



Gaylord Palms Breaks Industry Record, Pre-Sells 1 Million Room Nights; More Than 1 Million Rooms Sold...Before Opening!

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KISSIMMEE, Fla.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jan. 4, 2002--Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center last week sold its 1 millionth room -- breaking an industry record for room nights pre-sold before opening day.

"No other resort - in the history of hotels everywhere - has ever sold this many room nights before a single guest walked through the door," said Mike Mason, vice president of sales and marketing.

The 1 million sold include all room nights under contract with groups through 2012. In 2002 alone, the resort is already more than 60 percent pre-sold.

"Sales of a hotel before opening are a very reliable indicator of the overall success of the property's positioning," said David DuBois, CMP, CAE; president of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA). "Having said that, I've never heard of a resort pre-selling so many rooms before. With this announcement, the industry is certainly watching Gaylord Hotels grow successfully."

The expansive \$450 million, 2.1-million-square-foot resort opens on Feb. 2 in the Kissimmee-St. Cloud resort area of Florida. Situated five minutes from the main gates of the Walt Disney World Resort, Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center's 68-acre property features 1,406 guest rooms including 115 suites, 400,000 square feet of convention, meeting, exhibition and pre-function space with a 178,000 square-foot exhibition hall.

"In our current economy, this is certainly the good-news tourism story of the year," said Colin Reed, president and CEO of Gaylord Entertainment Company. "It's a testament to our gorgeous new resort, an innovative sales effort, and to our commitment to serve the very specific needs of the convention market. The bottom line, those who have seen the resort want to know where to sign."

Under its 4.5-acre glass-topped atriums, Gaylord Palms is not a typical hotel. Guests can explore fascinating Florida landmarks and the destinations of St. Augustine, Key West, the Emerald Coast and the Everglades, including a re-creation of the oldest Spanish fort in America and a 60-foot sailboat that doubles as a bar.

"There is no other resort like Gaylord Palms in the nation," said Mason. "We've got an incredible product that meets the needs of today's meeting professionals. The secret to our success? We asked our customers what they needed in a resort and convention center, and then we built it."

From refreshing fountains gracing the entrance to late 19th century architectural details that distinguished Florida as a vacation paradise, the hotel's appearance is distinct and completely themed to the Sunshine State. The entire theme of Gaylord Palms is designed to reflect and bring to life the history, culture, wildlife, water, architecture and landscaping unique to Florida.

Meetings and conventions are served in grand style for groups from five to 5,000 with 61 breakout rooms in the meeting area. Conveniently, the three ballrooms and meeting rooms are located on two levels and connected to the hotel by an enclosed walkway. The 28,690-square-foot Sun Ballroom can be divided into separate meeting rooms and the 46,650-square-foot Osceola Ballroom includes a 40 x 100 foot stage complete with lighting, sound and satellite feed capabilities. A third ballroom located in Emerald Bay offers an additional 3,600-square foot function space.

Emerald Bay at Gaylord Palms Resort is an elegant, private environment for small groups. Exclusive meeting rooms in The Emerald Bay provide comfort and convenience. Meeting planners can choose accommodations for their group within this most lavish area of the hotel with 362 magnificent guest rooms, 26 luxurious suites and nine exclusive Presidential suites. Here, guests experience the finest in splendid amenities at every turn and intimate meeting groups can be self-contained.

Emerald Bay is designed to be "a hotel within a hotel," giving meeting attendees the feel of a small quaint hotel with the availability of the amenities of a major resort.

Canyon Ranch SpaClub at Gaylord Palms tops the list of resort amenities. The largest spa and fitness facility in Central Florida, at 20,000 square feet, is operated by Canyon Ranch, the leading operator of destination health resorts.

Also popular with meeting professionals is the La Petite Academy Kids Station, a 4,000-square-foot facility offering professionally staffed, accredited childcare services and unique educational programming.

The new resort also features two swimming areas, three signature restaurants, as well as several entertainment locations and shops.

Gaylord Entertainment Company is a diversified hospitality and entertainment business whose portfolio includes Gaylord Hotels: Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Nashville, Tenn.; Gaylord Palms Resort and Convention Center in Kissimmee, Fla.; and, Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine, Texas. The company's businesses also include the Grand Ole Opry, The Ryman Auditorium, The General Jackson Showboat, WSM Radio and Acuff-Rose Music Publishing. Gaylord Entertainment's stock is traded on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol GET.

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