



14

**GUIDE TO**  
Convention centres



18

**DESTINATIONS**  
South Korea, Malaysia  
and Macau

# TTG associations

October 2018  
MCI (P) 048/05/2018

## Chief of all chefs

Mohd Kamaruddin Adnin, president of the Professional Culinaire Association, counts the many positive outcomes of hosting the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2018 for his organisation and his professional peers in Malaysia



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Research shows taking a  
break outdoors increases  
attention span by 20%.

Meet in the Philippines.





# INSPIRING INCENTIVES

Blue is the color of the Philippines' skies, hanging over rivers and landscapes. The Philippines is renowned for its nautical wonders, treasured by locals and visitors alike. With a myriad of UNESCO Heritage Sites, it's no wonder it garnered a reputation for beachside barbecues, storybook sunsets, and unbeatable experiences for event groups worldwide.

With a year-round tropical climate attracting visitors during any season, a vibrant culture infused with both native and global influences, and several UNESCO World Heritage sites, the Philippines offers memorable experiences for incentive travel.

The Philippines is diverse in the truest sense of the word. Be awed by diving into the waters teeming with wildlife in Palawan. Travel back in time when exploring the historic churches of Cebu and Bohol. Sit back, relax and enjoy the tropical sun on the powdery sand of Boracay. Experience the rush and enjoy the urban luxuries such as championship-calibre golf courses, lavish spas, sophisticated shopping malls, and spirited nightlife Manila has to offer.

With all kinds of attractions and activities located within or near five-star MICE facilities, the options are endless for incentives and team-building alike.

The country pairs its sights, sounds and vibes with the characteristic warmth and hospitality of its people. With an edge in skilled workforce behind its flourishing tourism, driven Filipino professionals find it second nature to blend the work and the fun to produce the so-called Filipino touch.

*Find out how the Tourism Promotions Board Philippines can provide services to complement your next MICE event. Visit [www.tpb.gov.ph](http://www.tpb.gov.ph).*



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# Give me more than just a space

I have a confession. Cavernous convention and exhibition centres with plain interiors of raw concrete walls and floors, and steel beams and fittings scare me. They remind me of school and solemn exam halls, and you can imagine I was often a nervous child.

They make the serious content discussed at trade events held within their walls even more grave.

They make me want to escape their confines once I've gotten the content and contacts I came for.

But increasingly, convention and exhibition centres with such interiors are becoming a rare find in Asia-Pacific.

I was impressed when I first stepped into the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) for AIME 10 years ago. It was cavernous, but it didn't feel confined; the massive windows brought the warm sun and green views outdoors in. Splashes of red and the wood accents on walls made the space endearing and inviting.

Along the way I came to admire even more convention and exhibition centres that cared about their looks and living spaces for visitors – MAX Atria at Singapore EXPO features rich, green lawns that are a relief for tired eyes and meeting rooms that sport warm palettes; the

revamped Suntec Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre, which has since been given sleek black interiors and chic carpets, so much so it feels like an upscale dance club; and the amazing ICC Sydney, with its interiors and exteriors designed to reflect its location along Darling Harbour and parkland as well as the inclusion of many art pieces.

These venues didn't chase me away. They made me want to hang around for a little longer for friendly chats with industry friends or just to go through my notes and get inspiration for my next editorial feature. They were good living spaces.

And I think it is important that convention and exhibition centres be inviting living spaces as more people spend their waking moments meeting their peers and taking in new knowledge in such places.

Hotels have all acknowledged that a comfortable environment encourages a thinking mind, and have invested careful effort to design inviting meeting venues for their clients. It is great to see this happening in more convention and exhibition centres in Asia.

For our Guide To feature this month (page 14-17), we take you on a journey around the region to pick out some of the most inviting convention and exhibition centres. Enjoy!



**Karen Yue**  
Group Editor



## PROFILE

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### Chief of all chefs

Mohd Kamaruddin Adnin, president of the Professional Culinaire Association, counts the many positive outcomes of hosting the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2018 for his organisation and his professional peers in Malaysia. By [S Puvaneswary](#)



## GUIDE TO

# 14

### Convention centres

*TTG* association reporters sniff out convention centres in the region that have paid careful attention to aesthetics and are reaping commercial benefits



## DESTINATIONS



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### South Korea // A little gem of a congress destination

A relatively late-starter in South Korea's race for business and association events, heritage city Gyeongju catches up quickly with several wins. By [Karen Yue](#)



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### Malaysia // Setting up for victory

Sarawak has gained global awareness from its successful hosting of the ICCA Congress in 2016, writes [S Puvaneswary](#)



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### Macau // Bringing the world closer

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is expected to improve Macau's accessibility and uplift her association meetings potential, writes [Prudence Lui](#)

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# Oil & gas tradeshow get creative to survive



**By Ruth Chen**

The global oil and gas industry is starting to rebound this year, with industry events seeing improved attendance alongside efforts by show organisers to present stronger content.

During the oil price downturn in 2016-2017, companies reported massive layoffs, a complete freeze on staff

events, reduction on assigned exhibition delegates as well as restriction on meetings to a when-necessary basis.

Marking the turn, the industry's biggest gathering – the annual Offshore Technology Conference, sponsored by 13 industry organisations and societies that have a hand in the



**Ballard: improved content will be a lure**

programming – achieved above-average attendance with 2,300 exhibitors and more than 61,300 attendees during its 50th edition in May 2018.

A South-east Asian oil and gas association secretariat member who declined to be named, told *TTGassociations* that general participation at events has increased by an estimated five per cent since last November. She expects attendance at her upcoming biennial exhibition in 2019 to increase by 10 to 15 per cent over the 2017 edition.

According to Stephen Ballard of BCM Public Relations, who organises oil and gas events in Asia, exhibition companies have been creative in carving out business opportunities at their events.

For example, the Africa Oil Week in November will have a special segment to look at monetising exploration projects in Africa.

Masterclasses have also been added to the biennial International Oil and Gas Industry Exhibition and Conference, taking place this November in Singapore. Such programmes are aimed at providing discussions on critical issues, challenges as well as recovery strategies.

The conference producer is expecting a much better turnout this year, although they did not indicate estimates.

## Anderes Fourdy is chosen PCO for Asian Pacific Digestive Week in KL

PCO Anderes Fourdy has been appointed by the Malaysian Society of Gastroenterology & Hepatology (MSGH) for the upcoming Asian Pacific Digestive Week 2020, which will be held in Kuala Lumpur in September 2020.

Fu Kei Cheong, co-founder of Anderes Fourdy, said: "Our immediate task is to chart the direction to achieve the objectives of the MSGH Local Organising Committee. This includes providing strategic financial goals and studying the many venue options in Kuala Lumpur to provide the best return on investment for MSGH."

Cheong said Kuala Lumpur had been chosen for the event as it had good air connectivity within the Asia-Pacific region, in addition to the appeal of a big metropolis. Close to 3,000 delegates are expected to attend the event.

Established three years ago, Anderes

Fourdy has also been involved in other major international congresses on the abdomen medical sciences held in Malaysia such as the 14<sup>th</sup> Endoscopic and Laparoscopic Surgeons of Asia

Congress 2018, and the 17<sup>th</sup> Congress of Asia Pacific Federation of Coloproctology 2019.

It has also played a prominent role of working with medical sciences non-governmental organisations in delivering quality congresses in Malaysia such as the International Forum on Disability Management 2016, 11<sup>th</sup>

International Symposium on Paediatric Pain 2017 and 22<sup>nd</sup> World Congress of Enterostomal Therapists Biennial Congress 2018.

The Asian Pacific Digestive Week was last held in Kuala Lumpur in 2010.

– S Puvaneswary



**Fu: chart direction to achieve objectives**

## PCMA launches crisis comms guide

Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) has launched a new guide for business event strategists on how to confidently handle communications in a crisis.

Based on a 15-point toolkit, the guide aims to be a companion for those involved in planning a range of events. It focuses on the impact poor communications can have on a crisis – or a stressful situation.

The actions the guide recommends are grouped in three phases; pre-crisis or day to day business strategic planning; during a crisis – who handles it and how; and post crisis – responsibilities, resources and recovery.

It also stresses the importance of asking 'what if...?' across the business, making sure that plans can respond adequately. The guide also addresses the importance of re-building a reputation post-crisis, and talks about how good communication skills are critical throughout the process.

The crisis communications guide will be distributed to PCMA's network of contacts throughout North America, Asia and EMEA.



## { Bureau brief }

# Dubai rolls out first getaway for association leaders

The Dubai Association Centre (DAC), a joint initiative of the Dubai Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Dubai Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) and Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), will host the city's first-ever Association Leaders Getaway.

Taking place from December 10-13, it follows on from the success of the first Dubai Association Conference, held in late 2017, which focused on building a strengthened community and robust ecosystem for associations in the region.

The Getaway is designed to offer a unique platform for networking, trials and discussions, all set amid immersive experiences and scenic settings around the city. Some of the confirmed sessions include Association Insomnia: What Keeps Association Executives Up at Night?, a workshop aimed at identifying workable solutions to overcome current challenges; Youth Integration, which looks at how associations are becoming more appealing to the next generation; and Working Together to Advance Humanity, a panel discussion led by the Dubai Future Foundation.

Issam Kazim, CEO of DTCM, said: "Following the inaugural Dubai Association Conference last year, the city has witnessed a marked increase in interest from association representatives, both regionally and globally. The Association Leaders Getaway is an effort to harness



this interest and create a platform for association members to network, share knowledge and best practice, in an engaging setting, beyond the confines of meeting rooms."

The four-day event will bring together 60 attendees representing local, regional and international associations, in addition to Dubai Government representatives, university students and academics, as well as association volunteer leaders. It will also help to curate themes and topics of interest for the next Dubai Association Conference in 2019.

