

## Queensland's best holiday destinations revealed in Top Tourism Town Awards

9 June 2023

The state's best holiday hotspots and local treasures have been revealed at the 2023 Queensland Top Tourism Town Awards Ceremony in Brisbane, with Caloundra, Airlie Beach, and Winton claiming top honours.

Presented by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council (QTIC), the annual Top Tourism Town Awards celebrate regional communities that demonstrate a commitment to visitor excellence.

After an extensive judging process by tourism experts and a public vote that attracted more than 20,000 votes, Queensland's top holiday destinations were announced from a shortlist of 17 finalists.

Across three hotly contested award categories, regional destinations were crowned the best in Queensland based on population size.

With a population over 5,000, the coastal escape of Caloundra was named the 2023 Queensland Top Tourism Town.

Airlie Beach took out the top gong for Queensland Top Small Tourism Town. It is the second year in a row the iconic destination with a population between 1,500 and 5,000 has received the prestigious title.

They may be small, with a population under 1,500, but Winton is mighty in exceeding visitor expectations and took out Queensland Top Tiny Tourism Town for a second consecutive year.

In 2023, a Queensland Top Tour Guide Award was introduced as a new accolade. The award recognises a tour guide who goes above and beyond in providing guests with an outstanding visitor experience.

The Sunshine Coast's Joel McPherson from Joel's Journeys was announced Queensland's best tour guide for 2023.

State winners from the Top Tourism Town Awards and Top Tour Guide Award will go on to represent Queensland at the national awards held later in the year, where they have the chance to be crowned the best in Australia.

The Queensland Top Tourism Town and Top Tour Guide Awards are made possible through the sponsorship of Racing Queensland and oOh!media.

# Media Release



## **Quotes attributable to Queensland Tourism Industry Council CEO Brett Fraser:**

“Congratulations to Caloundra, Airlie Beach, and Winton, and to all the finalists in this year’s Awards.

“The Top Tourism Town Awards shine a light on Queensland’s regional gems and reward communities united in delivering memorable holiday experiences.

“While attractions may drive guests to a destination, it is the warm welcome and meaningful customer service that has visitors leaving with a sense of wonderment. Congratulations to the winning communities for their remarkable efforts.

“Well done to all the finalists in the Queensland Top Tour Guide Award. We applaud these incredible individuals for their talents in captivating audiences. Their passion for storytelling fills guests with a deeper appreciation for Queensland.

## **Quotes attributable to Tourism Minister Stirling Hinchliffe:**

“Building a great reputation as a Top Tourism Town takes a united, whole of community commitment to consistently excellent visitor experiences.

“Travelling the State as Tourism Minister, I’ve seen many destinations - big and small – delivering immersive Queensland tourism experiences that are absolutely world-class.

“Queensland has an awe-inspiring diversity of quality destinations, each vital to the industry led Towards Tourism 2032 roadmap for growing the State’s visitor economy.

“Congratulations to the winning communities and nominees for this year’s coveted Awards who’ve worked together to make Queensland the nation’s favourite holiday destination.”

– ENDS –

## **Top Tourism Town (population over 5,000) finalists and winner:**

- **Caloundra - WINNER**
- Bowen
- Bundaberg
- Redcliffe
- Rockhampton
- Tamborine Mountain

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- Townsville

## Top Small Tourism Town (population 1,500 – 5,000) finalists and winner:

- **Airlie Beach - WINNER**
- Ingham

## Top Tiny Tourism Town (population below 1,500) finalists and winner:

- **Winton - WINNER**
- Hughenden
- Julia Creek
- Linville
- Quilpie
- Richmond
- Rubyvale
- Toogoolawah

## Queensland Top Tour Guide

- **Joel McPherson from Joel's Journeys – WINNER**
- Betty Burrows from Sarina Sugar Shed
- Russel Hosp from Passions of Paradise

## MEDIA CONTACT

Cat Riddle  
Communications Manager  
[Cat.Riddle@qtic.com.au](mailto:Cat.Riddle@qtic.com.au)  
0479 048 686



**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 \$27.2 billion to the Queensland's economy and employs more than 237,000 Queenslanders.

[info@qtic.com.au](mailto:info@qtic.com.au) | [www.qtic.com.au](http://www.qtic.com.au) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [YouTube](#) | [Instagram](#) | [QTA Facebook](#)