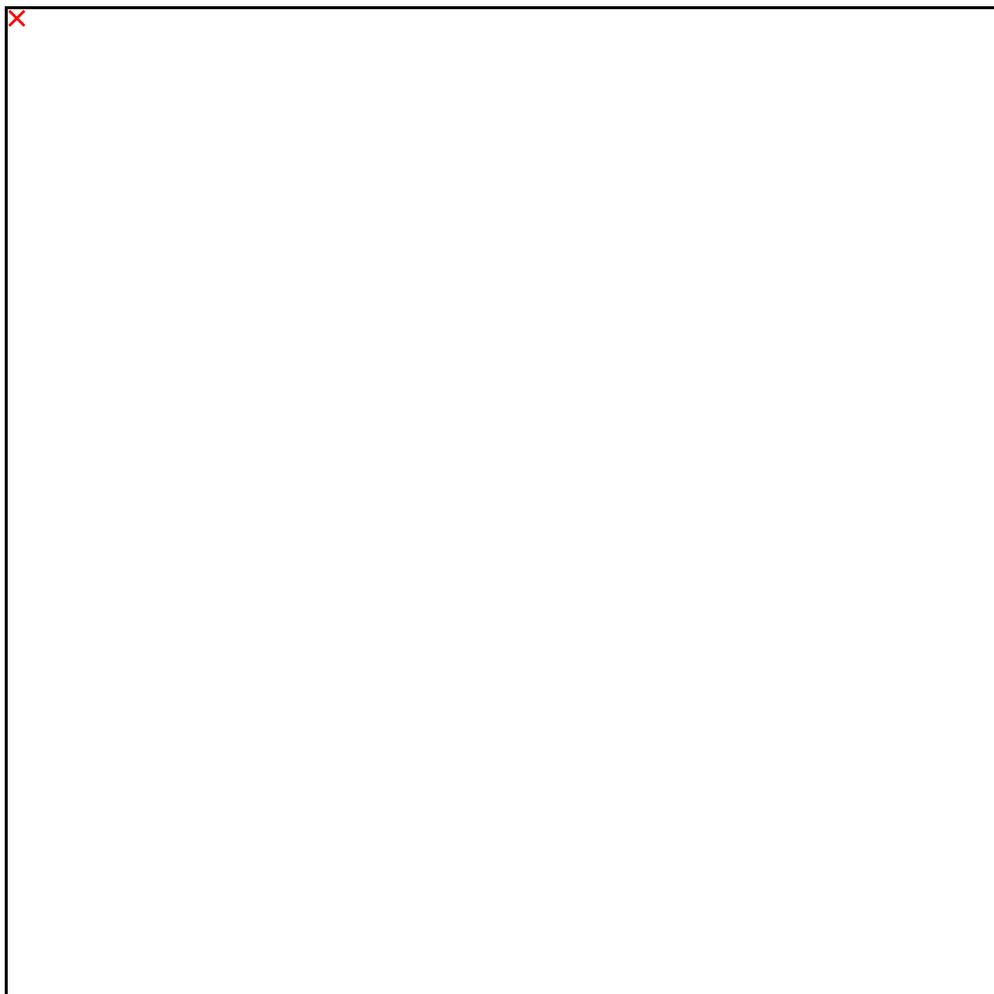


# Benchmark's Wanderlust Lifestyle Travel Guide Takes Top Honors-2017 INDIE Awards

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The Woodlands (Houston), Texas, September 2017 ... BENCHMARK®, a global hospitality company, is the winner of the prestigious 2017 INDIE Award for the "Best Digital Marketing Campaign" from the Independent Lodging Congress. The INDIE Awards recognize independent hospitality enterprises, celebrating those independently-branded hotels and hospitality professionals who have created a path to success through innovation, a sense of place, and a spirit to serve.

"We are extremely pleased that our innovative [Wanderlust Lifestyle Travel Guide](#) is being recognized with this prestigious award from the Independent Lodging Congress," says Ted Davis, Chief Sales & Marketing Officer for Benchmark. "It is a wonderful tribute to our mission, and to our passionate and pioneering marketing professionals and valued partners."

