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**CHOICE HOTELS LAUNCHES ASCEND HOTEL COLLECTION IN THE UK WITH 5 STAR EDINBURGH PROPERTY**

Choice Hotels International, Inc., the company behind the Comfort, Quality and Clarion brands in Europe and part of Choice Hotels International, announced today the introduction of it’s top end Ascend Hotel Collection to the UK, with Edinburgh’s five-star The Howard and four-star Channings Hotel, joining as the first UK Ascend Hotel Collection members.

“The launch of Ascend Hotel Collection in the UK is part of our strategy to continue diversifying our portfolio and provide the UK with a new upscale hotel offering. These two Edinburgh properties, which perfectly fit the Ascend Hotel Collection portfolio, give us a critical foothold in the UK that will support the accelerated rollout of the Ascend Hotel Collection in the UK and across Europe. We are delighted to welcome both the The Howard and Channings Hotel as the first UK Ascend Hotel Collection members,” said Mark Pearce, senior vice president, international division, for Choice Hotels.

Ascend Hotel Collection members are distinctive, independent hotels that are located in prime business or leisure travel destinations, providing guests with an upscale boutique hotel experience with superior service, backed by one of the world’s largest hospitality franchisors. Choice pioneered the soft brand concept with the launch of the Ascend Hotel Collection in 2008 and now has 148 hotels in key business and leisure travel destinations such as New York, Miami, Napa Valley, Sydney, Stockholm and Dublin.

The two new properties, to be known as The Howard, an Ascend Hotel Collection member, http://www.choicehotelsuk.co.uk/en/the-howard-an-ascend-hotel-collection-member-edinburgh-hotel-gb212 and Channings Hotel, an Ascend Hotel Collection member,

<http://www.choicehotelsuk.co.uk/en/channings-hotel-an-ascend-hotel-collection-member-edinburgh-hotel-gb211>join the portfolio with immediate effect.

The Howard is an intimate and discreet 5 star luxury Edinburgh hotel that occupies three Georgian townhouses in the heart of Edinburgh's New Town. Its bedrooms, suites and two bedroom serviced apartment Mews Cottage are served by a collection of butlers, who take care of everything from valet parking to ironing to late-night room service to theatre bookings.

Channings Hotel is a wonderfully quirky property that comprises a number of townhouses with Scottish country house feel, full of charming Victorian paintings, prints, books, furniture and memorabilia. One of the Channings’ townhouses was home to [Sir Ernest Shackleton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Shackleton), the Antarctic explorer.

The two hotels will continue to be owned and operated by The Edinburgh Collection and become Ascend Hotel Collection Members under franchise agreement with Choice Hotels Europe. Part of Palm Holdings, the international hospitality and business services group, The Edinburgh Collection ([www.thedinburghcollection.com](http://www.thedinburghcollection.com/)) own and operate a number of hotels in Edinburgh and have a proven track record of successful hotel development, branding, sales and marketing and operations.

Ricky Kapoor, Commercial Director, The Edinburgh Collection, commented; “Joining Choice’s Ascend Hotel Collection enables us to maintain autonomy and the hotels’ distinctiveness while leveraging Choice’s industry leading technology, marketing and distribution to optimise demand for the hotels and generate more revenue.”

The Choice Hotels Europe portfolio of franchised hotels offers business and leisure travellers a full spectrum from premium economy to upscale hotels. Choice Hotels Europe franchises nearly 500 hotels across Europe that are either open or under development. Brands franchised by Choice Hotels Europe include Clarion Collection, which is three to four star rated; Quality, which is three-star rated and provides a mid-scale full service offering, and Comfort, which is two to three star rated and is the largest Choice Hotels International brand worldwide, known for value, customer service and reliability.

Choice also provides guests with an upscale, boutique hotel offering through Ascend Hotel Collection, a portfolio of 4-5 star rated independent hotels located in key cities and destinations.

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**About The Edinburgh Collection**

The Edinburgh Collection Ltd ([www.thedinburghcollection.com](http://www.thedinburghcollection.com/)) own and operate hotels in Edinburgh and are part of Palm Holdings ([www.palmholdings.co.uk](http://www.palmholdings.co.uk/" \t "_blank)) with a proven track record of successful hotel development, branding, sales and marketing and operations.

Located in the heart of Scotland's capital, our Edinburgh hotels and serviced apartments offer a range of the best accommodation for both leisure and business visitors to the city. We cater to the needs of corporate travellers who require prime, Edinburgh city centre accommodation close to the financial district, the leisure customer who insists on the very highest levels of service, delegates visiting Edinburgh’s International Conference Centre and also those who prefer a self-catering option in Edinburgh city.

The Old Waverley Hotel was purchased in 2003, and formed the basis of what would later become The Edinburgh Collection. Holyrood Aparthotel was added in March 2010 providing contemporary and modern 4-star serviced hotel accommodation to our guests, just walking distance from The Royal Mile, Holyrood Palace, Scottish Parliament and Edinburgh.

4-star Channings and The Howard 5-star hotel in Edinburgh joined The Edinburgh Collection in December 2010.

**About Choice Hotels**

Choice Hotels International, Inc. (NYSE: CHH) is one of the world's largest lodging companies. With more than 6,300 hotels franchised in more than 35 countries and territories, Choice Hotels International® represents more than 500,000 rooms around the globe. As of September 30, 2015, 638 hotels were in our development pipeline. Our company's Ascend Hotel Collection®, Cambria® hotels & suites, Comfort Inn®, Comfort Suites®, Sleep Inn®, Quality®, Clarion®, MainStay Suites®, Suburban Extended Stay Hotel®, Econo Lodge® and Rodeway Inn® brands provide a spectrum of lodging choices to meet guests' needs. With more than 24 million members and counting, check out our Choice Privileges® rewards program to see how you can reap the benefits of being a member of the Choice Hotels® family. Visit us at [www.choicehotels.com](http://www.choicehotels.com) for more information.

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