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# ***Turisme de Catalunya* organises a business mission in the United States to promote the meetings and incentives travel product**

**Catalonian tourist business people will visit the North American cities of Chicago and Minneapolis to sell their offer in congresses, conventions and incentives**

Tuesday, 14 June 2005— *Turisme de Catalunya* is running a business mission consisting of two work sessions in the United States of America. The first session took place yesterday in Chicago, and the second will take place today in Minneapolis. Twenty Catalanian business people from the meetings and incentives travel sector will have the chance to establish commercial contact with nearly 70 North American professionals from the field of congresses, conventions and incentives.

These workshops take place at the *Peninsula* hotel in Chicago and at the *Solera* restaurant in Minneapolis, and they are completed with presentations to the press about the Catalanian tourist offer in general and its gastronomy. In this sense, the meeting in Chicago closed with a gastronomic dinner by chef Fermí Puig. This dinner formed part of the international tour that *Turisme de Catalunya* launched in order to introduce the Year of the Gastronomy.

## **Business Tourism in Catalonia**

A total of 650,000 tourists travelled to Catalonia last year for business reasons. Out of these, 100,000 were not Spanish. The economic impact of the total number of visitors was 570 million euros, of which 110 million were generated by international tourism.

In these last years, the North American market has become a priority for Catalonia. In 2004, the number of tourists from the United States increased by 4.2%, and the number of night stays rose above 10%. Taking into consideration the good behaviour of this market, *Turisme de Catalunya* is carrying out promotion activities in order to increase the presence of Catalanian destinations in the United States, and in this particular case, in the business and congresses sector.