



Bienvenida!

BRINGING

Argentina and the South American continent a whole lot closer was

the inaugural direct flight yesterday of Aerolíneas Argentinas into Sydney.

One of the longest non stop flights, the national carrier was welcomed by Destination NSW ceo, Sandra Chipchase.

"The introduction of Aerolíneas Argentinas' new non-stop service confirms Sydney's position as Australia's premier destination, and is a sign of Sydney's appeal and global reputation as an exciting and beautiful lifestyle city," she said.

Now who can argue with that?

Another thing you cannot argue with is the amazing competitions we have been featuring, keep your answers coming in, because you have to be in it to win it - Jill.



Singapore's 10 year reign

FOR the tenth consecutive year Singapore has been named Asia's Top Convention City, retaining their spot as the only Asian city in the top five Convention Cities in the World alongside Vienna, Barcelona, Paris and Berlin.

It is a recognition that comes as the country welcomes a record high of 13.2 million arrivals.

The number of business visitors rose to 3.2 million, an increase of 2.6% from 2010, forming 24% of total visitorship to Singapore.

Expenditure by these business visitors also rose by 4.1% to an estimated SG\$5.6 billion - accounting for approximately 25% of total tourism receipts.

The MICE industry performance strengthened with a 46% year-on-year growth in the number of conventions, conferences & tradeshows in 2011.

Key events also demonstrated strong growth in attendance and



participation.

Kenneth Lim, regional director Oceania, Singapore Tourism Board commented, "We are very pleased that we have managed to maintain our appeal to global businesses as a premier hub in the Asia Pacific region.

"Singapore is a vibrant city with something for everyone to enjoy, and our success can be attributed to the city's continual transformation that excites business events and the MICE industry, encouraging them to keep coming back for more."

BESydney lifts ABEE

THE Australia Business Events Expo (ABEE) in conjunction with Business Events Sydney and airline partner Qantas has expanded the Hosted Buyer Program to include both Hosted and Semi-hosted Buyer Programs.

Running from 14-16 August at the Sydney Exhibition & Convention Centre, expanding the program to two streams will introduce more local buyers to the show floor and enhance the quality and quantity of appointments for exhibitors.

Expressions of interest for both programs are now open for those who organise or advise on special events, meetings, conferences, exhibitions or incentive travel.

These will be reviewed against qualifying criteria and can be viewed at infosalons.com.au/ABEE12S3/start.asp.

Qatar Airways to PER

MIDDLE Eastern carrier Qatar Airways yesterday debuted its newest destination and second in Australia, with direct flights from Perth to Doha.

Qatar Airways has operated flights to Melbourne since 2009 and the Australian flights connect conveniently through to a wide range of destinations in Europe.

Ceo Akbar Al Baker, who was in Perth yesterday for the launch festivities which include a major celebration last night at the Burswood Entertainment Complex, said the Perth route holds "enormous potential as a competitive tourism destination."

And for Aussies heading abroad, "I know for a fact that our new flight connections will be more convenient for the travelling public," Al Baker added.

Making Sense in Phuket

SIX Senses Resorts & Spas, has won the lease bid of Six Senses Yao Noi beyond Phuket, after its acquisition by Pegasus Capital Advisors.

Six Senses will continue to operate the multi award winning property from 01 July.

Located on the Island of Yao Noi, among the awe-inspiring limestone pinnacles of Phang Nga, all 54 villas boast magnificent views of the bay and surrounding forestation.

"The appointment of Six Senses Resorts & Spas as the lessee will be beneficial for the stability, the seamless flow of operations and the continuous success of this iconic property", said Bernhard Bohnenberger, president, Six Senses.

WIN a travel caddy!

This week, *Business Events News* is giving readers the chance to win a travel caddy



valued at \$99.95, courtesy of Rocky Mountaineer.

The leather travel caddy offers zippered pockets both inside and outside the bag, an iPad custom inner pocket, fold-over flap to store the caddy in seat back pockets as well as an outside mesh pocket to hold a water bottle or umbrella.

The Rocky Mountaineer will debut its new Coastal Passage route in August 2013.

This unique rail journey will seamlessly connect Seattle and Vancouver to the Canadian Rockies, making it the company's fifth rail route and the first time the award-winning rail service will depart from the US.

To win be the first to answer: comp@businessesnews.com.au.

In 2013 Rocky Mountaineer will introduce a new route from the US, what is the name of the route?

Hint: rockymountaineer.com
prize subject to change based on availability





business events news

4th July 2012



crumbs!



COR' BLIMEY!

David Weekes, a London cabbie is turning his taxi into overnight accommodation during the Olympics.

