



Ensemble act

MARRIOTT
International's
Autograph
Collection,
launched



for the first time in Australia on Monday night, saw Sydney's Sebel Pier One change from Accor management to that of Marriott.

For the gathered media, the event proved even more indelible by being held on the expansive 40cm square balcony of Pier One Sydney Harbour's Waterside King Suite.

Jutting out over a pier with views across Walsh Bay and Sydney Harbour, the suite takes in the Opera House, the Bridge and the smile of Luna Park.

General manager Michael Sheridan who remains with the property, said the Heritage suites were particularly popular with chief executives and organisers of incentive and conference groups for their exceptional design and entertaining attributes.

To give you an idea of the rich character and uncommon details of the evolving ensemble of Autograph Collection Hotels, think The Algonquin Hotel Times Square, home of the legendary round table and birthplace of The New Yorker.

Then there's the AC Santo Mauro in Madrid, the 19th century residence of the Duke of Santo Mauro and closer to home, the exceptionally designed, The Stones Hotel – Legian Bali.

Jill

Pier One to a Marriott



MARRIOTT International's management acquisition of the Sebel Pier One makes the now Pier One Sydney Harbour the first Autograph Collection property in Australia.

Marriott vice president Australia Neeraj Chadha said Autograph Collection was not a brand.

"Hotel is a brand.

"Autograph is a collection of hotels."

Described as an exclusive portfolio of hotels that champion independence, two more Autograph properties debuted at the same time.

These were the ocean front Pier South Resort in San Diego, California, and the Hotel Chicago (formerly the Hotel Sax) in Chicago, Illinois.

Awarded the management over Accor following four months of talks, it was revealed that 14 international hotel groups made formal bids for the sought-after harbourside property.

Owner Robert Magid told travel trade media that Marriott was selected on the basis of its reward

scheme and vision.

With 189 guest rooms and 18 suites, Pier One general manager Michael Sheridan remains at the helm with newly created director of sales Mitchell Gunn and 22 former Accor staff.

Magid said with nothing needing to be done to the guest rooms, and a new conference centre, he promised a total revolution to the public spaces by the end of September.

To celebrate its inauguration into the Autograph Collection and for a limited time, the hotel is offering guests who stay two nights or more a complimentary upgrade to a water view suite.

The offer includes breakfast for two and double Marriott Rewards points.

Pictured at the launch are, from left, Michael Sheridan, Ruth and Robert Magid, Sydney Harbour Marriott director of sales and marketing Helen Radic, Neeraj Chadha and Marriott International national marketing communications manager Deborah McDiarmid.

Crown-ing updates

A RANGE of innovative event offerings will be showcased when Crown Melbourne and Crown Perth come together at AIME 2014, on Stand #2200.

In 2013, Crown launched a number of new developments including free, daily WiFi access for guests and the appointment of renowned restaurateurs Neil Perry and Guillaume Brahimi as Crown's culinary directors.

This year, the first and largest hotel complex in the city with a total capacity of 1,200 rooms, Crown Towers Perth, will commence construction.

Scheduled for completion in 2017, it will have 500 luxury rooms, an array of world-class restaurants, leading event facilities and access to Crown Perth's Convention Centre with 4,800 sqm of venue space.

During AIME, Crown Events & Conferences will return once again with the Crown Spa Pamper Zone, opposite Crown's stand.

Hosted buyers can book a treatment by emailing pamperzone@crownmelbourne.com.au before 5:00pm on 14 Feb with their preferred date, time and treatment option.



INSPIRED EVENTS DO THE NT

Invigorate your events in an extraordinary place.

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 18 - 19 FEBRUARY 2014 **BOOTH 1532**





AIME's \$250m potential



THE potential worth of AIME this year is expected to be around \$250 million.

Karen Bolinger, ceo of the Melbourne Convention Bureau, owner of AIME, said that approximately a quarter of a billion dollars worth of business was placed at last year's event, which she said was a testament to the fact that AIME was an invaluable opportunity for delegates and exhibitors to efficiently conduct business in the space of two days.

