



Messin' with Twitter

WE'VE been having fun with our



Twitter account in response to a reprimand received in Twitterspeak that we should check our facts about the news that Heston Blumenthal is moving his Fat Duck restaurant to Crown Melbourne in Feb next year (**BEN** 02 Apr) - check out our Twitter for photos from the launch of the Lighthouse Gallery as well - @BusEvNews.

In essence, they said that the report was an April Fool's joke.

"Always a challenge checking pressers on April 1" their Tweet said, referring us to a BBC link, which in fact read 'April Fool's Day – Ten Stories that look like pranks but aren't.'

Clearly, they had the wrong end of the stick because we confirmed the validity of the release with Crown Melbourne.

Here are more stories that smell distinctly of pranks but aren't.

The *Evening Express* reported that ambitious internet sellers were trying to sell a discontinued flavour of car air freshener for £4.50 on eBay; the Jelly Belly 3D Juicy flavour used to retail at £3.49 but is now being replaced by other flavours.

The item was later withdrawn although there are other sellers still trying to get £100 for their fresheners, the publication said.

Similarly *The Sun* wrote that sand from the Sahara desert landed on David Cameron's car.

The phenomenon, sometimes known as blood rain, leaves a thin layer of red dust behind, the newspaper reported.

The particles are swept up by winds in North Africa and can be blown for hundreds of miles in the right conditions.

Another in the 'weird but true' basket was the news that a hotel owned by Andy Murray was open for business; the converted 15 room luxury hotel with its own loch is near Dunblane, the *Star* reported. *Jill*

RB's Melb Dreamliner



ROYAL Brunei Airlines (RB) has launched its "Betterfly" Dreamliner service from Melbourne Tullamarine Airport to Brunei International Airport and onwards to London via Dubai.

Royal Brunei Airlines Australia country manager Brett McDougall (pictured left) said the business events segment was one of growing importance, and the new Dreamliner would give the airline competitive advantage in that market.

RB's third Boeing 787 Dreamliner touched down at Tullamarine Airport, greeted by McDougall, chief commercial and planning officer Karam Chand and airport manager Brett Abercrombie.

Passengers travelling on the return service to Brunei were treated to a special reception at the boarding gate prior to departure and greeted by His Excellency Zakaria Ahmad, Brunei High Commissioner in Australia (pictured centre).

McDougall said the airline competed "vigorously" for business events activity and played a major role in events in Brunei, such as the ASEAN summit.

When asked if there would be any targeted meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions offers, McDougall said the airline "carefully reviewed" all such opportunities and made a tailored solution available.

Speaking ahead of the launch,

the airline's deputy chairman Dermot Mannion said Australia represented an important market for RB and the arrival of the Dreamliner would cement its growing status as a competitor in this market.

"We have been operating a service to Australia for three years but with this launch, Royal Brunei Airlines now becomes the first airline in the world to offer an exclusive Dreamliner service on all long-haul flights."

A celebration fare sale has been launched offering a range of discounted flights to Brunei, Dubai and London from Melbourne.

Return fares to Brunei start from AUD\$696, onwards to Dubai from AUD\$958 and all the way to London Heathrow from AUD\$1,387.

The fares are valid for sale until 30 Apr and for travel until 19 Jun.

Pictured above right is Syed Rzman Syed Abd Rahim from the Brunei High Commission.

MHG adds 3 hotels

MINOR Hotel Group has added three properties in Mozambique.

Two of the three will be rebranded to its Anantara brand, with the last rebranded to the AVANI brand later in the year, with a 25% investment in the properties.

The investment was part of the group's strategy to increase its footprint globally and increase its presence in the country.

CeBIT @ SOP

CEBIT Australia is being held this year at Sydney Olympic Park from 05 to 07 May.

Now in its thirteenth year, CeBIT Australia was the largest business technology event in the Asia Pacific region, it said.

The conference program will provide insights on eHealth, the Cloud, eGovernment and cyber security and showcase business technologies.

On the program will be more than 100 Australian and international speakers, including US Cyber Consequences Unit director and chief economist Scott Borg.

Registrations for various programs are now open.

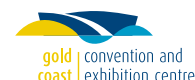
For more information or to register, **CLICK HERE**.

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Qantas unveils HK lounge

QANTAS has unveiled its multi-million dollar Hong Kong lounge.

The lounge seats 300 and has 12 showers, a family zone and a working area and replaces the First and Business lounges as a combined premium lounge.

Qantas International ceo Simon Hickey said the lounge was designed to reflect the colour, vibrancy and luxury of Hong Kong, and was testament to the continued investment in lounge and inflight experiences right across the network.

