



Triumphing over adversity

EVER since I rolled over and acquired a MacBook Air, iPad and an iPhone, I often find myself lying on the floor in my hotel room trying to find a power outlet that is higher than three inches off the floor.

Mind you, to even find a power outlet other than one at the desk that doesn't already have a lamp or clock attached to it, is a triumph over adversity.

In this modern age of technological wizardry, the bane of my life is arriving at a hotel to find there's no WiFi in the room or if there is, I can't connect because no one at reception thought to tell me I needed a code or there's no international adapter plug – worse yet, all three!

Some bright spark suggested I carry an extension cord to accommodate my bulky plug but I object - I already carry an arsenal of gadgetry.

My gripe about this sorry state of affairs to a friend dredged up another thing that can make a perfectly acceptable hotel stay a trial, and that is bathroom mirror lighting.

Two down lights over a mirror do not mirror lighting make, especially if a woman is trying to apply her make-up or a man is having a shave; they tend to cast long and unflattering shadows.

The friend who started me on the mirror rampage has his own gripe about a brand new five-star hotel in Bangkok.

The hotel, he said, had been faultless, until he laid back in the bath for a soak.

When he reached for the soap, there was none and he had to lean out of the bath to get some, and afterwards there was nowhere to put it as the edge of the bath wasn't very wide.

"All it needed was a platform on the edge of the bath or even a hook-over shelf," he said.

As they say, don't sweat the small stuff - trouble is, we do!

Jill



ICC appoints director

BEVERLEY Parker has been appointed the new director of business development for the International Convention Centre (ICC) Sydney.

The \$1b venue is due for completion at the end of 2016, with construction beginning last year.

Parker has been with Dockside Group as executive director of sales and marketing for the past 14 months.

Prior to this, Parker worked from 1999 as the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre director of sales and marketing for five years, and she is currently a board member of Business Events Sydney.

She has also held senior executive roles at Four Seasons and Accor Asia Pacific.

AEG Ogden director of convention centres and ICC Sydney ceo Geoff Donaghy said it was a key appointment to the senior management team and another indicator that the venue was ready to do business.

"In developing and successfully implementing the ICC's annual sales plan, she will work in close collaboration with the convention, exhibition and meeting industries, Business



Events Sydney as well as other key stakeholders."

One of Parker's first assignments would be to oversee ICC Sydney's presence at the IMEX Trade Show in Frankfurt in May, he said.

AEG Ogden will operate the ICC, the development of which was undertaken through a Public Private Partnership with the Darling Harbour Live consortium.

Korea chooses Aus

TOURISM Australia has said there have been solid incentive bookings from Korea for the next two years, with more than a dozen incentives secured for the country this year, in various industries.

Managing director John O'Sullivan said this reflected the country's interest in Australia as a business events destination, and that this and next year, a number of Korean incentive bookings had been confirmed, ranging from 100 to 1,000 delegates from various industries, including electronics, IT and banking.

This upswing in bookings was consistent with Tourism Australia research among corporate decision makers in Korea which showed that Australia was ranked number one against 45 other countries, O'Sullivan said.

The country's attributes include food and wine offerings and natural environments.

The North Asia Showcase is being held today in Seoul and includes 10 Australian business events industry partners, with the aim of bringing the best of Australia's business events products to important partners.

Accor hotel specials

BOOK before 15 Apr for stays until 31 May, if you want to get three nights for the price of two at more than 2200 Accor hotels.

For instance, there are offers in Sydney from \$258 for three nights, in Phuket from \$65 for three nights, in Hong Kong from \$157 for three nights and in Bali from \$66 for nights.

Other offers include an up to 30% discount if you book 30 days in advance, available at most brand hotels including Sofitel, Pullman, Novotel and Mercure.

For more information, visit www.accorhotels.com.

Four pages today

BEN has three pages of editorial plus a full page from: ([click](#))

• BridgeClimb Sydney

Aquire double points

AMERICAN Express has said that businesses who use its American Express Qantas Corporate Card to book flights with Qantas, Emirates or American Airlines will earn double the points offered through the Aquire program.

This meant businesses could choose either the Qantas rebate or double Aquire points on eligible flights when using the Corporate Card to pay for employee travel, American Express global corporate payments ANZ general manager Christine Wakefield said.

For more, [CLICK HERE](#).

Love is in the details.



Adam loves being a chef.

From sourcing the freshest and highest quality local ingredients to creating a world class dining experience for our guests, no detail is unchecked to ensure the perfect food is created and plated every time. From intricate degustation menus to creating the ultimate macaroon, the award winning team at the GCCEC delivers the ultimate culinary experience.



