



Food rules?

THE proof of the pudding is, as they say, in the eating, so I was intrigued when Ilana Den of CC Conventions & Corporate Event was keen to acquire answers about the industry on her LinkedIn groups site and posed this question: *Hotel breakfast buffets - what's your best ever hotel buffet experience?*



Isn't breakfast one of the things you most look forward to in a hotel?

In 2012 the SMH had a view on Sydney's best..and was swamped with replies.

Ilana too was inundated.

Darren Isenberg, corporate mc, presentation skills coach and keynote presenter who was one of the first to comment, said "I have one simple rule when judging a hotel breakfast buffet ... if there's smoked salmon, then it's good."

Later after a flood of enthusiastic replies, Isenberg was moved to post again "Of the approximately 50 discussions you've begun in this group, Ilana, this one on breakfast buffets has had by far the largest number of comments.

"I wonder what that says about our industry and the people in it?"

Albane Mahaut, director of sales and marketing at Novotel Forest Resort Creswick said the Heckers Hotel in Berlin where she stays each year for ITB, have the best boiled eggs she had ever tasted while Ana Vuckovic, waxed lyrical about the Shangri-la Sydney saying, "My last stay there was four days, so four breakfasts, and I didn't manage to try everything on the buffet menu - yum!"

It just goes to show, questions of venues, convention centres tiered seating and industry argy bargy pale into insignificance when food is mentioned - Jill.

CeBIT chooses Olympic Park

IT'S going to take a 14 kilometre commute to get there, however the Asia Pacific CeBIT organiser Hannover Fairs Australia in their search for a new venue for the 20,000 square metre event, due to the closure of the SCEC at the end of next year, have by passed the contentious Glebe Island site, in favour of Sydney Olympic Park.

The possibility that the event would be moved out of Australia, to China was circumvented by the NSW Government's commitment to funding about \$1 million a year to expand the show's international influences, in addition to funding a large NSW stand at the show.

Hannover Fairs managing director Jackie Taranto said in *The Australian* (4 June) that the show next year would be a bigger event and offered more than the 20,000 square metres of space used at the Darling Harbour CeBIT last



month.

"There are 18,000 registered businesses in that part of Sydney. "It's a great opportunity and there are some interesting things we could do", Taranto said.

Murder to benefit the needy

HOST a Murder, who offer team building High Tea events in first class hotels in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane for \$60 per head, is negotiating with the Salvation Army to create a new world record for the most people playing Host a Murder in one sitting, with more than 300 people.

Proceeds from the event will go towards the Salvation Army's drug abuse education programs. Locations for individuals or group participation are Saturday 20 July - Orange Bowling Club, 6, 13, 20 and 27 July - Christmas in July at Palais Royal, Katoomba and 8, 29 and 30 November, Yanco All ServiceMen's Club.

See - www.hostamurder.com.au.

Garuda celebrates flights to Brisbane

SALE fares available until 30 June, for both Economy and Executive Class travellers are being offered by Garuda Indonesia to commemorate the airline's return to Brisbane.

Commencing on 1 August, fares start at \$728 for Economy and \$2063 for Executive Class.

Garuda has also partnered with a range of Bali's top attractions to offer exclusive benefits that include discounted admission and tours at Benoa Marine Recreation Park, Bali Safari & Marine Park, Waterbom Bali and Bali Sobek.

Conversely, travellers returning home from Bali can also take advantage of up to a 30% discount on admission and tours at some of Australia's biggest attractions.

Exclusively for those arriving into Brisbane, they include Dreamworld, SkyPoint, White Water World and Captain Cook Cruises.

Frasers appoints Tymosiewicz



FRASERS Hospitality, has announced the appointment Mariusz Tymosiewicz as the new general manager of the newly opened Fraser Suites Perth.

Tymosiewicz' role follows his most recent position as operations manager at Fraser Suites Sydney.

Commencing his career in Sydney in 2000, he has held various senior roles with IHG before joining Frasers Hospitality at the end of 2012.

His strong credentials include a wealth of expertise in both hotel operations and sales and marketing.

The hotel group's first Gold-Standard serviced residences to be built in Perth in over a decade, it has 236 rooms in a variety of sizes - deluxe, executive studios and deluxe, premier one-bedroom apartments which can be easily connected to create two-bedroom dual-key apartments.



Victoria's Natural Conference Destination



Bid for the Event Awards

THERE'S an opportunity for an Australian destination to position itself as the events capital of Australia and it is being offered by the Australian



Event Awards, the peak industry awards program for Australia.

The events body is currently on the search for a home which means destinations from all over the country can bid to host the event for three years, from 2013-2015 and the chance to attract the movers and shakers from the events industry.

The Awards, which aim to celebrate the achievements of Australians in the industry that make magnificent events possible

both nationally and overseas, not only rewards the "Best Event Manager of the Year", but categories also include "Best Tourism Event", "Best Venue", and "Best Charity Event", in addition to the golden trophy of the "Australian Event of the Year".

"We are extremely pleased with the attention we've received from destinations across the country, and are looking forward to seeing who else submits a bid before the cut off," said Ian Steigrad, managing director of the awards.

Since bidding opened on 13 May, organisers have received interest from a range of venues and organisations, including government bodies, convention and entertainment centres, and private venues.

Bidding closes at 5pm on Friday, 14 June.

See - www.eventawards.com.au.

Of Emperors & scholars

SWIRE Hotels are about to unveil their third House, The Temple House, in Chengdu in the fourth quarter of 2014.

The opening follows the successful launch of The Opposite House in Beijing and The Upper House in Hong Kong.

The 100 room hotel and its 42 adjoining serviced apartments, is located in the heart of the city, Chengdu Daci Temple Cultural and Commercial Complex.

The Temple, once the enclave of Emperors, still evokes the modest houses provided for scholars who came from different parts of the world to study.

The hotel continues this tradition of humility by creating understated luxury experiences that are founded on a deeply personalised service for every guest.

Brian Williams, managing director of Swire Hotels, says "Our goal is to create a highly individualised hotel which houses a series of dynamic restaurants and uniquely designed facilities.

"The Temple House presents an ideal opportunity to extend our brand into one of China's wealthiest and fastest-growing regions," he said.

Hunter Valley conference special

CHATEAU Elan at the Vintage Hunter Valley has a residential conference special for 30 delegates or more with a minimum two night stay, which includes the following extras:

a corporate golf day for 12 including a one hour private clinic with respected golf instructor, Richard Mercer, five individual vouchers for a night away including accommodation for one night, a half day wine tour and a full day conference package at half day rates, free wifi and a \$500 bar tab for a cocktail hour prior to an onsite dinner.

Conferences are to be contracted by 30 June and commence prior to 21 August.

Telephone for a personalised proposal - 02 4998 2270.

Traders Johor debut

SHANGRI-LA Hotels and Resorts debuted its third Traders hotel in Malaysia with the opening of the 283 room Traders Hotel, Puteri Harbour, Johor on 1 June.

Offering four storey towers and landscaped walkways fronted by Puteri Harbour, it is geared for golf, a fishing adventure, water sport activities or a boat cruise.

In addition, there's family entertainment at LEGOLAND Malaysia, the indoor Puteri Harbour Family Theme Park.

For meetings and events, there's a 515 sqm Iskandar ballroom and reception area that can accommodate up to 600 guests while smaller groups can gather in five other meeting halls with bird's-eye views of the hotel areas.

"With the state administration centre and two theme parks practically at the hotel's doorstep, we're set to be the new business and leisure hub in Johor," said Sigi Bierbaumer, general manager.

As an opening promotion, the hotel is offering an overnight stay in a deluxe room at MYR380 per night.

It is subject to prevailing tax and service charge and includes breakfast buffet for two people.

Howdy, doody Etihad

A Meet and Greet service for guests arriving at Abu Dhabi Int'l Airport has been introduced on Etihad Airways flights.

The service, which can be booked up to 48 hours before travel, makes it quick and easy to collect luggage and pass through Abu Dhabi immigration and customs.

Offering two packages - a Silver at US\$38pp, includes a personal welcome on arrival, immigration fast track and assistance with baggage collection.

The Gold Package, at US\$65pp, includes all of the components of the Silver, as well as a personal porter to collect and transport baggage through the airport to curbside.



WHEN it comes to the question of air turbulence when flying, you might be relieved to know that it has been an issue in aviation since the Wright brothers first flew.

Not as some travellers fear, the result of over-packed flights or not going around a storm to save fuel.

An encounter with severe turbulence, *USA Today Travel* says, may be uncomfortable but not dangerous, as airliners are designed to handle it.

Today's newer technology helps pilots see and avoid turbulence near thunderstorms (known as wind shear).

Other types of turbulence such as clear air turbulence are invisible to radar, a phenomenon that meteorologists can usually predict and fly around.

However, the most common method of learning about the presence of turbulence is by reports from other pilots.

Even taking all the precautions, occasionally flights will experience severe turbulence.

Injuries are almost always to passengers who do not have their seat belt fastened.

So remember - belt up!

Bedding down with The Blue Train

THROUGHOUT this year, South Africa's luxury 5-star Blue Train, which runs between Pretoria and Cape Town and features such indulgences such as a private butler service, marble-clad bathrooms and gourmet cuisine, is offering guests a complimentary night's accommodation at either 131 on Herbert Baker in Pretoria or the super luxury Taj Cape Town.

This accommodation special applies to all new bookings and is subject to availability.

Overnight accommodation includes breakfast, as well as transfers from the train station.

See - www.bluetrain.co.za.



Jetstar's inaugural to Uluru

THE Red Centre welcomed its first Jetstar JQ660 flight direct from Sydney to Uluru, yesterday at 1.35pm.

The arrival was celebrated with a traditional Welcome to Country by Elder Harry Wilson while a local Inma ceremony took place on the tarmac.

Jetstar Australia & New Zealand chief executive officer, David Hall (pictured), was on board with the Northern Territory Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Matt Conlan, and 180 passengers, saying that the history-making flight had a smooth landing.

"We're thrilled to have expanded our low fare service to one of the world's most iconic attractions and thanks to our low cost model, Uluru is more accessible than ever before," he said.

Managing director at Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia, Koos Klein, said travellers to the region will find the perfect base for an outback adventure.

"We have a comprehensive daily suite of free Indigenous Guest Experiences to enjoy at Ayers Rock Resort including spear and boomerang throwing and cultural dance performances."

A special celebration sale has



one-way Jetstar fares starting at \$129pp.

For information visit jetstar.com.

In addition, Voyages has announced a Uluru Holiday Sale with prices from \$249pp twin share for two nights' accommodation plus kids under 12 stay free.

On sale now until 5pm, Friday 7 June contact 1300 134 344 or visit ayersrockresort.com.au/sale.

Club Med special

BOOK your next conference or incentive event for 2014 at a Club Med resort and each delegate will receive a choice of the following at no extra cost: up to a one hour spa treatment and an exclusive group excursion if booked by 30 June.

Details at - www.clubmedgroups.com.au.

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Sitting Pretty

Delta Air Lines Business Class

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

Delta Air Lines has been flying from the USA to Sydney for just over three years, and in that time it has attracted a strong following for its BusinessElite in-flight product. BEN found out why after flying to New York recently as guest of Delta for the opening of its new US\$1b Terminal 4 at JFK Airport.

DL 17 originates in NY and uses a B767 for the NY to LAX leg. Crew offered drinks prior to take off, hung jackets and made you feel most welcome for the five hour Coast to Coast flight.

THE SEAT

They are comfortable, cradle-style full flat-bed seats, 21" wide and 79" bed length, in 1-2-1 configuration all with direct-aisle access.

There are 1,000 on-demand movies and TV shows music and games, plus wireless Internet access and power ports.

SERVICE/MEALS

The six crew were up and serving pre-dinner drinks the second the seat-belt sign was off, followed by a three course dinner consisting of an antipasto roasted fennel and orange salad, beef tenderloin, risotto, and BBQ shrimp.

Cheese and premium California wines from the Napa Valley were served, as well as a French bubbly. Delta's Master Sommelier, Andrea Robinson is one of only 17 female Master Sommeliers in the world, and *BEN* assures you, she knows her wines.

Even though the plane was 30-minutes late leaving NY, we arrived in LA on-time, the pilot saying he'd found a "short cut" on the way.

After a 90 minute transit, it was back on board, changing to a larger B777-200. Flight time, 14 hours.

THE SEAT

Layout is Herringbone, angled-style, meaning you sit sideways, facing away from the window. Configuration is 1-2-1 with direct aisle access, so you are not sitting next to anyone, if you have a window seat. Seats convert into full-flat beds with 180 degree recline and 82" of legroom. Pillows and duvets make for a restful sleep. Side pockets for water and personal items. Tray tables pull up and are big enough for a laptop and food. There are power outlets, one for a computer and a USB charging port. Wifi is also available.

MEALS

Lobster salad for starters, then soup, and either ribs, chicken, cod, fettuccine alfredo, or deli plate. Cheese and dessert follows. *BEN* couldn't resist the chocolate-covered profiteroles. Mid-flight snacks - try the pumpkin cheesecake, and for breakfast, the apple ricotta crepes. Wines: Superb Robert Mondavi Napa Chardonnay, French/Chilean reds and French champagne.