## NT draws first long-term BE strategy

KPMG, in partnership with business events specialist Michael Cannon, is developing the first long-term business events strategy for the Northern Territory (NT) in Australia, where the NT government's A\$103 million (US\$76 million) Turbocharging Tourism stimulus package includes A\$2.33 million to support business event bids.

The strategy will guide the development of NT's business events sector through to 2030, and articulate a shared vision and framework for the sustainable economic growth of business events in the state.

## Seoul MICE Alliance grows

The Seoul MICE Alliance (SMA) gained 39 new members in August, bringing the public-private coalition representing Seoul's business events industry to a total of 299.

New members include Seoul's Oil Tank Culture Park, an oil reserve transformed into a cultural event complex for events; S factory, a venue established in the walls of a former textile factory; and recently-opened hotels such as Novotel Ambassador Seoul Dongdaemun Hotel & Residences and RYSE.

## ICCA Congress 2018 delegates lends support to eyesight charity



Delegates at the 57<sup>th</sup> ICCA Congress, taking place in Dubai later this year, will have the opportunity to support a local charity that prevents blindness and visual impairment globally, with organisers partnering with Noor Dubai Foundation on a number of initiatives.

Meetings industry professionals from around the world are set to descend on Dubai when the annual flagship event comes to the Middle East for the first time, from November 11-14.

On the morning of November 12, the ICCA Charity Run'N'Walk will take place along the Arabian Gulf coastline at La Mer. With the choice of a three kilometre run or a 1.5 km walk, participants will be encouraged to make a donation to Noor Dubai Foundation.

In addition, delegates will have the opportunity to donate old pairs of glasses, including prescription glasses and sunglasses to Noor Dubai Foundation who will re-lens and distribute these to those in need through its mobile eye clinic campaigns.

## Healthcare experts pick Brisbane

The 15<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Nursing Informatics, to be held at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre (BCEC) in 2020, is expected to showcase Australia's leading role in digital health.

It will be held in conjunction with Australia's Annual Health Informatics Conference, with the two events expected to attract some 1,500 delegates.

BCEC and key convention partners, Tourism and Events Queensland and Brisbane Marketing, collaborated with the Health Informatics Society of Australia (HISA), Australia's peak professional body for the digital health community, to secure the event for Brisbane.

Commenting on the event win, tourism industry development minister Kate Jones said: "This event is an opportunity for Queensland to showcase its

world-class business events' facilities and be part of this important medical conference.

"Leaders from across the country and around the world in this medical field will travel to Brisbane to learn from the best in the industry."

The congress will be an opportunity to highlight Brisbane and Australia's strengths in the sector and to further engage local universities, associations and government in Australia through networking, knowledge sharing and collaboration.

CEO of HISA, Louise Schaper, expressed in a statement her hopes that the congress would act as a catalyst to grow the

digital nursing community even further.

She added Australia was very strong in the digital health space with 98 per cent of Australian GPs involved in the digital management of clinical care.



**Schaper: catalyst to grow digital nursing community**



ONE MINUTE with IT&CM Events

## Here's What We Learnt From IT&CMA 2018's Dedicated Association Days & More

18 to 20 September | Bangkok



We embraced the legacy of association meetings leaving footprints that impact society and the economy in host destinations

Session:  
Meetings Legacy: More Than Bed Nights  
By GainingEdge



We got into a hot debate over PCOs for events

Session:  
Why Do You Need A PCO When You Can Organise Your Own Conference!!  
By ICCA and World PCO Alliance



We looked into GDPR and the importance of member data protection

Session:  
GDPR: Crucial Steps in Building Trust and Value  
By SITE



We celebrated the role of women in the workforce

Session:  
ICCA-TTG Passionate Breakfast  
By ICCA and TTGmice



We explored events on board cruises and modern incentive ideas

Asian MICE Cruise Conference Incentive Forums



We learnt how to engage and capture the attention of our audience in new and experiential ways

Keynote Address  
Experiential Marketing Forums

A thorough knowledge-building programme for Associations, by Associations, happened at IT&CMA 2018. Get the full perspective at [www.itcma.com](http://www.itcma.com)

Will we see you at the next series in Shanghai, China? IT&CM China 2019's Association Days take place on 19 -21 March 2019 in Shanghai, China. Register to attend online! [www.itcmchina.com](http://www.itcmchina.com)

# Looking beyond the benefits of tourism

Association meetings leave a wide-ranging legacy for the host destination, but they are still viewed as a component of tourism. By **Octavio B Peralta**



Associations hold events and related activities within their own country and in some cases, bid for or host international events for their affiliated overseas associations or federations.

Traditionally, the tourism authorities record these association events within the context of tourism, such as tourist arrivals, hotel room bookings, shopping and restaurant receipts, etc. However, current discussions in the association community are focusing on the "beyond tourism" aspects, which among others, consist of knowledge and technology transfer, sustainable development, and other related topics.

Such shift in thinking on the long-term contribution of association events to the local host destination is a good thing. For one, this increases the significance and benefits of association events to both the destination and to the organising association.

Secondly, this elevates the discussion and builds up the support system for the country's policymakers to include – aside from the tourism portfolio – the education, investment, and economic portfolios. By expanding the support ecosystem for association events, these key stakeholders can reap the benefits that such events have long been contributing to the country's economic development.

It has been a long-held belief that business meetings are a major source of revenue for the destination. Economic impact studies released have proven to governments that these events were

indeed key revenue generators, citing amounts in the billions of dollars. However, these reports are still very much anchored on travel expenditures which still reinforce the concept that these meetings are primarily about tourism spending.

A scoping study on events that covered beyond tourism benefits was published by Business Events Sydney in May 2010. It cited the long-term economic and societal benefits and legacies of such events. The study mentioned, among others, collaborative learning, social interaction, workplace and industry policy improvement – all of which have provided a positive impact on the destination and its reputation.

I think it is high time for more associations to go beyond the traditional tourism-focused approach taken for their meetings and events, and hope that economic policymakers would soon have the same view.



*Octavio B Peralta is the secretary general of Manila-based Association of Development Financing Institutions in Asia and the Pacific. As an experi-*

*enced professional association executive, he contributes his time and knowledge to furthering the profession. He founded of the Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives, and initiated the formation of the Asia-Pacific Federation of Association Organizations.*





# WHICH CAMPAIGN CAUGHT YOUR EYE?

## Vote For 2018's Most Inspiring Media Campaigns



### PRINT CAMPAIGN

**Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority**  
(TTG Show Daily: PATA Travel Mart 2017)

**Accor Asia Pacific**  
(TTG Show Daily: ITB Berlin 2018)

**Finnair**  
(TTG Asia 2017)

**Frasers Hospitality**  
(TTG Travel Awards Supplement 2017)

**International Convention Centre Sydney**  
(TTGmice 2018)

**Small Luxury Hotels of The World**  
(TTG Asia Luxury 2017)

**Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
(TTGmice 2018)

**Tourism Authority of Thailand**  
(TTG Show Daily: ATF 2018)

### DIGITAL CAMPAIGN

**Conrad Bangkok**  
(www.ttg-mice.com 2018)

**Eco Meridian**  
(TTGmice e-News 2018, TTGmice eDM 2018)

**Hong Kong Disneyland**  
(TTG Asia e-Daily 2018)

**Resorts World At Sentosa**  
(www.ttgasia.com 2018, TTG Asia e-Daily 2018)

**TravelPort**  
(www.ttgasia.com 2018 and TTG Asia e-Daily 2017 and 2018)

### CONTENT MARKETING

**Catalan Tourist Board**  
(Video Advertorial: TTG Asia Luxury / ILTM Asia-Pacific 2018)

**Dubai Corporation For Tourism & Commerce Marketing**  
(4pp Supplement: TTGmice 2017)

**JTB**  
(6pp Supplement: TTG Show Daily: IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific 2018)

**Korea Tourism Organization**  
(3pp Advertorial: TTGmice 2018)

**Resorts World At Sentosa**  
(8pp Supplement: TTG India 2018)

**Singapore Tourism Board: MICE Excellence Awards**  
(4pp Supplement: TTGmice 2018)

### CREATIVE MEDIA BUY

**Dream Cruises**  
(2pp Coverwrap: TTG Asia 2017)

**Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute**  
(Belly Band: TTGmice 2017)

**Thailand Convention & Exhibition Bureau**  
(4pp Coverwrap: TTG Show Daily: IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific 2018)

**Thai Airways**  
(Double Page Spread Series Ad: TTG Show Daily: ATF 2018)

### INTEGRATED MARKETING CAMPAIGN

**Avis Budget Group**  
(TTG Asia Luxury 2018, TTG Asia 2017 and 2018, TTG Show Daily: PATA 2018, TTG Asia Digital Pushmail 2017, Sponsored Posts on www.ttgasia.com 2017 and 2018, Sponsored Posts on www.ttg-mice.com 2017)

**Best Western International**  
(TTG Asia 2017 and 2018, TTG Show Daily: ITB Asia 2017, TTG Asia e-Daily 2017 and 2018, www.ttgasia.com 2017 and 2018)

**Centara Hotels & Resorts**  
(TTG Asia 2018, TTGmice 2017, TTG Show Daily: IT&CMA and CTW Asia-Pacific 2017 and 2018, www.ttgasia.com 2018)

**Hilton International Asia Pacific**  
(TTGmice 2018, TTGmice Planner 2018 online listing, TTGmice e-News 2018, www.ttg-mice.com 2018, Sponsored Posts on www.ttg-mice.com 2018, TTGmice eDM 2018)

**Philippine Tourism Promotion Board**  
(TTGassociations 2018, TTG Show Daily: ATF 2018, TTG Show Daily: ITB Berlin 2018, TTG Asia e-Daily 2018)

**Resorts World At Sentosa**  
(TTGmice 2017 and 2018, TTG India 2017 and 2018 – 8pp Supplement, TTG Asia e-Daily 2018, www.ttgasia.com 2018)

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## MITEC unveils VR tours of its facility

The Malaysia International Trade & Exhibition Centre (MITEC) has taken event engagement to the next level with the unveiling of its immersive Virtual Reality (VR) experience.

