



Grand Casino Brussels

A prestigious new concept unique in Europe

Brussels, November 25, 2005 --- With final preparations in full swing for the Gala Opening Night of Grand Casino Brussels on January 19, 2006, Mr. Freddy Thielemans, Mayor of the City of Brussels, Mr. Bertin Mampaka, Deputy Mayor of the City of Brussels, Mr. Paul Herzfeld, CEO of Casinos Austria International, Mr. Josef Leutgeb, CFO of Casinos Austria International, Mr. Tim Cullimore, General Manager Grand Casino Brussels, and Dr. Peter Ketzer, Casinos Austria International Representative in Brussels took the opportunity to present their new casino and offer journalists a sneak preview of the many attractions on offer.

A few weeks prior to the Grand Opening, Grand Casino Brussels, the most prestigious and ambitious casino project to be realized in Europe in recent years, will open its doors to the public to ensure the operation is fully prepared for the Gala Opening Night.

The new casino will be located in the historical *Salle de la Madeleine* right in the heart of the European capital.

A multi-purpose concept for a unique location

Casinos Austria International (CAI) and its architectural partner in Brussels, BOA, have worked in close cooperation to design an innovative casino venue that transports European gaming to a whole new level. The results speak for themselves: three extravagant floors in an avant-garde crystal and glass design linked by a round glass elevator.

Each of these three floors offers its own special ambiance and entertainment, making Grand Casino Brussels quite simply *the place to be* in Brussels. The decor and stylish amber and red interiors have been carefully designed with this in mind, and no detail has been overlooked: from the tasteful VIP club and state-of-the-art gaming areas to the lounge facilities and choice of gourmet eateries and bars. Our aim was to create a modern casino, yet still retain the warm and welcoming appeal that is so typical of Brussels.

The lively ground floor, home to the main gaming area, offers a choice of 13 live gaming tables (Roulette, Black Jack, Stud Poker and Mini Punto Banco), 201 slot machines, as well as a deluxe food bar and several cocktail bars.

For those seeking a more relaxing setting, the luxurious first floor gallery also offers 8 gaming tables and 5 slot machines, comfortable lounge areas, VIP club and gaming facilities and the trendy gourmet "La Madeleine" restaurant, where Chef de Cuisine, Michel D., will entice guests with his own very special flavour of cooking "live" from an open kitchen: a sublime combination of French, oriental and exotic delights.

Finally, the multi-purpose "St. Jean" function room on the top floor will be used to host all manner of events, receptions, banquets and seminars and can also be hired for private and corporate events.



Grand Casino Brussels

Covering an area of 6200 m², the complex is located right in the heart of Brussels, opposite the Hotel Royal Windsor and within easy walking distance of Central Station and main tourist attractions such as the *Grand Place* and *Mont des Arts* museum and theatre district. Grand

Casino Brussels is well served by all forms of public transport, with extensive parking facilities also available nearby.

With the approval of the City of Brussels, this splendid historical site has been fully restored to its former glory and transformed into a welcoming, entertaining and relaxing attraction for both local and international clientele alike.

Adapting the *Salle de la Madeleine* to accommodate the casino required extensive structural work, renovations and modifications. In doing so, CAI and the City of Brussels have taken the utmost care to respect the site's cultural and architectural heritage, whilst also ensuring that all work undertaken is fully compliant with the Belgian and international safety and security standards required to operate a casino of international renown.

Impact on the Brussels Region

The new multi-purpose casino will make a strong contribution to economic development in Brussels, creating over 260 new jobs and boosting the local employment market. Staff have been recruited primarily from the Brussels region and, with the support of the local authorities, have received extensive training in the special skills required for working in a casino environment. The highly enthusiastic new casino team includes a large number of young, multilingual staff.

The new casino and entertainment complex will play an important role in the entertainment, hotel and tourism sectors in the Brussels region. The presence of a casino of this calibre, with its high-class clientele and host of prestigious top events will help to revitalize this downtown district and make the city of Brussels an even more attractive destination for visitors.

