

NOEL'S VIEWPOINT - JANUARY 2011

The overall November arrivals figures are encouraging as they show that the likes of Germany and Russia are ahead, in spite of the collapse of Eurocypria. It is no mean achievement that Cyprus has not lost business overall in 2010 and a tribute to the Cyprus Tourist Organisation in its efforts to diversify away from the island's reliance on the UK.

However, the UK must not be ignored, because with UK numbers falling year on year, it will never be possible to grow the number of visitors to Cyprus. The UK still represents over 50% of all arrivals.

The more Cyprus falls out of fashion with the UK travelling public, the more are our members vital to maintaining the flow of tourists to our home country. Recently, the CTO announced their 'AMBASSADOR' initiative in order to generate interest in the island. Of course our members have been ambassadors for many years and though fewer in numbers, they still account for nearly 200,000 visitors to Cyprus annually.



Ayia Napa, Cyprus

AGTA Cyprus Specialist Members have always been staunch supporters of Cyprus Airways. We have looked on in dismay as the fortunes of our National



AGTA Chairman - Noel Josephides

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Carrier have once more taken a dip. Comments at Government level in Cyprus about the very viability of the airline have not helped bookings in the UK as many clients now feel nervous. They worry that if they book Cyprus Airways they might well lose their money if the airline collapses.

The airline definitely has to drag itself into the 21st century. It has the best service and more often than not the lowest prices of all airlines to Cyprus but, no one knows about it because, in the UK, there is no promotion or PR. The UK management knows what needs to be done but it is Nicosia that needs to take the initiative. Cyprus Airways is being left behind by other, less competent, airlines who market themselves better.

We need a two pronged attack. The Government, on the one hand, must issue positive statements and show that it is fully behind the national airline and Cyprus Airways, on the other, must learn to compete with the likes of Monarch, British Airways and EasyJet. *Cyprus cannot afford to lose Cyprus Airways because it can never*

rely on foreign airlines to act as the bridge between the island and the rest of the world.

How does 2011 look? It is far too early to tell. The initial December booking period, always very slow, has not been helped by the freezing weather that has gripped the UK. The uncertainty as to any improvement in the UK's economic situation is resulting in a loss of public confidence. The British are saving their money instead of spending it and this will not help the travel industry. Overall, *I believe that 2011 will be no worse than 2010 as far as Cyprus is concerned.*

However, the recent increase in VAT on foodstuffs will not help prices locally and it is about the very high local prices that we tour operators receive most complaints. Cyprus is getting too expensive to visit and no matter whether this is a result of greed on the part of retailers or other factors; something has to be done about it.

It would not be so bad if the service matched the prices but, in my experience, we fall far short. Most of all, I am disappointed at the prices in the many small supermarkets and general stores in the Paphos and Polis areas. Not only do these establishments look a mess and keep their prices high, but it is very difficult to raise a smile from those sitting at the till ready to take your money.

We need training as to how to behave towards the visitors to our island. We should not just be there to take the money. We should be there to *give a service and good value for the prices we are charging.* The problem is not with our hotels or with the rates they charge but with what happens once the visitors arrive. It is there that *we have to improve and we must do so quickly.*

SUNVIL HOLIDAYS CELEBRATES 40 YEAR IN THE UK TRAVEL INDUSTRY

On 29.7.10 [Sunvil Holidays](#) hosted a dinner for its staff and trade guests at the 'Olde Bell Coaching Inn' in Hurley, Oxfordshire in celebration of its 40th year anniversary. During the event the company also celebrated the retirement of its Sales & Marketing Manager, John Grew, who retired at the age of 70. John (pictured with female colleagues from Sunvil Holidays) worked for Sunvil for 16 years. The event was convened at the said picturesque, venue in order to enable Sunvil staff and guests to visit the company's recently renovated Boat, 'The Genevieve' [a 40ft x 7ft beaver stern saloon – built by Taylor and Bates of Chertsey in 1914!]. The Olde Bell will be promoting the Genevieve for a variety of river cruises to its wedding parties and corporate clients.



Ready to cut the cake are Sunvil Directors Noel Josephides & Dudley Derpathog, pictured with Lillian (CTO London) & Yannis (AGTA)

THANOS HOTELS

The [Anassa](#) has once again (eleventh year running!) been named one of the "Best Overseas Leisure Hotels in Europe, Asia Minor and the Russian Federation". It was also voted one of the top ten "Best Hotel

Spas Worldwide" in the [Condé Nast Traveller's Readers Travel Awards 2010](#).

The [Almyra](#) is officially a Five Star Hotel since May 2010.



