



SCANDINAVIAN OUTDOOR AWARD for DESTINATIONS

Premiere for the renowned SOA during ITB in Berlin, 7. - 11. March 2018

The Scandinavian Outdoor Award for Destinations (SOA Destinations) in the Nordic countries has been presented for the first time to the travel audience in Central Europe with the focus on German speaking countries at ITB "The World's Leading Travel Trade Show" in Berlin.

SOA Destinations will be given out to travel destinations and tourism companies once a year and presented for the previous years' achievement. The jury with nine members consists of international tour operators, specialized in outdoor and adventure travel in Scandinavia, travel experts and destination managers.

The "SOA" is presented since 2006 through Scandinavian Outdoor Group and traditionally features the testing and evaluation of outdoor products by members of the group of 63 Scandinavian outdoor brands.

SOA Destinations gets organized by Jan Badur/NordicMarketing and Matthias Aßmann/MANDEL, who is project manager for SOA at Scandinavian Outdoor Group.

We are proud to announce the first winners of the Scandinavian Outdoor Award for Destinations. Congratulations and "Herzlichen Glückwunsch":

REGION AWARD - Visit Vuokatti

PRODUCT AWARD - Hotel & Spa Resort Järvisydän

ENTREPRENEUR AWARD - Sapmi Nature, Swedish Lapland

DEVELOPMENT AWARD - Lake Saimaa, Purest Finland

EVENT AWARD - Baltic Snow Call

ONLINE AWARD - Pyhä Ski Resort

HONORABLE MENTION - Äksyt Ämmät, Guesthouse to Guesthouse

All winners have been presented at the award ceremony during the trade show in Berlin. The destination representatives informed all teams at home immediately and good news spread like in flight and sprayed joy and satisfaction in the regions. "We are overwhelmed and touched by the positive feedback we received from jury, destinations and the tourist boards – and of course the pure happiness of the winners. This was a wonderful start for the project" says Matthias Aßmann.



Jury Members at the official meeting, 6. March in Berlin:

Anja Schillinger, Teamleitung Europa, **Hauser Exkursionen**, tour operator
Christoph Winkels, Product Skandinavien, **Highländer Reisen**, tour operator
Patricia Lawitschka, Owner, **Club Aktiv**, tour operator
Ronny Friedrich, Sales Manager Europe, **AT Reisen**, tour operator
Els Hochheimer, Sales Director, **ZeitRäume Reisen**, tour operator
Charly Siegl, Owner, **Faszinatour**, outdoor company
Daniel Menzel, Managing Director, **Tourismusverband Fläming**, DMC
Albert Rinn, Sales Director, **Outdooractive**, Digital Solutions for Tourism
Martin Kössler, Initiator of **Scandinavian Outdoor Group**, CEO, **HuginBiz**

Jury Winner Motivations:

REGION AWARD - Visit Vuokatti

Visit Vuokatti has presented a humble and yet colorful description of their region, which offers a multitude of activities during all seasons. The many engaged family owned businesses assure preservation of the heritage, culture and production history.

PRODUCT AWARD - Hotel & Spa Resort Järvisydän

The resort shines through an appealing, though-out concept with family atmosphere. The product offer ranges from spa vacation to slow tourism activities in Linnansaari national park. The visitors are invited to join all possible experiences in the area all year around. The overall concept of the resort appears complete and product description and presentation are most informative and friendly.

ENTREPRENEUR AWARD - Sapmi Nature, Swedish Lapland

Sapmi Nature is presenting Sami culture, reindeer herding and the beauty of Arctic indigenous lifestyle in Lapland in a very soft and safe way. The small-scale tourism developed into a secret for lovers of deep and true nature and cultural experiences.

DEVELOPMENT AWARD - Lake Saimaa, Purest Finland

Lake Saimaa, Purest Finland managed to convince the jury successfully by highlighting the versatile activities and peaceful lake area within good proximity to nearby cities and neighbor countries. The jury was impressed by the agility of all network partners and the steps, which have been taken during the last years to drive programs and efforts to join the UNESCO Geopark network.



EVENT AWARD - Baltic Snow Call

Baltic Snow Call has managed to adapt the concept of snow sculpting into a sparkling event, which comprises enthusiasm, craftsmanship, teamwork, art & festival. It showcases the beauty of the Baltic heritage with spectacular illuminations and presents the region very attractively to an international audience.

ONLINE AWARD - Pyhä Ski Resort

Pyhä Ski Resort leadership managed to define and package their product in a way that is clear and comprehensible. The appealing website is convincing to the international audience with its informative structure and inspiring video material.

HONORABLE MENTION - Äksyt Ämmät, Guesthouse to Guesthouse

The jury would like to accentuate the carefulness and steadiness with which the presenters of Guesthouse to Guesthouse developed and established an authentic and true experience-product. The honorable mention shall highlight the courageous teamwork, presenting the Karelian culture in a very sustainable way, including a precious CSR award.

Contact and Information:

SOA is presented by NordicMarketing and MANDEL in partnership with Scandinavian Outdoor Group.

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