



Wow factor

WE CAN become a bit blasé in this industry about the array of quality banqueting and conference spaces that are available, yet be constantly on the look out for something new to inspire clients or a venue that offers something out of the ordinary.



I am sure there are many readers who will be familiar with what we see here as a new discovery but I'm betting there are an equal number who haven't seen or even heard of Miramare Gardens in Terrey Hills, 25 minutes from the Sydney CBD.

This expansive function centre, whose stand at AIME 2015 won best environmental award, caters for events of all sizes and up to 986 people in its grand ballroom.

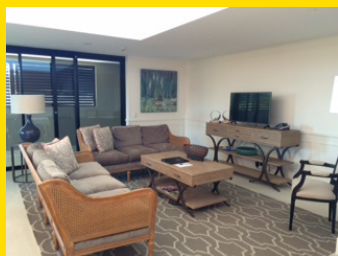
There's a total of 10 versatile function rooms, acres of manicured gardens set with bubbling fountains, clipped hedges, magnolia trees and vast lawns where corporate dinners and Rolls Royce launches have been held.

Adding to this is a wine cellar for wine dinners, a clubby cigar lounge, a staircase that sweeps down to the function rooms and a new on-site 51-room hotel.

What's more, a christening party for 250 plus guests is bringing in a circus for the occasion and should the weather be adverse, it will be transferred into the 1,250 sqm grand ballroom with its floor to ceiling glass overlooking the gardens.

Talk about impressive!

Jill



Pictured is the hotel's Penthouse Suite.

Business events on the radar

THE Association of Australian Convention Bureaux (AACB) has put the business events sector on the radar of the Backbench Tourism Committee.

Following a meeting at the end of last month with Federal Member for Bennelong John Alexander (pictured left), AACB executive director Andrew Hiebl (pictured right) said as part of the organisation's strategic plan to raise the profile of the business events sector, he had met with Alexander.

The Committee's remit was to look at opportunities to leverage tourism, and previously, its focus had been major performing arts events, he said.

However Alexander could "immediately" identify how business events could fit into this structure, Hiebl said, and how the sector could be leveraged, particularly around pre and post touring.

The AACB had also met with the staff from the Minister for Small Business' office this year to raise awareness of the sector, he said.

The more people in government



who knew about the importance of the sector, the more support there would be when decisions were made affecting business events, Hiebl said.

Brisbane conf nos up

LORD Mayor of Brisbane Graham Quirk said two conferences to be held this month have exceeded their attendance target.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists World Congress 2015 and the IEEE International Conference on Acoustics, Speech and Signal Processing 2015 were expected to see more than 3,900 delegates and exhibitors combined, exceeding the target of 3,000, which Quirk said was a "brilliant win" for conference organisers, who worked closely with the Brisbane Convention Bureau to boost the number of delegates.

The conferences were expected to pump almost \$12m into the city's economy.

Choc & wine tour

A NEW Melbourne tour on offer from I Heart Melbourne Tours and Chocoholic Tours features nine chocolate tastings and lunch at a Yarra Valley winery.

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Sunshine Coast flights to boost biz

INCREASED direct flights from Auckland to the Sunshine Coast are expected to see the region's conference and incentive business grow, Sunshine Coast Destination Limited (SCDL) ceo Simon Ambrose has said.

Air New Zealand and Virgin Australia have added a summer season from 13 Dec to 28 Feb 16, with 76 return flights over the 2015-16 season, up from 42 in 2014, SCDL said.

This would boost total seats available by 81% on the route.

Ambrose said the increased flights and longer leads times would give the organisation the potential to attract more business events, from small group incentives to larger scale conferences.

SCDL is set to launch a marketing campaign in New Zealand this month, which it says is its largest to date.

Hawaii's venues and experiences on show



TOURISM Portfolio and DMC partner Lizard IncentEvents took four Australasian incentive and events planners on a tour of Hawaii's high-end experiences available for Australasian groups.

The six day famil, which started on 06 Mar, saw the group take in Starwood Hotels and Resorts, including the Westin Moana Surfrider and the St Regis Princeville Resort.