PHONE: 07 5504 4000



business events news

7th April 2014

Pre-tours pique interest

AIME'S pre-tour program has piqued the interest of attendees, with 54% of survey respondents saying they would "definitely" bring business to the Melbourne or regional Victoria region.

There were 227 participants in the program and of these, 75%, or about 170, responded to a survey given out on the day or emailed afterwards, the Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) said.

Of these respondents, 54% said the pre-touring had influenced their decision to bring business to the area.

According to the survey, nearly all participants were satisfied with their visit and 48% said the program had positively changed their perception of the state as a meetings and conference destination.

The pre tour options were up five from last year at 19 to choose from and half the survey respondents were from Australia, with nearly 40% from the Asia Pacific and Middle East.

MCB ceo Karen Bolinger said the survey results proved the program was "very effective" in generating business for Victoria.

Suites for Barcelona

MANDARIN Oriental Barcelona has added 17 new suites and five more rooms to its inventory.

This brings the total room count to 120, with the new additions ranging from 44 to 124 sqm in size.

The hotel also has a 'Suite Temptations' package available until July and able to be booked from tomorrow, which is a three night offer with various benefits including spa credit, daily buffet breakfast and an extra complimentary night.

For more, go to www.mandarinoriental.com.

Bridgeclimb flashing

IT may have been a week ago but its worth reporting of the eight climbers who were flash mobbed on Sydney Harbour Bridge for April Fool's Day.

The unsuspecting climbers began ascending to 134 m above the Sydney Harbour for what they believed to be a traditional BridgeClimb experience.

When they reached the top they were surrounded from all angles by a 30 person strong flash mob who launched into a synchronised routine to songs by Pharrell, Katy Perry and Australia's own Justice Crew.

To view a video of the mob at work, **CLICK HERE**.

A Master stroke

A RANGE of culinary holidays which smack of a good corporate reward has been released by Cox & Kings in partnership with MasterChef.

The tours feature local culinary experts and are accompanied by some of MasterChef Australia's contestants.



For instance, Kate Bracks, winner of MasterChef Australia series three in 2011, will be accompanying the inaugural launch tour to Italy in September, heading through Tuscany, Florence, Rome, San Gimignano and Venice.

Cox & Kings Australia ceo Caroline Kennedy said the partnership made the most of Cox & Kings' expertise at organising special interest tours worldwide.

Other MasterChef Travel tours for 2014 to be joined by MasterChef Australia contestants include England, Vietnam, Mexico and India.

For more information contact info@masterchef-travel.com.au.

What a waste!

DELEGATES at the Townsville Enterprise Tourism and Events Industry Development Conference helped turn food waste into more than 200 litres of bio-fertiliser using a locally developed Bio-Regen mobile unit.

Townsville Enterprise tourism and events general manager Patricia O'Callaghan said this was part of the 10 Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs recently launched by the Townsville Enterprise Convention Bureau.

Throughout the two day conference, 150 delegates placed unwanted food into special bins.

Delegates felt it was an easy way to make a difference and appreciated that the food wasn't just going to landfill but was being converted into something useful, O'Callaghan said.

The Bio-Regen unit processed almost 80kg of food scraps, generating 234 litres of bio-fertiliser, which will be used by local farmers.

The process saved the equivalent of 70.2 kg of carbon dioxide from being emitted into the atmosphere, the organisation said.

The Bio-Regen unit is available for use at conferences across the region through Townsville Enterprise Convention Bureau's Food 2 Food CSR initiative.

O'Callaghan said a number of delegates had indicated they were interested in implementing the Bio-Regen unit into their business or event.

Hansar deal

THE Hansar Bangkok has a special meeting package available for full or half-day use.

The full day package is THB2,000 per person per day for a minimum of 20 guests.

The half day package is THB1,500 per person per day for a minimum of 20 guests

These include complimentary use of the meeting room from 9am to 6pm, wireless internet access, LCD projector and audio visual equipment, DVD player, plasma TV, whiteboard and flipchart and one lunch featuring a choice of one of chef Charles' special set menus.

The deal is valid to 30 Sep.

For more information or to book, visit the hotel's website at www.hansarbangkok.com.



ONE of New York's newest hotels, The Eventi, has everyone talking.

A boutique Kimpton Hotel, it has reportedly enlivened an already vibrant neighbourhood, adding artful public spaces, luxurious accommodations and extraordinary meeting and event spaces.

What makes it so special for the business traveller is that the hotel goes beyond carrying spare chargers behind the front desk for guests that have forgotten theirs or even their laptop - it has launched an entire Business Bar for absent-minded gadget hoarders like us.

