



Shining in the rain

Day one and it was clear that hosts, the Northern Territory Convention Bureau and The Ghan, had set out to impress the first dedicated MICE fam group to be on The Ghan.

Off the flight it was chocks away with Alice Springs Helicopters over the MacDonnell Ranges, to a rock-star landing at Doubletree by Hilton Alice Springs.

With a glass of bubbly in hand we went on a site inspection of the hotel prior to heading down to Lasseters Hotel to view their new rooms and progress.

After dining in new restaurant, Tali, on all things NT, such as crocodile tempura, it was on to Alice Springs Desert Park to watch their wild life bird show and learn of their groups facilities. Then it was off the beaten track with Direct Four WD Awareness for a specialised off-road four-wheel drive touring experience.

Then it was time to board the 710m long Ghan, hauling 30+ carriages for an unforgettable journey to Katherine and Darwin, travelling in luxury in the Sir John Forrest private carriage, cruising the Nitmuluk Gorge and arriving in Darwin with a monsoon in the offing.

Don't you just love the Top End, even in the rain it shines!

Jill



ASEAN backs Philippines



THE Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) secretary general Le Luong Minh (**above**) said that while the country was still reeling from the impact of typhoon Haiyan, "the trademark Filipino hospitality can never be erased by any calamity."

ASEAN said the best way to help the Philippines was to continue with leisure, business and meetings travel as normal, after consultation with Philippine authorities.

"Now is the time to visit the Philippines and make your presence count."

With this in mind, the Philippines Department of Tourism (DOT) and its Tourism Promotion Board (TPB) have launched a series of tours called Bangon Tours where 5% of net income from the trips will be allocated to NGOs supporting Haiyan relief and rebuild efforts.

The Bangon Tours slogan is, "Your Vacation Means a Lot."

The vast majority of tourism destinations have been unaffected by the typhoon Haiyan,

reported DOT Secretary Ramon R Jimenez Jr.

He told the Manila Bulletin on 15 Dec that "the affected areas did not happen to be touristic areas, except Coron," adding that destinations such as Puerto Princesa (Palawan), Bohol and Manila were not meaningfully impacted.

"Nothing really happened to Manila so we are going to recover very rapidly, even from Yolanda, from a touristic standpoint."

"When you count Bohol, the prime tourism offerings have not been affected."

All airports and airlines are operating normally, as are the popular tourism resorts.

Tourists and business travellers are advised to check the latest official travel advisories before travelling.

Today's BEN issue

BEN has two pages of editorial plus a full page from:

- AA Appointments [CLICK HERE.](#)

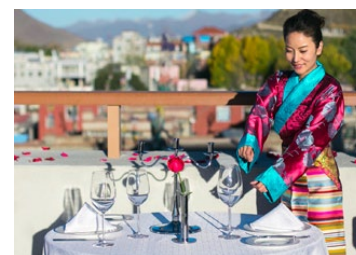
Lost horizons found

WHEN the 289 room Shangri-La Hotel, Lhasa, opens on 17 Apr, it will bring this Tibetan retreat, set on a plateau soaring 3,650m above sea level, to the highest and most spiritual region in the world.

Inspired by the mythical paradise found in James Hilton's novel, *Lost Horizon*, meeting and events organisers will be suitably inspired with its many function spaces.

These start from 81 sqm to the Grand Ballroom at 1,215 sqm - the city's largest.

A breakout area at Level 5 leads to an Outdoor Terrace, which overlooks Potala Palace and the surrounding mountain range - an ideal space for a pre-event cocktail.



The Shangri-La is a 40 minute drive from Lhasa Gonggar Airport and a 10 minute drive from the world's highest railway station.

The hotel is perfect for those wishing to explore the dramatic scenery and some of the world's most culturally significant Buddhist sites.

This includes World Heritage Sites such as the Potala Palace, Jokhang Temple, Sera Monastery and Norbulingka Palace.

DO DIFFERENT DO THE NT

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business events news

15th January 2014

A glowing fit-out



STYLISH outdoor glow furniture has been introduced on Hamilton Island, by AVPartners.

The new furniture, considered to be a natural fit for Hamilton Island's tropical setting, creates a stunning addition for dinner parties, cocktail functions and other events, providing event delegates with an inspired and leading edge event experience.

Jarum Rolfe, partner at AVPartners said, "The look on

delegate's faces when they first see the glow furniture is priceless; their jaws just drop.

"That's when you know you have created an event experience that is truly special."

The furniture, which contains LED light lamps that are controlled remotely, can change to 16 different colours, as well as fade, strobe and flash on demand.

Meeting the needs

NICE to hear that another key member of the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre, Annabel Norris, the former director of sales international, is now a director of Meeting Needs.

A support consultancy specialising in sales, research and marketing for the business events industry, it also offers project based conference management organisational support.

Norris brings to her new role 20 years of national and international experience.

Young professionals

A two-day, pre-AIME program organised by the ICCA, the Forum for Young Professionals, has expanded its stellar line-up of senior industry speakers.

C-level PCOs from Europe, Asia and Australia are confirmed with Inge Hanser from Germany and Bannie Kim from Korea joining leading Australian PCOs Roslyn McLeod, Stephan Wurzinger, Emma Bowyer and Sarah Hamm to share their knowledge.

Places are reportedly filling up fast. For program and registrations details, **CLICK HERE**.

