



Hospitality Europe Business News – Issue 15 – 18 July 2018

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INDUSTRY INTERVIEWS

Interview with Ms. Ketevan Meladze, President of HOREKA Georgia, the Georgian Hotel Restaurant Café Federation

Ketevani Meladze is the founder and president of Horeka Georgia. Biologist by profession, she has been involved in tourism and hospitality for 20 years already. Member of the Chamber of Commerce of Georgia and State Advisor, she is actively working on the development of the hospitality industry in the country.



*“First of all, I would like to point out that it is a great honor for me and for the country to become a member of **HOTREC’s European family**. I am glad that we were able to get the membership of such a **successful organization** and share their **outlook and principles**. This is extremely important for a country like Georgia, because tourism and **hospitality industry in Georgia is growing at a rapid pace**”; - Ketevani Meladze, Founder and President of Horeka Georgia.*

1. As the first Member from Georgia joining HOTREC, could you explain us the current situation of the hospitality industry in Georgia, its challenges and opportunities?

Possibilities, as well as challenges, there are plenty of them, of course. Georgia has already become a **trendy tourism destination**. All guests are fascinated by **Georgian hospitality, local culture, authentic cuisine, wine and traditions** that do not leave anyone indifferent.

The **number of visitors**, who represent a large portion of hotels and restaurants customers in Georgia, is **growing annually**, and the active tourist season is prolonged from year to year. Confirmed by the research results, conducted by the state, as well as by well-known blogs, web pages and articles it is indicated that Georgia as a **newly discovered must-visit tourist destination for the world**.

Therefore, the **main challenge** for the country has become the **quality of service**. Demand is for high-level service delivery is increasing, and the country needs to react and provide customers with a high quality products or services. Of course, the country has high quality service providers, but it is not enough.

It is important that Georgia will be able to **standardize the catering/food and accommodation facilities**, according to these standards and **maintain quality**, which will bring many positive results.

2. From a restaurants / cafés / hotels point of view, what are the services developed by HOREKA Georgia that are mostly welcomed by your members? Do you have any new services planned to be implemented in the near future?

From the activities of Horeka Georgia, which were especially appreciated by our members, it is worth mentioning the **legislative initiatives** that have been **successful implemented**. In the first two initiatives, the target segments of these amendments were **small and medium entrepreneurs**, for whom, after our lobbying, the **taxes were reduced**. The reduction of the taxes itself increases the **motivation** and **possibilities of development** for this segment. Another successful initiative was about **restaurants inventory procedures**, which was **facilitated**, that is also a great deal of privilege in managing the restaurant. Apart from that Horeka Georgia has **created and manages a public platform - web site** where all the members are listed with the detailed information about them.

3. As a new Member of HOTREC could you tell us how do you envision the relationship and what are the main issues HOTREC is of help to your association?

I think that **sharing the European experiences and practices** is the most important for Georgia. You probably will agree that quality assessment cannot justified in context of the absence of standards. Therefore, I hope that as a member of the family of HOTREC, we will have the **opportunity to share European standards, their basics and methods of implementation** to further generate the information obtained, and subsequently **adapt to the Georgian reality**. We are also very excited about the **opportunities of cooperation with Hotel Stars Union**.

A good example for us is Estonia and generally the Baltic countries, the experience of which is very acceptable for us. The way that HOTREC went through from the day it was established till today is very important for us. **We are proud that our small and beautiful country became a member of a large family of Europe – HOTREC's member.**



Interview with Mr. Manel Casals, General Manager of Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona



Manel Casals is the General Manager of *Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona* (Barcelona Hotels Association) since 2008. Before that, he used to be the Development Manager of *Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona* during five years. He's also General Manager of Confederació Empresarial d'Hostaleria i Restauració de Catalunya – Confecat – (Confederation of Hotels and Restaurants of Catalonia) since 2011.

1. Which are the tools / initiatives / activities developed by Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona in order to overcome the challenges faced by the sector? In which way does Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona help its members to be more competitive?

