

A WORLD FIRST: OFFICIAL SMED REPORT PRESENTED TO THE DOURO VALLEY IN PORTUGAL

MONTRÉAL, DECEMBER 12, 2008 – The World Centre of Excellence for Destinations (CED) announced today a world first: the presentation of the official report of the System for Measuring Excellence in Destinations (SMED) to the Douro Valley in Portugal. This event was held in Porto on December 9, in the presence of the Secretary of State for Tourism of Portugal, Bernardo Trindade, and the Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organization, Francesco Frangialli. Also present were Carlos Lage, President of the CCDR-N, Ricardo Magalhães, Director of the Mission Structure for Douro, Luis Patrão, President of the Portuguese Tourism Institute, François Bédard, Director General of the CED and 150 representatives of the tourism industry of the destination.

Immediately following the SMED report presentation, the authorities of the North of Portugal region where the Douro Valley is located, have announced a 30 million Euros investment in line with the recommendations made in the report.

The SMED is an evaluation tool developed by the CED which aims to identify the different levels of performance of the Douro Valley as a tourist destination, and propose recommendations for improvement and increased competitiveness, as well as to facilitate the integration of the destination in an international network of tourist destinations of excellence.

With its headquarters located in Montréal, the CED began operations in February 2007. The CED has signed partnership agreements with Canada Economic Development for the Québec regions, the *Ministère du Tourisme du Québec* and the *Ministère des Affaires Municipales et des Régions du Québec*.

About the CED

The CED is a non-profit organization dedicated to the research and creation of tools to support the development of sustainable tourism for destinations around the world. In performing its mission, the CED executes and further develops the tasks of the Destinations Council and other departments of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). It does so by adding value and expertise to the policies and innovative practices concerning tourist destination management. The UNWTO is a specialized agency of the United Nations with 153 member states and some 300 associate members from the tourism industry.

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