

CASE STUDY

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM'S HMAS VAMPIRE THE KEY TO INCENTIVE WOW FACTOR



Peter Jones Special Events (PJSE) was tasked with the challenge of finding a venue with a difference for a prestigious international car company who wished to host an exclusive small-scale incentive dinner in Sydney.

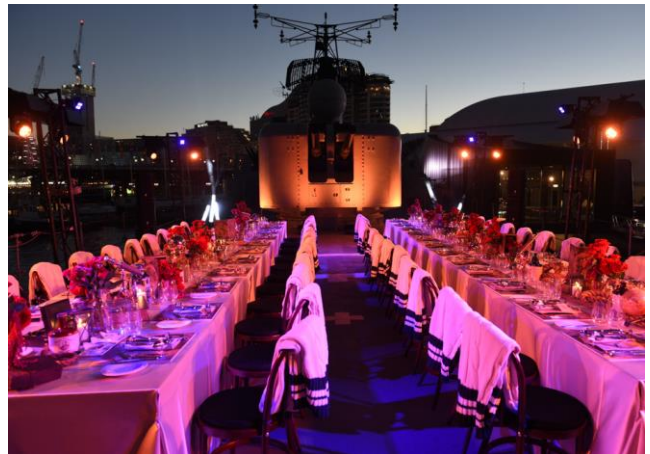
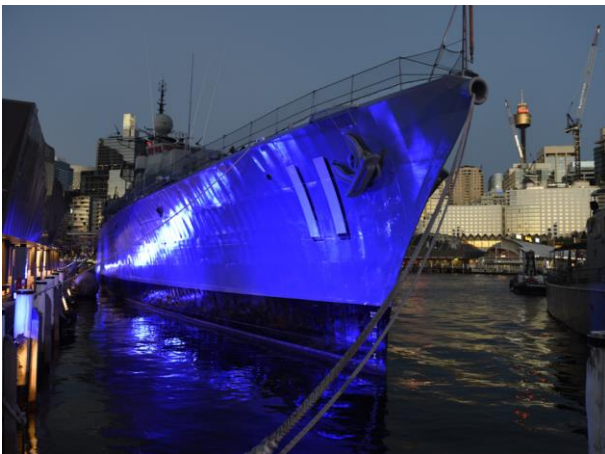
On this occasion, the main challenge was that some of the participants were actually based in Sydney and had already been to functions at many of Sydney's stunning venues.

Incentive organisers are always searching for that setting with a wow factor, for the place that will outdo whatever the participants have experienced at previous events. With this in mind, the very professional team at PJSE set off to find a location that would be a big surprise to participants.

The Australian National Maritime Museum met the criterion of a site with that distinct point of difference. Top of mind was PJSE's desire to create a sense of mystery and excitement by transferring guests on a boat to somewhere they were unlikely to have been before and without letting them know where they were going as they enjoyed cocktails and canapes en route.

Designed by Australian architectural icon Philip Cox, the Australian National Maritime Museum is set on the foreshore of Darling Harbour and is easily accessible by boat. The unusual venue choices available for hire at the Museum include the spectacular vessels *HMB Endeavour* and *HMAS Vampire*. A big gun destroyer, HMAS Vampire was in service for the Royal Australian Navy up until 1986 but now forms part of the attractions and unique venues at the Museum.

PJSE found just what they wanted in HMAS Vampire- an out of the ordinary venue where the theming fell into place. There were no vampires but the picturesque Museum backdrop bordered by colourful city lights provided a natural maritime theme.



Given the choice of the most “out-there” venue option of the helipad and deck of a destroyer with a gun turret bathed in vivid lights, PJSE decided on a bold entertainment option to match. Cher (aka legendary female impersonator and performer Trevor Ashley) was engaged to add another wow factor to the evening.

Planning commenced six months in advance with a second venue at the Museum being held in case of bad weather. Menu selection is a key part of an event manager's role and in this instance, PJSE decided on a delicious but practical menu to match the surroundings, by the exclusive caterers Laissez-Faire Catering.

“The Australian National Maritime Museum did a great job in helping us to get the idea to become a reality. We all put a lot of effort in, and it well and truly paid off,” said Peter Jones.



Delectable appetizers including tartlets of Persian feta with eggplant caviar and roasted cherry tomato, and crab and mango betel leaf were served on board the hired ferry as guests graced the decks with champagne in hand. In keeping with the maritime theme, sailors greeted them as they alighted the ferry and boarded HMAS Vampire.

Following on from the warm welcome speech, the ambiance hotted up as participants were asked to move to the helipad for the entrée of delicate tea-braised chicken with asparagus, wild mushrooms and saffron aioli followed by an alternate plated main course.

A torrent of colour rained in the sky with the Darling Harbour fireworks as the cue for Cher and the Priscilla team to wow the group with their polished show. A mouth-watering array of dessert canapés completed the meal at the conclusion of the performance.

The Australian National Maritime Museum was very pleased with their collaboration with Peter Jones Special Events which made this incentive event an unforgettable and special occasion. The key objectives of the event were met and feedback from participants was excellent.

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