



NEWS BUREAU

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: April 29, 2009

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**TENNESSEE TOURISM'S SUSTAINABLE WORKSHOPS
DEBUT IN FRANKLIN**

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The first Sustainable Tourism Workshop will take place from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m., May 14, at The Factory in Franklin, Tenn. The Tennessee Department of Tourist Development and the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation will host four free workshops about sustainable tourism throughout 2009. Sustainable tourism is defined as the commitment to sustaining our environment, history and culture, while simultaneously sustaining economic growth through tourism.

Ray Burger, founder and president of Pineapple Hospitality, Inc., is the keynote speaker and will discuss “The ‘C’s’ of Green.” Known as the “Green Guru,” Burger has over 30 years of experience in the hospitality industry. His company’s EcoRooms and EcoSuites Web site certifies the greenest hotels and defines what it means to be a green hotel.

“Hotels that have positioned themselves as ‘green’ will have a heads-up on the competition from both an operations and consumer perspective,” said Burger. “Travelers are becoming increasingly aware of their environmental impact. More so, hotels that have gone green have discovered significant savings – demonstrating that going green will keep you in the black.”

Each sustainable workshop will target the hospitality and tourism industry, providing sustainable tourism resources, case studies, best practices and access to leading experts in this important arena.

(more)



“Sustainable tourism is one of the tourism industry’s most important issues,” said Tourism Commissioner Susan Whitaker. “It’s a call to stewardship of Tennessee’s natural beauty and rich heritage, which is fundamental to good business. Getting this message out to all of our stakeholders will keep tourism thriving in Tennessee for generations to come.”

All community leaders are encouraged to attend the free Sustainable Tourism Workshops including tourism business owners and management, city and county government officials, Chambers and Convention & Visitors Bureaus leadership, lodging and restaurant industry owners and management, and any tourism partner or individual interested in green and sustainable tourism practices.

“Sustainability can benefit our local communities, the environment and the bottom line,” said Environment and Conservation Commissioner Jim Fyke. “From energy conservation initiatives to recycling and waste reduction to LEED certification for new state park cabins, the state of Tennessee is leading by example, and we’re pleased to share that experience with others in the tourism industry.”

The one-day workshops will take place, as follows, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.:

- May 14 - Franklin – The Factory
- June 16 - Baxter – DelMonaco Winery and Vineyards
- Nov. 16 – Jackson – Casey Jones Village
- Nov. 17 – Memphis – Pink Palace Museum

These workshops are an outgrowth of the state’s Great Smoky Mountains Sustainable Tourism Summit, held April 2008 in Knoxville, Tenn.

To register or for more information, contact Patricia Gray at (615) 741-9004 or patricia.gray@tn.gov, or contact Lee Curtis at (615) 741-9045 or Lee.Curtis@tn.gov. For a complete schedule, please visit www.tnsustainabletourism.com. There is no charge for the workshops, however space is limited.

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