



CTO's Successful Implementation of the European Program "European Destinations of Excellence - EDEN " and the EDEN Award to Agros for its "Rose Festival"

The Cyprus Tourism Organisation has successfully implemented the European Program **European Destinations of Excellence (EDEN)**, and has awarded the Community of Agros, for its "Rose Festival" as **"Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage Destination- Cyprus"**.

The EDEN program, which is co-financed by the Tourism Unit of the European Commission, had 20 European nations as participants and each one has selected its own National Winning Destination: Steirische Vulkanland-Austria, Ath-Belgium, Belogradchik-Bulgaria, Durdevac-Croatia, Agros-Cyprus, Viljandi-Estonia, Wild Taiga-Finland, Route Touristique de Vins du Jura-France, Grevena-Greece, Hortobagy-Hungary, Carlinford & the Cooley Peninsula-Ireland, Comune di Corinaldo-Italy, Latgalian Potters/Masters of Clay-Latvia, Plateliai-Lithuania, Echternach-Luxemburg, Kercem Hamlet of Santa Lucia-Malta, Horezu Depression-Romania, Soca Valley-Slovenia, Sierra de la Nieves-Spain and Edirne-Turkey.

In order to select the **"Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage Destination- Cyprus"**, CTO launched earlier this year a National Competition. A total of three candidacies were submitted by the Agros, Marathasa and Solea. The *Rose Festival* of Agros promotes the intangible heritage of the village and is a result of constructive cooperation among the local authority, the various tourism enterprises, local producers and the youth.

Agros is included in the select group of the 20 European *"Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage Destinations"* promoted in a pan European campaign by the European Commission and CTO. The various means of promotion include a 16-page colour brochure, a DVD, as well as the Cyprus EDEN website - www.cyprus-eden.com, and the EU website.

The European Commission has decided to promote and award the 20 European EDEN projects and winning destinations, during the European Tourism Forum 2008 which took place in Bordeaux, France 17-19 September 2008, and has invited 3 representatives from each participating country to attend the EDEN Awards Ceremony and EDEN Exhibition. The Cyprus invitees - Cyprus EDEN Delegation - were Ms. Maro Kazepi-Cyprus EDEN Manager, Mr. Christoforos Papachristoforou-President of Agros Community and Mr Kyriacos Anthrakiotis-Member of Agros Community Council.

During the EDEN Awards Ceremony, honored by Mr. Gunter Verheugen - Vice President of the European Commission, a promotional film for Agros was presented, followed the presentation of the Cyprus EDEN Award. The EDEN Award Ceremony was broadcasted live through the European Commission's website.

The 20 winning *"Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage Destinations"* were also promoted during a special EDEN Exhibition where each country had its own exhibition stand. The EDEN Exhibition was inaugurated at the opening of the European Tourism Forum 2008.

The European Tourism Forum 2008 was attended by tourism officials such as Mr. Frangialli, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organisation, Tourism Ministers including Mr. Paschalides, the Cyprus Minister of Commerce Industry & Tourism and Ms. Katsouris, Director General of CTO, who all visited the Cyprus EDEN exhibition.

The Cyprus EDEN Delegation - Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO – EDEN Project Manager, Mr. Papachristoforou, President of Agros and Mr. Anthrakiotis, Member of the Agros Council –, welcomed more than 500 delegates, at the Cyprus EDEN exhibition stand, and offered them special promotional materials on the Cyprus EDEN project, developed by CTO, as well as traditional local products from Agros with rose flavour.

This prestigious Award is of high importance for Cyprus and in line with the objectives of the Strategic Tourism Plan of the island which emphasise sustainable tourism development and the promotion of special interest tourism including the revitalisation and promotion of the intangible heritage of 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 Agros to be part of the select group of the 20 “Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage 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.

Such profile achievements in european programs are a great honor for CTO and will be exploited effectively for the promotion of Agros, the “Best Tourism and Local Intangible Heritage Destination-Cyprus”, and the networking with other European destinations for the exchange of experiences as well as for further cooperation. CTO explored networking opportunities during the EDEN Exhibition and will also participate in a special EDEN Networking Event in Brussels, as an invitee of the European Commission’s Tourism Unit.

For further information on the Cyprus EDEN please contact:

Ms. Maro Kazepi
Cyprus EDEN Coordinator
Cyprus Tourism Organisation

email: Maro.Kazepi@visitcyprus.com
web: www.cyprus-eden.com



At the Cyprus EDEN Exhibition Stand, [from left – right], Mr. Francesco Frangialli – Secretary General World Tourism Organisation, Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO - EDEN Project Manager, and Mr. Chr. Papachristoforou – President of Agros



EDEN Awards Ceremony: [left – right], Mr Papachristoforou – President of Agros, Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO - EDEN Project Manager, Mr. Verheugen – V.P. European Commission, and Mr. Anthrakiotis – Member of Agros Council



At the Cyprus EDEN Exhibition Stand, [from left – right], Mrs. Katsouris – Director General CTO, Mr. Chr. Papachristoforou – President of Agros, Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO - EDEN Project Manager, Mr. Antonis Paschalides – Minister of Commerce Industry and Tourism and Mr Anthrakiotis – Agros Community Council Member.



At the Cyprus EDEN Exhibition Stand, [from left – right], Mr. Pedro Ortun, Director Tourism Unit D.G. ENTR, Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO - EDEN Project Manager and Mr. Papachristoforou – President of Agros Community.



Cyprus Exhibition Stand: [left – right], Ms. Maro Kazepi CTO -EDEN Project Manager, Mrs. Katsouris, Director General CTO, Mr. Verheugen – V.P. European Commission, Mr Papachristoforou–President of Agros, Mr. Anthrakiotis – Member of Agros Council