The VR-based app will bring MITEC's venues to life with a 360-degree view, presented through a special headset device utilising the latest standalone VR, Oculus Go with improved visual clarity, comfort, quality audio and a built-in software. MITEC plans to use this technology at tradeshow, roadshows and sales calls.

The Oculus Go rises above the various competitors in the mobile VR category because for the first time, it allows both Android and iOS users run VR content as it

does not need to be paired with either a mobile phone or be tethered to a PC.

The VR headset allows the entire 45,000m<sup>2</sup> venue to be explored virtually and also provide users with an interactive navigation to get a feel for nearby attractions and amenities. For instance, meeting planners can expand the immersive experience to also discover Kuala Lumpur city.

Gunther Beissel, CEO of MITEC, concluded: "When it comes to planning events, organisers can view virtual experiences of exhibition halls and the venue's capacity to get a life-like idea of their event at MITEC will be like."

## First Oakwood property in Osaka opens

Oakwood Hotel & Apartments Shin-Osaka has joined the portfolio of 12 other Oakwood-branded serviced apartments in Japan.

The first international serviced apartment brand in the Umeda and Shin-Osaka areas offers both a total of 185 units, comprising 59 hotel rooms and 126 fully furnished serviced apartments.

Guests will have access to facilities such as a 24-hour gym, a meeting room, two laundry rooms, a car park, and the all-day Café O. Oakwood Hotel & Apartments Shin-Osaka will also provide services such as concierge and reception services and housekeeping.

The property is situated within walking distance to Shin-Osaka Station, the gateway to Japan's Kansai region.



## Kota Kinabalu Marriott welcomes guests to Sabah

The Kota Kinabalu Marriott Hotel in Sabah, has opened along Jalan Tun Fuad Stephens on the Malaysian city's waterfront.

The property offers 332 guestrooms and suites decked out in a contemporary design that pays homage to the rich heritage of Borneo's Kadazandusun tribe.

The property has also been designed to meet the needs of Malaysia's growing business events market, offering some 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of versatile event space. Function space include five rooms, and a Grand Ballroom that can accommodate up to 650 guests.

Recreational facilities include an outdoor infinity pool with views of the South China Sea, a 24-hour gym, and a spa. There are also five F&B options, ranging from the Japanese teppanyaki dining room to the rooftop bar.



## New conference hotel opens near KLIA

Mövenpick Hotels & Resorts has made its debut in Malaysia with a modern hotel and conference centre close to Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA).

Located just a few minutes from KLIA and neighbouring KLIA2, the hotel features 333 rooms and suites with the latest in-room technology. The Executive Rooms and Suites offer access to an Executive Lounge with a daily buffet and a variety of additional amenities.

Mövenpick Hotel & Convention Centre KLIA boasts extensive meetings and event facilities as well. Directly accessible from the hotel, the convention centre comprises a 1,287m<sup>2</sup> open exhibition space, 777m<sup>2</sup> circular hall, seven discussion rooms, 10 seminar rooms and the 2,386m<sup>2</sup> Main Hall, which can be divided into four separate spaces.

The main hotel building also has four meeting rooms and two boardrooms, which range from 35m<sup>2</sup> to 109m<sup>2</sup> and are well suited to corporate retreats and strategy meetings.

The property's leisure offering includes separate male and female swim-



ming pools, fitness centres and spa facilities that include outdoor spa pods.

F&B options include all-day dining venue Temasya featuring live cooking stations with a choice of authentic Malaysian and international cuisines all prepared to halal standards; restaurant Bara which serves a la carte specials made from fresh local and imported ingredients; Middle Eastern-influenced eatery Redup in the lobby lounge; and the Beranda Café and Sira which serves drinks, light snacks and meals throughout the day and evening.



## Two Australian convention centres gain sustainability recognition

Adelaide Convention Centre and Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre have become the joint first convention centres in the world to achieve the coveted EarthCheck Platinum Certification.

The achievement represents best practice in sustainability and reflects a decade of continuous certification with the globally recognised EarthCheck programme. There are just 34 properties worldwide to have achieved Platinum Certification, including only two convention centres.

EarthCheck CEO and founder Stewart Moore noted that achieving EarthCheck Certification is no easy feat as it requires total dedication from the entire team to achieve improved results each year.

"I congratulate the teams at the Adelaide Convention Centre and the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre on their outstanding achievements in attaining EarthCheck Platinum Certification. To achieve this high level of certification not only speaks to their individual and enduring commitment to sustainable practices, but also highlights Australia's sustainability leadership on the global stage," Moore said.



From above: Adelaide Convention Centre and Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre



## Hainan Airlines launches Shenzhen-Zurich service

On August 27, Hainan Airlines launched a twice-weekly service between Shenzhen and Zurich, the first non-stop flight connecting China's Guangzhou-Shenzhen area with Switzerland.

Operated with a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, flights take off from Shenzhen Bao'an International Airport on Mondays and Fridays at 01.20 and land at Zurich Airport at 07.55. On the return sector, flights depart Zurich at 11.40 and arrives back in Shenzhen at 05.00 the following day.

### { What's on offer }

#### Hilton Singapore

Sporting a fully renovated meeting and event space, Hilton Singapore is incentivising meeting planners to hold their events at the hotel.

Every new booking made between now and December 31, 2018, with event materialisation by March 31, 2019, entitles meeting planners to at least two perks.

The list includes welcome breakfast on arrival; complimentary free flow of soft drinks for all delegates; complimentary whole fruits in a bowl throughout the meeting; or 15 per cent off audiovisual equipment.

The bonus perks are applicable for full-day meeting packages, inclusive of two coffee breaks and one lunch at a discounted price of S\$85 (US\$62; usual price at \$95) per delegate. Price per guestroom starts from S\$260.

For residential meetings, meeting planners can enjoy even more benefits such as one complimentary room night for every 25 paid room nights (maximum of five complimentary nights); two compli-

mentary upgrades to Executive room with lounge benefits for up to two guestrooms; and 20 per cent discount off total bill at all F&B outlets operated by Hilton Singapore, excluding Room Service.

In addition, new meeting or group bookings can enjoy double Event Planner Points, where they can get benefits faster through the Hilton Honors loyalty programme.

Email [sinhi.sal@hilton.com](mailto:sinhi.sal@hilton.com).

#### Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur

Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur has unveiled a meetings and accommodation package, priced at MYR625++ (US\$159++) per delegate.

Available until December 29, 2018, the Essential Meetings package includes one night's accommodation in a deluxe room and a full-day meeting package, including light breakfast, lunch, two coffee breaks and use of a meeting venue from 09.00 to 17.00.

The package also comprises the free use of standard audiovisual equipment and LCD projector, Wireless Internet access, one com-



Mandarin Oriental, Kuala Lumpur, Topaz Room

plimentary breakout room, and one room upgrade to the next category for every 15 rooms booked, or a Park Suite upgrade for every 30 rooms booked.

The package is valid for single occupancy only, and is subject to availability. A 10 per cent service charge, six per cent GST and RM10 (US\$2.50) Tourism Tax for non-Malaysian guests will apply.

For reservations, email [mokul-sales@mohg.com](mailto:mokul-sales@mohg.com).



# A chapter's massive undertaking

Money was the biggest challenge, as the mega meeting sought to support 30 speakers and a low registration fee to attract young researchers. By **Caroline Boey**



The IEEE Photonics Society Singapore Chapter, which has been attending leading photonics conferences to woo associations to host one of their prestigious meetings in Singapore, finally succeeded in 2012.

Five years later, the chapter hosted not one, but a four-in-one mega meeting. For the first time, members of three of the world's biggest photonics societies were gathered together, and the first student-led conference was organised.

Event chair professor Perry Shum told *TTGassociations* the goal was to be innovative and to deliver a number of firsts at the event. Apart from the four conferences, the organisers had to ensure that registration for at least 1,000 delegates on the first day ran smoothly.

To complement the world-class conference, the organiser also had to deliver a Singapore showcase that would impress the world's leading academics, top industry speakers and VIPs in the field.

Shum said: "It was the first time that Singapore was hosting a global photonics conference, which also had an exhibition component. It was also the first time Singapore was hosting CLEO-PR; the first time after 20 years it was hosting OECC; and it was hosting the first student-led photonics conference."

He added it was not easy convincing the world's three largest photonics societies to co-locate their events and share the limelight.

Having to register about 1,000 people on the first day of the event was also unique in photonics association history.

Another challenge was having to commit to 2,000 guestrooms and complete payment before the event. "It was a lot of money," Shum recalled.

In addition, a total of 30 technical tracks were being planned and the conference committee size grew to some 200 people from 20 countries.

Many sub-committees had to be formed to take charge of various aspects. A sub-committee was formed for the technical tracks; a local sub-committee for organising a VIP event in the Flower Dome of Gardens by the Bay, another delegate event at S.E.A. Aquarium at Resorts World Sentosa and a gala banquet at the Ritz-Carlton Millenia Singapore; others included a finance-related committee and a publicity committee.

The Singapore chapter picked a PCO it had worked with before, but Shum said he personally had to "squeeze in a few thousand hours in the three years leading up to the event to take care of so many things", down to sourcing for gifts for the delegate bags.

The chapter reached out to about 60 student volunteers from Nanyang Technological University (NTU) who did a lot of the work online to source for giveaways in the delegates bag.

To drum up attendance, the Singapore chapter produced a creative marketing tool – a "fan" brochure to publicise and market the mega conference – and they were given out at events to be used to keep delegates cool in Singapore's heat.

With its marketing and communication efforts, the event managed to secure 1,000 attendees early. The committee also brought in a number of alumni and media sponsors.

