



It's the real thing

HOME after being on a Vietnam famil for 10 days has to be some sort of



record and the group consensus was it was time well spent. A time that ticked the affordability, cultural and accessibility boxes and will reap rewards for the organisers; IHG, Vietnam Airlines and Destination Asia, and for the groups that follow.

There are camera moments at every turn: ladies on flower-laden bikes, men negotiating boats using push poles and the sight of traditional conical hats just visible in lush green rice fields.

Destination Asia certainly proved their on-the-ground knowledge of the country and the high regard they are held in by the fact that they have access to a number of historic function venues not accessible to any other organisation.

More and more international hotels are opening up, with InterContinental clocking up the most at four, all of which we experienced and all of which have styles and locations that cover all leisure and event markets.

It's a country with a strong sense of culture and identity, where major cities such as Ho Chi Min and Danang are bordered by rice paddies and fields, where women dress in the elegant ao dai, consisting of a slim-fitting tunic and loose fitting pants.

The group commented on the fact that they didn't have to cope with hordes of tourists, being harassed by street vendors or people tugging at their sleeve for money.

Of course, things do change; you only have to look to China – a good reason to see the real thing now. *Jill*



\$694 per delegate for NSW

BUSINESS Events Sydney has released new research at IMEX Frankfurt this week which showed the average total inscope expenditure per conference day per international delegate in NSW is \$694.

The third phase in the organisation's research, the findings provided more accurate insights into the direct association delegate expenditure contribution of business events to host destinations, ceo Lyn Lewis-Smith said **(pictured)**.

"The integrity of data is paramount and directly influences the reputation of our industry.

"We must be accountable. We must be accurate. We must be transparent.

"Above all, we must not be afraid to ask questions, to challenge the way things 'have always been done', and to strive for continual improvement."

In partnership with the University of Technology Sydney, data from the research was drawn from 12 international conferences held in Sydney from 2011 to 2013, secured with the assistance of BESydney, with expenditure calculated as that which would not have occurred without the event.

It found that most international respondents came from Europe at 35%, with the Americas in at second at 31% and Asia at 25%.

One fifth of international



delegates were accompanied to Sydney by people who did not attend the conference, with the average number of accompanying guests at 1.2, or 24 additional visitors per 100 international conference attendees.

Delegates stayed for an average of 3.8 days beyond the conference duration, with an average retail expenditure in NSW of \$343 per trip, it said.

NSW delegates had an average total inscope spend per conference day in NSW of \$319, with interstate delegates sitting at \$493, having come mainly from Victoria at 40% and Queensland at 29%.

The average retail expenditure in NSW per trip for interstate delegates was \$267.

Lewis-Smith said the research aimed to develop a robust methodology for defining and measuring impact of the industry.

"Ultimately, we wanted to establish a 'best practice' approach.

"I believe we have achieved this."

To read the report, **CLICK HERE**.

Luxperience & VA

VIRGIN Australia has partnered with Luxperience as its Platinum Partner for Luxperience 2014.

Virgin Australia will welcome and host global buyers from North America to the business exchange, with Luxperience ceo Lindy Andrews saying the airline had supported the event since its inception, recognising its ability to raise the Australia Pacific region's profile with the premium travel market.

"We are attracting more quality buyers each year and we are seeing an increased enthusiasm to seek out our region's high end products.

She said Virgin Australia was an innovative company and a brand that exemplified the value of experience.

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business events news

21st May 2014

Parkroyal's Abode



PARKROYAL Darling Harbour has confirmed its restaurant Abode will open in June.

This would be the final stage in its multimillion dollar interior redesign, started in late 2012, and was described as a "pivotal step" by Oceania area general manager Craig Bond.

"Abode is the final phase of our hotel refurbishment and allows us to operate the restaurant and bar with its own identity creating a venue that can be enjoyed by everyone."

Hotel guests had the benefit of its proximity whilst the hotel also engaged with tourists, passers-by and local businesses in the Darling Harbour precinct, he said.

TFE's rewarding offer

BOOK before 30 Jun for business events held before 31 Jul with Toga Far East Hotels (TFE) and save 15% on a day delegate package.

In addition, join their free 'Events with Benefits' program and receive added benefits that include an up to \$500 gift certificate for the booker, the 15th delegate free, up to \$1,000 rebate off the next function and a free coffee upgrade.

To find out more email meet@tfehotels.com.

Blackman offer

THE Blackman Hotel in Melbourne has a special offer.

Corporate events booked at its restaurant and function venue The Willows will receive a free overnight stay at the hotel.

The Willows can cater for 10 to 150 guests seated and more than 200 standing.

Email events@thewillows.com.au for more.

NZ targets drinkers

AIR New Zealand and NZ Winegrowers have announced a Memorandum of Understanding which will see them work together to actively promote NZ as a wine tourism destination.

The move strengthens the longstanding relationship between the two, with Air NZ having been the naming rights sponsor of the Air New Zealand Wine Awards for almost 30 years.

A range of initiatives to promote New Zealand wine will be undertaken in North America and Asia, including a series of consumer and trade events in China, Canada and the USA as well as working together to host international food and wine media on NZ familiarisations.

Accor ADL addition

ADELAIDE'S the Playford hotel has become a part of the Accor network, with the family run property joining the group's boutique MGallery brand.

The Playford Adelaide is the eighth MGallery in Australia, and is located on North Terrace on the doorstep of the city's arts, culture and entertainment precinct.

A celebration 'City Getaway' package is on offer, with a free upgrade and a \$50 F&B credit - see www.theplayford.com.au.



