

PRESS RELEASE

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The third Mercado Workshop : business and conviviality in Salzburg!

The third Mercado Workshop was held in Salzburg last week on 1-3 March. Eight ECM members joined the workshop, each one inviting a corporate client.

The secret behind the success of this meeting lies in the formula. Mercado is a workshop for ECM convention members, and each participating bureau brings along one of the main agencies it routinely deals with who represent the lucrative corporate meetings sector. Working to a schedule in the form of twenty minute speed-dating appointments, the bureaux exchange clients to the mutual benefit of all. The clients hear about meetings destinations with which they are not so familiar and the bureaux find themselves face-to-face with prospective new clients with the potential for this to translate into future sales and business. Participating cities were the Convention Bureaux of Barcelona, Bergen, Berlin, Copenhagen, Lyon, Oslo, Salzburg and Valencia.

The venue for Mercado 2012 was *Salzburg Congress Centre*, located in the heart of the city. Participants started with an 'ice-breaking' session, cooking their own meal the Austrian style at Klessheim – the catering school which is part of the renowned *Salzburg Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management*. From that beginning through the appointments and coffee breaks to the closing Mozart dinner on Friday, a good deal of business (and much else besides) was transacted in a friendly and lively manner.

The feedback from clients and bureaux has been equally positive.

Elisabetta Gori, representing IN TOUCH in Denmark, a client invited by *Wonderful Copenhagen* city tourist office and convention bureau said: *"The stay in Salzburg was very pleasant and friendly. The programme was intensive, so I could meet with all ECM members and find out about the conference and meetings offers of their respective cities. Also, I discovered Salzburg and its venues which are most appropriate for the different events we organize"*.

Mateo Asensio, from the *Barcelona Convention Bureau* said: *"This workshop was very well organised. For ECM members, it was great to see colleagues bringing along such excellent clients. So the investment proved absolutely worthwhile. The manner and spirit in which the workshop was conducted was also businesslike and at the same time agreeable and courteous. Mercado contains a simple but very important message - namely that we are not always competitors and we can be co-partners to our mutual benefit"*.

All attendees are looking forward to taking part in the next edition.

ECM (European Cities Marketing) is the leading European association of city tourism offices and convention bureaux, representing 120 members across 100 major cities in 32 countries. Its aim is to improve the performance and maintain the competitiveness of its members through the exchange of best practice and information.

For more information and pictures, please contact:

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