

# FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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12 September 2003

### **Improving Riga Latvia as a Tourism Visitor Destination – Survey results**

To assure that future visitors to Riga Latvia will have a Delightful Experience, Patricia Tourist Office in Riga has just completed an assessment of visitors' opinions.

Working with the Riga City Tourist Information Office, Patricia Tourist Office with the cooperation of the Riga area hotels, surveyed visitors to Riga during the month of August 2003. Survey forms were placed in the tourist offices at Blackheads House, the Riga Central Bus terminal and in most hotels in Riga.

Visitors to Riga answered the 16-question survey form. The results were compiled and analyzed by Patricia Tourist offices General Manager, Michael Arthur Johnson (Maikls Arturs D'zonsons) who is also an experienced management consultant.

The results showed many positive comments from visitors about Riga as a destination and the hotels providing accommodations. A complete summary of survey results and analysis may be viewed on the Internet site <http://www.latviatourism.com/survey/riga/>

One of the major complaints made by the visitors was the overcharging by various taxi companies taking clients on trips from the Riga Central bus station, LIDO Krasta Centers and from in front of Riga hotel. However, the airport arrival taxis were praised for their excellent service and fair price fees.

In addition, the visitors made numerous constructive comments and suggestions as how to improve Riga as a destination for visitors.

The survey also pointed out that the visitors experienced a wide range and inconsistent level of customer service during their average 4 day stay in Riga.

Improving customer service skills of Riga area businesses is the first area of focus in the efforts to address the issues pointed out by the visitor survey. A series of seminars are planned for the months of December 2003, January and February 2004.

A working taskforce group is being organized and will invite representatives of ALTA, the Association of Latvian Hotels and Restaurants, Riga City Tourism Department and a representative of the Latvian Foreign Ministry. This group will continue to brainstorm the survey results and plan the improvement efforts for the months to come. The survey will be repeated on an ongoing basis and is also available to be completed on the Internet site <http://www.latviatourism.com/survey/>

The survey results were presented at meeting of local tourism professionals held at Riga City Hall offices on 10 September 2003 by Mr. Johnson and his associate, Ms. Iveta Kalvisa.