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The Fazendin Portfolio Releases African Travel Industry Survey Results

African travel industry rebounding, Tanzania and Botswana hot destinations for 2010, but industry continues to struggle with lead qualification and closing sales

DENVER, CO (April 20, 2010) – Today The Fazendin Portfolio, the African safari industry's leading travel representation firm specializing in marketing African safari camps, lodges and safari outfitters, released the results of their Q1 2010 African travel industry survey. Key findings include Tanzania and Botswana emerging as top African travel destinations for 2010, dedication to online/social media in marketing African travel in 2010 and beyond, and a continued challenge in keeping up with and qualifying inquiries.

Over two-thirds of the travel agents and tour operators who responded to this survey sell all, or almost all, travel to Africa, indicating responses from true African safari experts. Among the respondents, leading African destinations in rank order included; Tanzania, Botswana/South Africa (tie), Kenya and Zambia.

"Over the past several months we have been sensing a segment of the industry really pushing back on the trend of *uber-luxury in the bush* that our industry has been driving over the past decade, so we asked our partners to rank the most important factors for their clients on safari," explains Sarah Fazendin, President of The Fazendin Portfolio. "We found that 43% of respondents ranked *accommodation creature comforts/luxury* as of top importance to their clients, which came in second to an impressive 68% ranking *quality/quantity of wildlife* as the most important element to their clients when planning an African safari. That tells us that if the wildlife experience is not spectacular, luxury accommodation alone will no longer satisfy today's travelers. I predict we will continue to see this division emerging in the industry, in one direction where luxury accommodations are the key selling point and in the opposite direction where the wildlife and overall safari experience lead the sales message."

When asked about the most important factors for their clients on safari, not surprisingly respondents highlighted that *camp guides/hosting* and *value for money* were also very important. Of less importance were *hitting the highlights*, which is a departure from previous year trends and signals room for more creativity in safari planning, vs. sticking to more developed and well-known circuits. *Green/eco-friendly operations* did not rank as being particularly important, signaling continued confusion and lack of clarity on the relevance/importance of this among consumers.

MORE

PAGE 2

When it comes to marketing safari experiences to consumers, 68% of operators surveyed will be employing *online/social media marketing initiatives* and 62% will be planning *client nights/events* as key marketing plan elements. This signals the continued importance of personal communications and one on one relationship building in the safari selling process, as well as need for cost-effective marketing initiatives.

When asked what the greatest business challenge has been thus far in 2010, several respondents mentioned *keeping up with the volume of inquiries*. However, they were all quick to qualify that not all inquiries are serious and it's becoming increasingly difficult to qualify and make the sale while being time efficient. For example, one respondent commented, "we've had a great deal of interest, but the perception is that the pricing should be as aggressive if not more than 2009.... this objection takes a great deal of time to overcome. We're spending longer on inquires and closing fewer sales."

For more information on this survey, or to speak with Sarah Fazendin about the African travel industry or The Fazendin Portfolio's marketing services, contact via email: <http://www.fazendinportfolio.com/contact> or call U.S. office at +1.303.993.7906.

The Fazendin Portfolio provides travel industry representation and services including marketing, sales and public relations consulting to African travel companies. Specializing in small, owner-operated safari properties, the travel industry representation company currently represents Heritage Hotels (Kenya), Express Travel Group (East Africa), Alfajiri Villas and Galdessa Camp (Kenya), Offbeat Safaris (Kenya), Palacina (Kenya), Dinknesh (Ethiopia), Mbali Mbali Camps and Lodges (Tanzania), The Zanzibar Collection (Zanzibar), Conservancy Safaris (Namibia), Footsteps in Africa (Botswana), Transfrontier Parks Destinations (South Africa and Mozambique), Explore Gorongosa (Mozambique), Coral Lodge 15.41 (Mozambique), Mozambique Voyages (Mozambique), Nanzhila Plains Safari Camp and Kafunta Safaris (both in Zambia). To learn more about this collection of luxury African travel adventures or to learn more about the company's travel marketing services please visit <http://www.FazendinPortfolio.com>.

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About The Fazendin Portfolio: The Fazendin Portfolio provides innovative and cost-effective marketing, sales, representation and public relations services to Africa-based travel organizations. The company combines passion for extraordinary journeys with a clear understanding of international travel markets, and helps the world's best travel companies develop and manage imaginative, strategic and profitable marketing plans. For more information please visit www.fazendinportfolio.com.