



What the duck?!

Okay, I get it; 'It's The Duck's Nuts' is a cute if somewhat arresting name for a savoury snack but I'm not so sure about abalone flavoured crunchies.



I guess it's a Singapore thing, but a new NSW Government trade agreement will see Duck Creek products and other local offerings such as Companion Appleman and The Byron Bay Cookie Company, showcased in 38 Cold Storage stores, a Singaporean supermarket chain.

Duck Creek, hailing from the Byron hinterland, has, along with the Abalone snacks, such mouthfuls as tasty Wasabi, Roasted Garlic and Hickory.

MEANWHILE the Sydney-based Damn Good team, who always manage to turn up somewhere fabulous or incredibly outrageous, were at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras for the eighth year in a row.

Sadly, they say, not in their own float, but they did provide big screen coverage of the parade.

"Our truck mounted LED screens are features of the event every year, and this year was no exception, with one of our 35 sqm truck mounted LED screens taking pride of place in Taylor Square," said Damn Good's Ben Alcott.

Now they are looking forward to working at Mardi Gras again next year.

Alcott said the team recently spent a week in a brand new property – the W Hotel Singapore Sentosa Cove, which has 240 rooms, two restaurants, two bars, and seven function rooms (including the Great Room that featured little custom-made fairies hiding amongst the decor).

"The whole hotel is themed around natural design, and even the meeting spaces ('Studios') have 'thinking trees' growing out of the floors."

Take a look at the W Singapore by **CLICKING HERE**. Jill

\$80m Botanic Hotel



THE Royal Botanic Gardens and Domain Trust has revealed a draft master plan for the parkland on the edge of Sydney Harbour, which includes a new 150 room four-storey hotel.

The \$80m 'Botanic Hotel' (concept pictured above), if and when approved, would be built behind the NSW Art Gallery and could open by 2019.

The master plan, the cost estimates of which add to more than \$136m overall, has 25 key proposals, including a new ferry terminal at Woolloomooloo; new Domain Rail Station; themed, area-specific gardens at entry points, with themes such as Plants and Opera for the QEII Gates near the Opera House and Plants and Spirituality; a new cultural precinct and a plaza in front of the existing Art Gallery.

The hotel would be partnership funded, according to estimates.

Other proposed funding sources are the government and grants,

as well as donations.

The master plan aimed to develop required infrastructure to support year round visitation and further development and investment, the groups said.

Other changes include the extension of the land bridge between the Garden and the Domain.

Another suggestion in the master plan, which is the first in the 200 year history of the Royal Botanic Garden, Sydney and Domain, was the erection of a permanent Domain sound shell, where Carols by Candlelight and other such events could be held.

The draft plan is on exhibition to the public at Lion Gate Lodge or online until 04 May.

To submit feedback **CLICK HERE**.

Four pages today

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Sydney Show(ground)

THE Sydney Showground has launched its new brand which has the tag line 'Big Experiences'.

The launch was held in the newly opened 10,000 sqm building, operational since completion in March.

Sydney Showground gm Peter Thorpe said the organisation wanted visitors to have a 'Big Experience' at each event.

The new brand, which was 12 months in the making, and new facility, showed Sydney Showground was serious about supporting the events industry, he said (see **BEN** Friday for more).



CINZ mentors

CONVENTIONS and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) has launched a mentoring program to help grow the skills of NZ's PCOs.

The program will run for 16 weeks from mid-June.

CINZ event manager Jeanette Stanton said it aimed to grow the skills of PCOs and strengthen networks within the industry.

The New Zealand Coaching and Mentoring Centre, which will deliver the program that matches mentees with mentors, is led by business events industry PCOs Sally Bary, Megan Crum and Jan Tonkin.

Stanton said while there was usually a supervisor in the workplace to provide guidance, it could sometimes be difficult to talk openly with that person.

"A mentor is an independent, impartial person who is available to discuss issues or problems, offer advice and provide support.

"We think PCOs who participate in the programme will benefit greatly from having a mentor they can turn to and that it will lead to some strong and lasting relationships."

CLICK HERE for more.



business events news

9th April 2014

Voyages picks Williams

ACTING ceo since January 2014 Andrew Williams has been appointed ceo of Voyages Indigenous Tourism Australia.

Voyages board of directors chair Lisa Gay said Williams, previously chief financial officer, had been "instrumental" in the successful development of Voyages over the past three years.

Williams has more than 20 years' international hotel and tourism experience in both hotel operations and investment with companies including Accor and Carlson.

Gay said the appointment was a further vote of confidence in the current management team and strategic direction of the business from the boards of the Indigenous Land Corporation and Voyages.

Williams said the Voyages team had focused on rejuvenating Ayers Rock Resort over the past three years, efforts which



were reflected in the improving performance of the Resort.

"I look forward to leading the team as we work to establish Voyages as the leading Indigenous tourism operator in Australia."

Adding to the recent announcement by Jetstar to increase flights to Ayers Rock, a number of upcoming major events are in the offing, including the imminent visit by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

Other events include Tjungu, an Indigenous cultural festival, from 24 to 27 Apr, followed by the Outback Fest in May.

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Adults only Bali

AS if it didn't already have a lot going for it, Club Med Bali Nusa Dua is undergoing a transformation.



One of Club Med's most popular holiday and conference destinations, the resort's improvements will provide an increasingly upmarket and tailored experience.

The first project has already been unveiled, with the opening of an adults-only Zen Pool, designed by architect Marc Hertrich.

