



Some thirty companies that organise congresses world-wide take part in the professional presentations of *Turisme de Catalunya* at the EIBTM exhibition

This professional fair ending today in the Catalanian capital is considered to be the most important fair of the meetings industry at European level

Thursday, 1 December 2005- *Turisme de Catalunya* took advantage of its participation in the new edition of the European Incentive, Business, Travel and Meetings Exhibition (EIBTM) ending today in Barcelona to establish professional contacts and to strengthen the Brand Catalonia in the meetings industry.

Turisme de Catalunya showcased during this edition the offer of spaces and services suitable for the celebration of meetings, congresses, conventions, and so on, at a stand where the convention bureaux of Lleida, Sitges, Costa Daurada, Tarragona and Girona participated as co-exhibitors. During the three days of the fair, *Turisme de Catalunya* and its co-exhibitors presented before some thirty congress organising companies world-wide the possibilities of the destination Catalonia as a venue for professional meetings, gatherings and conventions. The buyers who had requested in advance to attend came basically from European countries, although professionals from Brazil, Australia or India were also attended.

The EIBTM exhibition is extremely useful to establish countless professionals contacts, as it is attended by representatives from big corporations and companies, professional associations, agencies, the media and international experts. More than 6,000 people visited the 2004 edition.

Turisme de Catalunya lends support to this fair of international renown that brings together exhibitors and visitors from one hundred countries from all over the world. Ignasi de Delàs, the Head of *Turisme de Catalunya*, was in charge of welcoming all the participants to the EIBTM during a reception jointly run by Turisme de Barcelona and Turespaña that took place on the first day of the fair.

In addition, as from tomorrow, 20 of the buyers invited by the EIBTM will have the opportunity of getting first-hand knowledge of part of the offer that *Turisme de*



Catalunya presented within the framework of the fair. The Costa Brava, the Costa Daurada and Sitges are some of the destinations that these professionals will get to know during the after-tour organised by Reed Travel Exhibitions, the firm responsible for the event.

Last year, Catalonia hosted this exhibition for the first time after a selection process set up by Reed Travel Exhibitions, organiser of the fair. Barcelona was then chosen as the new venue until 2008. Among the candidatures competing there were important European capital cities, including Geneva, which had been hosting the EIBTM since 1988.

Congresses, conventions and incentives in Catalonia

The congresses, conventions and incentives tourism focuses mainly on the city of Barcelona, a city with a wide experience in the organisation of fairs and congresses (Construmat, Alimentària, Saló Nàutic, SITC...). The Catalonian capital is one of the leading cities in Europe and the world concerning international congresses, and it ranks first in the ICCA 2004 list (International Congress & Convention Association) regarding the number of events, ahead of cities such as Vienna, Singapore, Berlin and Hong Kong.

Business tourism in Catalonia coexists very well with the offer of structured products, such as golf, culture, gastronomy and active tourism, among others.