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The Journal

Baha Mar Bahamas

The Caribbean's largest mega-resort

Baha Mar is set to open March 2015

Nassau Bahamas March 4, 2015;
Baha Mar is less a holiday resort and more like an enormous city by the beach. The Bahamas is gearing up for a grand opening of grand proportions as the Caribbean's biggest mega-resort opens this month.

Costing a staggering $3.5billion, the super-development Baha Mar -The New Riviera will include five fully-distinct resort hotels and will stretch across 3,000ft of Nassau's pristine Cable Beach.

Oscartek is proud to be a part of this massive new project with highly modern glass food display cases and counters in multiple eclectic designs chosen by a Top U.S designer firm TBCI. The resort is scheduled for opening this month and set to provide a major boost to Bahamas tourism, industry chiefs believe, and attract overseas real estate investment.

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It includes four top hotels – Grand Hyatt, SLS Lux, Rosewood and the flagship Baha Mar Hotel and Casino – luxury villas, a 30,000 square foot spa, a 100,000 square foot casino, a Jack Nicklaus Signature golf course, and more than 40 restaurants.

The Baha Mar Casino & Hotel, the Rosewood at Baha Mar, and SLS Lux at Baha Mar will start hosting guests on Friday 27 March and Grand Hyatt is due to open shortly after, according to development chiefs, despite previous reports attributed to Prime Minister Perry Christie that the opening could be delayed. Altogether, they have 2,200 rooms.

Its 307 private residences include one, two and three-bedroom Rosewood residences, which cost from $1.95m BSD-$2.44mBSD depending on floor level, plus four-bedroom beach villas.

One to three-bedroom SLS Lux range from $1,6m-$5.29m and Grand Hyatt rooms cost from $1.45m-$1.96m. The Bahaman dollar is pegged one-to-one to the US dollar.

"The Baha Mar Residences offer the preeminent resort lifestyle at the world's glamorous new playground in Nassau, The Bahamas. A fortunate few will own at thisenclave of the most celebrated hotels, pristine beaches, world-class gaming and much more."

Owners have the option of keeping their homes for personal use or including them in the rental scheme.

Oscartek case and counter line up

Buyers and their dependents are eligible for permanent residence status in The Bahamas and pay no income tax, capital gains tax or inheritance tax.

The major development, built by China's State Construction Engineering Corporation, is one of the most eagerly-awaited projects in the region. China is an equity investor in the project.

Baha Mar's President Tom Dunlap says, "A dream starts great endeavours, but it is only a beginning. Baha Mar's vision will truly come to life once the first guests sleep in our hotels, dine at our restaurants, snorkel at our reef, lounge at our Cabana Club, play at our casino, dance in our clubs until dawn—and experience the true soul of the Bahamas with impeccable service and joyful hospitality. This dream has been years in the making, and on March 27, 2015, it will finally become a reality."

Ratings agency Standard & Poor's says 2015 is "a pivotal year" for the nation and its economy and the Bahamas has seen improved infrastructure and is set to attract new flights.

Robert Sands, senior VP of government and external affairs for Baha Mar, agrees the development has benefitted the region. "The addition of such a substantial development, (Baha Mar) has been the impetus for government investment of millions of dollars into infrastructural developments necessary to grow the tourism industry in The Bahamas."

The Baha Mar project put into motion the $410-million investment in the expansion of the Lynden Pindling International Airport, which is set to boost capacity to 5.2 million passengers annually, the Hotel.Now website reports.

The government is already working on attracting new US flights, particularly from Chicago, Dallas and Los Angeles. Thanks to Baha Mar, international air arrivals are expected to reach 2million by 2020.

"Baha Mar has a high potential to attract a greater number of tourists from untapped, high-potential markets such as Latin America and China," adds Mr Sands.

The huge resort has even promoted itself at the Oscars as the Bahamian Riviera in its advertisement called The Voyage.

John Schadler, Managing partner at the SK+G agency that created the advert, says, "Baha Mar is a destination of epic proportion and is sure to become one of the great iconic attractions for discerning travelers around the world. With that in mind, we knew we had to introduce the brand in an equally commanding way. The Voyage is a story of glamour, excitement and the promise of a place that could only be described as 'The New Riviera.'"

High-end travellers are showing strong demand for Bahamas bookings and is had been included in the Virtuoso Hot List from January-March 2015. Member hotels, including the Rosewood at Baha Mar have recorded a 20% increase in year-over-year growth.

Baha Mar includes 200,000 square feet of flexible convention facilities, including a 2,000-seat entertainment venue; an ESPA spa; art galleries featuring Bahamian art; global luxury designer and local artisan boutiques.

It also features 20 acres of exquisitely landscaped beach and pool experiences, including a beachfront sanctuary with native Bahamian flora and fauna. On completion of renovations, the all-inclusive Meliá Nassau Beach will become part of Baha Mar.

