



Whales nil!

DAY two in Port Macquarie started at the Bonnie Hills Surf Club with breakfast by the beach.



One that began in sunshine and turned grey by the time we arrived for a spot of whale watching with Port Venture Cruises.

With the sea looking decidedly choppy we bravely headed out over the breakers and into the chop.

Not having had too much luck on whale watching cruises, I figure I must have been a harpoonist in a past life!

People eye me suspiciously and are ready to throw me to the sharks when they realise that not so much as a spout has materlised and that Port Venture Cruises have had a 100% strike rate this season.

The sweet, injured Koala's are of a much kinder disposition when we visit the Koala Hospital and historic Roto House.

At Panthers for lunch, I won a two night stay at Quality Resort Sails and at Cassegrain Winery that night I also won the wine appreciation challenge.

Mutterings amongst the disaffected arise once more... I escape to tell the tale with more to come - Jill.

Singapore turns 47

ON 9 August Singapore will be in full celebratory mode when the nation celebrates its 47th birthday.

The event is being held at The Float@Marina Bay, the world's largest floating stage - a 30,000 capacity grandstand and platform.

Joining in the celebrations is the nearby Singapore Flyer which will provide some lucky revellers with an aerial view of all the activities from the world's largest Giant Observation Wheel.

From here they will be treated to a dazzling view of the fireworks display, seen from the comfort of a spacious Singapore Flyer capsule.

A special National Day, full butler Sky Dining flight is being offered with a 4-course fine dining menu, plus an iconic Singapore Sling.

Silversea's silver service

A function held last week at the Museum of Sydney saw Karen Christensen, general manager & director sales/marketing, Australia, Silversea, introduce the luxury cruise line to a select group of PCO's & event managers.

The world of family owned Silversea is one of European elegance and sophistication and perfectly alined to the incentive and small meetings market.

Here are butler's who never say no, a staff-to-guest ratio of nearly one to one, of intimate ships from 132 to 540 guests, of fresh fruit and flowers, down duvets and fine linen, all suite accommodation and of all inclusive cruise fares.

These inclusions allow a choice of speciality restaurants, wine, champagne and spirits, gratuities, fully stocked in-suite bar and refrigerator and of ships that can sail into harbours that leave larger ones moored off-shore.

Christensen explained how the luxury travel market had changed in the past few years, from the "newly wed to the nearly dead," to a clientele who have a preference for luxury brands, art, wine, food and culture and who stay in 5-star hotels.

"Luxury hotels are our biggest competitor," she added.

"Having all suite ships instead of cabins that don't vary in the style of accommodation and an all inclusive price makes them ideal for incentive guests."

Charters, Christensen went on to say, are becoming increasingly popular with incentive groups, "although they do need to book well ahead," she added.

"Five to seven days is the usual, with one ANZ group doing a Singapore to Singapore cruise more recently.

"We would describe this style of cruising as Abecrombie & Kent afloat, it's the highest yielding product in the market," she said.



Silversea is adding to its fleet with the purchase of an upmarket 100 guest expedition ship, *Galapagos Explorer 11* which will undergo a major refurb in September 2013.

MICECON 2013

IN meetings, conferences, incentives & events, exposition news, the Philippines Department of Tourism has released initial details of MICECON 2013.

The event 'IMICE 2013 - "iGNITE, iINNOVATE, iINSPIRE, iNFUSE" - is to be held at the SMX Lanang Convention Center, Davao City 06-09 March 2013 and is being organised by the Department of Tourism/Tourism Promotions Board in association with Meetings, Incentive Travel, Events/Exhibitions Philippines and the Philippine Association of Convention/Exhibition Organisers and Suppliers.

A comprehensive educational program for industry and tourism practitioners includes plenary sessions on major topics affecting the business tourism industry plus industry-specific workshops - see: cgjones@philippinetourism.com.au.

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.16: How many guests is the Private Dining Room suitable for at the Wolgan Valley resort & Spa?

Hint: wolganvalley.com

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

[Click here for terms & conditions](#)





REVERSE skyscraper

The InterContinental Shimao Wonderland which plans to open in late 2014 or early 2015, will in fact be a reverse skyscraper.

The luxury resort is going to be built 100 meters underground on the side of an abandoned quarry.

Located at the foot of Tianmashan Mountain and surrounded by a theme park, the hotel will have three levels above ground and 16 underground, according to CNN sources.

4.8kms outside of Shanghai, the 380-room resort with a sports facility and an underwater restaurant will have room rates that start at around \$320 per night.

