

THE *big event*

WELCOME TO *Florence*



Rossini lived here for a time, Donizetti and Verdi wrote operas for Florence, Brahms and Tchaikovsky loved the city, Mozart and Wagner both considered moving here and the conductor Hans von Bulow - having lost his wife to Wagner - came to the banks of the Arno "to forget and to be born again".

Said Berlioz: "Everything about Florence pleases me, its name, its sky, its river, its setting and surroundings - I love it all". Mendelssohn concurred: "Everything here is beautiful and glorious."

## Why Florence



*Art, culture, wonderful wines, amazing food, fashion, passion, shopping, exhibitions, stunning views! Stimulating activities, great gala dinner and dine around locations, artisan producers, excellent quality hotels,*

For a trip with a difference, there is so much to do and see here, visiting the famous sights such as the Uffizzi, Duomo, Ponte Vecchio, Palazzo Strozzi and also the secret ones too, which is where we like to take you.

There are still many artisan shops in Florence producing silk, linens, hand made paper, leather shoes and bags, chocolates, jewelry etc, plus all the big designer names. The streets around Via Tornabuoni have all the best shops and just 45 minutes out of the city, you will find most of the famous designers' outlets, such as Gucci, Prada, Dolce & Gabbana etc.

Tuscan Cuisine is one of the most famous in the world. "La Fiorentina" steak is a must when visiting Florence. There are many local dishes such as La Ribollita (originally a peasant dish) that appears on menus even at the best restaurants.

We have close relationships with all the major 5 and 4 star hotels in Florence and have negotiated special rates with them all. Several of these hotels have excellent conference, meeting and banqueting facilities and are certainly great locations for an Incentive trip.

Having organised several trips in Florence, we can guarantee you that your clients will return home enriched both culturally and gastronomically with all they have seen, tasted, bought and experienced!

The nearest airport to the city centre is Florence (Peretola) and is just 20 minutes away. Flights arrive daily from many international destinations including London Heathrow (Vueling) and London City Airport (CityJet). Alternatively Pisa airport is just a further 40 minutes away for those who prefer to fly with BA, Easyjet and Ryan Air.



# Company Profile

## The Big Event Founded by Rosie McGrath Panchini

The Big Event is a boutique DMC located between Rome and Florence, specialising in Corporate Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Special Events.

Since the company was formed, we have dedicated time to finding a very special group of personnel, suppliers and collaborators who have the same philosophy as ourselves. Which is to offer a superb service, using the best quality products available and to be passionate about what they do. Working in Italy is very different to the UK and USA / Northern America and at times it can be quite challenging! However we have brought together a team that are totally committed to making our clients' events exceptional.

## Rosie McGrath Panchini

My personal event experience and organisational skills come from many years firstly working in the Music Industry with artists such as Supertramp, Paul McCartney and Wings, Mike Oldfield Chris de Burgh, Barry Manilow ,plus many more!

Below is a short resume of " turning point" events!

### **1990 - 2001**

A natural transition from the music industry to the events industry and the co-founding The Big Bang, Our company specialised in organising and decorating events at the major five star hotels in London for blue chip companies and investment banks and supplying our clients and the hotels with contemporary luxury gifts.

### **UK Clients**

Four Seasons Hotel Park Lane and Canary Wharf, Claridges, The Savoy, The Berkeley, The Connaught, The Dorchester, Park Lane Hilton, Langham Hilton, Grosvenor House, The Ritz, Mandarin Oriental, The Park Lane Hotel, etc. British Telecom, British Airways, BMW, BP, Barclays Bank, Shell, Agip Mercedes, Price Waterhouse, KPMG, Deutsche Bank, Credit Suisse, UBS, JP Morgan, Morgan Stanley, Cazanove, Bank of America, Citibank, Aon, Virgin Atlantic, Sony Music, Benetton Formula One for Flavio Briatore and Michael Shumaker, Formula One Hospitality.

### **2003 - 2009**

2003 The Big Event was formed. The company is set up to organise prestigious corporate events, conferences, meetings, and incentive programmes for International companies, very exclusive gala dinners and fine dining. Also " Money Can't Buy" activities for a select group of clients in luxurious environments and sponsorship guest programmes at the highest level of exclusivity .

