



Top: Sarah Cody, Ronnie Maskell, Tao Sheng, Kate Quigley and Steve Ciric at the JR Duty Free VIP Night.



Above: Members of the Melbourne concierge community, their associates and family absorb the finer points of panning for gold at Sovereign Hill in Ballarat.

LES CLEFS D'OR

by Peter McBrearty VICTORIAN STATE DELEGATE

The next item on our agenda was a visit to the Hilton Southwharf to acquaint ourselves, not only with the property itself, but also the development of the Southwharf precinct as a whole. A large and very appreciative contingent of Les Clefs d'Or members and associates from the concierge and tourism community were treated to a tour of the hotel followed by a range of delicious drinks and tapas at the Hilton's Sotano Wine & Tapas Bar. Our thanks to Chief Concierge Sam Slattery and Hilton Southwharf.

Finally a similarly large coterie of Les Clefs d'Or members, associates and even a number of younger family members greatly enjoyed a visit to Sovereign Hill in Ballarat. We experienced gold pouring, a delightful lunch (with enormously large lollipops proving popular with the children), musket firing, panning for gold, and the new underground mining exhibit *Trapped* (the young children visited a candle dipping class) before some of our party left for the return to Melbourne while the remainder checked in to the Sovereign Hill Lodge. After dinner we were treated to

the popular sound and light show *Blood on the Southern Cross* before returning to the Lodge. Breakfast in Ballarat the next morning left no doubt that some Ballarat cafés are easily the equal of any back in Melbourne. Our thanks to Jeremy Johnson and Serena Eldridge at Sovereign Hill and Renee Cassar and APT Day Tours who kindly arranged our transport.

APRIL WAS YET ANOTHER busy month in Melbourne hotels, with the normal post-Easter drop in occupancy largely failing to materialise, despite the interruption to air travel to and from Europe caused by a volcanic eruption in Iceland.

The concierge community began their social and research itinerary with the JR Duty Free VIP night, which proved to be an excellent opportunity to view the extensive range of tax free products on offer to our guests. Our thanks to Tao Sheng of JR Duty Free who was kind enough to host us for the evening.

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