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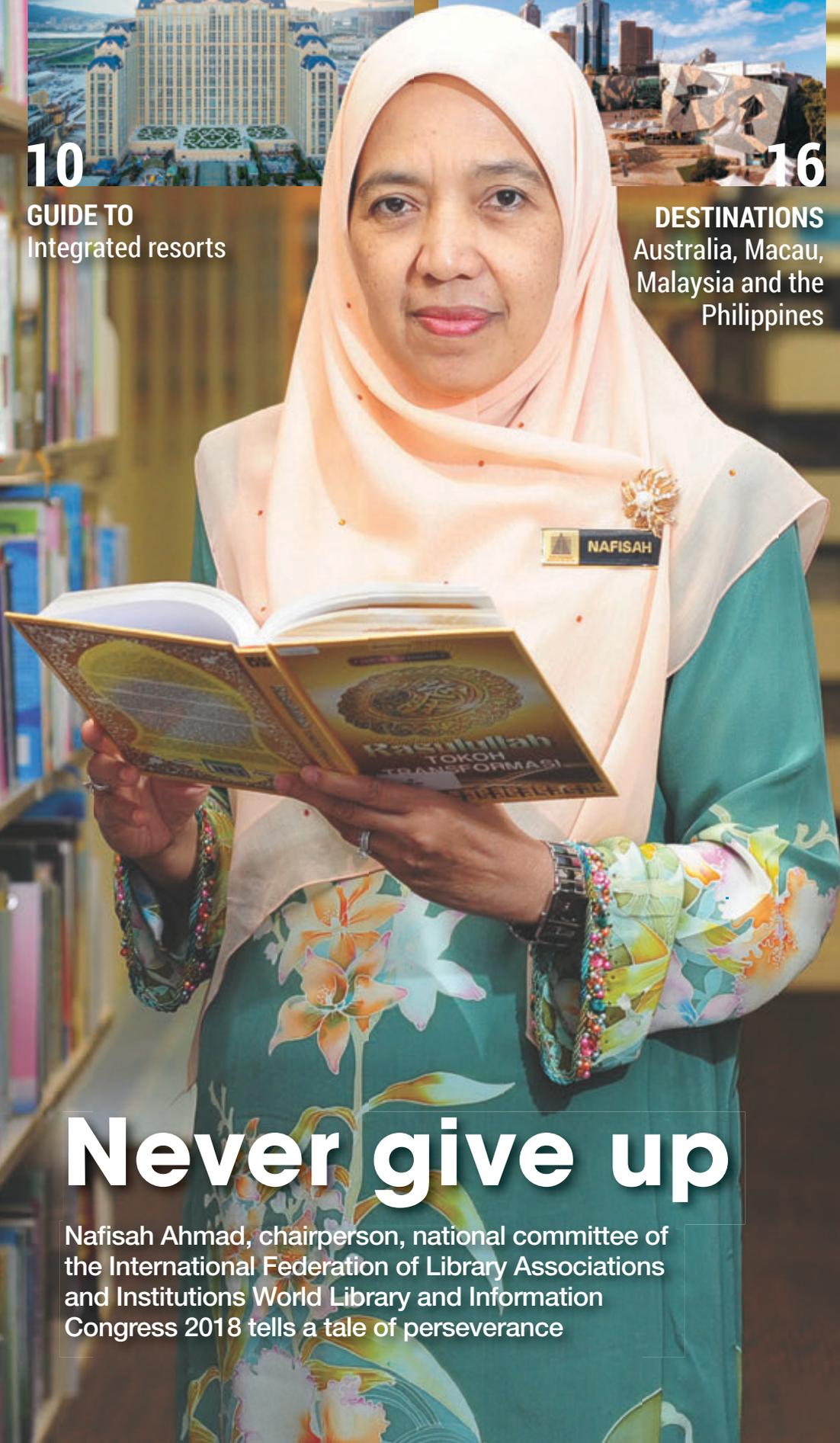
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**GUIDE TO**  
Integrated resorts



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**DESTINATIONS**  
Australia, Macau,  
Malaysia and the  
Philippines



# Never give up

Nafisah Ahmad, chairperson, national committee of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress 2018 tells a tale of perseverance

# TTG associations

July 2017  
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# The wonder of IRs

There is something magical about integrated resorts – massive complexes offering a variety of accommodation options, dining establishments to suit all budgets and appetites, numerous retail and entertainment opportunities as well as meetings and event spaces.

The magic, in my opinion, lies firstly in the convenience integrated resorts provide. For a meeting organiser who is gathering a large group of delegates from all over the world to take in an intensive programme comprising keynote presentations, multiple-track presentations and panel discussions, a trade exhibition, and various social activities that foster bonds, an integrated resort is a god-send one-stop solution.

All delegates can be accommodated under one roof and in properties that suit their budget – an arrangement that solves some logistical and security concerns for the organiser. They can meet, share knowledge and talk business in multiple function rooms located in a single event centre, just steps from their hotel. They can dine and socialise in themed surroundings set up in flexible

function rooms, in one of the many fancy restaurants in the complex or even in an attraction bought out for privacy.

And all these requirements can be coordinated through a single point of contact provided by a business event-savvy integrated resort.

The magic of integrated resorts also lies in the atmosphere. I find that the facility mix inherently lends a holiday vibe to these complexes, which makes attending a business event there feel less solemn.

Here in Asia-Pacific, meeting organisers are spoilt for choice. You can read about some of them in this issue's Guide To feature (page 10-13).

In Macau, home already to some of the most beautiful integrated resorts with impressive inventory of event venues, accommodation and lifestyle facilities, even more are being built now and will open in the near future. That, along with its attractive position as gateway to China's businesses and increasingly independent trade associations, will make Macau a formidable player in the association meetings market. You can also read more about Macau in this issue (page 18-19).



**Karen Yue**  
Group Editor

## PROFILE

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### Nafisah Ahmad

Nafisah Ahmad, chairperson, national committee of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress 2018 tells [S Puvaneswary](#) a tale of perseverance



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### Integrated wonderland

Integrated resorts, with their extensive event, dining and entertainment facilities under one roof, make a convenient venue for large meetings. *TTGassociations* profiles some of Asia-Pacific's best and finds out what's new at each



## DESTINATIONS



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Presence of modern infrastructure, significant knowledge institutions and unique destination experiences are giving Melbourne star appeal, writes [Adelaine Ng](#)



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# Philippine associations devise ways to tackle present challenges

By Rosa Ocampo

Sponsorship fatigue, changes in membership trends and evolving technology have been named as some of the current challenges being faced by associations and the Philippines, but some association leaders have found effective solutions for them.

Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCAA) CEO and founder Octavio Peralta said for an association to remain relevant, it must “rethink, re-tool and readapt to the current ever-changing business environment that we all are facing on a daily basis”.

Charlie Villaseñor, chair, international relations committee, Marketing Association of the Philippines (MAP), opined that “associations have to be run like a business” to be able to be self-sufficient.

To tackle sponsorship fatigue – where donors have become tired of continuously supporting organisations and their causes, Villaseñor took to organising MAP’s own events such as the Golf Cup for CSR and its 15<sup>th</sup> International CEO Conference this year to raise funds.

Jing Lagandaon, president of the Philippine Association of Convention Exhibition Organizers and Suppliers Inc. (PACEOS), said associations could collaborate with the business events sector in fund-raising such as through sponsorship and exhibition, and allow-

ing professional event managers to take the event management burden from association secretariats.

Lagandaon cited the case of the Philippine Constructors Associations’ annual trade show, Philconstruct, which was losing money.



Lagandaon: work with business event suppliers

Her company, Global-Link MP Events International, handled Philsconstruct and turned it into a money-spinner and the country’s biggest event with over 1,000 exhibitors and 80,000 visitors last year. Global-Link “did all the behind-the-scene works but the credit goes to PCA”, she explained.

To resolve thinning membership, many local associations have turned to millennials, enticing them with a sense of purpose and recognition. Others, like bank associations, for example, have successfully grown their membership by appealing to those in related sectors to join.

Ed Mapa Jr., founder, Institute of Mobile Marketing Association of the Philippines, pointed to the need to establish a “collaborative spirit”, which calls on “people to really be part of the process”.

Himself a millennial, Sam Christopher Lim, director for special projects and digital innovation of the Philippine Franchise Association, resolved to get staff and junior managers in the business to share operational issues and as a result has “seen lots of engagement” with the younger generation.

## { Bureau brief }

### Singapore's dishes out more perks

Changi Airport Group, Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and Singapore Airlines have enhanced their Singapore MICE Advantage Programme with new partners luxury airport terminal JetQuay and ride-sharing giant Uber, as well as more benefits for event organisers. At the same time, STB’s In Singapore Incentives & Rewards programme for Europe and North America has been extended to December 31, 2018.



### New website for Business Events Australia

Tourism Australia has launched a brand new website, [www.australia.com/business-events](http://www.australia.com/business-events), solely dedicated to business events. The site now sports a brighter design, where images and videos are featured prominently. The website also offers direct access to Tourism Australia business events representatives as well as event products and destinations, allowing users to easily make contact with sources of information on holding a business event in Australia.

### Dubai honours ambassadors

Forty-five high-profile individuals and organisations, part of the AI Safer Programme, established by Dubai Business Events in 2010, have been recognised for their outstanding contribution in attracting and hosting international conferences and business events in Dubai. The ambassadors range from pioneering subject matter experts and leading academics to innovative surgeons and prominent people in UAE business.

## ICCA, BestCities offer grant to advocate meetings

ICCA and BestCities Global Alliance have co-launched the ICCA Incredible Impacts Programme, a programme that celebrates the “beyond tourism” value of international association meetings.

The new programme creates a platform to advocate the positive societal impact of international association meetings. Incredible Impacts grants are then awarded to associations to encourage communication of the true value of their meetings. This partnership is a direct result of ICCA’s five-year strategic plan which was launched at the end of 2015.

To apply for a grant, associations must demonstrate a track record in



a “beyond tourism” or legacy programme or project related to their international meetings. The association must explain how they would use the grant to support, expand, extend or enhance their chosen programme or a future project.

An independent jury will deter-

mine which three associations will be awarded a grant of US\$7,500 each. The winners of each year’s grants will be announced at the ICCA Congress in 2017, 2018, and 2019.

The programme will look for “great examples” rather than for “best example of”, to stimulate further projects, better measurement, and wider understanding of the range of impacts that international association meetings can generate.

Associations can nominate themselves or candidate associations can be nominated by any ICCA member. Nominations can be e-mailed to ICCA’s director of association relations, Ksenija Polla, at [ksenija.p@iccaworld.org](mailto:ksenija.p@iccaworld.org).

# PCMA, UIA global meetings are bound for Thailand

Two major associations for associations and association professionals worldwide have awarded Thailand with their global meetings this year.

Bangkok will host PCMA's Global Professionals Conference for the Asia-Pacific region from August 28 to 31, while Chiang Mai will welcome UIA's Round Table Asia Pacific from September 21 to 22.

