



Press release

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Accor first Australian hotel group to launch fully accredited “Optimum Service Standards” for China and India markets

Australia’s largest hotel group, Accor, will be the first hotel group in the country to implement a fully accredited “Optimum Service Standards” program for hotels catering for the rapidly growing China and Indian inbound markets.

Following consultation with leading tour and travel operators from China and India, Accor hotels will provide a range of services specifically designed to cater for the needs of travellers from their two markets. These will include particular foods as part of the breakfast buffet, Chinese and Indian speaking reception staff, Chinese/Indian TV channels and media, concierge assistance and other services.

A key component of the Optimum Service Standards will be training and education of front-line hotel staff about the cultural backgrounds of China and India and the sort of requirements and needs required by travellers from these countries.

The **Accor Accreditation Program for Chinese Visitation and Service** and the **Accor Accreditation Program for Indian Visitation and Service** will be fully accredited and validated by approved external industry organisations.

Initially, 10–15 of Accor’s largest hotels will introduce the Optimum Service Standards. These hotels will be able to cater for larger Chinese and Indian groups and are located in cities that traditionally attract large numbers of tourists.

The Tourism Forecasting Council predicts inbound arrivals from China will become Australia’s second largest market behind New Zealand by 2018. Most recently, China overtook the UK as Australia’s top inbound market by economic value – worth around \$3.5 billion. Currently, China is Australia’s fourth biggest source by volume of international tourism behind New Zealand, the UK and the US after it overtook Japan last year.

TFC is also predicting that inbound travel from India will more than double by 2020, with an annual growth rate of close to 10%, making it one of the most dynamic inbound markets for Australia. Tourism Australia recently launched a highly targeted campaign to encourage further growth in the Indian market

Last year, Accor’s hotels recorded rises in excess of 30% in China business and 23% in Indian business compared to 2009, coinciding with expansion of Accor’s hotel brands across both China and India.

“These two markets are amongst the most promising for Australia’s tourism future, and so it is essential that we provide the highest possible level of facilities and service when they visit Australia,” said Simon McGrath, Accor’s Vice President, Australia.

“There are still many false perceptions about the Chinese and Indian inbound markets, so we thought it important to address the issue from two fronts. Firstly, by ensuring that our guests from India have access to services such as food and communications that will help ensure they feel comfortable and remain well-connected with their homeland. But secondly, we saw it as very important to provide ALL our frontline staff in key hotels with a better understanding and appreciation of Chinese and Indian cultural specifics.

“This was done with the Japanese market in the 1980s and we are also planning this for our Chinese guests, and it is long overdue to be introduced for Indian travellers. Accor has a rapidly growing network of hotels in both India and China, and we believe that their travellers’ familiarity with our brands will see rapid growth in usage of our hotels in Australia, so it is imperative that we are well prepared to handle the requirements of both first time and repeat visitors.”

Accor is the largest hotel group in Australia with over 150 hotels in every State and Territory across the country.

Accor, the world's leading hotel operator and market leader in Europe, is present in 90 countries with 4,200 hotels and more than 500,000 rooms.

Accor's broad portfolio of hotel brands - **Sofitel, Pullman, MGallery, Novotel, Suite Novotel, Mercure, Adagio, ibis, all seasons, Etap Hotel, Formule 1, hotelF1 and Motel 6**, and its related activities, **Thalassa sea & spa** and **Lenôtre** - provide an extensive offer from luxury to budget. With **145,000 employees** worldwide, the Group offers to its **clients and partners** nearly 45 years of know-how and expertise.

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