



Qantas for \$139

The announcement that Qantas will resume its direct services between Sydney and Hamilton Island from 02 Jul is good news for business event planners who now have a choice between the national carrier and the low cost Jetstar.



Whitsundays Marketing and Development Limited ceo Danial Rochford said the services were a great boost for the region and would stimulate visitation, particularly in the business travel sector.

"The announcement is of strategic importance to provide additional flights into our region and in particular to increase business class seats to the Whitsundays."

The route will provide a return service on Wed, Sun and during peak season on Sat.

Qantas has promoted the new services through sales fares, with Sydney to Hamilton Island from \$139. *Jill*

Luxury car offer

FOR the month of March all new JC Limousines bookings will enjoy a 15% discount on their services.

Based in the Hills district, the luxury limousine company provides an extensive fleet of modern hire cars in Sydney and beyond.

Whether it's a hummer for a special event, a luxury limousine airport transfer or a Maserati for an incentive, their luxury fleet is staffed by friendly, professional staff.

To book, visit <http://www.jclimousines.com.au/> quote code: Promo/mar 14.

Today's BEN issue

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

- AA Appointments [CLICK HERE.](#)

Stokehouse dropped



BENNELONG by Stokehouse is to be no more.

The restaurant at the Sydney Opera House, run by the Van Haandel family, was due to open in May, following Guillaume Brahimi's decision not to submit a tender for the site after 12 years at the helm of Guillaume at Bennelong (**BEN** 11 Nov).

However, the Sydney Opera

House and the Van Haandel Group said in a statement that they would not proceed with the Bennelong by Stokehouse restaurant, following the destruction of Van Haandel's flagship restaurant in St Kilda by fire in January.

"It was initially hoped the project would just be delayed, but it is now clear that the Van Haandel Group needs to focus on rebuilding its business in Melbourne."

Frank van Haandel said the Van Haandel group had put its heart and soul into the tender process and that achieving the status of preferred tenderer would always be one of its greatest achievements.

Opera House ceo Louise Herron said the iconic building would consider all options to deliver the best result for the restaurant space, and its goal was to bring the venue to life "day and night, seven days a week."

"This is about being open to more people, in more ways, more of the time."

\$4.50 airport parking

A NEW long-stay parking deal for domestic travellers has been launched by Sydney Airport at its Blu Emu car park.

The savings are offered by pre-booking online parking for up to 31 days for \$139 and represents a saving of two-thirds off the standard 31-day rate, or about \$4.50 a day.

"This is an excellent value deal for our customers who want the convenience of long-stay parking at a very attractive rate," said Sydney Airport general manager parking and ground transport Craig Norton.

The Blue Emu Ultimate Escape deal is available to book online and park through to 07 Dec this year.

To be eligible, customers need to book parking for a minimum of 23 days and a maximum of 31 days.

Additional days beyond a 31 day stay can be pre-booked for \$5 a day, and savings for pre-booked stays of shorter duration are also available.

For more information, visit www.sydneyairport.com.au.

What's on at MEA

DON'T forget to register online for the 2013 MEA Industry Awards, New South Wales Gala Dinner.

The dinner is being held 27 Mar at Dockside, Cockle Bay from 6.30pm.

Love is in the details.



Adam

loves being a chef.

From sourcing the freshest and highest quality local ingredients to creating a world class dining experience for our guests, no detail is unchecked to ensure the perfect food is created and plated every time. From intricate degustation menus to creating the ultimate macaroon, the award winning team at the GCCEC delivers the ultimate culinary experience.



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Disruptive Agility



WITH the theme of 'Disruptive Agility' and the major sponsorship of Tourism New Zealand and Air New Zealand, the CEO Institute Summit saw 350 ceos and senior leaders from a wide range of Australian businesses descend on Sydney in January.

This is the first year Tourism New Zealand has sponsored the summit, which provided a new avenue to target key decision makers within corporations.

Delegates spent a full day gaining insights from those who are reinventing success in their industries.

Tourism New Zealand's director of trade, PR and major events Justin Watson said the organisation was committed to marketing the country as more than just a holiday choice but also a world-class business events destination.

"We are making significant steps forward in the implementation of our business events strategy with key initiatives underway including the CEO Institute Summit.

"Our presence at the CEO Institute Summit further promotes the New Zealand business events offering using a group of key economic sectors as the focus for our message."

This additional activity comes after the government increased Tourism New Zealand's funding in order to promote New Zealand as an international business events destination.

"This year's Summit brings

together global and local thinkers where we can tell the New Zealand story and inspire companies to bring their conferences and events to New Zealand."

Pictured from left to right is Air New Zealand's Lynn Simmonds and Tourism New Zealand's Helen Bambray.

Gun it in Las Vegas

IT'S probably more of a boy thing but groups heading out to Las Vegas might like to try out the Bullets and Burgers Adventure, a private outdoor range set in the Mohave Desert.

"Our guests have the opportunity to fire a wide range of fully automatic machine guns and specialty weapons," said owner, and the man behind the project, Russ Mann.

They even have the actual firearms used in several Hollywood hits including The Terminator and Rambo II.

Here groups can have their own private range and certified ex-military firearms instructor.

Lunch is included inside the World Famous Arizona Last Stop restaurant and includes a half pound Angus Burger, fresh cut fries and soda or draft beer.

Guests depart Las Vegas by helicopter and fly through the Grand Canyon and land at the Arizona Last Stop.

The Experience concludes with a walk to the Hoover Dam Bypass Bridge - only in America!

ACTE's Council

THE Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE) has announced its Asia Regional Council for 2014.