Casinos Austria International in Brussels

Opening a casino in Brussels has been an exciting venture for its operator, internationally renowned casino management and development company, Casinos Austria International. Indeed, since its bid was officially accepted by Brussels City Council, the Austria-based group has done all in its power to ensure that the city's new casino receives the best of everything and does true justice to its host city's requirements and its role as the capital of Europe.

CAI counts its traditionally innovative approach to gaming and its extensive international presence and experience among its key strengths. Grand Casino Brussels will benefit greatly from being part of this global casino network.

As of November 2005, CAI and its partners operated a total of 51 land based casinos in 15 countries and 8 shipboard casinos. Its parent company, Casinos Austria AG, also owns and operates the 12 casinos in Austria. In 2004, the two companies together posted revenues (wins, registered tips, entrance) of € 996 million, welcomed a total of 17.3 million guests and employed around 9.200 staff. Casinos Austria's revenues from the casino sector are expected to exceed € 1 billion in 2005.



Contact Details

Casinos Austria International Holding

Rue Duquesnoy 12-14
B – 1000 Brussels

Tim Cullimore (General Manager)
Nancy Brock (Marketing Manager)

Phone: +32 2 289 11 30
Fax: +32 2 503 12 15
E-mail: office@grandcasinobrussels.be
www.grandcasinobrussels.be

Temporary Office Address:
Casinos Austria International Holding
Rue du Poinçon 51
B – 1000 Brussels

Press Contact in Brussels:

PRP (Public Relations Partners)
François Géhot – Jacques Lechat
Av. Roger Vandendriessche, 5
B – 1150 Brussels
Phone: + 32 2 762 65 18
Fax + 32 2 771 19 59
E-mail: info@prp.be

International Press Contact:

Casinos Austria International
Hermann Pamminger
Head of Corporate Relations and Customer Care
Dr. Karl Lueger Ring 14
A – 1015 Vienna
Phone: + 43 1 534 40 524
Fax: + 43 1 532 92 07
E-mail: hermann.pamminger@casinos.at
www.casinosaustria.com



Annex 1: Grand Casino Brussels Project Milestones

June 28, 2004:

CAI Wins Tender for New Casino in Brussels

On June 28, 2004 Brussels City Council voted to award the concession for its new casino to Austria-based international casino management and development company, Casinos Austria International.

This was a historic moment for the Brussels region, which had waited many years for the right to open a casino in the city. The decision followed changes to Belgian gaming legislation permitting the opening of a ninth casino on Belgian soil and decreeing that said casino should be located in the capital city. All the requirements were now in place for the future opening of a casino in the European capital.

The tender published by the City of Brussels attracted the interest of a large number of high calibre national and international candidates. Following a highly competitive bid process, a number of candidates were short listed for the final round of selection. Despite strong bids from all the candidates, the City Council finally voted in favour of the Casinos Austria International bid.

January 2005:

Start of building works at the Salle de la Madeleine

May – September 2005: **Gradual establishment of key staff**

October 3, 2005:

Opening of the staff training school

October 5, 2005:

Belgian Gaming Commission Grants License to CAI

Following its in-depth examination and a detailed corporate presentation by CAI, the Belgian Gaming Commission granted CAI a license to conduct gaming activities in Belgium on October 5, 2005. The awarding of this license completed the legal requirements for the opening of the first casino in Brussels.

November 25, 2005:

Sneak Preview Press Tour of Grand Casino Brussels

December 2005:

Soft Opening of Grand Casino Brussels

January 19, 2005:

Grand Casino Brussels Gala Opening Night

Local and international celebrities will gather in Brussels to watch the traditional first spin of the Golden Roulette Ball and celebrate the opening of the new casino in Brussels at the spectacular Gala Opening Night.



Annex 2: A Brief History of the *Salle de la Madeleine*¹

The *Salle de la Madeleine* was built by the Belgian architect, Jean-Pierre Cluysenaer, in 1847, with the building originally used as a city centre market hall. The building bears witness to the city's historical heritage and is a prestigious venue for any event or occasion.

