

Dear Members and Industry Contacts

Happy New Year to you all. We hope you all had a safe and memorable Christmas and New Years. 2011 is busily moving along with our streets, restaurants and cafes, beaches and attractions all busy with visitors and holiday makers over this summer period.

### **Sapphire Coast Regional Visitor Guide**

The new Sapphire Coast Visitors Guide was printed and delivered just 3 days before Christmas. A new approach was taken in this regional visitor guide to try and balance what we're well known for – our beach, fishing, golfing and water activities with our beautiful and untouched natural landscape and our heritage and culture. National tourism statistics show that nature and heritage tourism are the only projected areas of tourism that will grow so we highlighted our points of difference so that we stand out from the crowd and the 150 other beachside destinations in NSW alone.

Almost 10,000 visitor guides were immediately sent out to Visitor Information Centres in VIC, ACT, NSW & QLD before Christmas. The guides will also be promoted at upcoming 2011 travel shows, sent out to prospective visitors and inquiries on an ongoing basis throughout the year and used for all of our media and PR activities.

Over 11,000 visitor guides were also distributed throughout the region. That's 21,000 visitor guides distributed in under a week and before the busy Christmas period! The guides are available for collection from all of our Visitor Information Centres. Have you seen it yet? Why not drop into your local VIC and collect some to have on display in your own business and use in your own marketing efforts.

### **Destination Visitor Survey**

Sapphire Coast Tourism was successful in their grant application for professional marketing research of our visitors and their expectations. Managed by Tourism Research Australia, this \$30K project will provide key insights into what our visitor's think of us, why they come to the region, how much they spend and when they plan to return.

Surveys will take place by market researchers interviewing our visitors at the 6 major towns in the region from 20-23 January, as well as postcards on display at selected businesses for visitors to enter their details onto a postcard and complete a survey on their return home from holidays. Participation in the survey will enter visitors into a cash prize draw. The postcards provide the opportunity for a whole extra stream of data – a

The postcard option allows us all to have access to a far greater number of visitors and research data – a Victorian region had over 9,000 postcards entries alone! Would you like to have some postcards on display in your business? Please contact your local VIC for more information. Help SCT to help your businesses with greater visitor participation and more market research data available.



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### **At last, some good news on the domestic tourism front**

Domestic overnight travel has risen 2.7% compare to the Sept quarter last year. Tourism Research Australia's National Visitor Survey that was released earlier this year for the Sept 09 quarter also shows that visitor numbers were up by 3.5%, with spending up 1%. It is the second consecutive quarter of growth, after falls in the previous eight quarters. Welcoming the results, Tourism & Transport Forum (TTF) national policy director Even Hall said: "People are also travelling for longer, with visitor nights growing by more than overnight visitor numbers in the quarter. Spending was also up – reaching \$11.5 billion for the quarter".

### **Recent Media Activity**

SCT is now working with a PR consultant to increase the exposure and awareness of the Sapphire Coast region, our attractions and events in the local and national media. Recent features on the Sapphire Coast include:

*Daily Telegraph:* Some recent tourism features over the summer holidays in the Daily Telegraph highlighted our very own accommodation and attractions within the top 10 in the whole of NSW!

- Best placed to camp & caravan in NSW; Pambula Beach Discovery Holiday Park took out the no. 1 spot in NSW!!
- Top swimming spots in NSW (besides the beach); Mumbulla Creek Falls was listed as no. 9 best swimming spot in NSW. No wonder its been a hive of activity and packed even on rainy days ever since!

*On The Road, national travel magazine:* January 2011 edition – a 3 page feature on Eden and how volunteers have made a real difference in beautifying the town of Eden. While the feature recognises the hard work of local volunteers in maintaining Warrens Walk and the cemetery, it also highlights the Maritime Heritage Walk with its Aboriginal links and heritage, promotes Lake Curalo boardwalk while recognising the efforts of volunteers in building the boardwalk and planting 400 banksias, recognises St George's Uniting Church as one of Australia's oldest continually used churches with its grafted plum tree that grows six different types of plums (!), the log cabin, the Timber Workers Memorial, the Killer Whale Museum, the Seamen's Memorial Wall and Rotary Park. A fantastic article that not only promotes the whole of Eden but duly recognizes the efforts of all of the volunteers and the manpower that have used to maintain these tourism products for the town of Eden.

Do you have an event, experience or activity that you would like SCT to help you promote? Please provide information to [admin@sapphirecoast.com.au](mailto:admin@sapphirecoast.com.au)

### **"FREE" TNSW February travel promo**

Information about the TNSW promo was distributed earlier this week. Don't forget to submit your details to TNSW to participate in the free TNSW touring promotion for February. Submissions must be received by 17 Jan to be eligible.

If you also fax your completed application through to SCRTO (our regional tourism organisation for the South Coast), they too will add your details onto their website for additional exposure! FAX 02 9656 1295 So don't delay, fill out the correct form, send it off to TNSW, and also fax it through to SCRTO as well.



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### **Volunteers required for upcoming travel show**

Speaking of volunteers, SCT is looking for interested people from the industry and the community to volunteer and help man the SCT stalls at our upcoming travel shows.

Travel shows booked for the first quarter of this year are:

1. Albury/Wagga travel show; 5th & 6th March
2. Melbourne Caravan & Camping Show; 10-15 March

For those interested in attending the shows or require further information, please contact the Merimbula VIC by email [admin@sapphirecoast.com.au](mailto:admin@sapphirecoast.com.au) or by calling 6495 1129.

### **Export Ready Workshops – working with the international market**

With the growth in the number of international visitors to Australia and NSW, it is important that regional tourism businesses are aware of the advantages of proactively working with the Tourism distribution channels in order to increase the number of international visitors and visitor nights to regional NSW.

South Coast Regional Tourism organisation were successful in securing two Export Ready Workshops to be held in February 2011 – one in Moruya and one in Wollongong. Unfortunately none will be held in the Sapphire Coast.

Tourism NSW will present on the following:

- An introduction to the Tourism NSW International offices and team
- An overview of the international visitor arrivals into Australia and NSW
- A snapshot of international arrivals in your region including the markets visitors are coming from
- Tourism NSW's role in the international markets
- Opportunities for integration into Tourism NSW programs
- An overview of the International Industry Incentive Funding Scheme

ATEC (Australian Tourism Export Council) will present on the following:

- Understanding export ready
- The benefits of international visitors
- An overview of export ready criteria
- Understanding the tourism distribution system
- What is an Inbound Tour Operator and what they can do
- What is a wholesaler
- An overview of retail and online travel agents
- Setting prices and commissions
- Understanding ITO's
- Understanding familiarisations

The workshop will be held in Moruya on the 3rd February from 9.30am-12noon. This free of charge workshop will be held at Eurobodalla Shire Council, Administration building, cnr Vulcan & Campbell Streets Moruya. RSVP by 20 Jan 2011 to [Glynn@southcoast.net.au](mailto:Glynn@southcoast.net.au)