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NEW LUXURY BOOSTS RENAISSANCE OF THE SOUTH WEST

Timely £13.5m St Moritz Hotel development brings major economic boost

Over 75 years ago, thousands of people used to make an annual pilgrimage to the Cornish coast as their much needed escape from the daily stresses of urban life. Packing up beautiful cars with children, dogs and trunks, year-on-year they would drive for anything up to eleven hours to reach their final destination – the renowned St Moritz Hotel.

There they would discover unsurpassed personal attention, award winning gastronomy, luxurious décor and all the glory of the beaches and surrounding countryside. Now, with an ongoing renaissance of the South West, ever improving travel links and a growing concern for our carbon footprint, the complete transformation of one of Cornwall's best loved hotels will recreate this original feeling and return the St Moritz to its former glory, reviving the reputation and standards of the original hotel within new state-of-the-art surroundings.

Situated above Daymer Bay in Trebetherick near Rock, with uninterrupted views out across the mouth of the River Camel to Steppa Point, the new £13.5 million St Moritz will be the first purpose built, luxury hotel in Cornwall for over thirty years. The new hotel design comprises 48 hotel bedrooms made up of 16 suites and 32 double bedrooms. Also on site will be one of the most luxurious global spa concepts, a fully fitted gym, a large restaurant and external dining deck, a bar, lounge and coffee lounge, a games room, full leisure suite and large, open landscaped gardens. The new hotel will complement the much loved St Moritz Villas which are situated next door and visitors to the villas will also have unlimited access to all of the hotel's facilities.

A local team of over 40 fulltime, year round staff will be recruited and trained to the very highest standards of service based on the heritage of the original St Moritz, and a local 'deli' will be situated onsite selling the very best local Cornish fare including organic breads, fresh fish from Padstow harbour, fruits, preserves and wines. It is expected that the local economy will experience a boost of around £1.3 million per annum as a direct result of St Moritz and its high spend clients.

The new St Moritz is the brainchild of brother duo Hugh and Steve Ridgway. With over 25 years of high level management and property experience, Hugh is the day-to-day Managing Director and developer for the site and will continue this role into the running of the hotel. As Chief Executive of Virgin Atlantic Airways, Steve brings a wealth of marketing, project management and brand building expertise and both are highly passionate about the new concept and what it can deliver for investors, guests and the local economy. To recreate the careful ambience and glamour of the St Moritz heyday mixed with the most contemporary concepts in design and luxury, Hugh and Steve have enlisted a specialist team of South West based experts.

From Charlestown, Cornwall, the architects, Alan Leather Associates is an award winning consultancy with a growing reputation for environmentally sustainable projects. The stunning, Hamptons inspired interiors will be crafted by Absolute Design, the Falmouth based company behind Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall. This will be the first time the agency has undertaken a whole hotel concept and to complete the design team Mike Nelhams, the Curator of Tresco Abbey Gardens will work together with internationally renowned garden designer John Moreland to create the plush sculpted gardens.

Hugh Ridgway says, "The original St Moritz Hotel was created by a passionate local entrepreneur called Mr Underwood in the 1930s. He was continually pushing the highest international standards of luxury, service and catering and in its heyday, the St Moritz had an unrivalled following amongst the elite of society including politicians, Harley Street consultants, the leading city bankers and film and entertainment stars. As a team we are extremely passionate about recreating the original glory of St Moritz with the very best of contemporary design and luxury. We are steadfast in our resolve that the hotel, its staff, and its produce will undoubtedly be a market leader in the new renaissance for Cornwall and the South West."

The first phase of the new St Moritz Hotel will open in July 2007.

Ends

Issued on behalf of St Moritz Hotel by Nectar Events & Publicity. For further information please contact Juliet on Juliet@nectar-events-publicity.com or 07710 344101 or Rhona on 07740 410052.

Factsheets:

St Moritz Hotel – a history

In the early 1930s an enthusiastic young couple, Mr and Mrs Richard Underwood, commissioned a striking large house be built on a piece of land called the 'Greenaway' above Daymer Bay in North Cornwall. The situation of the house was stunning, affording views over the mouth of the River Camel and to Stepps Point beyond.

During the war, the Underwood's decided to convert the house into a boarding school for boys, housing evacuees from many cities across the UK. Following the war, the Underwood's decided to close the school and open it as a Hotel and Guest House. Mr Underwood was especially passionate about food and the highest standards of cuisine and in the 1940s he travelled to St Moritz in Switzerland. Such was his passion for the place and the high tradition of service and attention to detail there, he decided to name his hotel after the Swiss town and impart the caché of the foreign destinations upon his own enterprise.

The Underwood's developed a hotel concept that led with international trends in terms of hospitality, interiors and gastronomy and before long St Moritz had developed a significant reputation and following amongst the highest levels of UK society. Politicians, film stars, business leaders, bishops and poets and writers flocked to St Moritz every year as an annual pilgrimage, escaping the stresses of city life to admire the stunning views, frolic in the surf and enjoy the highest levels of personal service and care courtesy of the Underwood's and their St Moritz team.

