

10 March 2008

Woods Bagot Brings ‘Barefoot Luxury’ to four of the Globe’s Top Holiday Destinations

Global architect Woods Bagot is previewing designs for four sumptuous resort developments in locations as diverse as Belize, Cape Verde, Cyprus and Mauritius at MIPIM 2008.

The plans propose to evolve the luxury development market by bringing a new form of “barefoot” opulence to retreats in the leisure sector.

A selection of current designs will be launched at 4pm on the first day of MIPIM (TUESDAY MARCH 11) at Woods Bagot’s stand – 18 on the London Stand - and will feature client and government representatives of projects in Mauritius and Cyprus.

Rob Steul, Principal at Woods Bagot, said: “Our designs seek to create resorts which feel much more like a casually elegant private residence, rather than a traditional hotel – think weatherboard beach house in the dunes, rather than the manicured garden of a resort.

“These designs have been created to appeal to the harried city dweller by building an escapist dream of a relaxed, casual, yet incredibly comfortable guest experience. We call this approach “barefoot luxury” – connecting the guest to the natural essence of the site, while providing luxury services in a modern architecture inspired by the local vernacular, materials and scale.

“Woods Bagot’ belief is that our designs must create resort destinations which rejuvenate not only the visitor, but the site, the local culture and the local economy – all in a very sustainable way.”

Woods Bagot has created a design philosophy that delivers the rare experience of casual yet luxurious service in locations which have been created as very individual experiences in unique locations – the firm has given it the term “barefoot luxury”. Using this mantra as the dominant theme, Woods Bagot has now expanded its enviable portfolio of prominent projects to exotic locations such as Mauritius, Belize, Bali and Cape Verde.

Research conducted among over a 1,000 consumers by Woods Bagot supported its view that the modern tourist is weary of generic travel experiences. A reliance upon star ratings as a gauge of quality from resort operators now leaves consumers cold – 62 per cent said that an individual, bespoke approach to luxury should be included in their preferred destination.

The research clearly indicates that progressive holidaymakers from the ABC1 income bracket now demand design that uniquely compliments the surrounding landscape. They want to discover resorts that respond to the cultural context of the natural environment in addition to providing world class service and facilities.

Each one of the following sites is part of an established tourist destination which is in need of reinvigoration in terms of the designs that currently populate their regional market.

Belize: Dimension Developments has chosen Woods Bagot to raise design standards and sustainable construction in Central America. The 36-acre resort will be located at Placencia, a stunning long barrier island with spectacular Caribbean Sea frontage. The architectural aesthetics of the hotel and residential buildings have been created with a modern take on a British colonial style in mind with 90 freehold residences and a luxury hotel lounging on the side of a beautiful lagoon.

Cape Verde: Commissioned by Profile Group, Woods Bagot has designed a luxury resort and residential development situated on the island of Sao Vicente - one of the ten islands that make up the Cape Verde group. The impressive site covers over 3200 acres and presents a rugged landscape of steep valleys and escarpments, which meet the Atlantic ocean at a dramatic and enchanting beach. The development will include upwards of 9000 dwellings, central hotel buildings, town centres, parks and sporting facilities.

Cyprus: Woods Bagot and prominent Cypriot developer Pafilia have created the Minthis Hills golf and residential estate in the mountainous land outside Pafos, Cyprus. 600 luxury housing units are spread among the lazy contours of Cyprus' northern hills at this 1,200 acre site.

Mauritius: Woods Bagot is working with O&C Mauritius on the south east coast of this idyllic Indian Ocean island on 800m of uninterrupted coastline for its Le Bouchon



Resort. This destination – which will feature a hotel spa and 200 luxury freehold residences - includes a white crushed coral beach, basalt rock and turquoise sea.

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About Woods Bagot

International design practice, **Woods Bagot** provides its clients with innovative design solutions that are both functional and inspiring. This is demonstrated by the successful delivery of a range of high profile projects within the commercial workplace, hospitality, mixed-use, education and science sectors.

Established in 2001, Woods Bagot's London studio has a dynamic team of 85 professionals. Since its inception, its young, integrated team has developed a diverse portfolio of significant projects including:

- Piccadilly Tower, Manchester
- Liverpool Central Village
- Multiplex headquarters, London
- Rolls building, London
- Eversheds LLP new London headquarters