



Bali remarks GIVING

weight to the downturn in Australian visitor



arrivals to Bali, were remarks from some incentive and event organisers I spoke with the other night.

It seems that while Asian destinations such as Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand are still popular, it's the long haul North and South American, UK and Europe destinations that are keeping them busy right now.

We have this story and lots more. Enjoy the read - Jill.

Bali down on Aussies

BALI Discovery Tours report a sluggish start to tourism figures in 2013 with arrival figures for February in a holding pattern.

The total foreign tourist arrivals in February hit 232,877, a figure 6.1% ahead of arrivals for the same time last year.

However, cumulative arrivals for January-February 2013 are down 0.42% to 465,813.

Predictions are that while it is too early to say reliably, Bali looks to stay stagnant or decline slightly from the 2.82 million foreign tourist who visited during the whole of 2012.

The once increasing arrival numbers from Australia appear to be at an end as the strong Australian dollar is taking Aussies to destinations further afield.

Arrivals in February are down month-on-month by 6.84% at 53,455 while year-on-year arrivals have declined 4.84%.

Darling Harbour goes live



DARLING Harbour Live, a consortia of Lend Lease, Capella Capital, AEG Ogden and Spotless has lodged to the Department of Planning and Infrastructure a distinctly Sydney design for Darling Harbour.

Now on public exhibition, it is one that reflects a vision for the area's new international convention, exhibition and entertainment hub.

Lend Lease has also lodged a concept proposal for a new residential and working district in the southern part of the precinct adjacent to Haymarket.

The new precinct plans reflect the natural valley context of Darling Harbour and its importance as the most frequently visited public space within the city.

The plans reconnect Darling Harbour seamlessly into the surrounding neighbourhoods of Haymarket, Pyrmont/Ultimo and the CBD.

Within the design are five key design principles: the North – South Boulevard; three primary public open spaces being the waterfront, Tumbalong

Park and Haymarket Square; key East-West connections including Harbourside Place and Tumbalong Place; the International Convention Centre (ICC) and ICC hotel in the north with the entertainment theatre to the south as anchor buildings, and an expansion of the public realm with the Event Deck, terraced landscape and a larger Tumbalong Park.

Ceo of DHL, Malcolm Macintyre, said "We are reinvigorating a precinct of huge importance to the city, reconnecting this area north to south and east to west.

"Our design approach has been to ensure we don't have an isolated precinct within the city but one that knits the city together through its activation, scale and density, and importantly provides more public space and parkland.

"Integrating this part of Darling Harbour into Haymarket, Pyrmont, the city centre, Chinatown and Ultimo through clear connections will be a really important stimulus for these areas as well as the whole of Sydney," he said.

EIBTM's yearly return

BACK by popular demand, EIBTM, the global events conference with a focus on European destinations and held annually in Barcelona, has confirmed that its annual EIBTM Online Education Week is set to take place from the 22-26 April.

The program specifically dedicated towards the 'Future of Meetings' will deliver some of the best-attended sessions from the show, as well as industry research which will be available via the EIBTM website and the IBTM Knowledge Virtual Events Centre.

Sessions will comprise meetings industry technology, hybrid events, sustainability and industry trends and research, and can be accessed at any time online via www.eibtm.com/eduweek.

Participants are encouraged to comment and share their views with expert guest tweeters on Twitter using the hash tag #EIBTM13.

EIBTM 2013 takes place in Barcelona, Spain between 19 - 21 November.

Chadha promotion

NEERAJ Chadha, general manager of the Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa has been promoted to the national position of Multi Property vice president Australia.

Chadha joined Marriott as director Australia and gm of Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa in February last year.

In his new role, he leads Marriott operations, strategic and tactical efforts of the Australian portfolio consisting of 1,527 keys, and is also responsible for the success of the Marriott Resort.

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TAHITI and Bora Bora are names that are synonymous with paradise. Images of overwater bungalows perched above the perfect blue of a Tahitian lagoon conjure up visions of a relaxing beach break, far removed from the stresses of everyday life.

In other words, the ideal incentive for hardworking Australians or companies looking to treat their staff to the trip of a lifetime.

While Tahiti continues to remain popular with couples and small family groups, over the past 18 months there has been a significant increase in mid-sized travel groups looking beyond traditional Australian destinations in search of a more exotic venue to hold their conference or event.

Part of this is down to the increasing affordability of Tahiti as an overseas destination with the strong Australian dollar and competitive air and hotel packages combined to make these sought after islands in the South Pacific more accessible than ever.

