



Heaven on earth

WELL may you say you've been there and done that because chances



are you have not been to the InterContinental Danang Sun Peninsula Resort in Vietnam.

After enjoying the hospitality of two other outstanding IHG properties, we arrived at the resort which steps its way down Monkey Mountain and has been designed with all the hutzpah of US designer Bill Bensley.

Everything was made especially for the resort which is a masterpiece in traditional Vietnamese and modern design.

I guarantee you won't have seen a conference centre the like of which is here or a business centre that looks like an old Chinese bank.

And such is the gradient of the development, from top (Heaven), middle levels (Sky and Earth) to Sea, that two cable cars glide guests to their rooms in boat-shaped cars.

Here the lead-in room is a suite perched over the bay with outdoor dining for six and a bath that could take a sizeable number of new best friends!

As for the place de jour to conference, last November the Standard Chartered Bank did a buy-out of the resort at which ex British Prime Minister Tony Blair was guest speaker.

We've also been whisked from the resort along China Beach over the new Dragon Bridge in Army jeeps to the Cham Museum, continued on to the UNESCO-recognised and picture perfect town of Hoi An for a market tour, prior to a cooking course with world recognised foodie Miss Vy.

Jill



Events access to \$43m fund

THE Exhibition and Event Association of Australasia (EEAA) is advocating for industry access to the \$43m Tourism Demand Driver Infrastructure grants program.

The program was announced in the Federal Government's 2014-15 budget, saying it would provide \$43.1m over four years to states and territories for infrastructure that encouraged international and domestic tourism.

It is administered by Austrade, which consulted with the tourism industry on a draft definition of tourism demand-driver infrastructure and infrastructure priorities, yet to be released.

EEAA ceo Joyce DiMascio said the organisation had made a submission to Austrade that the exhibition and events industry should be given access to the funds.

Specifically, this would include making funding available for the creation of event-related

infrastructure for exhibitions and associated events, requiring a redefinition of "infrastructure" to include temporary event specific builds.

The submission also pointed out that the demand-driver infrastructure program presented a fresh opportunity to stimulate the visitor economy through business events, in particular through more visitors taking part in trade and consumer events, DiMascio said.

Other countries across Asia had targeted programs to support companies that brought business events to their cities, she said.

The EEAA had a "very positive" meeting with Austrade yesterday to discuss the idea, DiMascio said. "These events, across a range of industries, promote trade and investment as well as drive the visitor economy."

Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) ceo Peter King said the MCEC was supportive of the EEAA and the Business Events Council of Australia in working with Austade to secure funding to support the growth of the business events industry.

Great Keppel EOI open



EXPRESSIONS of Interest (EOI) are now open for potential investors in the Great Keppel Island development.

The campaign looking for investors was launched in April (BEN 02 Apr).

It has government support for the delivery of 700 villas, 350 apartments, a golf course, marina and airstrip.

This was the largest fully approved tourism infrastructure project in Australia, owner Tower Holdings said.

The project had an estimated completion value of about \$2b, Tower Holdings said.

The EOI period finished on 26 Jun.

Three pages today

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

- Accor Hotels

BESydney new brand

BUSINESS Events Sydney will launch its new brand, 'Sydney Shines', and communication campaign at IMEX 2014 in Frankfurt from 20 to 22 May.

Ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said the brand was about sharing the city's atmosphere of free thinking resulting in inspired solutions.

A sneak peek will be available to a select group of media on 20 May during Sydney's press conference, which would also include updates about the International Convention Centre and the Darling Harbour Live development, BESydney said.

WIN A STAY AT THE HOLIDAY INN



This week BEN is offering one lucky reader the chance to win 1 Night's Accommodation in a Superior Room including breakfast for 2 at the Holiday Inn Darling Harbour, courtesy of Holiday Inn Darling Harbour and JC Travel Professionals.

The prize includes:

- 1 Night's accommodation for 2 in a Superior room
- Full buffet breakfast for 2 at Shipley's Restaurant

For your chance to win, email your answer to the question below by Fri 16th May to:

comp@businesseventsnews.com.au

To win tell us in 25 words or less why you deserve this package prize?

Click here for Terms and Conditions



MEA2014 tours

MEA2014 has begun with tours of Kuala Lumpur.

The Malaysian Convention Bureau kicked off with a tour of the city centre, starting at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, where the group learned how to cook a fried banana dish and prepare Malaysian tea, before heading to Traders Hotel, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Impiana KLCC and finishing with lunch at the Grand Hyatt.

Other delegates chose a three hour bike tour of the city, which began at Kuala Lumpur Gallery, while others decided on the half day shopping tour which took in the Central Market, China Town and the craft and souvenir markets Karyaneka.



business events news

16th May 2014



crumbs!

RESEARCH has revealed not the mystery surrounding but that it is the oldest continually occupied area in Britain, having been continuously inhabited since 8820 B.C.

This comes after a recent archaeological study, 1.5 miles from Stonehenge by the University of Buckingham in the United Kingdom, unearthed flint tools and the bones of aurochs, extinct cow-like animals that were a food source for ancient people.

Carbon dating of the bones suggests that indigenous Britons who had lived in the area for thousands of years built Stonehenge.