EPA Approves New Refrigerant Alternatives

March 13, 2015
By; Jeffrey Hunter, Laura Kerr, Joanna Thies

On March 2, 2015, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published a final rule expanding the number of refrigerants approved for use in a variety of refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment as compliant with the "Stratospheric Ozone Protection" requirements of the Clean Air Act and implementing regulations. (See 42 U.S.C. § 7671; 40 C.F.R. Part 82, Subpart F.) The EPA issued the rule pursuant to its authority under the Act to identify and publish lists of acceptable and unacceptable class I and class II ozone-depleting substances. The final rule authorizes the use of ethane, isobutene, propane, the hydrocarbon blend R-441A, and difluoromethane (HFC)-32 in new refrigeration appliances for various uses, including household refrigerators and freezers, stand-alone commercial refrigerators and freezers, vending machines and in-room air-conditioning units.

Background

The EPA is authorized under the Clean Air Act to assess and regulate substitutes for ozone-depleting chemicals as part of its Significant New Alternatives Policy (SNAP) Program. One of the primary focuses of the SNAP Program is to approve low global warming potential substitutes for the ozone-depleting substances used in refrigeration and air conditioning. If the EPA determines a substitute substance will reduce overall risk to human health and the environment, it will add the refrigerant to its approved list. Some approved substitutes are subject to conditions limiting the approved methods of use.

			Infinite Dilution Activity Coefficients at 0°C		
Extractive Agent	Formula	NBP (°C)	HFC-32	HFC-125	Ratio
n-Pentane	C_5H_{12}	36.1	7.04	9.34	0.75
Cyclopentane	C_5H_{10}	49.3	10.78	11.04	0.98
n-Hexane	C_6H_{14}	68.7	7.25	6.65	1.09
Methanol	CH_3OH	64.6	3.89	3.94	0.99
Acetone	CH_3COCH_3	56.3	0.77	0.87	0.89
Methylene Chloride	CH_2Cl_2	39.8	2.77	9.53	0.29

Summary of the Final Rule

In the final rule, the EPA approved the use of ethane, isobutene, propane, the hydrocarbon blend R-441A and difluoromethane (HFC)-32 for the following end uses:

- Ethane for very low temperature refrigeration and nonmechanical heat transfer;
- Isobutene for retail food refrigeration and vending machines;
- Propane for household refrigerators, household freezers, household combination refrigerators and freezers, vending machines and in-room air-conditioning units;
- Hydrocarbon blend R-441A for retail food refrigeration, vending machines and in-room air-conditioning units; and
- Difluoromethane (HFC)-32 for in-room air-conditioning units.

In addition to authorizing the use of these substitutes, the new rule exempts four of the refrigerants, excluding difluoromethane (HFC)-32, from the Clean Air Act prohibitions on venting, release and disposal. The EPA exempted these refrigerants because it found that neither their venting and release, nor their disposal, pose a threat to the environment. Nonetheless, the EPA recommends that the authorized venting of these refrigerants occur in a well-ventilated area, preferably outside of any buildings. The EPA continues to prohibit difluoromethane (HFC)-32 from being vented or otherwise released or disposed of by any person maintaining, servicing, repairing or disposing appliances containing the substitute. Even for the exempted refrigerants, there may be other legal obligations pertaining to their handling and disposal.

The newly-approved refrigerants are subject to use conditions that address the flammability risks associated with the use of these refrigerants. The EPA limits the amount of refrigerant allowed in each type of appliance and requires the use of warning labels and color-coded hoses on equipment to indicate the use of a flammable refrigerant. In addition, the EPA recommends only technicians specifically trained in flammable refrigerant substitute protocols handle these substitutes when maintaining, servicing, repairing or disposing of equipment that contain them.

Implications of the Final Rule

Manufacturers and users of refrigerants and refrigeration appliances are not required to convert to approved alternative refrigerants or to new appliances that accept them. In fact, the substitutes are not authorized for all end uses. However, conversion could potentially provide the following benefits to both refrigeration appliance manufacturers and industrial users, including pharmaceutical manufacturers, data centers, grocery retailers, cold-storage warehouses and distribution facilities, oil and gas production sites and appliance retailers:

- Exemptions from, and improved compliance with, the "Stratospheric Ozone Protection" requirements of the Clean Air Act and potential avoidance of enforcement penalties.
- Potential cost savings from purchasing less expensive refrigerants as hydrochlorofluorocarbon refrigerants, such as R-22, are phased out and become increasingly costly.
- Potential carbon credits or offsets in carbon cap-and-trade programs and potential incentives from power plants, utilities and/or state governments seeking to comply with the EPA's pending Clean Power Plan.

Converting to an approved refrigerant could, however, impose additional costs. The final rule limits the use of the newly authorized refrigerants to new equipment; the substitutes may not be used as a "retrofit" refrigerant in existing equipment. Thus, manufacturers and industrial users are likely to incur substantial up-front costs for the replacement of existing appliances with those in which the approved alternatives may be used. Additionally, given the flammability risks of the approved alternatives, manufacturers and industrial users may incur costs to redesign appliances to withstand flammability risks and for training staff on the safe handling of flammable refrigerants, as well as other efforts to comply with regulations promulgated by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

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