Geelong gets Fawly

FOLLOWING on from the success of last year's Great Ocean Road Show, Business Events Geelong is to bring the region's best meetings venues & suppliers to Melbourne for a cocktail style event.

Set to take place at Showtime Events Centre, South Wharf between 4:30pm-7:30pm on 31 July, guests will be entertained by George Kamikawa and Noriko Tadano, recently seen on Channel 7's, *Australia's Got Talent*.

In addition, renowned Torquay hotelier Basil Fawly and staff member Manuel from Fawly Towers will show guests what hospitality is all about!

Convention Bureau manager, Terry Hickey said, "The Geelong and Great Ocean Road regions have brilliant natural and built assets, that make the region the perfect destination to ensure the success of business events and conferences.

"But the critical asset that sets us apart are our people, we encourage all event planners and professional conference organisers to come and meet the people behind the region and find out first hand why your event or meeting will be better in Geelong and the Great Ocean Road."

See businesseventsgeelong.com.au

Do you qualify for CIBTM?

CIBTM, China's largest meetings, incentives and business travel exhibition, and part of the IBTM Global Events portfolio, is being held 12-14 September at the China National Convention Centre (CNCC).

The most established event of its kind in China and Asia, CIBTM is endorsed by China National Tourism Administration and Beijing Municipal Government.

This year's CIBTM Education program has been confirmed with more than 19 tailored education sessions taking place over the course of three days.

Jeffrey Xu, Reed Travel Exhibitions, CIBTM project manager commented, "As part of our on-going development and progression, we continually conduct research around inbound and outbound business from the regions where each of our shows are held.

"We are looking forward to this year's update of the IBTM Global research at the show as it will provide us with an insight of what to expect in the industry sector for 2013."

Interested parties who organise, influence or make budgetary decisions for international meetings, conferences, incentive travel, business travel, conventions, product launches, staff training or events may be eligible to attend as a hosted buyer - see cibtm.com.

Shepherd to join EK

TIMOTHY Shepherd has been appointed as Emirates regional manager for Queensland, he brings to the role over 20 years experience in the travel industry.

In his new position Shepherd will be responsible for the management of the Emirates Qld, sales and service office, effective 07 August.

"Tim will oversee Emirates' thrice daily flights from Brisbane, one service to Auckland and two services to our convenient Dubai hub," said Barry Brown, Emirates' vice president Australasia.

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Carlson Rezidor's Fiji group deal



CARLSON Rezidor Hotel Group launched what it says is the first ever collaborative group package to Fiji at an event in Sydney late last week.

The all-inclusive package is priced from \$995 per adult (departing from Sydney or Brisbane) and includes Air Pacific airmiles, transfers, a three night stay in a single guest room at the Radisson Blu Resort Fiji Denarau Island, breakfast and welcome amenity.

A complimentary room is provided for every 25 booked as well as an upgrade to a one bedroom suite for every 1-in-25 rooms purchased.

"The package makes Fiji just as affordable as taking a group to Queensland," said Lisa Bacon manager, global sales MICE for Australia/NZ for Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group.

Bacon said she was "quite excited" to bring the package to the MICE industry with the inclusions and price well received by the industry who were in attendance at Harbour 220 in Sydney on Thursday.

"For instance if you were travelling to the Whitsundays or Cairns the airmiles are equivalent, but in some cases the accommodation is more expensive in Queensland", Bacon explained.

"This is the first time there is a package for groups" that include air and an accommodation partner said Air Pacific's Anna Cvjeticanin, who added that the package is sold as a "one stop shop" for event planners and the deal can be extended for people wanting to stay longer.

The \$995 package does not

include room hire because "not everyone wants to come to Fiji to sit in a room", Bacon said.

Full day delegate packages can be added with rates starting from \$45 nett per person which includes catering and conference room hire.

The deal can be used on group sizes from 10 to over 100 delegates, with the Radisson Blu able to accommodate up to 150 people cabaret style although the hotel prefers to have an intimate group of only 100 delegates.

The Radisson Blu Resort Fiji is located on the beachfront and nestled around one of the largest lagoon style pools in the Pacific.

Meetings and event planners can ensure that they are the only group at the Resort during their stay as the Radisson Blu focuses on one event at a time.

The resort features a dedicated meeting room and an executive boardroom as well as outdoor event locations with island archipelago backgrounds.

The Radisson Blu team can organise a range of ideas from themed evenings to cocktail events.

Activities are also available from the resort including jet skiing and hot air ballooning, treatments at the Harmony Day Spa and a sunset cruise.

For more details or to book the all-inclusive offer email Lisa Bacon at - lbacon@carlsonrezidor.com.