The four planners also took part in a Mai Tai Bar cocktail demonstration and a helicopter tour around Kauai island (pictured).



business events news

10th April 2015



NOW for something that would certainly make travelling between Europe and America for conferences easier, if somewhat sci fi - a proposed road is part of an ambitious project to create the world's longest superhighway, spanning half the circumference of the globe.

Stretching about 19,956 km from the western edge of Russia to the Bering Strait where the country nudges Alaska, it would link into existing road networks in Europe and Asia.



It's a scheme that is seen as a way of turning Russia into a global transportation hub, so revitalising the Russian economy and attracting new tourism, reports *The Siberian Times*.

Vladimir Fortov, the head of the Russian Academy of Science, put forward the uncosted plan, which has been dubbed the 'Trans-Eurasian Belt Development'.

The publication reported that Fortov told president Vladimir Putin the project, while expensive, would solve many problems in the development of the vast region.

Australia currently has the longest continuous road in the world, with Highway One, which runs around the entire country and spans some 14,500 km.

Tourism Oz Cairns briefing

REGISTRATIONS are open for Tourism Australia's half day tourism industry briefing in Cairns, which will give an overview of the organisation's plans for 2015-16.

The free event on 23 Apr is set to be held in the Hilton Hotel and will include presentations on Tourism Australia's plans for aquatic and coastal experiences.

CLICK HERE to register.

Their just desserts



SHOOTING the breeze on 27 Mar and enjoying an indulgent high tea were a small group of high-end business events members in the Sidney Nolan Wine Room at the Langham Sydney.

There for some pampering courtesy of the Sunlux Collection and Dragonfly Africa, talk turned to life, work and travel while hands freed of their champagne flutes and shoulders divested of their cares were variously massaged.

It was described by Unique Tourism Collection's Svetlana Jovanovic as not a bad way to wrap up a week.

"They deserve it."

Pictured from left is Michael Walker, Directions; Caroline Gair, CiEvents; Renita Collins, Axis Events; Marissa Fernandez, DMS; Colette Bains, The Conference Room; Svetlana Jovanovic, The Unique Tourism Collection.

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Just rewards



WHEN property investment company Ironfish took 95 of its high performers on a Fiji incentive, it was so it could immerse them in true Fijian culture.

Ironfish business manager Bree Morris said the incentive with Sigatoka River Safari aboard custom-built safari jet boats visited authentic Fijian villages.

"One of the things that struck our organisation was the friendly and welcoming nature of the Fijian people, particularly those who go without many of the things that we are lucky enough to take for granted each and every day."

The outcome led Ironfish to donate A\$2,500 to each of the villages visited, Mavua and Tubairata.

Welly wins World Care Congress

WELLINGTON'S TSB Bank Arena and Conference Centre will see more than 400 delegates arrive in November next year when it hosts the fourth World Congress on Integrated Care.

The three day conference was expected to bring in about NZ\$580,000 to the country.

Business Events Wellington, General Practice NZ, Tourism NZ and Positively Wellington Venues collaborated on the bid, with New Zealand up against China and Qatar, a spokesperson for Positively Wellington Venues said.

Ben on BEN



Each month Business Manager for inPlace Recruitment, Ben Carnegie, writes his observations from the recruiter's perspective to help job hunters find the perfect job.

Ben has over 15 years working in five star hotels and the MICE industry and has worked on some of Australia's biggest events.

Culture Fit

CULTURE fit is often 90% of the reason why one candidate may be selected for a particular role over another.



Ensuring that you don't 'rock the boat' by bringing in a bad egg is something that hiring managers take very seriously. If your company is in a position to keep a diverse work force including age, sex and nationality, finding new staff members may be easier than for businesses that are dominated by a particular 'type'.

As an employer, the benefits you gain from having a diverse work force can be immense, as you have access to opinions from all walks of life as opposed to a narrow view of only a small portion of your market.

Long term, your business will do better and in my experience, your employees tend to bond better as there is an organic level of respect and a learning environment that leads to open minded employee behaviour.

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