



## **GLOBAL HOTEL ALLIANCE AND ASMALLWORLD TO BECOME SHAREHOLDERS IN EACH OTHER'S BUSINESSES; ENTER INTO LONG-TERM STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

*Global Hotel Alliance and ASMALLWORLD AG combine the strengths of GHA DISCOVERY, the largest loyalty programme for independent hotel brands and ASMALLWORLD's leading travel & lifestyle community*

**Dubai, UAE, 22 December 2021:** UAE-headquartered Global Hotel Alliance (GHA), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, will enter into a strategic partnership agreement with ASMALLWORLD AG, the world's leading travel & lifestyle community, and both companies will become shareholders in each other's businesses when the transaction closes in March 2022. ASMALLWORLD AG will acquire a 10% stake in GHA in a part cash, part shares transaction, which will see GHA owning a 3% stake in a ASMALLWORLD AG.

This announcement comes on the heels of the recent relaunch of the GHA-operated loyalty programme [GHA DISCOVERY](#), which now offers a unique digital rewards currency "DISCOVERY Dollars" plus a new "Live Local" concept, which offers access to benefits, activities, events and experiences in hotels, even when members are not travelling. ASMALLWORLD will support GHA with the delivery of this reimagined programme, in particular the "Live Local" concept. ASMALLWORLD will provide complimentary access to its own social network for GHA DISCOVERY's elite tier members as an additional benefit free of charge. This will allow GHA DISCOVERY elite members to enjoy all the benefits of the ASMALLWORLD travel and lifestyle network, including events, experiences, and the opportunity to engage with a like-minded community, which is expected to increase customer engagement and drive repeat visits across the alliance's hotel portfolio.

Once NH Hotel Group has completed its integration into the alliance in 2022, GHA will be a network of 40 independent hotel chains with over 800 hotels in 100 countries, and GHA DISCOVERY will have more than 20 million members. The new strategic partnership also provides ASMALLWORLD with a mandate to recruit independent hotels into the alliance under a new "ASMALLWORLD" hotel brand portfolio.

GHA's CEO Chris Hartley comments: "joint activities with ASMALLWORLD have already proved successful and have highlighted the close synergies between our customer bases and the attractiveness of the complementary products and services, which bring value to each other's membership propositions. ASMALLWORLD members who join GHA DISCOVERY tend to become some of our highest-spending customers across our hotels. It therefore feels like a natural next step in this growing partnership to become shareholders in each other's businesses; and we will benefit from ASMALLWORLD's insights and experience in areas such

as social networking and events, which are a logical extension to our GHA DISCOVERY programme. We are excited about the new opportunities this collaboration will present; it will create a new social aspect to the travel experience of our top tier GHA DISCOVERY members, at a time when we are all optimistic about the recovery of travel in 2022.”

"This strategic alliance between ASmallWorld and GHA opens up new opportunities for both companies. GHA can now offer its most valued customers direct access to the ASmallWorld network and ASmallWorld will be able to offer its core products to members of the GHA DISCOVERY programme, and in particular their highest-spending elite tier members. GHA will also offer ASmallWorld's services to the entire GHA DISCOVERY's 20-million-strong membership base, which will greatly increase our reach and sales potential," said Jan Luescher, CEO of ASmallWorld.

The transaction is expected to close in March 2022 and the new partnership will launch in mid-2022.

GHA DISCOVERY is complimentary to join, and travellers can [sign up online](#) or download the GHA DISCOVERY app and register on their mobile phones. Travellers can also connect with GHA DISCOVERY on Instagram and Facebook.

**For more information visit [GHA DISCOVERY](#) or [Global Hotel Alliance](#)**

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**About Global Hotel Alliance (GHA)**

Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) brings together a unique collection of independent hospitality brands with GHA DISCOVERY, a multi-brand loyalty programme leveraging a shared technology platform. Through membership in GHA, brands expand their global reach, drive incremental revenue, and reduce dependence on third-party channels, all while maintaining management independence and individual positioning. GHA represents a collection of 35 brands with over 500 hotels in 85 countries serving 11 million members. The award-winning GHA DISCOVERY programme generates approximately \$2 billion in revenue and more than eight million room nights annually. GHA's brands currently include Anantara, Araiya, Avani, Campbell Gray, Capella, Corinthia, Discovery Destinations, Divani, Doyle, Elewana, Fauchon, GLO, JA Resorts, Kempinski, Leela, Lungarno, Marco Polo, MYSK, Niccolo, Nikki Beach, NUO, Oaks, Outrigger, Pan Pacific, PARKROYAL COLLECTION, PARKROYAL, Patina, The Residence by Cenizaro, Shaza, Sukhothai, Sun International, Tivoli, Ultratravel Collection and Viceroy. For more information, visit [globalhotelalliance.com](http://globalhotelalliance.com).

**About GHA DISCOVERY**

Launched in 2010, GHA DISCOVERY is the world's largest loyalty programme for independent hotel brands, featuring more than 500 hotels, resorts and palaces across 35 brands. Members enjoy VIP recognition, thoughtful benefits and generous rewards at home or away. Recently the programme has evolved to include an additional tier and flexible paths to upgrade through nights/stays, eligible purchases or number of brands stayed, making it easier and faster for members to reach elite status. Unlike more

traditional programmes, GHA DISCOVERY does not ask members to count points towards their next upgrade. Instead, members earn and spend DISCOVERY Dollars (D\$), an exclusive rewards currency. They also enjoy members-only Experiences curated by each hotel and have access to properties close to home, without a stay, through member-only Local Offers.

### **The ASMALLWORLD Group**

ASMALLWORLD is the world's leading travel & lifestyle community, focusing on experiences: the modern-day definition of luxury.

Centred around the ASMALLWORLD social network, the company operates a digital travel & lifestyle ecosystem which enables and inspires members to travel better, experience more and make new connections.

Members of the ASMALLWORLD social network connect through its app and website, where they can meet other members, engage in online discussions, receive travel and lifestyle inspiration, and enjoy a wealth of travel privileges.

Members also meet in person at over 1'000 global ASMALLWORLD events every year, ranging from casual get-togethers in major cities around the world, access to exclusive launches, shows, galas, soirees, exhibitions, major global sporting events, and larger flagship weekend experiences hosted in iconic destinations such as Saint-Tropez and Gstaad.