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MAUI IS “BEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD” FOR THE 17th TIME

“The Magic Isle” Captures Highest Score of Any Destination in the World for 2011

MAUI, Hawaii – For an unprecedented 17th time, “Maui, the Magic Isle” captured “Best Island in the World” honors in the 24th annual CONDE NAST TRAVELER Readers’ Choice Awards. With a score of 92.1, Maui was also voted “Best U.S. Island” (formerly “Best Pacific Island”) for the 21st consecutive year.

In the same category, sister island Kauai placed 2nd (90.0) while third place honors went to Kiawah, South Carolina (86.6). The Big Island of Hawaii and Oahu tied for 4th (85.8) and Lanai rounded off the top six with a score of 84.6. According to the publication, the Readers’ Choice Awards are a unique and trusted source of advice globally for its range and depth thanks to America’s most discerning and demanding travelers.

“Maui continues to capture the hearts, minds and imaginations of visitors the world over,” stated Terryl Vencl, executive director, Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau. “Recent branding studies reveal our visitors seek variety, choice and adventures, planned or spontaneous. They want to know lots of options are available, but want to have the freedom to be as active or relaxed as they choose. I believe this coveted award speaks to that.”

The award was presented to Vencl by veteran actor Chris Noth (*Law & Order*, *Sex in the City* and *The Good Wife*) in a star-studded awards ceremony held in New York City last night. Noth shared his love for Maui and visits regularly. His mother, a former CBS television reporter, has made Maui her home.

Other top island destinations worldwide included winners in the following geographical categories: Asia (Maldives, 87.5), Caribbean/ Atlantic (Bermuda, 87.4), Asia/ Indian Ocean (Bora Bora, 87.0), Europe (Bozcaada and The Turkish Aegean Islands, 84.2) and Canada (Vancouver Island, 81.5).

Maui's score once again surpassed all other top destinations globally beating out every "Best City" category winner including Oceania (Sydney, 85.1), Europe (Florence, 85.0), U.S. (Charleston, SC, 84.7), Africa/Middle East (Cape Town, 83.9), Canada (Quebec, 83.0), Asia (Kyoto, 82.3) and Mexico (San Miguel de Allende, 79.8).

Maui County Mayor Alan Arakawa added, "Maui has so much to offer. It is an island of incredible beauty featuring unparalleled service, top-notch activities, excellent restaurants, a wide variety of accommodations and the friendliest folks anywhere." Arakawa continued, "This is a proud moment for the visitor industry and our people of Maui."

In the "Top Hawaii Resorts" category, resorts of Maui and Lanai captured top honors as well. Leading the way was Travassa Hana (95.0) followed by Four Seasons Resort Maui at Wailea (93.9). Oahu's Trump International Hotel Waikiki Beach Walk (93.7) placed third and Four Seasons Resort Lanai at Manele Bay tied for 4th place with Hawaii Island's Four Seasons Resort Hualalai (93.4). Sixth place went to Four Seasons Lanai, The Lodge at Koele which scored 93.1. Other Maui resorts making the Top 20 included 11th place Grand Wailea (89.3), 12th ranked Fairmont Kea Lani (89.0.) and 13th place Hyatt Regency Maui Resort and Spa (87.8). The Ritz Carlton, Kapalua (86.9), captured the 14th spot.

Hawaiian Airlines also ranked as a Top U.S. Airline placing third (66.5) behind 1st place Virgin America (79.7) and 2nd place Jet Blue (71.0).

The magazine's annual Readers' Choice Awards poll analyzes the travel preferences of their readership in various categories including cities, islands, airlines, cruise lines, hotels, spas, resorts and rental cars. Ratings are based on the responses of CONDE NAST TRAVELER subscribers who participated in the 24th annual poll. More than 28,000 readers responded representing some 8 million individual votes. Complete results will be published in the November 2011 issue, which arrives on newsstands later this month.

The Maui Visitors and Convention Bureau is a subsidiary of the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau. HVCB is contracted by the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA), the state of Hawaii's tourism agency, for marketing management services in North America. The HTA was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawaii tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of

Hawaii's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs.

The islands of Maui Nui (Maui County) offer three very distinct Hawaiian experiences. World-class resorts, award winning cuisine, championship golf, exquisite natural beauty and the islands' host Hawaiian culture have propelled Maui Nui into the limelight. For more information, go to www.visitmaui.com or call 800-525-6284.