These two events will strengthen Thailand's reputation as the convention hub in Asia-Pacific and reveal to all who attend that the country has the skill, capacity and product to produce high quality business events for global organisations.

According to PCMA, the Bangkok

event will bring together 35 global planners from top associations and corporations along with 15 senior-level suppliers representing convention bureaus and centres from around the region. Conference content will focus on offering a richer understanding of opportunities available across Asia-Pacific, while demonstrating how to maximise the impact of business events.

UIA's destination choice is a confidence boost for the upcoming destination for business events.

"Chiang Mai has been identified as one of the emerging MICE cities by TCEB and we are delighted that UIA is endors-



Doi Inthanon, Chiang Mai

ing our vision...by hosting its esteemed roundtable (there)," said TCEB in a media statement.

Representatives from Asia-Pacific associations will meet in the northern Thailand gateway city to share experiences in management, administration, policies, regulations, values and vision.

UIA is not new to Thailand, having last hosted a similar event in Bangkok in 2015. Based on that success TCEB won the bid to bring the meeting back to Thailand.

## All Occasions Group reels in WFC2020 congress

Adelaide-based All Occasions Group (AOG) has been named the event manager for the World Fisheries Congress 2020 (WFC2020).

The congress will be led by Primary Industries and Regions SA, in partnership with AOG, on behalf of the Australian Society for Fish Biology and the broader Australian and New Zealand seafood industry.

Anne-Marie Quinn, AOG's CEO, said: "We will be working alongside the WFC2020 Steering Committee to bring an expected 1,500 national and international delegates to Adelaide to learn about and foster cooperation in fisheries science, conservation and management.

We anticipate that similar to the 2014 World Aquaculture Conference, delegates will also visit South Australia's regional fisheries and aquaculture sites."

"Delegates will enjoy insightful presentations, information on the latest technological advances in fisheries and an inspiring forum for debate and discussion on critical developments needed to ensure the future sustainable development of the world's oceans and rivers," added Quinn.



Quinn: wide ranging responsibilities

## APFAO identifies new ways to grow membership, visibility

The Asia Pacific Federation of Association Organizations (APFAO) has come out with several initiatives to increase membership and visibility.



Peralta: more organisations are welcome

"Recognising that setting up an association for associations in other countries that are not yet a member takes time, APFAO is open to have members from existing national membership organisations with association members like federations, such as trade associations, chambers of commerce and industry, societies, cooperatives, local government groups and others," said Octavio Peralta, CEO and founder of the Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives (PCAEE).

PCAEE will continue as APFAO secretariat for another year.

Moving forward, "APFAO aims to expand its membership to cover as many countries in the region as possible, enhance visibility, increase partnerships with other similar organisations around the world, and eventually organise a regional congress on association governance and management in cooperation with same-purposed and like-minded associations," he explained.

While APFAO currently has two members in Australia and one each in South Korea and the Philippines, Peralta said "Malaysia is in its final stage of registration and Japan has started organising association forums. Thailand, Taiwan and Singapore are mulling over similar initiatives". – Rosa Ocampo

## 'Jane Bond of Innovation' to keynote ASAE meeting in August

Nilofer Merchant, a fellow at The Martin Prosperity Institute and one of the world's top-ranking business thinkers who is known as the 'Jane Bond of Innovation', will kick off the 2017 ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition, August 12-15, in Toronto.

Merchant will discuss how



Merchant: imparting knowledge

ideas today spread through networks, collaboration and co-creation instead of hierarchies, and outline how the power to make a difference is not bound by status.

Association executives can learn how to surface powerful ideas and take home Merchant's experience in

defending against competition and maximising revenue.

"Imagine what problems associations might solve and innovative breakthroughs that could be unlocked, if every idea had an equal opportunity, not just the ones that come from expected people and places," said ASAE president and CEO John H Graham IV.

# New alcohol ban at venues, hotels shakes Indian event players

By Rohit Kaul

The Indian Supreme Court's move to ban sale of liquor at establishments within 500m of state and national highways in a bid to curb drunk driving, is expected to impact events in the country where land scarcity in the city centre has driven larger, newer venues to be developed close to highways.

S M Shervani, managing director of The Shervani Group, said the impact would be felt down the road when large convention centres built for the future are opened.

"For India to compete with other international cities we need convention halls for about 10,000 people, but such venues cannot be placed in city centres due to the lack of land. They can only come up in areas near highways," Shervani said.

Citing an example, Shervani pointed to an international convention centre being built in Kerala by Dubai-based Lulu Group, slated to be opened in September 2017.

"A huge investment has been made on this facility but with the liquor ban how

will it attract domestic (business events), let alone international ones?" remarked Shervani.

And with affordable hotels being located near highways too, Indian hoteliers are just as concerned about the future of their banquet business.

Sudesh Poddar, director of Nataraj Group of Hotels, predicted that event planners, turned off by the liquor ban at affordable hotels in the restricted zone and pricey city centre alternatives, would take their business out of India.

Since the ban was announced and set in motion on April 1, the number of enquiries for new events at hotels in the restricted zone has started to dip, according to sources.

"We expect hotels (in those areas) to lose 60 to 70 per cent of their business events. Different taxation in different states was already making it hard to host a (business event) in India, and now with the liquor ban the situation is even more challenging," lamented Garish Oberoi, vice president, Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India.

## US, Paris take top spots in ICCA's 2016 rankings

Cityscape of Paris



The US has retained its crown in ICCA's 2016 top 10 country rankings while Paris has succeeded in taking over Berlin's spot as the most popular city for international association meetings.

The US hosted 934 meetings in 2016, holding nine more meetings than in 2015. Germany and the UK remain in second and third positions respectively, while France and Spain have swapped places to fourth and fifth respectively.

Italy and Japan have also managed to stay put in sixth and seventh spot, however the latter now shares its seat with China, which has improved by one place.

The Netherlands drops from shared eighth to ninth. In the 10<sup>th</sup> position, newcomer Portugal (12<sup>th</sup> in 2015) shares

the spot with Canada, whose position is unchanged. January 2018.

Meanwhile, ICCA's researchers have placed Paris in top spot in the 2016 city rankings, for hosting 196 qualified meetings in 2016. The French capital was first in 2014.

2015's champion Berlin has fallen from first to fourth place, while Vienna has climbed two places to second. Barcelona and London remain third and fifth respectively. Newcomer Amsterdam (12<sup>th</sup> in 2015) shares seventh spot with Madrid, and Lisbon has held on to her ninth position.

Asian winners Singapore has jumped from seventh to sixth, while Seoul has improved from 13<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> spot.

{ Advertorial }

ONE MINUTE with TIG Events



## Are Corporate Gifts Right For Your Association?

Corporate gifts are known to have a positive effect on brand awareness and recall. Your association may already be familiar with or is considering corporate gifting. Here's what you need to know.

### Customisation Is Key

The gift should represent your association. Gift suppliers are now equipped with not only product variety, but also innovative customisation options that enable gifting to be more meaningful for the brand and its recipient. Where to start?

The Singapore Gifts Show (SGS) 2017 features exhibitors offering thousands of gift ideas across diverse genres. This 3-day trade event is an excellent one-stop shop to explore latest trends, customisation technology and ingenious gift ideas, in person.

### Consider Handcrafted Options

Personalisation is great! But handcrafted personalised gifts takes impact to a whole new level. SGS is collaborating with Social Innovation Park's PaTH – a community initiative that provides marginalised individuals a creative and economic outlet to harness their talents and earn an income. Over the years, SGS gift buyers have been constantly wowed by the appealing and novel gift ideas by PaTH exhibitors.

### Choose Designs That Are Symbolic

Local associations might find iconic Singapore designed gifts a hit with their members and partners, while regional and international associations could prefer gift designs that have a broader appeal. At SGS, participating gift suppliers extend beyond Singapore and include exhibitors from Bhutan, Thailand, and China. Perfect for sourcing gifts that are exclusive to specific cultures and tastes or that showcase craftsmanship, design or material native to a country.

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[www.singaporegiftsshow.com/register-now](http://www.singaporegiftsshow.com/register-now)

\*Terms and Conditions Apply

# Pool's pulling power

Following a recent refurbishment, The Ritz-Carlton, Millenia Singapore, has added a new overwater pool cover that brings about more than 1,300m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor events space.

Made of Plexiglas, also known as acrylic glass, the transparent Plexiglas table-tops are durable and engineered to support weights of up to 800kg per cube. When placed into the water, the standing Plexiglas-top cubes can be custom-built to take on various shapes, from a rectangle to a square or even a T-shape to accommodate the entire length and or width of the pool, or just a portion depending on the event.

There is also the possibility of video projection mapping, LED lighting in the trees and foliage, as well as underwater lighting to supplement the pool's floodlights.

The platform can accommodate between 150 to 200 people for a sit-down buffet dinner, or between 150 to 450 people for a cocktail reception.

Aside from the pool cover, the new outdoor swimming pool now features a three-tiered timber pool deck flanked by sun loungers, private cabanas, a pool bar and an outdoor grill.

Event package prices start from S\$80 (US\$58) for a cocktail reception for at least 50 guests. A minimum F&B spend of S\$18,000 is required to close the pool for exclusive use, with an additional S\$12,000 for the custom set-up of the preferred pool cover configuration.



# Hong Kong unveils its first urban resort



The closely-watched Kerry Hotel, Hong Kong has opened.

Touted as the city's first urban resort, the new-build 16-storey property sits along the shoreline of Hung Hom Bay on Victoria Harbour and offers 546 rooms, ranging from Deluxe Sea View (42m<sup>2</sup>) to Presidential Suite (294m<sup>2</sup>).

Built with both business and leisure guests in mind, the five-star hotel dangles facilities such as the 1,756m<sup>2</sup> Grand Ballroom and the 1,125m<sup>2</sup> Hung Hom Ballroom, five F&B concepts, a fitness centre, 25m outdoor infinity swimming pool, Jacuzzi, steam bath, sauna and spa.

Conceived by architect and

interior designer Andre Fu, famed for his innovative approach to hospitality projects, the hotel provides plenty of natural daylight and contains extensive outdoor landscaped gardens. In addition, a curated collection of over 1,000 art pieces are showcased throughout the property – many of which were specially commissioned from leading Asian contemporary artists to complement the fluid design of the property.

Kerry Hotel is conveniently located, being only a brief walk from Tsim Sha Tsui East, Hung Hom Ferry Pier, Whampoa MTR Station and Hung Hom Train Station.

# New nature-themed attraction in Manila welcomes events

Appealing to planners who prefer spacious and natural settings outside the city confines, the new Haranah Eco Park offers events an alternative venue combining nature and the outdoors, a rarity in metro Manila.

Jasmine S Tan, managing director of Haranah Tours and whose family owns the eco park, said that just a couple of hours away from Manila, the 16.2-hectare site is in Tanay in Rizal, an unspoiled and beautifully landscaped province that's still unknown to tourists.

