

Sapphire Coast Tourism Ltd. Membership Prospectus 2010-2011



About Us

Sapphire Coast Tourism

SCT is the official regional tourism organisation for the Bega Valley Shire and is responsible for the regional industry development and strategic marketing of the Sapphire Coast region to domestic and international consumers, trade, media and business.

SCT is managed by a Board and consists of the following directors:

DIRECTOR	POSITION HELD	TIME PERIOD	YEARS NOMINATED
Bruce Leaver	General/Chairman	2 years	2008 – 2010
Gordon Beattie	General/Deputy Chair	2 years	2008 – 2010
Tony Allen	Council Rep	2 years	2008 – 2010
Barry Harrison	Tourism	2 years	2009 – 2011
Janette Neilson	General	2 years	2009 – 2011
Tim Shepherd	General	2 years	2008 – 2010
Grant Webster	General	2 years	2008 – 2010
Robert White	Tourism	2 years	2009 – 2011

The Strategic Plan

SCT has implemented a Strategic Plan that details the direction we aim to take in the development of a sustainable tourism industry in our region. The plan is available from our website www.sapphirecoast.com.au

Our Mission Statement

To identify and promote the region's compelling visitor statement to maximise the social, cultural, environmental and economic well being of the community through sustainable tourism.

Our Objectives

- To develop a strategic framework for tourism in the region
- To plan and implement branding, marketing and promotion
- To conduct research and provide information, advice and support to improve the range and quality of visitor experiences provided in the region
- To provide advice to government, industry and potential investors on opportunities, servicing, facility and infrastructure requirements and sustainability
- To develop partnerships and relationships with other bodies, which will assist SCT to achieve our mission statement.

About Us

The Region and its Partnerships

The Sapphire Coast sits within the Bega Valley Shire and is located on the Far South Coast of New South Wales approximately half way between Sydney and Melbourne. The Shire's coastal fringe extends from Wallaga Lake (Bermagui) in the north to Cape Howe and the Victorian border in the south. Collectively, this 106-kilometre section of coastline forms the beautiful Sapphire Coast. The Sapphire Coast also travels inland to west of Bemboka – the higher peaks of the Great Dividing Range giving way to the rolling hills and hinterlands, numerous rivers, streams and lakes. Undoubtedly it is the natural environment and under-developed beauty that attracts both residents and visitors to our area.

The region of the Sapphire Coast offers a magnificent diversity of coastal, forest, mountain and rural country. Its natural, unspoiled environment provides the atmosphere for a peaceful, relaxing or adventurous visit in contact with Australia's unique flora and fauna. The variety of natural experiences and the mildness of our climate identifies the Sapphire Coast as an all-season destination.

The South Coast also takes pride in the richness of our cultural assets. From our many festivals; our extensive and quality artistic scene; our craft and artisan villages as well as our unique indigenous and European heritage – the Sapphire Coast offers a much broader dimension to the visitor, to complement the attractions of our beautiful natural environment.

Featuring country towns and villages, vast tracts of National Parks and State Forests, significant indigenous sites, abundant wildlife and vibrant communities, as a whole the Bega Valley Shire covers an area of some 6,052 square kilometres.

SCT is a member of the South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation (SCRTO), the peak marketing body for the greater region which includes six Local Government Tourism Organisations (LGTOs) spanning from Wollongong down to the Victorian border. Marketing of the South Coast as an entity is undertaken in partnership with Tourism NSW (TNSW) including extensive media advertising and journalist visits, on-line marketing, public relations and trade marketing.

SCT will also work strongly with its neighbouring regions of Eurobodalla, Snowy Mountains (The Alps) and East Gippsland to take opportunity of cohesive industry opportunities and developments.

SCT also has access to the Sydney-Melbourne Coastal Drive (SMCD) under the umbrella of Sydney/Melbourne Touring (SMT), funded by TNSW, Tourism Victoria and Australian Capital Tourism.



About Us

The Region and its Partnerships

These organisations are responsible for the international and domestic marketing of the three touring routes promoted between Sydney and Melbourne. The Coastal Drive covers the beauty of the beaches and scenic drives along the coast passing through the Sapphire Coast, while the two inland touring routes of the Heritage Drive and the Great Alpine Road provide alternative touring options.

SCT will also work closely with Tourism Australia (TA) in marketing the region under the Australia's Coastal Wilderness (ACW). ACW is part of TA's National Landscapes program and it is our incredible good fortune to be part of a limited number of the world class '*best of Australia*' regions. The National Landscapes initiative is selecting Australia's top 15 nature experiences for TA's long term international marketing programs. ACW is a cross border initiative extending from Bermagui in the north down to Lakes Entrance in Victoria, taking in the Sapphire Coast and Destination Gippsland regions and was one of the first 8 National Landscapes to be announced in 2008.

