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### Justin Vandermere Fleming

President of ABTA

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#### WTM report

# WTM and the 'feel good' factor



▲ After a few months of bad news for tourism for the islands, Canarian delegates to the recent World Travel Market in London in November have returned feeling very positive about both the short and long term prospects for the islands.

Intense but satisfactory seems to have been the overall response to the trade fair from both the regional department of tourism (minister Rita Martín was in attendance) and Tenerife's business and political representatives who travelled to London for what is considered one of the most important dates in the international tourism trade fair calendar.

Tenerife Tourism councillor José Manuel Bermúdez said that following a number of meetings with agents within the travel market, he was "moderately optimistic about the winter season". The



Cabildo representatives also met with members of ABTA (the British association of tour operators) as well as a number of different airline companies leading Bermúdez to state that indications were that "figures for November and December would contribute towards compensating for poor summer numbers", leading to a better than expected end of year average. He added that Easyjet had confirmed their desire to increase their links with the island, and were sending a delegation to Tenerife to meet with a series of tourism chiefs to discuss the possibility of expanding the frequency of current routes as well as adding some new connections.

(l-r) Wolfgang and Cristoph Kiessling, the businessmen behind Loro Parque and Siam Park

#### In Brief >

## Houses under threat

▲ Thousands of houses, huts and various hotels are to be demolished under the Department of the Environment's plans for the recovery of the coast for public use.

Some beach bars and marinas will also be cleared under the department's sustainable coast strategy although no timetable has yet been given for the demolitions. Currently undeveloped tracts of coastline are to be purchased up to a distance of 500 metres from the sea, more control is to be exercised over legal and illegal effluence into the sea, dykes and sea defences are to be repaired, existing beaches are to be widened, deepened and generally improved and new stretches of sand created especially in the south of Gran Canaria, but also in various points in Tenerife and Arrecife.

## Child abuse ring

▲ Four German citizens were arrested by the National Police of Los Realejos and Puerto de la Cruz for drug distribution and child prostitution offences.

Police investigations have also traced the paedophile clients who paid to abuse the children in apartments in Puerto de la Cruz. The young girls rescued were found to be listed by Interpol as missing from Germany. Three males, U.D., 43, M.R.T., 47 and J.G. 69 were arrested along with a woman, 31-year-old, L.H.

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