While 60 to 70 per cent of Haranah Eco Park is untouched forest, its open grounds can ac-

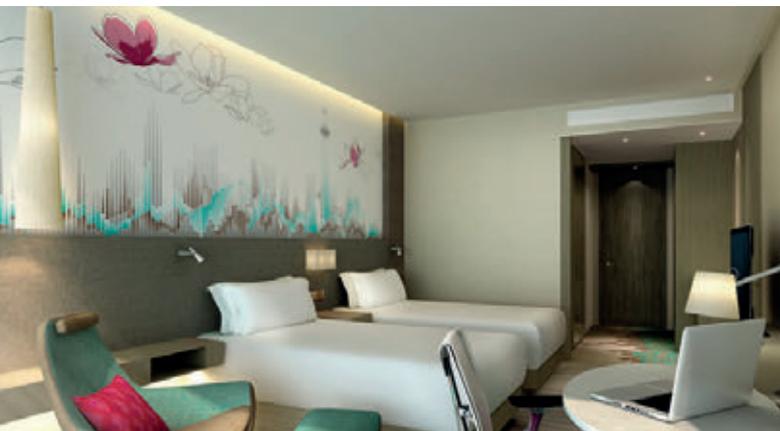
commodate up to 2,000 people.

Facilities for meetings, seminars and conferences include a solar-powered multipurpose hall that seats 200 people, a conference hall for 40 people, a view deck and lounge for 15 people, an outdoor amphitheatre, three geodesic domes for planting herbs and spices, and a traditional Filipino house.

Activities can include outreach with the indigenous Dumagat community as well as rock balancing, camping, hiking, trekking and Filipino games which make great ice-breakers.

Villas and dorms will be added later.





## First Hilton Garden Inn arrives in Shanghai

Part of the New Hongqiao CBD, the new Hilton Garden Inn Shanghai Hongqiao offers 226 modern guestrooms complete with 43-inch HDTVs, complimentary Wi-Fi and ergonomic chairs and facilities including two restaurants, a 24-hour snack pantry, gym and a self-service laundromat.

For event planners, there is 500m<sup>2</sup> of meeting and banquet space, good for gatherings of up to 200 guests.

The hotel puts guests within easy access of the Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport and Hongqiao Train Station, as well as the National Conference and Exhibition Centre (Shanghai) and the Shanghai Qingpu Industrial Zone.

It is the first Hilton Garden Inn property in Shanghai.

## AccorHotels brings new meeting option to Bangkok

Novotel Bangkok Sukhumvit 20 has opened in the heart of Sukhumvit, bringing with it the brand's signature Meeting at Novotel concept as well as tantalising dining experiences.

A dedicated meeting floor houses the Benjasiri Grand Ballroom for up to 1,000 guests for a cocktail reception and 450 for a round table set-up, and six meeting rooms for 10 to 60 people.

Two additional meeting rooms are available at Food Exchange and one meeting room at Executive Sky Lounge.

Benjamin Krieg, general manager of Novotel Bangkok Sukhumvit 20, said the hotel has one of the largest event facilities in the city.

A host of culinary options can be found at the Food Exchange, a venue designed to transport diners to Bangkok's Chinatown. Based on the concept of live cooking stations with a modern interpretation of traditional food markets around the world, diners can interact with the chefs and dive into a selection of western dishes and authentic Asian delights.

Other dining gems are Gourmet Bar where wines and Thai, Western and fusion dishes come together to promise a relaxing evening, The Pool Bar and Sky on 20 on the 26<sup>th</sup> floor where the evening sunset can be caught.



### { What's on offer }

#### Regal Airport Hotel

2017 Residential Meeting Packages are now available at Regal Airport Hotel are priced from HK\$1,380 (US\$177.60) per person per day. The package includes one night's accommodation (on twin sharing basis) with in-room Internet access, full-day meeting package with Wi-Fi access (one IP access per person) for one day, and free daily buffet breakfast.

Planners can also access rewards such as a 30-minute stretching exercise during meeting, a 3km run or hike down Wisdom Path in Lantau, and use of MICEAPP+ to

stay in touch with event delegates.

Terms and conditions apply.

Email [meet@airport.regalhotel.com](mailto:meet@airport.regalhotel.com).

#### Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia

The Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre has updated the menu for its TenOnCall (TOC) packages, presenting 20 new dishes and 80 reinvented ones.

Culinary highlights include roasted lamb ribs glazed with honey and chilli flakes; Bandung crèmeux – rose-flavoured mousse; and Charlie Brown – salted peanut brownie with

chocolate crème and lemongrass yogurt ice-cream.

TOC packages, valid for 10 flexible meeting spaces at the centre, are available in half- and full-day arrangements, priced from RM186.56 (US\$42) and RM212.20 nett per person respectively.

Visit [www.klccconventioncentre.com](http://www.klccconventioncentre.com).

#### Dorsett Hospitality International

The new Dorsett Choice is allowing planners to earn points from their bookings made with participating hotels in Malaysia such as Dorsett Grand Subang, Dorsett Kuala Lumpur, Silka Maytower Kuala Lumpur, Silka Johor Bahru, and more.

The reward programme accepts reservations on guestrooms and venue bookings for meetings, seminars and conferences, and points are based on qualified rates per discretion of participating hotels. Points can be redeemed for stay and dining vouchers at Malaysian properties and shopping vouchers at selected stores.

Additional perks include 10 per cent off BAR and 20 per cent off F&B at participating hotels.

Terms apply.

Visit [www.dorsetthotels.com/choice](http://www.dorsetthotels.com/choice).

Regal Airport Hotel



**Nafisah Ahmad**

# Never give up

Nafisah Ahmad, chairperson, national committee of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions World Library and Information Congress 2018 tells **S Puvaneswary** a tale of perseverance

## **Why is it important to bring the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) World Library and Information Congress (WLIC) to Malaysia?**

WLIC is the most prestigious international conference platform for librarians in the world, and having this opportunity to host the congress in 2018 will allow Malaysian delegates to participate in an international conference, network with international participants and collaborate for the betterment of the industry. It also provides the Librarians Association of Malaysia an opportunity to showcase what our libraries have to offer, and share best practices in the field of librarianship/ information management and communications technology with the rest of the world.

It will maximise Malaysia's growth potential as an international education hub and first-world knowledge economy.

The eight-day congress is expected to attract delegates from more than 100 countries and generate RM44.4 million (US\$9.9 million) in economic impact to the country.

## **What did you do differently in the third bid attempt?**

At IFLA-WLIC 2015 in Cape Town, as part of our awareness drive for our local association and libraries, we took an exhibition booth to showcase activities and services of the Librarians Association of Malaysia and libraries in Malaysia. We had never attempted this in the past.

In the bid document, we also presented a supporting letter from the Ministry

of Tourism and Culture Malaysia and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission to show that we had the strong backing from the government if we won the bid. We also had monetary support from the government.

Malaysia Convention & Exhibition Bureau (MyCEB) held our hands and supported us all the way, from helping with the bid document, to negotiating good rates with the host venue, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC), and liaising with different government agencies for off-site dining venues and tours.

We had only one month to prepare the bid document, but with the support of MyCEB, KLCC and members of our association, we managed to come up with a strong business case to hold the congress in Malaysia.

## **What do you think was the clincher?**

We bid against Qatar for the 2018 congress. I think it was the site inspection that made the real difference.

After we were short-listed, four officials from IFLA came to Malaysia in June to assess our readiness for the congress. They saw we had a world-class, iconic venue (KLCC), with a wide choice of hotels within walking distance. They were also impressed with the different libraries we had selected for them to visit and which will be part of the programme should we win the bid.

They also saw improvements in our urban transport infrastructure, as they had done site inspections here when we bid for WLIC in 2010 and again in 2013.



The officials observed and commented that our committee members in the Librarians Association of Malaysia worked as a team and that we had sufficient manpower to ensure the successful execution of what was necessary.

We were also in a unique position due to my dual roles as president of the association as well as director-general of the National Library, which plays a leadership role among the libraries in Malaysia. Thus, I am able to get the cooperation and commitment of all the librarians and libraries in Malaysia.

Zulkefli Sharif, CEO of MyCEB, himself hosted a dinner for the officials in which he reinforced MyCEB's support for the congress.

### What preparations are needed?

We are in charge of getting a keynote speaker and two plenary speakers from Malaysia. We are also responsible for the opening and closing ceremonies and have to organise a cultural event. The rest of the programme will be organised by IFLA. As the local host, we will also have to market this congress overseas in order to hit our target of attracting 4,000 to 4,500 delegates.

### Do you expect a record attendance from this region?

We are working very hard to ensure a record attendance from South-east Asia as this is a once in a lifetime opportunity (for many delegates in this region) to attend WLIC. They can save on airfare and accommodation at this congress, as compared to having to travel to Europe, the US or some other longhaul, developed destination to attend it.

To encourage them to attend the congress, we will provide travel grants for delegates from developing countries within South-east Asia, which will cover their accommodation and airfare. We are targeting 1,000 local delegates, 500 delegates from Asia-Pacific and a large number from North America and Europe.

### What's the programme like?

There will be more than 100 conference sessions and around 20 satellite meetings held before and after the main event. These are meetings for small groups of delegates with special interests in the IFLA sections and the venue will be hosted by local libraries.

All of these meetings, except for one, will be held within a three-hour flight time from Kuala Lumpur. The exception is a satellite meeting to be hosted by the Philippines Librarians Association.

The one-day satellite meeting planned for in Sabah will attempt to bring together issues relating to the theme of special needs groups, while the one in Sarawak will revolve around the theme of indigenous groups. The University of Malaya

in Kuala Lumpur will hold a satellite meeting around the theme of Information and Communications Technology.

There will also be post-tours for delegates and their spouses to visit the many beautiful destinations in Malaysia.

### What challenges do you foresee?

We have to work hard to promote the congress internationally in order to meet or surpass the attendance target. Next year, WLIC will be held in Poland and we need to send a big group from Malaysia to assist with promotions (of WLIC 2018). Getting commercial sponsors to commit is another challenge, especially in this current climate of global uncertainty and a soft economy. We stress to potential sponsors that exhibiting at WLIC is a wonderful opportunity to promote their products and services to an international audience.

### What is next for you, after WLIC 2018?

I will retire from public service in 2019. However, I will continue to contribute to the profession through my involvement in the association.

### Having been with the Librarians Association of Malaysia since 1999, what would you say is the biggest challenge for the association?

It is getting commitment from all librarians in Malaysia to support our programmes and to encourage librarians and non-professional library staff to become members. Attitude is something we have to deal with especially among young people. Before joining, many will consider what the association can do for them, rather than how they can contribute to make the association better.

### How do you deal with this?

Giving members a platform to interact with their peers, both locally and internationally, such as through active participation and involvement in the organisation of this congress will motivate more young librarians and non-professional library staff to join our association.