The National Landscapes are now the only area-based tourism assets used by TA in their marketing, engagement with international media and through their extensive overseas partnerships programs. Inbound nature-based tourism is a strong growth area and 68 per cent of inbound visitors seek a nature-based experience.

The Coastal Wilderness brand toolkit is under development by TA and a specific detailed ACW web portal will be implemented 2010/2011 and will set out the features that make our region one of the world's most outstanding areas of untouched temperate forested coastline.

The www.australia.com website run by TA attracts over 1 million hits per month and is now available in 14 different languages with a direct link to www.sapphirecoast.com.au giving us invaluable exposure in the international travel market.

There is increasing evidence of more international visitors to our region. Whilst ACW is targeted to the 'experience seeker' international visitor, the increasing international recognition of what our area offers will be hugely interesting and highly attractive to a domestic tourism market that has yet to explore the best of what their own country has to offer.



Member Services

Web Page & Booking Service

A significant service offered to members is the exposure of your property in the online environment on www.sapphirecoast.com.au which promotes and provides regional information on the Sapphire Coast.

The SCT regional website www.sapphirecoast.com.au has received over 3.2 million hits this year alone and is only 4 clicks away from Tourism Australia's website www.australia.com. Attracting over 1 million hits per month, www.australia.com is available in 14 different languages and provides us with invaluable exposure in the domestic and the international markets.

The online environment is now without a doubt, a key distribution channel of information for customers planning a holiday. In modern tourism by far the majority of potential visitors are researching their travel decisions on the web. To support the website and provide additional benefits to members, SCT also provides an online booking facility as part of its services.

Membership with SCT will provide you with a number of options to promote your business on the Regions premier website. Members will enjoy a business display listing with the opportunity to link to your own website, together with online banner advertising options as well as linking to our 24/7 online booking system.

The online booking environment is a must have service for savvy customers searching for accommodation and special travel deals and provides you with additional options to promote different products and packaged deals. The online booking facility offers another means of accommodation booking in addition to the telephone, email and walk in booking enquiries SCT receives.

All accommodation bookings made online at www.sapphirecoast.com.au or at any of the VICs either by a Tourism Officer or by a visitor will attract a 10% commission payable to SCT. Preference of bookings will be given to those operators who have their availability online and up to date. Accommodation operators may attract a 12% commission payable to SCT if availability is not online. The additional commission fee is to cover labour costs of manual availability checking and/or phone inquiries. All tour, charters and attraction bookings will attract a 15% commission.

The Marketing Program

The annual marketing program conducted by SCT provides opportunities for members to actively get involved with co-operative activities to be offered that best suit your marketing needs.

Official Regional Visitor Information Guide

The 2010-2011 Visitor Guide will be a key promotional product for the Sapphire Coast that captures the true essence of our beautiful and diverse region. The guide will promote and provide a variety of emotive reasons and visitor experiences and will include major destination information and motivational editorial and imagery. The guide will be distributed externally of the region to main aim draw prospective visitors to the Sapphire Coast. Participation will be offered to all businesses for wider collective support and joint promotion of the Sapphire Coast and our tourism industry in order to provide a true representation of the region.

Consumer Travel Shows

SCT will continue its participation at a number of consumer holiday travel shows in our key target markets of Melbourne, Canberra and regional VIC and NSW but will ask the industry to collectively help man these stalls.

By attending these consumer travel shows, the Sapphire Coast region will be promoted to tens of thousands of prospects via exposure at these consumer shows, promoting the Sapphire Coast to increase interest and visitation to the region.

Co-Operative Advertising

Our major advertising in print and online, on an on-going basis will be achieved via co-operative marketing and advertising opportunities. Seasonal marketing prospectus will be created and offered to members at key times throughout the year to participate in co-operative endeavours for 2010-2011.

Additional campaigns will be made available via South Coast Regional Tourism Organisation (SCRTO) with TNSW. By working with SCRTO, larger campaigns are able to reach thousands of prospects and are valued at hundreds of thousands of dollars. TNSW funds, plans and controls the media and content of the campaign and shares the cost on a \$ for \$ basis with the members of SCRTO. In turn, SCT can offer members the opportunity to include tactical offers at a highly reduced rate in major publications and on-line channels. Just another huge opportunity for our members to promote their businesses.

The Marketing Program

Online Opportunities

SCT is developing a social media strategy and now has a blog attached to the regional website. A blog is an open form of online communication where locals, visitors and prospective tourists can all share information and communicate online. With Google's changed search analytics, it is important to keep new and current information fresh to be captured via the Google 'spider search mechanisms'. Various social media programs and other initiatives will be investigated and considered to increase the exposure, awareness and 'online chatter' of the Sapphire Coast region in the online domain.