Almyra



Anassa

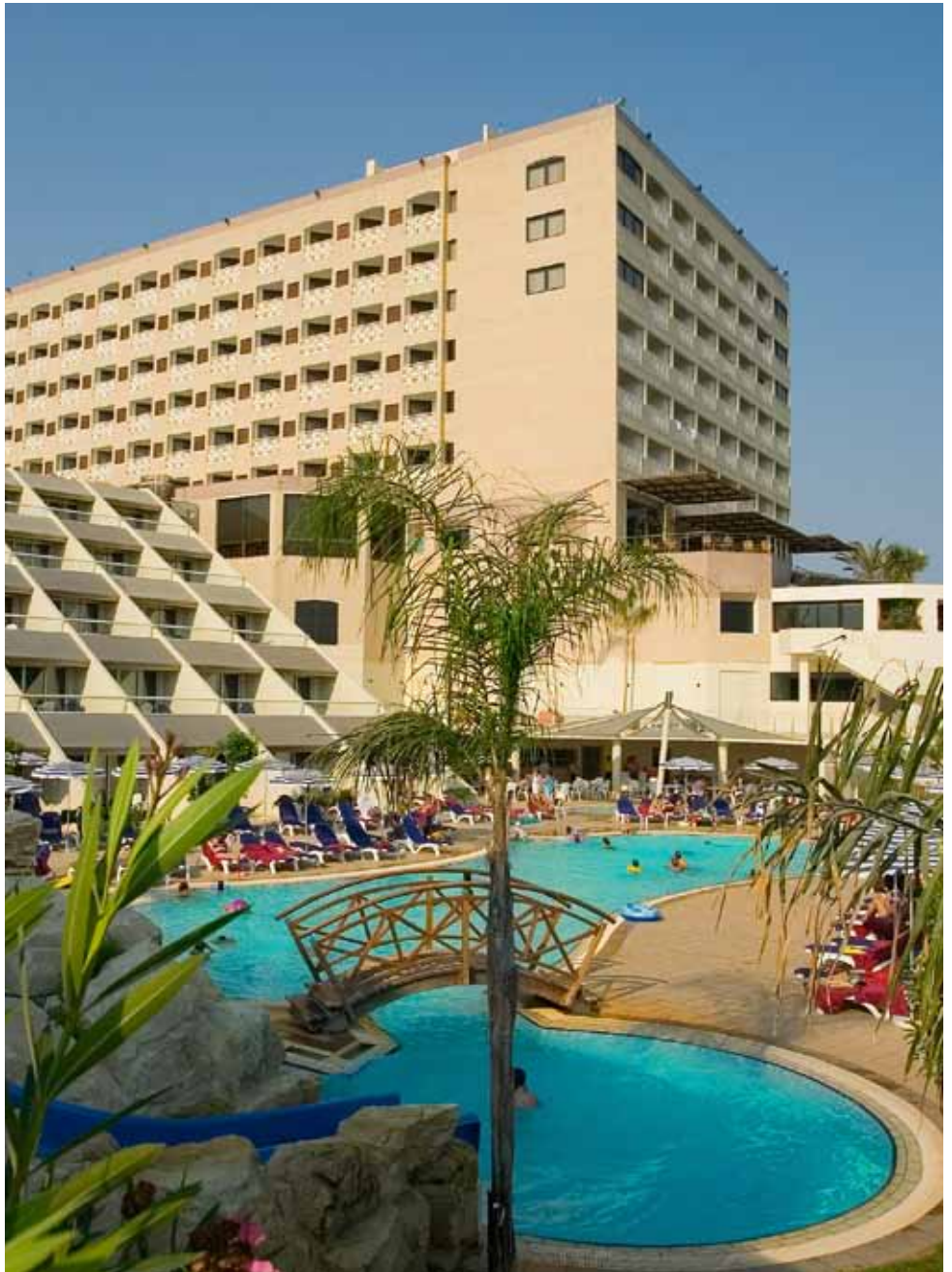
ST RAPHAEL RESORT

St Raphael Resort has, for the third consecutive year, been voted as *'Cyprus' Leading All Inclusive Resort'* and for the second year in a row the award as *'Mediterranean's Leading Resort'* at the 2010 World Travel Awards.