On a national level, we organise conferences and seminars that are interactive as this will also encourage participation from members. We plan to introduce more courses for middle management. We are lobbying local public universities offering library information science programmes to encourage their undergraduates and postgraduates to become members of our association and gain credits that go towards their extra-curricular activities.

### What more do you wish for your association?

While the Librarians Association of Malaysia is the voice of the association, I hope it will have a greater impact on



Nafisah (second from right) with national committee members of IFLA WLIC 2018

## A committed individual

Nafisah Ahmad, director-general, National Library of Malaysia has been actively involved in the development of libraries in Malaysia throughout her career. She has worked at the National Library of Malaysia for 30 years.

She was project director with the National Digital Library Project and a member of IFLA Cataloguing Section 2005-2006 and the Ubiquitous Library or u-Pustaka Project, among her many roles. She also sat on the national committee on cataloguing and classification from 1991 to 2007, and on the committee on national data dictionary for public sector from 2004 to 2012.

She has presented papers in local and international conferences.

Now, as the director-general of the National Library of Malaysia, she also sits on various committees which include Conference of Southeast Asian Librarians Executive Board Member, Conference of Directors of National Libraries and Conference of Directors of National Libraries Asia Oceania.

She is also currently the president of the Librarians Association of Malaysia and chairperson of the national committee of IFLA WLIC 2018.

society at large through our programmes which are meant to increase information literacy and media literacy among Malaysians including school children, those with special needs, indigenous communities and the homeless.

We will introduce activities and programmes in Malaysia in support of IFLA's commitment which is in line with UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals where access to information, universal literacy, safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage as well as access to Information and Communication Technologies are strongly represented.

# Integrated wonderland

Integrated resorts, with their extensive event, dining and entertainment facilities under one roof, make a convenient venue for large meetings. *TTGassociations* profiles some of Asia-Pacific's best and finds out what's new at each

## Australia

### CROWN MELBOURNE

Crown Melbourne is Australia's largest and multiple-award winning integrated resort, spread over 550,000m<sup>2</sup>. It encompasses three hotels, meeting rooms, celebrity chef restaurants, high-end shops and entertainment facilities. It also has Australia's biggest casino that includes award-winning VIP facilities.

Its three hotels, Crown Towers, Crown Metropol Melbourne and Crown Promenade Melbourne, altogether offer 1,600 rooms from four- to five-star quality.

Crown has received government approval to construct a new luxury hotel on a site adjacent to the Crown Melbourne complex, which would add 388 six-star rooms and 708 apartments to Crown's Melbourne operations.

A self-sufficient meetings hotel, Crown Melbourne offers three floors of conference and meeting facilities across 7,350m<sup>2</sup> at the Crown Conference Centre. This includes a 900-seat showroom and the Palladium Ballroom which accommodates 1,500.

Crown Melbourne is within walking distance to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

There are also two luxury spa options. Completing the complex are more than 40 retail outlets and some 70 restaurants, cafes and bars. Celebrity dining options include Nobu and Dinner by Heston Blumenthal.

### THE STAR SYDNEY

The Star in Sydney has won multiple awards for its hotels, restaurants, building design and casino. Its 250,000m<sup>2</sup> area includes two luxury hotels and some of

Sydney's iconic entertainment venues.

The Star's two hotels offer about 600 rooms from five-star accommodation to apartments with up to three bedrooms. The Astral Towers & Residence will complete refurbishment works by mid-2017 to reveal serviced apartments, king rooms and premium suites. The Darling is its boutique offering featuring 171 rooms, suites and penthouses, and is the city's only hotel to receive the prestigious Forbes five-star rating.

A key feature at The Star is its multi-award winning Event Centre which offers state-of-the-art, configurable space over three floors, suitable for 200 to 2,680 guests. The A\$100 million (US\$) centre has hosted national red carpet events such as the ARIA Awards, along with product launches and gala dinners.

Another hallmark at The Star is its Marquee, internationally famed for its lineup of local and international DJ artists with a VIP experience that's been compared to Las Vegas' super-clubs. The space can be tailored to suit corporate events, providing 1,858m<sup>2</sup> of floor space that sits on the entire top tier of The Star's harbour-side entrance and offers expansive views of Sydney Harbour and the city skyline.

The Star has about 20 restaurants and bars with options for corporate groups of up to 100 delegates. Signature restaurants like Momofuku Seiobo have adaptable space for various event sizes and audio-visual requirements, including a private dining room.

It is preparing to submit building plans for a signature A\$500 million, 215-metre tower which will add a 220-room six-star Ritz Carlton hotel at its top and another 150 residences to its current operations.



The Star Sydney



Clockwise from above: Angsana Bintan; The Parisian Macao, Genting International Convention Centre



## Indonesia

### LAGUNA BINTAN

One of the three Laguna integrated resorts in South-east Asia under Banyan Tree Group, Laguna Bintan comprises the 64-villa Banyan Tree Bintan, the 113-key Angsana Bintan and Laguna Bintan Golf Club.

Banyan Tree Bintan is an elegant property with a wide selection of recreational activities and is loved for its award-winning spa and memorable dining experiences in unique settings. In 2013, the resort's villas were refurbished and new relaxation pools were added.

Angsana Bintan, the younger sister of Banyan Tree, has a more active character, armed with a 1.5km stretch of private beach and a Marine Centre that makes watersports available to guests. It also run activities for everyone in the family, including nature tours.

Both welcome business and association events. Banyan Tree Bintan's meeting room can take 32 people while Angsana Bintan has two for 132 pax.

New at Laguna Bintan is the revamped Laguna Golf Bintan. Reopened in July 2016 after a complete redesign and renovation, the 18-hole, par-72 golf course now covers 60 hectares and affords sweeping views of the South China Sea.

Banyan Tree Group's third hotel brand – Cassia – will also soon open, offering one- and two-bedroom apartments.

## Macau

### CITY OF DREAMS

Developed by Melco Resorts & Entertainment, City of Dreams Macau started its phased opening in June 2009 and today pulls together four hotels – Crown Towers Macau, Grand Hyatt Macau and The Countdown Hotel – as well as a plethora of entertainment, dining, and retail facilities.

For meetings and events, Grand Hyatt Macau shines with its collection of venues spanning almost 8,000m<sup>2</sup> in total. There are two ballrooms – Grand Ballroom and Salão do Teatro – and eight meeting salons plus an outdoor pool deck for more informal gatherings.

The pillarless Grand Ballroom, with an eight-meter high ceiling, is ideal for 2,000 people in theater style or 1,300 pax in a banquet setting. It can be divided into four soundproofed sections.

Salão do Teatro boasts an innovative open kitchen concept and natural daylight, and can accommodate up to 360 guests.

Recent updates include the rebranding of Hard Rock Hotel Macau to The Countdown Hotel, with effect from July 6 this year.

In November 2016, Melco Crown revealed plans for a fifth hotel within the City of Dreams. Named Morpheus after the God of Dreams, the luxury

property will boast pioneering design and architecture.

### THE PARISIAN MACAO

The latest flower to bloom in Macau's Cotai is The Parisian Macao, an integrated resort that is physically connected with sister properties – The Venetian Macao, The Plaza Macao, and Sands Cotai Central.

Opened in September 2016, The Parisian Macao features 3,000 guest rooms and suites, a half-scale replica of the Eiffel Tower with a restaurant and observation decks within, 5,200m<sup>2</sup> of meeting rooms plus outdoor event spaces, The Parisian Theatre which can also be hired for business events, and a variety of restaurants, retail stores and fun attractions for all ages.

## Malaysia

### RESORTS WORLD GENTING

Located in the cool climes of Titiwangsa Mountains northeast of Kuala Lumpur, Resorts World Genting (RWG) has long drawn domestic and international travellers alike since the 60s. Today, the integrated resort comprises the Genting International Convention Centre which houses 13,935m<sup>2</sup> of function space with built-in high-tech features, six hotel options to suit various budgets, a casino, and a variety of

entertainment and dining outlets.

RWG's room inventory has recently grown, following the completion of First World Hotel's renovations and expansion in June 2015. The hotel added 1,286 rooms and now boasts a place in the Guinness Book of Records as the world's largest hotel with 7,351 keys. In all, RWG offers more than 10,000 keys.

Also new is a cable car system which opened last August. It comprises 99 gondolas and covers 2.8km in 11 minutes. Ten of these gondolas come with glass floors and are an attraction themselves.

August 2016 also saw the opening of SkyAvenue mall.

## Philippines

### RESORTS WORLD MANILA

Resorts World Manila (RWM) was the first integrated resort in Metro Manila when it soft-launched in 2009. Today it draws travellers with a selection of hotels and a combined guestroom inventory of 1,707 rooms as well as a casino, a plethora of restaurants and bars, and the four-storey Newport Mall.

It endeared itself to planners with the opening of the 10,000m<sup>2</sup> Marriott Grand Ballroom in 2015, a facility which has been touted as the most spacious and modern in the country.

The 480-key Belmont Hotel Manila also opened in 2015.

The expansion continued in 2016, with the debut of Japanese concept restaurant Ichiba, modelled after the market alleys of Osaka and Kyoto. RWM's Marriott Manila will add another 228 keys while Hilton Manila and Sheraton Manila will soon open. All three will raise RWM's inventory to 4,200 keys from the existing 1,226.

### SOLAIRE RESORT AND CASINO

Opened in 2013, Solaire Resort & Casino in Manila's Entertainment City offers 800 resort-style guestrooms in two towers – Sky Tower and Bay Tower – and a collection of dining, entertainment and retail opportunities for its guests.

For business events, Solaire has more than 5,000m<sup>2</sup> of event space, including a ballroom for 1,300 guests.

New at Solaire is the Sky Range Shooting Club and the 1,760-seat The Theatre which is said to be the most advanced in the country and the only venue in the Philippines equipped with Meyer Sound Constellation acoustic system.

### CITY OF DREAMS MANILA

City of Dreams Manila, soft-opened in December 2014, is a luxury complex comprising of three hotels – Crown Towers, Nobu and Hyatt – along with casinos, retail outlets, entertainment for all ages, and a collection of dining es-

tablishments including the famed Nobu Japanese restaurant.

In addition to the various event function spaces within the integrated resort, City of Dreams has made available its two night clubs – Chaos and Pangaea – for private hire. They can be hired during the day and early evening on weekdays.

## Singapore

### RESORTS WORLD SENTOSA

Spanning 49 hectares on Singapore's Sentosa island, Resorts World Sentosa (RWS) is a collection of six hotels each with a distinct theme, the Resorts World Convention Centre, a casino, several celebrity chef restaurants and specialty retail outlets, and a number of renowned attractions including Universal Studios theme park, S.E.A. Aquarium and Adventure Cove Waterpark.

Resorts World Convention Centre features a variety of indoor and outdoor spaces that suit intimate incentive programmes for 10 people to massive conventions with up to 6,000 delegates.