### **2009**

The Big Event became the preferred Event Organizers for the prestigious boutique hotel marketing company Mr & Mrs Smith.

We were commissioned to tender for a series of prestigious events in Italy for the Hong Kong Government and even though there were four other competing agencies, The Big Event won the contract. Our clients definitely put us to the test as we were given just three weeks lead time to organise and promote a show, gala dinner, exhibition and two concerts, with both Italian and Hong Kong dignitaries attending.



## 2010

We completed a series of events in Florence for a US Communications company with 80 offices worldwide. Fortunately we didn't know until after the events that there were ten competing agencies!!! The conference was held at the Four Seasons in Florence for a group of US Dieticians and Sponsors. Having seen us in action, we were then invited by the Four Season's to become one of their preferred DMC 's

## 2011

Having been invited to tender for a series of educational events based around food and beverage, we competed both creatively and cost effectively against many local agencies, to win the contract to organise a series of events in Dublin. The clients conference was held at the conference Four Seasons, Dublin. Our clients tell us that the events were phenomenal!!!

## 2012

We are really excited to announce that The Big Event was awarded the contract to organize a series of events in Prague in February 2012! Having been in competition with many local agencies, our bid was chosen due to the strong and innovative programme content

## 2013

In late August of 2013 The Big Event were referred to clients and given the challenge of organising a series of events (eight days) at the highest level - to include exclusive tours and activities, dinners culminating in a gala dinner at the Galleria dell' Accademia where Michelangiolo's David resides.

Given that we had just 10 days leadtime instead of at least two months, The Big Event and our amazing team of collaborators did an EXCEPTIONAL job!

Autumn 2013 / Winter 2014, we are researching and preparing a culinary programme for a series of events which will take place in Amsterdam in February 2014 for 100 guests during their 17th anniversary conference.

### " So why are The Big Event winning these high profile contracts?"

1. Because we are totally passionate about what we do and we only take on commissions where we know we can do an excellent job for you
2. Our level of service, precision and care is of the highest standard and our approach is to continually improve and exceed your expectations
3. We are creative and enjoy the research in developing bespoke programmes based around you, your clients and your sponsors
4. Having worked in London for many years and now here in Italy, we understand what our clients need from an international DMC/partner and we become an extension of your team
5. The real satisfaction of doing an AMAZING job for you is really important to us, which we achieve together with you our clients, our very experienced team and our faithful, talented suppliers!

The Big Event is a boutique DMC, based in both Cortona and Florence and have financial headquarters in the UK.



## Why The Big Event

Since 1998, I have coordinated a global food and nutrition conference, called Food 3000. Food 3000 is my company's -- Porter Novelli's -- signature annual meeting designed specifically for food and nutrition communicators, providing a forum to examine current trends, policies, and research that impact food and nutrition issues. Every year this extraordinary event includes seasoned food communicators from nutrition, food retailers, food technology and culinary perspectives. In addition, each year, this event takes place in a different city around the world to provide a cultural and culinary discovery to match the level of science and food policy in our educational sessions.

In 2010, I contracted with Rosie McGrath and her team at The Big Event to serve as our destination management partners on the ground for our event to take place in Florence, Italy. We already had many years of experience coordinating this event more than a dozen times already. So we knew what we were looking for. We interviewed many firms in the region before selecting Rosie and her team. But ultimately, Rosie's passion for our event, her initiative to understand our guests and their needs, and her ability to create truly unique experiences for us made it clear that Rosie was the best partner we could find in Florence.

Our event was scheduled for mid-February 2010. And as fate would have it, one of the largest blizzards in history "snowed in" me and my associates in the days leading up to our event. Without blinking an eye, Rosie and her team rose to the occasion to augment her existing duties with those of me and my team in the last days and hours before our guests arrived. I, literally, arrived at the same moment as all of our guests -- only to find that every detail was meticulously addressed as if I had been there myself. The 2010 event, overall, was a smashing success and was rated as our best ever on participant questionnaires.

