



GLOBAL HOTEL ALLIANCE APPOINTS GLOBAL HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT

James Simmonds to lead the development of the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 2 October 2017: Global Hotel Alliance ("GHA"), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, today announced that James Simmonds has been appointed to the newly-created role of **Global Head of Development**.

In this new role, Simmonds will build and lead a team to source upscale and luxury hotel brand partners to join GHA's growing portfolio of 35 hotel brands worldwide. This growth objective is a key driver of GHA's five-year strategic plan, significantly increasing from 110,000 rooms today.

Simmonds brings a wide range of experience in business development and asset management, having worked for both hotel brands and real estate investors. Prior to joining GHA, Simmonds held senior development roles at Belmond, Rosewood Hotel Group and Mubadala Investment Company, working in London, Hong Kong and Abu Dhabi. In these roles, Simmonds has acquired an extensive industry network and is well-positioned to attract new brands to join GHA.

GHA is the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, created to help its members to compete more effectively in the face of the industry consolidation among major hotel companies and the growing marketing power of online travel agencies. Member hotels share an integrated global platform for guest recognition and loyalty rewards, DISCOVERY, which this summer welcomed its 10 millionth member.

"We are delighted that James has joined our senior team; he has an impressive track-record and I am confident in his ability to attract new partners to our family of independent hotel brands," says Chris Hartley, GHA's CEO. "GHA's business has grown considerably in recent years, and now that we have created this new role, we are looking to expand our alliance membership to the next level, competing effectively against the major hotel brands in the loyalty and CRM space, and offering a compelling solution for brands wishing to remain independent."

Originally from the UK where he graduated with first class honours from the University of Surrey, Simmonds started his career in London at Ernst & Young, before moving to Deloitte's corporate finance hospitality team.

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Editor's Notes:

About Global Hotel Alliance

Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) is the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, bringing together 35 brands with 550 hotels in 76 countries. GHA uses a shared technology platform to drive incremental revenues and create cost savings for its member brands. GHA's award-winning loyalty programme, DISCOVERY, provides over 10 million members exclusive opportunities to immerse themselves in local culture wherever they travel. GHA's hotel brands currently include: Alila, Anantara, Art Series, Atura, AVANI, Corinthia, Discovery Destinations, Doyle, Elewana, Eventhouse, First, GLO, Kempinski, Leela, Lungarno, Marco Polo, Meritage, Meydan, Mokara, Niccolo, NUO, Omni, Outrigger, Pan Pacific, PARKROYAL, QT, Rixos, Rydges, Shaza, Tangram, Thon, Tivoli, Ultratravel Collection and Viceroy. For more information, visit gha.com

About DISCOVERY programme

A memorable trip demands more than a comfortable stay. DISCOVERY, an award-winning global loyalty programme, provides over 10 million members recognition and perks across 550 hotels, resorts and palaces in 76 countries. Elite members have the opportunity to immerse themselves in local culture through *Local Experiences*, distinctive activities that capture an authentic taste of each destination. For more information, visit discoveryloyalty.com

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