



## **European Tourism Forum 2007 EDEN Awards Ceremony**

Cyprus and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation welcome the opportunity to be part of the 10 countries participating in the pilot project "European Destinations of Excellence". Following a national competition, Troodos, the Green Heart of Cyprus, was selected as the "Best Emerging Rural Destination" for Cyprus.

This prestigious award is of high importance for Cyprus and in line with the objectives of CTO's Strategic Tourism Plan, which emphasises sustainable tourism development and the promotion of special interest tourism, including the revitalisation and promotion of rural Cyprus.

The pan-European calibre of the EDEN Award is expected to provide winning destinations with a credible, universally acknowledged Award which will facilitate their marketing, promotion and general visibility on the world's tourist map. It is a great honour for Cyprus and Troodos to be part of the select group of the 10 "Best Emerging Rural Destinations" which opens a new window of opportunity to develop future "Networks of Excellence" and "Networks of the Winning Destinations" for the further development of cooperation programs, exchange of best practice experiences, as well as joint promotional activities at the European level.

We are also optimistic that the creation of such networking and future partnerships among EDEN "Best Emerging Rural Destinations" could lead to the development of new proposals for EU programmes and initiatives.

We thank the European Commission for the initiative to implement the EDEN project and we are confident and optimistic that Troodos – Cyprus – will explore opportunities for networking and cooperation, joint promotional activities and find ways to capitalise on the opportunities offered through the various EU co financed programs and initiatives which will contribute towards the continuous success and sustainability of the "Best Emerging Rural Destinations" of Europe.

Our goal is to give the opportunity to the European citizens to get to know, visit and experience Europe's "Best Emerging Rural Destinations". We look into the future, with an optimistic outlook, not only to enjoy the benefits of this Award but also to foster cooperation and develop joint projects, activities and partnerships with other "Best Emerging Rural Destinations" in Europe. Cyprus extends to you a warm invitation to visit the island and experience its "Best Emerging Rural Destination", Troodos, the Green Heart of Cyprus.

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