



## A world of ancient wonders awaits

"SEIZING tourism

market opportunities in times of rapid change," is the topic of an international conference being held in the Dead Sea, Jordan 5-6 June and **BEN** will be in attendance.

Much will centre on what is happening in the global economy and the drivers of political, social, technological, legal and environmental change and their effect on tourism flows and investment.

The Jordan experience will also be explored, in addition to the country's tourism plans and activities over the next few years.

Included in the program will be a trip to the 2000 year old city of Petra, one of the new wonders of the world - see next week's issues of **BEN** for all the action - Jill



## Club Med's reward solution

AS Club Med Business reports increased popularity and a 12% year on year growth for group business in 2011/12, they have announced

an initiative aimed at companies unable to provide large scale staff incentive rewards.

Targeting companies in sectors such as mining, health, IT, automotive and finance and those with constraints of en masse staff movements and remote locations limitations, the new 'Corporate Rollover' campaign, provides a solution that enables companies to reward staff and families over a 12 month period while giving them access to the flat-rate contract buying power of a large-scale group incentive.

It works like this: when a company nominates the number of staff they want to incentivise in a 12 month period, they are allotted the same flat-rate group buying contract rates (from \$138 per person per night), to use in manageable blocks, as they see fit.

This may include incentivising workers and rewarding their



families; staff rewards; group executive meetings; or holding conferences, trade shows, company prizes and contests.

A team of dedicated Club Med staff (GO's) are there to assist the event's personalisation, tailor activities, plan all the fun and games and ensure the event, trade show or reward incentive is memorable, and stress free for everyone.

The organiser has on hand a personal team to assist their every move, making their job far less stressful and prone to problems often encountered when moving, entertaining, housing and feeding such large groups.

The event is fully costed, budgeted and agreed to before it takes place, eliminating the risks of budget blow-outs, unforeseen expenses, niggling or ever growing miscellaneous expenses and financial pitfalls.

## Soneva sells Phuket

**EFFECTIVE** immediately, the Soneva Group has sold the

Evason Phuket resort for an undisclosed sum to an international Thai hospitality and leisure group.

Sonu Shivdasani, founder and ceo of the Soneva Group, said: "Although it did not fit into the Soneva Group's strategic plans, Evason Phuket is a wonderful property that will continue to thrive under new ownership."

He went on to say they are working hard to provide alternative employment to as many staff as possible or provide packages for those they can't employ elsewhere.



## Stay and Play at Fairmont

This week, *Business Events News* is giving readers the chance to win a 'Stay and Play' package consisting of one night accom in a Fairmont deluxe room and breakfast for two plus a game of golf and cart hire at Leura Golf club courtesy of Fairmont Resort MGallery and Leura Golf Club.

The newly renovated and rebranded Fairmont Resort MGallery has unparalleled leisure and conference facilities and offers the perfect setting for romantic getaways in the Blue Mountains, weekend escapes, weddings and cutting-edge business retreats in world-class conference venues in the heart of Greater Sydney.

The most creative answer will win: comp@businessesnews.com.au

**Tell us in 25 words or less what you love about winter and golfing in the mountains?**



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**FAIRMONT**  
RESORT BLUE MOUNTAINS  
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## First among equals

**LAST** night at New Zealand's Hotel Industry Conference Awards, Novotel Auckland Airport won the Hotel Industry Environmental Initiative Award for its pioneering 'green' credentials and celebrated its first anniversary.

But wait there's more...Tim Dearsley gm of All Seasons Christchurch Papanui Road was honoured with a Special Award for his key role after the Feb 2011 earthquake.



## Lizard Is named best

**LIZARD** Island took out the Best Resort/Lodge in Australia at the Australian Gourmet Traveller 2012 Travel Awards.

Also named runner up in the Best Australian Island Resort, the award was announced by emcee Catriona Rowntree at the Park Hyatt hotel in Sydney.





## crumbs!

**WITH** the Queen's Diamond Jubilee starting tomorrow, our English cousins are celebrating in true barmy style with special menus for dogs in Renaissance pubs in SW London, in honour of the Queen's constant companions – the corgis.

Carnaby Street is holding a street party on 2 June with a giant chocolate Diamond Jubilee cake.

The Berkshire town of Stratley and Goring in Oxfordshire will be linked across the Thames by 450 trestle tables of picnickers.

