



Luxe a must

THERE'S nothing like a glamorous affair to put a positive spin on things.

So hats off to Luxperience's Rosemarie Sama for having the forethought to put the luxury event on Sydney's expo calendar.

Buyers and guests were greeted by an enormous gilt edged mirror and bowls of fresh spring flowers, while exhibitor booths were stylishly decorated with touches of colour and glamour.

Tourism New Zealand's stand proved popular both as a meeting point - and for the excellent expresso coffee and bowls of Whittakers chocolates they offered! *Jill.*



A pitch & a Poken at Luxperience

LUXPERIENCE, the new three-day business exchange for the high end experiential travel and incentive industry, opened its doors on Monday.

Held in Sydney's Overseas Passenger Terminal, a pre-opening Thought Leaders session

and an elaborate opening event was held on Sunday, officially opened by Roza Sage, MP (representing the Premier of New South Wales) and Rosemarie Sama, founder of Luxperience.

Sama said that the expo was a fulfilment of a three year dream and was particularly exciting as the first time event had sold out.

"We have put together an event to create a community which will go well beyond a few days," Sama enthused.

"We've tried to think about all the things that people don't like about trade shows, and have done away with them.

"For instance, exchanging the need to carry around tons of paper brochures with nifty little Poken devices which enables the user to exchange contracts and information electronically and then download it to a computer."

Luxury, Sama said is one of the most overused terms in the travel industry in which flat screen TVs in rooms and several hundred thread count Egyptian cotton bedlinen are no longer luxuries.

"Luxury now is all about bespoke, unique adventures and experiences.

Exhibitor Aashish Vyas, who's vice president of Pure India - Luxurious Escapes, described the exhibition as "nice and compact" in comparison to other shows.



"What I particularly liked is that exhibitors and buyers were invited to mix socially, he said.

"Not something that usually happens at these events, because as exhibitors we are often sidelined.

"After all, we do pay the

bills!"

Silversea's Karen Christensen said she hoped the show would be sustainable, adding that, "perhaps, it would be better to hold it every two years.

"I don't think our budget is growing as much as the shows are!" she said.

EEAA's young stars

THE Young Stars program operated by the Exhibition and Event Association of Australia will hold its first Victorian event at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre next Tue 18 Sep.

The scheme was launched in Sydney last month, with younger members of EEAA committing to an ongoing program of "thought leadership and professional development".

EEAA gm Joyce DiMascio said the Young Stars Program had been warmly embraced by under-35s in the association, who have formed an active committee.

The Melbourne event will include three presentations (from MCEC ceo Peter King; Marie-Claire Andrews and Josh Dry from Showgizmo; and EEAA gm Joyce DiMascio) and also offer excellent networking - and it only costs \$35 for EEAA members and \$65 for non-members - to attend email memberservices@eeaa.com.au.

Marriott refurb deal

SETTING a new benchmark with a \$20 million refurbishment, the Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa has for a limited time only, group room rates that start from \$195 including breakfast.

The offers is available when a conference or event is booked for 2013 and the deposit paid by 21st December this year.

The extensive makeover includes an upgrade to all conference rooms and facilities, guest rooms, lobby, front entrance area, lagoon pool, a new 'grab and go' style eatery Java+ and new interactive restaurant, *Citrique*.

Marriott's director of sales and marketing, Ken Duddy says the Gold Coast is the perfect destination for conferences and events.

"Our event space is almost limitless - from small boardroom meetings, to welcome cocktail parties by the saltwater lagoon and extravagant themed affairs in the grand ballroom, there is no request too big or too small as we tailor your event to match both your needs and your creative vision," he said.

Sell TNQ 2012

Apply now to join the Business Events Cairns & Great Barrier Reef annual Sell TNQ famil program.

Sell TNQ provides an exclusive opportunity for qualified event and incentive planners to visit the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef Region and experience firsthand our ability to host successful business events. This year's program will be hosted 2-5 November in Palm Cove followed by an optional post touring program encompassing Cairns and Port Douglas.

During Sell TNQ, meeting planners and conference and incentive organisers are given the chance to meet with the region's premium business tourism operators, and enjoy Australia's ultimate all year round conference and incentive destination.

With a large variety of meeting venues and spectacular off-site locations, participants will enjoy an eventful program of networking opportunities, touring and events set amongst the tropical atmosphere.