The association's executive director Greeley Koch said the council represented more countries throughout the region and reflected a growing reliance on ACTE programs.

These include members from India, Singapore, China, and Japan.

"ACTE is changing the way companies travel, the way travel managers think, and the way companies and travellers benefit.

"We're doing it through the vision of gifted volunteers, like the professionals who are serving on the association's Asia Regional Council."

ACTE previously announced its 13th annual Asia Travel Conference would be held in Hong Kong from 06 to 07 Aug.

Find out more at www.acte.org.

Free rego in SQ

A FREE Conference Venues Sourcing and Contract Negotiation workshop is to take place at the MICE Asia-Pacific Exhibition 2014, in Singapore from 13 to 14 Nov.

The exhibition is expected to be attended by more than 3000 conference and events organisers from all around the world.

There will be free training workshops and conference sessions for event organisers that cover how to source venues for your conferences and events.

Topics will include what makes a good venue, how to negotiate with a venue, what to look for in a contract and methods used by venues to raise prices.

To register for free tickets and to exhibit, email anna.hollis@oliverkinross.com.



IT was a case of minding their bees and Q's when Traders Hotel, Brisbane sought to pollinate change and educate residents and travellers on the vital and extraordinary role of the indispensable honeybee.

The occasion was one that saw the hotel join forces with urban apiarists, Bee One Third (beeonethird.com) on the sixth floor terrace last Monday to celebrate the hotel's first harvest.

The morning included an interactive presentation by apiarist Jack Stone from Bee One Third, who explained why this initiative is so important – global bee populations are dwindling and the dire consequences of "no bees is no food; no food means no us."

Traders started with around 35,000 bees in October last year and presently, about 60,000 pollinators are coming into the winter months and expected to produce around 100 kg of honey.

Human resources manager Carol West, who heads up the project, said it was part of the hotel's Corporate Social Responsibility Program.

"It's well suited to Traders too, because neighbouring Roma Street Parklands provides bountiful foraging grounds for our bees to be able to thrive and make honey for our Traders friends and family.

"We've named our project, High Honey, I'm Home, and we're excited to see it flourish into the future."



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The Star looms large



THE largest in-house high resolution LED screen in any event space in Sydney has been installed in The Star's Event Centre.

First unveiled for Alicia Key's exclusive performance in the Event Centre in December, the LED screen was constructed to its full size with live stage content being screened to the more than 3500 concert attendees.

The modular screen can be custom built to suit a variety of event styles, creating a screen up to 10m by 5.5m comprised of 220 panels of 5mm LED.

Event Centre technical manager Ben Whatmore said for an upcoming series of events, the screen would be elongated out around the edges of the Event Centre as a scrolling ticker tape display of digital content.

"Having used the system on a variety of event styles we can now offer pre-rigged and configured LED screens in different ratios for gala dinners, conferences, concerts, meetings, sales kickoffs, product launches and many more."

The Star has also purchased multiple trusses, capable of holding the screen in a variety of formations out on Sky Terrace, adjoining the Event Centre.

In addition to the 220 panels, The Star also acquired a Christie Digital Spyder M20X processor to service the screen and it is backed by and integrates with the Event Centre's four Christie 20K projectors.

Gleeson joins Novotel

DAWN Gleeson has been appointed business development manager at the Novotel Swan Valley Vines Resort, Western Australia.

She joins the Novotel sales team at the resort, considered somewhat of an icon in the MICE industry.

Gleeson hails from South Dakota and has lived in Asia and throughout Australia for the past 10 years.

She recently moved from Melbourne where she was business development manager for Wyndham Hotel Group.

Japan's tallest hotel

THE creation of a new co-branded hotel, the Osaka Marriott Miyako Hotel, is a partnership between Marriott Hotels and Miyako Hotels & Resorts, a subsidiary of the Kintetsu Corporation.

The property is the first for the brand in Osaka and the fourth in Japan.

At 300m, the ultra-high rise complex is the tallest building in Japan, with 60 stories above ground and five stories below.

All 360 rooms, at an average of 38 sqm each, and the hotel's signature ZK restaurant, are located on the top floors of the building, offering views of Osaka and positioning the hotel as the new landmark of the city.

The rooms include six suites and 33 premium rooms.

Marriott International president and Asia Pacific managing director Simon Cooper said the company's model for growth around the world was to work with local partners who had the right local expertise, knowledge and skills, and who shared its values and culture.

Meeting room facilities include one large meeting room of 230 sqm and six small meeting rooms of 32 sqm, with WiFi access throughout.

Himalayan allure

IN a bid to enhance its Asia-Pacific portfolio, Preferred Hotel Group has partnered with Himalayas Hotels & Communities to add two lifestyle hotels.

These are the Himalayas Qingdao Hotel, a member of Preferred Hotels and Resorts, and Himalayas Nantong Hotel, a member of Preferred Boutique.

Of particular interest to incentive and meetings planners is the former, scheduled to open at the end of March.

The first lifestyle hotel in Qingdao and the flagship property of Himalayas Hotels & Communities, it is located in the seaside Laoshan district at the base of the revered Mount Lao.

Designed by Hassell Studio Australia, it features contemporary interiors inspired by the mountain and its lodestones, naturally magnetic rocks that are said to possess unique healing properties and good luck energy.

The hotel has 208 guest rooms, including 24 suites.

Amenities include an all-day dining restaurant, a lounge bar, a full-service Health Club and Spa Himalayas, and 1,000 sqm of flexible function space equipped with state-of-the-art audio and visual capabilities.

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