His hotel-for-one which can be rented for \$77 a night, has a mattress with official Olympic bedding, a lamp, solar fridge, radio and iPad.

It can be parked outside Weekes's house - but guests have to vacate before his shift.

WHO do you think you are?

According to Orbitz Worldwide, an online travel agency, Apple Mac users spend as much as 30% more a night on hotels, so the taxi hotel might not be an option for them!

The company have been experimenting with showing different hotel offers to Mac and PC visitors with the result that Mac users spent \$20 to \$30 more a night on average.

Mac users are 40% more likely to book a four or five star hotel than PC users.

Accor's winning ways

IT'S Australia's largest hotel exhibition and the event no one wants to miss.

Not only for the opportunity to meet and mingle with more than 90 Accor delegates showcasing over 3000 hotels and resorts across the global network, or for being stylishly fed, watered and entertained by Larry Emdur and Melissa Doyle from Sunrise - the ultimate carrot is the chance to win a Peugeot 207cc convertible worth almost \$40,000, as well as a host of other prizes including numerous hotel stays across the Pacific.

Held at the Sofitel Wentworth on Thursday 2 August, travel agents, wholesalers, corporate clients, tourism partners and MICE organisers can access the latest news from the country's biggest hotel operator.

Enter the specialists

TWO of Australia's leading names in association and conference management, Conference Action and the Australian Professional Centre (APC), have amalgamated their long-established brands and are now known as The Association Specialists.

The merger sees the organisation become the first service provider, specifically for associations and member-based organisations.

Managing director and owner of both Conference Action and the APC, Francis Child said "The combination of these two well known brands under one name better represents who we are and clearly defines our niche.

"We have been operating for many years in this space.

"The Association Specialist brand identifies us as being just that, association specialists" - see theassociationspecialists.com.au.

Chinese at Coolum



PALMER Coolum Resort, on the Sunshine Coast, is today hosting a delegation of high ranking Chinese trade union officials.

The 20-strong group from Wuhan in central China, is part of a fact-finding mission on the facilities Australian companies use for employee conferences and group bonding initiatives and has been organised by Gold Coast-based information share company, *Get Media*.

The group will receive a guided tour of Palmer Coolum Resort's extensive amenities, including the convention centre, the spa, tennis and golf facilities, restaurants, beach club and the various styles of accommodation.

Steve Mazur, head of Enterprise Partnerships with Get Media, said the facilities at Palmer Coolum Resort made the Sunshine Coast landmark the perfect fit for the delegation's requirements.

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AYANA's Masterstroke



US Masterchef's Sharone Hakman hosted 450 executives from the world's most influential media brands at AYANA Resort and Spa Bali on 25 April - a gala dinner that progressed into an after-party at the resort's iconic Rock Bar.

A former financial advisor, Hakman who finished fifth in the Masterchef 2010 US season, entertained the audience with

live cooking demonstrations throughout the 5-course dinner before a performance by American Idol Season 11 finalist Thia Megia.

This was followed by a snake handling demonstration by National Geographic's Wild Dangerous Encounters host, Brady Barr.

The dinner and Rock Bar party, hosted by FOX International Channels, were part of the 2012 Asia-Pacific Pay-TV Operators Summit held at the resort from 24-27 April - a summit that included Disney, BBC and MNC and which closed with an 'MNC Beyond the Sea' event at AYANA's 22,000sqm Champa Garden event facility, featuring a full-sized pirate ship.

Working closely with Hakman AYANA's executive chef Giordano Faggioli and his team cooked on the night with Hakman giving praise for doing "an amazing job."

Hakman was supported by AYANA's celebrated Singaporean chef Jusman So who on a previous night cooked an 8-course dinner for 24 FOX VIPs in the resort's 3-bedroom presidential villa.

Hakman said his menu was influenced by his Mediterranean and Israeli background, which shone through in dishes such as Watermelon & Fetta, a traditional Israeli treat.

Pictured above is US Master Chef Sharone Hakman who entertained the audience with his live cooking demonstrations.

Meet in San Francisco

THE One Kearny Club, originally a 1902 Mutual Savings Bank Building, located between San Francisco's Financial, SOMA and Union Square districts, can host up to 300 people.

When used as one space there is more than 4,000sq feet.

What's more it sits atop of the One Kearny building with an adjoining landscaped roof terrace.

VS welcomes Lloyd

SIMON Lloyd is to join Virgin Atlantic as marketing director from 10 July 2012.

Julie Southern, chief commercial officer, Virgin Atlantic who expressed her delight at the appointment, said: "Simon has a strong commercial focus, a huge thirst for continuous improvement and an excellent understanding of our business goals."