Groups can have exclusive use of any village and the colour palette sets the tone for this area of relaxation, where adult guests can enjoy sea views.



crumbs!



THERE are plenty of good reasons to visit China, but if you've been there and done that, here are some wild and wacky things to do, from the *Telegraph*.

For instance, the city of Hangzhou has vending machines that sell hairy crabs - a delicacy that reside in the machine's pinch-proof casing.

In Shenzhen, there's a theme park that features more than 100 reproductions of the most famous tourist attractions in the world, effectively telling the locals that they don't ever have to leave the People's Republic.

Perhaps you'd like to visit the upside down house, opening to tourists next month, where visitors enter the structure, built at the China Folk Painting Village, through an "upstairs" window.

Furniture and fittings are glued to the ceiling, à la 'The Twits' - for more ideas, [CLICK HERE](#).

THE ULURU MEETING PLACE

EASY ACCESS TO ULURU WITH NEW MELBOURNE SERVICE

Jetstar will commence a four times weekly return service between Melbourne and Ayers Rock Airport (Uluru) from 29 June 2014 and increase its Sydney route to a daily return service. Virgin Australia already offer a daily service connecting Sydney and the spiritual heart of Australia. Never has there been a better time to hold your event, conference and incentive at Uluru Meeting Place. Enquire today!

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Fashioning it forward



IF there's a way to attract a predominantly female conference to Sydney or Melbourne, or to add extra spice to an accompanying partner program, then it's Fashion Week.

The event is expected to see around 25,000 people across four days.

Event sponsors hosted "hospitality moments" in and around the venue, including private dinners and cocktail parties, as well as using the event as a platform to announce new initiatives, a Fashion Week spokeswoman said.

While a figure for what the event was worth to the region was not available, Minister for Small Business Katrina Hodgkinson said the NSW fashion industry employed more than 700,000 people in 2012/13, generating retail sales of about \$6.4b for the economy.

In Sydney, Mercedes-Benz Fashion Week kicked off this week but what is new and being billed as a world exclusive is the event's 'Weekend Edition'.

Held at the same venue, Carriageworks, it comes straight

after Fashion Week, running from 12 to 13 Apr, and will aim to give the public a taste of the full fashion week experience.

The event will involve a series of runway shows featuring the best of Fashion Week, how-to sessions from hair and beauty stylists and discussions with international bloggers.

Destination NSW ceo Sandra Chipchase said it was exciting to see new initiatives being pioneered in Sydney through the 'Weekend Edition' event, which would generate even more interest from visitors, giving them a unique Fashion Week 'only in Sydney' experience.

NSW deputy premier Andrew Stoner said the Weekend Edition would generate consumer interest by leveraging the excitement that was generated from such a fashion event.

The Weekend Edition was a powerful marketing initiative that allowed designers to engage a consumer audience and leverage show investment, IMG Fashion director of brand and strategy Elle Turner said.

Photo credit: Getty Images.

Udaipur gains a Blu

A PARTNERSHIP between Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group and Rockwood Hotels & Resorts Ltd has resulted in the signing of Radisson Blu Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa, formerly known as the Sheraton Udaipur Palace Resort & Spa.

This is the first Radisson Blu hotel in Udaipur and is expected to open in May 2014.

Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group Asia Pacific president Simon C. Barlow said the group was "aggressively" growing its presence, reinforcing its position as the largest international hotel group in India, with 66 hotels in operation and 41 in development.

EIBTM proves ROI

POST show research from EIBTM has found that 98% of exhibitors felt the event was "vital" to business, with the estimated average order value estimated to be about \$614,000.

There were 2,937 exhibiting companies at EIBTM, which was held in November.

A further \$571,500 approximately was expected to be confirmed as a result of the show, EIBTM said.

The show had 3,843 international Hosted Buyers attending, with 99% saying they were satisfied with the event.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.

Ultimate Venue Selector

VENUE Selector, the provider of a free venue finding service to suit conference or event needs, has been acquired by the Ultimate Group.

Ultimate Group director Lisa Roberts said Venue Selector founder Samantha Dove's values mirrored the group's.

"We are pleased to have her join our team during a phase of continued expansion."

The team would build on both current client and supplier relationships and expand on various opportunities, Ultimate Group said.

Mitchell in F&B role

LUKE Mitchell has been appointed director of food and beverage at InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort.

Mitchell started his career on the Gold Coast working for IHG sister properties Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn and most recently, he spent four months as assistant food and beverage manager at InterContinental Fiji Golf Resort and Spa before returning to the Gold Coast in October last year and taking up the role of event services manager at InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort.

Mitchell said he was working on re-launching the poolside experience which would include new food and beverage offerings, to launch in spring.

AGTC jumps for joy

ASIA'S largest-ever golf tourism event, the Asia Golf Tourism Convention (AGTC) 2014 has been trumpeted as a huge success.



Organised by global golf tourism industry association, the International Association of Golf Tour Operators, it was hosted by golf and spa resort Mission Hills Haikou and the Haikou government.

The event took place over two days at the Hainan International Exhibition & Convention Centre on China's Haikou Island.

Attended by 556 delegates from 40 countries, more than 200 golf tour operator buyers from over 150 companies met with 290 supplier delegates from 150 seller companies.

These included golf resorts, hotels and tourist boards from 19 countries across the Asia-Pacific region including China, Japan, Malaysia, Abu Dhabi, Dubai, Australia and New Zealand.

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