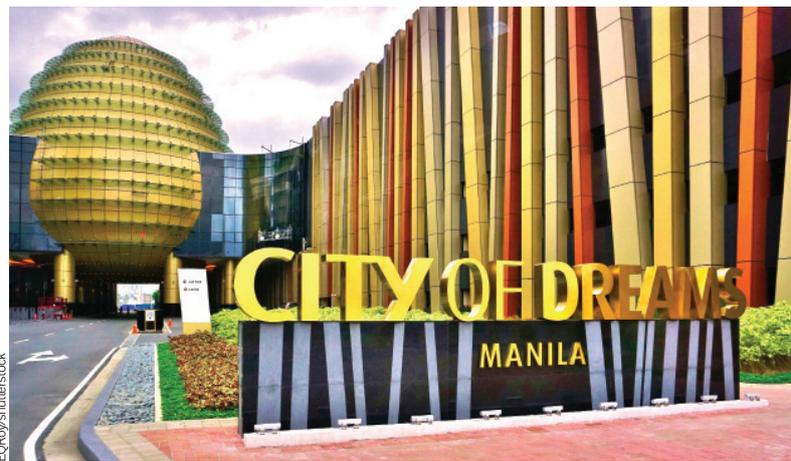
RWS' 6,000-seat ballroom is due for a face-lift in 2017.

### MARINA BAY SANDS

Opened in 2010, Marina Bay Sands (MBS) is home to 2,561 guestrooms, the 120,000m<sup>2</sup> Marina Bay Sands EXPO and



Resorts World Sentosa



EQRoy/Shutterstock



fazonv123RF

Clockwise from top left: Resorts World Sentosa; City of Dreams Manila; Solaire Resort and Casino; Marina Bay Sands





**Clockwise from top left: Cassia Ballroom, Banyan Tree Phuket; XANA Beach Club at Angsana Laguna Phuket; Angsan Lang Co**

Convention Centre, a casino, the ArtScience Museum, the MasterCard Theatres, and some 300 retail and F&B outlets.

In 2015 MBS reconfigured two ballrooms on level four to better serve massive events. The combined Roselle-Simpur main ballrooms can now accommodate up to 2,000 delegates.

Two high-resolution video walls – a 100m<sup>2</sup>, 10mm screen for outdoor events and a 50m<sup>2</sup>, 2.8mm screen for indoor events – will be installed soon to allow planners to enjoy greater brand visibility at their events.

## Thailand

### LAGUNA PHUKET

Said to be Asia's first integrated resort, Laguna Phuket is a massive complex that houses eight hotels and resorts, the Banyan Tree Phuket Spa Sanctuary, the 18-hole, par-71 Laguna Golf Phuket, a teambuilding grounds and activities provided by Quest Laguna Phuket Adventure, and more than 404.6 hectares of tropical parklands that can be utilised for corporate events.

For planners, Laguna Phuket offers the 1,000-seat Latitude Marquee, which is perfect for themed events, in addition to function rooms available across the eight hotels and resorts.

Planners with mega-sized events appreciate the accessibility of these facilities in a single location and the convenience of a single master bill, and this is reflected in the success Laguna Phuket is enjoying in being the destination of choice among companies like Amway



China (16,000 pax, 2012) and Nu Skin Greater China (4,000 pax, 2013).

Latest developments here is the rebranding of Outrigger Laguna Phuket Resort and Villas to Angsana Villas Resort Phuket.

## Vietnam

### LAGUNA LANG CO

Laguna Lang Co occupies 280 hectares of Phu Loc's pristine coastal land, nestled between the cities of Danang and Hue in Central Vietnam.

Pushed up against the resort's three-kilometre private beach are two Banyan Tree properties – the 229-key Angsana

Lang Co and Banyan Tree Lang Co with 60 pool villas.

Hotel guests can get around the compound on buggies and shuttle boats to enjoy a host of on-site facilities, including an 18-hole championship golf course, spas, retail outlets and an organic garden, which lend well to incentive and teambuilding purposes.

Angsana Lang Co has four meeting rooms while Banyan Tree Lang Co has four boardrooms.

There is more to come. With room for six more properties on the compound, Laguna is looking for potential investors to complement its existing offerings and enhance the resort as a whole, informed a spokesperson with Banyan Tree Lang Co.

# Scotland Day 2016

Japan Scotland Association overcomes venue hurdles and a painfully tight budget to deliver a successful inaugural Scotland Day, writes **Kathryn Wortley**



The Japan Scotland Association (JSA)'s plan to host its first Scotland Day celebration in 2016 hit a glitch right from the start when it encountered difficulties in securing a suitable venue.

The event was aimed at introducing the close relationship between Japan and Scotland, showing Scotland in a contemporary light, showcasing the benefits of studying in Scotland, and reaffirming the affinity between the two cultures.

Hironori Katagiri, president of the JSA, recalled: "We called 50 to 60 venues but couldn't find one available less than a year ahead. As our event was (planned for November 26), a popular month for weddings, it was particularly difficult."

Even after finding a location within budget, there were hurdles to overcome, specifically restrictions on F&B consumption, display tables, decorations on walls, dancing and sale of items. Scotland Day had to involve all of these and more, so JSA turned to Shuji Kamikado, board member of both the JSA and the Tokyo Metropolitan Foundation for History and Culture, for help with the venue.

Kamikado eventually found a room for the event at the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre. It was a large space normally used by theater staff for post-show parties and could accommodate all the activities JSA desired.

As the event was arranged at short notice and requests for corporate sponsorship went unanswered, JSA tapped into its own network for help.

It sought the help of Scottish Development International, which presented the concept to government officials and provided organisational support and endorsement. Through personal and professional relationships, the event also received the



endorsement of the Scottish government, British Airways, Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the British Council, the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan, and Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre. British Airways sponsored tickets to bring ceilidh caller David Vivanco and BBC advisor Takeshi Shimizu, from London to Tokyo.

Seed funding of 3,000 pounds (US\$3,740) was secured from the Scottish government only a few months before the event but budget remained too limited to fly guests from Scotland over. JSA therefore roped in contacts to source for Scottish and Japanese performers and speakers within Japan and support their attendance. Representatives from four of Scotland's leading universities were invited and able to attend independently.

All JSA organisers volunteered their time and covered their own expenses. Sale of tickets and whisky glasses made specially for Scotland Day covered some costs and the rest was subsidised by JSA.

The marketing budget, too, was limited so volunteers and supporters utilised

their networks to attract attendees.

Spanning seven and a half hours, another challenge was therefore to develop a programme that would keep guests engaged throughout the day.

"There are so many interesting things about Scotland that we could have included and some Japanese have strong expectations of what Scotland is about," said Katagiri. "There had been contemporary art events and things like whisky tasting parties held in Tokyo before but we wanted to show that Scotland is cutting edge, too. It was a risk but we found a way to package the event to introduce science, technology and culture at the same time."

Locals voted with their feet. More than 500 people attended the day, including 18 VIPs. It incorporated a study abroad fair, cultural and historical lectures, nine talks powered by PechaKucha and using a format of spending 20 seconds to describe each one of 20 images, a whisky master class, highland dance demonstrations, musical performances, and a ceilidh. Various Scottish products were displayed and Scotland-related books were on sale. A buffet dinner was served, which featured iconic Scottish dishes using specially imported ingredients.

The evening reception also provided a networking opportunity for people involved in a wide range of business fields in one or both countries.

Due to great feedback, JSA has decided to make Scotland Day a yearly event. This year, it will be held in the Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre's galleries and workshop rooms, a fitting contemporary location for an event that aims again to promote Scotland as a modern place to study, live and do business.

The success of the inaugural event has led to other possibilities for Scottish culture events in Japan. For instance, mayor of Toshima-ku Yukio Takano has pledged to provide venues for Scottish artists and performers on an on-going basis.

## Event

Scotland Day 2016

## Organiser

Japan Scotland Association

## Date

November 26, 2016

## Venue

Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre

## Number of Participants

More than 500

## Challenges

Suitable venues and funds were lacking; and a programme was needed to keep guests entertained for seven and a half hours



Setia SPICE Convention Centre

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Billed as the world's first hybrid solar-powered convention centre, the Setia SPICE Convention Centre is the latest addition to Penang's business events facilities. The state-of-the-art convention centre has the largest subterranean pillarless ballroom in Asia, accommodating up to 8,000 delegates in theatre seating. With 13 function rooms to support international conventions and congresses, meeting planners can also utilise the 2,000-square-foot Grand Foyer and the sprawling 6-acre SPICE Roof Garden.

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Penang hosted more than 1,250 MICE events in 2016, with an estimated economic impact of €172 million. With a plethora of unique venues, convention hotels and centres, this coastal Malaysian state is fast rising as a star meetings destination in the region. Experience meetings set against the spectacular bird's eye view of Penang at the Rainbow Skywalk or revel in the splendour of one of the world's oldest rainforests with gala events at The Habitat Penang Hill and the award-winning Tropical Spice Garden.

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# Magnetic Melbourne

Presence of modern infrastructure, significant knowledge institutions and unique destination experiences are giving Melbourne star appeal, writes **Adelaine Ng**

It's not everyday you're asked to organise a small swimming pool at your conference venue so a few fairy penguins can swim in it. Or arrange for a few cars to be hoisted to the ceiling of the venue space for display. But that's the kind of request the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) is getting used to.

You could say it comes with the territory as Melbourne reinforces its attractiveness as a host for trade association meetings. In fact, Melbourne appears to have the lion's share for the sector.

"We probably outperformed any other Australian city especially where the international associations sector is concerned," said Melbourne Convention Bureau's CEO Karen Bolinger. "A lot of it has to do with our infrastructure and we have significant institutes here. For example 41 per cent of Australian life sciences companies are based in Melbourne."

It is also a highly profitable market. Eighty per cent of MCB's business comes from the trade associations sector, representing A\$134 million (US\$99.3 million) in revenue over the 2015/2016 financial year. Over at the MCEC, the city's flagship facility for conferences, bookings for trade association meetings now accounts for half of total income with last year's earnings hitting A\$40 million.

And by all accounts, that percentage is set to grow. "We've had our best year ever in 2016 with a 15 per cent increase in performance over the previous year," said Peter King, MCEC CEO. "People are



**"We probably outperformed any other Australian city especially where the international associations sector is concerned."**

**Karen Bolinger**  
CEO  
Melbourne Convention Bureau

comfortable with what we deliver as a destination and also a venue, with a high quality of customer experience in things like food and technology services," he said.

The biggest industries attracted to Melbourne are in the medical, pharmaceutical and scientific space, accounting for

36 per cent of all association bookings in 2016. Among the 160 association events the MCEC secured last year, bookings included the International Society for Stem Cell Research Annual Meeting 2018, the World Federation for Ultrasound in Medicine and Biology 2019 and the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons Annual Scientific Congress 2020.