Access to SCT Image Library

SCT has many hundreds of images of the region, which are used in all promotional marketing. A digital library will be developed in 2010 for ease of catalogue and availability. Many of these images are available to members to use in their brochures and websites and is another service and reason to support and work with Sapphire Coast Tourism.

Membership Benefits

With future sustainability obtained via the recent council Tourism Levy, there has never been a better time to be part of your local, vibrant Visitor Information Centre and to support your regional tourism organisation and industry.

*Tourism is our **business** on the **Sapphire Coast** – it is the **Backbone** of our **Economy***

Membership Benefits & Opportunities Summary:

1. VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRES	2. SCT WEBSITE & ON LINE BOOKING SERVICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the official regional tourism organisation for the region, SCT will support and help develop the 4 accredited VICs (Bega, Bermagui, Eden and Merimbula) and TIC (Cobargo) • SCT will participate in the newly formed Bega Valley Shire Business Forum regional VIC committee with representation of all VICs and TIC to share information, industry updates and developments and regional co-operative marketing and advertising opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business display listing on the regional website www.sapphirecoast.com.au • Direct business weblinks • Free promotion of your business online • Listings in multiple sections and event listings • 24/7 on line booking service • Option to participate in online banner campaign • Comprehensive range of local information • Over 3.2 million hits for 2010 to date
3. MARKETING, PROMOTIONAL & BUY-IN CAMPAIGNS	4. INDUSTRY COMMUNICATION & DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-operative marketing • Consumer travel shows • eMarketing campaigns • Packages • Official visitor guide • Niche marketing campaigns • Visiting journalist program • TV, media & PR campaigns • Event marketing • Social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular newsletters • SCRTO, Tourism NSW and Tourism Australia events, seminars, workshops and industry development and information • Industry familiarisations • Special workshops and seminars • Networking opportunities • Shire wide VIC volunteer familiarisations via VIC committee

Membership Fees

Sapphire Coast Tourism

SCT is the official regional tourism organisation for the Bega Valley Shire and is responsible for the regional industry development and strategic marketing of the Sapphire Coast region to domestic and international consumers, trade, media and business.

Sapphire Coast Tourism (SCT) will offer a tiered membership structure with a variety of benefits and options according to the level selected. Help support your official tourism organisation in its endeavours to develop the local tourism industry and increase visitation to the socio-economic benefit of the wider community and tourism industry.

Level 1 membership:

Basic support level. By taking this option you and your business will be supporting SCT and the tourism industry of our region. You will be kept up to date via regular SCT e-letters and information will be provided containing general industry updates, trends and developments. You will be informed of strategic planning, BVSC lobbying, SCRTO and ACW information and generic promotional activities.

Level 2 membership:

This level of membership will offer all of the benefits of level 1 including access to wider and more detailed state and national tourism industry information and statistics and the opportunity to participate in industry workshops, seminars and professional development.

Regional co-operative marketing and promotional initiatives will be developed and offered to you and your business to participate in. These may include advertising and promotional activities; social media opportunities; TV, media and PR campaigns; trade activities; visiting journalist programs; shire wide Visitor Information Centre familiarisations, and consumer travel show exposure.

A limited web package for the SCT website is available in Level 2 membership offering an individual business listing* and a direct weblink* to your business from the SCT regional tourism website.

Level 3 membership:

This level of membership offers all of the benefits of Levels 1 & 2, including a full web package. The full web package includes not only an individual business listing* and direct weblink* to your business from the SCT regional tourism website but also provides the additional benefits of the regional online booking facility (if applicable) and covers the cost of participating in the rotational banner display ads on the website.^