"With the majority of the floor space already booked by exhibitors, it's likely that the event will reach full capacity, and

I wouldn't be surprised if the value of business placed exceeds the amount achieved in 2013."

The two-day event will see 750 exhibitors from 30 countries meet with more than 3,500 business events, meeting and incentive planners, and exhibition organisers.

Newcomers for 2014 include Shangri-La and Haycom, alongside international destination marketing organisations such as Brand USA.

Jacqui Timmins, AIME's exhibition director said 93% of surveyed Hosted Buyers reported establishing long term business partnerships in 2013.

Outrigger expands

HAWAII Outrigger Hotels and Resorts is expanding its global portfolio with the purchase of two new properties in Fiji.

Outrigger bought partner Geoffrey Shaw's shareholding in the ownership company of Outrigger on the Lagoon Fiji and his privately held Castaway Island, Fiji.

The transaction, for an undisclosed amount, gives Outrigger 100% ownership of the two properties.

"This acquisition is consistent with the strategic growth of Outrigger in the Asia-Pacific region," said David Carey, president and ceo of Outrigger Enterprises Group.

"We plan to have Outrigger resorts in the best beachfront locations in the best resort destinations in the Asia-Pacific region."

New IBTM director

SALLIE Coventry will be appointed as the new portfolio director for the IBTM Events Portfolio.

The news follows the promotion of Craig Moyes as head of the Leisure Portfolio.

Prior to joining Reed Travel Exhibitions, Coventry was W&O managing director.



IT doesn't seem likely that the architects of the US\$51 billion Sochi Winter Olympic Games would have cut costs by building toilets over a huge dam or frozen fishing lake but what else explains why athletes have been banned from fishing in the toilets!

A bizarre chart uncovered in the athlete village lists the 'Sochi bathroom rules.'

It was discovered by Canadian snowboarder Sebastien Toutant, who tweeted his discovery, saying that while the list of dos and don'ts includes some reasonable tips in aid of promoting good hygiene – not standing up or squatting above the toilet – you might be forgiven for thinking the designers had run out of ideas when they got to the last two rules: in one, a stick man can clearly be seen fishing, with a rod, in the toilet.

As fishing is not included in the Winter Games, the reasoning remains unclear, and athletes are unlikely to have brought equipment with them.



THE ULURU MEETING PLACE

NEW INDIGENOUS ENCOUNTERS

With the mighty silhouette of Uluru on the horizon, Ayers Rock Resort, home of Uluru Meeting Place, inspires delegates with high-impact events and once-in-a-lifetime experiences. New encounters include performances from cultural dancers and Indigenous dance workshop, a segment of traditional Aboriginal games, a session with the didgeridoo, spear and boomerang throwing and more. Enquire today!

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NZ's new conf centres

A MAJOR selling point at AIME for New Zealand's business events industry will be three new convention centres planned for the country.

Spearheaded by Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) and Tourism New Zealand, the marketing push will

emphasise the new infrastructure that will soon be available.

"By mid-2018 New Zealand will have more than 6000 delegate capacity across three new convention centre facilities in Auckland (3500), Christchurch (2000-2500) and Queenstown (750)," said CINZ chief executive Alan Trotter.

"Auckland's development at SKY CITY is expected to come on stream from late 2017, while Christchurch should be first off the block earlier in 2017."

Queenstown was still working through plans but would likely open about the same time, in late 2017 or early 2018, Trotter said.

Christchurch's new convention centre precinct, estimated to cost NZ\$284m, is due to be cleared for construction by August with the master-planning and development stage starting from June this year.

Queenstown has a preferred site for its new convention centre, overlooking Queenstown Bay, with council approving a convention centre master-plan.

"The new convention centres

are going to open up new opportunities for our business events industry and give us the capacity to host much larger

international gatherings."