King said the opening of the Victorian Comprehensive Cancer Centre (VCCC) last year played a significant part in attracting bookings. "The VCCC is a world leading cancer research and treatment centre all in one location. And it's right next to a few other world-class hospitals and teaching facilities so that precinct is providing incredible impetus to the world in medical and science research," he remarked.

Another key to the MCEC's success is the adoption of an ambassador programme which it partners with MCB. The programme appoints leaders in various fields to represent Melbourne on the world stage and help secure hosting international conference rights in Victoria state.

"(The 130 ambassadors) help us identify potential conferences that travel around the world in their specific area of expertise and we try to bring them to Melbourne to support the growth of the local industry. That's been an incredibly successful process that's attracted over 100 conferences in the last few years specifically related to those sectors we're targeting," said King.

In 2015/2016 these ambassadors helped secure 12 conferences for the bureau, worth A\$91 million to the state.

As for adding entertainment value to conferences and meetings, MCB and its partners are well in that space too, collaborating with what's readily available in Melbourne's rich food, arts and events landscape that may not be obvious to visiting trade association planners.

"These could be things like wellness activities or organising a Secret Garden pop-up in summer," said Bolinger. "There have also been visits to coffee factories to learn the science of making coffee and walks through non-traditional laneways to explore artwork that end up with a behind-the-scenes look at the Melbourne Theatre Company."

Nicolena Oborn, group director of sales at Crown Hotels where association meetings account for up to 50 per cent of its business mix, said getting to Australia is a hurdle for many event planners. "But once they get here, they really appreciate what we have to offer. Our flight connectivity to the city, ease of getting around and lack of pollution are big pluses. And it helps that Melbourne has been hailed the most liveable city in the world six times running," she said.

## { Need to know }

### 1 One point of contact

The Melbourne Convention Bureau is a great first point of contact for association meeting planners. The non-profit organisation helps planners achieve their meeting objectives with local advice and connections to relevant agencies. It also provides support in event promotion and delegate boosting. The bureau has five offices in other countries.

### 2 Non-stop action

Melbourne has activities almost all year round but the big international ticket events like the Australian Open and the Grand Prix

happen in summer. Other highlights in December to March include White Night when Melbourne is spectacularly lit for 12 hours, and the Moomba Festival which features carnival rides, fireworks and a big parade.

### 3 Autumn is best

Weather-wise autumn is officially the best time to visit Melbourne when the average temperature reaches a maximum of 20°C. This is the season for festivals, fashion, food and flowers with opportunities for day trips to tourist areas like the Yarra Valley, Grampians National Park, the Great Ocean Road and Phillip Island.

## { Pre/Post }



### Take an inside look into Melbourne

Localing Private Tours, run by two energetic young friends, Daniel Platt & Dean Hampel, prides itself in creating unique tours of Melbourne and regional Victoria that introduce visitors to little known parts of the destination while supporting small local businesses at the same time.

Tours can be themed around culture, history, gastronomy and more, and are best suited for a bus-load of 42 people. These tours are led by knowledgeable local guides who are passionate about the subject matter.

Localing has done rare back-of-house tours of the Melbourne Theatre Company, with participants getting a peek into a rehearsal and then sharing a meal with renowned actors, as well as gourmet programmes at local celebrity chef Shannon Bennett's private farm where participants get to hunt for truffles and then dig into a feast crafted by the star himself. More common tours cover visits to local boutique coffee roasters such as Auntie Peg's to learn about the business and Melbourne's love for coffee, or walking tours of Melbourne's vibrant alleyways.

#### Contact

info@localing.com.au



### Donovans make dining exciting

Family-run Donovans restaurant on Melbourne's St Kilda Beach, close to Brooks Jetty, may have been in business for the past 21 years and is now a renowned dining institution in the city but co-owner Gail Donovan keeps things fresh by giving the interiors a new theme every six months and introducing innovative new dishes every two weeks.

The menu changes daily according to the freshest produce found in the local markets. However 10 signature dishes, such as the comforting old-fashioned chicken pie with a crisp pastry lid, stay fixed on the menu.

#### Contact

(61-3) 9534-8221



### From Grand Mercure to Sebel

AccorHotels has rebranded the Grand Mercure Apartments Docklands in Melbourne to The Sebel Residences, Melbourne Docklands.

The four-star, 80-room apartment-style hotel is located in the waterfront dining, entertainment and shopping precinct of Newquay, in Melbourne city.

One-, two- and three-bedroom serviced apartments are available, all with a fully equipped kitchen, laundry facilities, spacious living area, separate dining area and private balcony. On-site facilities including a fitness centre and a swimming pool.

The property is sits 23km from Melbourne Airport.

#### Contact

info@sebeldocklands.com.au

### Dior's in the house

Melbourne's National Gallery of Victoria International (NGV) will showcase the designs of fashion icon Christian Dior, in a world premiere exhibition launching in August 27.

*The House of Dior: Seventy Years of Haute Couture* will include more than 140 garments, covering the length of the label's history. The exhibition ends its run on November 7, 2017.



Meanwhile, the NGV has a number of event spaces, including The Great Hall which can host 750 guests banquet-style or 1,400 guests cocktail-style.

#### Contact

www.ngv.vic.gov.au/about/venue-hire/

# Going for big wins

Macau's ever expanding inventory of hotels and event venues is giving it greater power to attract and support association meetings, writes **Prudence Lui**



GSMA's Wholesale Agreements and Solutions Group #5 Conference at the Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel

Armed with new integrated resorts built with impressive event venues, and with even more coming online in the near future, Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute (IPIM) has cast a more serious eye on association meetings with the hope of drawing these major gatherings to fill the destination's growing capacity for events.

However, Macau is no stranger to the association community. Of 276 business events held in Macau last year, 336 were association meetings. ICCA counted 22 certified association meetings in Macau in 2014 and that number rose to 37 in 2016.

This year, Macau continues to draw major association gatherings, such as the 39<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Dental Congress in May, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport's International Convention, the FY18 Medtronic Greater China Kick Off Meeting, and the 14<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Chinese Language Pedagogy – the last three taking place in June.

Despite these achievements, an IPIM spokesperson told *TTGassociations* that “Macau is still a relatively new destination for large-scale events”.

The spokesperson elaborated: “We have had recent success with large-scale corporate and incentive groups but not so many associations as they are not yet aware of Macau's capacity to stage such events. We and the industry have been

targeting to hold more ICCA (certified) events and with some early successes such as the 39<sup>th</sup> Asia Pacific Dental Congress.

“This year we are targeting to have more ICCA (certified) events in order to boost Macau's reputation and credibility as a meetings destination.”

For now, IPIM's focus is on Asia-Pacific conferences with rotation in the region, as well as international conferences in specific industry sectors such as technology, creative industries, finance, tourism, leisure and hospitality, and education.

IPIM is also establishing an ambassador programme to help identify and support potential local hosts who are bidding for international conferences, as well as to develop regional support within the Pearl River Delta region. But it is here that IPIM has its work cut out for it, as there are not many associations in Macau that are actively engaged with their international counterparts, according to the spokesperson.

“We lack a local host and this will reduce the opportunity to bid for an international convention to be held in Macau,” said the spokesperson.

Also taking into consideration that “the development of associations is still relatively new” in Macau, IPIM has invested in strengthening the support to local entities, including bid support for international conventions and the provi-

sion of membership fee support to local associations wanting to join their affiliated regional or international association.

Another obstacle to Macau's association meeting goals is associations' reluctance to meet in gaming destinations, a reputation Macau is trying to shake off.

“But with a growing diversity of attractions and new venues with less direct access to gaming areas, Macau is starting to draw the interest of associations,” opined IPIM's spokesperson.

Daniella Tonetto, general manager of both Sheraton Grand Macao Hotel and The St Regis Macao – properties that have seen good association business coming out of the US and Europe's healthcare, technology and social services sectors – felt that Macau's lack of a convention bureau to take the lead in the associations business pursuit as well as the lack of direct flights from target markets are key issues.

“That said, government bodies such as IPIM offer considerable support through their subvention programme, which is continually enhanced to ensure the attractiveness of the destination,” remarked Tonetto.

On the part of the hotels, Tonetto said her team continues to “build our base through sales trips and roadshows to create awareness for the destination”.

“Collaboration” is key for Tonetto, who shared that the two hotels not only work closely with IPIM and Macao Government Tourism Office, but also other hotels that make up Sands Resorts to sell the full complex as a single facility for massive groups.

MCI Macau Office's business development and event director, Olinto Oliveira, sees a rosy future for Macau's association business which is spurred by a relatively large number of local associations in Macau and Hong Kong that are active and hold regular small-scale events.

“Large associations, especially those in North America and Europe, are starting to take note of Macau as they search for fresh destinations. Based on the current cycles I'd expect Macau to start welcoming some major association businesses in late-2018 and 2019. The draw for these associations is obvious – the (Macau) government is active in providing incentives, and there are world-class mega resorts that are able to host (the entire event) and deliver a wide spectrum of entertainment all within the electric Cotai strip,” said Oliveira.

“With more venues and offerings, it makes it easier to connect the right product to the right client. Not every association is going to need the 10,000 pax arena but with each new integrated resort having its own personality and unique selling points, we're able to craft experiences that will truly resonate with delegates in unique ways,” he added.

## { Need to know }

### 1 One-stop connections

Macao Trade and Investment Promotion Institute, more commonly known as IPIM, makes life easier for association meeting planners by providing connections to local and Chinese associations and partners, as well as assistance in venue sourcing, application for MICE subsidies, and fast-track service set-up at the airport and ferry terminal for delegates. Contact IPIM for information on other forms of support.

### 2 Way to the heart is through the belly

Food is one great way to introduce a destination to event delegates. Macau's past as a colony of Portugal for more than four hundred

years can be told through its Portuguese-inspired style of cooking and dishes. Macau's unique cuisine was made richer with foodstuffs and cooking ideas imported from Portuguese settlements in Africa, South America and India.

### 3 Improved access

The new 200,000m<sup>2</sup> Pac On Ferry Terminal located next to the Macau International Airport and Cotai will open this year, connecting Hong Kong and Shenzhen to provide easier access. The terminal can accommodate 400,000 passengers a day, and features 88 immigration counters, three multifunctional berths for large ferries and cruise ships, and a heliport for five helicopters.

## { Pre/Post }



### Meet the pandas

Macau's very own giant pandas Kai Kai and Xin Xin have expanded their family with two tiny additions, cubs Jian and Kang Kang, born last summer. Visitors can pay them a visit at the Macao Giant Panda Pavilion on Sunday afternoons, from 14.30 to 16.30.

#### Contact

[www.macaupanda.org.mo](http://www.macaupanda.org.mo)  
[www.parisianmacao.com](http://www.parisianmacao.com)

### Travel through time in Taipa Village

One of the best ways to get acquainted with Macau's past and present is through a walk through Taipa Village. One can take the iDiscover City Walk, which comes with a travel app and map, to discover 25 points of interests and plentiful dining options. Another recent addition to Taipa Village's attractions is the Taipa Village Art Space, a venue that promotes local arts through regular workshops and exhibitions.

