

# The BNC

## CORPORATE NETWORKING FORUM 2017

### Lisbon

Whilst many big international conference hotels get a facelift or go to sleep during the quiet month of January, there was no rest for the glorious Dolce CampoReal Lisbon, as it was chosen as the host of 2017's first BNC Corporate Networking Forum. This resort style property based near Portugal's vibrant capital became base camp for BNC business networking meetings and social activities over four sun-filled days.

The Forum was part of the initial celebrations for The BNC's 20th Anniversary and it was designed to provide attendees with the right balance of fun & serious networking opportunities, whilst also continuing our new BNC Gives Back Initiative by reaching out to local charities to see how we can help them with their events and to create connections for the future.

#### The Trip

Day 1: TRAVEL DAY – A quick and easy flight from London Heathrow thanks to TAP Portugal and short journey to the hotel thanks to our DMC EMVIAGEM! Some time to settle in before enjoying welcome drinks and canapés in the Wellington Bar, followed by a delicious buffet dinner in the Manjapão Restaurant.

Day 2: MEETINGS DAY - Hosted buyer/supplier meetings took place in both the morning and afternoon, followed by some well-earned free time before drinks and canapés in the Wellington Bar. A gourmet five-course seated dinner was held in the Grande Escolha Restaurant.

Day 3: NETWORKING DAY – The group was split into four networking circles where we got serious about industry issues, talked trends, shared stories, debated, discussed and listened to others. Representatives from a couple of local Portuguese charities also attended and were given a platform to talk, share, listen & absorb. We then brought the circles together to meet as an entire group to hear about the charities' work in Portugal and to discuss ways forward for our BNC Gives Back Initiative.

#BNCGivesBack

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**EVENING EXCURSION** - The group took a coach tour around Lisbon city before our hosted dinner at the Museu da Cerveja in the heart of Lisbon town, courtesy of the **Lisbon Convention Bureau**.

Day 4: TRAVEL DAY – A free morning gave the group a chance to make the most of the hotel facilities and grounds for a final time before travelling home.

#### The Hotel

The Dolce CampoReal Lisbon is a 5-star resort in the Torres Vedras district. Just 30 minutes north of Lisbon's city centre and airport (and a short drive away from the local beaches of Santa Cruz), it was perfectly located for the Forum.

It's a quiet oasis, offering a great location for focus groups, conferences and events, with sporting add-ons (particularly a par 72, 18-hole golf course). Our group of BNC buyers highly recommend this hotel, commenting particularly on the exceptionally quick, thorough and attentive staff & quality of the food & dining.



#### Free Time

To reward our hard working group we ensured they had plenty of free time for catching up on work, relaxing in the pool, gym or visiting one of the seven treatment rooms in the spa. Many took advantage of the outdoors during these periods, going for a 6k run around the 18-hole golf course, taking a cycle ride or hopping in a cab to quaint nearby villages.



#### The BNC Gives Back Initiative

"We're very lucky to work in the industry that we do," says Kim Paulden, Director of The BNC and the driver behind The BNC Gives Back initiative.

"It's a multi-million pound industry and we all arrange or attend very extravagant and privileged events.

To balance that, The BNC wants its members to come together to work towards good causes and to leave a lasting legacy wherever we are – at home or overseas.

I am so pleased with the efforts made by the BNC team and by our members and supplier contacts during the latter part of 2016 and with the Forum in Lisbon. There's a lot more to come as the Initiative takes hold and grabs the hearts and imagination of many more BNC supporters.

It was an honour to meet with charities from Portugal and we hope that we helped them in some way. We will keep in touch and look forward to hearing their updates."



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