Application Deadline
April 15, 2016

FLORIDA TOURISM
Hall of Fame

NOMINATION FORM
FLORIDA TOURISM HALL OF FAME

The historic and continuing popularity of Florida as the world’s premier visitor destination is due in great measure to the vision, entrepreneurial spirit, and hard work of a select group of tourism industry superstars. VISIT FLORIDA recognizes these individuals each year by inclusion into the Florida Tourism Hall of Fame, which was inaugurated in 2001. The 2015 inductee is John Ringling, founder of the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, FL.

John Ringling, born May 31, 1866 in McGregor, Iowa, was the fifth of eight children of a modest family and became one of America’s wealthiest. His life represents the epitome of the American Dream, coming from poor beginnings then creating his own destiny filled with wealth, power, and international fame. His prosperity funded the expansion for the City of Sarasota, Florida during the 1920’s. Ringling was a visionary, creating a master plan for his Mediterranean-style resort that brought tourism to the West Coast.

Ringling purchased a series of barrier Islands, enlarged them, installed sea walls, dredged canals for home sites, then built a series of spec homes designed by New York architect Dwight James Baum. His Sub-tropical real estate development incorporates an open-air shopping district called “St Armand’s Circle,” having a City Park in its central axis. From St Armand’s Key another bridge was built giving access to Longboat Key, where Ringling donated 120 acres for a large golf course and country club to draw tourists to the area. He began the construction of a luxurious 200-room Ritz-Carlton Hotel designed by New York Architects Warren and Wetmore of Grand Central Station fame.

In 1928, he was appointed the President of the Tamiami Trail committee, which included Thomas Edison. This established a travel route from Tampa to Miami for the expansion of tourist travel on the west coast of Florida.

As Florida’s land boom became a depressed market, John Ringling saved the local economy by bringing the Ringling Bros. & Barnum and Bailey Circus to Sarasota. The winter quarters of the show ultimately became a Zoological Park featuring rare and exotic animals and live circus acts and was one of the top tourist attraction in the State of Florida before Disney. He became a community leader serving as President of the Chamber of Commerce from 1927 to 1929. He promoted Florida’s winter season tourism by sponsoring a Florida State exposition at Madison Square Gardens in New York City. He worked with film companies to document local festivals and beaches that were played in movie houses across America, promoting the beauty of Florida.

He and his wife established the John and Mable Museum of Fine Art, completed in 1930. Ringling made a bequest of all his art collections and property to create the State Museum of Florida for all the world to enjoy.

Each year, one Hall of Fame inductee will be chosen from among the nominations received and approved by the VISIT FLORIDA Board of Directors. Nominees must have served the Florida tourism industry for a minimum of 10 years. Self-nominations will not be accepted.

PLEASE FILL OUT THE NOMINATION FORM COMPLETELY AND IN DETAIL FOLLOWING THE PARAMETERS SET FORTH.
Nominee’s Name: ________________________________________________
Company or Organization: _______________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________
City: _________________ State: ___________ Zip: ________________
Work Phone: _______________ Cell Phone: ________________________
E-mail: ____________________________

Person Nominating: ____________________________________________
Date Submitted: _______________________________________________
Address: ______________________________________________________
City: _________________ State: ___________ Zip: ________________
Work Phone: _______________ Cell Phone: ________________________
E-mail: ____________________________

Executive Summary: Please give an overview of the nominee and the primary contribution(s) for which he/she was responsible. (400 words or less)
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1. Describe the achievement and its result on the Florida tourism industry. Describe the nominee’s role in the success of this achievement. (250 words or less for up to three achievements)

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2. What is unique or pioneering about their achievement(s) that show consistent vision, innovation, and creativity for Florida tourism? (250 words or less for up to three achievements)

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3. What other career/volunteer experiences has he/she contributed to the general well-being of Florida tourism? Please state specific examples that go beyond the scope of the nominee’s job. (Provide career/volunteer experiences in chronological order, and focus the volunteer experience on the tourism community)

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Please email this form to operations@VISITFLORIDA.org by April 15, 2016. Attach any supporting documentation in PDF or Microsoft Word format, and please include a headshot, which will be used to honor the Hall of Fame winner on a plaque at the Capitol.