

EDITOR: BONNIE TAI



Today's issue of BEN

Business Events News today has two pages of news.



■ **A MOTHER** and son duo have come up with a novel way to keep wine fresh after it's opened: by slipping a wine condom over the neck.

Marketed as "protection for wine lovers", inventors Mitch Strahan and Laura Bartlett say the idea was born after they arrived home with a half empty wine bottle and no clue how to seal it.

The pair later developed the wine condom concept, a disposable rubber cap that comes in novel foil packaging.

AIME LAUNCHES RISING STAR AWARD

THE Asia-Pacific Incentives and Meetings Expo (AIME) is set to recognise the youth leaders in the MICE community this year with the launch of a new Rising Star award.

"The introduction of this award to AIME acknowledges up-and-coming talent in the industry, those who have achieved in their work, attitude, leadership and commitment," said AIME event director Ian Wainwright, Reed Travel Exhibitions.

"We are inviting nominees to think outside the box with their submission. If you have a video, blog or presentation that demonstrates your outstanding approach, our judges would love to see it," he said.



EA, event manager, event staging manager or an events student.

The entry should be inspiring and describe an event that was run, a concept which was delivered or a marketing idea that was created.

Submissions will be judged by the AIME Advisory Board, with the winner to be announced at an awards ceremony held annually on the AIME show floor.

Entries for the Rising Star Award are open until 07 Feb. AIME will run from 21-22 Feb at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

The winner of the inaugural Rising Star prize will receive a \$500 gift voucher, a full VIP AIME experience including complimentary accommodation and flights, priority entry to education seminars, networking functions and the Welcome Event which will be held at Carousel by food&desire.

To apply, young professionals must be under the age of 30 and work in the MICE industry as either a freelancer, PCO, PA,

To submit an application or to nominate a young, deserving MICE leader for the accolade, **CLICK HERE.**



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Enter the inaugural Travel Marketing Awards
Entries close January 20

SAILAWAY ON THE PRISTINE REEF incentives spotlight

THE World Heritage Great Barrier Reef is an unmissable experience, *Jasmine O'Donoghue* reports.

Away from the bustle of Cairns, Port Douglas is a relaxed resort town and a launching pad to the World Heritage Listed gems of the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef.

Snorkelling or diving from a coral cay, a pontoon in the middle of the ocean or straight off a boat are some of the experiences available from Port Douglas' Reef Marina.

We choose a Sailaway Low Isles Afternoon Tour, and the moment we step on the marina, the sight of the luxury catamaran amongst the other vessels is enough to elicit an excited grin.

We are promptly greeted by our friendly and accommodating crew, directed to the sandwiches and muffins and allowed to get comfortable on the ship's gleaming white surfaces.

Soon we find ourselves skimming across the Coral Sea en route to the protected coral cay of Low Isles, which is relatively untouched by coral bleaching and is home to a large population of turtles.

Eager to dive in, we jump aboard a glass bottomed boat and are swiftly delivered to the immaculate Low Island.



A few kicks and we are suspended above an underwater city.

Our guide leads us into the open and we are enveloped by the movement, as coral of all shapes and sizes rise and fall beneath us while tiny fish politely navigate around us.

Stopping here and there, our guide explains the nuances of the habitat and we ogle at a cleaning station - the beauty parlour of the underwater world where aquatic life congregate to be cleaned by smaller creatures.

Soon we are left to explore on our own and after a while our curiosity leads us

to shore, where there's the promise of a heritage walk and cold drinks.

Low Island is home to a fully functioning lighthouse & weather station which is manned by two caretakers.

But they are not alone, as fearless white-chested birds and their chicks hop around the bush floor, unfazed by their new company.

After lazing on the sand and watching the birds circle over the ocean, we are led back to the glass bottom boat and out to our luxurious catamaran.

We step on board and are instantly greeted with canapes, this time accompanied by a beverage from the bar.

As we settle in for the trip back, we watch as Low Isles turns into a tiny blip on the horizon and then move to the front, from where we can see clouds gathering on the Daintree mountains, preparing for an afternoon storm.

Sailaway offers full day, afternoon and sunset sailings and the company's two vessels can be reserved for sunset sailings for up to 84 people.

The company has catered for large groups up to 120, broken down into multiple activities and with both boats simultaneously operating Sunset sailings over two evenings.

ICC Sydney to host NTIA awards

THE International Convention Centre Sydney has been chosen as the new home for the Australian Federation of Travel Agents' (AFTA) 2017 National Travel Industry Awards (NTIA).

"If we thought the event couldn't get any bigger, it just did," said AFTA chief executive Jayson Westbury.

"The new venue will accommodate the overwhelming ticket requests received each year and enable more of the industry to join in the celebrations."

The gala awards evening will be held 22 Jul.

Pictured are AFTA staffers and suppliers on a venue walk through.



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

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