“All of our flights from Hong Kong to Australia are overnight, so we know customers will enjoy being able to dine in the lounge before they fly so they can maximise their sleep onboard.”

Hickey said the opening of the lounge showed the airline’s commitment to Hong Kong as a key hub for the region.



Menus are designed by chef Neil Perry with a range of dining options from the Spice Temple BBQ bar to yum cha trolleys.

The airline has also partnered with Sofitel for a hosted experience for those travelling in First and Platinum One Qantas

Frequent Flyers, with services including shirt pressing and shoe shining.

Qantas said it was working on two new lounges in Los Angeles, with the first phase of the LA Business Lounge scheduled to open mid-2014, and Qantas First Lounge at the end of the year.

The high and mighty

HAVING overcome its issues, things are now back on track with Peter Rowland Catering unveiling the Melbourne Star Observation Wheel.



Their new key business and special events venue was on display to the city’s top conference and meeting planners and event organisers this week.

Peter Rowland Catering ceo John Isherwood speaking at the showcase event said the company was thrilled to have the Melbourne Star in its portfolio of attractions and looked forward to establishing it as Melbourne’s newest ‘venue with a difference’.

“Event guests and delegates will be able to incorporate a flight on the Melbourne Star to add imaginative and inspiring impact to planning meetings, product launches or business lunches.”

August in Paris

A PROPERTY that is sure to have incentive planners salivating is the opening of The Peninsula Paris, the Peninsula Hotels Group’s first venture into Europe and one that has been much talked about for several years.

Set to open on 01 Aug, it is housed in a century-old classic building that has been meticulously restored by a team of artisans from all over France.

Modernised and restored spaces will be complemented by contemporary art installations, furnishings and technology.



This 21st century palace will have rooftop spaces and private terrace gardens that offer 360° views.

Formerly The Majestic Hotel on Avenue Kleber in the 16th Arrondissement in 1908, it is just a few steps from the Champs Elysees and the Arc de Triomphe.

We can hardly wait!

For a sneak peek at the hotel, **CLICK HERE**.

A glowing idea

BOUTIQUE hire company Design Hire have added a ‘glowing range’ of products.

Suitable for both evening and day events, the range includes bars, tables, floating balls, ice buckets, stools, sculptures and backdrop walls.



Glow cubes, for instance, are available in a variety of sizes from small at 25 cm to medium at 43 cm and large ones measuring 73 cm around.

Suitable for use as bars, tables and more, they are made of polyethylene with halogen lights.

Additionally, Design Hire offers a variety of designer items as well as photography equipment for photo shoots and parades or props for stylists and set dressers.



WITH 23 Apr said to have been the birthday of William Shakespeare in 1564, Shakespearean sites and attractions in England are revving themselves up to immerse visitors and locals alike in all that is the Bard.

VisitEngland has released a list of some of the newest and best. Sam Wanamaker Theatre, London is a candlelit 340 seat theatre which opened in January 2014.

It was built to the original Jacobean style and aims to recreate the most authentic 17th century theatre experience yet.

Despite it being the ‘season of mists and mellow fruitfulness’ in Australia, the Shakespeare’s Cycleway is celebrating spring, as well as the Bard.

This package allows you to cycle from Shakespeare’s hometown in Stratford-upon-Avon to the Capital.

A new offering, it takes in the beautiful and quintessentially English towns of The Cotswolds and The Chilterns before heading towards Shakespeare’s Globe and to the Sam Wanamaker Theatre on London’s South Bank.

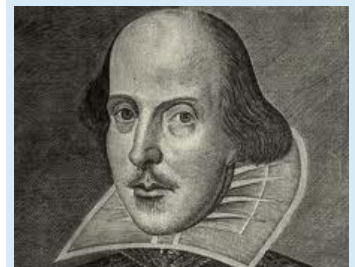
Prices start from £1210 (Classic, intense cycling) to £2390 (luxury, gentle cycling) for four nights including accommodation and breakfast each day,

luggage transfers, bike hire, helmets, panniers and a tour of Shakespeare’s Globe Theatre.

Shakespeare in Love is a new stage version of the eponymous film, which will open at the Noel Coward Theatre in July.

Celebrate in Shakespeare’s Birthplace on the 26 & 27 Apr is an extended programme of events and activities at the five Shakespeare family homes and free entertainment in the streets and parks of Stratford-upon-Avon will be held throughout the weekend.

There’ll be storytelling sessions, stage fighting workshops and the chance to see how fake scars and bruises are created.