Shum said the only way to maintain technical quality at the three plenary and 10 keynote sessions – where speakers included one Nobel Laureate and an Elon Musk industry equivalent – was to have

a large conference committee and many sub-committees to accomplish the many things on the checklist.

With multidisciplinary conference sessions, a joint effort with international academic institutes like MIT, Stanford and Hong Kong University was established.

To tackle the large numbers registering on the first day of the event, a two-hour breakfast for 1,000 people was staged, a first for a photonics event.

Shum noted that support from the Singapore Tourism Board from start to end also played a critical role in helping the mega meeting achieve what it did.

## Event

CLEO-PR (Conference on Lasers and Electro-Optics Pacific Rim); OECC (OptoElectronics and Communications Conference); PGS (Photonics Global Conference); PGSC (Photonics Global Student Conference) 2017

## Organiser

IEEE Photonics Society Singapore Chapter

## Date

July 31 to August 4, 2017

## Venue

Sands Expo and Convention Centre Singapore

## No. of attendees

1,700 from 55 countries

## Challenges

Four events were being organised together; the selected hotel required full payment in advance and it was a large sum; an efficient way was needed to register 1,700 delegates on the first day



**Mohd Kamaruddin Adnin**

# Chief of all chefs

Mohd Kamaruddin Adnin, president of the Professional Culinaire Association, counts the many positive outcomes of hosting the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2018 for his organisation and his professional peers in Malaysia. By **S Puvaneswary**

**Malaysia hosted the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2018 in July. How is that beneficial for the Professional Culinaire Association (PCA) and its members?**

The event is proof of PCA's recognition by Worldchefs (The World Association of Chefs' Societies), which is important as we are a young association. It is also recognition by chefs in Malaysia that we are the national professional body in Malaysia.

The four-day event provided plenty of opportunities for our members to network with foreign chefs from more than 100 countries. That is important because it opens doors for us to





invite overseas chefs to give talks on the latest cooking techniques as well as cooking demonstrations at PCA's future events, and for our members to showcase our expertise and Malaysian recipes at overseas events. There are more opportunities for us to learn from one another.

Since the congress, PCA has been approached by both corporate and government agencies that wish to work with us. One such government agency is Invest Selangor. It has invited us to exhibit, give a career talk on the profession and judge in a competition on cake decoration and fruit carving at the Selangor International Business Summit 2018 in September. It is a great opportunity for our members to network with South-east Asian importers and exporters of F&B, manufacturers, distributors and traders who will be present.

### **Has the congress helped to grow PCA membership too?**

Most definitely. Prior to the event, we had about 100 members. As we drew closer to the congress, membership started to rise. Now we have 250 members and growing.

By hosting the congress, we have successfully demonstrated to Malaysian chefs that PCA is an active association and we organise and participate in activities that give members foreign exposure. We also conduct educational programmes for our members and do charity projects that involve cooking for the homeless, orphans or victims of natural disasters.

Young chefs who are 25 years and below now make up 30 per cent of our membership. Many of them are still in colleges taking culinary courses. They have

not yet entered the working world. They join the association with the intention to gain more knowledge which could further their career development and for networking opportunities with celebrity chefs. Here, we also create opportunities for them to serve the community through charitable events.

### **Sometimes major association meetings led to positive influences in government policies facing the profession or related industry issues. Has the congress achieved any advances in this manner?**

No, but it has opened doors for us. The deputy tourism, arts and culture minister, Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik, who gave an opening speech and launched the congress, told our members to give proposals to the ministry on how we can work together.

There are a few things we'd like to do, to further expose foreigners to Malaysian food which is not as well-known as say, Japanese or Thai cuisine.

We would like to do cooking demonstrations on Malaysian food in foreign countries where Tourism Malaysia, Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation or other government agencies are exhibiting at major events.

### **Food wastage is a growing concern around the world and for Worldchefs. Was this addressed at the Worldchefs Congress & Expo 2018?**

First, you need to understand the difference between food waste and food loss. Food waste refers to food that is fit for consumption but is discarded. This is very different from food loss, which is food that is spoilt before it reaches the retail stage. At the congress, the issue of food waste was tackled head-on and delegates made a commitment to reduce food wastage.

A delegate, Christopher Ekman, who is also chef at ReTaste, a not-for-profit restaurant in Stockholm, gave an on-site demonstration using produce given by local supermarkets that were nearing their expiry dates. This included pasta made from stale bread. The key message was that less than premium products were still valuable and, with a little imagination, you can produce delicious meals with them.

### **How is food wastage being dealt by PCA?**

We work closely with Food Aid Foundation, a non-profit government organisation that rescues surplus food from the supply chain and distributes it to those in need. We run projects together where Food Aid Foundation gives us the ingredients and our volunteer members cook and distribute dishes to the needy.

We also run educational talks for our members, including young chefs, on what they can do to reduce food wastage. We advocate cooking based on requirement, and not cooking in excess.

### **So what's next for PCA now that the congress is done and dusted?**

We will be concentrating on activities within Malaysia. A strong bond was forged among committee members in the lead up to the congress. We hope to enhance this.

Now that we have more members, we will be organising more activities that will foster teambuilding and create greater rapport within the association. We hope to have regular healthy activities for our members such as camping or hiking. We never had such activities in the past.

### **What challenges is PCA facing in operations and growth?**

Our biggest challenge is finding corporate partners in the food industry to support our events. Fortunately, the recent congress had created awareness about our association and made it easier for us to approach potential partners.

Another challenge is finding volunteer members to join committees. No one in the association gets paid for





## A delicious calling

At 42 years old, Mohd Kamaruddin Adnin is a young president for the Professional Culinaire Association (PCA).

He is no stranger to culinary industry events. He was a member of PCA's bid team, working closely with the Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau to successfully bid for the WorldChefs Congress & Expo 2018.

He was also the manager of Malaysia's national team at the Food&HotelAsia 2018 in Singapore.

Besides his work with PCA, he is executive chef and central production unit manager at MAS Awana Services. In his capacity, he takes charge of food catering for Malaysia Airlines premier lounge and airline catering for flights out of Sabah and Sarawak.

He has also contributed recipes to local cookbooks.

Since young, Mohd Kamaruddin knew he wanted to become a chef. He started his career as a kitchen helper in Hilton Petaling Jaya in 1995.



Delegates of WorldChefs Congress & Expo 2018 at KLCC Park

As a young bachelor, he loved to travel and worked onboard Royal Viking Sun and Seabourn cruise lines for three years.

He has also served as a chef in overseas hotels and resorts.

In 2008, he returned to his home country Malaysia and joined Sheraton Imperial Kuala Lumpur as chef de cuisine. Four years later, he was promoted to executive sous chef of the hotel.

their time and energy. Sacrifices have to be made, so most people don't stay long in committees. Personally, I'm fortunate that my wife is also in the F&B industry and she has joined me at meetings. She understands what I do and why sometimes my weekends are spent away from the family.

### How do you overcome the challenge of finding volunteers?

We just have to constantly try to rope them in. When I interview them, I paint a real picture and tell them they must be willing to sacrifice time, energy and money. If they volunteer, they will have three special projects to achieve within a term of two years. If they are unsuccessful, they will be replaced. For me, deadlines and results are the most important.

### Let's talk about you. How long have you been involved in PCA and how have you been driving its objectives?

I have been with the association for five years. Prior to that, I was the chairman of competitions. PCA strongly advocates the development of young chefs, and networking between chefs and food suppliers.

One frequent question from young chefs who are taking a diploma in culinary studies is, what position they can start with upon entering the work force. I tell them they have to start at the bottom as a commis chef. This is the first rung of the ladder to becoming a great chef. It is an opportunity to learn all there is to know about the trade and cooking under the supervision of a chef

**“OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE IS FINDING CORPORATE PARTNERS IN THE FOOD INDUSTRY TO SUPPORT OUR EVENTS. FORTUNATELY, THE RECENT CONGRESS HAD CREATED AWARENESS ABOUT OUR ASSOCIATION AND MADE IT EASIER FOR US TO APPROACH POTENTIAL PARTNERS.”**

de partie and rotating through different sections such as sauce, vegetables, fish and butchery.

Many young chefs after their education do not know how to start their career and we help them through this process through our activities.

### Would you describe yourself as a strict leader?

I am open to reason and I like to get opinions from others and brainstorm ideas. I am also very straight forward and transparent especially when it involves money and benefits. I like to observe and guide the committee where I can. I won't be in the association for the next 20 years.

### Your term as president ends in May 2019. What is next for you?

I hope to continue serving the association and sharing my knowledge, even though I may not be re-elected. I believe I have knowledge and ideas to share with young chefs who want to grow in this industry.

### Do you believe in succession planning?

Definitely. I believe in developing young chefs who will take over the association and also be leaders in their job. I like to share my skills and knowledge with others. At PCA, we encourage members to take part in activities, share knowledge and ideas, and to take on leadership roles. To become a leader, you need passion, to focus on what you do, and to make decisions based on consensus.

### How would you like to see PCA grow further?

I want to make it business oriented so that we don't have to look for funds all the time. I want it to be profitable, so that we can afford a paid secretariat to reduce the burden on volunteers. That will also help the association grow membership further and increase the number of programmes we run while reducing the workload on the committees.

### Have you taken steps in this direction?

A committee is now doing the paperwork which will be presented to all members at the next annual general meeting in May 2019. I also have to present this proposal to our advisory board for their opinion.





# CONVENTION CENTRES

*TTGassociation* reporters sniff out convention centres in the region that have paid careful attention to aesthetics and are reaping commercial benefits

## Academyhills, Tokyo, Japan

Comfort is a key consideration at Academyhills, with facilities designed with the belief that delegates who are relaxed will be more productive and engaged.