#### Contact

[www.taipavillagemacau.com](http://www.taipavillagemacau.com)  
[Pamela.chan@taipavillagemacau.com](mailto:Pamela.chan@taipavillagemacau.com)

### Unboxing a jewelry trove

Designed as the jewelry box of Macau's Cotai, the MGM Cotai is scheduled to open in 2H2017 with approximately 1,400 hotel rooms and suites, meeting spaces, a high-end spa, retail offerings and F&B outlets. It will also house the world's first international Mansion at MGM travellers with deeper pockets and more exquisite tastes. MGM's other property in the destination is MGM Macau, on the Macau Peninsula.



### Home for local arts

More revitalised heritage sites in Macau have reopened to visitors, the latest of which is the newly-refurbished Navy Yard No. 1. Reopened end of 2016, the building was once Carlos I dock mechanical room and had served as the past government's facility for building and reconditioning ships. Today, Navy Yard No. 1 functions as an exhibitions space to promote Macau's cultural creativity and local artists.

#### Contact

<http://www.icm.gov.mo/en/NavyYardNo.1>  
Tel: (853) 8988 4000

### Party time on Broadway

Macau's own Broadway Food Street dangles more than just popular street eats and Michelin-recommended restaurants. The open-air venue in Broadway Macau hotel offers also festive performances and a 'Band on the Run' that features live entertainment, an energetic dance show and great stage performances. Look forward to different acts throughout the year.

#### Contact

[www.macaupanda.org.mo](http://www.macaupanda.org.mo)  
[www.parisianmacao.com](http://www.parisianmacao.com)



### Night market prancing

Rua de Cinco de Outubro, along Hong Kung Temple, is transformed into the bustling Hong Kung Night Market every weekend, from 18.00 to 22.00, with interesting trinkets and tasty food for sale and fascinating performances and games offered as entertainment. The event is organised by the Industry and Commerce Federation of Macau Central and Southern District.

#### Contact

Tel: (853) 2825-9897

Nattsee Chalermtragoon/shutterstock

Cultural Affairs Bureau



# Clark's glorious ascend

New business infrastructure, expanding foreign investments and better air access are making Clark Freeport Zone the next big thing. By **Rosa Ocampo**

Clark Freeport Zone, emerging out of the shadows of neighbour Manila, is fast tracking its readiness for business and association events with aggressive infrastructure development and business investments.

In less than a year, for instance, Clark has vastly improved its accessibility and proximity by enticing domestic and foreign carriers to mount an unprecedented number of domestic and regional flights.

It was mostly possible through Philippine Airlines' (PAL) decision to use Clark International Airport as its secondary gateway in December 2016, a move copied by other carriers owing to limited expansion in Manila's congested Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA).

"Overall there is really potential for Clark" given its proximity to metro Manila, increased hotel room inventory driven by conferences and business events, and improved accessibility, said Dinbo Macaranas, senior manager for research, Colliers Philippines.

Concurring, Afro-Asian World Events president, Angel Ramos Bognot, said the fact that Clark is just two hours or so from Manila – and from Asian cities given the new air services recently – makes it easier to organise events there. Her B2B Travel Business Exchange, now an international event, continues to be based in Clark.

With congestion in metro Manila, Clark is indeed becoming a favoured alternative for business events. While it cannot as yet accommodate big events, it already has existing convention facilities for small and medium sized gatherings.

Two international hotel brands will open over the next year or so: a 260-key Marriott hotel next to Widus Hotel & Casino and the 268-key Hilton Clark Sunvalley Resort within a mixed-use development comprising 3,380m<sup>2</sup> of meeting spaces, a casino, a 36-hole golf course, and more. InterContinental Hotels Group is also eyeing a Crowne Plaza in the area.

Darlene Achumbre, assistant sales and marketing manager, Midori Clark Hotel and Casino, said that while her Festa Hall can accommodate up to 450 pax and about the same number for her vast gardens, there are plans to build a convention centre for larger groups of more than 1,000 pax.

At a time when security risks and natural calamities can deter travel, Clark has several advantages not played up in the press: being a former US military base, it is safe and secure; it's not within the typhoon and earthquake belts; and has green and unpolluted environs.

Another sanguine point is the rising volume of business travel to Clark due to incentives given by the freeport, lower cost of doing business, and the need for new business sites "better" than Manila.

For example, a number of conglomerates are investing in the Clark Green City, currently being developed as the Philippines' first smart, green and disaster-resilient multi-use metropolis.

One of these companies, Filinvest Land Inc., was awarded the right to lease, develop and manage the vast resort of the former Mimosa Leisure Estate.

Currently being developed as Quest Clark under Chroma Hospitality, director

of sales and marketing Mabel Roman, told *TTGassociations* that there are existing facilities and "our parent company is still planning to add more facilities for (business and association events) to further service the growing market".

But certainly, a major coup for Clark International Airport is attracting more carriers to mount flights. This, despite the failure to build a fast rail that will link the freeport zone to metro Manila, proves that Clark does not have to be twinned with NAIA to succeed.

Since PAL started flying to and out of Clark in December last year, domestic carriers immediately began following suit, with services to major tourist destinations like Boracay, Cebu, Palawan and Davao. Flights from South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan and China followed, in addition to existing flights from the Middle East (Emirates and Qatar Airways), Hong Kong and Macau.

China Eastern Airline is also keen on debuting in Clark, linking it with Pudong International Airport in Shanghai.

These new services not only bring Clark closer to international event delegates, they also open up a wide range of accessible pre- and post-tours to some of the Philippines' best tourist destinations.

For instance, a host of options exists within the Pampanga area, which Clark is part of. Clark can be twinned with Subic and other beach and nature destinations in Zambales. Attractions in Pampanga included the Mount Pinatubo crater, Hot Air Balloon Festival, exotic and fusion culinary experiences, heritage tours, etc.

## { Need to know }

### 1 The essential eight

The Philippines is composed of more than 7,000 islands but it is easier for meeting planners to know that the Philippine Tourism Promotions Board offers eight major destinations for business events. These are Manila, Palawan, Vigan/Laoag, Baguio/Banaue, Cebu, Bohol, Boracay and Davao.

### 2 Divine Davao

Davao boasts one of the best and user-

friendly business event programmes in the country. *Let's Meet in Davao 2017-2018* offers unrivalled discounts and incentives depending on group size, including special event group rates from Cebu Pacific and AirAsia, complimentary or discounted meeting rooms at SMX Convention Center Davao, complimentary massage from Davao Wellness Association, and special tour packages.

### 3 Association for associations

The Philippine Council of Associations and Association Executives, which is also the secretariat of the Asia Pacific Federation of Association Organizations, can assist foreign associations in holding their meetings in the Philippines. This is possible through its links with the Tourism Promotions Board and the Philippine Association of Convention Exhibition Organizers and Suppliers Inc., and its local association members.

## { Pre/Post }

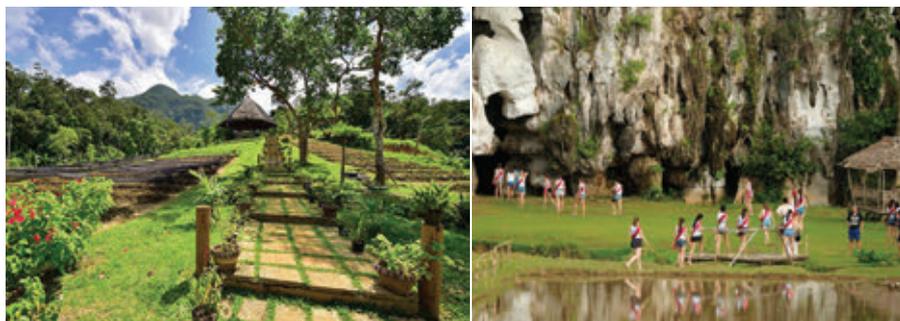


### Step into the Philippines' colonial era

Las Casas Filipinas de Acuzar in Bataan is a showcase of 18<sup>th</sup>-century Philippines through a village of noble-class mansions, wooden stilt houses, and a grand main building against a backdrop of mountains, rice fields and a river – but with concessions to modern luxuries and comfort. Perfect for post-conference programmes, guests at Las Casas stay in original houses brought from various parts of the country, feast on food typical of the colonial era, and get entertained with songs, dances, games prevailing in those days. Various heritage tours are thrown in for a more experiential feel.

#### Contact

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



### Sheridan Organic Farm and Eco-Village in Puerto Princesa, Palawan

Sheridan Organic Farm and Eco-Village in Puerto Princesa, 50-ha agri-tourism farmstead committed to a sustainable integrated and organic farming system, is wooing business event groups with farm-to-table dining experiences and hands-on activities like animal feeding, vegetable and tree farming, rice planting, harvesting and plowing, and friendly practices like vermi-culture. On-site lodging is a dorm with hotel-standard beds and linens as well as designer toilet and bath. Another option is the nearby five-star Sheridan Beach Resort & Spa, which also manages the farm.

#### Contact

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

### Okada arrives in Manila

The city's newest luxury integrated resort has partially opened, offering 993 luxury suites and villas in its three hotels, *World of Wonders* performances at the lobby lounge, The Fountain which is touted as the world's largest fountain, various dining outlets, luxury shops, and the Golden Ballroom for up to 300 pax.

Soon to open at the resort are: spa and wellness facilities, fitness areas, a swimming pool, and the Grand and Glass ballrooms fitted with modern pixel mapping feature and latest technology.

#### Contact

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

### A rumble on sandy beaches

The province of Romblon in the Visayas is now on the tourist map following Cebu Pacific's launch of four weekly flights from Manila to Tablas Island. Tablas is just one of the islands in the province offering endless shorelines and quiet beaches, ideal for a relaxing sojourn.

Romblon also is recognised as the country's main source of marble so a visit to marble factories, quarries and shops should be a part of the itinerary.

### Easier flight to a cultural experience in the Banaue

Destination management company Wakay Air Services rolled out in May a four-day/ three-night cultural immersion package to the Banaue rice terraces via Clark International Airport in Pampanga to Bagabag Airport in Nueva Ecija.

The hour-long flight is a far more convenient alternative to the 10-hour overland journey by Manila to Banaue.

Available four times weekly, the flight is operated on a 38-seater Dornier aircraft.

#### Contact

Tel: (63-02) 935-8043 / (63-02) 935-4641





Abang Faizul/shutterstock



Clockwise from above: Indigenous *Bidayuh* women; Cat Statue in Kuching, capital of Sarawak; sunset view over Kuching



Pictures courtesy of Sarawak Tourism Board

# An outstanding tribe

The Sarawak Convention Bureau kicks off a new campaign to show how a second-tier city can work association events differently. By **S Puvaneswary**

**S**arawak Convention Bureau recently kickstarted its new brand campaign, *Redefining Global Tribes*, by unveiling the Tribal Warrior Challenge, an exhilarating obstacle-based teambuilding event which will be held in Kuching on August 19.