As noted above, our event moves from city-to-city each year. I was disappointed that my successful relationship with Rosie and The Big Event would be limited to Florence in 2010. But once again, Rosy rose to the occasion and offered her services in other cities. In 2011, she coordinated the cultural program for Food 3000 in Dublin, Ireland. And in 2012, she coordinated the cultural program for Food 3000 in Prague, Czech Republic. If it is possible to imagine, she and her team absolutely out-did themselves each year. Our most recent questionnaires from attendees have been filled with comments like, "How does Porter Novelli continue to top the previous year's event?!" The answer, very clearly is that we have wisely chosen an extraordinary partner in Rosie McGrath and team.

Beyond the sensational accolades above, Rosie and her team are extraordinarily buttoned up. In addition to their creativity, they pay extraordinary attention to detail. The Swiss could set their clocks by Rosie and her colleagues in that she is never even a minute late for a meeting or conference call, their budgets are precise, their client service is insightful and impeccable. To be honest, I am known for my extremely high standards. I don't give praise lightly. So please consider this a hard-earned but very well deserved letter of recommendation.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at [smccauley@porternovelli.com](mailto:smccauley@porternovelli.com)

Stephen McCauley  
Partner  
Porter Novelli  
Washington, DC



## Testimonials

LEA MUCEDERO - AMCOR, ZURICH

*"Rosie, Let me take this opportunity to thank you sincerely for all you and your team have done for us to make this week a success – you helped me with so many things through the week and it was great to have you to lean on. Collaboration was always professional and with a big smile. I would have no hesitation in recommending Rosie and her wonderful 'The Big Event' to any organization who, in my opinion, wants to use the best in Florence"*

KATE UPSTONE - SENIOR EVENT MANAGER (no company name can be stated - major international insurance company)

*"I worked with Rosie and The Big Event to arrange an incentive trip to Florence in November 2012. With both the pre-planning and delivery of this event, I found Rosie and her team excellent, happy to work closely with us to create an exciting programme for our guests and ensuring all the little final details were in place to make this event special! Everything was delivered to a very high standard and I would hope to work with them again in the future"*

TRACY HOGAN - SENIOR EVENT MANAGER (Wealth department)

*"We have worked with "The Big Event" to arrange two Italian conventions, Lake Como and Florence during 2012. I found that during this time Rosie and her team to be creative, adapt at generating new ideas and methodical in their planning. The onsite team in Lake Como went out of their way to ensure everything was delivered to the highest of standards and that guests enjoyed every element of the convention. "The Big Event" have great attention to detail and vast experience of organising very successful events. They are good fun to work with, yet remain professional and we look forward to delivering a successful programme in Florence"*

STEPHEN McCauley - PARTNER PORTER NOVELLI (2011) re Food 3000

*"For the second, consecutive year, The Big Event proved to be an outstanding partner in planning our international event! From start to finish, Rosie and team helped us plan and execute a flawless four-day food conference in Dublin, Ireland for 80 people. She drove much of the planning process – establishing budgets, identifying on-the-ground experts, and developing many creative options. During the process, she kept us on task and reminded us of critical deadlines. She researched, tested and booked excellent restaurants and activities. And when it was show time, she and her team were present at each event – even including airport transfers – to ensure everything went smoothly. In addition to all of this efficiency, she and her team were a delight to work with. They always kept their cool and they were great ambassadors for my company – like an extension of our own staff. Our event was infinitely more successful because of partnership with The Big Event. We plan to use them again. Perhaps that is the greatest testimonial of all!"*

HEATHER GARLICH - PORTER NOVELLI - Food 3000 Dublin february 2011

*"We could not have done it without you and your team. It was a pleasure to work with you, Tanya and Stefano. It's not often that putting on a major event is stress-free and actually enjoyable! Thank you again for your attention to detail and the experiences you were able to bring to our group. I look forward to working with you again soon"*

MARY CHRIST ERWIN - PARTNER AND EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT PORTER NOVELLI - Food 3000  
Florence february 2010

*"Rosie. From the bottom of my heart to the tips of my tastebuds, thank you for all your extraordinary help and boundless patience! You have made this trip so very special!"*

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CARON GREMONT - VICE PRESIDENT PORTER NOVELLI - Food 3000 Florence february 2010

*"Rosie and Team. THANK YOU! Its been so much fun planning this with you.. What will I do without our weekly/daily calls!! Thank you, this has been amazing!!"*