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Merivale's Beach Palace

MERIVALE has continued its portfolio expansion with the purchase of the Beach Palace Hotel in Coogee.

This follows the acquisition of the ex Trump Tavern in the CBD, announced this week, and the Paddington Arms Hotel on Oxford Street, confirmed in February.

The hotel is closed for refurbishment.

There was potentially a business events focus but an overall master plan, plus opening details, have not been announced yet but would be confirmed in due course, Merivale said.

Financial details of the

acquisition were not released and there were no further acquisitions to be announced currently, the company said.

Ceo Justin Hemmes said there were very few iconic beachside venues like the hotel in Australia in terms of scale and location.



"I'm extremely passionate about this property and really excited about opening something special for the local community and Sydney.

"The Beach Palace has long been a landmark property in Coogee and we have great plans to bring it to life."

AEG 1EARTH

THE Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) has committed to a four week program focusing on the environment as part of 1EARTH Month.

It involves staff suppliers and clients and started with the World Wildlife Fund's Earth Hour.

Staff would engage in a diverse range of activities, including reducing energy consumption, advocating cycling to work and supporting the homeless, the BCEC said.

The program will also see the launch of the Centre's Bicycle Users Group which will enhance the Centre's facilities for cyclists and encourage staff to cycle.

BCEC general manager and Bob O'Keeffe said the program reinforced the importance of putting values into action.

"We believe that each one of us has a responsibility to make choices that reduce our impact on the environment and contribute to building more caring communities."

Lighthouse launches

THE Australian National Maritime Museum's Lighthouse (ANMM) Gallery has launched.

Guests were welcomed into the new space on a red carpet beside the water, with a live singer and grand piano in the venue itself, as well as a chocolate and liqueur bar.



The space has a capacity of 250 to 400 people and the ability to incorporate some of the Museum's exhibitions.

Guests can also bring objects to display into the Gallery, including cars - or, as was at the launch last night, a grand piano.

The Lighthouse guided vessels through the Great Barrier Reef in 1874 and was reassembled in Sydney in 1993, ANMM councillor Robyn Holt said.

It could be lit up with clients' logos if they so desired, Deanna Varga of the ANMM said.

Other event spaces with the ANMM includes Yachts, a double sided cocktail venue with a capacity of 300 people in wet weather and the HMAS Vampire, which can host 30 people at a sit down dinner or 200 for cocktails.

Pullman's Easter deals

THE Pullman Sydney Olympic Park has packages available for the Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Called 'Play and Stay' packages, rooms are available from \$299 and inclusive of two Easter Show tickets, valid from 16 to 23 Apr and subject to availability.

To book the package, email H6411@accor.com.

How sweet this is

IN recognition that no two events are ever alike, Stamford Hotels and Resorts have come up with a range of 'Pick N Mix' deals.



'Pick N Mix' offers bonus sweeteners that include complimentary guest rooms, function rooms, Wi-Fi, welcome canapés or free use of breakout rooms for the duration of the event.

Then, so as to have your cake and eat it too, there's a delicious option of free desserts as part of a menu, or decadent high teas.

"We want to ensure meeting organisers are rewarded for their support and are able to deliver professional and successful meetings within budget, without having to cut the extras," said Stamford's Andrea Werner, MICE group director of sales.

Visit www.stamfordmeetings.com.au for more.

Koo-indah to this

THE multi-award winning 4.5 star Mercure Kooindah Waters Golf & Spa Resort in Wyong is offering conference delegates complimentary buffet breakfast and limited WiFi during the event.

Conferences need to be booked by 30 Apr and the event held before 31 Dec for a minimum of 20 accommodation rooms per night.

To book with the Resort, email reservations@kooindahwaters.com.au.

JW Marriott vision

BOOK your next meeting at the JW Marriott Phuket Resort & Spa and you'll enjoy an additional 5% discount for F&B and meeting package with complimentary WiFi.

There is a choice of Your Vision or Your Added Value packages.

Booker benefits include complimentary four nights accommodation and a complimentary two hour Thai Massage at Mandara Spa and the offer is valid until 15 Dec.

For more, contact www.jwmarriottphuketresort.com.

Emirates & Europcar

EMIRATES Airline's frequent flyer program, Emirates Skywards, has partnered with Europcar.

The partnership will provide members of the reward program with the chance to earn Skywards Miles for every booking.

Members will earn 600 miles on rentals at all Europcar locations with Gold and Platinum members eligible for an additional 200 bonus miles per rental.

Members of Skywards could redeem their earned miles for a range of rewards, including hotel accommodation, Emirates said.

For more information, visit www.emirates.com.

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