With a variety of accommodation options, sophisticated infrastructure and highly experienced destination experts at your fingertips, Tahiti and her islands has something to suit groups of 10 through to multi-venue hosted groups of 450.

Tahiti's stunning natural beauty provides endless inspiration and relaxation for visitors of all ages.

From motu picnic days to "mutiny on the Bounty" themed nights and Tahitian cultural extravaganzas, there is an endless array of activities to inspire and recharge in between any formalities.

For more info on Tahiti visit - www.tahitinow.com.au.

Wedgewood reveals Berlin

AUSTRALIAN DMC representative, Nemonic Concepts has unveiled a Berlin cultural program



for high-end incentive groups and small meetings in conjunction with Wedgewood Germany, a leading European destination management company.

The Berlin experience captures the cutting-edge culture of its avant-garde cabarets, superb dining and shopping experiences as well as its imposing architecture, beautiful canals and iconic attractions - Brandenburg

Gate, the Reichstag Building, the Berlin Wall and Checkpoint Charlie.

The programs also incorporate the city's intriguing World War Two and Cold War legacies,

where spies came in from the cold to conduct their clandestine affairs.

"Berlin is truly a premier European destination that offers a wealth of diverse cultural experiences and scenic attractions for guests," says Sue Wallace, senior partner, Nemonic Concepts.

"What singles out Wedgewood Germany is that all of their Berlin programs are meticulously produced by experts who showcase the city through the various neighbourhoods, which have been shaped by events in history and through the arts," Wallace added.

Info at - info@nemonic.com.

Free Internet access ramps up

MORE good news on the internet front Frasers Hospitality, the provider of serviced apartments and boutique residences, is now offering unlimited free internet access throughout all the areas of their properties worldwide.

The move, a reflection of Frasers' culture of technology adoption and innovation, follows the launch of the group's new mobile website (www.frasershospitality.com), which allows travellers to make, reservations, modify bookings and have instant access to property information, special offers and promotions via their smartphones anytime, anywhere.

MEANWHILE Passengers on Captain Cook Cruises Fiji can enjoy free wifi on-board the *MV Reef Endeavour* operating the company's three, four, seven and eleven night cruises in Fiji.

While Captain Cook Cruises itinerary involves visiting remote islands and villages, the company has found 3G is available from most of their anchorages.

The wifi is now accessible in the ship's Tabua Suites and in the Yasawa Lounge, Pool Deck and on the Sundeck.

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crumbs!



IF you have been there and done that in the usual Europe countries, then places like Romania, Hungary, Poland, Estonia and Croatia beckon with 17th century castles, lush countryside, and unspoiled coastal cities.

For instance the Three Sisters Hotel in Estonia is made up of three former merchant houses, built in the fourteenth century, where you can sip on vodka in the dungeon-like Beluga Bar.

In Hungary the 14-room Hertelendy Kastely built in 1920 as a hunting lodge, boasts its own airfield and mineral hot spring.

While Poland's Hotel Copernicus, Krakow's most famous hotel takes its name from Nicolaus Copernicus, who stayed there as a guest over five hundred years ago.

Australians embrace Jordan

AN investment in the Australian market, which included a road show in October last year and two large familiarisation programs, of media and another of travel agents in February, has seen an increase in Australian visitor numbers to Jordan.



The past five months has seen an increase, in September by 28.2%, October by 14.8%, November by 6.4%, December by 0.4% and January by 19.6%.

Jordan Tourism Board's representative in Australia, Nicole Lenoir-Jourdan said, "Australians are visiting Jordan in growing numbers with many saying it is at the top of their bucket list.

"Jordan is seen as a very secure destination with a stable government. "It is often referred to as the 'Switzerland of the Middle East'.

"This stability along with the diverse sites of the ancient Nabatean city of Petra through to the Dead Sea, the Red Sea, Bedouin camps in the Wadi Rum desert and the historical sites from Mount Nebo and Madaba through to Christ's baptism site on the Jordan River, Jerash and the desert crusader castles makes Jordan one of the most magical destinations on the globe."

Continuing the impetus of Australians visiting the region, Jordan Tourism is planning another road show next year.



Jumeirah & the UAE on trend

IT was event number five when Jumeirah Hotels & Resorts hosted a dinner at The Four Seasons, Sydney's



Pictured above are: Stephen Hall, Mohamad Slieman, Elwin Kemming, Ross Park, Christian Hellot, Teree George & Anne Liyanage

new restaurant, The Woods on Wednesday evening.