Bumper year for LA

LOS Angeles has announced that they welcomed a record 42.2 million visitors in 2013, a 2% increase over 2012's 41.4 million, beating mid-year projections by 150,000 visitors and breaking visitation records for the third consecutive year.

The announcement was made at the California Science Center, home to the U.S. Space Shuttle Endeavour.

Mayor Eric Garcetti said the continuing, record-breaking growth and strength of tourism in Los Angeles was a "shining light" for the economy, "creating good-paying jobs for our families, benefiting local businesses, and generating significant revenue for the city that goes toward the important public services our city needs."

Total international visitation set a record with 6.2 million visitors, a 2.6% increase over 2012. China was the biggest driver of overseas visitation with a year-over-year growth of more than 21%, and solidified its position as LA's No. 1 overseas market.

Getting into the pic



THE National Portrait Gallery in Canberra has selected the Trippas White Group as their new catering partner, providing the catering for events as well as servicing the Portrait Café.

The building comprises three modern and spacious areas that can accommodate corporate and private events for up to 500 guests.

Joseph Murray, managing director of Trippas White Group said of the appointment, "We look forward to working closely with the team at the Gallery to showcase a range of spectacular events at the venue; to enhance visitor experience; and to provide a refreshed café offering."

The group's menus can be tailored for all styles of events including: all-day conferencing; breakfast and lunch functions; and formal sit-down dinners.



JUST when you thought it was getting more comfortable to fly, with more leg room, wider seats, celebrity chef menus and inflight staff that actually appear to like their job, comes the prospect of in-flight mobile phone usage.

Privacy and personal boundaries may soon be a thing of the past.

Perish the sound of the passenger next to you engaged in an inane conversation with someone on the ground, saying, "Guess where I am?" "I'm sitting in the middle of two other passengers - isn't it a hoot?"

Huffington Post offers these airplane etiquette tips if you must use the phone on your next flight, and the flight of the future:

- 1) Keep your voice down. Regardless of how and when we make phone calls on a flight, the rule of mobile phone courtesy is a 10-foot buffer between yourself and others. And refrain from taking your phone into the toilet for lengthy phone calls.
- 2) Privacy is only an illusion. Avoid working on anything confidential and remember that your seat mates and people behind you have a clear view of what you are watching; choose your entertainment accordingly.
- 3) Be mindful of neighbours. When working on your laptop or reclining your seat back, make sure those behind you can open up their own device.
- 4) Protect yourself and others from excess noise.

Invest in a pair of high-quality noise-cancelling headphones. If you are listening to music, check the volume. No one else is interested in your music playlist.

Rutledge joins ICMS

EMMA Rutledge, the Meetings & Events Association of Australia's 2013 National Event Manager of the Year, has been appointed to the position of operations manager Sponsorship & Exhibitions, at leading professional conference organiser, ICMS Australasia.

Rutledge spent eight years at the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre.

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FUN IN NUMBERS

CORPORATE GROUPS TRAVEL CONSULTANT
MELBOURNE – SALARY PACKAGE UP TO \$65K (DOE)

We are currently recruiting for an upcoming corporate group's portion in Melbourne. This well-known TMC now requires an experienced group's consultant to join their dedicated team and service large groups of up to 8000 to worldwide conferences. You will work Monday – Friday hours only and will have the chance to work in a fun team environment. If you have a minimum 18 months groups experience then we want to hear from you! Call us now.

NEW CORPORATE GROUPS/EVENTS

CORPORATE GROUPS CONSULTANT
SYDNEY – SALARY UP TO \$80K OTE

This is a great opportunity to move into the exciting world of groups and events travel. If you are looking for something different and want to move away from a traditional consulting role, this is a perfect opportunity for you to get moving. You will be responsible for booking conferences, incentive travel and corporate functions. If you have 2 years' experience in corporate travel or corporate groups travel and strong GDS skills. Apply for this great role today.

DEAL IN LARGE NUMBERS

RETAIL GROUPS CONSULTANT
SYDNEY – SALARY UP TO \$60K OTE

This exciting group's role is working for one of the global leaders in the travel industry. With guaranteed educationals and a huge amount of company benefits, it's an exciting opportunity. Prepare exciting group quotes from weddings, sporting groups, school groups and an array of other groups. You will be responsible for the end to end preparation and selling of the group bookings. If you have experience in group travel, GDS skills, apply today.

LET US ENTERTAIN YOU

ENTERTAINMENT GROUPS TRAVEL CONSULTANTS
MELB – SALARY PACKAGE UP TO \$100K (OTE)

We have a new role that is set to start ASAP for an experienced entertainment travel consultant! This well-known travel company now requires a superstar consultant to join their team and book exciting entertainment travel arrangements. From famous bands, to movie crews to production crews your days are varied and exciting! This role will see you earning the highest salary in Melbourne of up to \$100K! Don't delay; call us today to find out more.

GROUPS GALORE

TEMPORARY TRAVEL CONSULTANT
SYDNEY CBD - LONG TERM TEMP ROLE

Enjoy booking unique, specialist group touring holidays for a niche market including school and student groups and high-end private groups. Manage calls and emails from well-respected clientele creating unique worldwide, group travel bookings for various famous worldwide events. Long Term temp role with the chance to extend if successful, Monday to Friday only AND get paid weekly! The ideal candidate will have some group booking experience & GDS skills.

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