As representatives of the hospitality industry of the city of Barcelona, our Organization is aware of the role that currently has at the time to face the main challenges of the activity. We also fully assume our responsibility with the **environment**, and our dynamic role of **economic activity** of Barcelona.

In fact, we take part proactively in all that happens around us, with special emphasis on those issues that have to do with the **development of the hotels and tourist area**, such as: the quality of Barcelona city as destination; the eradication of the illegal tourist accommodation, the development of a legal and business framework for the hospitality industry; improving coexistence between tourism and citizenship; the professionalization of the sector and the improvement of the quality of life of the citizens, in areas such as security, sustainability and social responsibility.

Everything, in short, with the aim of promoting a sustainable tourist activity in our destination, covering economic, social and environmental areas.

In this sense, and in order our capacity for representation may be effective, our organization acts as an **agent in negotiations with the different administrations** (local, regional or national), in those referred to collective and individual defense; promoting the search for investments in infrastructure; **collaborating** on to the raising of major events for the city; **supporting** the Organization of new commercial attractions which may help to invigorate seasons, and actively **participating** in the most representative of the city tourist and business entities, as well as, being next and collaborating with the neighborhood, social organizations and citizens, and with the media.

All this added to the strong interest of our Organization for participating and collaborating, at National and European level, in the development, precision and resolution of the great challenges of our industry, from the hand of **CEHAT and HOTREC**.

In order to improve the competitiveness of our members, the entity encourages the development of **innovative projects in the context of tourism and hospitality activity**, so that they provide new tangible values positively affecting their activity and, in its results business, while fitting with environment. This factor is accompanied by the promotion of the level of knowledge and training hotelier's business staff.

2. As a new Member of HOTREC could you tell us how do you envision the relationship and what are the main issues HOTREC is of help to your association?

Up to the date of our income as members of HOTREC, the Gremi d'Hotels de Barcelona (GHB) has always been distinguished by following very closely, through CEHAT, the work done by HOTREC. **We have always had a great interest in European issues.**

This is why our Association is going to be **very active** in HOTREC. We hope that the other members may consider a great advantage to have GHB as a member of the European hotel family. Our status as member of HOTREC will bring still closer questions relating our segment that are debated at European level to our partners. This new point of view will allow us to allocate more means and energy to contribute to global solutions to defies and **challenges** European hospitality deals with.

Firsthand information that HOTREC offers us on legislative initiatives of European level, and which have a potential impact for our sector, is going to help a lot in the talks and negotiations with the local authorities. In the same way, from GHB **we appreciate very much good practices of HOTREC member associations.** For example, for GHB, it is essential to learn the role and experience of the hotel associations that have been able to achieve that in their countries unfair terms of OTA (as, for example, the parity of prices) in contracts of the Hotel digital distribution have been banned.

Projects sponsored by HOTREC in which we are interested in are multiple: we would like to help implement the **Hotelstars Union** classification system in Catalonia, our autonomous community, and, thereby, help the rest of Spanish communities also do the same. Likewise, promote the **Book Direct** campaign and take part in projects of European grants for the modernization of the sector.

3. Over tourism is becoming a real issue for the city of Barcelona. What is your point of view on it?

Tourism is a key sector for Barcelona's, Catalan, Spanish and world economy. In this context, we are in a moment in which the **tourism in Barcelona faces important challenges** to preserve its commitment to quality, sustainability and the coexistence with the environment, such as: the fight against the illegal activity and the platforms that protect it; the identification of tourist accommodation proposals that disrupt the citizen coexistence and, the need to wager clearly for the promotion, not so much to increase in number of visitors, but to improve the profile we want for our destination, promoting that arriving tourism becomes something attractive.

In this sense, tourism reveals as a phenomenon that goes beyond the simple recruitment and management of visitors: is openness, exchange, knowledge, work, business, culture and position in the world. This is why our Organization advocates to recognize it's worth and strengthen the public private partnership model that has brought so much success to our destination and which is shaping up as the ideal way to bring about the precise organization and management of tourism in our city.



