

OPENINGS ADELAIDE

Adelaide's stylish opening

Adelaide's newest upscale hotel has arrived, with the opening of the 30-room Clarion Hotel Soho in the city's trendy East End on October 21.

Designed by award-winning Australian architects Loucas Zahos, the 5-star hotel oozes a vivacity and style reminiscent of colourful Soho in London, where theatrical meets sophistication.

Rooms feature Italian marble bathrooms, king-size beds with Missoni linens, Australian-made Natio Spa products, 42-inch LCD televisions, iPod docking stations, cable broadband internet and iconic 20th century designer furniture.

Constructed with the best sustainable building practices in mind, rooms also feature bi-folding windows with electronic external louvre shutters admitting natural light and fresh air, and energy saving Eco-Green switches which control power to all in-room lights and appliances.

The hotel shows off its creative side



Stylish: Adelaide's new Clarion Hotel Soho

with an extensive, ever-changing art collection exhibited throughout the hotel to showcase emerging South Australian artists. Each guest room features an original artwork, available for sale.

General Manager and fifth generation hotelier Stephanie Horlin-Smith said Soho would breathe new life into Adelaide's accommodation sector. "Our vision was to create a modern masterpiece on a small footprint," she said.

DEVELOPMENTS TOWNSVILLE

Imagine Hotel Townsville - slated to open in January 2009 - will now be known as the Metropole, to reflect the iconic nature of the site. The Metropole, a Townsville pub with landmark status,



Metropole Townsville

is undergoing an extensive refurbishment and adjoining it will be a brand new 104-room studio apartment hotel. The property will be managed by Oaks Hotels and Resorts.

COMPANIES SYDNEY

New digs for Soho Projects

Sydney's Soho Projects have shown in the past year or two how they can get the job done quickly, keeping overheads to a minimum without cutting down on quality. The firm recently carried out a complete refurbishment of the 14-storey North Sydney Harbourview Hotel, now a 4.5-star upscale hotel.

While some of the firm's architects and project managers undertook other refurbishments more recently in Victoria, Soho's two directors decided to carry out a massive refurbishment of its own new offices - almost 290 square metres of a free standing

building on the second floor of 118 Bronte Road, Bondi Junction, in Sydney.

Normally, such a task to refurbish what had been first built as a warehouse many years ago, would take eight to eleven weeks to complete, but Soho Projects did it in a fortnight.

Soho Projects specialises in the refurbishment of corporate buildings and offices, along with hotels.

"No job is too large for our experienced team. And by carrying it all out to a tight schedule, enables us to keep a tight rein on the costs for our valued clients," said Soho Projects Managing Director, Josh Nassi.

BRISBANE Airfares are set to fall, following the decision by Virgin Blue to reduce fuel surcharges by 20 per cent on Virgin Blue domestic and Pacific Blue international flights. Following a decline in oil prices, the fuel surcharge has been reduced to AUD\$19 for a one-way domestic flight and AUD\$35 for Pacific Blue and Polynesian Blue one-way international flights. "We are keeping our word. We are reluctant ever to increase the cost of air travel by even a small amount however as jet fuel prices continued to rise and rise to extreme levels, like all airlines we were forced to introduce a levy to cover those costs," said Virgin Blue CEO Brett Godfrey. "But we have always promised that if the cost of fuel reversed, we would gladly reverse the surcharge accordingly. That is what we are doing, because that is fair."

TWEED HEADS Outrigger Twin Towns Resort has partnered with award-winning eco tour operator, Australian Wild Escapes to offer guests very special day trips unlocking some of the hidden secrets deep within the ancient rainforests and river towns of the Tweed Valley. This brand new, full day tour coincides with Tourism Australia recently classifying the Tweed Valley as a "must-see destination", and one of only eight areas on its National Landscapes register. The tours cater for groups from two up to 14, and stop frequently at quaint river towns and villages with guests sampling everything from local arts and crafts, to luscious tropical fruits from the many roadside produce stalls dotting the Valley.

HOBART Choice Hotels Australasia (CHA) is enjoying unprecedented growth in Tasmania, almost doubling its total room stock by signing up four new hotels in Hobart and Launceston. The newly signed hotels - Quality Hotel Hobart Airport, Quality Hobart Midcity Hotel, Quality Hotel Colonial Launceston and Clarion Hotel City Park Grand Launceston - brings the group's total Tasmanian representation to 15 properties and 638 rooms. CHA Managing Director David Bayes welcomed the growth to the group's Tasmanian network: "Tasmania is an important market for us and we are delighted to see these four excellent properties adding to our Tasmanian offering," he said. All four hotels began taking forward bookings via the Choice network from November 17, 2008.

SURFERS PARADISE The Surfers Paradise Marriott Resort & Spa has announced plans to host the most glamorous party on the Gold Coast this year - its inaugural New Year's Eve Charity Ball. From the red carpet arrival, to the decadently themed black and white ball room, this black tie event is one not to be missed and tickets are on sale now. Topping the impressive list of auction items up for grabs is a stylish BMW 1 Series Convertible. Proceeds from fundraising on the evening will be donated to the Humour Foundation's 'Clown Doctors'.