

The Director of *Turisme de Catalunya* will travel to Moscow tomorrow to meet with the leading Russian tour operators on the occasion of Moscow's MITT Fair

***Turisme de Catalunya* will take part in Moscow's *International Travel & Tourism Exhibition* with its own 400m² stand and the presence of some twenty firms and entities of the Catalan tourist sector**

Tuesday, 22 March 2005.— *Turisme de Catalunya*, the body attached to the Catalanian Ministry of Trade, Tourism and Consumer Affairs, will be present for another year running in Moscow's *International Travel & Tourism Exhibition* (MITT), with its own stand of 400m² and the offer of the Catalanian destinations. From tomorrow onwards and until 26th March, the presence of Catalonia in the most important tourist meeting of Eastern Europe will be represented by some twenty tourist companies and entities that will exhibit their products in the Russian market. Ignasi de Delàs, the Director of *Turisme de Catalunya*, will travel to Moscow tomorrow where he will meet with Russian tour operators with the objective of informing them of the main novelties of the Brand Catalonia for this tourist season.

The Catalanian presence at the MITT fair will be represented by tourist promotion bodies from Costa Brava, Costa Daurada and Barcelona, the leading destinations of Eastern European tourists in Catalonia. The following companies will also be present at the stand of Catalonia: Universal Studios – Port Aventura, Montserrat, Viatges Novovira, Sol-Vip-Travel, Rigat Park & Spa Hotel, Ancodes Viatges, Viatges Cosma Tur, Estival Park Salou, Hotel Majestic, Mani Event, AC Hotels, Hotel Ra, Beach, Thalasso, Spa, Derby Hotels, Serveis Municipals - Barcelona Zoo, Marfil Travel and Guitart Hotels.

Catalonia pioneered tourist promotion in Eastern European countries with the inauguration of the first Catalanian Tourist Promotion Centre in 1993. *Turisme de Catalunya* has currently offices in Moscow and Kiev, and is studying extending to other new markets of recent incorporation into the European Union. In this sense, contacts have started with tourist agents from Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia.



In 2004, Catalonia received 134,000 tourists from Russia who totalled 2.5 million night stays, and represents the top destination of this market in the Spanish state.

Two out of every five Russian tourists have already been to Catalonia

The tourists arriving from the Eastern European countries are characterised by a high degree of loyalty to Catalonia; 40% of tourists had already visited the country before. Their average stay is of 10 days, a figure well above the mean among foreign tourism (8 days). The sun and the beaches are the product most often chosen by the Russian market, as well as those destinations with a high leisure component combined with the cultural and commercial offer.