

Five-star resort opens amid tourism slump

LOOKING FOR A ROOM TONIGHT?

These are the best rates we could find for a one-night at some of the Gold Coast's five-star establishments.

Jupiters Hotel & Casino **\$179**

Hyatt Regency Sanctuary Cove **\$191**

Royal Pines Resort **\$210**

Surfers Paradise Marriott **\$230**

Hilton Surfers Paradise **\$259**

Palazzo Versace **\$480**



SEEING IS BELIEVING: The view from a luxury suite at the new Hilton Surfers Paradise; a main bedroom; and pool valet Luke Foster with drinks waiting for guests. Pictures: Adam Head



Jeremy Pierce

THE boss of Queensland's newest five-star resort is confident the luxury hotel can withstand Australia's tourism slump.

The famous Hilton hotel family will officially open its first hotel on the Gold Coast today but the special occasion comes amid a backdrop of gloom over the state of the economy, and in particular, the tourism sector.

Hilton Surfers Paradise general manager David Kelly said he was excited and confident ahead of the

opening. "I still think people want to get away and enjoy a break," he said.

"The Gold Coast thankfully has a large proportion of visitors as domestic travellers so we shouldn't be feeling the same impact."

He said service was where Hilton would stand out.

"If they want extra activities or whatever they want, we will be on hand to help from the time they arrive to when they leave," he said.

The first five-star hotel to open on the Gold Coast since Palazzo Versace more than a decade ago, the

Hilton has 169 rooms and 250 holiday residences across two towers in the heart of Surfers Paradise.

Off-season rates start at \$219 a night, while \$1000 gets a three-bedroom ocean-view apartment.

However, even that is small change compared with the \$2500 required to stay in a three-bedroom condo up the road at Versace.

Gold Coast Tourism spokesman Ben Pole said the Hilton would be a welcome addition, with the Coast last year drawing a record 11.6 million visitors.