

Top Spots

NEW VENUES + RE-OPENINGS

1. Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre

Built adjacent to the existing Melbourne Exhibition Centre—and creating Australia's largest and most advanced convention and exhibition district—the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre opened for business at the end of June. The center's environmental design features a displacement ventilation system and vast amounts of natural light. It is the **only convention center in the world to hold a six-star Green Star environmental rating** (awarded by the Green Building Council of Australia), and also offers a state-of-the-art, 5,000-seat plenary hall that can be divided into three, self-contained, acoustically separate theaters and an entry-level foyer capable of playing host to 8,400 guests.

2. Pelham/Split Rock Golf Course

New York City Events, the catering sales arm of American Golf Corp., has completed its US\$7 million renovation of the historic buildings at the century-old Pelham/Split Rock Golf Course. **The Pelham golf course was one of the first U.S. public courses when it opened in 1901.** Today, its historic clubhouse has been restored to original condition and enhanced with state-of-the-art amenities. Located in Pelham Bay Park in the Bronx—between Manhattan and Westchester County, N.Y.—Pelham/Split Rock offers a grand banquet hall that can accommodate up to 200, smaller rooms for more intimate gatherings and a spacious patio suitable for outdoor events.

3. W Barcelona

The 473-room W Barcelona will open in October. Located on the Nova Bocana (the "new entrance") of the Port of Barcelona, the hotel will be near the boardwalk La Barceloneta, the restaurants of Port Vell, the beaches of Puerto Olímpico and a short stroll from the cafes, shops and nightlife options of Barcelona's Old Town and Las Ramblas. The hotel's offerings will include 10 meeting rooms, a rooftop bar, a restaurant and a spa. Architect Ricardo Bofill's design of the **W Barcelona was inspired by the sail of a ship**, which has led to a local reference of the building as "La Vela" or "The Sail."

4. The Shangri-La's Villingili Resort and Spa, Maldives

The Shangri-La's Villingili Resort and Spa, Maldives opens this month on Addu Atoll. All 142 standalone villas—from **private ocean retreats to tropical luxury tree house villas with panoramic views**—feature indoor and outdoor showers, private terraces leading to the beach and either waterfront or lush garden views. In the heart of the natural island is the Village Centre, which houses an eco-center and a water sports facility featuring surfing, scuba diving, snorkeling and a variety of non-motorized water activities. The Village Centre also includes a freeform pool, two tennis courts, dedicated indoor and outdoor spaces for children, boutiques and an entertainment center.

5. PGA National Resort & Spa

The PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., recently completed a resort-wide restoration of all its 39,000 square feet of meeting space plus the creation of two new ballrooms: Bella Vista and Bella Lago. The project began with a transformation of the hotel's public spaces including a contemporary new lobby and a freeform pool. **The renovations included a new, outdoor 5,000-square-foot Honda Pavilion** featuring lake views. Each of PGA National's 23 meeting rooms, including the 10,000-square-foot PGA Ballroom, have been transformed from floor to ceiling with new decor and state-of-the-art technology.

6. The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain

Located in Marana, Ariz., The Ritz-Carlton, Dove Mountain will open this fall with 250 guest rooms, a full-service spa and five dining options, as well as The Ritz-Carlton Golf Club featuring a Jack Nicklaus Signature course and venues for meetings and events—including ballrooms of 9,000, 5,000 and 2,100 square feet and five individual function rooms. **For groups desiring views of Dove Mountain and its towering Saguaro cacti, the pre-function space has windows with a view of the nearby landscape.** In addition, three outdoor lawn areas offer 360-degree views of the Tortolita Mountains.

