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## **BRANDY MARINE LEADS COSTA RICAN OFFICIALS ON FLORIDA MARINA TOUR**

### *Costa Rican Minister of Tourism planning future visit for symposium*

**SARASOTA, Fla.** -- (January 8, 2004) -- Brandy Marine, Inc., the Florida-based marina development firm, recently hosted an official delegation from Costa Rica visiting the U.S. to learn more about how the U.S. develops and regulates marinas.

The five-person delegation represented the Comision Interinstitucional de Marinas y Atracederos Turisticos or CIMAT, an agency of the Costa Rican government known in English as the High Commission of Tourist Marinas and Piers. CIMAT is charged with approving all aspects of marina development in Costa Rica.

Bruce H. Blomgren, president of Brandy Marine, said five members of CIMAT traveled to Southeast Florida to gather information about planning, design, development, administration, operation and appropriate oversight of successful marinas and boat yards. Brandy Marine facilitated the mission after Blomgren's introduction to the Costa Rican agency on a recent trip to Costa Rica. Brandy has been involved in numerous marina projects in Central and Latin America. Brandy, based in Sarasota, consults, develops and operates premier marinas and related waterfront marina villages in the U.S. and other countries.

The Central American visitors toured three public marinas, five private marinas and boatyards in Florida's Broward and Dade Counties. They included Bahia Mar, which Brandy once managed, Pier 66, Bradford Yard and Merrill Stevens. Members also met with government regulators and officials of the Marine Industries Association of South Florida (MIASF).

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“This visit offered a whole new perspective to our board members,” said Alvaro Martin, chairman of CIMAT. “We do not have vast knowledge of the development of marinas in Costa Rica, so it was extremely important to observe the private sector processes in the United States and to meet regulatory and industry representatives.”

Martin noted that Costa Rica welcomes applications from private developers such as Brandy Marine for the development of public tourism projects. “It was good to observe the private sector operations in Florida,” he said. “Costa Rica has a climate that can sustain marinas year-round, so we are quite interested in bringing these investments in tourism to our country.”

Frank Herhold, executive director of MIAASF, said he offered CIMAT the services of the association to organize a future symposium for the Costa Rican Minister of Tourism and U.S. officials. “There is a lot of advice we can offer our friends in Costa Rica, a lot of dos and don’ts. We are mindful, too, that many in our cruising community will enjoy taking their own vessels to Costa Rica when there are suitable facilities there.”

Blomgren said he anticipates meeting the Minister of Tourism on a future trip to Costa Rica and would like to help facilitate the symposium proposed by the Marine Industries Association of South Florida.

#### **About Brandy Marine, Inc.**

Brandy Marine, Inc. is a Florida-based international consultant/developer/operator of premier marinas and related waterfront marina villages. The company has nearly 30 years of experience working with hundreds of marinas in major resort and commercial markets throughout the United States, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica, Jamaica, the British Virgin Islands, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Greece and the Bahamas. More information on Brandy Marine can be found at [www.BrandyMarine.com](http://www.BrandyMarine.com).

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