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Survey Shows Melbourne Made for Indian Incentive Travel

Melbourne has scored impressively with senior Indian Corporate Decision Makers visiting on a recent site visit. The visit confirmed the city's appeal for corporate incentive travel programs from India where incentive travel is increasingly used to reward a company's top achievers.

The familiarisation, hosted by the Melbourne Convention + Visitors Bureau (MCVB), involved nine corporate end-users, all Key Decision Makers, from a range of prestigious Indian companies, including Glaxo Smith Klein Consumer, Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company with OBC and Bharti Airtel Ltd.

According to Sandra Chipchase, CEO of the MCVB, the familiarisation provided the perfect opportunity to further Melbourne's position as a desired destination in the important and growing Indian incentive market.

"Almost three quarters of the Key Decision Makers on our familiarisation said they knew nothing about Melbourne before their visit. As a direct result of their familiarisation, all nine delegates have indicated that they have groups in mind for which they could recommend Melbourne.

"This familiarisation presented quintessential Melbourne, but was specifically tailored to meet the Indian Incentive market's needs.

"It was also an opportunity for us to show our guests, first-hand, that despite some media reports, Melbourne really welcomes Indian visitors.

"A highlight for the group included a tour of the Melbourne Cricket Ground, complete with lunch with the celebrated former Australian cricket star, Max Walker. When surveyed, 100% of the delegates told us they loved their MCG visit."

The survey also showed that all delegates were 'very satisfied' with their visits to other Melbourne attractions, events and experiences, including attending the Australian Open Tennis Championships, an aerial flight to the Great Ocean Road, and a tour of the renowned Melbourne Aquarium.

A visit to the Princess Theatre to see the musical, *Jersey Boys*, was also very popular.

Ms Chipchase said that, in keeping with findings from earlier studies, including MCVB's Melbourne Convention Delegate Study, Indian delegates were highly satisfied with the friendliness of Melbourne's people, the value for money offered by Melbourne and the standard of service they experienced.

Additional comments gleaned from the survey included that delegates thought Melbourne was a "very green and clean city", had "beautiful venues in the city and around" and was a "superb place with superb people".

Ms Chipchase said that the survey also measured delegates' responses regarding feeling safe and welcome in Melbourne.

"Importantly, although the delegates were aware of individual criminal acts against some Indian residents, our discussions with the delegates highlighted that these disgraceful events did not reflect the views or behaviour of normal, peace loving Melbournians. In fact, 100% of delegates surveyed said they felt "safe" and "at home" in Melbourne as a result of their stay. All delegates also indicated that they believe Melbourne is a harmonious, multicultural city."

"We thank the delegates for taking the time to visit Victoria, and seeing for themselves what a great city Melbourne is. We look forward to working together to grow the very important Indian market for our State. We also thank Tourism Australia for their outstanding support with this familiarisation program," Ms Chipchase said.

Contact

Brooke Daly, Communications Manager, telephone +61 3 9693 3317, or email: brooke.daly@mcvb.com.au