



Dollar dazzling

LAST week's Cairns Convention Centre Tradeshow in



Sydney provided an opportunity to gauge opinion from Cairn's residents about the contentious \$4.2 billion Aquis Great Barrier Reef resort development which is proposed at Yorkey's Knob.

While opinion was mixed, most of those spoken to felt that as it had the imprimatur of the Queensland Premier Campbell Newman, it was very likely to go ahead, although not necessarily as planned.

Questions were raised as to where would the mass of people come from to fill the 3,750 hotel rooms across nine luxury hotel brands, the international class casino with 1,500 gaming machines and 750 gaming tables and the 45,000m² convention and exhibition centre, to name a few of the features within the development.

With casino developments also proposed on Wavebreak Island on the Gold Coast and at Clive Palmer's Coolum resort, Premier Newman described Queensland's current casinos as "run down and eroded", saying the future of the state's tourism sector was "bleak" without new attractions.

"It is only the people who are particularly interested in things like seeing the Great Barrier Reef.

"We won't see the growth, we won't see the expansion of the industry," he said.

For now, this project on a 353-hectare cane farm site, is at the initial proposal stage and does not yet have any of the approvals it would need to go ahead.

We watch with interest as to how the development proceeds.

MEANWHILE if you'll be in Sydney at the end of next month, save the 28th of November for the next Platinum Networking Night which will be held at the Sofitel Wentworth. RSVP details on **page four**. *Jill*

EEAA optimistic about 2014



THE Exhibition and Events Association of Australasia (EEAA) has released its fourth "Market Monitor," which shows that event organisers are quite optimistic about the future at present.

The Market Monitor, produced by independent pollster Micromex research, aims to track the heartbeat of the exhibitions sector and showed that there are 17 new shows expected to take place during 2014.

There's varying performance across different sectors, with the strongest performance being in lifestyle consumer shows.

And the Market Monitor also reflects some concerns relating to the domestic economy, decreasing exhibitor budgets, and the impact of construction in Sydney's Darling Harbour area.

The report was presented at a recent Gold and Platinum Partner event, which also included talks from leading lobbyist Matt Hingerty, former head of the Australian Tourism Export Council and now ceo of Barton Deakin.

Also presenting was Simon Banks, who's the Canberra-based Director of Hawker Britton.

EEAA gm Joyce DiMascio said "we take the view that we need to stay close to those who are connected in Canberra and with state governments around Australia."

She said insights from both

presenters were "a salient reminder of the need to understand the new political drivers of policy and funding, and especially the role that minor parties will play".

MEANWHILE the EEAA has also opened registrations for its final events to be held at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The EEAA Conference will be packed with "top-tier speakers," while the Awards for Excellence will honour the high achievers of 2013.

The awards dinner, to take place on 26 November, will be filled with emotion as the industry farewells the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre, which closes its doors just a week later.

With the backing of their major sponsor Octanorm for the conference and FABframe for the Awards, DiMascio said the conference would be a stimulating one for everyone.

"Our workshops will be sleeves rolled-up sessions in which we explore themes including experiential exhibition design, strategic planning and digital marketing compliance," she said.

CLICK HERE for more info.

Pictured above at the EEAA event are: Domenic Genua, Boating Industry Association; Joyce DiMascio, EEAA; Simon Banks; and Matt Hingerty.

Baillie Longitude 131°

FOLLOWING on from the purge of some of the Voyages Board members (**BEN** Fri), Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia has entered into an agreement with Baillie Lodges that will see them operate Longitude 131° from 1 November.

It is a move that will allow the luxury tented property to join with Baillie Lodges' other luxury properties Southern Ocean Lodge and Capella Lodge – both of which are part of the Luxury Lodges of Australia.

James Baillie said of the agreement, "We are excited and honoured to be able to steer Longitude 131° into its second decade."

Future plans for Longitude 131° include the refurbishment and expansion of the luxury "tents".



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ATM 2014 increases exhibition space

IN 2013 the Arabian Travel Market (ATM) welcomed 2,300 exhibitors from 87 countries, covering 22,000 square metres of floor space.

Now, with increased exhibitor demand from a variety of industry sectors an extra hall has been added to the floor plan, increasing the overall exhibition space to in excess of 23,500 sq m.

Organisers, Reed Travel Exhibitions say this represents a 5.8% increase in floor space for next year's event, being held from 5-8 May at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre.

There's rising demand from Middle East exhibitors, up 11%, versus Europe up by 7% and travel technology and hotels rising by 8% and 7% respectively.

Sofitel projections

AN offer of complimentary data projector and screen use is being made by Sofitel Sydney Wentworth when booking a meeting between 1 November and 30 December, with the Day Delegate Package priced at \$110 per person.

The offer includes arrival tea and coffee, morning tea, choice of two inspired break items, working buffet lunch, afternoon tea, conference stationary and venue hire.

For new bookings only and subject to availability, the deal excludes the ballroom and a minimum of 20 paying delegates is required per meeting.

For more information email sofitelsydneysales@sofitel.com

EIBTM market focus

THIS year's EIBTM, taking place 19-21 Nov, will include a series of dedicated market spotlight sessions, as a result of post-show feedback from hosted buyers who expressed an interest in placing business in these destinations.

Sessions will feature Andalucia, Catalunya, Slovenia and the USA - for details see www.eibtm.com.

Forest Resort's charity mission

EARLIER this month Novotel Forest Resort's Creswick Golf Course hosted a charity golf day to help out Accor's national charity, Mission Australia.

A number of local partners were happy to jump on board in support, with the event attracting 144 competitors in total.

The winning team was "The Bears," pictured above with Novotel Forest Resort Creswick gm Jessie Sheehan.

The charity golf day raised more than \$12,000 for the cause.



MHF Marketing, representing established DMC, Mercury80, recently partnered with South African Airways to host a group of senior incentive planners from Melbourne and Sydney to South Africa, Botswana and Zambia.

The group travelled on SAA from Perth via JNB to Cape Town where they were hosted by Sun International, Table Bay Hotel.

The next three days saw the group indulge in wine tasting in the Cape Winelands region, lounging on the sand for lunch at Grand Africa, amongst just a few activities.

A visit to Langa Township and the local school were included where the children welcomed the group with songs, dances and lots of hugs.

A highlight was the "MasterChef" competition held

at the Table Bay Hotel where the hotel executive chef coached the teams to culinary heights.

In Zambia the group stayed at the famous Royal Livingstone for two nights, a visit that included dinner on the famous Royal Livingstone Express and a visit to Chobe National Park in Botswana.

The group is pictured at the Table Bay MasterChef event, from left: Marcus Fitzgerald, Bunch; Tanya Raad, Tribe; Vanessa Armstrong, Corporate Traveller Groups; Tracy Thomas, SAA; Executive Chef Table Bay Hotel; Fran Vaughan, Mercury80; Mary Helen Farrell, MHF Marketing; Angela Redward, Medical Meetings; and Steve Robin, ASN Event.

Giddy-up at Spicers

SPICERS Hidden Vale, one hour south west of Brisbane and located on a 4856-hectare cattle station, is offering a special mid-week deal (Sunday to Thursday) of \$189pp single share for bed and breakfast.

The offer also includes a complimentary laser shooting experience for the team.

Based on a minimum of five rooms per night, it is available for November and December.

Ideal for a team of up to 65 for conferences, board retreats or corporate Christmas events, the historic 1900's property is centred on the property's original charming homestead. Take part in the many team activities onsite including laser shooting, archery, 4WD tours, mountain bike riding, horse riding trails, bush walking, abseiling, Segway adventures or simply relax by one of the pools.

R&C gift boxes

RELAIS & Chateau has launched new gift boxes which are perfect for corporate rewards in the lead up to Christmas.

Bespoke gift voucher packages are valid at 300+ hotels and restaurants - such as Tetsuya's or qualia or even a 3-star Michelin hotel in Provence - **CLICK HERE**.



BOUND to raise a few hotel hackles but as forewarned is forearmed, one hotel concierge has divulged that since the average no-show rate is 10% daily, hotels will overbook whenever possible.

The sales and reservations departments are encouraged to book the property to 110% capacity, in the hope that with cancellations and no-shows they will fill every room.

When the numbers game doesn't play in the hotel's favour, someone gets walked.

The hotel will now pay for the entire night's room and tax, plus one phone call, at a comparable hotel in the area - a small price to pay for full occupancy!

Remember you are more likely to get walked if you booked using an on-line site at a deeply discounted rate and are therefore less important; have never stayed there before and may never visit the city again; are a one-nighter; or are acting like a idiot.



business events news

28th October 2013

A good fit



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Nam Air set to fly

DESTINATION Asia report that a new airline Nam Air will launch in Bali soon to serve domestic and international routes.

A subsidiary of Jakarta carrier Sriwijaya Air, it is currently in the process of obtaining its Air Operator's Certificate ahead of commencing services shortly.

It plans to fly to Malaysia, East Timor, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines and Singapore.

Chateau Elan benefits

BOOK a residential conference or event by 28 February 2014 at Chateau Elan at The Vintage in the NSW Hunter region and choose from six rewards.

One 'benefit' applies to bookings of 0-25 room nights; two 'benefits' for 26-50 room nights; three for 51-75 room nights and four for 76+.

Benefit choices include a free bottle of Chateau Elan wine per delegate; a complimentary room per 20 rooms booked; a round of drinks post conference or pre onsite dinner; a sommelier-led wine tasting of a range of Hunter Valley wines; 10% off your day delegate package; or a complimentary golf day for 12 golfers including a private clinic with Richard Mercer.

Find out more by calling the property on 02 4998 2270 or events@chateauelan.com.au.

Foster to Sanctuary

MICHAEL Foster has relocated from Melbourne to join the team at InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort as Business Development Director.

Bringing with him a wealth of experience from his previous roles as meetings director at Crowne Plaza Hunter Valley, and a senior bdm position with Pan Pacific Hotels, last month Michael was named one of the Australasian accommodation industry's brightest stars when he was awarded the Sales Associate of the Year award at the 2013 HM Awards.

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Sitting Pretty

Fiji Airways Business Class

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

As of next month, Fiji Airways will be the proud owner of three brand new Airbus A330 aircraft, with two already in operation. In line with the rollout of the new additions, the carrier has reinvented itself, launching new uniforms, a new name replacing the former Air Pacific moniker, and effectively a new public image. Quite rightly, the carrier should be proud of their new craft, which will operate sectors from its Nadi hub between Los Angeles, Hong Kong, Auckland & several Australian ports.

Business Events News recently enjoyed the Fiji Airways Tabua Class experience from Fiji to Sydney and relaxed in the luxury afforded by the spacious cabin.

THE SEAT

Greeted by beaming smiles and the warm Fijian hospitality one can come to expect, **BEN** took its seat in 3E. The cabin is laid out with 24 seats in Business Class in a 2-2-2 configuration. Nearly immediately, crew come calling with welcome glasses of champagne, which on this occasion, is declined due to it being only gam, but we happily accept the orange juice alternative. Natural light swathes the cabin and settling in to the seat takes mere moments. A newspaper from a selection of local and major world mastheads is offered.

The seat is ergonomically designed to support the legs and lower back, with a cushion also available if needed. A small table separates the next seat across, with three storage compartments available. The panel to progressively recline the seat back as far as its lie-flat capabilities is located in the armrest.

ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

A photo screensaver featuring images of the idyllic Fijian islands adorns the 15.4" screen until just after takeoff, at which point a good selection of new and recent release movies, TV shows, music and video games is made available. Crew distribute pairs of high-quality headphones which nearly muffle the aircraft noise entirely.

SERVICE

Business Events News' flight was a gam departure from Nadi, meaning breakfast would be the meal available. Kicking things off is a selection of fruits including pineapple, watermelon and rockmelon, along with a delicious granola and yoghurt combination. Quite content after this selection, it was surprising but not unwelcome to see a generous second course of hot items following, including bacon, eggs and potato. Tabua Class passengers also enjoy a premium experience on the ground, with access to the Tabua Club at Nadi Airport.

Fiji Airways flies from Sydney to Nadi twice daily, with a third service catering to high demand in school holiday periods. Direct flights to Nadi from Brisbane, Melbourne, Auckland and Christchurch make up the carrier's Australian and New Zealand route map.





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