

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **New China Ready Workshop added to the Connect Travel Marketplace**

ATLANTA, December 20, 2017—With 40 decision makers from top Chinese tour operators confirmed to attend Connect Travel Marketplace, Connect Travel has added a complimentary China Ready Workshop to the conference agenda.

According to the Department of Commerce, the United States welcomed 2,972,264 Chinese visitors in 2016, up 14.7 percent from 2015, and these travelers spent \$34.8 billion in 2016. “Visitors from China spend over \$95 million per day in the U.S., making Chinese travelers the most valuable visitors for U.S. destinations,” said Will Seccombe, president of Connect Travel. “We added the China Ready Workshop to the Connect Travel Marketplace agenda to help North American destinations and travel suppliers learn what it will take to increase their business from the fastest growing international feeder market.”

Connect Travel will host 200 general managers, product directors and business development managers, including 40 representatives from leading Chinese tour operators, Feb. 18-20 in Orlando, for prescheduled, one-on-one appointments with North American suppliers to develop travel products for the new year. “We have an impressive group of Chinese travel companies joining us for Connect Travel Marketplace,” said Shari Bailey, director of international of Connect Travel. “These companies range from large global powerhouses to travel brands that are new to the North American market. Companies originating from all regions of China will participate.”

Confirmed Chinese companies include GZL International Travel Service, CTrip.com International Ltd., Alitrip Network Technology (Fliggy), JD.com, Tongcheng International Travel Service Co., Ltd., American Asia Travel Center Inc. (Super Vacation) and China Swan International Tours. The China Ready Workshop is sponsored by Welcome Chinese and the China Outbound Travel & Tourism Marketplace.

“China remains one of the most important booming markets for world tourism, so it is important to know how Chinese visitors need to be welcomed and hosted and how their expectations can be met,” said Jacopo Sertoli, CEO of Welcome Chinese. “This is one of the central themes that the tourism industry has to face, and Welcome Chinese Certification has been created right for this purpose. It is an exclusive standard issued by the China Tourism Academy, a government department of the Chinese Ministry of Tourism, which allows the incoming sector to access an officially recognized network and to address, with specific requirements, the huge market of Chinese visitors and to stand out from the competition. We are pleased to present Welcome Chinese to the American tourism industry during the Connect Travel Marketplace and to start a successful collaboration.”

For more information on Connect Travel Marketplace and the China Ready Workshop, please contact Shari Bailey, director of international of Connect Travel, at [sbailey@connecttravel.com](mailto:sbailey@connecttravel.com) or register at [connecttravel.com/events/marketplace](http://connecttravel.com/events/marketplace).

## **About Connect Travel**

Connect Travel is the leisure tourism division of Connect and serves as a strategic marketing partner, connecting destination marketers with the products, services and people that will allow them to thrive in a rapidly evolving and highly competitive marketplace. Connect Travel offers a full suite of marketing solutions and events for destination marketers. For more information, visit [connecttravel.com](http://connecttravel.com).

## **About Connect**

Connect is a leader in the meetings, travel and tourism industry. Specializing in destination marketing, the company produces a full suite of digital programs, online and mobile solutions, meetings business and travel magazines, trade shows and consumer events, travel guides for newspapers and leisure magazines and destination information, which is distributed through broadcast and custom programs. More information about the company's brands and services is available at [connectmeetings.com](http://connectmeetings.com).

## **About COTTM**

Now entering its 14th year, China Outbound Travel & Tourism Market is the only B2B exhibition in China dedicated to the outbound travel market. COTTM is a unique platform for international countries and travel product suppliers to showcase their destination and services to the ever-expanding Chinese outbound market. COTTM 2018 will take place April 16-18, 2018, at New Hall, National Agricultural Exhibition Center in Beijing.

## **About Welcome Chinese**

Welcome Chinese Certification is the new hospitality standard specifically dedicated to Chinese travelers. CTA's sponsorship guarantees uniformity in the quality of service and supports all the certified businesses to access the Chinese travel industry.