Tatiana Swedek, Chief Millennial Officer for the Independent Lodging Congress, said, "The INDIE Awards recognize and celebrate hotels and professionals who exhibit innovation, a sense of place and a spirit to serve. The Independent Lodging Congress is thrilled to present the 2017 Best Digital Marketing Campaign Award to Benchmark for the company's creative and original Wanderlust Lifestyle Travel Guide."

In creating the integrated and wide-ranging digital platform for the Wanderlust Lifestyle Travel Guide, Benchmark looked to its original mission to inform, inspire, and provide dynamic, immersive and memorable travel experiences, working in concert with the company's marketing publishing partner, Hawthorn Creative, on crafting editorial content for many aspects of Wanderlust storytelling. "When planning a personal trip or a business meeting, leisure travelers and conference planners look first to the destinations that might meet their needs," notes Mr. Davis. The Wanderlust Travel Guide provides a

comprehensive array of imaginative, carefully curated content covering all of Benchmark's remarkable destinations. It offers special insights into the local culture, history, natural wonders, recreational opportunities and regional cuisine. Guests can log into the Benchmark website or that of its two brands, Benchmark Resorts & Hotels and the Gemstone Collection, and find four distinctive areas with an array of frequently-updated information for every traveler, taste and timeframe. Discerning guests can log on to these sections: Like a Local, The Weekender, Flavor of and The Adventurer. The Wanderlust Travel Guide takes a much deeper dive into a destination than conventional guidebooks and internet platforms because the data is provided by the staff at Benchmark's hotels and resorts worldwide, with in-depth knowledge of the area.

Guests can make plans to hear a Hawaiian Talk Story at Turtle Bay Resort on Oahu's legendary North Shore, take a tour of Haunted Miami and stay at one of Benchmark's properties in the area, explore the Legend of Sleepy Hollow or the spectacular Pepsi Sculpture Garden near New York's Doral Arrowwood Resort, or make a splash at North America's highest underground waterfall, Ruby Falls in Tennessee, from the nearby Chattanooga Hotel.

Says Ted Davis, "Travel is more than a great hotel, resort, spa or travel itinerary. Travel is immersing oneself into something new, different, life enriching and life affirming. Benchmark is proud to have pioneered this concept from its earliest days. The Wanderlust Travel Guide by Benchmark showcases the expertise and creativity of many, many Benchmark team members and is part of our ongoing mission to provide engaging transformational travel experiences for our guests. The INDIE Award is a salute to all the Benchmark team members that daily help enrich their guests' travel experiences."

The Independent Lodging Congress is a place of discovery, collaboration and idea generation for owners and operators of independent hotels. Its Annual Congress, scheduled this October 4-5 in Brooklyn, New York, connects visionaries and thought leaders within and outside the independent lodging sector for the betterment of the industry and the guests it serves.

### **About BENCHMARK®, a global hospitality company**

BENCHMARK®, a global hospitality company, is a trailblazer in the development, management, marketing and owner-advisory services of resorts, hotels, conference centers and exclusive private clubs. In addition to the company's iconic Benchmark Resorts & Hotels portfolio, the Gemstone Collection is a distinctive luxury portfolio of independent hotels & resorts in highly preferred destinations. BENCHMARK'S distinguished and proven reputation is deeply-rooted in core values that are focused and aligned with exceeding ownership and stakeholder performance expectations. The combined portfolios feature nearly 70 unique and distinctive properties domestically and internationally. The company leadership and valued employees are passionately committed to delivering the industry's most authentic, enchanted, soulful, vibrant, unrivaled and memory-making experience. BENCHMARK'S progressive "Be The Difference" culture and values are a cornerstone to the company's nearly 40 years of extraordinary achievement and prosperity. Many properties have been recognized with the Benchmark Conference Centers® mark of meeting excellence. BENCHMARK, a global hospitality company, is based in The Woodlands (Houston), Texas, and has regional offices in Park City, Utah; Miami, Florida; New Brunswick, New Jersey; Seattle Washington; and Tokyo, Japan.

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