**Media Contact:**

Katie King

Red Fan Communications

O: (512) 551-9253 / C: (512) 964-9185

[katie@redfancommunications.com](mailto:katie@redfancommunications.com)

**The Westin Austin Downtown Opens Its Doors in the Live Music Capital of The World®**

**AUSTIN, TEXAS (July 16, 2015) –** Westin Hotels & Resorts, part of Starwood Hotels & Resorts (NYSE: HOT), today announced the opening of its latest Austin hotel, The Westin Austin Downtown, located in the heart of the city at the corner of San Jacinto Boulevard and Fifth Street. A joint venture among White Lodging Services Corporation, the Harry Whittington family and REI Real Estate Services, LLC., the 20-story hotel, which draws design inspiration from the local music scene, is Westin’s second Austin property, and one of five new openings in North America this year.

The Westin Austin Downtown used HKS Architects, Inc. and was designed by Simeone Deary. Upon entering the lobby, guests are transported to a modern-day oasis where they are met with a 12-foot-tall custom-made art piece comprised of charred wood blocks that come together to form the body of a guitar. Incorporating natural design elements, the lobby ceiling and vertical garden mimic the cutouts of a Dobro guitar, while the ballroom floors allude to prints often found on guitar straps. In keeping with the Austin music theme, the hotel will regularly host local musicians in the lounge area.

“We wanted to pay homage to all Austin has to offer, and, of course, music is a huge part of that,” said Kristofer Carlson, General Manager of The Westin Austin Downtown. “Most of the inspiration comes from vintage guitars, so you’ll see many parts of the hotel subtly reflect various guitar components. That, combined with Westin’s signature amenities, will offer Austinites and visitors alike a relaxing-yet-energized stay.”

The new Westin offers one of the city’s most spectacular rooftops with uninterrupted 180-degree views of the city. A relaxing getaway for guests amidst the energy of Austin, the rooftop is home to Azul – the city’s tallest hotel rooftop pool and bar, which features cabanas and a fire pit, as well as the 24-hour Westin WORKOUT® Fitness Studio. The hotel offers its signature Gear Lending program, providing New Balance® shoes and athletic wear for guests who like to pack light. The local Run Concierge is also available to provide guided group runs of Austin’s most well-known sites or recommend routes for guests who would like to explore the city solo.

“Filled with so much vigor and energy, it was only natural that our second hotel in Austin be in the heart of downtown,” said Bob Jacobs, Vice President, Brand Management, Westin Hotels & Resorts and Sheraton Hotels & Resorts. “The Westin Austin Downtown aims to provide guests and locals alike with an escape from the hustle and bustle, while still embracing the city’s culture.”

Up the guitar-string staircase, The Westin Austin Downtown is home to 366 contemporary guest rooms and suites, each featuring a signature Westin Heavenly Bed® to ensure a great night’s sleep, the soothing Heavenly Shower/Bath®, high-speed Internet, plush robes and a 100 percent smoke-free environment. The hotel also features the city’s newest restaurant, Stella San Jac, an Austin-American restaurant serving eclectic Southern cuisine. Guests have access to 24-hour in-room dining from the hotel’s full-service kitchen, and for extra nourishment, The Westin Austin Downtown offers fresh juices and smoothies, SuperFoodsRx choices for adults and The Westin Eat Well Menu for Kids.

The hotel features more than 19,000 square feet of state-of-the-art meeting and banquet space, inclusive of 16 individual meeting rooms, each named after a famous Austin musician or venue, including Joplin, Benson, Paramount, Continental and Moody.

“The new Westin Austin Downtown has already enabled us to make advances in both the size and quality of groups that we are now able to attract with the additional inventory,” said Bob Lander, president and CEO of the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB).

Starwood Preferred Guest® members checking into The Westin Austin Downtown between July 16 and Sept. 12 will receive 1,000 bonus Starpoints.

To learn more about The Westin Austin Downtown, visit [www.westinaustindowntown.com](http://www.westinaustindowntown.com).

**About The Westin Austin Downtown**

The Westin Austin Downtown Hotel, opening July 2015, is one of the premiere downtown Austin hotels, located just one block from the Austin Convention Center and the 6th Street Entertainment District. With 366 contemporary guest rooms, the hotel welcomes guests to stay in the heart of the Live Music Capital of the World®, just footsteps to the latest foodie hotspots, historic sites, legendary live music venues, eclectic shops and year-round outdoor fun. The 20-story hotel also offers 19,000 square feet of state-of-the-art event space for meetings and special occasions and the city’s tallest hotel rooftop pool and bar. To learn more, visit [www.westinaustindowntown.com](http://www.westinaustindowntown.com).

**About Westin Hotels & Resorts**

[Westin Hotels & Resorts](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/index.html), a leader in wellness and hospitality for more than a decade, lives its philosophy “For a Better You™” through the Westin Well-being Movement’s six pillars: Feel Well, Work Well, Move Well, Eat Well, Sleep Well and Play Well. At more than 200 hotels and resorts in nearly 40 countries and territories, guests can experience offerings that include the iconic Heavenly® Bed, RunWESTIN™ and Westin Gear Lending with New Balance®, delicious and nutritious SuperFoodsRx™, the innovative workspace Tangent, Westin Weekend signature experiences, and Heavenly Bath and Heavenly Spa. Westin is proud to offer Starwood Preferred Guest®, the industry’s leading loyalty program. To learn more, visit [www.starwoodhotels.com/westin](http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin). Stay connected to Westin: @westin on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/westin) and [Instagram](https://instagram.com/westin/) and [facebook.com/Westin](https://www.facebook.com/westin).

**About White Lodging Services Corporation**

White lodging Services Corporation was established in 1985 and is headquartered in Merrillville, Ind. White Lodging is a fully integrated hotel ownership, development and operations company – a recognized leader that has defined and cultivated the ability to achieve consistent, sustainable growth among mid-to large-scale hotels across the country. Its current portfolio consists of more than 161 hotels in 21 states and encompasses representation of the following leading brands: Preferred Hotel Group, Marriott International, Inc., Hilton Worldwide, Hyatt Global, Starwood Hotels and Resorts, InterContinental Hotel Group and Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group. For more information about White Lodging, please visit [www.whitelodging.com](http://www.whitelodging.com/" \t "_blank).

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