



How suite it is

I'VE viewed many a hotel suite and opulent penthouse and even stayed in the occasional one, but some of the most impressive I have seen lately are at the Sebel Pier One Sydney.



The hotel's seven new suites have been designed by internationally renowned firm Bates Smart Architects and include four Harbour View Balcony Suites that have direct access to private, expansive balconies.

This week I was a guest at a small soiree, in their premier Harbour View Balcony Suite, which perches on-and-over Sydney Harbour at the northern end of the Walsh Bay pier.

The suite's impressive large balcony which juts out over the Pier measures an impressive 40sq meters and makes an ideal setting for private alfresco dining and corporate sunset drinks.

Completing the picture – all the balcony suites have designer day beds and arm chairs which are positioned to maximise the panoramic views.

Beam me up Scotty! Jill

Doubletree benefits

WITH the entrance of Doubletree by Hilton into the Australian market, the newly rebranded DoubleTree by Hilton Darwin, DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade Darwin and DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs hotels are now open for bookings and stays from Wednesday May 1, together with the new Hilton Darwin hotel.

Lead in rates start from AUD\$225 at DoubleTree by Hilton Darwin, AUD\$190 at DoubleTree by Hilton Esplanade Darwin and AUD\$150 at DoubleTree by Hilton Alice Springs.

Opening deals at all four hotels offer 1000 bonus Hilton HHonors points for stays booked on eligible rates and completed by 31 July.

Food and wine in focus

TOURISM Australia has flagged a greater focus on the country's outstanding food and wine experiences, as part of its future international marketing plans.

This morning Tourism Australia managing director Andrew McEvoy presided over the opening of this year's Australian Tourism Exchange in Sydney, which will welcome more than 2200 delegates including almost 550 international distribution partners for Australian tourism product around the globe.

McEvoy (pictured) said that recent research had shown a strong response to Australia's culinary offerings from a number of key markets.

He said the study had shown that "we exceed their expectations and rank very highly against competitor destinations".

"People who have never visited



Australia have a very limited understanding of the quality and variety we offer and associate us with old fashioned stereotypes," he added.

The food and wine strategy is still under development, but will emphasize the wide range of experiences available for visitors to Australia such as deep sea fishing, cheese making, wine tasting and dining on five star food in spectacular locations.

TA will also partner with Wine Australia in the promotion, which McEvoy said was an example of the successful 'Team Australia' approach to marketing.

This collaboration will see the organisation, along with key airline, supplier and other partners, spend about \$150m around the world promoting Australia this year.

ACTE NZ networking

THE Association of Corporate Travel Executives (ACTE) is holding a New Zealand Networking Reception on 14 May 5.30pm-7.30pm at the Hilton Auckland Hotel.

Whether you are a buyer, manager or supplier of corporate travel, expanding and strengthening your network, it is increasingly essential to look at differing ways to meet evolving cost management and legislative requirements.

ACTE's recent Sydney Networking Reception attracted some 100+ representatives from the business travel community, including Corporate Travel Program Buyers/Managers from the likes of Accenture, Boral, Macquarie, Oracle, PwC, Sonic, E&Y, UTS & Hanson to suppliers such as Hilton, Serko, TMS, Accor, Virgin, Travelport, Starwood, United and BCD Travel.

CLICK HERE to register.

Bluestone Bar

A NEW corporate conference and dining space – Bluestone Restaurant Bar - has opened in the heart of Melbourne's bustling Flinders Lane.

In concert with the new space Bluestone has also introduced a series of new 2013 autumn conference and events menus.

Consistently listed in *The Age Good Food Guide*, it was most recently a 2011 and 2012 Victorian Finalist, for Best Modern Australian Restaurant - Formal in the Restaurant and Catering Awards of Australia.

Spectacular Segways

KEITH Christenson, director travel programs 212F has been eulogising the benefits of getting around a city (not in much of Australia or New York unfortunately) on a Segway.

We at **BEN** can't help but agree.

"Easy to learn how to ride and lots of fun – simply type 'segway tour' into your search engine to get the details," Christenson said.

"I have taken Segway tours in Dallas, Paris, Dublin, Berlin and even Melbourne and heartily recommend them," he added.

"Another great way to explore a city is on a hop on-hop off, bus or tram.

"Again they are very popular throughout the world and offer an inexpensive way to get a general feel of a destination.

"I have used them in Rome, Florence, Paris, London, New York, Barcelona and Melbourne."

A bit more naff, but amazingly fun, is France's The Petite Train Touristique or The Little Train.

"There are also trains in Monaco and Nice," he concluded.

MEANWHILE Segway tourism and activity operations are likely to become much more common in Queensland, after the sunshine state became the first in Australia to allow the use of the gadgets on bikeways and footpaths.

Qld Transport Minister Scott Emerson said that the ruling would become effective later this year, with Segway riders required to wear an approved helmet.





business events news

26th April 2013

Advertise in BEN

• Cost Effective • Targeted • Easy

For details call us today:
1300 799 220



THE Greater Palm Springs area is made up of nine distinct cities and is easily accessible with over 100 flights daily into Palm Springs International Airport from 21 cities, or less than a two hour drive from Los Angeles.

