



## **Rainforestation Nature Park**

### **ISN-APSN 2015 Meeting**

The Farewell Celebration in the Rainforest event was the culmination of the 5-day ISN-APSN 2015 Meeting (ISN 2015) in Cairns, Queensland, Australia. Over 900 guests attended the event at Rainforestation Nature Park in Kuranda, a locally-owned tourism operator located a 30 minute drive west of Cairns.

ISN 2015 was organised and managed by a leadership team consisting of Cherie Glare (Sales Development Manager, CaPTA Group), Danielle Boniface (Groups Coordinator, Rainforestation), Rebecca Quilty (Senior Account Manager, Arinex Events) and Pinar Akbulut Turat (Project Manager, Kenes Group).

Of the 900 guests in attendance, more than half were international. 47 countries were represented, including guests from the United States of America, Japan, Germany, India, and several European countries.

The majority of the international meeting delegates were in Australia only for the duration of the meeting, and therefore did not have sufficient time to experience the Australian wildlife and culture. As a result, Rainforestation Nature Park was chosen as the venue for the Farewell Celebration primarily due to the three unique Australian experiences available at the park – the Koala & Wildlife Park, the Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience and the historic Army Duck tour through the rainforest.

Senior Account Manager at Arinex, Rebecca Quilty, said Rainforestation Nature Park was a strong contender when selecting the venue for the ISN 2015 farewell celebration.

“I discussed the benefits of the location with my contact at Kenes Turkey, and we agreed that the range of activities at Rainforestation Nature Park stood out – the wildlife park, the Army Duck tours and the Aboriginal experience,” she said.

“My contact at Kenes Turkey then explained to her client that they simply “couldn’t go anywhere else” – Rainforestation Nature Park was the right venue for their event.”

Throughout the evening, guests were treated to a range of activities and entertainment. Wildlife keepers roamed the Koala & Wildlife Park with a range of animals for guests to interact with, including koalas, snakes, and other reptiles. Koala photos were also available within the Gift Shop for those guests who wanted an additional souvenir of their visit.

The Pamagirri Aboriginal Experience performed two dance shows, and entertained the crowd with didgeridoo lessons, spear throwing competition and Indigenous face painting. Army Duck tours through the Rainforest were available for the duration of the event.

Eight food stalls were set up around the park, offering a range of cuisines including wood-fired pizza, satay sticks, Asian food and Australian bush tucker. A number of bars were also available for drinks and dessert stations were spread through the park filled with ice cream.



The Tropical Fruit Orchards were lit with fairy lights strung amongst the fruit trees, whilst lanterns hung from branches and lit the perimeter. The three restaurants at the park were individually themed, creating a warm ambience for guests to enjoy.

Four local acts were engaged to provide live music and entertainment throughout the evening. Tony George Entertainment provided a 3-piece band and were based in the Outback Restaurant area, while Tropicana, a 2-piece band, were based at the Tropical Treats area of the park. Two entertainers, Kirk Steel and his accordion and Danny Simany, a magician/comedian, also roamed the park and mingled with the guests.

Throughout the evening, it was clear that guests were impressed with the range of activities on offer. Many guests were overheard commenting on how special their experiences were and how much they were enjoying the event.

Guests were transported to/from Kuranda via a convoy of 21 coaches, managed by Tropic Wings Cairns Tours & Charters, a sister company to Rainforestation. Initially, guest numbers were set at 600 however in the days leading up to the event, the numbers increased to 1000.

Ms Quilty said “the change in guest numbers was handled smoothly by the event management team at Rainforestation due to careful planning.”

“One of the major challenges for us was the increase in guest numbers in the days prior to the event, as a result of the popularity of the evening and the opportunity to “do” Australia,” she said.

“As a result of the increase, the original schedule for the evening had to be adjusted. The number of Aboriginal dance shows were doubled, extra Army Duck tours were scheduled, and the overall logistics of the event were impacted.

“Despite this, the event ran incredibly smoothly. Our team had planned for contingencies and these plans were effectively implemented. I wouldn’t do anything differently next time.”