Designed by world-famous architect Kengo Kuma, the conference centre occupies the 49<sup>th</sup> floor of the Roppongi Hills complex. The 559m<sup>2</sup> Tower Hall can accommodate 500 delegates in a theatre layout, while the other nine event spaces can cater to groups of between 150 and 30 guests.

Roppongi Hills was created as an “artelligent city” – a fusion of art and intelligence – and Academyhills contributes to that as a space of “tranquil intellectual luxury,” said Keiji Kurahashi, senior manager of the Academyhills Forum Group.

“Delegates stay in conference facilities for several hours at a time and are often in a tense environment. And that is why we have incorporated visual designs of an appropriate scale and calm lighting while making the entire complex easy to navigate in order to reduce participants’ tension,” he said.

That concern for delegates’ well-being has extended to the creation of a unique chair. The WATT chair benefits from extensive ergonomic research to reduce discomfort and help delegates remain focused during long meetings.

To promote the sense of the conference centre serving as a knowledge hub, the Library Café and the hallways of Academyhills are flanked by bookshelves containing books on a myriad of subjects that can be perused by guests. Corridors are wide and dotted with comfortable chairs; the décor is warm and inviting.

Some 200m above street-level, the venue also boasts 360-degree views across the city – particularly spectacular at night – while event catering services are provided by members-only Roppongi Hills Club, which is housed in the same building. – **Julian Ryall**

## Bali International Convention Centre, Indonesia

Bali International Convention Centre (BICC) was designed and furnished with a strong Balinese flavour, using carved timber columns, batik and local art works, giving the venue a sense of place in Bali.

Function rooms and halls throughout the centre sport a welcoming ambience, a stark contrast from traditional convention and exhibition spaces. The Exhibition Hall, for example, overlooks a manicured garden and has an internal staircase that leads to a gallery upstairs. The Cafe sits next door, offering

**Above: International Convention Centre Sydney, Australia**  
**Below: Library Café, Academyhills, Tokyo, Japan**







event attendees a contemporary and relaxing space for light bites and refreshments. In this space also stands a stone wall carved by Balinese artisans to depict scenes from ancient Hindu mythology.

Other event spaces within BICC include theatre-style Mangupura Hall which can seat 2,500 people; the auditorium with 506 built-in seats, Bali's only tiered theatre; 26 meeting rooms; two plush VIP holding rooms; and The Lounge, which comes with a fully-stocked bar that can cater to quality social gatherings.

Being located adjacent to The Westin Resort Nusa Dua has its perks, as BICC gains high-quality F&B catering support.

As well, event delegates can easily skip to the hotel's Heavenly Spa by Westin for a post-meeting massage or keep to their usual exercise routine at the fitness studio, double tennis court and on-site running routes.

Saraswati Subadia, assistant director of sales and marketing for The Westin Resort Nusa Dua, said the venue often won an event bid with its "appealing environment" that planners are comfortable with.

"In our 27 years of experience in hosting small to large conferences and corporate to high-level government events, we have received many comments about our well-designed interior as well as varied support facilities," she added. – **Ade Siregar**

## IMPACT Muang Thong Thani Bangkok, Thailand

This integrated venue is one of Asia's largest exhibition and convention centre, taking in IMPACT Challenger which comprises three interconnected halls; IMPACT Exhibition Center which houses eight multi-purpose halls and six function rooms; IMPACT Forum, a standalone convention centre; IMPACT Arena with 11,000 seats; IMPACT Lakefront with 150,000m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space; and AKTIV Square with 19,000m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor space.

The most beautiful gem in IMPACT's crown is the Royal Jubilee Ballroom, said to be Thailand's largest and most elegant column-free ballroom. Conical chandeliers, elaborate ceiling and wall detailing, and a plush carpet of warm shades lend a regal feel to the venue.

The careful attention paid to the interior design of IMPACT's spaces are not just for aesthetic reasons; it fulfils commercial aims too – particularly in getting planners to sign the venue on for their events.

Loy Joon How, general manager of IMPACT Exhibi-

tion Management Co, said: "Our ballrooms and function rooms are comparable with hotel equivalents, which is important because our five-star facilities with elegant settings and amenities will add prestige to our customers' events."

"The design (of IMPACT's spaces) has helped us to be the preferred place for events."

Beyond these event facilities, IMPACT offers also places for visitors to have a little fun in between meetings. The Portal Lifestyle Complex, a four-storey building connected to IMPACT Arena, IMPACT Challenger and IMPACT Exhibition Center via well-designed link bridges, is packed with restaurants, shops and the 1,500m<sup>2</sup> Portal Ballroom. Some of these restaurants have been used for corporate social events.

Outdoors, the IMPACT Speed Park beckons. Opened in December 2016, the karting facility comes complete with changing rooms, shower facilities, a briefing room, function rooms, and a winners' podium. It will soon be joined by a waterpark.

Loy said: "Our recreational facilities enable us to offer our customers options to integrate business with pleasure. They can have a complete business and social programme under one roof." – **Karen Yue**

## International Convention Centre Sydney, Australia

An eye-catching landmark in Darling Harbour, the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) is made up of three buildings, each different in design.

Joint venture partners HASSELL + Populous that were behind the architectural concept, crafted the ICC Sydney Exhibition Centre with natural colours of greens, browns, whites and greys, with liberal use of wood, to reflect the surrounding landscape of Tumbalong Park; gave ICC Sydney Convention Centre a shimmery glass façade, a fitting match to the glistening waters of the bay nearby; and presented ICC Sydney Theatre in a futuristic manner with bold reds and blacks, perfect for the live music concerts the venue was designed for.

Geoff Donaghy, CEO of ICC Sydney, said: "Convention and exhibition buildings have a tendency to be introverted by their very nature. In contrast, ICC Sydney was designed to bring a new dynamic quality and reputation to Sydney as one of the world's most desirable business event destinations, enriching its knowledge and visitor economies."

But ICC Sydney is more than just a pretty face. It

**Above: Hibiscus room, Bali International Convention Centre, Indonesia**  
**Below: Royal Jubilee Ballroom, IMPACT Muang Thong Thani, Bangkok, Thailand**





houses an 8,000-pax theatre, 35,000m<sup>2</sup> of exhibition space, a 5,000m<sup>2</sup> open-air event deck, a 2,000-pax grand ballroom – the largest of its kind in Australia – and world-class theatres, meeting rooms and event spaces.

In total, the venue boasts over 240,000m<sup>2</sup> of gross floor area and the unique configuration allows three major conventions to run simultaneously.

“ICC Sydney is a purpose-built digital venue which not only supports the needs of today, but has the capability to flex and adapt for decades to come across all types of events – big and small,” Donaghy added, pointing to the venue’s 10Gbps optical fibre backbone which had seamlessly accommodated more than 5,200 concurrent Wi-Fi users across 150 sessions during the annual Salesforce World Tour to Australia.

“Since opening in December 2016, the venue has received strong praise for its design, its in-depth collaborative pre-planning process and robust technology infrastructure, garnering more than 25 accolades recognising excellence across all facets of the business,” he said. – **Karen Yue**

## Philippine International Convention Center, Manila

The country’s first convention centre was purpose-built for the International Monetary Fund-World Bank annual meeting 42 years ago when the Philippines was striving for global acceptance.

Located in Manila, Philippine International Convention Center’s (PICC) brutalist architecture and elegant interiors – magnificent chandeliers, wooden parquet flooring, grand staircases and priceless paintings and sculptures – set it apart from its newer counterparts’ futuristic and minimalist designs and metal-and-glass box structures.

Its elegance undiminished by time, PICC’s low-rise horizontal space is matched by vast outdoor spaces in the garden, courtyard and reflecting pools. Indoors are delegates lounge and executive lounge for relaxing in between meetings and conferences.

PICC general manager Renato B Padilla said: “Convention centres are no longer just about functionality, but also about beauty and aesthetics. Its layout and interiors, as with any venue, set the mood and ambience for any event. A well-designed centre facilitates a smooth flow of communication – whether shared or confidential – in line with its primary purpose of being a place for exchanging ideas and networking”.

Padilla added: “However, we’d like to think that PICC is often chosen as an event venue not just for its well-designed interiors, but also because of its cultural and historical value.”

PICC’s fine dining restaurant, Amorsolo, is run by accredited caterer Via Mare. It even has a prayer room for attendees practicing their Islam faith.

Padilla said the modern museum of art and numismatic collections of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (Central Bank of the Philippines) will be completed in 4Q2018. Set within PICC grounds, the museum will also offer lecture rooms, a research area, a library and more.

To keep pace with changing market needs, the PICC Forum will be dismantled this year to make way for the new Trade Exhibit Hall which will add more space for exhibitions and more function rooms plus pre-function lobbies, storage rooms, kitchen, loading bays and rentable commercial spaces. – **Rosa Ocampo**

## Setia SPICE Convention Centre, Penang, Malaysia

Setia SPICE Convention Centre in Penang, Malaysia is recognised as the first hybrid solar powered convention centre in the world, and boasts a Green Building Index certification.

Setting it apart from traditional convention centres is its vast open spaces that welcome events.

The rooftop garden comprises three large areas: A children’s playground, a large well-manicured green lawn, and a Japanese inspired bamboo garden and spice garden. Spread across two levels, the rooftop garden allows attendees of large-scale events to flow freely in the open. It can host approximately 10,000 guests for a cocktail event.

It is worth noting that Setia SPICE Convention Centre’s has 654 energy efficient light bulbs which can be programmed to cast various colours and patterns to complement any event held at the rooftop garden. There is also an outdoor stage area.

Setia SPICE Convention Centre is one of five components of an integrated complex. The others are: Setia SPICE Arena, Setia SPICE Canopy, Setia SPICE Aquatic Centre and an adjoining 453-key business class hotel opening in 2020.