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Days of people & revenue

RESPECTED hotelier Philip Pratley, general manager of Sydney's Grace Hotel, is celebrating eight years of leadership and guiding the historic landmark property and also a 40 year career in hospitality and management.

During his tenure in the hospitality industry Pratley says he has experienced his fair share of highs, lows and challenges.

"The simultaneous closing of the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre for three years at the end of next year and the construction of the Barangaroo precinct will certainly bring some challenges to the sector, however it is needed, and in the medium term, I believe Sydney will unveil a world class facility making it more attractive at a national and international level."

Pratley's career is one that spans work as a trainee manager



at the Wentworth Hotel (now Sofitel Wentworth), learning the fundamentals of running a hotel to 13 years working at casino hotels, Burswood Perth and Star City and stints at Sheraton.

"Running The Grace Hotel over the past eight years has been both challenging and rewarding," he said.

"My days are filled with people and revenue. If I can make a difference with the hotel staff and together we continue to generate revenue, then ultimately my two most important stakeholders are happy – my employees and the hotel owners," Pratley added.

AIME signs Bay Travel

NEXT year's Asia-Pacific Incentives & Meetings Expo (AIME) has signed a partnership with Sydney travel management company, Bay Travel, to organise travel arrangements for its 2013 Hosted Buyer program.

One of the largest privately owned travel management firms in Australia, they will be responsible for coordination of travel for AIME's Hosted Buyers.

Bay Travel joins existing travel management partner, The Human Group, as AIME's contracted travel agencies and the two will work together to provide a seamless travel booking process.

Buyers who wish to apply for Hosted Buyer status for AIME 2013 in Melbourne 26-27 Feb should visit www.aime.com.au.



A CHINESE tourist has been arrested for trying to switch a rare diamond with a fake, by swallowing the original.

Chow Cheng was attending Sri Lanka's biggest international gem and jewellery expo, which was also attended by buyers from all over the world.

Cheng was promptly arrested after a vendor noticed him place the diamond, worth \$13,600 into his mouth.

Police detained the man until nature took its course and they recovered and disinfected the valuable specimen.

SOCIAL media and a digital promotional campaign is helping to boost tourism in the Eurobodalla Shire by enticing visitors from Canberra to watch whales as they make their return journey along the Pacific Ocean 'highway' with their babies in tow.

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Sheraton Macao special

WITH the grand opening of the world's largest Sheraton hotel about to happen in Macau, the Sheraton Macao Hotel, Cotai Central is offering a special deal.

Available from September 21 through December 31, the 75th Celebration Package which starts from HKD\$ 1,398 (plus 10% service charge and 5% tax), gives the opportunity to experience Macau, plus the personalised service and amenities that are indigenous to the Sheraton brand.

"We invite visitors from all backgrounds to experience this vibrant city through Sheraton Macao Hotel," said Josef Dolp, the hotel's managing director.

"Our ideal location on the Sands Cotai Strip, our proximity to world-class shopping, dining and entertainment, and our full array of amenities will make for a most memorable vacation."

With two consecutive nights or more, guests may upgrade to Sheraton Club Room and receive complimentary breakfast, tea and coffee and evening cocktails in the private Club Lounge with free Wi-Fi in room - see sheratonmacao.com/offers-en.

Emirates wi-fi OK

EMIRATES can now offer inflight internet connections for a larger part of its flights ex Australia, after its communications provider OnAir received approval to operate over Australian airspace.

Hilton helps MICE

HILTON worldwide launched a new website in June this year, designed to make searching, planning and booking a meeting or event in properties across Australia.

In conjunction with the launch a special promotion, called 'Flexible Meetings, Flexible Offer' is available to any event planner booking at any one of the 15 Hilton properties across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and French Polynesia.

To find out more go to: www.hiltonevents.com.au.

Jobs made easier

A NEW website that focuses on Australian travel & tourism jobs has been launched by inPlace Recruitment.

Designed with the 'need it now' user in mind, Sandra Chiles, managing director of inPlace Recruitment says a lot of thought has gone into the design of the website to cater for today's time poor world.

"We've drawn on our many years recruitment experience, putting a lot of thought into what job seekers and employers have told us they need.

"Other online job sites can have you trawling through many search categories and irrelevant information until you can narrow it down to your specific field. You can access on your iphone or ipad and all jobs are streamed through to Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn," Chiles said.

See inplacerecruitment.com.au.

WIN 2 NIGHTS AT SALAMANDER SHORES RESORT



This week **Business Events News** is giving one lucky reader the chance to win a two-night getaway in stunning Port Stephens, courtesy of **Salamander Shores Resort** and **Port Stephens Tourism**.

The prize, valued at \$558, includes two nights' accommodation for two in a Bayview Room, full buffet breakfast daily and a \$100 dining voucher to Shoreline Steakhouse.

To enter simply answer the question below in 25 words or less, the most creative will win! Email your response to portstephens@businessesnews.com.au

Describe the appeal of the vistas obtained from the Bayview rooms at Salamander Shores.

Hint! Visit www.salamander-shores.com





business events news

12th September 2012

In conversation: Tim Tranter

TIM Tranter - pictured right leading a high-end tour group last week - is the owner-operator of Tread Lightly eco tours, and has lived in the Blue Mountains for over 45 years.

His strong links to the local community and knowledge of the region, in addition to his roles as a wildlife rescuer, fire and rescue team member, means he's not just the first choice of incentive and conference groups for his bush craft and team building skills; he has his finger on the pulse of the region.

"There is so much minor and major restoration work going on in the region, it has reached in excess of the billion dollar mark," he said.

It is work he believes that will re-establish the Blue Mountains as the premier tourism destination in Australia, attracting some 5.2 million visitors. The Blue Mountains, Tranter said, have been in recovery since 2000, with half a million dollars being spent on the greater Blue Mountains Drive promotion and upgrades in quality signage for bush walking and drive routes.

"Supporting the region for tourism growth there are extensive highway and rail infrastructure upgrades, in addition to multimillion dollar upgrades to a number of hotels, Jenolan Caves House, the Caves themselves and the development of a new Cultural centre."



All at sea with Athena



'WISE' event organisers are being encouraged to consider Classic International Cruises who are offering new, all-inclusive day delegate on-board packages.

The wisdom of this offer is linked to the name of Classic's Australian-based liner, *Athena* - named after the Greek goddess for wisdom.

"Hosting a lunch, product launch or a conference aboard a cruise ship in port or at sea is so much more exciting, popular and memorable than a land-based event," said Classic International Cruises managing director Grant Hunter.

"It's a wise move. And our smaller, classic-styled liner, *Athena*, carrying just 550 passengers, is ideally suited to charters and corporate events and, as part of our Australian program this summer, we will be offering a record 12 short cruises of five nights or less."

New all-inclusive delegate packages have been released from \$470 per person, including two nights' accommodation at sea, all meals and morning and afternoon teas, free venue and equipment hire, entertainment and a customised daily newsletter for delegates.

The ship, which is based in Adelaide and Perth between December and April 2013, offers meeting space for up to 200 guests, with discounts available for groups of more than 32 passengers.

The new corporate packages can be used on any of *Athena's* 17 Australian cruises this summer including the 12 short cruises from two to five nights.

For more info or to book email vilma@classicintcruises.com.au.

WA's first Pullman

AS PART of a rapid expansion plan for Accor's 5-star Pullman brand across Australia, Asia and the rest of the world, Quay West Resort Bunker Bay in Western Australia's Margaret River wine region will rebrand to Pullman Resort Bunker Bay on 19 Sep.

The Pullman brand was acquired by Accor in 1991 and at the time a number of hotels - including the famed Metropole Hotel in Hanoi - were Pullmans.

Accor relaunched the Pullman brand in 2007, establishing a network of over 60 hotels in many of the world's key cities - including the recently rebranded Pullman Sydney (formerly the Sydney Marriott).

Quay West Resort Bunker Bay will be Western Australia's first Pullman, and has 150 bungalow-style villas and six state-of-the-art meeting rooms, in addition to a permanent marquee capable of holding up to 400 people.

GM Bronwyn Bulpitt, said "The resort has really established itself as one of Western Australia's leading properties in its eight years of operation, and with Pullman branding I think we can take the resort to new levels."

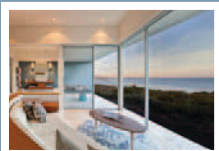
Parker Sebel move

EMMA Parker has been appointed to the role of director of sales & marketing, conference and events at The Sebel & Citigate Albert Park Melbourne.

Parker, who has worked at the property for the past three-years, is taking over the role previously held by Keren Southgate, whose last day will be 14 September.



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@businesseventsnews.com.au



Q14: Name one of the rejuvenating treatments available on the Southern Ocean Lodge spa menu

Hint: www.southernoceanlodge.com.au

[Click here for Terms and Conditions](#)

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