



Media Release  
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## **New dining attraction rolls into Melbourne**

Melbourne, the only city in Australia to operate trams as a form of transport and entertainment, now has another new dining attraction on wheels.

The new restaurant tram called *Bela* - a rebuilt 1944 W-class tram – is the latest addition to Melbourne's Colonial Tramcar Restaurant, which has operated since 1983.

According to Sandra Chipchase, CEO, Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB) *Bela* and the other two Melbourne restaurant trams are the only ones in the world.

"Combining fine dining with Melbourne's iconic trams, ensures a truly quintessential Melbourne experience for convention delegates," said Chipchase.

Melbourne's famous trams were rated by international and domestic delegates visiting Melbourne as one of Melbourne's top icons<sup>1</sup>.

The convention delegate study also revealed that convention delegates viewed dining out in Melbourne as 'diverse', 'interesting', 'sophisticated' and 'stylish'.

"Melbourne is renowned for its gourmet food, wine and world class restaurants. The city and its surrounds contain more than 3,000 restaurants, cafes, bistros, and bars across a spectrum of cuisine," said Chipchase.

Since the Colonial Tramcar Restaurant was established, more than one million passengers have dined on the trams, with almost half of these diners being international visitors.

A recent deal between the Colonial Tramcar Restaurant and a US tour company will bring more than 2,000 US visitors a year to the city to experience tram dining.

"Melbourne is a city that never stops, we are constantly looking for ways to up the ante. We are developing unique incentive travel products aimed at the Asian market as well as our traditional markets in the United States and Europe.

"Tramcar dining is a great way for visitors to see the city in style. It is also great for locals just wanting to do something special. On average, staff on the tramcars witness about three wedding proposals a week so the romance of the experience must be working!" said Chipchase.

Restorers started with the shell of a 1944 tram transforming it over six months into a plush burgundy-coloured restaurant on wheels for about AU\$ 1 million.

Ends

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<sup>1</sup> Melbourne Delegate Study, commissioned by the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB) and the Melbourne Exhibition and Convention Centre (MECC).