BUSINESS TRENDS & STUDIES

International tourist arrivals for 2018 exceed UN expectations so far



In the first four months of 2018, the **global tourist arrival numbers** grew by **6 percent** thanks to a rise in international travel to countries in Asia-Pacific and Europe, **exceeding thus the UNWTO's expectations**, which was 4-5 percent.

According to the latest statistics from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), between January and April of this year, international arrivals increased by 8 percent in the Asia Pacific region.

At the sub-regional level, international tourist arrivals reached 10 percent for countries in Southeast Asia and 9 percent across South Asia.

Not far behind, **Europe also saw a 7 percent spike in international tourist arrivals** during the same period. The great performances from destinations in the **South and Mediterranean Europe, and Western Europe (both 8 percent)** contributed to this number.

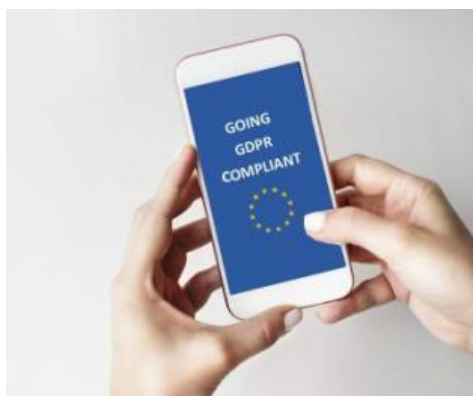
In the Americas, it is South America that showed the best results with 8 percent growth in international tourist visitors.

However, the Caribbean experienced a decrease of 9 percent and this is due to the aftermath of the devastating hurricanes last year.

The first four months of the year represent **28 percent of the yearly total international tourist arrivals** and show already a **good growth for Europe**.

DIGITAL ISSUES

Providing useful tools to ensure compliance with GDPR regulation



The Slovak hotels and restaurants also had to come to terms and **adjust to the new GDPR regulation**.

Even though Slovakia had valid legislation which set up rules and regulations for hotels and restaurants, these rules were only followed on paper.

That is why the association has decided to **actively help its members** and provide them with **useful tools and instructions** to resolve any new obligations related to GDPR.

Along with experts the Slovak Association of Hotels and Restaurants created a manual which maps out the most usual and common data flows.

We have also invited its members to participate in **workshops** which were specific for the HoReCa, in addition it created an app, which allows for easy and effective processing of all documentation and regulation for hotels and restaurants.

Moreover, all of these efforts will significantly decrease the financial cost related to changes with GDPR regulation.

The Slovak Association of Hotels and Restaurants will keep on following any legislative changes and will continue to update the manual for our members.



GNI Guide for GDPR in hospitality establishments

GNI has proposed exclusively to **its members** a dedicated **Guide** relative to set up **GDPR obligation**.

Indeed, in France the organism in charge of the control of the application of this European text (**CNIL**), has demanded that all enterprises filled a register concerning data protection.



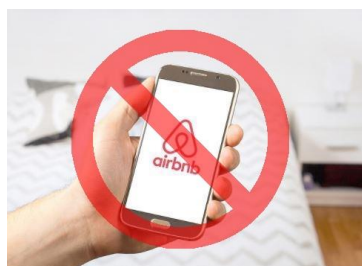
The GNI's **28 pages-guide** is composed with:

- Model of text to **inform employees and consumers**,
- Model of text to get information from **partners**,
- **Guidelines** to fill the right model of register of data protection,
- **Guidelines** for cybersecurity,
- And **many other advices**.

Thanks to this guide, many members of GNI are now GDPR compliant.



New legal rulings in Asia-Pacific countries constrain Airbnb activities



Airbnb and other short-term rental platforms have been a hot topic of debate for the past years. Japan, Thailand and Australia join cities like Paris, Barcelona, Berlin, Amsterdam, New York and San Francisco as they release new regulations to short-term rentals.

Japan – new law effective mid-June

Since 15 June, hosts in Japan have to **register their accommodation and obtain a license** in order to continue renting them. This new legislation forced Airbnb to **remove 80% of its listings**, bringing 62,000 listing recorded earlier this year down to 13,000. Rental period is limited to **180 nights per year and per housing**.