According to Yeoh Kheng Ho, senior manager, Setia SPICE Convention Centre, the interior design of any convention centre plays an important part in making the centre look grand and at the same time, peaceful, to visitors and clients. – **S Puvaneswary**



**Below: Philippine International Convention Center**



## Kaohsiung Exhibition Centre, Taiwan

Kaohsiung Exhibition Centre is the Taiwanese city’s business events centrepiece. It sports an iconic wave design and enjoys a prime location on the Kaohsiung Harbour.

The building boasts an oceanview banquet room overlooking the marinas and Kaohsiung Port, and its halls are equipped with a simultaneous interpretation system that can translate between eight languages.

Beyond the meeting spaces, corridors are filled with dining, retail and art.

Its location also means delegates can easily break away from indoor meetings for rejuvenating strolls along the sea. Access is also easy through harbour cruises from the nearby terminal. For meetings with a twist, planners can hold breakout sessions at the nearby Pier 2 artistic area.

“(These) can all be easily integrated into the meeting itinerary, bringing inexpensive diversity to





the programme,” opined group vice president Robert Campbell.

He added that such features have helped the centre draw in “more and more medical conferences”.

He explained: “Our venue works very well for sessions in different rooms, coffee breaks in others, sponsor booths in the aisles or other rooms, all on the same floor of a beautiful iconic building on the waterfront, with parking below and on-site kitchen for catering.”

The centre is part of the Kaohsiung MICE Alliance which comprises stakeholders from venues to academia. It will be the venue of the ICCA 2020 Congress. – **Pamela Chow**

## Singapore EXPO Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore

A sprawling complex in the east of Singapore, Singapore EXPO Convention & Exhibition Centre has the luxury of space and uses it well.

Its 100,000m<sup>2</sup> of column-free indoor and outdoor spaces offer customisable halls and rooms, as well as a wealth of dining options.

It also offers a convention wing, MAX Atria, which takes in 12,000m<sup>2</sup> of meeting space in the form of 32 meeting rooms and an outdoor rooftop space.

MAX Atria is Singapore’s first business events facility to receive the Building & Construction Authority’s Green Mark Platinum standard for its eco-friendly building design. The wing is surrounded by lush gardens and floor-to-ceiling windows.

“We take inspiration from how events are evolving. They are now in hybrid formats in order to engage attendees from all industries. Our halls and spaces are canvases of opportunity,” said Aloysius Arlando, SingEx Holdings’ CEO.

He raised the example of the carnival nature of the expo’s own event, the Singapore FinTech Festival. “We have different configurations and multimedia elements. We’ve also moved away from the two breaks/one lunch model, and brought in an all-day dining concept to let visitors eat and drink whenever they like.”

Another example is the recently held Regional General Managers Conference for McDonald’s China, for which a stage was transformed into a 360-degree spectacle.

“Event organisers are looking to venues to provide that added touch to help them make a truly ‘wow’

event and manage costs. We keep pace with technological changes, but we must also be a true partner to help curate and co-create events,” remarked Arlando.

The next big thing for Singapore EXPO, revealed Arlando, is relooking at its menu of offerings and anticipating new demands of organisers, such as all-day dining and inventive configurations of meeting spaces. – **Pamela Chow**

## Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre

Part of a shopping and office complex, Suntec Singapore Convention & Exhibition Centre has the advantage of placing event attendees in close proximity to a diverse spread of dining and retail options.

The centre boasts 42,000m<sup>2</sup> of events space spanning over four levels, including two 12,000m<sup>2</sup> multi-purpose halls and 36 meeting rooms. These customisable spaces are equipped with movable, soundproofed walls and an Intelligent Building Management System that controls space configuration. As well, it takes pride in the use of integrated technology that enhances the event experience.

Arun Madhok, CEO of Suntec Singapore, said: “We are able to accommodate the demands of a fast-growing hybrid conference and exhibition market segment, which requires multiple rooms for exhibitions and conferences to be in the same area.”

Suntec Singapore also employs the use of cutting-edge systems such as Crystals-on-4, a customisable and energy-saving lighting solution; the ImmersiveAV Suite, a wide-format 105m projection screen; and The Big Picture, the world’s largest high-definition screen at the driveway of the centre.

“Setting the right mood for an event is crucial to creating the perfect experience for our audience... As one of the most digitalised convention centres, the launch of the ImmersiveAV has catapulted Suntec Singapore into another league. It uses technology to transform audience experiences, thus gaining us recognition among event organisers who are constantly under pressure to create more engaging experiences,” said Madhok. – **Pamela Chow**

**Above: Rooftop garden at Setia SPICE Convention Centre, Penang, Malaysia**  
**Below: Singapore EXPO Convention & Exhibition Centre, Singapore**







# A little gem of a congress destination

A relatively late-starter in South Korea's race for business and association events, heritage city Gyeongju catches up quickly with several wins. By **Karen Yue**

**G**yeongju, a quiet city on South Korea's southeastern coast, is better known among the locals for being the capital of the ancient Silla Dynasty which existed more than a millennium ago. The generations of rulers dotted the land with regal monuments and architecture, resulting in extensive historical remains today – many of which are still being discovered through planned excavations.

This has influenced Gyeongju's landscape, remarked Kyla Joo, assistant manager, convention services, convention sales team with the Gyeongju Convention and Visitors Bureau.

"While Gyeongju has plenty of land, construction has to proceed very carefully as there could be precious relics underneath and as such land permitted for development is limited," she said.

Despite the strict regulations on infrastructural development, Gyeongju has managed to build itself the Bomun Tourist Complex, a massive area with tourism facilities such as attractions, hotels of various star ratings, dining enclaves and a convention centre.

Gyeongju Hwabaek International Convention Center (HICO) opened in

Bomun Tourist Complex in March 2015. It is located within walking distance of 10 hotels, such as the five-star Hilton Gyeongju and The-K Hotel.

HICO, built by the Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) organisation and gifted to Gyeongju City Hall, is deemed to be instrumental in Gyeongju's ability to rise as a congress destination. The venue is able to accommodate more than 3,500 people.

Joo said: "Gyeongju CVB, as a representative of Gyeongju Destination Marketing, has been established for four years now (since 2014) but it was with the completion of HICO that Gyeongju has been able to welcome many high-profile international congresses such as the 66<sup>th</sup> UNDPI/NGO Conference in 2016 and the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) General Meeting in 2017.

"This year alone we will have six international association congresses calling at Gyeongju, most of them related to medicine and engineering."

Joo clarified that medicine and engineering are not among Gyeongju's main economic pillars, but her city has been able to win these meetings over with the modern facilities at HICO.

Gyeongju has also seen success in winning over nuclear power-related meetings as a result of KHNP's relocation of its main office to the city in March 2016.

"There is very close cooperation between KHNP and our CVB. KHNP feeds us a lot of information on upcoming international nuclear congresses. Since last year we had have four or five conferences related to nuclear power, and it was all because of KHNP," she added.

"Gyeongju's rich heritage has also spurred us to go after heritage-related congresses. Last year we hosted the World Congress of (Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) and because of the success of that conference, UNESCO has taken its Asia-Pacific meeting to our city in September."

Joo told *TTGassociations* that the young bureau is determined to build the city up as a prominent congress destination. To this end, it has been participating in relevant trade events such as those organised by ICCA and UIA.

"That's also where we get our intelligence on potential rotating congresses we could try for," she said.

Besides HICO, smaller meetings in Gyeongju are also often held at business event-ready five-star hotels. Hilton Gyeongju has welcomed its fair share of association meetings over the years, even before the establishment of the Gyeongju CVB.

According to Jongwoo Yoo, manager, sales &





## { Need to know }

### 1 Get there by speed rail

While Gyeongju doesn't have its own airport, its Singyeongju train station is served by KTX high-speed rail from two South Korean international gateways, Seoul and Busan. The KTX service takes one from Seoul to Singyeongju in two hours and five minutes, and from Busan in just 30 minutes. Public buses and abundant taxis are available from Singyeongju train station to take travellers into the heart of Gyeongju, just a short ride away.

### 2 CVB support

Gyeongju Convention and Visitors Bureau offers various support programmes to academic societies, associations and corporates wishing to host an event in the city. Support includes site inspection services, hosting expenses, provision of destination publicity materials, etc. These support programmes come with terms and conditions.

### 3 Qualified unique venues

Gyeongju has two unique venues approved and recommended by the Korea Tourism Organization, under the national bureau's new Korea Unique Venue programme. The two unique venues are Hwangryongwon and Gyochon Hanok Village.

### 4 Life after dark

There is little nightlife in this historical city which turns all quiet and dark after dinner time. However, some of the historical sites remain open after sunset to show off a different, more romantic view. Donggung Palace and Wolji Pond, as well as Cheomseongdae Observatory, for instance, are bathed in yellow lights from sunset till 21.00 or 22.00. Destination specialists will be able to organise a guided night tour of some of Gyeongju's star historical attractions.

marketing Seoul Office, Hilton Hotels & Resorts, past events include the World Green Energy Forum in 2014 and 2016, the second Regional Conference for World Heritage Cities in 2016, the 2014 International Foot and Ankle Biomechanics Congress, the APEC Education Ministerial meeting in 2014, and the G20 Finance Minister's Meeting, among many others. This year's line-up included the 2018 Synchrotron Radiation in Polymer Science in September and the 3<sup>rd</sup> IAEA HRD Conference in May.

The five-star hotel boasts a Grand Ballroom for up to 500 guests and 15 customisable function rooms.

Although Joo said Gyeongju has enough hotel rooms to support the size of congresses the city typically attracts today – an average of 500 to 600 delegates, she hopes to see an emergence of more five-star international branded hotels.

She explained: "When these hotels open in a destination, they do their part in destination marketing and that helps us to get our name out."

"Gyeongju is the first small city in South Korea to have its own CVB but because we are such a tiny city, many foreigners do not know about us. It is challenging to raise our profile in the congress marketplace but we are determined to promote our city, facilities and events infrastructure."