Pictured from left are: Natasha Cannon, Executive Assistant Network; Lisa Bacon, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group; Peter Tudehope, Radisson Blu Hotel Sydney; Jamison Warren, Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group and Luisa Finiasi, Tourism Fiji.



Fraser's pathways

KINGFISHER Bay Resort on World Heritage-listed Fraser Island has launched an in-house performance-based coaching and business training program called Fraser Pathways.

The custom-designed training programs for all levels of business are aimed at developing and retaining talent, increasing employee engagement and personal development and consists of two and four-hour sessions, one and two-day intensive training modules at the resort and back-at-work coaching.

Prices start from \$275pp for a one day module.



MEANWHILE as Kingfisher enters its twentieth year of operation the popular eco resort is undergoing a conferencing and Centre Complex facelift; revamping its Lake McKenzie-shaped main swimming pool it is at 'prototype stage' for a hotel room refurbishment program, which is expected to be rolled out in 2013/14.

"The conference refurbishment – which has seen the addition of high tech AV equipment, lighting, sound-proof walls as well as soft and hard furnishings will bring the resort in line with current industry standards and expectations," said director of sales and marketing, Kerry Brough.



Harmony in Hobart



A 30 minute drive from Hobart's CBD is a beautiful 17 hectare country property perched on top of a hill.

It is here you will find a unique spa 'village' consisting of seven hexagonal-shaped buildings encircled by a bamboo fence - Harmony Hill Wellness Retreat.

The perfect place to regain a sense of peace, balance and harmony, it makes the ideal venue for an incentive reward or small corporate health retreat.

Here experts in natural therapy and holistic medicine deliver their expertise in a beautiful day spa and spa retreat, designed to restore a balanced connection and to offer highly skilled healing.

Both Eastern and Western natural therapies are delivered by highly skilled Asian therapists.

The Retreat's central building has a dedicated yoga pavilion and three single treatment rooms.

All rooms face outside and enjoy beautiful views and natural light, while a unique glass pyramid on the apex of the roof introduces strong purifying energy into the spa complex.

Feng Shui principles have been used in the design of the six cottages which surround the central building and are designed in multiples of three.

For more information visit - organicspa-retreat.com.

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Face to Face with...

Andrew McEvoy, MD, Tourism Australia



Business Events News recently caught up with Tourism Australia's managing director, Andrew McEvoy. He has held his current role since January 2010 following almost three years as chief executive of the South Australian Tourism Commission. McEvoy started his career as a journalist with News Ltd before switching to tourism when he took on a role at Tourism Victoria.

What does your role entail?

Helping create demand globally for the best destination in the world.

What's the first thing you do when you get in the office?

Say hello to people. Emails and diary have already been checked on the way so saying g'day is a nice way to start.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Staying competitive in one of the world's most competitive sectors.

How do you inspire your team?

You would be better asking them.

Dealing with new technology - bonus or headache?

Bonus. Consumers are choosing what they want to view as opposed to advertisers disrupting their day. That's a huge opportunity for travel and tourism

and Australia in particular.

Technology has put the power in the hands of the consumer and we are very appealing.

What would you be doing if you weren't ceo of Tourism Australia?

B Grade poet living in an Italian hill town.

Who has inspired you?

My family, my board, my team.

How do you relax?

Deep breath and look out the (plane, taxi, hotel, office) window, taking in what lies beyond.

What makes a great conference?

Simplicity and impact.

What the most inspiring conference you have been involved in?

Google Zeitgeist.

How many conferences have you attended in the last 12 months?

Plenty.

Abu Dhabi unearthed

CONSIDERING Abu Dhabi for an event?

Abu Dhabi Tourism has published a Business Tourism Planners guide, developed to assist with gaining a thorough understanding of the emirate's ever expanding business tourism proposition.

The pages unearth a vast amount of information on Abu Dhabi, the hotels available and the activities and convention offerings.

To download the newest version go to - abudhabitourism.ae/en/portal/mice.inside.aspx.

AV1's seven year itch

SCRATCHING a seven year itch, audio-visual production house, AV1, marked their 7th birthday and showcased a suite of innovative new services to more than 100 special guests, last week.

Held at Sydney's Museum of Contemporary Art, the new service division, AV1 Media, provides the company's client base with access to the latest in video production, content creation, interactive tools and 3D design.

"By listening to our clients and understanding their needs, we can offer an end-to-end production service for all corporate communications to suit a range of budgets," said MD, Keith Wootton, who founded the company.

Email - aaron@av1.com.au.

