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Best Western Hotels & Resorts Expands Global Footprint with 13 New Hotels in South Africa

Orion Hotels to Join International Hotel Brand

PHOENIX, Ariz. (March 8, 2016) – As part of its dynamic development program in Southern Africa, [Best Western® Hotels & Resorts](#) is growing its portfolio from one to 14 total properties in the region over the next 12 months. The multi-phase signing agreement with [Orion Hotels](#) is integral to the brand's expansion plans in Africa and provides travelers with a more geographically diverse portfolio at which to earn and redeem Best Western Rewards® points.

Phase one will see the addition of Velmoré Hotel Estate (Erasmia) and Hotel Promenade (Nelspruit) to the Best Western Plus® portfolio and the Magoebaskloof Hotel to Best Western. The rebranding of the three hotels is projected to be complete by July 2016. The remaining 10 hotels will rebrand by the end of Q1 2017. Each of the 13 hotels will adapt Best Western brand standards, but will operate under the management of Orion Hotels. The two companies plan to further expand throughout Africa as Orion Hotels continues to lease, manage or acquire new properties, which will also be branded with one of the Best Western Hotels & Resorts brands.

"More than ever, as we continue our journey in taking the reimagined Best Western brand into the future, we are dedicated to offering guests memorable travel experiences and the best in hospitality around the world," said David Kong, President and CEO of Best Western Hotels & Resorts. "This relationship positions Best Western for growth across the continent of Africa and also presents an opportunity for Orion Hotels' guests to take advantage of a truly global loyalty program."

[Velmoré Hotel Estate](#) consists of the Velmoré Hotel, a stunning establishment aimed at the affluent luxury traveler, and Velmoré Grande, which showcases opulence with everything from oversized rooms to extravagant finishes. Ideally situated between Pretoria and Johannesburg, Velmoré Hotel Estate offers a tranquil country setting on the border of the Hennops River with spectacular views of the Magaliesberg Mountains. Its unique architecture is inspired by traditional French Provence, and the sprawling layout over an expansive landscape creates a sense of space and serenity.

The [Magoebaskloof Hotel](#) is a charming country hotel that sits along a ridge, offering rooms with spectacular views of the superlative Magoebas Valley. Guests can enjoy an idyllic and relaxing break in the countryside with friendly personal service and comfortable accommodations.

[Hotel Promenade](#) is a historic hotel in one of the town's most prominent landmarks, the original town hall of Nelspruit. This heritage city hotel offers guests spacious accommodations combined with genuine local hospitality.

"It is with immense pride and joy to announce that Orion Hotels & Resorts is joining one of the largest hotel companies in the world, and the rebranding to Best Western repositions Orion Hotels as the largest international hotel brand in South Africa," said Franz Gmeiner, CEO of Orion Hotels. "Furthermore, the association with Best Western creates significant career opportunities for our management and staff. In addition to rebranding and upgrading our existing properties, securing management agreements and leases will be part of our core focus."

Best Western has an existing presence throughout Africa including locations such as Nairobi, Kenya; Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania; and Lagos, Nigeria. In the development pipeline are the Best Western Premier Garden Hotel Entebbe in Entebbe, Uganda and two Best Western-branded hotels in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to launch later this year.

"This opportunity to showcase several of our brands in South Africa will introduce Best Western to many travelers in a key feeder market to the rest of the continent," said Suzi Yoder, Senior Vice President of International Operations, Best Western Hotels & Resorts.

Orion Hotels in Southern Africa will join more than 4,100 hotels worldwide that participate in Best Western Rewards, one of the richest and truly international loyalty programs in the industry, offering the lowest redemption thresholds for awards and points that never expire. Best Western Rewards is a partner of South African Airlines' Voyager Programme. In addition to Best Western Rewards points, members can also earn miles by staying at Best Western hotels worldwide. For stays that occur this May and June, Voyager guests can earn double miles for stays in any Best Western hotels globally.

For more information, please visit www.bestwestern.com and www.orionhotels.co.za.

About Best Western Hotels & Resorts:

Best Western® Hotels & Resorts headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz., is a privately held hotel brand with a global network of 4,100* hotels in more than 100* countries and territories worldwide. Best Western offers seven hotel brands to suit the needs of developers and guests in every market: Best Western®, Best Western Plus®, Best Western Premier®, Executive Residency by Best WesternSM, Vīb®, BW Premier Collection® and GLōSM. Now celebrating 70 years of hospitality, Best Western provides its hoteliers with global operational, sales and marketing support, and online and mobile booking capabilities. More than 26 million travelers are members of the brand's award-winning loyalty program Best Western Rewards®, one of the few programs in which members earn points that never expire and can be redeemed at any Best Western hotel worldwide. The brand's partnerships with AAA/CAA, Minor League Baseball, and Harley-Davidson® provide travelers with exciting ways to interact with the brand. Best Western continues to set industry records regarding awards and accolades, including Business Travel News naming Best Western as the best midscale hotel brand in 2014 and Best Western Plus as the best upper mid-price hotel brand in 2014 and 2015, four consecutive Compuware Best of the Web gold awards for best hotel website, and seven consecutive AAA/CAA Hotel Partner of the Year awards. Nearly sixty percent of Best Western branded hotels earned a TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence award in 2015.

* Numbers are approximate, may fluctuate, and include hotels currently in the development pipeline.