#### Kyla Joo

Assistant manager, convention services, convention sales team, Gyeongju Convention and Visitors Bureau

## { Pre/Post }

### More than just a religious site

Seokguram Grotto, an artificial cave temple built more than a millennium ago in 751, is home to a fine-sculpted Buddha statue that rises about 3.3 metres high and sits on a 1.6 metres pedestal, as well as overhead panels bearing elaborately carved deities and devas.

While this ancient site is religious in nature, visitors of other faiths will still appreciate the scenic hike to the grotto along a paved mountain path lined with trees, the serene surroundings as well as the story of this architectural feat.

Along the way to Seokguram Grotto, make time to visit the sixth century Bulguksa Temple, also a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.



### Village stopover

Gyochon Hanok Village features a collection of traditional Korean houses which now operate as traditional tea houses, shops selling traditional crafts or renting traditional outfits called hanbok, museums and restaurants.

Visitors can learn about the intricacies of traditional Korean tea ceremony; peek into the House of the Gyeongju Choi Clan, a wealthy family that once resided on these grounds; or enjoy a hearty traditional meal at the beautiful Yosokkoong, a restaurant run by the Choi family whose members faithfully keep to family recipes that have survived through 12 generations.

### Bomun Lake turns pink in spring

The sprawling Bomun Lake – centrepiece of the Bomun Tourist Complex – is beautiful and serene year-round, even in autumn and winter when the trees are bald. But in springtime its landscape takes on a delicate pink hue, thanks to the cherry tree-lined walking path that snakes around the lake's circumference.

Active folks who are in Gyeongju in spring should watch out for the Gyeongju Cherry Marathon held every April. Full (42.2km), half (21.1km), 10km and 5km courses are offered, and all routes go along Bomun Lake.



### See the relics

More than 3,000 relics unearthed from around Gyeongju, dating back to the Silla Dynasty (57BC – AD935), are kept at the Gyeongju National Museum, which has recently completed renovations. Some of the treasures here include the Divine Bell of King Seongdeok the Great, well-preserved golden crowns, gilt-bronze Buddhist statues and items once used by the royal family and the noble class during the Unified Silla period.



# Setting up for victory

Sarawak has gained global awareness from its successful hosting of the ICCA Congress in 2016, and is extending the effects with top-level programmes that make the state friendlier for association meetings, writes **S Puvaneswary**



All photos by Sarawak Tourism Board

**Sarawak's bidayuh ring ladies are increasingly a rare sight now**

When the Malaysian state of Sarawak hosted the prestigious ICCA Congress back in 2016, it propelled itself onto the world stage for business and association meetings.

Three years on the benefit of the Congress still holds strong.

Dee Dee Quah, director, Medical Conference Partners, shared: "It has made it easier to promote Sarawak to medical conference organisers based in the US and Europe, as there is more awareness about the destination due to the Congress and exposure from media publicity pertaining to the Congress.

"It has also dispelled misconceptions among overseas conference organisers that Sarawak does not have the IT technology and the know-how to successfully execute a congress of that level."

Lex Lam, director of sales at Discovery Overland Holidays, said: "Hosted the Congress in Kuching (capital of Sarawak) has also proven to local associations that the city has the sophistication and the know-how to cater to business events. It also provided great networking opportunities with association heads.

"For instance, at the congress I connected with a delegate from Prudential Life Insurance Agency Association

Malaysia and that was how Discovery Overland Holidays became the destination management company for their event, Quality Leaders Conference, in Kuching this September."

Part of Sarawak's appeal as a business events destination lies in its authenticity, opined Quah.

She explained: "Participants who have been to conferences in glitzy cities such as Paris, New York, London, Shanghai, Seoul and Sydney would likely feel, after awhile, that one city looks like the other. In this sense, Sarawak stands out with its rainforest and natural beauty.

"After the conference, participants can visit UNESCO sites, Mulu National Park in Mulu and Mt Kinabalu in Sabah. These attractions are just a flight away from Kuching."

The destination is affordable too, emphasised Gracie V Geikie, director/principle consultant of Place Borneo.

She said: "The rate for a five-star hotel in Kuching for conferences is between RM280 (US\$69) and RM300 per night, while a four-star hotel rate ranges from RM240 to RM250 per night. Flights between Kuala Lumpur and Kuching or Singapore and Kuching are also affordable due to low-cost carriers plying these routes. They cost about 40

per cent less than a decade ago."

Borneo Convention Centre Kuching (BCKK), the main convention centre in Kuching for international business events, is doing its bit to ensure the destination is friendly on organisers' pocket. Its CEO, Eric van Piggelen, shared that the centre absorbs the cost of shuttle transfer services between Kuching city centre's hotels to BCKK in the conference package.

Sarawak benefits from top-level support in its bid to appeal to global associations. In August, the Sarawak Convention Bureau launched the BESarawak Alliance (BESA), a platform dedicated to improving collaboration and ties between the bureau, ministries and their agencies, and the private sector in order to further strengthen Sarawak's position in bidding for regional and international business events as well as further developing Sarawak's core industry sectors.

For a start, chief minister of Sarawak, Abang Johari Tun Openg, has appointed three Sarawak ministries and two agencies as BESA ambassadors: Ministry of Welfare, Community Wellbeing, Women, Family and Childhood Development; Ministry of Tourism, Arts, Culture, Youth & Sports; Ministry of Modernisation of Agriculture, Native Land and Regional Development; and Sarawak Multimedia Authority and Sarawak Centre for Performance Excellence.

More government ministries and agencies from both the federal and state levels will become members of the alliance in the future.

Abang Johari also stressed the government's commitment to invest RM1 billion (US\$24.44 million) to upgrade digital infrastructure in the state.

As well, he revealed that the government was negotiating with AirAsia to improve frequencies between Kuching and Singapore and to operate new services to Hong Kong. Currently Sarawak's foreign air connectivity is limited to Pontianak (Indonesia), Singapore and Shenzhen (China).

Sarawak Convention Bureau's Business Events Tribal Meet (TriBE 2018) in August is another initiative to further grow and emphasise the destination's business and association meetings potential.

The bureau took the chance to debut



at the event its 360 Degree Interactive Virtual Reality Video. The 2.5-minute virtual reality destination video of Kuching, Bintulu, Miri and Sibul also showed off the meeting facilities at BCCK. The software was developed by the bureau's bid team. It can be tailor-made to support event bids, to give Sarawak a competitive edge against competitors, said Jamie Wang, head of bids at the bureau.

Amelia Roziman, chief operating officer at Sarawak Convention Bureau, stressed that its use was not just limited to bidding, but that it will also be used at trade events where the bureau

participates and at roadshows and in marketing campaigns.

Another new initiative by Sarawak Convention Bureau is to assist local and foreign associations with headquarters in Sarawak. The bureau will support associations' initial operational expenses provided they match the state's interest, particularly in agriculture, renewable energy, public health, education, security, development of women and children and the digital economy.

Amelia revealed that there are already a few applicants for the initiative.

"The selected associations will have access to the meeting spaces at our

bureau as well as complimentary usage of office rental space and utility bills for the first two years," she said.

Since the establishment of the bureau in 2006 up to June 30, the state has secured 776 business events which resulted in a direct delegate expenditure of RM645.6 million. These were achieved through a joint effort of the bureau and its sector partners. In 2017, the bureau recorded a total of 48 business events, comprising both national and international association meetings.

Amelia said: "Forty-eight meetings may be relatively few in the global meeting space, however the impact of these business events has contributed substantially to their own target, specific sectors."

Some major conferences and meetings in Sarawak this year include: 5<sup>th</sup> International Marine Conservation Congress 2018, June, 700 delegates; Annual Meeting of the Association for Tropical Biology and Conservation 2018, July, 1,000 delegates; The 19<sup>th</sup> Pacific Early Childhood Research Association International Conference, July 2018, 450 delegates; 6<sup>th</sup> World Spinal Health Association Congress 2018, November, 400 delegates; and 5<sup>th</sup> Academic Conference for Asian Society of Cryosurgery, December, 400 delegates.



"Participants who have been to conferences in glitzy cities such as Paris, New York, London, Shanghai, Seoul and Sydney would likely feel, after awhile, that one city looks like the other. In this sense, Sarawak stands out with its rainforest and natural beauty."

**Dee Dee Quah**  
Director,  
Medical Conference Partners

## Redefining Global Tribes Campaign:

Join Sarawak in the revolution for business event **communities** to gather in **unity** to construct a stronger **identity** for Global economy.

**UNMASK YOUR IDENTITY**

To find out more about the campaign and Sarawak's support for Business Events,



[www.businesseventssarawak.com](http://www.businesseventssarawak.com)  
[info@sarawakcb.com](mailto:info@sarawakcb.com)  
+6082242516



## { Need to know }

### 1 Support from the top

Sarawak Convention Bureau offers a range of support for business and association events, for areas such as professional advice, support and seed funding for non-profit organisations that wish to spearhead new conventions on topics of interest.

To qualify for financial support, non-profit organisations must market the inaugural event beyond Sarawak and attract international delegates. The bureau also provides support for convention bidding, delegate boosting and venue and vendor selection.

### 2 A home for conventions

Borneo Convention Centre Kuching is the only international convention centre in Kuching. The Great Hall can fit up to 5,000 people in theatre seating and there are 14 breakout rooms. Within walking distance to the centre is the four-star, 209-key UCSI Hotel Kuching

which opened in 2016. The hotel is ideal for speakers, delegates and the conference secretariat team.

### 3 Memorable social venues

Sarawak's rich history and cultures have given birth to many unique venues that are great for private events. Some of these are beautifully conserved buildings that tell the Sarawak story, such as The Old Courthouse in Kuching and Sarawak Cultural Village in Santubong.

### 4 Ample keys

Kuching has just over 900 rooms in the five-star category and more than 1,500 rooms in the four-star category. In total, the state capital of Sarawak, where most association gatherings are held, has 3,875 rooms including boutique and home-grown stay options.

