



Win a BEN book!

Today *Business Events News*

is giving our readers the opportunity to win an autographed souvenir copy of the new cookbook by entrepreneurial Sydney chef David Bitton.

Bitton, whose upmarket products are sold in DJ's and delis in 12 countries, also personally hosts intimate cooking class experiences at his Sydney bistro - a great small group or team building activity.

Be quick - competition details are on page 3 - and also don't forget to enter our comp to win a Medina accommodation package, which closes on Friday.

We'd love your BEN feedback, so let me know what you think on jill@businesseventsnews.com.au.

Fraser BEN special

KINGFISHER Bay Resort on Queensland's stunning Fraser Island is offering *Business Events News* readers a special Residential Conferencing Package for \$125 per person per day.

The offer includes hotel resort accommodation (twin share), buffet breakfast and a delegate day package including conference room hire, morning tea and an on-site conference organiser.

It's valid for new bookings made before 31 Mar 2012 - to enquire call 07 3032 2813 and quote BEN.

Leading the way with style

LEADING Hotels of the World, which represents scores of top hotels around the world, held a stylish - *italy - one-of-a-kind* event last night at Signorelli in Sydney.

Hosted by LHW's New York-based president & ceo Ted Teng, the occasion brought together some of the hotel group's finest Italian hotels and their managers, and executives who captivated the guests with their Italian charm.

The event showcased properties such as the Grand Hotel Villa Medici in Florence, whose concierge can organise advance tickets for the Uffizi Gallery, a feat



in Santa Margherita Ligure, where Sir Lawrence Oliver and Vivian Leigh honeymooned in 1947.

The Miramare's Ellen van Waveren said they now have a focus on the lucrative Australian C&I market, especially since the hotel experienced a rise in Australian FIT visitors from 2010 to 2011 by 50%.

"The Grand Hotel is a luxe base from which to tour the surrounding sites, such as the famous cliffside Cinque Terre towns and our exceptional Italian Riviera beaches," van Waveren said.

David Addison, director, meetings & events, MCI Australia, who attended the function and is more than a

little in love with the region, said that Santa Margherita Ligure can be reached by train from Milan.

He's pictured above with Ellen van Waveren, while at left are Giulia Sersale from Le Sirenuse with Daniela Signorella of Eventscape.



which circumvents the gallery's notoriously long queues.

There was also the Capri Palace Hotel & Spa, where Jackie Onassis would summer and order handmade sandals and signature, custom-made Capri pants.

Also the Grand Hotel Miramare

Japanese MICE push

THE Sydney office of the Japan National Tourism Organization will hold a special Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions seminar this Friday.

JNTO says Japan is the "ideal location for incentive tours and international conferences, with its highly developed infrastructure, world-class venues and excellent facilities, wide variety of accommodations, wealth of tourist attractions and superb level of hospitality, safety, cleanliness and above all, professionalism".

Presenters at the event will include Japan Airlines, Hilton Worldwide, Destination Asia, Mandarin World Tours and JTB Australia.

Qantas top drop

QANTAS is popping its cork after receiving six top awards at the Celler in the Sky Awards in London this week.

The carrier took out the Best First Class Celler and Best Business Class Celler awards for the second year running, along with a number of individual wine categories.

Stockton's new rates

Stockton Beach Tourist Park has an update on its cabin rates with 2-bedrooms starting from \$160/night and 3-bedrooms from \$175/night, valid for 2 night min. stays until 30 Apr - stocktonbeach.com.



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2012 AIME Update

Celebrations for 10 yrs of Cheeky(ness)

AS AIME celebrates its 20th anniversary this February, the Cheeky Food Group is also celebrating a milestone with its 10 year anniversary.

Cheeky managing director, Leona Watson (pictured) said, "I really can't believe it has been 10 years since we started as a little team cooking company in Sydney.

"Cheeky has gone through some big changes over the past ten years.

"We have expanded our events to all over Australia, NZ and the Pacific and gone from running events for seven people to up to 700 plus.

"Most importantly we have stayed true to creating smiles and bringing people together through food, cooking and wine," said Watson who went on to reveal that various celebratory competitions and promotions would occur during AIME.

"We really want to share our birthday with the people that have made it possible to reach this milestone and also with new friends that will help us reach 20 years!"



Head over to Cheeky's stand (2034) if your birthday falls in February and you can receive a special birthday gift.

In addition, five times a day, on the hour ten lucky prizes can be won. There are lucky draws to win prizes and to be part of a sweet or savoury flambé, Cheeky Cook-up of your choice.