Bristol is planning the biggest street party with 91 road closures, while Manchester plans 200 celebrations.

And discount ticket agency TKTS is offering free tickets to the first ten subjects to prove they bear the majestic moniker of Elizabeth.

## No Butts about Banyan

**ABID** Butt has been announced as ceo of Banyan Tree Hotels and Resorts (BTHR), the wholly-owned hotel management and development subsidiary of Singapore-listed Banyan Tree Holdings Ltd.



Butt comes to Banyan Tree with a previous legacy of experience, having served as the area general manager for the group's flagship resort, Banyan Tree Phuket, followed by his appointment as the first vice president of operations from 2000 – 2002.

Butt, who is delighted to return to the Banyan Tree family and participate in the company's dynamic growth and development said, "I will be focused on strategic initiatives for the 30 hotels in our current portfolio, along with the successful launch of future projects around the world."

## Business travel stabilises

**ACCORDING** to the 2012 American Express/CFO Research Global Business and Spending Monitor, as growth rates in key markets within Asia-Pacific slow down, regional businesses are looking to maximise the sales opportunities provided by business travel, with almost 40% of those who will spend on business travel looking to do so to meet with customers.

Almost one third of senior finance executives at some of the largest companies in the region expect to spend more on business travel this year, but just 5% anticipate spending at least 10% more on business travel.

23% of Australian executives surveyed anticipated spending more on travel to industry conferences, management retreats or professional development activities, slightly lower than the 27% average across the Asia-Pacific region.

Dr Carl Jones, head of American Express Advisory Services for the Asia Pacific region said instability in Europe, slowing growth rates in specific markets within Asia and a slight uplift in the US economy have driven the trends.

"Companies in Asia Pacific are still shying away from doing business in Europe so airfares to this region continue to fall.

"Interestingly, fares to the Americas have increased 2% in the last quarter – the first quarter on quarter increase in the last six months. This is largely due to certain carriers – specifically in Australia - increasing prices in response to the recent positive performance in the US."

Demand for travel within the Asian domestic economies remains strong but slowing growth rates and the introduction of low cost carriers in some of the markets means domestic fares have increased 1% in the last quarter.

Intra-Asia fares have performed similarly and as supply responds to increasing demand for intra-Asia travel, fares have remained flat compared to the last quarter.

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## Martin Grant uniform frock shock

**WE** love a good frock story, so after yesterday's announcement that Qantas has appointed leading Australian designer, Martin Grant to develop the new Qantas uniform, we had to ask, "Martin Grant who?"

While **BEN** may not be in the business of fashion, we are not entirely fashion name trags, so our apologies to Grant who is lionised by Vogue USA as the designer who speaks to the international woman, the woman who travels, the woman who works, the woman who wants to be dressed with appropriateness and whose designs are worn by Cate Blanchett, Juliette Binoche, Blake Lively, Tilda Swinton and Kate Hudson.

Qantas ceo Alan Joyce said he was pleased to welcome Grant to the Qantas team with his creative vision and 30 years experience, to develop concepts for the new

uniform for cabin crew and uniformed employees.

"Martin's work reflects modern and contemporary designs and we were extremely impressed with his appreciation for the Qantas brand and his enthusiasm to design the next instalment of the Qantas uniform," Joyce said.

Grant, who was born in Melbourne and launched his first ready-to-wear line in 1982, said it was a true honour to be selected as the new Qantas uniform designer.

"As an Australian, I'm proud to be working with such an iconic Australian brand.

"It will be wonderful to see the Qantas teams wearing my design across Australia and in cities all over the world," Grant said.

Qantas aims to have its international and domestic cabin crew and ground staff sporting the new designs in 2014.

## WIN A TRIP FOR TWO TO VANUATU



During the months of May and June, **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win an amazing holiday for two people to Vanuatu, courtesy of **Air Vanuatu and the Grand Hotel and Casino**.

The prize includes Air Vanuatu return airfares from Syd/Bne or Mel to Port Vila, and five nights accommodation in a Harbour Deluxe Room including continental breakfast daily at the Grand Hotel and Casino.

Air Vanuatu offers daily flights from Australia, just over 3 hours away. Complimentary inflight service and the friendliest smiles in the Pacific!

