

# Smart meetings

June 2019 • \$5.00

Los Angeles

Conference & Convention Centers

HOW TO  
FESTIVALIZE  
ANYTHING

FALL IN LOVE  
WITH THESE  
CONVENTION CENTERS

THE "DO MORE  
WITH LESS"  
SECRET

2019  
**SMART  
STARS**

DISCOVER YOUR NEXT  
BEST PLACE



LOS ANGELES  
MID-ATLANTIC  
ALBUQUERQUE/SANTA FE  
GREATER SAN FRANCISCO

RESORT AT PEDREGAL INFINITY POOL, CABO SAN LUCAS



THE BEST OF

2019

Smart Stars

MEET OUR READERS' CHOICE WINNERS

The dictionary definition of “best” as an adjective is: “of the most excellent, effective, or desirable type or quality.” See also: greatest, foremost, leading, preeminent, premier, prime, supreme, unsurpassed, peerless, optimum, ideal, perfect. For event professionals, choosing the best property, supplier or partner means fewer last-minute surprises, more delight and less stress—all welcome outcomes.

But how do you know you are selecting the best location for your annual meeting or board retreat? Ask the experts—planners who have been there and experienced it for themselves. Smart Meetings readers can be brutally honest. They are not just telling us about the most amazing swimming pool or golf course; they are sharing feedback about the experience of working with the team, brainstorming innovative ideas and solving problems before anyone ever knew there was one.

We call this no-holds-barred list of 191 of the best of the best our Smart Stars Winners. You will call it your go-to guide for ensuring that your next event exceeds your expectations and wows clients and attendees. This year, we expanded the categories to include airlines, CVBs, DMCs, casinos, and best F&B—35 categories in all.

To make capitalizing on the knowledge of this wise planner crowd even easier, we dedicated a page of our website (SmartMeetings.com) to a sortable list you can personalize, based on where you plan meetings and your individual goals. Looking for an environmentally friendly hotel in the Northwest? Is your CEO set on finding a stellar incentive hotel in Mexico? Sort, save and print. Easy. Plus, we have linked years of articles on these planner-favorite destinations for easy research from the comfort of your office.

Smart Meetings founder and CEO Marin Bright started this publication to share the wisdom of a community of dedicated event professionals for the benefit of the industry. This annual feature has become the embodiment of that “share what you know” mantra. We are honored to announce the names of these trusted partners and share their stories.

Now, go be your best brilliant selves.



**JT Long**  
Content Chief, Smart Meetings

[smartmeetings.com/smart-stars](http://smartmeetings.com/smart-stars)

## BEST INCENTIVE HOTEL



### SEA ISLAND

Sea Island is an exceptional resort on Georgia's coast, appealing to those who appreciate extraordinary hospitality. Perfect for intimate conferences or gatherings of up to 500 people, it is the only resort in the United States to host a G8 Summit and the only resort in the world to receive four Forbes Five Star awards for 11 consecutive years.

912-634-4490  
sales@seaisland.com  
seaisland.com

*Sea Island*

## BEST HOTEL SPA



### THE RESORT AT PEDREGAL

Seaside and cliffside, outside and in, The Resort at Pedregal is the ultimate in luxury Los Cabos resorts. Enter via Mexico's only privately owned tunnel and let every care drop away. Relish in your private getaway with spacious rooms and suites, each with a private plunge pool and ocean views to calm and center you.

602-330-6147  
dawn.benedict@theresortatpedregal.com  
theresortatpedregal.com

  
THE RESORT  
AT PEDREGAL  
*A Divide Of Luxury*

## 2019 SMART STARS WINNERS LIST

- CAESARS PALACE LAS VEGAS HOTEL & CASINO
- HARD ROCK HOTEL & CASINO PUNTA CANA
- MGM NATIONAL HARBOR
- TALKING STICK RESORT
- WYNN LAS VEGAS AND ENCORE HOTEL

### BEST GOLF RESORT

- HYATT REGENCY HILL COUNTRY RESORT AND SPA

- NEMACOLIN WOODLANDS RESORT
- PARK HYATT AVIARA RESORT GOLF CLUB AND SPA
- PGA NATIONAL RESORT AND SPA
- STREAMSONG RESORT
- THE BROADMOOR
- TRUMP NATIONAL DORAL MIAMI

### BEST HISTORIC HOTEL

- FAIRMONT LE CHATEAU FRONTENAC
- HOTEL MONTELEONE
- MILLENNIUM BILTMORE LOS ANGELES

- ROYAL PALMS RESORT AND SPA
- THE SAGAMORE RESORT

### BEST HOTEL POOL

- ATLANTIS PARADISE ISLAND BAHAMAS
- FOUR SEASONS RESORT ORLANDO AT WALT DISNEY WORLD RESORT
- GRAND WAILEA, A WALDORF ASTORIA RESORT
- HYATT REGENCY SCOTTSDALE RESORT AND SPA AT GAINES RANCH
- MARRIOTT MARQUIS HOUSTON
- THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL