



Oh, what a show!

HERE today, gone until next year, Sydney's Event Showcase and the Australian Business Events



Expo 2012, with three halls chock-a-block with more than 300 suppliers, venues and managers, ended its two day run on Thursday with **BEN** hearing mixed results from exhibitors and visitors.

Talk was of the show being quieter than previous years both from show visitors and exhibitors - however some of the exhibitors such as Swissôtel, Mantra and Spicer's Resorts expressed delight with the results.

What we learnt at **Business Events News** is that sex sells.

Especially when it is contained in the physical attributes of a semi-naked 'BEN.'

Check out our **page 4** photo page to see if you made the cut.

MCEC savours awards

CONTINUING to challenge perceptions around traditional events catering, the team at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) were finalists in two categories at the Victorian Savour Australian Restaurant & Catering HOSTPLUS Awards for Excellence, at the Atlantic this week.

Anomously assessed by a team of judges on a range of criteria, considerations included guest arrival, function set-up, food presentation, food and beverage service delivery and staff.

MCEC director of food and beverage Marc van der Meer said "Our proud and passionate team are pleased to be recognised as finalists at these awards and judges' feedback will help us improve our event delivery and continue to provide a high standard of food and service."

The business of events



THE annual Sydney's Event Showcase and the Australian Business Events Expo 2012, opened on day one with the inaugural Australia's Event Master Class Seminars with the topic - 'The Business of Events in Australia'.

MCD by John Lees, and hosted by Lyn Lewis-Smith ceo, BESydney, speakers included Sandra Chipchase, chief executive officer of Destination NSW as well as Terry Crane, former head of the CHOGM Perth 2011 Taskforce.

Lewis-Smith highlighted the importance of business events as a major contributor to the economy and of the necessity for government support, while Sandra Chipchase spoke of the importance of events like Vivid Sydney, which she described as being "truly embraced by Sydneysiders and visitors alike."

Chipchase revealed that 45,000 interstate and overseas visitors attended Vivid Sydney last year.

"In 2013 we expect up to 500,000 people will attend the festival from 25 May – 11 June and estimate that it will inject more than \$10 million in new money for the State," she enthused.

Now, after four years this event has morphed into the largest annual festival of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere, with Vivid Sydney recently ranked as one of the world's top ten ideas festivals by the UK's influential *Guardian* newspaper - being named alongside SXSW Interactive Festival in Austin, Texas and the

TedX 'ideas worth spreading' worldwide event phenomenon.

Chipchase went on to say how they intend to collaborate with the event industry to encourage them to create their events and conferences in and around Vivid.

"Destination NSW," Chipchase offered, "can help with advice & collateral".

Terry Crane spoke of his involvement in, and the logistical challenges of organising CHOGM (Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting) - the security issues, overcoming negative press, road disruptions, etc and the imperative to engage local people in forums, events and a range of activities such as community barbecues.

"Ultimately, these events can be memorable for the city and financially beneficial," he said.

Crane also spoke of the challenges of dealing with such a diverse group of dignitaries.

"For instance, cultural, religious and ego issues make it challenging to get everyone to travel on a coach together and then there's the issue of who gets the best suite in a hotel!"

That was a matter that drew murmurs of agreement and much nodding of heads from some the gathered event planners!

Crane who has worked with the British Royal family on these events said, "If you ever want to see an organisation that knows how to manage an event, then it's The Palace – they are magnificent."

Creating a Vibe

VIBE Hotels, who have released four chart-topping albums, have taken their next project another step after releasing last year's *The Vibe CD: The Chillout Suite* - which ranked sixth on the Charts.

Now, in another Australian first, Robert Conley, the hotel brand's music director will take the Vibe dedication to music another step further by presenting the Vibe Songwriting Suite - a new songwriting and recording studio in Sydney's Redfern.

This creative and funky space with lots of techy toys for musos, is the brainchild of Conley.

Singing sensations already booked to work in the Vibe Suite include: Delta Goodrem, Brian McFadden, Amy Meredith & stars of *The Voice*; Sarah De Bono, Darren Percival & Rachael Leahcar.

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GROUPS & INCENTIVES



business events news

17th August 2012



NBC may have been accused of delaying the London Olympics Games broadcast, however, figures released show that the Games was the "most watched" television event in the US history.

The American TV network said more than 219 million viewers watched on its networks, compared to the 215 million for Beijing 2008.

On the other hand, the BBC says its coverage was watched by 90% of the British population.

Bigger, better, best

THE finishing touches are being made to Macau's largest hotel, the Sheraton Hotel, Cotai Central.

It is also the world's largest Sheraton hotel and its opening in September coincides with the hotel brand's 75th anniversary.

In final preparations, the new hotel is unveiling some intriguing behind-the-scenes facts, including the fact that the construction and staffing has helped to boost the Macau economy and provided locals with many career options.

In gathering its staff, the Sheraton hosted a number of job fairs and received more than 10,000 applications from new graduates as well as seasoned hotel industry veterans and conducted 5,000 interviews.

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Pictured is Rob Kirk, Harvey World Chatswood with Jack Black

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Kids & conferencing

THE BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday, at Airlie Beach, is a resort with the dual ability of being able to provide a tropical resort holiday location with family-style conferences and small groups.

The resort's creative events team can organise daily schedules for the family in addition to a separate program for business delegates.

Set in 10.5 hectares of lush tropical gardens, a year-round pleasantly heated lagoon pool and masses of activities for the kids, there's enough room for everyone to find their personal space.

Separate tours and team-building activities can be organised by day while everyone can join in with organised social events in the evenings.

The BIG4 has facilities for outdoor movies or roast spit parties, family trivia nights or even a formal dinner around the pool.

The Australian-style resort offers a large range of accommodation from beautifully presented open plan cabins to brand new luxury three-bedroom condominiums, with rates that rise from \$95 to \$255.

Step into spring

THE Rendezvous Grand Hotel, Melbourne is inviting conference planners to 'Step into Spring' and be rewarded with a Myer gift voucher when they book their next conference, event or group accommodation.

For instance spend \$2,500 - \$4,999 and receive a \$250 Myer Gift Voucher, spend \$5,000 - \$9,999 and receive a \$500 voucher, while a \$10,000 or more spend gets a \$1,000 voucher.

Day delegate packages start from \$69 per person, Christmas cocktail events from \$41 per person, accommodation from \$169 per night and residential packages start at \$249 per room per night.

Email for a quote to - conventions@melbourne.rendezvous.com.au.

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Rochford's 80s concert

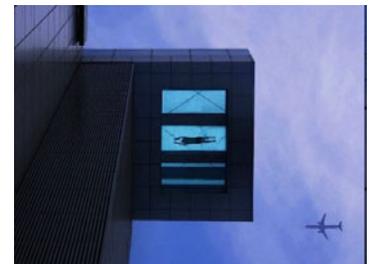
ROCHFORD Winery in Victoria's glorious Yarra Valley, has three Concert Corporate Packages on offer from a low \$329 per person, during their 300th land mark concert on Saturday 01 Dec.

These packages include three course meals and beverages, made up of Rochford's finest food matched with award-winning wines, along with reserve seating and private bathrooms.

The ritzy rock 'n' roller 80s concert features an international line up of world class entertainment that includes The Simple Minds and Devo while on the Australian side are The Church and the eclectic popstars Models, led by Sean Kelly.



Swimmingly Shanghai



DANGLING 24 storeys above busy Shanghai streets, the Holiday Inn Shanghai Kangqiao's arresting cantilevered swimming pool is causing quite a splash with guests and quite a few stares from the pedestrians below.

Guests at the hotel get a spectacular and unique view of a busy metropolitan street as they swim in the pool whose glass floor extends beyond the ledges of the building.

To use the pool, you have to be a guest of the hotel or a member of its gym; rooms at the hotel start at just \$125 per night, compared with the \$2,400 annual gym membership.

Win a luxury stay at Southern Ocean Lodge



During the months of August and September, *Business Events News* is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Southern Ocean Lodge, Kangaroo Island courtesy of *Baillie Lodges*.

The prize includes two-nights accommodation for two people in a Flinders Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily, open bar with premium wines and spirits, in-suite bar, signature experiences and return island airport transfers.

To be in the running simply answer the 17 questions and the final creative answer which will be featured in *BEN* on 21 September.

The person who answers ALL the questions and has the most creative response will win.

Email your answers to:

baillielodges@businesseseventsnews.com.au

Q3: Which commercial airline flies to Kingscote on Kangaroo Island at least three times daily?

Hint: www.southernoceanlodge.com.au

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business events news



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EatDrinkBlog

80 food bloggers from around Australia are expected to attend the Eat Drink Blog 3 (EDB3) conference on Sunday 04 November, being held in Adelaide's iconic Central Market.

The weekend will also include a half-day of pre-conference activities on Saturday 03 November, including trips to South Australian wineries, an Adelaide Central Market tour and a dinner featuring local produce & wines.

The conference follows EDB2, held in Sydney in 2011, and the inaugural conference, held in Melbourne in 2010.

Christina Soong-Kroeger, EBD3 co-chair, and publisher of Adelaide food blog, The Hungry Australian, says, "Eat Drink Blog is the most important conference for Australian food bloggers in terms of content, sharing of ideas and information, and networking."

Conferences get arty

CURRENTLY managing events spaces at the Viaduct Events Centre, Aotea Centre, Auckland Town Hall and The Civic for MICE events, Auckland Conventions Venues and Events has added the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki to its portfolio.

Home of visual arts in New Zealand with a collection of more than 15,000 artworks, Auckland Conventions director Mohamed Mansour said, "We're delighted to offer our events skills and support to Auckland Art Gallery."

The Gallery which scooped ten architectural awards this year offers seven event spaces in one location.

"Since the Gallery reopened in September last year, it has hosted a wide variety of events from gala dinners to car launches, high profile fashion shows to cocktail parties for finance companies, industry awards to private weddings," says Gallery director Chris Saines.

Auckland Conventions' expanding portfolio allows clients to have greater choice and flexibility for organising unique and memorable event experiences.



"As our city continues to grow and to offer more to visitors to enjoy, demand for great venues and experiences will increase," said Mansour.

"For example, we contributed to the leap Auckland made in the International Congress and Convention Association rankings for the Asia Pacific and Middle East region for 2011."

A ranking that saw them go from 45th in 2010 to 19th in 2011, with 22 international meetings hosted, up from eight in 2010.

"Auckland Conventions held a significant proportion of those events at its landmark venues," Mansour continued.

"This indicates that we can offer any venue and events experience imaginable to clients – from international conferences through to intimate corporate events thanks to our choice of exceptional venues."

GETTING TO KNOW: Cannes, Cote d'Azur

THE South of France is widely renowned as the playground of the rich and famous - not to mention the iconic Cannes Film Festival which sees movie stars and their entourages flock to the coastal town near Nice in May every year.

Business Events News recently experienced a short visit to Cannes at the height of the northern summer, and it truly lived up to expectations as a destination which is ideal for a high-end incentive or small corporate meeting.

There are stunning hotels on the Cannes waterfront, including the JW Marriott (rack rate €899 per night) and the one and only Carlton InterContinental which evokes memories of many movies including classics such as Audrey Hepburn and Cary Grant in *To Catch A Thief* or Meg Ryan in *French Kiss*.

And while these properties are amazing, apparently the less publicity-hungry Hollywood stars prefer to stay at the extremely upmarket nearby Hotel-Du-Cap Eden Roc, which provides gated seclusion behind high walls.

A stroll by the beach reveals waterskiers aquaplaning behind classic wooden speedboats, and looking in the other direction there are row after row of high end stores. It's lots of fun to eat a meal at one of the many cafes here, and see who you can spot passing by.

When it comes to retail therapy, our advice is to just window-shop - **BEN** spotted a Jimmy Choo outlet with some €2,000 boots and another retailer was selling a €13,000 handbag - definitely targeting the A-list!

BEN's small group experienced an exclusive Champagne tasting at the Carlton Hotel, hosted by the delightful Frederi Pignon (www.evinence.com) who has devoted his life to the bubbly stuff and shared his expertise generously - our favourite was the Domaine Jacqueson but we were quite partial to some of the others too.

As well as experiencing Cannes itself there are lots of other options nearby including Antibes, the city of Nice itself and a visit to the historic village of Eze, about a 45 minute drive north, which boasts amazing views of the coastline (look out for all of the superyachts), several Michelin-starred eateries and a surprising hilltop garden.

Visitors to the region could also take a trip to nearby Monaco, which is just a five minute helicopter flight north from Nice, and several operators will take guests directly from their flights to the tiny nation famous for its many festivals and other activities including the annual Monaco Grand Prix.

Cannes is easily accessible from Nice airport, with Emirates and Qatar Airways even offering the convenience of one-stop flights to the region from Australia.



The Australian Business Events Expo in Sydney this week gave participants the opportunity to network, have fun, meet people on stilts and a half naked BEN!



THE business events sector has enjoyed lots of action this week at the Australian Business Events Expo and RSVP show in Sydney - and **Business Events News** was definitely in the thick of it

We took these photos during the expo, with many visitors keen to have their photo taken with our honorary **BEN** - particularly once he took his top off.

Lots more pics are now online at our website and at facebook.com/BusEvNews.

LEFT: Working flat out on the Spicer's Resorts stand.



ABOVE: *Business Events News* editor Jill Varley getting her hands on some of the props.

