



Ibis threads

A PUBLIC vote on Facebook has lifted the profile of two Whitehouse Institute of Design



students – Bethany Everitt and Sarah Millar, who were selected to design new uniforms for Ibis brand hotels.

Accor say they expect to have their *Style Our Threads* competition winning uniforms, worn by Ibis front-of-house staff, across each of the three hotels in the group from early 2013.



Bethany Everitt & Accor ceo Simon McGrath

A new sound for the 'Gong

LAST night Tourism Wollongong became Destination Wollongong, in a move

that brings the city's expanding CBD and tourism/events base under a single marketing umbrella.

This thriving beachside city now encompasses five core areas – tourism, marketing, operation of Wollongong's visitor information centres, major events, conferences and city centre marketing.

Destination Wollongong general manager Greg Binskin said the changes would enable the city to better develop and package itself as a lifestyle destination.

"Becoming Destination Wollongong is something of a natural progression for us

Destination WOLLONGONG

because it has already happened with Destination NSW and Destination Melbourne – two effective marketing bodies that saw the need to streamline the way in which they can plan, develop and package their destinations.

Binskin said the transformation began last November when a five-year funding agreement with Wollongong City Council enabled Tourism Wollongong to expand its core role and responsibilities.

"The decision allows all the city's main marketing activities to be brought under one roof in a way that removes duplication and enables Wollongong to adopt a more holistic approach to destination marketing," he added.

Vote now for World's Best Hotel Award

REGISTRATION is open for the first World's Best Hotel Award, with the grand objective to find a single hotel to honour with the title: world's best.

Unlike other hospitality awards, this "prestigious, global title" has no country or category-based awards.

The top award will go to one outstanding hotel, which staff and guests have voted as being supreme, no matter if the applicant is a large resort or a small boutique hotel, luxury or modest – so everyone is in the running to win.

Registrations are open until 30 November, with voting by staff and guests from 1 December to 28 February, 2013.

By registering in the awards, entrants not only gain the celebrated title of The World's Best Hotel, they also raise money for brain cancer research while all entrants receive a detailed report on staff and guest comments that are recorded during the voting period.

The winner will be announced on 31 March, 2013 at www.theworldsbesthotel.com and on social media sites.

To access the registration page visit the awards website and click the "Registration" link.

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@businessesnews.com.au



business events news

Q11: Being Australia's third largest island, Kangaroo Island is _kilometres long by _ kilometres wide.

Hint: www.southernoceanlodge.com.au
Click here for Terms and Conditions

Tangalooma Qld

TANGALOOMA Island Resort Queensland is promoting its conferences, executive management retreats, corporate team building and events through a full page in today's issue.

For more info see **page 4**.

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crumbs!

TALK about dropping yourself into it from a great height.

That's what's happening at Skydive the Beach Melbourne, whose latest package is an adrenalin-packed wedding proposal package.

It's the brainchild of the same people who operate Skydive the Beach Sydney out of North Wollongong, a popular activity with tandem jumping conference groups.

In Melbourne, both parties jump, the man first, as a banner is placed with 'Will You Marry Me' on the landing zone so the hopeful groom can be waiting on bended knee with the ring in hand when she lands.



Macau's greatest show on earth

GUARANTEED to leave you speechless is an event that is a must on any Macau or Hong Kong event itinerary - the US\$250 million production, 'The House of Dancing Waters.'

Forget everything else you have ever seen, this completely water-based show takes physical performance to Olympian heights.

It's a story derived from the 'seven emotions' of classical Confucian beliefs which sees gymnasts and performers leap, tumble and dive continuously from the rigging of a ship and from high scaffolds in the theatre, 17 metres above a deep pool.

A pool, by the way, that disappears in seconds to be replaced by a flat stage!

Devised and created by Franco Dragone, it takes place in a purpose-built Dancing Water Theatre, in the Palace of Dreams.

The theatre contains the world's largest commercial pool, approximately 49 metres in diameter and approximately 8



metres deep, holding 17 million litres of water - more than five times the volume of an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

There are 11 hydraulic ten-ton elevators allowing the stage to convert from aquatic to solid floor in less than a minute.

The cast comprises of some 80 international performance artists including 45 acrobats and gymnasts, the 10-strong Tanzanian performance group Pyramid, seven dancers, four musicians and even seven motorcycle stuntmen.

What's more, 36 scuba divers work underwater for general operations and 20 of them provide support during the show.

It's a theatrical masterpiece.

Ibis leads the way

PLAYING a vital role in Christchurch's tourism sector, yesterday the city welcomed the first hotel to open its doors since the February 2011 earthquake.

The Ibis Christchurch located in Hereford Street, just off Cathedral Square, has undergone major remedial work that includes renovation of all 155 rooms and public areas, as well as structural strengthening to meet the city's new building code.

Just four years old when the quake hit, the Ibis received only minor damage and re-opens as a virtually new hotel featuring the latest branding and facilities.

A major benefit to business travellers and officials involved in the reconstruction of the city, the launch of the hotel comes a month after the announcement of a masterplan for the "re-imagining" of the city.

It's a vision that will see the Ibis in close proximity to the proposed convention centre as well as other key tourism, shopping and entertainment facilities.

Local residents will also receive a boost with up to 50 people employed at the hotel.

