

PRESS RELEASE

FOUR SOFITEL HOTELS OBTAIN THEIR 5th *

Paris, September 30, 2009 – Four Sofitel hotels have obtained their 5th star, based on the new French hotel classification. These are the Sofitel Lyon Bellecour, Sofitel Vieux-Port Marseille, Sofitel Paris La Défense and the Sofitel Biarritz Le Miramar Thalassa.

This is a great recognition for Sofitel, which naturally nourishes its ambition to become the leading French and European ambassador of the international hotel profession.

“Four of our establishments obtaining the fifth star confirms Sofitel’s positioning in the up-scale hotel industry and is in line with a success-oriented dynamic,” declared **Dominique Colliat, SVP Sofitel Europe Middle East and Africa.**

“In less than two years in France, as well as abroad, the Sofitel network has been refined and we are implementing an ambitious renovation plan so the hotels can achieve the brand’s new standards. The two Sofitels in Lyon and Marseille, respectively number one in their destination, are the perfect example of this plan, having just finished their improvements.

As part of this renovation strategy, the other Sofitels in France will apply for the fifth star after their renovation.”

THE FOUR FIRST SOFITELS TO RECEIVE THE 5th STAR

The Sofitel Biarritz Le Miramar Thalassa offers the best of its treatments and gastronomy in a refined setting facing the invigorating sea spray of the Atlantic Ocean. Renowned for its ultra modern thalassotherapy institute and the quality of its treatments (Accor Thalassa network), the hotel welcomes its guests in an atmosphere between sandstone, driftwood and filtered light. This elegant designer address is also a paradise for golfers who want to combine relaxation with the greens.

Located two steps from the historical center, along the Rhone quays, the **Sofitel Lyon Bellecour** has become over the years a genuine emblematic setting. An address to rediscover since it now boasts a new décor, marked by the personality of the architect Patrick Norguet. The new lobby is majestic, the Silk Brasserie displays a resolutely designer look and the new fitness area, the So FIT, is a veritable cocoon of serenity.

Thanks to its exceptional location in the heart of the Phoenician City, the **Sofitel Marseille Vieux Port** can boast that it offers the best view of the city. This address has just undergone an incredible metamorphosis orchestrated by the designers Marc Hertrick and Nicola Adnet, who here have signed a décor inspired by yachting. Moreover, the Sofitel Marseille Vieux



Port has just been equipped with a Spa, baptized So Spa: a 600 sq.m. area entirely dedicated to well-being and beauty, in the very heart of Marseille's ancient fortifications.

With its dominant view overlooking the Grande Arche square, the **Sofitel Paris La Défense** is the only 5* hotel in the West Parisian business district. With remarkably easy access, today it is the essential business hotel, perfectly combining refinement and High Tech.

To earn their fifth star, these hotels had to satisfy new specifications, with more than 200 conditions to fulfill in areas as varied as reception, facilities and service. This classification in line with the international standards puts an end to the "French exception," which limited the highest hotel classification to four stars luxury.

The brand's other hotels in France will apply for this 5th star after their renovation. Today the Sofitel network has 11 French addresses, including three Thalassa establishments.

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Sofitel, World Class Hotels and French Elegance

Sofitel is the only French luxury hotel brand located on all 5 continents, with 130 addresses in more than 50 countries. Sofitel offers contemporary hotels and resorts adapted to today's more demanding and more versatile consumers who expect and appreciate beauty, quality and excellence. Whether situated in the heart of a major city like Paris, New York, London or Beijing, or nestled in a Polynesian or Egyptian landscape, every Sofitel offers a genuine experience of the French "art de vivre".

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