas Island, one of the eight natural islands in the Desert Islands destination situated off the Abu Dhabi coast, two new environmentally conscious luxury lodges providing 60 additional hotel rooms to the island, a conference centre with a capacity of 300 persons, an equestrian centre offering supervised riding classes with local Arabian horses, and a diving and water sports centre, will all be launched as part of the island's second phase of development, and are scheduled to open to visitors in the fourth quarter of 2010.

These new luxurious lodges will bring the total number of hotels on the island to three with a total of 124 rooms. Desert Islands Resort & Spa by Anantara, which was voted one of world's greatest hotels by *Conde Nast Traveller* in its 2010 Gold List, is currently the only hotel on the island. The Thai-based leading and award-winning hospitality brand Anantara will also be the operators for the two new lodges.

The lodges will offer magnificent floor-to-ceiling views of sand-capped salt dome hilltops, rich greenery of the Arabian Wildlife Park abundant with indigenous wildlife or the vibrant coastline of the Arabian Gulf, bringing guests even closer to the dramatic scenery and vast amount of indigenous wildlife species that roam on the island.

Commenting on TDIC's flagship project, Desert Islands, Lee Tabler, Chief Executive Officer of TDIC, said: "Conservation of nature and wildlife as part of the tourism experience in a truly five-star setting is a breakthrough concept for this part of the world. Sir Bani Yas is truly unique to the region and among the few destinations in the world to offer such diverse experiences. The addition of new products, specifically the lodges and the conference centre, are an extension of Anantara's partnership, and a significant step forward to enhance the islands' proposition."

Al Yamm Lodge, on the eastern shores of the island located by the lagoons and surrounded by mangrove forests, will provide guests with breathtaking views of the Arabian Gulf and offer a true desert island experience, with the concept inspired by the traditional way of life of early fishermen who lived seasonally on the island. The Al Yamm Lodge will include a restaurant serving local Arabic cuisine, in addition to an Italian-style pool lounge and grill serving a range of lighter meals.

The Al Barari Lodge will be located in the heart of the 4,100-hectare Arabian Wildlife Park, which was opened in 2009 as a dedicated breeding and rehabilitation area for indigenous animals from the Arabian Peninsula and is home to more than 23 species and around 4,500 animals. This will provide guests with the opportunity to observe animals such as sand gazelles and Arabian mountain gazelles, from the comfort of their rooms. Al Barari Lodge will also include an all-day dining African Safari-styled restaurant and a South Asian-themed pool lounge and grill.

William E. Heinecke, CEO of Minor International, owners of the Anantara brand, comments, "Creating a 'destination experience' is at the core of the Anantara philosophy, so we are delighted to partner once more with TDIC in the launch of these luxury lodges on Sir Bali Yas Island. The new lodges will perfectly complement Desert Islands Resort & Spa by Anantara to provide a range of unique locations and experiences on the Island. Al Yamm and Al Barari lodges will continue to reflect the brand commitment to harmoniously blend with the local environment whilst offering unobtrusive service, spa pampering and a range of adventure activities associated with the location".

The newly announced offerings adhere to strict environmental development and sustainability guidelines, put in place by TDIC, as a result of many years of research to protect the island's natural habitat. The guidelines cover all aspects of design and construction including building materials, water cycle management and sustainable transport. TDIC recently ordered the world's first two zero-emission, all-electric buses as a pilot project for operation on Sir Bani Yas Island, making the island the first destination in the world to have a public transportation system run purely on electric buses.

"Our number one priority remains the conservation of the island. With this in mind, all of our future developments have been carefully planned, and consulted on, as we aim to ensure that we go to the necessary lengths to minimise potential adverse environmental impacts," added Tabler.

By creating investment partnerships and joint ventures, TDIC's developments are part of Abu Dhabi's evolution as a world-class destination for tourists, businesses and residents, and are helping to realise the emirate's considerable tourism potential and strategic goal of delivering 2.3 million hotel guests a year by 2012.