Australia – Cracking down on the short-term rental

The Australian State, New South Wales, voted beginning of June to limit short-term rentals to a **180-day cap** in the cities of **Sydney, Wollongong and Newcastle**. It also allows property owners (strata corporations), to vote to prevent short-term rentals if the host does not live in the unit they are renting, **targeting** in that sense **investors who only buy apartments to put them on Airbnb**.

Thailand's court ruling on daily or weekly rooms' rentals

On May 2018, the Thai court ruled that rooms rented out on a **daily or weekly basis are illegal** as hosts have not a license to run a hotel business under the 2004 Hotel Act. Only rentals of 30 days or more would be legal.

GDPR compliance: UMIH's new tool

In order to **help its members to comply with the new Regulation on data protection**, UMIH has published another tool summarizing all obligations weighing on professionals. To access this brochure please click [here](#) (available only in French).

Synthetic and practical, it **aims at facilitating the understanding of this new Regulation** by members and gives some useful links with examples, templates and tools for members to download.



This brochure explains technical terms related to the issue and describes the regulation in 10 steps. Key concepts such as **Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)** or **Data Protection Officer (DPO)** are also mentioned in this tool, from their definition, to their role and when they are needed.

Finally this tool also explains step-by-step the 4 actions to be followed to comply with the GDPR regulation: identify the data; sort it by type; inform the persons concerned and secure the data.



Airbnb goes against Expedia and Booking.com with a new hotel campaign!

On 13 March 2018, Airbnb published an **open letter** to boutique hotel and B+B owners with the goal to broaden its own services and draw business away from travel booking sites such as **Booking.com** and **Expedia**.

In this letter, the platform affirms that it wants to **partner with hospitality entrepreneurs** to help them better connect with their guests by providing the best quality services at a fair price.

The home- and room rental platform promises to **charge lower fees than its OTAs competitors** (that can go up to 30 percent) and to **not impose long-term contracts**.

The company also stated in this letter that there have been over 300 million guest arrivals in Airbnb listing around the world, and it **is aiming for a billion guest by 2028**. Therefore, including boutique hotels and B+B's in its listings will help the platform reach this target.

Airbnb is also planning in adding **new high-standard services** such as 'Plus' (features pricier accommodations inspected personally) or 'Called Beyond' (features luxurious and high-end accommodations).

To read the full open letter please click [here](#).

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Austrian national championship of apprentices in tourism

Like usual, once a year, **apprentices** from the **nine Austrian federal states** compete against each other. Every federal state sends three representatives for the categories of “**kitchen**”, “**service**” and “**reception/back office**”.

The preselection usually occurs through **regional championships**. Depending on the results, all participants receive either gold/ silver/ bronze medals or a confirmation of participation.

This year a total of **27 gold medals, 31 silver medals and 22 bronze medals** were awarded. The national winners can participate in the qualification for **Euroskills** and **Worldskills**.



Austria 2018 champions, include from left: Konrad Steindl (President of the Federal Economic Chamber in Salzburg), Bianca Marion Riedl (winner reception/back office), Marco Panhölzl (winner kitchen) and Jacqueline Hörburger (winner service).

For more information visit: <http://www.lehrlings-staatsmeisterschaften.at/>

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LOBBYING

Proposal for legislation for outlawing “platform parity clauses” in the hotel sector approved



On Tuesday July 3rd **history was made in Belgian’s hotel sector**. The Belgian Government approved in the Chamber’s Commission a draft legislation to **outlaw so-called “platform parity clauses”** in the hotel sector.

Recent developments in legislation throughout the world have made **rate parity an important topic in the hospitality industry**.

Therefore, Horeca Vlaanderen CEO, Matthias De Caluwe, and Vice-Premier Minister, Kris Peeters, worked in close collaboration to draft a **proposal to ban parity clauses**. The proposal was later approved in the Chamber’s Commission.



