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### **Re-nourished Beach Makes Paradise Even More Pristine In Sarasota**

Sarasota, Fla. (June, 2009) – Sarasota & Her Islands are scoring high on national rankings this summer with Lido Beach being named one of America’s best restored beaches and the Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota ranked as the number one domestic hotel and number three hotel world-wide by Expedia.com’s Insider Select List.

Lido Beach has been raising eyebrows since the April 2009 completion of a federal-grant supported re-nourishment project. The beach on Lido Key was expanded 150 - 200 feet and has more than 600,000 tones of new white sand. It has been restored to its condition prior to the damaging 2004 and 2005 hurricane seasons. The restoration was recognized by the American Shore & Beach Preservation Association in May as one of America’s best restored beaches.

“Guests to Lido Beach will delight in the beauty of the beach,” said Sarasota Convention and Visitors Bureau President Virginia Haley. “We locals are amazed with the transformation and are so happy to be able to share it at its best, with the world.”

Lido Beach is located just beyond St. Armand’s Circle, which is commonly referred to Sarasota’s Rodeo Drive offering dining, shopping and entertainment. With Lido Beach being conveniently located near St. Armand’s Circle as well as the rest of the destination’s miles of white sand beaches, accommodations, attractions, culture, shopping and dining, the refreshed appearance of the beach is estimated to inject a potential of \$21 - \$37 million in economic impact into Sarasota, according to city officials.

The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota is a 266-room destination resort with championship golf, private beach-front facilities, award-winning dining, and is also centrally located to all that Sarasota has to offer. The resort was ranked as the number one hotel in the United States and the number three hotel across the globe by Expedia.com's Insiders' Select List.

Rankings for the list are determined by taking the more than 160,000 traveler opinions combined with the "value" of the hotel for the money spent (as compared with other similar properties) to Expedia's network of travel experts for review. More than 30,000 hotels and resorts were reviewed and scored. The highest scoring properties were then ranked.

The ranking puts the spotlight on the Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota's quality and value. With Expedia.com being home to more traveler reviews than any other online travel agency, the ranking is proof that vacationers consistently recognize and appreciate these virtues after staying at the Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota.

The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota has a Members Beach Club on Lido Key, which makes available the award winning Lido Beach to all its registered guests. The resort has a nightly "sunset celebration" at Lido Beach with a drum procession leading to the sunset that helps build the anticipation of the famed "green flash" of the setting sun over the Gulf of Mexico.

The rankings of Lido Beach and Ritz-Carlton come within days of Siesta Key Beach being ranked the number two beach in the country by Stephen P. Leatherman, a.k.a. Dr. Beach. The rankings are cause for celebration by passing on special deals and packages to vacationers. These include:

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**The Helmsley Sandcastle Hotel**, Lido Beach, Sarasota ([www.HelmsleySandcastle.com](http://www.HelmsleySandcastle.com)) is offering great discounts this summer! From May - August 2009 ask for the SUMMER

SPECIAL to receive a 20 percent discount. All dates in June are at a 35 percent discount. Rates and view based on availability at time of reservation.

**The Lido Beach Resort**, ([www.lidobeachresort.com](http://www.lidobeachresort.com)) is offering five exceptional packages to meet any budget or expectation. The packages are:

#### "HONEY WE'RE STUCK WITH THE KIDS"

Make your next family getaway fun for the kids and the adults alike. This family fun package includes:

- A complimentary beach tote stuffed with beach toys, a souvenir beach towel, and snacks to keep the little ones occupied.
- (2) Complimentary cocktail coupons for parents to enjoy at the poolside Tiki Bar.
- Children may participate in daily poolside activities.
- Also enjoy complimentary beach chairs and cabana.
- Transportation to and from St. Armand's Circle, complimentary parking, and no resort fees.

Call 1-800-441-2113 and request the "FAMILY BEACH" package.