Virgin Atlantic advertisement featuring a flight attendant in a red suit, a Virgin Atlantic plane, and cityscapes. Text: 'Great for Groups. Great for you. During Sept-Nov we're halving your work load and sending you shopping. Get a free* seat when you book a group of only 10 and bag yourself \$200 worth of shopping vouchers. Hurry, offer ends 30 November. To book, call 1300 727 340 or email our dedicated groups team sydney.groups@fly.virgin.com Your airline's either got it or it hasn't. Terms and conditions apply. *Free seat applies to economy class group bookings only. virgin atlantic'



NEXT for Novotel

THE completion of a \$5.6 million refurbishment to Novotel Melbourne Glen Waverley has revealed a sophisticated new look to its 200 accommodation rooms.

It's a program that heralds the arrival of Novotel's innovative NEXT rooms, designed with a range of features to enhance the rooms.

Hotel general manager, Andrew Maynard said, "We are very excited about the excellent standard of room we now have available to our guests after four months of renovations.

"We have made significant changes to uplift the style, functionality and technology in the rooms, which we hope will attract even more leisure and conference guests to our hotel," he said.

New features include a large workstation with integrated 'MediaHub HD' which allows portable digital devices to be connected to the 32" TV, stereo Bluetooth enabled smart phones while laptops or MP3 players connect wirelessly to stream audio through the TV speakers.

Rooms also have a low-energy, silently operating mini bar fridge with glass door, polished stainless floor lamps, adjustable LED bedside reading lights, and full length block-out curtains.

In addition, the Melbourne hotel is now fully accredited in Accor's PLANET 21 global sustainability program.

Rates go from \$189 per room per night.



Savouring Olio

A MEDITERRANEAN style cafe and bar on the new Grey Street level of the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, called *Olio*, has opened.

With a committed focus on fresh, local produce, a Mediterranean influence and a casual modern dining style, it follows a scratch kitchen philosophy, wherever possible with everything made from raw ingredients in the Centre's main convention kitchen.

Presided over by the Centre's executive chef, Martin Latter, *Olio* offers a range of dining options from breakfast, quick eats, and dishes to share, substantial lunch and dinner selections and cakes and pastries freshly baked in the Centre's in-house patisserie.

Olio Cafe & Bar also adds to the dining choice for delegates and visitors to the Centre and with free Wi-Fi is reported to becoming a popular meeting spot within the Centre.

Mitchell joins IHG Fiji

IHG veteran Luke Mitchell has been appointed as InterContinental Fiji's new assistant director of Food & Beverage.

With more than 11 years experience in the InterContinental Hotels Group (IHG), Mitchell's commitment to delivering excellence and an engagement with the IHG 'Room to Grow' program has seen him evolve into bigger and better roles and pursue a rewarding career.

Originally employed as a banquets attendant at Holiday Inn Surfer's Paradise, Mitchell aspires to be a general manager.

CONTACT US:

Publisher Bruce Piper
Editor Jill Varley

Contributors/Coordinator Chantel Long

Advertising: advertising@businesseventsnews.com.au

P: 1300 799 220 **F:** 1300 799 221

PO Box 1010 Epping, NSW, 1710

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Sitting Pretty

Welcome to *Sitting Pretty*, our regular review of experiences up the front of the plane.

**United Airlines 747-400
Sydney-Los Angeles**

United Airlines has been consistently committed to the Australian route, operating flights from Sydney and Melbourne to Los Angeles and San Francisco for more than 20 years. BEN was very pleasantly surprised to experience the UA business class cabin on a recent US trip.

The aircraft

United Airlines operates its stalwart Boeing 747-400s on the Australian route, configured with four classes - 240 economy seats, 70 in "economy plus", 52 flat bed "BusinessFirst" class seats and 12 First Class suites. First and business class offers individual on-demand inflight entertainment screens but in economy and economy plus there's an older system where all passengers watch the same movies on shared screens spread throughout the cabin.

The seat

Travelling from Sydney to Los Angeles *BEN* was seated on the upper deck of the 747 which has 20 business class seats. The seats are large and comfortable, providing good privacy and personal space. They're arranged in a staggered 2-2 configuration with some seats facing backwards, and there is plenty of room to access the aisle. Large screens link to a modern in-flight entertainment system which offers a great choice of on-demand entertainment.



Service

The business class cabin crew on both legs of *BEN's* flight were exceptional, in particular helping with special needs of some of the travellers which included some lucky children. Meals were tasty and well presented, and during the flight passengers were often asked if they would like anything more. The five-course meals conclude with a signature "ice-cream sundae service" and as you'd expect there's an excellent range of premium wines and other beverages. When it's time to sleep the seat converts into a fully flat bed complete with a duvet and large pillow which make it very comfortable.

Connectivity

United Airlines has a massive domestic network which makes it easy to fly onwards to just about anywhere in North America. The carrier is also part of the Star Alliance meaning frequent flyers with other carriers such as Lufthansa or Singapore Airlines can earn points on UA flights.

At the airport

Flying out of Sydney premium passengers have access to the lounge operated by United Airlines' Star Alliance partner, Air New Zealand. A snazzy American touch in the lounge before the departure of UA flights is a self-serve hot-dog bar which helps travellers get into the mood before they even board. On departure from the US the lounge experience at Los Angeles Airport was not so positive, being extremely crowded and with very limited offering of food. Our recommendation for a late night departure is to ensure you eat dinner elsewhere.



The future

United Airlines merged with Continental last year to create one of the

world's biggest airlines. The carrier has big plans and recently became the first US airline to take delivery of the new Boeing 787 *Dreamliner*. United Airlines has also flagged a significant upgrade of the economy offering on the 747s which it operates to Australia, potentially including wi-fi streaming of inflight entertainment to personal devices such as iPads or other tablets.



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