Grand Hotel and Casino offers a relaxing yet sophisticated French style setting, in a prime waterfront location in the heart of the shopping, business and entertainment district. 74 rooms with floor to ceiling windows, own private balcony, Internet access in all rooms and 24 hour room service. We also cater for conferences sizes between 10 - 80 delegates and for groups up to 130 people.

**Q.9: Watersports including diving, kayaking, sailing, parasailing and jetskiing are all available from the island of Efate - true or false?**

Hint: [vanuatu.travel](http://vanuatu.travel)

Email your answers to: [Vanuatu@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:Vanuatu@businesseventsnews.com.au)

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## Hyatt New Orleans

A NEW Hyatt hotel, designed as a lifestyle, not a demographic has opened in downtown New Orleans.

The Hyatt Place New Orleans/ Convention City Center centrally located in the Warehouse District and steps away from the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, is within walking distance of the city's main attractions, like the French Quarter and Mercedes Benz Superdome.

"This is the first Hyatt Place that's opened in the New Orleans area and we're excited to be part of it," said gm Tony Welch.

With more than 3,300 sqft of flexible, high-tech meeting/ function space, Gary Gutierrez president HRI Lodging Inc said, "Tourism is one of the top industries in New Orleans and in 2011 alone, there were over 30 conventions, each with more than 3,000 attendees."

## QT - 'Gone to Gowings'

FINALLY, after some fanfare, a new hotel, QT Sydney will rise out of the historic Gowings department store and the heritage-listed State Theatre, in September.

Set in the heart of Sydney's central business district, the building will retain historic elements like original timber floors, retail showcases, gargoyles and facade details – all carefully restored.

With an interior design concept that is both bold and playful, its 200 guest rooms come in 12 different styles with most equipped with a signature oversized bathtub and shower and unique design pieces that reference the buildings' past.

The Gowings Bar and Grill will continue the quirky vibe of the hotel while spaQ will feature an array of facials and body treatments.



## Good Counsellors conf



GOOD news, inspiring speakers and celebration were part of Travel Counsellors annual conference at Sydney's Sheraton on the Park last month.

Travel Counsellors is a UK-based travel agency group which has a significant presence of home-based members in Australia.

The event was attended by more than 180 delegates and nine Travel Counsellors from the UK who won the opportunity to join the Australian group, in addition to more than 40 of the company's suppliers exhibiting at a special Pow Wow session.

David Speakman group gm said, that the theme of the conference, 'The World of Travel Counsellors', "is a special world to be part of."

The delegates were entertained by The Three Waiters at the start of the conference.

**Pictured** above are the staff from the company's Melbourne head office support team enjoying the Gala evening.

## Siam Niramit, Bangkok Thailand

## GETTING TO KNOW:

DESCRIBED by one supplier at a recent conference as "the best Disney movie ever", the Siam Niramit is a 'spectacular' show of Thai arts and culture featuring 150 performers and more than 500 exotic costumes.

The 80 minute Bangkok show, which is performed daily at 8pm, is sold as a package including dinner, and also gives the opportunity to take time walking through a traditional village which gives a remarkable insight into Thailand's four diverse regions.

Prior to entering the performance, there is entertainment outside with Thai music and dance and the chance to experience a traditional Thai massage.

In addition, a sumptuous dinner, served buffet style offers a selection of Thai and Western cuisines in a restaurant that is able to accommodate up to 1000 people at a time.

The 2000 seat theatre with 25 wheelchair spaces can cater for both small and large MICE groups.

The event area can be divided to make functions exclusive and private with packages able to be tailored to meet with individual requirements and budgets.

There are 11 areas for conference groups including the Siam Niramit Theatre, Sala Thai, Sawasee 1-4, Ramayana Hall and Himapaan - rooms able to hold a delegation of between 24 and up to 2000 people depending on the style of an individual event.

This spacious event centre is able to accommodate delegates in a classroom, banquet, dinner or cocktail options for any style event.

The Siam Niramit can be accessed by the MRT at the Thailand Cultural Centre Station, Exit 1 and get the free shuttle bus service; alternatively there are 300 car spaces.

The function facility has held a number of large events in past years including the 50th Anniversary Lions Club Thailand; Bank of Thailand & Lufthansa Airlines.

For more information see [www.siamniramit.com/MICE.php](http://www.siamniramit.com/MICE.php).

