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HENRI BIRMELE TAKES ON NEW POST AS GENERAL MANAGER OF
ICONIC HOLLYWOOD HOTEL, SHERATON UNIVERSAL

HOLLYWOOD, CALIF. (Nov. 23, 2009) – Destination Hotels and Resorts announces the appointment of Henri Birmele as general manager to one of Hollywood’s most iconic stars -- the Sheraton Universal, Hotel of the Stars™. With more than 20 years of luxury hospitality experience, Birmele will be responsible for maintaining the Sheraton Universal’s presence in Hollywood’s entertainment industry while guaranteeing stellar operational standards.

A native of Switzerland, Birmele originally relocated to Los Angeles to begin his career in the hospitality industry with Hilton Hotels Corporation. Most recently, he was the general manager of the award winning Shutters on the Beach hotel in Santa Monica, CA. Previously he served at the Rafael hotel group’s Turnberry Isle resort as the food and beverage director for seven years. While under his sophisticated management style, the Turnberry Isle resort received coveted awards by Travel and Leisure as well as Conde Nast as being one of the best resorts in the United States. Birmele then returned to Los Angeles to open the St. Regis Hotel before becoming the general manager for the Viceroy in Santa Monica overseeing the extensive renovation and redesign of the property before its opening in 2002.

“Henri’s extensive background with some of the most prestigious independently branded hotels and resorts provides him with a strong foundation, a diverse perspective and the very deep industry knowledge to take the Sheraton Universal to a level and market position that is critical in today’s hospitality industry,” said Mark Hickey, Senior Vice President, U.S. Hotel Operations, Destination Hotels & Resorts.

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Henri Birmele, General Manager
Sheraton Universal
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"I truly love living and working in Los Angeles, especially in the heart of Hollywood. The historical perspective of the Sheraton Universal is so rich and intriguing. I look forward to rolling out our red carpet for all of our frequent and first time guests to the Hotel to the Stars," said Birmele.

Having recently completed a major 40th anniversary multi-million dollar renovation, the hotel's new look and restaurants are complemented by the hotel's long-standing reputation as a celebrity haven with warm, friendly service by seasoned staff. The Sheraton Universal has been the "Hotel to the Stars" for 40 years and continues to bring back the excitement of Hollywood to the Hill.

About Sheraton Universal

The Sheraton Universal is one of more than 30 independent, upscale hotels, resorts and conference centers managed by Destination Hotels & Resorts, which is consistently rated one of the top 10 independent hospitality management companies in the United States. To protect and preserve the unique communities in which the company operates, Destination launched Destination Earth, an environmental sustainability program in 2008. New for 2009 is the 582-room Terranea Resort situated on the Palos Verdes Peninsula in southern California which opened to the public in June. The 102-acre ocean front resort features a 25,000-square-foot destination spa, three swimming pools, three ocean view restaurants and a Todd Eckenrode-designed par three golf course. In addition to Terranea in the greater Los Angeles area, Destination operates properties in key metropolitan areas and resort markets including Washington, D.C., Denver, San Diego, Santa Fe, Aspen, Palm Springs, Houston and Lake Tahoe. Destination is a subsidiary of Los Angeles-based investment, development and management firm Lowe Enterprises. For more information on the properties in the Destination Hotels & Resorts collection, please visit www.destinationhotels.com or to join the company's loyalty program for the best offers available, visit www.destinationdelivers.com

For more information on the Sheraton Universal, please visit www.sheratonuniversal.com.

Executive head shots of Henri Birmele available upon request.