

MEDIA RELEASE

21 April 2021

Tourism set to rebound as State's tourism Awards relaunch

The Queensland Tourism Awards are back and set to be *bigger and better* than before, as the tourism industry comes together to champion the outstanding achievement and commitment from operators around the state.

Reflecting extraordinary industry resilience, the 36th annual Queensland Tourism Awards – hosted by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) – will return in 2021 and Queensland businesses are being urged to enter and showcase their efforts and resilience over the past two years.

QTIC Chief Executive Daniel Gschwind said that the return of the Queensland Tourism Awards offered tourism operators a chance to come together to celebrate a path to recovery and reflect on the challenges they had overcome.

“Tourism remains a driving force for regional economies and communities across Queensland, accounting for one in nine Queensland jobs, and nearly one in six jobs in Far North Queensland¹,” Mr Gschwind said.

“The return of the Queensland Tourism Awards signals a significant milestone in confidence for tourism – albeit in the domestic forefront for now – and provides the opportunity to support and re-energise the industry and unify with those who are working hard to rebuild the sector.

“Undeniably 2020 was a uniquely challenging year, however, Queensland tourism operators took it in their stride, and we saw the number of Queenslanders taking a trip in their own state soar – with regional Queensland tourism up 12 per cent in December 2020, when compared to the same period in 2019².

“One positive legacy of the COVID-crisis for tourism has been a very effective and agile partnership between industry and government.

“The Queensland Government has been very responsive with its support measures and we look forward to building on this solid basis.”

Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe said there was no doubt the global pandemic had been tough for tourism businesses.

“These awards are a wonderful opportunity to recognise hard work, innovation and a focus on delivering world-class visitor experiences,” Mr Hinchliffe said.

“What’s been impressive is the number of operators and regions who have remained positive and developed new tourism experiences and marketing to domestic visitors.

1 The Courier Mail. (2021). *End of JobKeeper may cost Qld \$80m a week, 25,000 jobs*. [couriermail.com.au/coronavirus/end-of-jobkeeper-may-cost-qld-80m-a-week-25000-jobs/news-story/4a3afb6bfc385518a9b93f8ba0ef538b](https://www.couriermail.com.au/coronavirus/end-of-jobkeeper-may-cost-qld-80m-a-week-25000-jobs/news-story/4a3afb6bfc385518a9b93f8ba0ef538b)

2 Tourism Research Australia. (2020). *National Visitor Survey Monthly Snapshot*. www.tra.gov.au/Domestic/monthly-snapshot

“There are many operators worthy of special recognition.

“The Palaszczuk Government has worked shoulder-to-shoulder with local operators to help them through the pandemic and rebuild better for the future.

“We’ve invested more than \$800 million to support operators and encourage Queenslanders and interstate tourists to visit our holiday destinations.

“Our refreshed Good to Go campaign has delivered up to \$5 billion into the pockets of tourism operators.

“By remaining positive about the opportunities ahead we can be ready for the possibilities emerging with travel bubbles, as some are already doing with New Zealand.

“We know there’s more work to do and the Palaszczuk Government is committed to helping, as we always have.”

Queensland Airports Limited, which includes the Gold Coast, Townsville, Mount Isa and Longreach airports, continues its long-term partnership with the Queensland Tourism Awards – stretching back 15 years.

Queensland Airports Limited CEO Chris Mills encouraged tourism operators to enter in this year’s awards to share their achievements with the rest of Queensland and help highlight the industry’s resilience.

“We have weathered an extremely challenging 12 months and now we are seeing the beginning of recovery,” Mr Mills said.

“There has been considerable resilience and innovation shown during this time, and the awards provide an opportunity for operators to reflect on this and recognise their achievements.

“The COVID-19 management measures have impacted travel and tourism throughout the state in different ways, but I look forward to joining our tourism industry friends and colleagues at the awards and sharing our experiences.”

Nominations for the 2021 Queensland Tourism Awards are open now. For more information and to enter, visit <https://www.qtic.com.au/queensland-tourism-awards/>.

– ENDS –

NOTES TO EDITOR:

- *Nominations are open from now until Friday 21 May 2021, with winners announced on Friday 12 November 2021 at the Black-Tie Gala Ceremony.*
- *A full list of this year’s 2021 Queensland Tourism Awards categories is outlined below.*
- *Select category winners will gain automatic entry into the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards.*

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QUEENSLAND
TOURISM INDUSTRY
COUNCIL

Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC) is the peak industry body for tourism in Queensland representing more than 3,000 members. QTIC is a private sector, membership-based organisation which, since 2001, has worked to influence and shape the state's tourism business environment that directly contributes \$25 billion to the Queensland's economy and employs more than 217,000 Queenslanders.

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2021 QUEENSLAND TOURISM AWARD CATEGORIES:

1. Major Tourist Attractions
2. Tourist Attractions
3. Major Festivals and Events
4. Festivals and Events
5. The Steve Irwin Award for Ecotourism
6. Cultural Tourism
7. Award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism
8. Tourism Retail and Hire Services
9. Visitor Information Services
10. Business Event Venues
11. Major Tour and Transport Operators
12. Tour and Transport Operators
13. Adventure Tourism
14. The Richard Power Award for Tourism Marketing and Campaigns
15. Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services
16. Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries
17. Caravan and Holiday Parks
18. Hosted Accommodation
19. Unique Accommodation
20. Self-Contained Accommodation
21. 3 to 3.5-Star Accommodation
22. 4 to 4.5-Star Accommodation
23. 5-Star Luxury Accommodation
24. New Tourism Business
25. Excellence in Food Tourism
26. Outstanding Contribution by a Volunteer or Volunteer Group
27. Young Achievers Award
28. The Marie Watson-Blake Award for Outstanding Contribution by an Individual
29. & 30. RACQ People's Choice Award