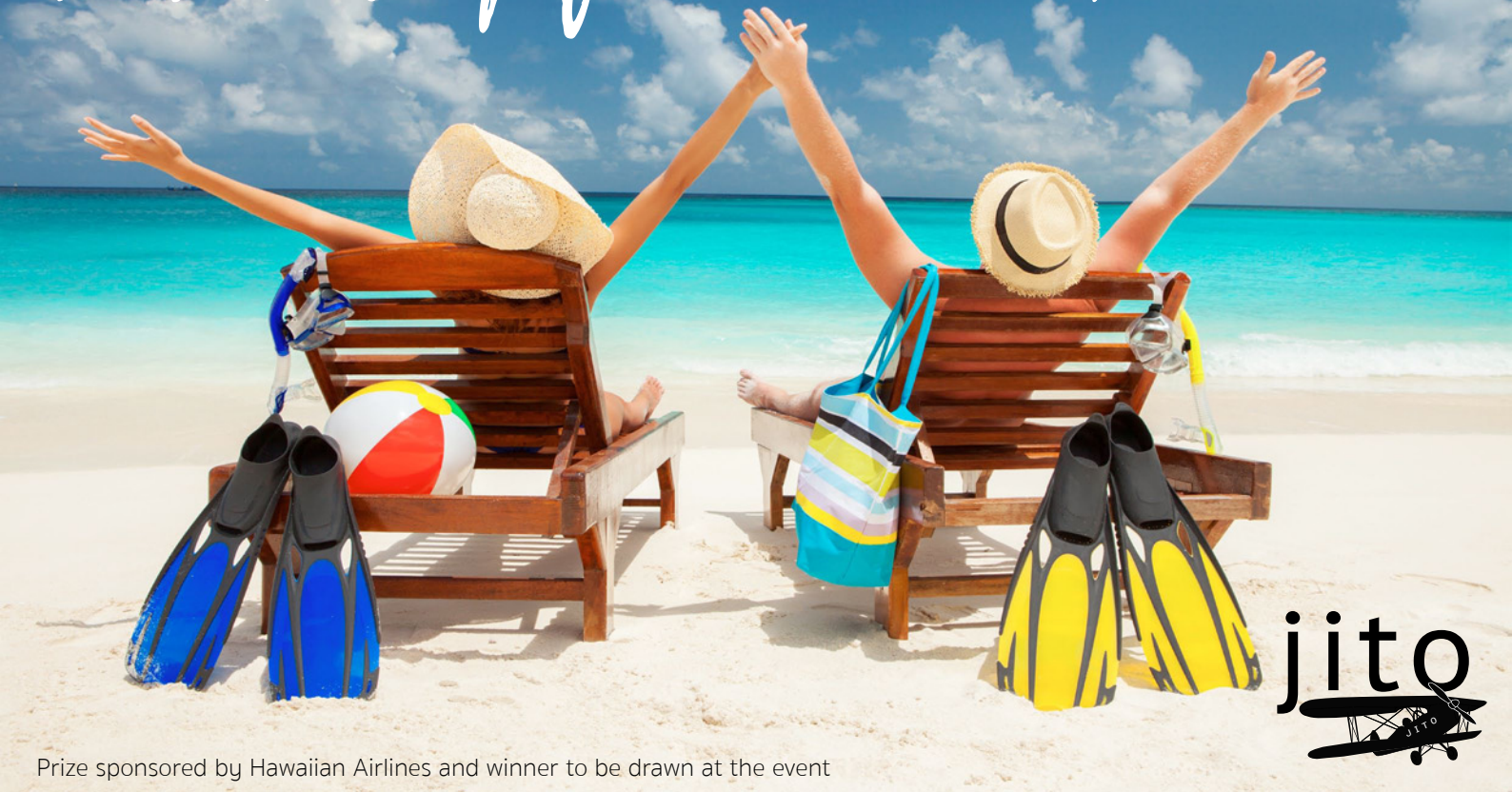


Win a trip for two to Honolulu



Prize sponsored by Hawaiian Airlines and winner to be drawn at the event



Industry Networking Night

This event is a traditional mix of complimentary food, drinks and networking

Following on from the success of the Executive Networking Night, Travel Daily Group and jito have partnered with some key industry players to bring you a new Industry Networking Night.

This event is open to anyone in the Travel & Hotel Industry at all levels. RSVP early - attendance will be confirmed based on availability. Limited to 100 guests.

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Indulged WEDNESDAY

finds **BEN** in Banyan Tree Lang Co, Vietnam, after travelling from



Singapore by ferry to Bintan Island for a brief stay at Banyan Tree Bintan, where monkeys chattered and geckos chirped in the canopy that surrounded our luxury Seaview Villas, each with its own spa pool perched over the South China Sea.

Here, we were indulged with a mesmerising spa treatment in Banyan's Spa that looks out onto the natural beauty of sea, rocks and old growth trees.