* One listing per membership

^ Not including design fee and up to 30,000 banner ad impressions

Terms & Conditions

<p>MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES For all members:</p> <p><u>Approvals, insurances, and licenses</u> It is the responsibility of members to have all necessary licenses, insurance policies and statutory approvals required to operate their business in agreeance with any local, state and federal authorities and within the law.</p> <p><u>Promotion (online and printed)</u> As a member of SCT it is a requirement that you review your business listing on www.sapphirecoast.com.au keeping it up to date with accurate information and liaise with SCT if amendments are required. SCT reserves the right to remove inaccurate or inappropriate information/images from the website, or to remove a members listing from the website.</p> <p><u>Contacting You</u> It is a condition of membership that accommodation and tour operators be readily available and accessible to answer inquiries, from either visitors or tourism team members, on a 7-day basis within reasonable hours. Members may risk losing business if they are not readily available or contactable. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure all contact details are up to date and alternative contact arrangements are in place. This includes your address, phone numbers, email and web contact details.</p> <p><u>Membership Fees</u> Membership fees are non-refundable.</p>	<p>MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES Online Booking Service:</p> <p>All accommodation bookings made online at www.sapphirecoast.com.au, or any of the Visitor Information Centres either by a tourism officer or by a consumer, attract a 10% commission (GST inclusive).</p> <p>Preference of bookings will be given to those operators who have their availability online and up to date. Accommodation operators may incur an additional fee if availability is not online to cover labour costs of manual availability checking and/or phone enquiries.</p> <p>SCT has an online 24/7 real time accommodation booking system. Access to this system is only available to full accommodation members of SCT via the following process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All eligible members will receive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Username and password to log onto the on line administrative member console - Free product listing on the SCT site including photographs. 2. Access to the management console is through the www.thebookingbutton.com.au/extranet 3. As a member you will be required to enter all business details, pictures, descriptions, availability, rates, special conditions and special rates into the on line booking system. SCT will provide access to an on-line user manual and initial technical support. 4. Accuracy of all information published by any media, including availability and tariff rates, is the sole responsibility of the operator. The booking system is real time. It is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A search engine operates through a questionnaire pro forma and selects suitable products based on user entries. If product/s meet the search criteria of the customer they will be presented with an option to book the product on line. Responsibility for the accuracy of all information, including availability and tariff rates, belong solely to the operator. 	<p>MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES Code of Conduct:</p> <p>The SCT code of conduct outlines professional guidelines so the conduct of SCT members will enhance the regions tourism industry and contribute positively to the community, environment and quality of life. SCT members are expected to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Act professionally and with high levels of duty of care, safety and concern towards other SCT members, customers and the Bega Valley community. 2. Deliver with integrity, all advertised products and services, meeting all legal responsibilities including trading only under a register business name. 3. Comply with the laws of Australia and ensure all contracts and terms of business are clear, concise and honoured in full, ensuring all dealings are ethical and fair. 4. Speak and act respectfully and not denigrate or slander anyone or discriminate on the basis of race, gender, religious belief, sexual orientation or political persuasion. 5. Ensure claims in advertising and marketing a product or service are true, not misleading or exaggerated and are not negative about another member's product or service. 6. Manage their businesses effectively and efficiently, enhancing the reputation of tourism within the Bega Valley and to respond and resolve customer complaints in a timely and courteous manner and to change business processes and policies when necessary. 7. Operate a safe, healthy and satisfying working environment for staff, customers and the public. 8. Manage their staff/employees fairly and equitably. Consider environmental best practice guidelines, conserving water, energy and the natural environment.
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MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES For all members (cont):	MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES Online Booking Service (cont):	MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES Code of Conduct (cont):
<p>For Accommodation Members: <u>AAA Star Rating Certificates</u> If your accommodation product has been assessed by AAA Tourism and has a current AAA Star rating certificate, SCT requires a copy of this certification. If operators fail to provide a current AAA Star rating certificate, SCT will use AAA Tourism's online star rating for that property. Those operators who have not been AAA Star Rated may provide a self-rating of their property but the AAA Star Rating 'star icons' will not be used.</p> <p><u>Payment information</u> Payments to operators will be made via EFT to bank account nominated on the application form and the remittance emailed to the nominated email address within 10 days of the end of the month following stay by the customer.</p> <p>-end-</p>	<p>The system will require the customer to enter their credit card details and pay 100% of the fee up-front. The system is not designed to take deposits. Payments will be processed using a secure payment gateway. Members will be notified via email when a successful transaction is completed. The customer will be notified by email that they have a confirmed and paid for the booking. Both the customer and the property contact details will be included in the e-mails. Responsibility for accuracy, including availability, tariff rates and double bookings belongs solely with the operator. If a double booking occurs the provider is responsible for providing alternative accommodation. Inability by a member to access or maintain tariffs, calendar or availability must be reported immediately to the SCT office at Merimbula. NB: Responsibility for the booking belongs to the operator. SCT will not be liable for any failure of, or interruptions to hardware, third party Internet Service Providers, browsers, domains or any other software. If a booking is altered or cancelled, you will need to notify SCT of any changes. Preference of bookings will be given to those members who have their accommodation availability online and up to date.</p> <p>5. Payments to operators will be made via EFT to bank account nominated on application form and the remittance emailed to the nominated email address within 10 days of the end of month following stay by the customer.</p> <p>6. Failure to honour bookings made through the real time system will incur a minimum \$75.00 admin fee payable by the operator.</p> <p>-end-</p>	<p>Be ambassadors for tourism on the Sapphire Coast and help remote community understanding of the importance of tourism as a vibrant contributor to the local economy. Tourism is the backbone of our economy.</p> <p>9. Membership of SCT is subject to review and acceptance by the Board or their authorised agent</p> <p>10. Breaches of the Members' Code of Conduct may result in suspension of membership and associated benefits including brochure display, website listings and bookings. Members have the right to address the Board should a breach be alleged against them</p> <p>It is understood that by signing the membership application form you agree to follow the Members Responsibilities and the Members Code of Conduct.</p> <p>-end-</p>