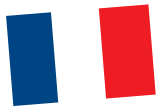


ISES UK



Postcard from....

FRANCE

Wish you were here



# ISES on tour

ISES UK STAGED ITS REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCE AT DISNEYLAND PARIS IN MARCH. WILL BROOME, PRESIDENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SPECIAL EVENTS SOCIETY UK, RECALLS THE EDUTAINING EXPERIENCE

Over 50 delegates from the UK, Holland, Belgium, San Francisco and New York City attended the first ever Regional Educational Conference to be staged in Continental Europe.

Disneyland Paris was the unique setting for two days of insightful behind-the-scenes activity and inspirational talks from the directors of one of the world's most successful brands. To say that we were treated like Royalty is an understatement and Laurent Charbonnier, director of sales, eloquently aligned ISES values with those of Disney.

Networking expert Andy Lopata took to the stage giving us a rousing start to the day's formalities – it's not "who you know but who knows you," he told ISES members before adding that organisations should aim for more business rather than more sales through the use of alliances and synergies.

After a wonderful and lavish French buffet, Eloi Corcoux, director of business development, gave us a world-first insight into how, from a marketing perspective, it made the transition from "Euro Disney's" initial PR disaster through to their current status of being the roaring success that is Disneyland Paris today.

Disney "Imagineer", David Minichiello, who has been with the Disney Corporation for some 30 years (from Florida to Hong Kong and now, Paris) followed with an amazingly detailed talk about how the "Imagineers" formulate their ideas and bring the impossible to life. His talk included information on a whole host of new attractions and secrets for the future as well as a spectacular insight into how

the Imagineers conceptualised, designed and built the biggest and most ambitious attraction on earth – Expedition Everest.

After a logistical talk by business solutions director, Eric Le Gal who gave us a dramatic insight into the sheer scope and logistical possibilities at Disneyland Paris (from team building events to large-scale conferences and just about everything in between (there are 7,800 hotel rooms on-site!) we were addressed by one of France's top chefs, Michel 'Le Gastronomer'. Michel is one of the world's most respected chefs and he officially rates other chefs in France – a very rare accolade! We then embarked upon a fascinating tour of the Disney kitchens, as it was revealed how they manage to serve 1,500 guests in 30 minutes using their famous "regeneration" techniques as well as showing us some highly inventive ways of serving canapés such as canapés skewered by sauce filled test tubes and starters served in sardine tins.

A tour of the convention centres and event spaces ensued, followed by a return to our luxury bedrooms at the Disneyland Resort Newport Bay Hotel where we each found an array of corporate gifts including our very own Mickey Mouse.

After an intense series of educational sessions throughout the day, the group entered the magical Disneyland Park as exclusive guests. One of many big surprises that we were able to watch was the rehearsal for a huge celebrity event Mickey's 18<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party, which was due to take place the very next day. Spectacular projections and lasers bathed the castle and music and dancing filled the clear Paris night.

Shaken from a brief spell on the rollercoaster in Adventureland, delegates

moved on to a tropical paradise complete with rainforest effects and waterfalls for a Champagne reception before a sumptuous French three-course dinner under a giant tree filled with wildlife animatronics. Fine wines flowed and guests were roused by authentic Hawaiian dance troupes and drummers whose rhythmic beats whipped everyone up into a frenzy of excitement before the impromptu awards ceremony, which topped off the dinner at midnight.

With some delegates having a magical and relaxing time with their families in the park the following day, having been given free tickets by our hosts, it goes without saying that this was an ISES UK event of spectacular proportions and possibly our greatest (certainly our most ambitious) moment to date. If you'd like to know more or need further explanation for some of the points mentioned...then perhaps you should join ISES and make sure you don't miss out next time! ■