Accor's pregnant pause



AS ACCOR takes in 43 Mirvac hotels to its network, the company's PR team is growing in more ways than one.

Angela O'Connor, formerly assistant communications manager at Mirvac is taking on the role of PR & communications executive, Accor Asia Pacific.

O'Connor will also oversee PR for the former Mirvac hotels as they integrate into the Accor network.

And as Rebecca Freestun goes on maternity leave, O'Connor will also manage PR for Accor's Queensland hotels.

Also filling in for Freestun is Gaynor Reid who will look after Sofitel Luxury Hotels press relations for the Pacific region.

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Dear BEN...



THANKS to all the people who give us feedback on our stories; Lisa Bacon, manager, global sales MICE for Australia/NZ for Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group writes:

It was great to read about Jordan in your 'Getting to know' section (BEN 22 June).

This is such an interesting destination for incentives and it's becoming a sought-after location for the savvy incentive houses looking for a trip of a lifetime that delivers a point of difference.

The destination is being requested now on a regular basis from our market here in Australia and New Zealand.

We have a fabulous hotel in Aqaba on the Red Sea, the Radisson Blu Tala Bay Resort.

I was wondering if you would share some insights into the destination?

And our response...

"Dear Lisa, co-incidentally, our famil group stayed at the Radisson Blue Tala Bay Resort.

"It's an impressive property that spreads across a sizeable proportion of Red Sea beach front.

"Look out for Friday's **BEN** which will feature 'Getting to know' Petra and Aqaba."

Gaining an Edge

GAININGEDGE, with sales personnel all over the world, has welcomed into its ranks former Pittsburgh CVB ceo, Joe McGrath, as associated consultant.

In addition to his continuing duties as executive chairman for the Pittsburgh bureau, McGrath's role will include both account development and account services in North America.

GainingEdge ceo, Gary Grimmer, said that having Joe join the organisation would be a major boost to efforts by GainingEdge to extend its services into the United States.

"Having Joe on board helps us to extend our permanent presence there," he said.

MEA's Benchmarque

AS the MEA Mentoring Program enters its 4th year, BENCHMARK Hospitality & Event Recruitment has been announced as the new sponsor for the NSW Mentoring program 2012.

The program offers an effective solution that assists in addressing skills shortages, professional development and attrition within the meetings and events industry.

The MEA and BENCHMARK Mentor Program NSW provides the framework to inspire individuals within the industry to achieve their personal aspirations and potential.

Find out more go online to: meetingsevents.com.au/mentoring/BENCHMARK.

Toga getting appy

TOGA Hotels has launched a free iPad app that allows guests to access information about all of Toga's hotels and apartment hotels in Australia and Europe.

To download the app, go to the Apple iTunes store.

For more info on how to use the app and its features see the video page on our website at businessesnews.com.au/videos.

ICEing on b'day cake

ICE Australia, (International Conferences & Events) founded in 1992 by Christine Dorner is celebrating 20 years in business.

Evolving from a small home office event management company to one of Australia's leading professional conference organisers, they are specialists in not-for-profit Association events.

"What started out 20 years ago as a small event management business in the Sutherland Shire has steadily grown into a business exceeding all expectations," said Christine.

Dorner drew on the event management strengths learnt through her experience within the industry with organisations such as the Queen Victoria Building and Royal Viking Cruises.

ICE Australia initially catered to the corporate market but quickly moved to conferences when Dorner's keen eye for detail and budget management saw her handling more complex events.

Today, ICE has offices in Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

ICE Australia is able to provide clients with local expertise coupled with a national framework and provides complete conference management services.

WIN AN ESCAPE TO EMIRATES WOLGAN VALLEY RESORT & SPA



During the months of June and July, **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing two-night stay at the exclusive Emirates **Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa** in the Blue Mountains.

The prize includes a two-night stay for two people in a Heritage Suite with breakfast, lunch and dinner daily. Non-alcoholic beverages with all meals and selected regional wines and beer with lunch and dinner are also included, as are two outdoor activities each day.

Emirates Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is located on a 4000-acre nature reserve adjacent to the World Heritage listed Blue Mountains and only 190kms from Sydney. The resort offers 40 stand-alone luxury suites, each with its own private verandah & swimming pool.

To enter simply email your answers to each question by 27th July 2012

Q.8: Wolgan Valley Resort & Spa is renowned worldwide for their approach to sustainability, name 2 things that Wolgan does that help them to gain Carbon Neutral status

Hint: wolganvalley.com

Email your answers to: wolgan@businessesnews.com.au

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