Later we dined by firelight next door at Angsana Bintan Resort, Banyan Tree's sister property, in a diaphanous tent on the beach.

It was an evening that provided an insight into how well the two properties could be used for corporate groups and small incentives.

After this taste of indulgent living, we returned yesterday to the Bintan ferry to cross back to Singapore and a Silk Air flight to Danang to this new Banyan Tree resort, which look like something out of a Vietnamese picture book.



And, if we thought our Villas in Bintan were something special, these lavishly appointed villas with their spacious pool terraces, set in lushly tended private gardens, takes luxury spa living to another level.

Next door to the Banyan Tree is the new and very elegant Angsana Lang Co resort - see **page three** for more.

But wait, there's more! Jill Visit the **BEN** Facebook page for more photos at: www.facebook.com/BusEvNews.

NTIA voting now open

VOTING for the Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) 2015 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA) is now open.

There are six nominees for Best Business Events Travel Agency, including last year's winner, cievents, and winner in 2012 and 2013, Event Travel Management.

Other nominees are American Express Global Business Travel, CPE Travel, Platinum Event Solutions and Impact Organisation - Events.

AFTA ceo Jayson Westbury said the amount of entries for the 2015 Awards was at an "all time high", with a record number of nominations received across the 37 categories.

Westbury told **BEN** business events was an important component of the broader travel industry and recognition helped these businesses improve and grow.

The awards are set to be held on 18 Jul at the Dockside Pavilion Darling Harbour, marking a move from the Hordern Pavilion at Moore Park, where the event was held for the past two years.

Westbury said with the event space changes underway in Sydney and with AFTA's eye "firmly on the prize" to move to the International Convention Centre Sydney in 2017, the organisation had thought it



appropriate to be within the precinct of what would be the new home for NTIA in the future.

The Pavilion had been unable to accommodate the NTIA's dates, but AFTA was "very happy" with the decision to move to Darling Harbour, he said.

About 1,200 attendees are expected this year, down from 1,300 last year (**BEN** 26 Mar), due to venue size, Westbury said.

Tickets were yet to go on sale, but with sponsor allocation, the awards were "well on the way to a full house," Westbury said.

Voting closes on 13 Apr.

CLICK HERE for more.

Tender how-to

THE Tendering for Government Business workshop will be held again for QLD businesses.

To be held in Bowen on 25 Mar, the \$50 workshop would help businesses learn how to develop and submit tenders for government business, the Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning said.

CLICK HERE to read more.

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Today's issue of **BEN**

Business Events News today has three pages of news, a front full page from **jito** plus a full page from (**click**)

- Tangalooma Island Resort

Starwood to sell three Fiji properties

STARWOOD Hotels and Resorts has listed the Sheraton Fiji Resort, the Westin Denarau Island Resort and Spa and the Denarau Golf and Racquet Club for sale.

CBRE Hotels said it had been appointed as selling agent for the properties, which would be offered via an international marketing campaign.

Starwood global development president Simon Turner said the sale was in line with the company's asset-light strategy, and it would have a "long-term presence" in Fiji through ongoing management of the properties.

Tourism fastest growing sector?

TOURISM could be the fastest growing sector in the country in the next 10 years, measured by overnight visitor expenditure, Minister for Trade and Investment Andrew Robb has said.

Tourism was already Australia's largest services export, and growing the sector would require a "huge injection of capital," the Minister said.

More air capacity, a competitive visa system and new hotel rooms were needed to see tourism grow, Robb said, with several initiatives announced already including a pilot program for online Chinese visas (**BEN** 19 Dec 14).

Robb highlighted China as a market of opportunities for Australia, saying by 2020, the number of Chinese travellers on an international holiday would double from 2014's 100m.

"So the opportunities are immense but they will not fall into our laps."



business events news

18th March 2015

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crumbs!

HEADS up, event organisers and tour operators in the Great Barrier Reef region - Tourism Australia has partnered with Atlantic Productions to produce a three part documentary with Sir David Attenborough.

Announced at Destination Australia yesterday, the doco was expected to air next year, Tourism Australia said, and was part of a push to promote the country's sea and coastal experiences.

Time to practice your best Attenborough impersonations and brush up on the legendary documentarian by watching videos like **THIS ONE** of him talking to a blind baby rhino.

We can only hope a rat-eating plant is discovered in the area, and named after him, as it was in the Philippines - **CLICK HERE to read more.**

\$610m Festival Plaza revamp

THE Adelaide Festival Plaza precinct will undergo a \$610m redevelopment which will see two levels of restaurants, cafes and retail behind Parliament House, a redesign of Hajak Plaza and 4,700 sqm of public space.

The SA government has committed \$180m in an agreement with the Walker Corporation, which would commit \$430m, Tourism SA said.

Riverbank Authority chair Andrew McEvoy said the development would "perfectly compliment" other government-funded facilities such as the Adelaide Convention Centre.

