

This week the spiritual home of tango will teach travel industry's elite some new steps

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Paris might be famous as the location of Marlon Brando's last tango, but this week the fancy footwork of travel commerce will be taking place in Buenos Aires, the real home of tango.

That's because the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) will be holding its 18th annual Global Summit in Buenos Aires, the capital of Argentina. The WTTC is the global lobby group founded in 1991 to gain recognition for the job creation and economic contribution of our fast growing sector.

And where better to hold it than in the nation chairing the G20 this year and whose recent economic resurgence is helping its tourism economy? Over 600 tourism ministers, CEOs and senior executives of leading travel firms, academics and analysts focusing on the sector, and journalists from across the globe will all converge on the city.

Argentina's President Mauricio Macri will be opening the event and this year's theme of 'Our People, Our World, Our Future' will see tough questions asked about the future facing travel & tourism today.

Key note speakers of interest will include Zurab Pololikashvili, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO); the ex-Prime Minister of Spain, José María Aznar; the CEO of Thomas Cook Group, Peter Fankhauser; the CEO of TUI Group, Fritz Joussen; and the President & CEO of Marriott International, Arne Sorenson.

Our very own Executive Chairman Joan Vilà will be taking part in a debate on stage titled 'Leadership in a digital age', where he'll be discussing how digital disruption is impacting effective leadership in an uncertain climate, alongside fellow panelists from Airbnb, Dufry AG, and Value Retail.

At Hotelbeds Group we are proud to be members of the WTTC and participate actively in its regular events, debates and research. We're particularly looking forward to the event as it will be the first chaired by the WTTC's new President & CEO, Gloria Guevara Manzo, whose previous roles included being the Tourism Minister for Mexico.

One of the famous songs by the legendary Argentine tango singer Carlos Gardel was called *Silencio* (in English, *Silence*), but hopefully the impact of this week's WTTC Global Summit will be anything but silent. Whether you like tango, jazz or rock music, the fact that travel & tourism is the world's largest sector and produces 10% of the world's GDP, is surely music to the ears of everyone in the travel industry? It certainly is to the one in ten people who are employed in travel & tourism globally, and thankfully that figure is growing. It's enough to make you want to dance.

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