Success that was 14 years in the making: 10% VAT on accommodation services in Slovakia



After more than 14 years of activity, the Slovak Association of Hotels and Restaurants was finally able to find political support and push for a **decrease of the value added tax for accommodation services**.

During this time AHRS has been reaching out to all relevant political parties, but finally found the necessary support in the Speaker of the National Council of the Slovak Republic, Mr. Andrej Danko, who is also a tourism supporter.

In addition, Mr. Danko is the chairman of one of the ruling coalition parties. At a high level meeting at the end of May, he declared he was able to muster needed support of the other ruling coalition parties and in September, there will be two new regulations presented before the parliament.

One of the new regulations is **lowering the VAT on accommodation services** from the current 20% to 10%. The second regulation to be presented is a **tool, which will support domestic tourism**, a recreational voucher. This voluntary tool allows employers to provide maximum amount of 275 EUR a year to employee, a tax expense for the employer and a non-taxable income for the employee.

The Association expects these regulations will **improve the business environment within the hospitality sector, increase investment, and create new jobs but mostly, increase the employee wages**.



Reduction of VAT from 13% to 10% for Hotel-services in Austria

On 21st March the **National Assembly of Austria** passed the amendment of the Value-Added-Tax Act according to which the VAT on hotel services (and camping sites) will be reduced from **13% to 10%**.

The reduction comes into force on **1st November 2018**.

For hotel stay advance payments after the 31st October 2018 **hoteliers can decide** whether they charge the new tax of 10% or the current VAT of 13% (in that case a subsequent correction is necessary).



Together with the Austrian Hotel Association (ÖHV), APHA worked on an **information paper with FAQs** regarding the VAT-reduction which is available under the following [link](#) (only in German).



MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

CimerAlbert Campaign – Hotels take care of everything, especially you!



The French HORECA Union, UMIH, (professional organization N°1 in the sector) and the National Group of Hotel Chains (GNC), have launch beginning of April 2018 a **humorous communication campaign, 100% digital** and named **CimerAlbert** to value hotels and all the services offered by hoteliers. It comes with a clear message: **“Hotels take care of everything, especially of you!”** which is translated in French **“A l’hôtel on s’occupe de tout, et surtout de vous !”**.

This campaign, only available on social media, will last three months and aims **to increase awareness of hotels and all their services** to 2 main targets which are millennials and families:

- **Millennials** (25-34 years old) as they are ultra-connected and over-requested by every communication campaign. They are sensitive to the quality of the service and benefits and don’t hesitate to let it know by sharing their experience.
- **Families** because some of them turned away from hospitality through the past years saying that hotels don’t provide them with services that satisfied their needs and expectations.

This campaign, created with NetOnly, will be carried by **Albert**, a “super” butler, personifying all the services provided in hotels: staying at the hotel is still a unique experience with a high-quality welcoming and a tailor-made service that hosts will found nowhere else... even in short renting accommodations!

CimerAlbert, it is:

- A **dedicated website** www.cimeralbert.fr to present hospitality and its values, the diversity of establishments and experiences, and to emphasize services offered by hotels to their clients. It will resend to dedicated accounts on social media and will also host the three video made for the purpose of the campaign.
- **3 video** released on social media and on the website showing the everyday life of characters who look like us (a family, a young couple, a business traveler) and who face situations which can happen to those who don’t stay at Albert’s.
- A **Facebook** page: <https://www.facebook.com/CimerAlbert.fr/> and an **Instagram** account: <https://www.instagram.com/cimeralbert/> where will be posted articles, photos and video concerning values and services offered by Albert. A “sponsored” advertising campaign toward specific targets will be launched between April, 10 and May, 15.

At the end of May, CimerAlbert counted already 453.000 views on Instagram; 1.531.200 views on Facebook and over 70 publications.



SUSTAINABILITY

Project "joint eco-sign for Lithuania's-Latvia's restaurants and hotels in cultural objects"



The expansion of **cultural tourism** over recent decades has played a crucial role in the promotion and the protection of tangible and intangible heritage. **Lithuania and Latvia** are known for the countries' cultural heritage objects (especially mansions), little altered natural surroundings, resorts tradition, and many other things.

