

Underbelly goes underground at Swiss Grand Resort & Spa Bondi Thursday, 18 December 2008

Underbelly was one of the must-see television shows of 2008 and to capitalise on this popularity, a prequel to the miniseries is currently being shot around Australia. The crew was at the **Swiss Grand Resort & Spa** recently to film some scenes which are meant to be based in different hotels in Singapore, New Zealand and Brisbane in the 1980s. With the current economic climate, it was decided it would be cheaper to have Bondi become Singapore than to fly cast and crew overseas.

Although the Swiss Grand has undergone extensive renovations in recent years, its 'Budapest meets Sydney' 1980s architecture was perfect for the era and the ambience needed. Underbelly removed the hotel's modern furniture and fittings and brought in period furniture to theme the set appropriately. Hotel staff, many of them fans of the original show, were thrilled to see some of the actors from "Australia's best-ever crime drama" on site.

While the majority of the first series was filmed in Melbourne - where many of the events took place - the prequel will follow more closely Vince Colosimo's character, Alphonse Gangitano and will also feature many Sydney underworld figures.

Nine Network has revealed the title of the prequel will be *Underbelly: A Tale of Two Cities* and it will focus on the booming heroin and marijuana trade of the 70s and 80s.

The Underbelly prequel will also see scenes filmed in Richmond in Sydney's northwest and Warwick Farm.

Source = Swiss Grand Resort & Spa Bondi

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