It also submits that before erecting Stonehenge, people living in the area set up gigantic timbers between 8820 and 6590 B.C - a sort of wooden precursor to the stone monument.

Up on the roof

THE Four Seasons will open its rooftop as a last stop on a three hour photographic tour with photographer Richard Hirst.

Afterward tour participants will be welcomed back to the hotel's lower ground floor to enjoy champagne and receive an autographed print of Richard's work to take home.

Guests will stay in one of Four Seasons' signature suites – the Royal Suite, Deluxe Royal or Presidential Suite.

CLICK HERE for more.

Strictly digital

STAGING Connections, working with the InterContinental Adelaide team, is transforming the ballroom into the first fully digital ballroom in Adelaide.

The conversion enables the venue to deliver technically complex events without the need for the introduction of additional cabling or equipment.

In addition to the all fibre-optic vision system and fully digital audio system, five permanently installed projectors around the ballroom complemented by motorised screens will ensure a swift turnaround between events and convenience for event organisers.

InterContinental gm



INTERCONTINENTAL Fiji Golf Resort and Spa has a new general manager in Erik Stuebe, who will be based at the resort.

Stuebe has more than 30 years experience, having previously worked with Accor hotels and founding his own hotel management consultancy firm.

Stuebe will take on not only the general manager role but also that of area general manager for Holiday Inn Suva and Holiday Inn Resort Vanuatu

A star is born

DREAMWORLD on the Gold Coast showcased the theme world's new indigenous precinct Dreamworld Corroboree at an industry event last month.

Attended by some 100 sales and events professionals from the Gold Coast and Brisbane based hotels, it also promoted recently launched event packages.

The facility offers interactive event experiences celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and is designed to look like a 'humpy.'

Guests were shown a film about the local Yugambah people's story and met some native wildlife.

Hawai'i goes Bahamas

INCENTIVE and corporate meeting planners interested in hearing why Hawaii is a perfect destination for Australian groups are invited to Sydney's flagship Tommy Bahamas store on 24 Jun.

Organised by Tourism Portfolio in conjunction with its North American DMC Lizard IncentEvents, the two hour function kicks off at 5:30pm, where guests will enjoy some Hawaiian inspired canapés and cocktails and learn about the range of activities available.

Interested industry professionals should contact Lisha Singh on lisha@tourismportfolio.com.au.



A REAL WAKE-UP CALL!!!

Andrew Klein, director of SPIKE Presentations, presents his front line observations on conferences in a regular feature in **BEN**.

Let me confess. I've become a hotel snob. Since becoming a member of the speaking circuit almost 20 years ago, I've become accustomed to staying in really nice, cosy, comfy hotels.

Most conferences are held in luxury 4-5 star hotels, so that tends to be where the conference organisers put up their speakers. I couldn't even begin to count the number of nights I've spent staying in lovely hotels around Australia and Asia - but it's a lot.

Problem is, I can neither afford nor justify staying in the same level of accommodation when travelling with my family. Sure, I love them to bits and spoil them when I can (and if my wife is reading this, 'Darling, you deserve only the very best!'), but work is work and family holidays are family holidays and, well, do I want my own kids to turn out as spoiled as me?

I'm ashamed to admit I have developed a severe case of Extreme Hotel Snobbery. It's crept up on me slowly, but I've become accustomed to the luxury. My wife prefers the term 'spoilt rotten' which is probably more accurate. But having chatted with many of my PCO colleagues and fellow speakers, it seems I'm not the only one.

As a younger traveller, I never really minded where I stayed as long as it was clean. I didn't notice the difference between a nice hotel and an average one. Give me a bed and a TV and I was happy. I even spent most of my childhood holidays camping with my parents and brothers and never minded roughing it one bit.

But while holidaying with my own kids recently, in a clean yet middle of the road 3.5 to 4 star hotel, I realised how drastically my standards have changed.

After checking in, I could not help but notice the tiled floor, the inadequately stocked mini bar (what, no Pringles?), the lack of bathrobes and the fact that the generic shampoo containers looked, well, plain.

The pillows were simply 'normal' pillows as opposed to the countless cushy options offered by the Sheratons or Hiltons of this world. I even caught myself looking for a 'Pillow Menu' which I'd recently enjoyed in my beautiful Ayers Rock Resort Hotel at a conference gig late last year.

A pillow menu? Really? How shallow and pampered has this conference industry made me?

My wife and kids were delighted with the hotel so I kept quiet, but I wasn't happy. The hotel customer service was fine, the rooms clean and comfortable but the shower-bath combo with shower curtain just isn't what I've become accustomed to.

Hey, I'm not proud to admit any of this. However, I know that many of you who have been schmoozed on a famil, or who have enjoyed your resort bubble bath or exquisite room service, will be reading this knowingly. But generic hotel bathroom products aside, how many of you are willing to come clean?

For more information about Andrew and what he can do for you at your next conference email andrew@lunch.com.au or visit his website at www.andrewklein.com.au.



CONTACT US:

Publisher Editor Contributor/Coordinator
Bruce Piper Jill Varley Alex Walls

For advertising enquiries email Sean Harrigan & Katrina Ford:
advertising@businesseventsnews.com.au

P: 1300 799 220 F: 1300 799 221

PO Box 1010 Epping, NSW, 1710

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