## { Pre/Post }

### A leisurely cruise

Sarawak River Cruise operates a daily sunset cruise that comes with light refreshments, a live commentary in English about the Sarawak River and the historical buildings along the river bank, as well as a traditional performance by local dancers.

The 90-minute long experience begins at 17.30 from the Kuching Waterfront Pier, onboard the MV *Equatorial*, a 36m by 6m ship that can accommodate up to 140 passengers.

Around 18.30, as the ship sails back to the pier, guests will enjoy a breathtaking view of the sun setting over the horizon of Mount Serapi.

#### Contact

srcinbox@gmail.com



### Here kitty kitty

A homage to the city's namesake, the Cat Museum is located eight kilometres north of the city centre of Kuching, featuring 2,000 exhibits on all things to do with the little feline. Owned by the Kuching North City Hall, the attraction is housed on the grounds of the City Hall building.

#### Contact

(608) 244-6688

### Explore a protected rainforest

Mulu National Park is Sarawak's largest national park and the country's first UNESCO World Heritage Site. The park's main attractions are the four show caves – Wind, Clearwater, Deer and Langs Caves, all accessible by wooden walkways and paths. Visitors may not enter any of the caves without a park guide which must be booked a day in advance. Payment of fees can be made at the park office.

#### Contact

www.mulunationalpark.com

### Dive into the deep

The Miri-Sibuti Coral Reefs National Park is located in the maritime boundary between Bintulu town and Miri City, and is the largest offshore national park in Sarawak. It has an average visibility of 10m to 30m, and boasts some interesting wreck dives. The nearest dive site is a mere ten minutes from the marina bay jetty. The best time to dive here is from late-March through November.

#### Contact

info.cocodive@gmail.com



### Outdoor fun in the sun

Operated by Kuching-based Paradesa Borneo Tours, the two-day Ride and Hike Bako adventure programme takes participants on bicycles to the seaside Bako village where they will enjoy a lunch stop in one of the local fishermen's stilt house and a demonstration of shrimp paste-making by the villagers. Later, a boat ride will take the group through a nearby mangrove swamp. Participants will also get to trekking through Bako National Park to spotting wild animals.

#### Contact

info@paradesaborneo.com



# Bringing the world closer

Government Information Bureau of Macau, SAR

The Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge is expected to improve Macau's accessibility and uplift her association meetings potential, writes **Prudence Lui**

**T**he new 42km-long Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge (HZMB) is bringing exciting hopes of more business events in Macau, thanks to its role in improving connectivity in the Pearl River Delta Region. Once ready, meeting delegates could travel more conveniently to nearby airports in Hong Kong and Zhuhai, reaching Macau via HZMB within 30 minutes, according to Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute.

Capitalising on the improved access, the Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) and the Hong Kong Trade Development Council have signed an agreement in October 2017, which requires both sides to work together to build attendance at business events held on their grounds.

For instance, Macau will actively invite enterprises, associations and government departments of the Greater Bay Area (GBA) to join in Macau's trade events. An IPIM spokesperson elaborated: "For example, we plan to work with the Department of Commerce of Guangdong Province to (get) different trade organisations from GBA cities to participate in the 23<sup>rd</sup> Macao International Trade and Investment Fair and the 2018 Portuguese-Speaking Countries Products and Services Exhibition this October. The events will promote exchange and cooperation between the GBA and Portuguese-speaking countries through Macau's events."

The spokesperson added that "as connectivity between GBA cities improves, so will the opportunities to develop extended stays, pre- and post-show tours, social programmes, incen-

tive itineraries and technical tours".

Meeting planners and groups will benefit from a more diverse range of activities to suit their needs.

IPIM is particularly keen to leverage the HZMB to attract more association events from Guangdong. Its representative office in the Chinese province offers support services for enterprises and associations that are keen to invest in or stage conferences in Macau.

At the same time, IPIM is also showing off Macau's ability to act as a gateway to industries in Guangdong. It is organising visits to the GBA for local and foreign enterprises meeting in Macau. For example, local and European attendees of the 2018 Macao International Environmental Cooperation Forum and Exhibition were brought on a visit to Jiangmen, Guangdong to study the region's green industry developments.

MCI Group, director of live communications, Olinto Oliveira, looks forward to the completion and opening of the

**"Being able to bring delegates over by bus directly from Hong Kong International Airport to the doorstep of the event venue in Macau resolves (one of the biggest challenges of associations meeting in Macau)."**

## **Olinto Oliveira**

Director of live communications,  
MCI Group

HZMB, as a means to overcome the logistic bottleneck between Hong Kong and Macau.

Oliveira explained that one of the biggest challenges associations face when meeting in Macau is transporting overseas delegates – particularly those from Europe and the US – who fly through the Hong Kong airport, as the Hong Kong-Macau ferry service is stretched having to serve a "constantly high influx of tourists".

"Being able to bring delegates over by bus directly from Hong Kong International Airport to the doorstep of the event venue in Macau resolves this challenge considerably," he said.

While the ease of getting to Macau is clear to see, Oliveira does not expect the HZMB to alter travel patterns or length of stays among visiting association meeting attendees.

Macau Explorer Cultural Travel, managing director, Manuel Wu, has chosen to downplay the potential impact of the HZMB on inbound association meetings to Macau.

"I don't think the bridge will bring immediate benefit, because many international association meetings are still preferring Hong Kong, with Macau playing the role of a pre- or post-meeting leisure destination," he said.

However, Wu believes there is potential to see more association gatherings in Macau in the long term, if the 7,000 associations registered under the Macau government leverage the improved access to conduct more international exchanges.

For Macau to see real results in the association meetings sector arising from the HZMB, Mandarin Oriental Macau, director of commercial strategy, David Lam, said the tourism authorities and travel trade players need to truly paint Macau as a "multi-interest and entertainment destination".



## { Need to know }

### 1 Look beyond the glitzy hotels

Macau may sport many fancy integrated resorts with convention facilities, but the destination also has much to offer in terms of traditions and culture. The well-preserved Taipa Village has evolved into a destination offering art, cultural and dining experiences. There are art galleries to visit, public festivals to partake in, old backstreets to explore and numerous local and international eateries to keep visitors' bellies very happy. Some venues welcome private events, allowing meeting planners to add a unique touch to their programme.

### 2 Find your way around

There are free online tools to help visitors get around Macau. The latest is Macau GeoGuide which provides location search functions, GPS positioning and more.

Look out also for the Municipal Facilities EasyGo, a website that guides visitors around municipal facilities managed by the Civic and Municipal Affairs Bureau through suggested walking and bus routes as well as an audio guide function. Another valuable feature is EasyGo's toilet guide.

## { Pre/Post }

### Stay in an architectural icon

Designed by the late architecture meister, Zaha Hadid, the five-star Morpheus hotel opened its door in June. It offers 770 guestrooms, suites and villas, including three ultra-luxurious pool villas and six duplex villas.

Morpheus is a perfect option for meeting attendees looking for a more luxurious leisure extension. The hotel dangles an array of premium dining experiences, such as the World of Ducasse which has an entire floor dedicated to two Alain Ducasse restaurants and a bar; and Yi which is said to be the only Chinese fine-dining restaurant in Asia to present a blend of regional Chinese cuisines served omakase-style.

#### Contact

[rsvnmorpheus@cod-macau.com](mailto:rsvnmorpheus@cod-macau.com)



### Immersive experiences

Launched at Broadway Macau this June, Zero Latency is a 200m<sup>2</sup> virtual reality (VR) game arena featuring heart-racing zombie attacks, galaxy space missions and family fun adventures for up to eight players at one time.

#### Contact

[info@zerolatencyvrmacau.com](mailto:info@zerolatencyvrmacau.com)



### Sail into the sunset

Organised by Macau Sailing and operated on a traditional junk built in Macau's Coloane shipyards half a century ago, the Saturday Sunset Cruises takes place every weekend, and plies the waters around the Inner Harbour and the city's waterfront.

The cruise departs Doca do Lam Mau at 17.00. A ticket costs MOP350 (US\$43) per adult, and the price comes with drinks.

The vessel, which can accommodate up to 45 guests, also welcomes private charter. Events are supported by an accompanying 11m-long trawler equipped with a fully functional kitchen, barbecue equipment and fun water accessories.

#### Contact

[www.macausailing.com](http://www.macausailing.com)



### Baking egg tarts

Offered by Small World Experiences, this two-hour class teaches participants how to make the legendary egg tarts of Macau. Under the guidance of a professional pastry chef, participants learn about the story behind the egg tart and step-by-step techniques to making the delicacy. The experience concludes with participants tucking into their creations and having a few more to take home.

A minimum group size of 10 is required, and no more than 16.

#### Contact

[mail@smallworldexperience.com](mailto:mail@smallworldexperience.com)

### Don a traditional outfit

The qipao and maqua are traditional outfits of the Chinese, and Klook has a programme that alights to rent one of them along with a traditional handbag, fan and hair accessories, and then head out to explore Macau's streets. The fun experience can be enhanced with a special photoshoot package where guests will receive professionally edited photos at the end of the journey.

#### Contact

[www.klook.com/activity/11634-qipao-experience-macau](http://www.klook.com/activity/11634-qipao-experience-macau)



### A deeper look into Macau's art and culture

Organised by CoForte Organisation Development, the Art and Culture Journey is a guided tour through Macau's traditional industry. Participants visit museums, galleries and a shipyard. Some of the hands-on activities include making a wooden paddle and keychain using wood once used to build ships. Reserve a month ahead. A minimum of 10 people is required.

#### Contact

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## THE TECHNOLOGY EXPERIENCE

The article The Technology Experience in TTGmice June 2017 by Karen Yue has been awarded a PATA Gold Award 2018 in Travel Journalism - Business Article category.