Both countries have a huge interest in **ecotourism** and in emphasizing the **need to protect cultural objects** and to efficiently use **regional heritage** for benefits of both countries.

The project „Joint eco-sign for Lithuania's-Latvia's restaurants and hotels in cultural objects“ started in April 2017 and will come to an end in September 2018. The main objective is to **increase the number of visitors** to cultural heritage sites in Lithuania-Latvia by the creation of a **new eco-sign** for restaurants and hotels in those areas.

The main project output would be **Sustainable Tourism**. It will in the long-run:

- Contribute to **increasing the number of tourists** and their visit duration to eco-sign hotels and restaurants;
- The newly introduced eco-sign will **raise the standards** for restaurants and hotels in the cultural heritage area who will have to adapt **“green technologies”** and to comply with strict other environmental requirements;
- Promote the **protection of heritage objects**;
- Promote **local culture and products**;
- Will in different ways **benefit the hotel and restaurant consumers**, and
- Undoubtedly increase the **countries' competitive advantage**.

During the project new and joint eco-sign will be created and implemented. This project is unique in worldwide, because of its focus on cultural heritage objects. New Eco-labeling system represents **11 aspects of sustainable business, 128 evaluation criteria, of which 42 are mandatory**. There are **20 project partners** involved, from the most beautiful, and state protected buildings in Latvia and Lithuania. All of them operate as **accommodation or/and restaurant businesses**.



Ms. Egle Lizaityte, Managing Director of Lithuanian Hotel and Restaurant Association on the left and Ms. Santa Graikste, CEO of Latvian Hotel and Restaurant Association, while promoting LATVIA-LITHUANIA cross border cooperation Programme.



GNI during the SIHRA GREEN



The first exhibition dedicated to **sustainable restaurants**, called **SIHRA GREEN**, was held from June 17th to 19th in Lyon in France.

There, GNI highlighted members' early engagement in **quality, new trends** and **sustainable development**.

GNI organized for example a panel discussion on **biowaste management**. Indeed, each year French restaurants produced 10 tons of biowaste, so this new industry could produce **green energy for 3 million of households**.

Caterers explained they are also concerned by sustainable development supporting **food donations**.

This event has shown the investment of GNI and its members into **Corporate Social Responsibility**.



UNTWO Annual Report highlights sustainable tourism's contribution to SDGs

The World Tourism Organisation (UNTWO) has published in June its **2017 Annual Report**, highlighting the **importance of tourism** to achieving the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.

According to the annual report, 2017 was a record year for international tourism. Indeed, **international tourist arrivals** reached **1,323 million in 2017**. **Europe** alone welcomed 671 million international tourist arrivals, representing **51% of the total international tourist arrivals**.

Tourism has grown above average, at around **4% per year, for eight straight years** – such uninterrupted growth was not recorded since the 1960s.



The report mentions that 2017 was the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. As part of the project, the UNWTO supported a consumer-oriented campaign, **'Travel.Enjoy.Respect,'** which will continue through 2018. The campaign aims, among other issues, to **increase awareness of the role of travelers in harnessing tourism's contribution to sustainable development**.

The report also highlights **events and activities organised by UNWTO** in the framework of the International Year to promote the sector's potential to lead **economic growth, social inclusion and cultural and environmental preservation**.

To have access and read the UNTWO 2017 Annual Report, please click [here](#).

TRADE SHOWS & EVENTS

Irish Tourism Minister opens Hotel Investment Conference



Minister for Transport, Tourism and Sport, Shane Ross TD is pictured with Michael Lennon, President of the Irish Hotels Federation (left) and Tim Fenn, Chief Executive at the Federation's **sixth Irish Hotel Investment Conference** which took place on **22 May 2018** in Dublin.

The annual event for hoteliers, investors and advisers provides expert market insights into the latest developments in the **Irish hotel and finance markets**.

Tourism and hospitality is continuing to be a significant success story for Ireland with **strong growth in overseas visitors and employment over the last seven years**.

