



## Millions for MEETINGS

TENS of millions of dollars worth of conference and incentive business is expected to be contracted at next month's MEETINGS expo in Auckland.

Last year, the annual event run by Conventions and Incentives New Zealand (CINZ), generated more than \$50 million in business for Kiwi industry suppliers over two-days.

CINZ chief executive, Sue Sullivan, said "the business end of New Zealand's tourism industry is high value with huge growth potential.

"International convention delegates spend an estimated \$350 per night, twice as much as other visitors to New Zealand," she remarked.

Over two million delegates attended 36,000 events in the year ended Mar '16 in the country, and Sullivan expects the figure will only increase.

"This can only grow as our value proposition strengthens, and we gear up for major new convention centre and hotel infrastructure to cater for much larger conventions," she said.

MEETINGS will run on 15-16 Jun at the ASB showgrounds in Auckland - [CLICK HERE](#) to register.

## MGallery by Sofitel

ACCORHOTELS has announced Hotel St Moritz, Queenstown will be positioned under the newly badged MGallery by Sofitel, with rooms & suites to be upgraded.

## More space for MCEC

THE Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) has over the weekend unveiled the design for its upcoming expansion (**BEN** 03 Mar 16).

Nearly 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of flexible, multi-purpose event space including new exhibition halls and additional meeting and banquet rooms are set to be added, increasing the MCEC's overall size to over 70,000m<sup>2</sup>.

Victorian Minister for Tourism and Major Events, Hon John Eren, said the MCEC extension would be a boon for the state.

"This new boost will help our state bid for more events, which will see more people visiting, more jobs created as we become an event stronger state," commented Eren.

MCEC chief executive, Peter King, said the development was

critical to ensuring the venue can continue to accommodate the growing demand for flexible meeting and conference spaces.

"We're thrilled to share our plans, which complete the vision for MCEC as a vibrant, world-class events and entertainment destination," he said.

The development is a part of the South Wharf development project, which will connect visitors and local traders with a new 341-room hotel and multi-storey carparking facilities.

Preliminary works for the project have already begun, with developer and sponsor Plenary appointing contractor Probuild to construct the expansion, with works to be completed in 2018.

## ANZGM heads to Qld

CAIRNS will this week play host to the annual scientific meeting of the Australian and New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine.

Held at the Cairns Convention Centre, more than 400 specialists are expected to attend.

Local Geriatrician, Dr Eddy Strivens, said it was a "great opportunity for our region to provide the backdrop for innovation and research in Geriatric Medicine."

Conference organisers estimate the convention will inject an estimated \$2 million economic benefit to the region.

The ANZGM is this year themed around why women and men age differently.

ANZGM will kick-off on 01 Jun and run through until 03 Jun.

## Luxperience upgrade

LUXPERIENCE today unveiled a series of professional development seminars, which will be available to attending buyers during the exhibition which runs from 19-21 Sep.

The seminars will be focused around technology, wellness/mindfulness and styling, with talks given by fashion authority Henry Weinreich Roth, social media specialist Annabelle Smith and hotelier Anne Biging.

More info on Luxperience [HERE](#).

## Wentworth concept green light



THE New South Wales Government today approved concept plans for the Wentworth Point Rowing Club, a year-round recreational facility situated Inner West of Sydney.

The facility, set to open in 2018, will offer function rooms and club hospitality venues, an on-site restaurant, observation decks and a training gym.

**Pictured** left is an artist's impression of the Wentworth Point Rowing Club.

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## Tourism Portolio/IMS pact

**TOURISM** Portfolio will expand its reach into Central and Eastern Europe, today announcing an exclusive representation deal with Vienna headquartered DMC specialist, IMS.

IMS owner and ceo, Michael Schillinger, said the group sees "significant potential" in the Australian MICE market, and the deal with Tourism Portfolio is "an important step in promoting the company's unique products and services".

"IMS offers vast experience in handling incentives and corporate meetings in Central and Eastern Europe, and with Donna Kessler and Tourism Portfolio as an extension of our sales and marketing team we look forward to increasing our presence in the Australasian market," remarked Schillinger.

Tourism Portfolio's Donna Kessler said The Australasian MICE market is keen to embrace safe, new and easy European destinations.