Its impressive blue stone façade with double arcades on two levels offers a reminder of Italian Renaissance architecture (and Florence in particular), a style also repeated in the *Rundbogenstil* ("round arch") movement in Bavaria at the start of the 19th century.

The façade originally masked a vast covered market, which opened onto the *rue St. Jean* to the rear and enclosed the whole of the *Galerie Bortier* (a small arcade now devoted entirely to rare and second-hand books).

Work on the complex, commissioned by Pierre Louis Antoine Bortier to Cluysenaer's design, began in 1847. When it was inaugurated in 1848, the *Marché de la Madeleine* was the first covered market in Brussels, opened in response to concerns raised in an 1846 Health Council report and demands for less congested, cleaner streets in the city centre.

The neo-Renaissance Flemish-style market served as a meeting place for the city's vegetable merchants and was also the venue for many of the large national festivals common at that time.

The old market was demolished in 1956 to make way for the new *Salle de la Madeleine*. Only its front and rear façades remained to serve as a screen for the site's new inhabitant. After its renovation, the *Salle de la Madeleine* served as the venue for numerous events, the most famous of which being the annual *Bal des Fonctionnaires* ("Civil Servants Ball").

The *Salle de la Madeleine* now looks forward to the next stage in its colourful history, with the opening of Grand Casino Brussels in December 2005.

¹ Information taken from documents and publications stored in the Brussels City Archives.



Annex 3: Casinos Austria International

Casinos Austria International (CAI) was founded in 1977 to consolidate the international activities of its parent company, Casinos Austria AG, under one roof. The company has since expanded far beyond its national roots and is now a leading player in the international casino and gaming industries. With its unique portfolio of casino management and development services, CAI has successfully realized more casino projects in more jurisdictions than any other casino operator worldwide.

As of November 2005, CAI and its partners operated a total of 51 land based casinos in 15 countries and 8 shipboard casinos. Its parent company, Casinos Austria AG, also owns and operates the 12 casinos in Austria. In 2004, the two companies together posted revenues (wins, registered tips, entrance) of € 996 million, welcomed a total of 17.3 million guests and employed around 9.200 staff. Casinos Austria's revenues from the casino sector are expected to exceed € 1 billion in 2005.

In addition to its extensive network of land based and shipboard casino operations around the globe, the Casinos Austria Group is also active in the lottery, online gaming, video lottery terminals and sports betting markets through its stakes in Austrian Lotteries, win2day.at, winwin and tipp3. A further subsidiary, CAST, develops and supplies premium technical equipment and the latest in security and surveillance services and technology. In 2004, the Group's companies together posted revenues of € 2.6 billion.

Service, quality, integrity, responsibility and respect for tradition are the driving forces behind the company's success and are reflected in all its business activities. CAI aims to achieve excellence in its field by committing itself to these basic values and taking its obligation to the host communities extremely seriously. CAI is dedicated to responsible gaming practices, to fulfilling its duties as an accountable corporate citizen, to upholding its reputation for probity and efficiency, to offering unrivalled service in each of its operations and to providing its employees with a stable and rewarding work environment and exciting opportunities for personal growth through its extensive corporate network.

With its truly global network of casinos and unique combination of tradition and innovation, CAI takes a multicultural approach to casino development and management. Each of its casinos is specially designed to meet the needs of the local market and reflect the tastes and traditions of its host community and culture, yet also draws on the wealth of experience and expertise available in its unrivalled global casino network.

CAI specializes in all aspects of casino development and management, offering an extensive portfolio of know-how and services for all phases in a casino project: from evaluation and planning through to building and operations. Its casino projects are considered to be "traditionally innovative" and are based on the company's proven combination of traditional values and innovative concepts.

The company's future plans include continued expansion into new and emerging markets, as well as the optimization and strengthening of its existing international presence.