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## Going green: a hotel limbers up for environmental compatibility

### Unusual measures to protect the environment at the Berlin Marriott: Booking "Green Meetings und Events" means making a contribution to saving the rain forest

The Berlin Marriott Hotel plans total environmental compatibility. It has examined every section of its operations with the ecological magnifying glass and "recycled" it. As a result, guests are practically handed the opportunity to reduce environmental impact on a silver platter – and when opportunity knocks, it is bound to be welcomed in.

Example: the organization of a complex event in the capital city. Congresses are usually not only cost-intensive but also energy and resource-intensive: participants travel there by air, need cleaning services, consume energy with computers and conference equipment and so on. Instead of taking all of this for granted, Marriott presents its conference guests with something in addition to perfect event organization, energy efficiency and the deployment of environmentally friendly materials: the chance to compensate for environmental impact. With the help of event planners, the congress organizer calculates the carbon dioxide emission of the event and effects a corresponding donation to the hotel group's *Juma* project, a 560,000 hectare endangered region of the Brazilian Amazon rain forest.

This year, business meetings have taken on a green hue at the Marriott due to its Green Meetings Concept. It all began in the USA, the company's home. Today, all of the group's hotels use exclusively paper, flipcharts and note blocks from certified forestry. Pens and pencils are made of recyclable and biodegradable materials – considering this applies to around 47 million articles a year, it is surely a worthwhile investment! Mineral water is flavored with herbs of the season and served at conferences in reusable bottles or carafes. Small sweets, usually individually packed in plastic, are served from practical, hygienic vending devices or dispensers. And only energy efficient audio and video equipment is used. This all adds up to consistent minimization of environmental impact.

The Berlin Marriott Hotel has good reason for adopting the trend: "For many, environmental protection still has a laborious, uncomfortable image, but you can achieve so much by making only a little effort – and then everyone is prepared to contribute" explains Claudio Trübenbach, the hotel's technical manager. Environmental protection is a growing concern in the context of hotel accommodation and guests are

# Marriott NEWS

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increasingly aware of the issues involved. The hotel on Potsdamer Platz proves that it is worth investing in the protection of water, soil, air and climate – for the sake of the environment and guests.

## **Lighting, showers, cleaning, - and the German premiere for a dust filter: Putting environmental protection into practice**

Giving the green light for careful use of resources: "We use almost exclusively energy saving lighting in the hotel. The new lighting concept alone saves more than five percent." explains Trübenbach describing one of the many measures initiated. In order to reduce ozone, particulate matter and allergens, special, highly efficient combination filters are deployed at the Berlin Marriott – a first for the German hotel industry. Water is also an important resource: Installation and use of water-saving toilet flushes, faucets and shower heads in all rooms and public areas makes a substantial contribution to reducing water consumption.

Housekeeping is ecologically sound while achieving scrupulously clean results: environmentally compatible products are used in room cleaning and laundry and sheets are changed only every third night – unless, of course, guests request a higher frequency. "In total, we have been able to achieve savings of 20 percent for all areas" summarizes Trübenbach.

## **Green Cuisine**

In the kitchens and restaurants too, environmental awareness is growing. Specialists have developed successful techniques of harmonizing luxury cuisine with recipes for green cuisine: "We use mainly regional, seasonal ingredients in order to avoid the environmental impact caused by long transport routes. Many foods, such as vegetables for example, are delivered in reusable crates to reduce packaging – or we buy products exclusively in larger units" explains Martin Schmidt, the hotel's kitchen director. Health conscious: both the kitchen and the catering operation have organic certification and in food preparation use exclusively products from organic farming in most dishes.

## **Five-point strategy for a healthy environment**

Green commitment: Since 2005 the hotel has been making a contribution to a healthy environment with numerous campaigns and ideas and has extended the concept into all sections of its operations. "Environmental protection and energy efficiency play an increasingly important role."

The concept goes far beyond careful use of water and the modern cliché, the option to reuse towels in guest rooms" says Thomas Guss, Managing Director of the Berlin Marriott. "Sustainability in operations is an integral part of company philosophy."

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Together with Conservation International, a global environmental organization, Marriott International has developed a five-point strategy for all of the group's hotels in continental Europe. This aims to balance carbon dioxide emission with protection of the rain forest. Secondly, it is planned to reduce fuel and water consumption by 25 percent per available room over the coming ten years and to promote the installation of solar energy systems in up to 40 hotels by 2017. In addition, orders will be made exclusively from the environmentally friendly range of the 40 largest suppliers and fourthly, the company will strive to work exclusively with hotel developers who implement internationally recognized ecological construction standards. Last but not least: personnel and guests are actively informed in order to raise awareness of the ways each individual can help to protect the environment – at work, at home, while traveling – and to consciously adopt the culture of sustainability and responsibility in the hotel.

A worthwhile side effect: "Commitment to environmental protection contributes to customer loyalty and wins new customers. Careful use of energy, raw materials and goods also reduces operating costs" summarizes Thomas Guss.

**The Berlin Marriott Hotel: US-American understatement coupled with a superb location in the German capital's Lenné triangle. The hotel belongs to the global Marriott International hotel chain. The Berlin Marriott Hotel is located in the heart of Berlin and offers the perfect venue for every occasion. Immediately adjacent to lively Potsdamer Platz, the hotel provides a peaceful, stylish refuge and a bright, comfortable ambience. 379 guest rooms and suites with a timeless allure await hotel guests. For events, there is an extensive banqueting and conference floor. Facilities include a pool with a fitness center and first-class restaurants. Further information at [www.berlinmarriott.de](http://www.berlinmarriott.de)**

Further information and reservations on the toll-free Marriott reservation numbers: Germany: 0800/1 85 44 22, Austria: 0800/29 67 03, Switzerland: 0800/55 01 22 or at [www.marriott.de](http://www.marriott.de).