



What a Darling!

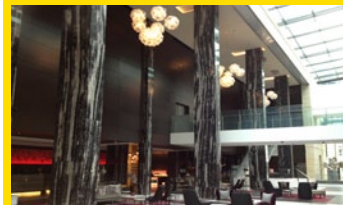
SATURDAY night and **BEN**, as a guest of The Star



entertained a few industry friends in a Jewel Suite, at their most luxurious of new hotels, The Darling.

The first five-star new build hotel in Sydney since the 2000 Olympic Games, it has already garnered a slew of awards, including being named as one of the Top 60 Best New Hotels in the World by Condé Nast Traveller 2012.

From the friendly, attentive staff, to the large, high-stepping bed clothed in 400 thread Egyptian cotton sheets, plush furnishings and an outdoor swimming pool delicately scented with a blend of white tea and eucalyptus, Sydney now has a hotel whose rooms are akin in style to Melbourne's Crown Towers.



The Mantellato & Norris collective

HELEN Mantellato and Annabel Norris (**pictured**), two of the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre's best known team members are celebrating a collective 45 years at the venue.

Mantellato, who joined the Centre in December 1987, five months before its official opening and who was one of the first people employed in the events department, has been with the Centre for 25 years, while Norris, who joined in February 1993, has reached her 20-year milestone.

Joining as assistant conventions and exhibitions manager, Mantello who has held the position of director of sales – exhibitions for the past eight years said she had remained at the venue because she found the environment highly stimulating and energising.

"Because of its reputation, the Centre attracts highly motivated individuals with specialised skills and it also attracts the best, most



interesting and complex events," she said.

Norris, who joined the Centre as director of sales, said she could not believe 20 years had passed since she joined the Centre.

"It's been a privilege and a joy to represent and sell Sydney and Darling Harbour on the world stage over two decades – to be part of a bid team and to be catapulted into the world of academics, scientists, medical specialists, researchers, farmers, bankers, wine makers, and many more," she added.

Paying tribute to his two team members, Centre chief executive Ton van Amerongen said, "Helen and Annabel are very much part of the fabric of the Centre and exemplify the professionalism and dedication of our team which has seen the Centre lead the Australian events industry since our opening in 1988."

One for the diary

FIFTY-THREE naval vessels and tall ships from around the world will provide a spectacular armada to rival the 1988 Australian Bicentenary, when the Royal Australian Navy celebrates its Centennial Fleet Review, on 5 October.

To ensure the best vantage point for the activities, which include a huge fireworks display, harbour parades, plane and helicopter fly-pasts and aerobatic displays, Australian cruise agency Cruise Express has chartered a deluxe harbour vessel.

Sydney Glass Island, which offers 360-degree water views for a special, all-inclusive, four-hour dinner cruise, allowing guests to see the visiting ships and evening fireworks.

The cruise leaves from King St Wharf in Darling Harbour around 6pm and costs \$199 per person including a three-course dinner and drinks.

Details on the website at - www.cruiseexpress.com.au.

Loyalty free Internet

IHG (InterContinental Hotels Group) has announced it will be providing free internet to all of its 71 million loyalty program members worldwide.

The first and only hotel group to offer free internet in all hotels to loyalty program members, they are also renaming the program from Priority Club Rewards to IHG Rewards Club in July.

GIBTM triples corporate buyers

THE seventh edition of GIBTM 2013, at Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), closed last Wednesday on a high note, tripling corporate meetings buyer attendance.

This accounted for 35% of all hosted buyers attending the show, compared to 11% from the corporate sector in 2012.

The total number of hosted buyers was evenly split between the Middle East, Europe and Asia Pacific, with first-timers attending from key growth markets for the Middle East including Australia, South Africa and Azerbaijan.

"According to Standard & Poor's latest forecast, GDP growth within the Gulf economies will

reach 4.6% in 2013, valuing the GCC economy at \$1.5 trillion, which compares very favourably with many flatlining western economies, facing prolonged austerity and sluggish growth," said GIBTM exhibition manager Lois Hall.

"As a consequence the region is clearly attracting an increasing number of meetings, incentives and business travellers, especially from key regional and international trading partners.

"We have also witnessed a sharp increase in the number of overseas destinations, looking to attract meetings and incentive groups from the Middle East," added Hall.



Break-outs. More fun in the
Philippines

facebook.com/ismorefuninthephilippines
 Visit morefuninthephilippines.com.au



business events news

3rd April 2013



Rejuvenate.Inspire.Connect

Cypress Lakes Resort, the premier regional C&E destination in the Hunter Valley!

Enquire today 02 4993 1806



Getting the Inside run



THE first famil group of pcos to be hosted by the InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort, since the property joined InterContinental Hotels Group in December, were treated to a number of Intercontinental Meetings' Insider Collection experiences.