The Queen also came to visit the area and was introduced to Richard Underwood who was appointed as the head of the Cornish Tourist Board. He continued to send all of his chefs to Switzerland to learn their trade, a major investment for a hotel in those days. The beneficial results were always in evidence however as accolades and awards were continually won and the hotel's reputation for the finest gastronomy and hand crafted speciality foods continued to prosper. The hotel itself grew in shape and size as new wings and rooms were added to cater for the ever growing flow of enthusiastic guests and a much loved Round Room was created, where guests could enjoy the most amazing sunshine over cream teas and evening aperitifs.

After 40 years of living at St Moritz, the Underwood's decided that it was time for them to retire. Although, sadly, the couple are no longer with us, the rebuilding of the new £13.5m St Moritz will bring Richard Underwood's vision to life once more. The standard of attention to detail and commitment to service, plus the unmistakably friendly ambience and passion for the enterprise will be reborn and St Moritz will once again become a special place in many people's hearts and minds.

History collated with the gratefully received help of Mr Peter Tuthill, local historian.

St Moritz – the team

As a £13.5 million investment, the scale and vision of the new St Moritz Hotel and apartments need to be led, directed, managed and implemented by the highest end professionals. In keeping with St Moritz heritage and the team's commitment to the strongest talent in the South West, the directors have collated a team with the same dedication to standards, sustainability, creativity, efficiency and deliverability as themselves. They are:

Alan Leather

Architect, Charlestown

Alan Leather Associates is an established, award winning, multi-disciplinary Architectural practice providing high quality services throughout the South West of England and internationally. Their commitment to improve the quality of the built environment has led to their becoming increasingly involved with environmentally sustainable projects.

Owen Davies

Architect, Southampton

Operating across the whole of the South of England, Owen Davies Architects was formed in 1997 with the purpose of providing an efficient, cost effective, highly professional architectural service to its clients.

They have considerable experience in the commercial, industrial, retail, residential, leisure, conservation and defence sector, together with expertise in all forms of building procurement, and in particular, the many types of design/build, develop/construct methods.

Absolute Design

Interior Designer

Absolute are one of the leading interior design agencies in the South West. A multi-disciplinary practice established in 1991, the interior department was opened in 2000 and already has a national reputation for their work in the hospitality industry, with recent projects including Jamie Oliver's new restaurant 'Fifteen Cornwall'.

Mike Nelhams

Curator, Tresco Abbey Gardens

Mike was specifically chosen for his expertise in horticultural design and landscaping in a salt environment. He is a Royal Horticultural Society trained Horticulturalist and is currently Curator at Tresco Abbey Gardens on the Isles of Scilly. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Horticulture as well as an RHS judge and gardening writer.

John Moreland

International Garden Designer John, a landscape architect and Fellow of the Society of Garden Designers, is a four times Gold Medal winner at RHS Chelsea. He is a respected show garden's judge at RHS and international flower shows.

Rosina Shepherd

Estaury Estates, Trebetherick

Rosina, who owns Estaury Estates, has an intimate knowledge of the North Cornwall property market and was personally responsible for marketing the prestigious Roserrow Golf and Country Club development in Polzeath. Prospective purchasers can view the interior specifications at her new design studio "Dream Boat"

Alex Roads

John Bray & Partners, Rock

Established for over 30 years John Bray & Partners are a niche selling estate agency, specialising in properties for sale in Rock, Daymer Bay, Polzeath and Port Isaac in North Cornwall. With over 50 years of property experience the team handle everything from beach huts to estates alongside a highly successful holiday lettings business.

St.Moritz - Board of Directors

Hugh Ridgway

For the past four and a half years Hugh was Project Manager for the development of the St.Moritz site and now, with his brother, has acquired the property from the previous owner. Together with a newly formed Board of Directors he intends bringing to fulfilment the dream of establishing a unique, standard setting development at St.Moritz that not only takes full advantage of its incomparable location but also meets the demands of the most discerning buyer.

Steve Ridgway

As Chief Executive of Virgin Atlantic Airways, Steve brings to the Board a wealth of marketing, project management and business development expertise. Steve joined Virgin Atlantic in 1989 and has been part of the team running the airline since 1994. In the late 80's he helped create the hugely successful British Steel Challenge and then the BT Global Challenge Round the World Race. Before that he was Project Head and Chief Pilot on the Virgin Atlantic Challengers that recaptured the Blue Riband for the fastest North Atlantic crossing.

Fraser Whyte

Fraser is the Chief Executive and a shareholder of Strand Harbour Development Management Ltd, a company with its roots in construction and with an excellent reputation for the sensitive and imaginative management of large development projects. Recently, the company rebuilt the historic and

award winning Cams Estate near Portsmouth where, along with period and new buildings, it created a high quality office campus in the centre of a 27 hole golf course overlooking Portsmouth harbour. Fraser is a Fellow of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors.