

GREEK ORTHODOX FOLK DANCE & CHORAL FESTIVAL **FDF 2009**

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO BOOK YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS AT OUR OFFICIAL CONFERENCE HOTEL

Everyone has the right to stay at the accommodation of their choice while attending a conference. However, when you stay at our official hotel, we all benefit. Here's why:

In order to guarantee hotel guestroom blocks and meeting space for the 2009 FDF at the destination of choice, FDF entered into a formal contract with the hotel and convention center. Estimates were then made regarding the number of hotel guestrooms and the amount of meeting space needed as well as the number of people who would attend food functions.

This arrangement gave FDF a strong position to negotiate prices and other concessions with the hotel and convention center. In light of our conference history, we have been able to secure very appealing hotel guestroom rates for our attendees, while also receiving attractive rental fees on meeting space.

These concessions result in savings to our attendees, thus keeping down the conference registration fees.

However, in order to enjoy these concessions, FDF must fulfill the contractual obligations outlined in its contract with the hotel and convention center. These obligations include but are not limited to: (a) usage of hotel guestrooms blocked for the event and (b) revenue guaranteed by FDF for food functions. Failure to meet our obligations will result in serious consequences, which include but are not limited to:

- a) FDF will be required to pay substantial penalties for failure to use the minimum number of hotel guestrooms outlined in the formal contract. In fact, conference registration fees will need to increase by 50% to cover the cost of lost hotel concessions.
- b) Financial penalties for not meeting the minimum guarantee for food functions
- c) Weakened bargaining power when negotiating future hotel contracts
- d) "Unavailable" guestrooms at the host hotel. This can be problematic for you when trying to book a last minute reservation.

Historically, attendees of FDF utilize at least 83.2% of the guestroom block that has been contractually committed. In addition, we have always met our contracted obligation for food expenditures. However, due to the current economic environment

and the pressure to save funds whenever one can, **we must emphasize how important it is for you to use accommodations committed by FDF.**

We know how tempting it is to make your hotel reservation at the official hotel via alternative means. But if you do, we won't receive credit for your booking. Alternative booking options to avoid include:

- a) Calling the hotel directly or the hotel's central reservation system and failing to identify yourself as a FDF conferee
- b) Working through a travel agent
- c) Going to discount travel Web sites such as Orbitz, Travelocity, etc.
- d) Using other discount venues such as AAA, AARP, etc.
- e) Using housing companies such as Convention Housing Authority, www.StayBetterForLess.com and www.reducedlodging.com. These companies are not associated with our conference, and we do not recommend them. You will generally receive their solicitation via fax.

In addition, by not confirming your reservation by the hotel's deadline, our event will not receive credit for your guestroom.

Here is what you can do to maintain our cost and benefits structure to assure availability of accommodations at our official hotel:

- a) **Reserve your hotel guestroom at the official hotel early and in the manner outlined in the conference registration kit. It is easier to cancel your travel plans, if needed.**
- b) **Always keep in mind a lower hotel guestroom rate elsewhere will only be a short-term savings. That savings will be lost in the future with increased conference registration costs.**

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Katia Bakas Boudouvas
FDF 2009 Operations Officer