Not bad going for this sales mission who had only arrived in Melbourne from the UAE the previous day.

"The sales mission is about reinforcing the message that we are very serious about the Australian market," said Teree George, director of global sales, Australia.

"In particular what the Emirates/Qantas partnership will offer customers and corporate clients here and in Europe."

The intimate gathering allowed guests to meet and hear from

some of Jumeirah's senior sales colleagues representing Jumeirah at Etihad Towers in Abu Dhabi, Jumeirah Beach Hotel, Madinat Jumeirah, Jumeirah Zabeel Saray, Jumeirah Emirates Towers and Jumeirah Creekside Hotel in Dubai.

"The heart and soul of Jumeirah is to stay different," George continued.

"In every destination we try to remain culturally connected.

"We are all about our service standards, how we greet our clients, how we manage our welcome and how we invite them to return."

And, the MEA winners are...

CONGRATULATIONS go to the winners of the Meetings & Events Australia (MEA) NSW Awards, held at Luna Park on Monday night, and in particular to the Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre who walked away with four awards.

The Sydney Convention & Exhibition Centre was awarded gongs for: Meeting Venue over 500 delegates; Best Banquet and Catering Services; Best In house AV Services and Corporate Social Responsibility over 30 employees.

Other winners included Funktional who took out the Special Event of the Year category.

The Organisation less than 8 employees and Event Management Organisation was taken away by Verve Creative Events.

The Metropolitan Destination Marketing Organisation category was won by Business Events Sydney; IML Worldwide took out the Best Support Services category while Technical and Creative Production over \$5 million was accepted by AV1 beating out finalist Staging Connections.

Finally the MEA Young Professional Scholarship was presented to Laura Valentine from Zadro Communications during the Sydney event.



Hotel Highlight Pullman London St Pancras

PULLMAN Hotel at London's St Pancras Station is the first hotel of its kind in the UK.

Talk about nice and friendly.

The young staff here go out of their way to be helpful & could certainly teach a thing or two about the art of hotel service.

The property is but a short trot to King Cross station and five minutes walk to the Eurostar trains to Europe.

Buses outside the hotel take you direct to the shopping Mecca of Oxford St in 15 mins.

The 312 rooms, all with free wifi, range from Superior to Deluxe and are fitted with comfy bespoke beds and bathrooms with stimulating rain showers, plus top-of-the-range Roger & Gallet soaps and toiletries.

There are two restaurants, the Golden Arrow, serving delicious English breakfasts, and the Jospier Grill for modern European fair.

There's even a wine library with wines by the glass at reasonable prices.

The hotel caters well for meetings with its Shaw Theatre, a fully-equipped auditorium that seats up to 446 people for larger presentations and product launches.

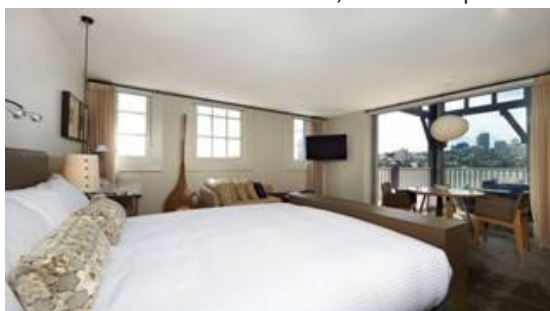
Sydney's Sebel Pier One's new suites

THE Sebel Pier One Sydney in Walsh Bay has unveiled seven spectacular over-water suites.

Perched on-and-over Sydney Harbour, the hotel's new suites have been designed by internationally renowned firm Bates Smart Architects and include four Harbour View Balcony Suites with direct access to private, expansive balconies. The largest balcony measures an impressive 40sq metres which juts out over the Pier and an ideal setting for private alfresco dining or sunset drinks.

Designed for open-plan living, all have an abundance of natural light due to the floor-to-ceiling wrap around windows and glass sliding doors.

At the northern end of the Pier, the hotel's premier



Harbour View Balcony Suite guests will feel like they're floating on water.

In addition to the seven new suites, The Sebel Pier One Sydney has also renovated 22 new Waterside King and Heritage King rooms, which now takes the hotel's total room count to 189.

General manager for The Sebel Pier One Sydney, Michael Sheridan, said "We're very excited to be offering such a premium, waterfront product to the local and international market and being so close to the bridge and Opera House, we expect these new suites to sell out well in advance come festival time and New Year's Eve."

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