The Greater Palm Springs Convention & Visitors Bureau is the official tourism agency for the entire Coachella Valley including the cities of Palm Springs, Desert Hot Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta, Indio and Coachella.

The Greater Palm Springs area offers luxurious resorts, pampering spas, over 100 championship golf courses, 600 tennis courts, arts & culture, modern architecture, designer shopping, and a rich dining and nightlife scene, all in the heart of Southern California's desert region.

Not to mention a calendar filled with world-class events including Modernism Week, the Palm Springs International Film Festival, and the Humana Challenge.

More than US\$2 billion has been invested in new and revitalised hospitality amenities and product, and the Greater Palm Springs CVB offers a multitude of meeting and event planning services to ensure your needs and specific requirements are met.

The Palm Springs Convention Centre is walking distance from over 1600 hotel rooms and just blocks away from the heart of Downtown.

And with 350 days of sunshine per year, warm blue skies and lush green settings, what more could you ask for?

Loyalty to carbon credits

THE first hotel loyalty program to commit to a global meetings and events carbon offsetting initiative has been announced by Club Carlson, the Carlson Rezidor Hotel Group's rewards program. Club Carlson will purchase

Connect with Sarawak at IMEX

THE Sarawak Convention Bureau (SCB) has launched a "Telegram of Borneo" as part of their participation at IMEX in Frankfurt which takes place 21-23 May.

An international marketing campaign, the Telegram targets prospective clients across the globe and is an invitation to connect with Sarawak.

Upon receipt of the telegram, prospective clients will need to add "BE Sarawak" on Facebook and join 'The Borneo Telegram' group administered by SCB.

Clients will then be invited to take part in a lucky draw at the Malaysia booth (B200).

Among the prizes are unique Sarawak gifts and a Samsung Galaxy Tab.

"We hope that by sending out the 'Telegram of Borneo', we will be able to connect directly with prospective clients and be in touch with them via social media.

"It's a productive tool for sending updates and keeping in touch from miles across the planet," commented Mike Cannon, managing director of the Sarawak Convention Bureau.

Accor's stay 3 nights, pay 2 special offer

CHOOSE from more than 60 Accor hotels and resorts across Australia and Stay 3 nights and pay for 2.

These include Pullman, Sebel, Sea Temple, Novotel and more.

Plus Qantas Frequent Flyers earn 3 points per dollar spent.

Ends 11:59pm AEST 22 June, unless sold out prior, valid for stays 9 Apr – 30 June.

carbon credits to offset the estimated carbon footprint of 100% of Club Carlson for Planners meetings and events globally, across the group's six brands totalling 1,077 hotels in operation worldwide.

A free service for meeting planners, it will be managed through Carlson Rezidor's new partner, Carbon Footprint Ltd.

Carbon credits will be purchased and invested in renewable energy in India and with the planting of one tree for every tonne of carbon offset in the Great Rift Valley in Kenya.

Any of the 10 million Club Carlson members globally will also have the opportunity to redeem their Gold Points, in various increments, to these projects on an ad-hoc basis.

"Carlson Rezidor takes sustainability seriously," said the company's chief commercial officer, Suzanne Reisterer.



....**AND** another one bites the dust!

After 25 years of riding Sydney's elevated rails, the monorail, which always seemed to tread a controversial path even before it was built in 1988, has posted the date of its last ride – June 30.

It's all part of the SICEEP Darling Harbour precinct redevelopment and is said to pave the way for an expanded light rail system in the city of Sydney.

Monorail riders are being encouraged to take a last ride and to upload a photo of their experience on the Monorail Life in Photos, online picture gallery.

After the closure the interactive section will be archived.

All the details are online at www.monorail.com.au and this website also contains a live countdown clock, ticking away the seconds until the Monorail's ultimate demise.

Mastering the Games

WHEN BEN caught up recently with Virginia Percival, director, The Conference Event & Function Specialists, Sydney at AIME, she talked of being invited to be an agent for the World Masters Games that are being held in Torino, Italy, in August.

To facilitate this part of her business Percival has taken a new business name – Masters Travels Worldwide.

The Masters Games are held every four years and are for competitors between the ages of 35 to 100+ years, with no professional teams allowed.

Second only in size to the Olympic Games, there are 29 core sports, including volleyball, basketball, hockey, tennis, badminton, archery, athletics, swimming, cycling, golf and sailing.

We followed up with Virginia during the week to find out how

she was progressing with this not insignificant project and she said she has been overwhelmed with the response to inquiries.

So far they have booked numerous volleyball, basketball, sailing teams, as well as many swimmers, cyclists and athletes.

"It's a great opportunity for delegates to get fit and for employers to offer a unique incentive experience for their employees and clients," she said.

Find out more about the Games at www.masterstravels.com.au.





Even more Choice

CHOICE Hotels Australasia has announced the expansion of their portfolio over the past year to eleven new regional properties across New South Wales, Victoria and Western Australia.