IN recent years, Sydney International Airport has introduced some out of the ordinary dining options, including the Bambini Wine Room and the Seafood Bar - Caviar House & Prunier.

Setting the bar a touch higher, CNN reports that celebrity chefs are using airports for their new restaurant openings, most notably Heston Blumenthal, who will open The Perfectionist's Café at London Heathrow Airport's Terminal 2 on 04 Jun.

Stumbling blocks for these culinary offerings are rules that prohibit gas being used in the kitchens, while in most airports, food suppliers have to go through security clearance.

Gordon Ramsay opened Plane Food at Heathrow's Terminal 5 in 2008 and in Munich Airport, there's Airbrau with a beer garden attached to an on-site brewery, where tours can be organised.

Elsewhere in Germany, Top Air in Stuttgart Airport is Europe's only Michelin-starred airport restaurant where they have a seven-course menu for €132.

Perhaps we can expect to see a Luke Mangan, Neil Perry or Guy Grossi restaurant popping up in an airport near you too?

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Aussie IMEX presence



TOURISM Australia and 14 business events industry groups will be on show at IMEX Frankfurt this week.

Held from 20 to 22 May, the exhibition would give the delegation the opportunity to showcase what Australia had to offer in the conference, incentive and association markets, Tourism Australia said.

The delegates come from eight destinations across Australia, including Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth.

Tourism Australia said the latest Global Business Travel Association report had found that five of the major business travel markets - the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain - would increase their business travel spending, which it said was a key indicator that the market was on the rise.

According to recent research commissioned by the organisation, Australia's global reputation as a place to do business was an increasingly

important factor when choosing it as a business events destination, performing strongly against other destinations in factors such as safety and security, as well as the quality of business event facilities, accommodation and local cuisine.

Tourism Australia business events general manager Penny Lion said experiences, destinations and world-class food and wine were some of the main reasons Australia consistently ranked as a preferred business events destination.

"We are continually investing in our world-class business events capabilities to uphold our reputation for excellence, and we are proud to showcase some of the very best Australia has to offer at IMEX Frankfurt.

"The UK and Europe have traditionally been strong markets for Australia's business events sector, so it is pleasing to see the region's key confidence indicators starting to improve."

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JW Marriott HK deal

THE JW Marriott Hotel Hong Kong has released a special meeting accommodation deal, valid for groups visiting the property from now until 15 Sep.

The 602 room property has more than 12,000 sq ft of meeting space and the offer includes complimentary buffet breakfast for delegates as well as one room upgrade to the next available category, one room upgrade for the meeting organiser for every 30 attendees and welcome coffee and tea with cookies in the morning.

Valid for bookings of a minimum of 10 rooms per night - jwmarriott.hk@marriotthotels.com.

New IACC course

THE International Association of Conference Centres (IACC) Americas has launched a new workshop called 'Innovative Conference Centre Design'.

The workshop aimed to present and share the innovations of IACC members worldwide.

Members from Japan, Canada and the UK contributed, with topics covering the audio-visual experience, the conference centre experience and the meeting experience.

IACC ceo Mark Cooper said next year the organisation would look to provide an Innovations Hub within its exhibition area of the conference.

Gray's Say

Peter Gray, an independent Motivation Consultant, presents a regular *Business Events News* feature on current issues in the Conference and Incentive industries.



DO WE NEED QUITE SO MUCH CHOICE?

IMEX, the global conference and incentive trade show, is now on in Frankfurt. In my experience, this is the best of all the C&I trade shows that populate our diaries. Ray Bloom, Paul Flackett and co. learned their trade with EIBTM, then located in Geneva, before Reed Exhibitions acquired it. The lessons they learned have earned them and the team that now run IMEX and IMEX America a great reputation. But how many trade shows can any of us attend in a year? How many trade shows can hotels, conventions bureaux, airlines, DMCs and the host of other suppliers that make up the C&I industries afford to support? Fifteen or so years ago there were just five major trade shows which, if a buyer attended them all, would give them a good picture of what was available world-wide. These were EIBTM (pre-Reed), AIME, IT&ME, Confex and WTM. The last time I investigated the number of such shows, there were twenty or so that I knew about and probably a good many more besides. This doesn't include 'domestic' trade shows such as Meetings which is an excellent showcase for New Zealand products, both in terms of its organisation and the exhibitors who have consistently shown that they know their products and how it relates to the buyers the show attracts.

AIME this year seemed to have come out of the doldrums into which it had descended in previous years and, as one of the 'staple' C&I shows, will hopefully strive to be better still in future years. Reed Exhibitions obviously has

an eye to where conference and incentive clients are travelling these days. With EIBTM (Global), CIBTM (China), GIBTM (Arabian Gulf), AIBTM (USA) and now IBTMs in India and Africa, there's probably only South America left, geographically, that's not covered. Then there's the raft of IT&CM trade shows - IT&CM Asia, China and India - now owned by TTTG Events based in Singapore. Of all the trade shows I must say that IT&CMA was the worst I have experienced. The last time I attended one, it's organisation was appalling. The organisers still insist on charging a fee to attend, which they say will be refunded if a buyer fronts up to all his or her appointments; less, of course, administration fees, bank charges and a host of other deductions. Frankly, I don't need the hassle and so I no longer attend IT&CMA.

Whilst competition is always healthy, the cost of supporting all these shows has to be borne by someone. I feel sure that with the state of some of the world's economies, some of these shows will fall by the wayside because they are just too expensive at which to exhibit and return on investment is better elsewhere. I wonder how many of the twenty or so shows I can list now will still exist in five years time?

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