Through a dynamic partnership with Borneo Tru Events, this obstacle course race gathers business event communities in the Asia-Pacific region and the general public, and demonstrates how the bureau can package business events in a fresh, new manner.

The Tribal Warrior Challenge will have three categories. Participants can opt for the The Rite of Passage category (8km) or the more tedious Headhunter category (12km) which is designed for those who wish to push their boundaries.

The Bizst Mode (5km) category is crafted exclusively for the business events sector and is open only to invited guests of the Sarawak Convention Bureau. Invitees will include association

leaders in the Asia-Pacific, the bureau's industry partners, and select media organisations.

Amelia Roziman, chief operating officer at Sarawak Convention Bureau, explained that the Tribal Warrior Challenge reflects the value of unity, community and identity of business events – the three key drivers that underline the *Redefining Global Tribes* campaign.

**“...second-tier destinations also bring added values such as lower costs, and easier logistics – such as Kuching International Airport being only 20 minutes from the city centre.”**

**Gracie V Geikie**  
Director/principal consultant  
PCO Place Borneo

In conjunction with the challenge, the bureau will craft a four-day/three-night fam trip for the industry invitees.

“The (programme) will follow with site inspections of hotels and tourism products in the state as well as a business events Sarawak industry seminar which will also provide participants with information on the support services provided by the bureau,” Amelia added.

Since its establishment in 2006, Sarawak Convention Bureau has concentrated on niche events that yield benefits in education, social responsibility, research and trade for Sarawak, or lend support to the multiple industries or professions that are of state interest.

The new brand campaign, which emphasises on the importance of business events and its impact on constructing a stronger and more diverse economy for Malaysia, is a sequel to the 55<sup>th</sup> ICCA Congress' 2016 theme – *Gathering of the Global Tribes* – which placed Sarawak on the world map for second-tier destina-

tions in conventions and conferences.

Overall, the campaign has received positive feedback from industry players.

Gracie V Geikie, the director/principal consultant of Sarawak-based PCO Place Borneo, said: “The campaign provides revitalised energy for the destination. Hosting the ICCA Congress in Sarawak was great as it put Sarawak on the world map for business events.”

However, Geikie cautioned that this did not guarantee a steady flow of events, so “having a sequel to the brand campaign is a step in the right direction as campaigns must have continuity”.

This is a way of continuously “wow-ing” the market in order to keep the memories alive as well as energy levels high, she added.

Yap Sook Ling, director AOS Conventions & Events, agreed that the campaign is a necessary as many other destinations are competing for business and association events, some of which have big marketing budgets.

Yap said: “It is so easy to get lost in the crowd, so what the bureau is doing through the brand campaign exercise is good for Sarawak and Malaysia. It puts attention on the destination for new clients looking for niche, secondary destinations to hold their events.”

In addition, Yap believes that Sarawak is good for association meetings that are not looking for a glitzy city centre, and instead prefer to experience diverse local cultures and explore close-by UNESCO World Heritage sites such as the Gunung Mulu National Park.

Malaysian Tribology Society secretary, associate professor Mohd Fadzli Bin Abdollah, sees Sarawak as having its own unique charm.

He explained: “Sarawak has a diverse cultural heritage. We think such a unique destination will attract the attention and interest of international participants. It will be an opportunity for them to see



“I am calling all international business event communities to join Sarawak in the revolution to unite in constructing a stronger identity for our region’s economy.”

#### Amelia Roziman

Chief operating officer,  
Sarawak Convention Bureau

the rainforest, the endangered orangutan and tribal longhouses – things you don’t get to see in Tier One Asian cities.”

Giving Sarawak a vote of confidence, the society chose the destination for its 6<sup>th</sup> Asia International Conference on Tribology in 2018, even though it would have been easier to host it in Peninsular Malaysia, as all its society members are based in West Malaysia.

Geikie added: “Too often, associations get bogged down with the logistics and see Sarawak as a second-tier destination. But second-tier destinations also bring added values such as lower costs, and easier logistics – such as Kuching International Airport being only 20 minutes from the city centre.”

## { Need to know }

### 1 Impart some tribal wisdom

Event organisers, consider inserting a Tribal Wisdom Speaker programme into one of your dinner receptions.

Conference sessions or cocktails can be made more lively with 15-minute tribal talks by speakers from Sarawak’s successful businesses, artistes and professionals – who are also from the state’s ethnic tribes.

The talks are motivating and the speakers are fully sponsored by the Sarawak Convention Bureau. It is also an opportunity for delegates to experience the unique diversity of Sarawak’s ethnic tribes.

### 2 Jazz up your itinerary

The Rainforest World Music Festival (July 14-16, 2017) and the Borneo Jazz Festival (May) are two iconic annual events in Sarawak. MICE planners can leverage on these festivals to host pre- and post-events for their clients.

This year, a special celebration is in store for the 20<sup>th</sup> edition of the Rainforest World Music Festival. It will be an all-day event, kicking off with morning wellness activities. Main performances will be held at the Sarawak Cultural Village, alongside interactive and educational workshops, ethno-musical lectures, jamming sessions and mini concerts, followed by evening performances on the main stage. Meanwhile, the indoor Theatre Stage will be used for smaller chamber-style performances, giving a more intimate and classical feel for the seated audience.

### 3 Dress for the tropics

Smart cotton casuals for corporate tropics are ideal for Sarawak’s tropical weather. It is usually sunny with tropical showers, and temperatures range 21°C to 32°C. The wetter months are from November to March, so if you are having an outdoor event during this period, do have a back up plan.

### 4 Opportunities for CSR activities

A thriving, developing land like Sarawak with its mix of growing affluence and needs means endless possibilities for CSR programmes. These include building homes for the poor, providing aid to underprivileged children, or participating in the Orangutan conservation programme at Semenggoh and Matang Wildlife Centres. Better yet, you can get Sarawak Convention Bureau’s assistance to craft a CSR programme to suit your objectives and help you achieve your goals, while at the same time, contribute to a better future for the state.

### 5 Choose your dates with care

Save yourself a logistical nightmare when planning an event in Sarawak. Avoid public holidays, major annual events and school holidays. By selecting off peak periods, you can reduce costs on local suppliers who are providing transportation and accommodation. Competitive conference rates can also be obtained during the Muslim fasting month of Ramadan.



Kuching's waterfront

{ Pre/Post }



**Learn about Sarawak's history at Brooke Gallery**

The Brooke Gallery in Kuching opened in September 2016 with artefacts loaned from The Brooke Trust. Each object was selected to evoke a particular aspect of Sarawak's historical journey.

For example, Sir James Brooke's personal sword symbolised the first Rajah's prowess, but when he passed on it became the Sword of State and symbolised the sovereignty of Sarawak and each Rajah that followed. As well, the Sarawak anthem on display, composed by Lady Margaret Brooke, served as Sarawak's state anthem for over 70 years.

**Contact**

[www.brooketrust.org/the-brooke-gallery](http://www.brooketrust.org/the-brooke-gallery)

**Try spotting the shy Irrawaddy dolphin while on a cruise**

The Santubong area is one of the best places in Sarawak to see the rare Irrawaddy dolphin, which inhabits rivers, estuaries and shallow coastal areas.

CPH Travel Agencies runs regular dolphin spotting trips, and their boatmen and guides are familiar with the waters around Santubong and the areas where the Irrawaddy dolphin can be spotted. Lasting three hours, hotel pick up is at 09.00. Guests are then transferred to the Sarawak Boat Club, a 40-minute drive away from Kuching.

**Contact**

[general@cphtravel.com.my](mailto:general@cphtravel.com.my)



**Stay in a remote forest retreat**

Sitting on the fringe of Batang Ai National Park in Lubok Antu is the 100-guestroom Aiman Batang Ai Resort & Retreat.

Accessible only by boat from the resort's private jetty, amenities include a restaurant, three function rooms and an outdoor pool. Recreational activities include fishing, guided nature walks and a trip by longboat to a traditional Iban longhouse to experience the local culture.

**Contact**

[aimanbatangai.com](http://aimanbatangai.com)

**Explore the state's oldest national park**

Gazetted as a protected area in 1957, the 2,742-hectare Bako – at the tip of the Muara Tebas Peninsula – is Sarawak's oldest national park.

The park's trail system is made up of 16 colour-coded trails which offer a range of walks between easy forest strolls to full-day jungle treks. Overnight camping expeditions are also available.

While walking, keep an eye out for the park's 25 distinct types of vegetation from seven eco-systems – beach vegetation, cliff vegetation, heath forest, mangrove forest, mixed dipterocarp forest, grassland vegetation and peat swamp forest.

Aside from flora, wildlife that can be found in Bako include the Bornean bearded pig, hairy-nosed otter, long-tailed macaque, silvered leaf-monkey and mouse deer. The park is also home to approximately 150 rare proboscis monkeys, found only in Borneo.

**Contact**

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

**Get up close with orangutans**

Established in 1975, the Semenggoh Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre cares for wild animals which have either been found injured in the forest, orphaned, or were previously kept as illegal pets.

The centre also functions as a place for the study of orangutan biology and behaviour, and provides a safe and natural haven for dozens of semi-wild orangutan. To catch these creatures in action, the best time to visit is during the morning (09.00-10.00) and afternoon (15.00-15.30) feeding sessions when the semi-wild orangutan return to the centre for a free meal.

**Contact**

[sarawakforestry.com/htm/snp-nr-semenggoh.html](http://sarawakforestry.com/htm/snp-nr-semenggoh.html)



**Visit a living cultural museum**

The 6.9ha Sarawak Cultural Village tucked in the foothills of Mount Santubong, is a living museum that offers an introduction into local culture.

The village is home to some 150 people, and there are replicas of buildings that represent every major ethnic group in Sarawak. Each building has a storyteller, an expert who will be able to describe and relate the particular group's culture and lifestyle.

After a tour of the complex, enjoy the 45-minute-long multicultural dance performance in the village theatre. There is also a restaurant and handicraft shop on site.

**Contact**

[scv.com.my](http://scv.com.my)





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# A NEW DIRECTION

## E > ST BUILDING      CENTRAL BUILDING      WEST BUILDING



Our attention turns eastward to the second stage of our redevelopment, the East Building launch in August 2017. The fruition of the \$400 million investment will significantly increase capacity and enhance the versatility of the Centre across three distinct, but interconnected buildings along the Riverbank. The East Building replaces the original plenary building (home of the first Convention Centre in Australia in 1987) with a multi-purpose, state-of-the-art facility with plenary capacity of up to 3,500 seats. The redeveloped Centre is set in the heart of the Riverbank Precinct which is rapidly evolving to create a new hub for Adelaide, incorporating 'BioMed City' - health and medical research centres, educational institutions, sport and entertainment facilities. The East Building launch also marks the completion of the entire facility and heralds a 'new direction' and new possibilities for the Adelaide Convention Centre.

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