"Cities and towns across Central and Eastern Europe offer this multi-faceted appeal, with fascinating culture, picturesque scenery and first-class touring and dining experiences supported by sophisticated, state-of-the-art infrastructure," said Kessler.

The arrangement will officially come into play from 01 Jun.

### Chef takes top prize

**EPICURE'S** executive pastry chef at the Melbourne Cricket Ground, Deniz Karaca, has been awarded 2016 Savour Patisserie of the Year.

Karaca beat a host of overseas talent to take the top prize.

The competition was held at Foodservice Australia in Sydney last week.

Next year's comp will be held in Melbourne.

### ITB Asia Halal Travel

**ITB** Asia has partnered with Crescent Rating to present the 'Halal in Travel - Asia Summit' conference, which aims to share insights on how delegates can strengthen their position in the niche industry.

The dedicated workshops will share first hand experience on developing Muslim-friendly travel packages as well as offer Halal fine dining suggestions at hotels and restaurants.

Halal in Travel - Asia Summit will be held in Singapore at Marina Bay Sands on 19 Oct.

**CLICK HERE** to register.

## USANA to Queensland

**THE** Cairns and Great Barrier Reef region will play host to more than 900 Asian delegates for the USANA Asia Pacific Growth Incentive.

The seven-day trip will see attendees visit Port Douglas and Daintree to experience the region's twin World Heritage areas, the Great Barrier Reef and Wet Tropics Rainforest.

Director of Business & Tourism Events Rosie Douglas said the region was thrilled to host such a high-profile event which would bring significant economic benefits to the local industry.

"Cairns & Great Barrier Reef will be rolling out the red carpet to make delegates feel at home and ensure they return with the memories of a lifetime," she said.

The USANA Asia Pacific Growth Incentive group will be in the region until 01 Jun.

## Bula to Castaway Fiji

**CASTAWAY** Island Fiji is set to reopen on Wed following a three month clean up and renovation after Tropical Cyclone Winston.

A number of bures and public areas have been either refurbished or rebuilt, whilst the resort's outdoor kitchen has undergone an upgrade.

## Kauri Cliffs retreat

**THE** Lodge at Kauri Cliffs in New Zealand has introduced the Meet and Retreat Package.

The deal includes accom in a suite with comp wi-fi; daily pre-dinner drinks and canapes, dinner and breakfast; meeting space with meeting stationery and NZ\$100 lodge credit towards food & beverages.

Available from now until 30 Nov - **CLICK HERE** to enquire.

## Tas backs MICE sector

**THE** Tasmanian Government has allocated an additional \$600,000 in funding in its 2016-17 budget to increase the state's yield in the lucrative business events market.

Business Events Tasmania (BET) chief executive officer, Stuart Nettlefold, said the investment shows that the State Government has confidence in the MICE sector.

"It's great to see the potential of our sector is being recognised at this level and it demonstrates the current strength of the industry in Tasmania," he said.

"The business event delegate is the highest spender in the visitor economy, a fact that hasn't been lost on the State Government in their push to see targeted growth in the sector."

Funding will be rolled out at \$150,000 pa, boosting annual State Government Funding to reach over \$790,000 pa.

## MEHK Rewards!

**HONG** Kong Tourism Board is raising its appeal to the MICE market, teaming with industry partners to launch the 2016/17 Hong Kong Rewards! Program.

Through Meetings & Exhibitions Hong Kong (MEHK), the tourism organisation has aligned with hoteliers and major attractions to offer more discounts & privileges than ever before for delegates from arrival to departure.

New Hong Kong Rewards! Program inclusions consist of free cocktail receptions at designated hotel venues, complimentary cultural performances, a group photo at Hong Kong Disneyland, up to HKD\$2,000 in shopping & dining discounts at about 400 airport restaurants and shops for each MICE delegate - more **HERE**.



**AIRBNB** is offering die-hard Teenaged Mutant Ninja Turtle fans the chance to spend a night in the crime fighters' secret lair.

Situated in Manhattan New York, the three-bedroom lair has been listed for just \$10 per night, and can comfortably accommodate up to six guests.

The high-tech dojo features a glow in the dark basketball court, retro arcade and television wall.

A donation will be made to PACER's National Bullying Prevention Centre for each guest that spends a night at the lair.



**Business Events News** is Australia's newest online publication dedicated to the vibrant meetings, incentives, conferences and events sector.

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