To have more information on the speakers and sessions of the conference please click [here](#).



EHRL & Hotelstars (the Netherlands) seminar on Hotel Classification system in Tallinn



Estonian Hotel and Restaurant Association (EHRL) together with **Hotelstars the Netherlands** organised a best practise seminar for EHRL members in Tallinn.

Dutch colleagues from *HotelStars Union* shared the experience how star classification system works in Holland.

Seminar included discussions about the **developments of service quality** and reasons why **classification system and service classification** is still appreciated among hotels.

Dutch colleagues participated in 5* superior hotel classification inspection in Tallinn and also visited properties outside the capital, in Pärnu.

Similar trip was first made last autumn when EHRL visited Amsterdam - **EHRL encourages other HOTREC members to share best practises**, visit Estonia or vice versa to know more about different methods, technology and unique services and ideas other associations/hotels/restaurants has to offer.



Innovation Summit 2018 at the IHA Hotel Congress: SOLOS Mirror and Suite TV convince IHA members

Already for the third time, the German Hotel Association (IHA) held an **Innovation Summit** at its annual congress in Berlin on 25-26 June 2018, where its members voted directly to award the award for **start-ups** and the "**Product Innovation of the Year**" from among their preferred partners.



The smart mirror from **SOLOS Mirrors** prevailed among **start-up companies** for the **hotel fitness room**.

The SOLOS mirror for fitness studios and therapy centers in hotels measures the movements of a user without sensors on the body, shows how the exercises are performed, recognizes errors and outputs training parameters via visual elements directly on the mirror surface.

For the second time in a row, **SuitePad** won the **Preferred Partners' competition**, this time with the "**Suite TV**".

Suite TV transforms an existing hotel TV into a smart TV on which the guest in the hotel can enjoy the same entertainment level as he is used to at home.



Suite TV is a communication channel that brings hotels and guests closer together during their stay, increases guest satisfaction and creates financial added value for hotels.

*"We are pleased about the strong acceptance of our competitions and are proud of the **variety, quality and innovative power** of the contributions. We warmly congratulate the winners, but also all the other participants,"* says IHA Chairman Otto Lindner, explaining the association's commitment.



Belgian culinary team in Bocuse d'Or finals



Belgium qualified for the **2019 Bocuse d'Or** finals in Lyon, the **most prestigious international gastronomic competition in the world**.

The team took **6th place in the European finals in Torino, Italy**. Amongst the 20 participating countries, only the best 10 are qualified for the finale.

Chef Lode De Rover, commis Piet Vande Castele and gastronomic coach Jo Nelissen convinced the European jury of topchefs with the **typical Flemish asparagus being the star of their dish**.

Flemish Minsiter of Tourism Ben Weyts is extremely enthusiastic: *"With this result, **Flanders** profiles itself as a **culinary top destination**. By impressing at a competition as Bocuse d'Or, you establish **international culinary reputation**."*



Food Hotel Tech 2018 - An exhibition of digital tools for the HORECA industry



4-5 June 2018, Paris - For the second year in a row, the **Food Hotel Tech Fair** opened its doors at the Paris Event Center and exhibited the **latest innovation trends** dedicated to **hotel and restaurant professionals**. The Food Hotel Tech goal is to help professionals in the hotel and restaurant industry to **integrate the digitalisation in their services**.

The fair brought together 150 stands including 40 young SMEs, and gathered 4,500 trade visitors.

For this second edition, tech experts worked on **improving booking management softwares**. Their objective is to reduce their paper production and be more eco-friendly and **sustainable** but above all is to provide customers with **simple and dynamic** new applications and therefore offer them a **better experience** while making a reservation.

The *"Payment Systems of Tomorrow"*, the *"Internet of Things"*, *"Millenials and the Hotel Industry"*, *"How to deal with the Collaborative Economy?"* or the *"GDPR: a Restriction or an Opportunity for the Industry?"* were among the topics of the conferences organised during the two days.

Check Food Hotel [website](#) to find more about the two-day exhibition.