There are five in New South Wales including the Comfort Inn Bushman's in Parkes, The Quality Suites Boulevard on Beaumont in Newcastle with impressive conference facilities and 32 spacious self-contained rooms.

For the budget conscious corporate traveller there is the Econo Lodge Grafton with free wifi, Albury's Econo Lodge Albury Paddlesteamer and the Econo Lodge Hideaway Armidale.

In Victoria there are four new additions including 'city by the bay' Geelong's Quality Hotel Bayside, the newly refurbished Econo Lodge Statesman Ararat, Econo Lodge Parkville Place in Brunswick and the recently refurbished Comfort Inn Mitchell on Main in Bairnsdale and finally in Western Australia, the Quality Inn Margaret River.

Aileen Cobern, Choice's general manager sales and marketing said, "It's a move that reflects Choice's desire to significantly grow and expand its regional mid market sector offerings in order to benefit from the increased consumer demand for high quality, affordable accommodation."

South Africa up 10%

SOUTH African president Jacob Zuma has announced that last year 9.2 million international tourists visited the country, up 10.2% on the 2011 total.

Australia was one of the key drivers of the increase, up 16.2% overall with a total of 120,315 visitors last year.

New Zealand also grew strongly, up 17% to 22,209.

Europe, which is South Africa's biggest source of overseas tourists, grew 9.5% overall to 1.397 million, while the USA in second place was up 13.6% to 326,643 for the year.

Banyan Tree's new oases

LUXURY hospitality operator Banyan Tree is continuing its steady growth, with the recent opening of the Banyan Tree Lang Co in Vietnam.

Ideal for a high end meeting or incentive, the exclusive property lies on the easily accessible South Central Coast of Vietnam, about an hour from Da Nang International Airport and 90 minutes from either of Hue and Hoi An.

For larger groups there's also an adjacent Angsana property, and the property's director of sales and marketing, Albert Lafuente visited Australia earlier this month to introduce the property to key clients.

Vietnam isn't the only area of growth for Banyan Tree, which also just opened its first luxury hotel in Northern China.

The new Banyan Tree Tianjin Riverside is the group's tenth



Auckland is TRENZing

THE NZ Tourism Industry Association has announced that next year's Tourism Rendezvous New Zealand (TRENZ) event will again be held in Auckland, after a successful 2013 TRENZ wrapped up earlier this week.



Each month Business Manager for inPlace Recruitment, Ben Carnegie, writes his observations from the recruiters perspective to help job hunters find the perfect job.

Ben has over 15 years working in 5 star hotels and the MICE industry and has worked on some of Australia's biggest events - visit www.inplacerecruitment.com.au.

I'M noticing more often, the lack of effort being put into professional references.

It's scary how many people list referee details without actually asking if they are happy to vouch for them. Furthermore there are people who list referees without knowing what they actually think of them.

Reference checks are usually the final stage of the interviewing process but are still just as important as your performance in the interview.

My recommendation for the winning formula to having credible and supportive referees for your resume is:

1. Never burn your bridges - the MICE industry is too small.
2. Have a list of referees and provide ones that appropriately support the role you're going for.
3. Know what your referees will say about you.
4. Inform your referees when they should expect a call and tell them about the role you're interviewing for.
5. Always thank them.

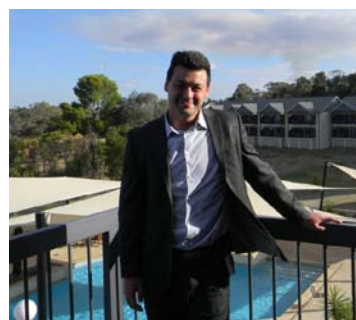
Follow this and there should be no nasty surprises!



Houey moves to resort

ANDREW Houey, formerly with the Adelaide Convention Bureau, has been appointed director of sales and marketing at the Novotel Barossa Valley Resort.

With more than nine years experience in sales and marketing both at strategic and operational levels, Houey's experience in the meetings, conference and events industry and strong sales acumen will stand him in good stead in his new role.



property in the country and builds on Banyan Tree's unique "urban resort" concept.

With 159 elegant rooms, it is located in the former Austrian concession district, on the east bank of the Hai River with easy access to Tianjin's historical and cultural heritage sites.

A variety of room types are available, including the signature Deluxe Riverside Retreat, Premier Riverside Retreat, and Banyan Tree Suite, most of which feature large French windows.

Reap Le Club

JOIN Le Club Accorhotels points based loyalty program before 30 April and earn a bonus of 500 Le Club Accorhotels points.

Members get the full spectrum of rewards with every stay – these include: Incredible Choice – choose from over 2,600 hotels and resorts across 90 countries; Exclusive Privileges – four levels of recognition from Classic to Platinum and Select Rewards – Redeem points for hotel vouchers or airline miles.

CONTACT US:

Publisher
Bruce Piper

Editor
Jill Varley

Contributors/Coordinator
Chantel Housler

For advertising enquiries email Christie-Lee or Chantel email: advertising@businessesnews.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.