These Insider experiences feature local activities, designed to deliver an authentic, personalised local flavour.

For the group, this included an interactive cooking class with chef and television personality Ben O'Donoghue that commenced with a visit to Sanctuary Cove's marina, where freshly caught prawns and Morton Bay bugs were selected from a local fishing trawler.

Ben shared his tips on how to shell and cook the seafood, which featured in a gourmet lunch served on the resort's Lagoon Pool lawns.

Other highlights included a helicopter flight to "Insider Location" McLarens Landing for drinks and nibbles, a speedboat trip, a fun and light-hearted art class conducted by Byron Bay Art Class at the resort, an alfresco champagne breakfast, golf lessons and a visit to the Mt Tamborine Skywalk with transfers by classic cars.

The group also enjoyed some downtime watching a movie on the beach while relaxing on inflatable lounges.

Omran chooses Crowne Plaza

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group (IHG) has signed an agreement with the Oman Tourism Development Company SAOC (Omran) to open Crowne Plaza Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre, Muscat.

The new property is a part of Omran's Oman Convention and Exhibition Centre (OCEC) development, which is due for completion in 2016.

Just 10 minutes from Muscat International Airport, the mixed-use, purpose-built precinct will feature a state-of-the-art exhibition centre with 22,000sqm of exhibition space.

The Crowne Plaza hotel, the second in the capital and the fourth Crowne Plaza in Oman, will feature 296-rooms and extensive meeting and event facilities with a separate function centre.

It will also include a glamorous ballroom with terrace, a boardroom and three large meeting rooms.

Overlooking a Wadi (a natural waterway) and extensive parklands, H.E. Nasser bin Khamis Al Jashmi, chairman of Omran, speaking at the signing ceremony, said, "By formalising this agreement with our preferred and trusted partner IHG to operate the 5-star facility, we are taking another step forward to establish the Sultanate as a favoured destination for the regional and global meetings and

exhibitions industry."

Pascal Gauvin, chief operating officer, India, Middle East and Africa for IHG, said "Omran's Convention and Exhibition Centre is set to put Muscat on the MICE industry map."



A palatable reward

THE Novotel Barossa Valley Resort is dangling the lure of a bottle of Penfold's renowned Grange Hemitage in their new conference incentive reward promotion.

To receive a bottle of the 2007 Grange, organisers need to book a conference at the resort before 31 July to the value of \$20,000 and with conference day packages from \$68pp, bookers will also enjoy double Le Club Accorhotels Meeting Planner Points with this offer.

The Novotel Barossa Valley, set in the natural amphitheatre of the South Australian wine country offers ten function rooms, with space for up to 250 delegates.

In addition, the resort has its own Tasting Room where local wines and produce can be sampled, an Endota Spa on site and a 18-hole Tanunda Pines Golf Course adjacent to the hotel.

See - novotelbarossa.com.



AH to be in England where TV tour spin offs abound.

All of which offer some great ideas for pre and post conference touring and partner programs.

Take for instance Downton Abbey where a Downton three-day "experience" promises a full immersion in Edwardian life, above and below stairs and there's even a chance to dress up in period costume.

Another hit series Call the Midwife, has spawned guided walks around the historic dockyard in Chatham, where much of the drama is filmed.

It recreates the atmosphere of the Poplar docks, complete with pushbikes and washing lines.

Finally, keep your eyes open for the possibility of a Game of Thrones coach tour launching in Northern Ireland this summer.

Much of the cult fantasy series is filmed at Belfast's Paint Hall Studios, on the Antrim coast and shores of Strangford Lough, and in the Mourne Mountains.



MCB appoints staff

THE Melbourne Convention Bureau has appointed two new regional sales directors in Asia.

Edward Kwek will head up the Singapore office as regional sales director - South Asia, and Jessica Chang will take on the position of regional sales director - North Asia in Shanghai, joining business development manager - China, Jenny Yang.



NOVOTEL TWIN WATERS RESORT- A FREE IPAD MINI ON US!

This idyllic Sunshine Coast multipurpose property offers a variety of unique dining options and experiences. With capacity for up to 1400 delegates Novotel Twin Waters Resort is the perfect destination for your next conference or event.

FOR ENQUIRIES CALL 07 5450 9582
EMAIL conference@twinwatersresort.com.au
QUOTE - iPad Mini

1 x iPad mini per booking. Must be confirmed by 31st May 2013. Minimum 25 room nights and \$5000 spend per event. New bookings only. Terms and Conditions apply.



www.novotelTwinwatersresort.com.au



First among equals

ORIENT Express Group's most improved and top Emirates performers strike a pose by the Jumeirah Burj Al Arab Hotel during a three-day incentive famil in Dubai.