Magical for MICE

HONG Kong Disneyland Resort isn't just for kids - as part of one of the world's biggest entertainment companies it's promoting a wide range of "Magical and Unforgettable Private-Event Opportunities".

And Disney's unforgettable fireworks display is the ideal way to kick off networking with a bang.

The park offers MICE visitors the opportunity to have exclusive after-hours access, and even dine under the stars with the enchanting backdrop of the Sleeping Beauty Castle.

For more information about a Disneyland Hong Kong event call the Business Solutions and Events team on +852 3510 6868.

Korea Convention2012

IN order to boost the country as one of the top five convention destinations in the world, a large team of Korean MICE industry specialists will attend AIME to promote 'Korea Convention Year 2012.'

Joining the Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) on stand No. 4700 are Seoul Tourism Org., Busan Convention & Visitors Bureau, and specialist MICE operators - Aju Incentive Tours, Jane Tour & DMC, Holiday Planners Co. Ltd., Redcaptour along with many more.

According to the KTO, government support and incentives for events held in Korea during the 'Korea Convention Year 2012' will increase up to twofold for qualified meetings, conventions & incentive tours.

Convention centres will offer discounts of up to 30%, while hotels will have up to 40% off rooms plus room upgrades.

Additionally, complimentary site inspection trips and special discounts are available on the two flag carrier airlines - Korean Air and Asiana Airlines and other incentives - email mice@knto.or.kr.

Last chance to vote

GET your skates on, because with AIME less than just two weeks away, the deadline for the highly coveted AIME Awards nominations is this Friday, 10 Feb.

The five AIME Award categories are: Best New Exhibiting Stand (all new exhibitors will be judged on-site in this category); Best Stand Under 36 square metres (all stands under this size will be judged on-site); Best Stand Over 36 square metres (all stands over this size will be judged on-site); Best Environmentally Sustainable Stand; AIME Industry Person of the Year.

For the first time, presentation of the awards will take place at AIME's new Nightcap Networking event, which is taking place from 9pm-11pm on Tuesday, 21 February 2012 at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) in Southbank.

AIME director Sally de Swart said that "great work in the industry needs to be acknowledged".

To nominate for the awards visit aime.com.au/en/exhibiting/AIME-Awards/.

Cotai Strip Macao

MORE than 5000 new rooms and 20,000 square metres of additional meeting and exhibition have opened on the Cotai Strip in Macau, which will be showcased at AIME booth 3500 this year.

As well as an unbelievable array of MICE facilities, the strip has unrivalled entertainment options including a resident Cirque du Soleil show and over 60 eateries.

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US entry getting easier

THE US government has implemented a "final rule" which makes its 'Global Entry Program' a permanent system which can provide expedited clearance for "pre-approved, low-risk travellers" arriving in the USA.

Currently available for visitors from Canada, Mexico, The Netherlands and the UK, more than 327,000 frequent travellers already use the system.

"The impact of a program like Global Entry on US destinations, and particularly in the meetings industry, is significant," said Roger Dow, CEO of the US Travel Assn.

"Those who regularly travel enjoy fewer burdens thanks to Global Entry, making it more likely they will attend meetings and conventions in the US," he said.

The system operates at 20 airports across the US, and Dow also urged expedited agreements to expand the system to South Korea, Singapore and Germany.

Emirates lifts Italy

EMIRATES has announced more capacity to Milan, with a third daily flight set to start from 1st June this year.

The Middle-Eastern carrier also recently announced that its Venice operations would expand to twice a day, with the service also continuing to offer a unique water limousine transfer service across the Venetian lagoon for First and Business Class travellers.

Cairns connectivity

THE 4.5 star Cairns Harbour Lights hotel is now offering free internet across all room types, making it easy for meeting delegates to keep in touch.

The property is located opposite the Pier Marina, with accommodation including studio hotel rooms, one and two bedroom self-catered apartments and a three-bedroom penthouse.

See www.mirvachotels.com.

An intimate dinner with David



DAVID Bitton is an intriguing character - a French chef who has created an upmarket food range found at top delicatessens (and on business class flights) from his bistro base in Alexandria, Sydney.

His expanding operation also offers a great meeting option, with The Bitton Room available to host special events, dinners and meetings for up to 30 people.

And for a unique experience, it's possible to book a cooking session and meal for small groups hosted by the man himself.

Earlier this week *Business Events News* was lucky enough to spend some time at the Bitton Gourmet Cafe, where David regaled our small group with stories of how his business was established and continues to grow - all to the accompaniment

of fine wine and a fabulous meal which we watched him cook using his own unique ingredients.

