



## **2010 Global Spa Summit Announces Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism Has Joined as Platinum Sponsor**

***With the Summit Set for Istanbul in May, Partnership Shines Spotlight on a Vibrant City and Country – and its Extraordinary Spa and Wellness Culture***

**New York, NY February 4, 2010** -- The Global Spa Summit (GSS), the leading annual event for spa and wellness industry executives, today announced that the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism has joined as a Platinum sponsor. The Summit and the Ministry will partner not only to promote the growth of the spa and wellness industries worldwide, but also to increase global awareness of Turkey's unique national spa and thermal culture - both historic and modern – and the rich, cultural mosaic that is Istanbul.

Istanbul is a natural fit for the Summit, being held May 17-19, 2010 at the historic Çırağan Palace Kempinski Hotel. As one of the world's oldest geographic/cultural 'crossroads' – where East literally meets West – it dovetails with the 2010 Summit theme of 'Bridges Worth Building,' and the conference's focus on establishing the many connections between spas, wellness, health, medicine, tourism, fitness, and beauty - to name a few. Additionally, Istanbul has been designated the 'European Capital of Culture' for 2010, and the metropolis is showcasing its cultural riches all year long, with a roster of special events.

"Delegates from last year's Summit overwhelmingly indicated that Istanbul was their first choice for 2010, and while we were courted by numerous other countries, Turkey was simply the perfect fit," said Pete Ellis, Chairman of the Board of the Global Spa Summit. "I want to thank the Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the city and country in general, for being so supportive of the Summit – and warmly welcoming the hundreds of global industry leaders that will be gathering there this spring."

**The Turkish Spa Scene:** Spa culture is deeply ingrained in Turkey's national identity, reflecting its unique geography and history. The country is home to more than 1,300 natural thermal springs (ranking among the top two in the world), as well as the traditional Turkish hamam, an Ottoman institution that has been part of the country's lifestyle for centuries - and is now becoming popularized across the globe. Turkey's medical, wellness and thermal spa tourism industries are expanding significantly, and its offerings uniquely 'bridge' the ancient and super-modern: from new, 5-star luxury resorts, to nearly 500-year-old Turkish Baths.

2010 Summit delegates will be immersed in this spa and cultural scene. With the Summit hosted by the Çırağan Palace Kempinski Hotel (the only Imperial Palace Hotel in Turkey, and the residence of the last Ottoman Sultans), delegates will experience a special event/tour of the property's royal, historical hamam (Tarihi Hamam), typically closed to the public. Outings to other major resort hotel spas throughout the city are scheduled, along with a visit to the authentic Cağaloğlu Hamam in Old Istanbul, dating back to 1741.

A city tour of Istanbul's cultural landmarks (mosques, museums, etc.) will include a visit to the Topkapı Palace, the spectacular official residence of the Sultans for four centuries, with its ancient harem hamam. The award-winning Richmond Nua Wellness Spa (a premier destination spa in Turkey, and one hour away from Istanbul), will offer delegates special pre-and post-Summit packages. Further benefits from the Ministry connection include discounted fares from Turkish Airlines for delegates travelling internationally.

Another local connection for the annual conference: the GSS's 'Student Challenge' for 2010 will involve students and faculty from both Istanbul Technical University and the University of Southern California squaring off on a unique design competition - involving the 5<sup>th</sup>-century thermal springs site at Kula in west-central Turkey.

**For media information contact:** Beth McGroaty, [beth@rbicom.com](mailto:beth@rbicom.com), +1 213 300 0107 or +44 (0) 870 121 6066.

**For registration/sponsorship information contact:** [info@globalspasummit.org](mailto:info@globalspasummit.org), or visit: [www.globalspasummit.org](http://www.globalspasummit.org)

**About Tourism Turkey:** The Turkish Ministry of Culture and Tourism and its overseas offices promotes Turkey around the world. It provides information on all aspects of the country and Turkish culture through its worldwide offices and websites, as well as running advertising and media campaigns. For more info visit: ([www.goturkey.com](http://www.goturkey.com)) or ([www.tourismturkey.org](http://www.tourismturkey.org)).

**About Global Spa Summit:** The award-winning Global Spa Summit is an annual event that attracts top-level executives and leaders from around the world with interest in the spa and wellness industries. Delegates from diverse sectors including hospitality, investment, finance, real estate, medicine, manufacturing, technology, consulting, product, tourism and other related industries attend this intimate, high-level gathering focused on advancing the spa and wellness sectors. With increasing attendance by more countries each year, the Global Spa Summit delegation represented 32 different countries from all continents in 2009.