



Officially speaking

WHEN it comes to Government-run initiatives in Vietnam, there appears to be two answers to any question: the official answer and the unofficial.

So when I asked our guide when the new Long Thành International Airport, located about 40 km northeast of Ho Chi Minh City, would open, he smiled and said, "Do you want the official or the unofficial version?"

Officially, I learnt that its completion date is 2020, when around US\$10b will have been spent.

The very modern Tân Sơn Nhất International Airport we flew into on our Vietnam Airlines, IHG and Destination Asia famil was only completed in 2007 with a capacity of 25m passengers a year.

However in 2010, expectations were revised that it would be overloaded by 2015, so a bigger airport was needed.

Tân Sơn Nhất has its origins in the early 1930s with the French colonial government.

Later, during the Vietnam War (only ever referred to in Vietnam as the 'American War'), it became one of the busiest military airbases in the world.

Even today, you can still see the American Nissen aircraft hangars.

When Long Thanh International Airport is completed, Tân Sơn Nhất will become a domestic terminal; well, that's the official version! *Jill*



Darling new precinct



AN integral part of the NSW Government's 20 hectare revitalisation of Darling Harbour has received planning approval for its first three stages.

The new neighbourhood in an area south of Pier Street will be known as Darling Square and will include study spaces and homes for up to 1,000 students, 20,000 sqm of modern campus style offices plus an incubator hub, 1,400 apartments with district, harbour and CBD views, new shops, cafes and restaurants, all connected by new streets and laneways and centred on a new boulevard and public square.

Described as Sydney's "most walkable" new precinct, it is well connected to the light rail, buses, Central Station and Town Hall.

There will also be electric vehicle spaces, car share bays and bicycle bays while 25% of the site will be public space, about the same size as the section of Martin Place between George and Pitt Streets.

Work is expected to start later

this year with the first students, residents and tenants moving in during 2017.

The first key stage of work will be the demolition of the car park, while the Sydney Entertainment Centre will remain open until the end of 2015.

CLICK HERE for a fact sheet about Darling Square.

New CINZ ceo

CONVENTIONS and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ) has a new ceo in Sue Sullivan.

Sullivan has more than 20 years' experience in sales, marketing and operations, both in NZ and Australia, in visitor attractions and transport, and was most recently general manager sales for Tourism Holdings Limited.

She has also served for six years on the board of the Tourism Industry Association NZ.

She will begin as ceo on 03 Jun and will be with the CINZ team at MEETINGS 2014 from 17 to 19 Jun in Auckland.

Three pages today

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

- Langham Hospitality Group

A fine balance



AS the first stage of the multi-million dollar refurbishment to the InterContinental Wellington continues, guests now have the option of upgrading to the new Club InterContinental guest rooms as well as access to the personalised service of the Club InterContinental Lounge (*pictured* above).

The first stage saw a newly defined deluxe guest room category open with 84 rooms just prior to Christmas and the second phase opened last week.

The 64 deluxe club rooms were ideal for the corporate traveller, InterContinental Wellington director of sales and marketing Geoff Naumann said.

The final stage of the hotel's remodel is a total refurbishment of the Lobby Lounge, Chameleon Restaurant and meeting rooms.

The new-look InterContinental Wellington is scheduled to be completed by the end of August.

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business events news

26th May 2014

\$20m Ibis Styles Perth

ACCOR has announced a new-build Ibis Styles in Perth, following the signing of a management agreement with Rehawk Property Group.

The group will develop the hotel in East Perth, with a construction build of more than \$20m.

Accor said it would be the first new-build economy hotel development in the city in more than 10 years.

The hotel would be located on Adelaide Terrace and would have 228 guest rooms in 15 levels, featuring a meeting room, business corner and gymnasium,



with an expected completion date of July 2015, Accor said.

Chief operating officer Simon McGrath said the economy sector was rapidly changing in the country.

"Ibis Styles East Perth will respond to the growing demand for quality product at a genuine economy price and it will cater to the increasing number of travellers seeking wallet-friendly travel experiences.

"A new build Ibis Styles in East Perth will give the brand even greater visibility in the Australian market."

Howarth for The Star



RICHARD Howarth has been appointed general manager, sales, marketing & entertainment to lead The Star's team of entertainment, tourism and hospitality professionals.

Howarth brings knowledge and experience to the role from a number of industries and has held senior roles with the Sportingbet Group Australia (now William Hill UK), Telstra and the Coca Cola Company.

Barossa Valley first

RELAIS & Châteaux's first hotel in the Barossa Valley, The Louise, comes as the group celebrates its 60th year.

The Louise's 15 suites have indoor and outdoor private spaces, bathrooms with spa tubs and panoramic views over the vineyards, and the hotel features a modern private boardroom for small groups of up to about 24 delegates.

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Luxperience EOIs

LUXPERIENCE Enterprises is inviting Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from destinations in the Australasia Pacific region to host Luxperience 2015 and 2016.

Destinations would need to prove they had the infrastructure to host more than 700 delegates at the three day event and that they understood the value and opportunities afforded by the international luxury and experiential travel market, as well as a base of appropriate product to showcase, Luxperience Enterprises said.

It was preferable that the same destination would be used for both years, the organisation said, with an announcement for Luxperience 2015 made at the end of this year's event, held from 31 Aug to 03 Sep.

The organisation said last year's event, held in Sydney, had produced projected travel bookings over the succeeding 12 months worth more than \$70m.

The Asia Pacific region was fast growing and a "significant" new source market for outgoing high end travel, it said.

Expressions of Interest should be sent to Luxperience ceo Lindy Andrews at lindy.andrews@luxperience.com.au.

Capella SNG special

CAPELLA Singapore has a special meetings and events package, valid for bookings held before 30 Jun 2015.

For SGD\$599 (approximately A\$517) per person per night, the booking includes accommodation in a premier garden room, complimentary WiFi in guest and function rooms and a personalised Conference Services manager and personalised butler for the event.

As an added incentive for an event booking, the hotel will give a complimentary room for the event organiser during the event.

Email noelene@enticingasia.com for more.



IN just one week, the Royal International Convention Centre (Royal ICC) chefs fed more than 50,000 people at events including the prestigious PwC post budget breakfast.

It was the Centre's busiest week since opening 15 months ago.

Truly the hunger games, guests attending various events managed to consume more than 7000 eggs, 3000 rashers of bacon, 3000 Danish pastries and 600 Western Queensland grass fed eye filets.

Venue sales & marketing gm Sue Hocking said she was blown away by the team's effort.

"This has been our busiest week yet and it couldn't have run more smoothly."

Royal ICC executive chef Sean Cummings said a selection of menus was served over the week, ranging from an upmarket French three course meal for 800 guests to breakfast for 2200 guests.

Luna-tics in Uluru



IF the stars align for those planning to conference at Uluru in August, you could be there when All-sky Astrophysics (CAASTRO) holds an Uluru astronomy weekend from 22 to 24 Aug.

What's more, the infectious enthusiastic scientific personality Dr Karl Kruszelnicki will host this celebration of the outback night sky.

Event highlights include 'Stellar Sounds of Silence', a bush tucker inspired dining experience followed by an aperitif and guided tour of the outback night sky with Kruszelnicki in dialogue with prominent astronomers.

[CLICK HERE](#) for more.

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Business Events News is part of the Travel Daily group of publications which also include: Travel Daily, Cruise Weekly & Pharmacy Daily.

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