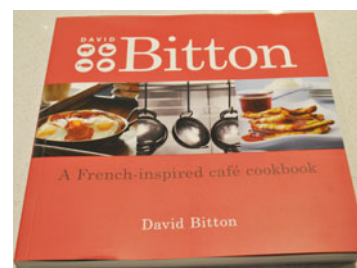
For more information on a Bitton event call 02 9519 5111.

Today one lucky **BEN** reader can win a signed copy of Bitton's fabulous new cookbook, by being the first to answer the question:

When did David Bitton establish his business in Australia?

Hint: See bittongourmet.com.au

Email your answer ASAP to comp@businesseventsnews.com.au.



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business events news

8th February 2012

Look what's cooking at qualia...

ALISTAIR Waddell has been promoted to the role of executive chef at Hamilton Island's upmarket qualia resort - where he's worked as sous chef under Jane-Therese Mulry for the last three years.



The classically trained Waddell is passionate about the 'nature cuisine' movement, using local produce, but as a proud Scotsman has also introduced black pudding to the menu!

Titanic venue

TITANIC Belfast, 'The World's Largest Titanic Visitor Experience' is taking bookings for The Titanic Suite, Northern Ireland's newest dedicated banqueting venue.

The suite offers views of the City and flexible spaces catering for 50 to 1,000 guests.

Claire Bradshaw, head of sales & mkt, said: "The Titanic Suite will be Belfast's largest dedicated banqueting space, filling a gap in the market for major functions with up to 1,000 guests."

"It's also, however, a highly flexible and unique space which will just as easily cater for private and society functions, launch events or intimate gatherings".

See titanicbelfast.com.

WIN A WEEKEND AWAY AT MEDINA



To celebrate the launch of Australia's newest business tourism publication, **Business Events News**, as well as **Medina Apartment Hotels'** 30th birthday, we are giving one lucky reader the chance to win a weekend away for two adults in a one bedroom apartment at a Medina Apartment Hotel of choice across Australia!

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All you need to do to be in the running to win this great prize, is to email your answer to the below question by COB next Friday 10th Feb to: medinacom@businesseseventsnews.com.au.

The most creative answer will win!



In 50 words or less tell us your best travel memory?

Darwin sets standard

DARWIN Convention Centre (DCC) after successfully completing a rigorous external audit, have been awarded with a Gold Certification by the AIPC, the highest possible achievement in its Quality Standards Program.

They now join a select group of only 18 AIPC convention facilities to have successfully achieved this certification to date.

Darwin Convention Centre general manager Malu Barrios says the certification is a reflection of her team's passion and commitment to put Darwin on the global map of business events.

"I'm extremely proud of our team who are driven to achieve the best possible outcomes for our clients while almost oblivious that we are operating among the best in the world," she said.

"The certification honours everyone's efforts to continually look for new ways to deliver excellence in all aspects of our operations", she added.

AIPC President Edgar Hirt in congratulating the DCC on its accomplishment and in particular at the top level of achievement said, "It demonstrates to owners, colleagues and clients that the Centre is addressing international standards of performance in their management procedures."

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Given the industry's fondness for the MICE acronym, it seems fitting to honour Pennsylvania's resident rodent, Punxsutawney Phil, the groundhog who achieved world recognition in the Bill Murray film - *Groundhog Day*.

Earlier this week when he emerged from his lair to "see" his shadow on Gobbler's Knob, a tiny hill in the town, northeast of Pittsburgh, he predicted six more weeks of winter in the US.

A prophecy at odds with his groundhog brethren who seem to think that spring is coming early.

HKCEC excels at events

THE Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) is reporting an excellent start to 2012 with the securing of five new exhibitions and 30 major conferences for the coming year.

The conferences are expected to bring over 30,000 delegates, experts and government officials from all over the world and will cover a diverse range of topics, from medical, science and dentistry to yoga and bridge & tunnel construction.

Of the total, 15 are international conferences and six are new to the HKCEC.

For example, the "2012 FDI Annual World Dental Congress" to be held from 29 August to 1 September 2012, is expected to attract around 10,000 oral health professionals to the city.

The Congress will be celebrating its 100th edition in Hong Kong, when nearly 140 national dental associations will gather to decide on global policy for the profession and share the latest industry developments.

The five new exhibitions demonstrate the remarkable diversity of events that the venue's professional private management company HML successfully caters for, focusing respectively on LOHAS living, Indian property, antiques, frozen food, and diving and resort travel.



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