The redevelopment would see the Adelaide Oval properly linked to the Riverbank, Festival Centre and Adelaide Casino, Premier Jay Weatherill said.

SA Minister for Tourism Leon Bignell said the Oval was a "great convention space" and the state had done "quite a bit of building" around this area at AIME (**BEN 23**

Feb).

The Festival Centre would see a \$90m upgrade, including renewal of its foyers and opening of its northern side to better link to the Riverbank, as well as technical and equipment upgrades, Tourism SA said.

CLICK HERE to read more.

Adina set to open



ADINA Apartment Hotel Sydney Airport is set to open later this month.

The property would consist of 123 serviced apartments as well as two meeting rooms with capacity to host up to 100 delegates, TFE Hotels said.

New Sydney event

THE Intermedia Group will hold a new event show called Events Uncovered in Sydney.

Set to be held on 07 Jul at The Argyle, The Rocks, the show would feature 25 exhibitors and would be free for attendees, who would need to pre-register, spokesperson Ben Curtis said.

The event would give suppliers a way to showcase in a new format

He said based on feedback and other events, fun and less formal formats were more conducive to doing business, so the same could be expected of Events Uncovered.

First 4 Vibe Marysville

VIBE Hotel and Conference Centre Marysville held its first residential conference from 26 to 27 Feb for Ericsson, hosting 90 delegates.

Its opening was hailed as a "major step" towards Marysville once again becoming the state's most popular regional tourism destinations (**BEN 04** Feb).

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BreakFree on Cashel gm appointed



GRAEME Back has been appointed general manager of BreakFree on Cashel.

Slated to open in April, the 263-room reconstructed Christchurch hotel closed after the 2011 earthquakes (**BEN** 23 Jan).

Back would start this month, leaving his position of general manager of Beqa Lagoon Resort in Fiji, BreakFree said.

Vivid Sydney expands into two new areas

VIVID Sydney will this year expand into Chatswood and Chippendale.

The festival's program was announced today, which Destination NSW said was its biggest yet.

NSW Premier Mike Baird said there would be twice as many shows at the Laser Fountain Water Theatre, while more events were planned for the University of Sydney and Pyrmont and The Star.

To be held this year from 22 May to 08 Jun, last year's festival saw \$41.3m injected into the state economy, the Premier said.

A record 1.43m attendees saw the festival last year, Destination NSW said.

CLICK HERE for more.

Accor NZ meetings and events site



ACCOR NZ has launched a meetings and events website that covers New Zealand and Fiji.

The company said the site allowed organisers easy access to its conferencing venues in hotels, with location, event type and capacity searchable parameters.

Accor NZ, Pacific Islands and Japan senior vp Garth Simmons said the site came as the industry relied more on the internet for research.

CLICK HERE to access the site.

Angsana takes two

ANGSANA Lang Co Resort in Central Vietnam, just over an hour from Da Nang International Airport and incorporated within the Laguna Lang Co complex, has released a 'Two's on Us' special meetings and incentive package of creative inclusions for stays of two to three nights.

The resort, with incentive facilities for groups from 10 to 200 guests, has a three kilometre beachfront site spanning 280 ha, and a wide variety of recreational facilities including an 18-hole Sir Nick Faldo championship golf course, award winning spa treatments and tours to UNESCO World Heritage sites of Hue, Hoi An and My Son.

For more information or to book, email

sales@mhmarketing.com.au.



Getting to Know: The Great Ocean Road

by: Jill Varley

THIRTY minutes out of Melbourne on the AIME Great Ocean Road post fam, 10 event and meeting planners were enjoying high tea at the Italianate 1870s mansion, The Mansion Hotel and Spa at Werribee Park. This former seminary, with purpose-built conference facilities for up to 100-theatre or banquet style, also offers extensive formal gardens for outdoor events. The bonus is, it is next door to Shadowfax Winery and Vineyard, with additional venue options, and the Werribee Open Range Zoo.

From here, the tour with Greyhound Coaches, wired for free WiFi, wound its way along this wild and windswept Southern Ocean road, through Apollo Bay to beachside Lorne for an overnight stay.

Here the planners were split between Cumberland Lorne Resort and Mantra Lorne, both with extensive conference facilities.

Cumberland Lorne, with its apartment style accommodation, has the largest purpose-built conference centres in Victoria, including an auditorium seating up to 400 people.

That evening Mantra Lorne, catering for up to 600 delegates in seven different venues and undergoing a \$1m renovation ending in May, hosted an Argentinian-inspired dinner on its seagrass lawn.

Next morning, Big Stick Adventures' Brett Hollis, whose company specialises in customising incentive and corporate team building activities, escorted the group farther down the coast to the craggy limestone stacks of the Twelve Apostles (make that seven) with lunch on the beach at spectacular Loch Ard Gorge. After, airport-bound, there was a brief stop at the Geelong Beach front after this uniquely Victorian experience.



Business Events News is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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