CHRISTINE BOOKS - ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE PORTER NOVELLI - Food 3000 Florence february 2010

*"Rosie...Thank you so much to you and your team for making our event the best it could be, We're forever grateful"*

MARK NEYRINCK - HONG KONG ECONOMIC AND TRADE OFFICE - May 2009 Cortona Italy

*"Our office, the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in Brussels, is the official representation of the Hong Kong Government to the European Communities and its Member States. We worked closely together with Rosie earlier this year for a two-day event in Cortona near Firenze (Florence). To promote Hong Kong we organised a series of events, some of them in co-operation with the local and regional authorities. Our delegation consisted of 7 Government officials, including a Secretary (equivalent to Minister) and our Special Representative, and 15 members from a newly founded Society, whose aim it is to promote the relations between Hong Kong and Italy. Rosie was our contact person on the spot. She liaised on our behalf and represented our interests while she was also responsible for the a-to-z organisation of some of the events. Our office is based in Brussels. That is why we commissioned her to represent us.*

*There were two major events. The first was a high-level gala dinner for 70 persons at Il Falconiere, a top Michelin recommended / awarded restaurant in Cortona. The cocktail reception and dinner were preceded by a Chinese music performance on the terrace. Rosie was amongst others responsible for identifying suitable sound & vision companies and liaising with the shortlisted company, liaising with the restaurant on the menu and run-down, suggesting head table arrangements and other logistical arrangements. The second event was a series of cultural performances in Cortona in the morning. Rosie was commissioned to publicise and promote the event, liaise with the local cultural institutions to attract a 400+ audience, find and liaise sound & vision companies, provide the MC, and take care of the logistics. For both events, she was liaising closely with the regional and local authorities.*

*Why did we choose The Big Event? Since I was responsible for selecting the local event organiser, let me give you my views. The events in Cortona were only confirmed at a very late stage and we were only able to send out the call for tenders early April. The events were planned for mid-May. Out of 5 companies, four replied, one of them being The Big Event. Her proposal and ideas met our requirements more than the other. We were impressed by her enthusiasm, swiftness and ability to understand our wishes and limitations. I have met with Rosie several times in the run-up to the event and during the event. She appeared to me professional and determined to do the best possible job. She defended our interests though these were not always compatible with the Italian mentality and habits. Because of the very short leadtime and our changing requirements, she was required to handle things in a very efficient way, keep the overview and not to lose control over the whole events. She had to work many extra hours and showed flexibility to do so. Our events were successful and this office was happy with the services she provided. We were above all impressed by the fact that through her network of contacts both within the private sector and the regional and local governments, which is still a very important factor in the Italian society and a key to success which cannot be ignored, we managed to fill up the venue on a Friday morning. As such, we managed to bring a piece of Hong Kong culture to the Italians.*

*All I can say is that the Hong Kong Government was happy with the services rendered by Rosie and The Big Event.*

*The organisation of an event in a place, which is not your hub, is never an easy exercise. And, finding a reliable event organiser isn't either. the selection should be based on a series of elements, ie the proposal submitted by the event organiser (does it meet your requirements and is the event organiser flexible enough to adapt to the (changing) wishes of the contractor) and how do you feel yourself about the person (do you like the way he/she is presenting him/herself though I realise this is rather a feeling than a rational element)."*

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JOANNE CHU - HONG KONG ECONOMIC TRADE OFFICE

*"Dear Rosie, I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to you and your wonderful team for the great job! With the professional assistance of BIG EVENT, we had done a successful big event in Cortona. Although we worked under a very hectic schedule, we did make the miracles and have good outcomes! Once again, thanks a lot! Hope to see you again in Brussels or Italy. regards"*

GAYLE KENNEDY - SCIENTIFIC GAMES (USA)

*"Rosie, Thank you, thank you, thank you! We really appreciate all your help and patience with us and for pulling off a fantastic event. You did a wonderful job and I have heard only GREAT compliments about what a lovely event we hosted in Rome. We would not have been able to do it without you. Our customers were happy as well as our very own SG folks. Thank you again everything you did to make this an incredible event for Scientific Games. I look forward to working with you again in the future"*





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