St Raphael Resort has also begun a noteworthy scheme by which to support the [World Food Programme \(WFP\)](#)

A Press Release by the Hotel states:

'The United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) is the world's largest humanitarian agency, fighting hunger worldwide. St. Raphael Resort Limassol Cyprus finds hunger 'simply inexcusable', and that's why we are proud to support such a worthwhile cause. WFP delivers food wherever and whenever it is needed most. In 2010, WFP aimed to feed more than 90 million people in 73 countries. WFP is completely reliant on voluntary donations, which is why St. Raphael Resort is urging all guests to participate in its **€1.00 per room' programme. 100% of the funds raised through this programme will go to WFP. Just €1.00 can provide 5 schoolchildren with a nutritious meal.** We also have a collection box at the reception and you too can help our efforts by making a donation directly to WFP via our website. Let's see how many kids we can feed together! Click the banner and donate today!'



St Raphael Resort

FOREST PARK {CYCLAMEN RALLY – CLASSIC CARS}

The **Forest Park–Cyclamen Rally** was organized successfully on the weekend 27–28 November for the 7th consecutive year. 40 classic cars took off on Saturday at 14:30 from the Classic Car Inn at Skarinou, and after 82 km and 4 Special Stages ended up at the Forest Park Hotel in Platres for the night. Sunday's route included a visit to the Botanical Gardens of Amiantos, where drivers

and navigators had the opportunity to forget for a while road book and timers and admire the beauty of Cyprus nature. In the competitive field, first in the general category were Kyriakos and Antonia Teratsia in an Alfa Romeo of 1984. *Awards to winners were donated by the Forest Park Hotel.*



Pictured presenting a miniature classic car to one of the winners is Mr Eraclis Skyrianides, Managing Director of Forest Park Hotel

WORLD TRAVEL MARKET

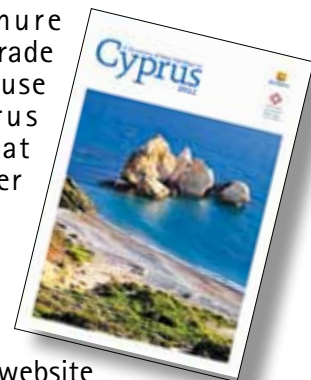
AGTA participates annually at the World Travel Market [held at the Excel centre] with a stand within the Cyprus pavilion. During the 2010 event (8 to 11 November) the council and members of the Association held formal and informal meetings with representatives from the Cyprus Tourism Organisation, Cyprus Airways, Cyprus Hoteliers and most of the Island's tourism bodies including, ACTA, CHA, STEK, the main Resort Management Companies of Larnaca, Limassol, Paphos, Ayia Napa & Protaras, and representatives from CSTI and the Rural Cyprus team.



Pictured from left to right: Michael Metaxas (Head of Marketing CTO), Lefkos Phylictides (Director General, CTO), H.E. Mr A Paschalides (Minister of Commerce, Industry & Tourism of Cyprus), Marios Hannides (CTO Board Member) and Orestis Rossides (Director CTO London)

2011 AGTA CYPRUS BROCHURE

The 2011 AGTA Cyprus brochure [members' directory] was launched during late October and at the WTM in November. This important AGTA marketing tool is produced annually to promote Cyprus in the UK. Distribution of the brochure includes a UK trade mail-shot and use by the Cyprus Tourist Office at trade / consumer exhibitions.



WEBSITE

The Association's website www.agta.co.uk is currently being upgraded again in order to make the site more user friendly and improve its potential and links. The new work will be completed by March 2011.

OTHER NEWS



TRAVLAW - *Launch of a free legal helpline for all AGTA members.*

A free initial consultation will be provided by *Travlaw*, who have been Affiliate UK members of AGTA for over five years. *The company is a travel specialist law firm* with experience in all types of legal issues that face the industry. Their team are happy to discuss any travel-related legal issue. You can call them on 0113 258 0033.

NEW MEMBER - 'Your IFA Ltd' an independent financial adviser company specialising in Pensions, investments, savings and life assurance has joined AGTA (UK) as UK Affiliate Member for 2011. Contact for AGTA matters:

Mr. Yiannis Kokotsis
07711 701450

MEMBERSHIP LAPSES: Affiliate UK Membership for Holiday Taxes, Lounge Pass and MB Solicitors (MB law) lapsed on 31.12.2010

AGTA 2011 AGM

The *21st AGTA Annual General Meeting* will be held on Wednesday, *15.6.2011*-7 to 10 p.m. As normally, after the official part of the AGM the Association will host a dinner for members and guests. The event will be held at the usual venue for AGTA meetings, the Cyprus Brotherhood, London. Please make an entry in your diaries.

Details of new members will appear in future lists / brochures and on the AGTA website in due course.

END NOTE:

AGTA NEWS is a quarterly produced newsletter distributed to members and industry networking tourism partners. Comments on published items should be e mailed to the AGTA (UK) Secretariat: Email: yannis@agta.co.uk

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Pictured: The team of expert Travlaw Solicitors