While the "bar" is not an actual physical bar, the offerings are very real, from a selection of Apple products (iPads, iPad Minis, and MacBook Pros) to reading tablets (Kindle or Nook) and even digital cameras and a GoPro.

Plus, there's a plethora of tech accessories available too, including the all-important chargers.

All guests need to do is stop by the front desk to reserve their item of choice.

The amenities are available on loan for the length of your stay.



Book 'em Danno

THE Meetings and Events Australia (MEA) 2014 National Conference has some newly released Air Asia fares.

They are Sydney-Kuala Lumpur return from \$391, Melbourne-Kuala Lumpur return from \$395, Adelaide-Kuala Lumpur return from \$410 and Perth-Kuala Lumpur return from \$331.

For more, **CLICK HERE**.



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Dare to discover

ADULTS who lead busy lives and find themselves wanting to take time out to discover new skills might be interested to learn of Dare Retreats & Workshops who create bespoke programs for groups of 10 or more people.

Their first retreat, named 'Discover', is designed to immerse guests in the culture of Bali while discovering inner peace.

The three night program runs from 17 to 19 Jul and is being held at the luxurious five star Amandari Resort in Ubud, Bali.

Activities include daily yoga, happiness workshops with Dare facilitators and leading psychologists.

Package price US\$1350 a night per twin share or US\$2,000 a night per single.

Find out more by emailing
sales@dareretreats.com.

NZ middles along



NEW Zealand's tourism marketing, including Hobbit tie-ins, has been cited as driving growth in the country's visitor arrivals.

Research commissioned by Tourism New Zealand (TNZ) and completed by the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) showed that growth in arrivals from key long-haul Western visitor markets outstripped the markets' economic recovery, TNZ said.

Tourism New Zealand chief executive Kevin Bowler said the research could reasonably be attributed to tourism marketing.

"The 6% growth we saw for the year ending December 2013, and the continuing growth of 7.3% through to year-end February 2014, is the kind of growth not

seen in a decade.

"What NZIER found was that marketing factors were having a considerable impact in five long-haul markets.

"And the strongest of these factors was the impact of New Zealand's association with Middle-earth and the new Hobbit films."

This finding was backed up by the Oct-Dec 2013 International Visitor Survey (IVS) that showed 14% of holiday arrivals said The Hobbit trilogy was a factor in influencing their decision to visit New Zealand, Bowler said.

Other factors included improving economic conditions following the Global Financial Crisis, exchange rates and changes in air capacity, as well as country specific taxes.



Getting to Know: InterContinental Sanctuary Cove

by: Jill Varley

WHAT needs to be understood about InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort is that it has industry street cred by the bucket load.

It was here, 25 years ago at the opening of Sanctuary Cove, a purpose built residential community and resort set on the water at the northern end of the Gold Coast, that Frank Sinatra, Whitney Houston and Australia's top talent entertained 50,000 people at what was staged as 'The Ultimate Event.'

It also included the Ultimate Sporting Events, which saw the world's top golfers and tennis players, including Arnold Palmer and Curtis Strange, Nick Faldo Ivan Lendl, Boris Becker, Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova gather for golf and tennis challenges.

Today, the resort retains all the style and elegance it had when it first attracted these big names and now, a year after IHG took over from Hyatt, a room refurbishment is under way, including new bathrooms.

With 243 rooms and suites, it is set amidst picturesque fountains and lush gardens, and is home to a spectacular one-acre beach lagoon pool.

A magnet for events and conferences and a favourite of pharmaceutical and automotive companies, the resort recently hosted a BMW London conference, which included a dinner on the beach across the Broadwater at McLaren's Landing, on South Stradbroke Island, where they can cater to groups of up to 2,500.

With no shortage of on-property activities, the resort is next door to a Sanctuary Cove Marina where an International Boat Show is held in May each year, a retail precinct with boutique shops and restaurants and two internationally renowned championship golf courses — The Pines and The Palms.

With no shortage of on-site and nearby property activities such as Dreamworld for a private party and the Performance Driving Centre for a unique driving experience, IHG's 'Insiders Collection,' program means delegates get access to unique experiences that tourists never see.

It can deliver speakers such as The Voice's Darren Percival, who does musical workshops, cultural experts and sports heroes and insider community immersion to give added depth to an event.

Corporate Traveller were thrilled with their experience at the resort and said of their conference there - "I will be raving about the InterContinental Sanctuary Cove Resort to all of my colleagues and corporate clients."



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