#### "STOCK THE FRIDGE AND SAVE!"

Worried that endless days dining out on the town might put a damper on your vacation budget? No worries; stock your fridge full of all your favorites and save \$50.00! Each guestroom at the Lido Beach Resort features:

- Full refrigerator
- Microwave oven
- Dual stovetop
- Dishwasher
- Dinette, dishes, and silverware

Just present a valid grocery receipt of \$50.00 or more from your favorite local supermarket showing the items you purchased for your stay, and the Lido Beach Resort will give you an instant credit of \$50.00. So stock up and enjoy! The first \$50.00 is on us! Call 1-800-441-2113 and request the "STOCK MY FRIDGE" package – Based on a two-night minimum

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#### "OVER THE TOP"

Why not go VIP all the way? Treat yourself to all that is fabulous at Lido Beach Resort with this OVER-THE-TOP package.

- Guaranteed South Tower...it's the only way to go.
- Guaranteed 10th floor or higher...stunning views will take your breath away.
- Guaranteed Gulf View in the resort's finest accommodations...the finest in the land.

- An in-room amenity waiting for you upon arrival with chilled champagne...indulge.
- Your own window-side table in the Lido Beach Grille, reserved especially for you for the duration of your stay...it will even have your name on it.
- Daily Breakfast for two at your table and dinner for two one night in the Lido Beach Grille...mouthwatering.
- Evening turn-down service...a truffle on your pillow ensures sweet dreams.
- Complimentary beach chairs and cabana pre-reserved just for you...sun and beach.
- Transportation to and from St. Armand's Circle, and complimentary parking...explore your surroundings.

Call 1-800-441-2113 and request the "OVER THE TOP" Package – based on a three-night minimum

#### "HONEYMOON PACKAGE"

You don't have to be on your honeymoon to reserve this romantic getaway. Package includes:

- King size, Gulf View room in South Tower
- Chilled Champagne upon arrival
- Chef's homemade Chocolate Truffles
- And a romantic dinner for two in the Lido Beach Grille.

Call 1-800-441-2113 and request the "HONEYMOON" Package – Based on a 3 night minimum.

#### "SUNCOAST OFF-SHORE BOAT RACE"

Get a bird's eye view of the action for the 2009 Sun Coast Offshore Grand Prix Boat Races. Taking place over the Fourth of July Weekend and encompassing the excitement of the beach, the boats, the bands, and the best time of the summer! This package includes:

- Gulf Front room in the South Tower with large, private balcony...feel the roar of the engines!
- Complimentary Sunday Brunch for two...a mouthwatering feast with a view of the race course.
- Complimentary parking...hard to come by on race day.
- The beach party of a lifetime...Nobody does the races better than the Lido Beach Resort.

Call 1-800-441-2113 and request the "OFFSHORE PARTY" Package – based on a two night minimum

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**The Ritz-Carlton, Sarasota** ([www.ritzcarlton.com/resorts/sarasota](http://www.ritzcarlton.com/resorts/sarasota)) is offering the "Peace of Mind" package to reinforce the importance of quality and value at the Ritz-Carlton. The package includes deluxe room accommodations, full American breakfast for two served in the restaurant, daily internet access and local phone calls, overnight parking, and Ritz Kids special

activities program for two youngsters. In addition to all of these extra perks and privileges, the Peace of Mind package offers the option of three nights for the price of two; five nights for the price of three; and a week for the price of only four nights. The package is available through Sept. 30, 2009 and pricing starts at \$349 for double occupancy.

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**Sarasota and her string of eight islands are located along Southwest Florida's Gulf Coast between Tampa and Ft. Myers. Sarasota and Her Islands is comprised of Sarasota, Longboat Key, Lido Key, St. Armands Key, Manasota Key, Siesta Key, Casey Key, Englewood, Nokomis, North Port, Osprey and Venice. In addition to sandy beaches, Sarasota and Her Islands also offer numerous cultural and ecological attractions. For more information on discovering Sarasota & Her Islands, call the Sarasota Convention & Visitors Bureau at (800) 522-9799 or visit [www.sarasotafl.org](http://www.sarasotafl.org).**