

Tuesday, 5 May 2015

SYDNEY SHINES IN NBC TODAY SHOW LIVE BROADCAST

Spectacular fireworks over Sydney Harbour featured in a special live broadcast by NBC's TODAY show, which has 5.6 million viewers in the United States.

Set against the backdrop of the Sydney Opera House and Sydney Harbour Bridge, the live broadcast was hosted by Australian-born TODAY co-anchor Savannah Guthrie. It was the grand finale to a visit by the top-rating breakfast show that took in many of the city's sights and activities.

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres said, "Last night we saw Sydney's name up in lights across the USA, with millions of potential visitors to the city taking in the sights, sounds and experiences that make Sydney Australia's number one visitor destination.

"I was delighted to welcome Savannah Guthrie and the TODAY crew to Sydney, a visit secured by the NSW Government through its tourism and major events agency Destination NSW in partnership with Qantas Airways.

"Securing this broadcast is a huge coup for Sydney, and a chance to showcase our city to the third-largest source market of visitors to NSW, helping us drive further visitation to the State."

Highlights of the broadcast included a visit to Bondi Beach, sailing on Sydney Harbour with Sydney-based singer Jessica Mauboy, a BridgeClimb, and a visit to Paddington and Surry Hills for some of Sydney's best shopping.

Destination NSW Chief Executive Officer Sandra Chipchase said audiences were also treated to a special preview of Vivid Sydney, with Arclight – an installation co-created by Australian/US artist Chris Knapp.

"With Vivid Sydney less than three weeks away, it was the perfect opportunity to show people in the U.S. what they can expect when the world's largest festival of light, music and ideas transforms our city for 18 nights from 22 May to 8 June," Ms Chipchase said.

"TODAY's audiences were introduced to some of Sydney's friendly lifesavers and nippers from North Bondi Surf Lifesaving Club. They also met a bilby, wombat, joey and koala from Featherdale Wildlife Park."

Viewers were treated to a special Sydney cheer by Air Born Cheerleading from Sydney's Woonona, an all-girl troupe that has won more than 30 National Titles.

Uncle Max Eulo, Aboriginal Elder from the Budjedi tribe of western NSW, performed a smoking ceremony on the broadcast site.

“TODAY boasts more than 10.5 million visitors to its website each month, more than 4 million Facebook fans and about 2.5 million Twitter followers, so tapping into this market is a huge opportunity,” Ms Chipchase said.

“As well as the broadcast, last night marked the start of a sweepstake promotion giving TODAY viewers the chance to win a trip to Sydney, and the commencement of a digital campaign by Destination NSW and Qantas to promote sale air fares.

“The NBC broadcast has given millions of TODAY fans a sample of Sydney’s many great experiences, and we look forward to welcoming visitors from across the U.S.A. to our beautiful Harbour City to experience it themselves.”

Minister Stuart Ayres visited the set on Monday night to welcome Savannah and her mother Nancy, who travelled to Sydney with her daughter. Mr Ayres presented Savannah with two books for her 9-month-old daughter Vale; *Alphabetical Sydney* by Hilary Bell and Antonia Pesenti, and *Diary of a Wombat* by NSW author Jackie French.

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