Visitors to the 100% Pure New Zealand stand will also have the chance to sign up to attend New Zealand's own

business events expo, MEETINGS, held in Auckland in June.



Visit and win

VISIT Hamilton Island at AIME to hear about the new developments for conferences and events and go into the draw to win a Charles Heidsieck Champagne Pack or an AVPartners Event App for your next Hamilton Island event.

Hamilton Island are sharing the Whitsundays Business Events Stand (#2214) with Cruise Whitsundays.

Make an appointment to see their Business Events team on 02 9433 3333 or conference@hamiltonisland.com.au.

AIME mobile

PREPARE yourself - AIME is a'comin' to your phone.

The mobile app is now ready to download, by searching 'IBTM events' in the App or Play store, to have event schedules, personalised agendas and more at your fingertips.

The app is free to download.

MCI rallies to cause

MCI Australia has partnered with the Van Wright Foundation to deliver an inaugural gala dinner to be held on 21 Feb at the Plaza Ballroom in Melbourne's Regent Theatre.

The Foundation was set up by Phil Wright of Exponet and his wife Collene, the parents of Van Wright, who was diagnosed at 15 months with MECP2 duplication syndrome, a progressive neurological disorder.

Scientists were confident that this newly discovered disorder would be treatable with adequate funding to progress research into a cure, Phil Wright said.

The partnership means MCI Australia will lend their expertise in event management by providing strategic guidance and logistical support for the dinner.

MCI Australia managing director Stephan Wurzinger said it was fantastic to see the team showing initiative in aligning with a national charity partner that promoted a worthy cause, and encouraged thought leadership in establishing an inaugural event.

"It's great to be able to use our skill set in such a meaningful way."

To show support, visit www.vanwrightfoundation.org.

Win in The Woods

LAST year, in its first year of operation, The Woods, the Four Seasons Hotel Sydney restaurant, was runner up in Time Out's 'Best New Restaurant.'

Executive assistants and PA's can find out why this newcomer is making waves and be rewarded with a free \$100 voucher for every 10 bookings they make for lunch or dinner.

The restaurant, with a homely lounge room feel, centres on a modern Australian menu cooked using native woods as oven fuel.

Email hello@thewoodsrestaurant.com.au.

Pan Pacific deals

PAN Pacific Perth are offering special pricing with day delegate packages for meetings booked before 30 Apr.

The prices start from \$79 per person and the packages include a light lunch or buffet, a projector and screen and complimentary audio-visual.

To book, call 08 9224 7722.

Luna Park for Oz Day

When the Australia Day Lunch was held at Luna Park this year, it was the 30th anniversary the event had been celebrated at Luna Park Venues.

It was also the first time in more than 25 years that it was held at a new venue, with the move to the newly renovated Big Top proving to be an outstanding success.

Attended by up to 900 guests, the occasion provided the opportunity for guests to reflect on our achievements as a nation and dwell upon our good fortune of simply being Australian.

It was sponsored by Australia Post.

The event featured master of ceremonies Shane Jacobson who introduced a memorable program featuring speeches from Governor of New South Wales Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir and 2014 Senior Australian of the Year Peter Ford, as well as performances from Iva Davies, Darren Percival and the national anthem sung by The Wiggles.

General manager of sales James Granter expressed Luna Park's pride in playing host to such a notable event in the Australian events calendar.

Shanghai rates

DESPITE only opening a few years ago, The Jumeriah Himalayas Hotel, Shanghai, has already notched up many awards.

The hotel is a property infused with Chinese soul and Feng Shui elements.

For the conference market, the hotel has the spectacular Dagan Theatre with a total of 1,100 sqm of convertible space, the latest technology, including adjustable flooring and the ability to be divided into smaller spaces.

Additionally, it also meets the needs of various kinds of exhibitions, events and conferences.

For 2014, it has special rates, with guest rooms starting from RMB1180 per room, per night, inclusive of breakfast.

For more information email teree.george@jumeriah.com.



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