Hosted by Dubai Tourism in partnership with Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts and Alpha Tours on the ground, agents were rewarded for their achievements as they gained first-hand experience of some of the best attractions Dubai has to offer, including Ski Dubai, SMCCU, a tour of Dubai Mall's family attractions and Desert Safari.



Tjapukai revitalises

THE first sod of the \$12m revitalisation of Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park was turned in March, creating employment opportunities for Indigenous people.

Together with the construction of the 12 month redevelopment, jobs has been offered to the traditional owners, the Djabugay people.

To ensure Tjapukai could remain open during the upgrade, careful planning has gone into continuing to offer cultural experiences from different areas of the park's grounds at Caravonica near Cairns.

"This first stage will involve revitalising Tjapukai's Cultural Village where guests are given hands-on experiences," said ceo Geoff Olson.

The Dance Theatre is being rebuilt and will offer a new show.

A revamp of the kitchen and restaurant will happen in stage 2.

Randall represents Meritus Bali

WHEN Randall Marketing takes up its appointment to represent the new Meritus Pecatu Bali resort, the Sydney hotel marketing group will target the meetings and small conference markets in Australian and NZ.

The representation of the 136 room property, which has its soft opening mid-year, will mark a return to Bali for Randall Marketing and an extension of its relationship with the Singapore-based Meritus Group.

Ceo, Randall Lui said that being a resort located on a golf course with direct access to Dreamland beach and having brand new business and meetings facilities will be of special interest to the MICE market.

The 180sqm conference centre with a capacity for 150 people theatre-style, is equipped with modern business facilities, wireless internet connectivity and state-of-the-art visual equipment.



Face to Face with...

Giovanna Lever

Marketing & Communication Manager Business Events Australia



Business Events News recently caught up with Business Events Australia's marketing and communications manager, Giovanna Lever. In her role with Tourism Australia, Giovanna manages the global marketing and communications program for the business event portfolio. She has over 13 years integrated marketing experience in tourism, sport marketing, FMCG and small business both domestically and internationally.

What does your role entail?

As the marketing and communications manager for the Business Events Australia team at Tourism Australia, I manage the global marketing program from advertising and brand through to digital and program activation. The role focuses on the inbound conference and incentive and associations market.

What's the first thing you do when you get in the office?

I usually drop off some goodies I baked the night before for the team, and then straight into it!

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Balancing expectations whilst staying true to the customer. There are always lots of ideas but at the end of the day, the customer is key and it is important that we get the right messages to the right customer through the right channels.

How do you inspire your team?

There is only one way to inspire my team - lead by example!

Dealing with new technology - bonus or headache?

Bonus - it certainly has made my life easier, particularly whilst on the road. The fact that I can FaceTime with my kids when travelling and read them their bed time story makes both their and my day.

Technology is moving at a rapid pace and the most important thing to remember is to use what works for you, not just because it's on trend.

I think this is a common error particularly when it comes to social - it is best to use a platform that speaks to your

audience and do it well rather than try to do everything half-heartedly & lose your audience.

What would you do if you weren't in your current role?

Heading up Stephanie Alexander's Kitchen Garden Foundation - bringing together my other loves after tourism - business, food and food education.

Who has inspired you?

I am inspired by people who take life by the horns and aren't afraid to give it a go. I have this amazing friend who is 80 going on 40 and her zest for life and willingness to try new things never ceases to amaze me.

What makes a good conference?

Great speakers who know their audience and their material.

What is the most inspiring conference you have been involved in?

As part of Business Events Week in Melbourne, I attended the Open Space plenary presented by internationally renowned speaker, Simon Hammond.

The theme for his presentation was around connectivity - more specifically, "Has business forgotten what it is to be human?" where he spoke about the fact that people want emotive experiences. I feel this is true in all aspects of business, and particularly business events.

How many conferences have you attended in the last 12 months?

Three - Meetings and Events Australia (MEA), Social Media Summit, and the Association of Australian Convention Bureaus conference. I also regularly participate in webinars.

CONTACT US:

Publisher Editor Contributors/Coordinator
Bruce Piper Jill Varley Chantel Housler

For advertising enquiries email Christie-Lee or Chantel email:
advertising@businesseventsnews.com.au

P: 1300 799 220 F: 1300 799 221

PO Box 1010 Epping, NSW, 1710

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

Disclaimer: While every care has been taken in the preparation of *Business Events News* no liability can be accepted for errors or omissions. *BEN* takes no responsibility for the opinions of its contributors/columnists. Information is published in good faith to stimulate independent investigation of the matters canvassed.