

## MEDIA RELEASE

10 November 2017

### Sunshine Coast shines at Queensland Tourism Awards

Sunshine Coast tourism operators have taken out seven accolades at this year's Queensland Tourism Awards, which celebrate the dedicated individuals and successful operators of the state's \$25 billion tourism industry.

The Queensland Tourism Awards are hosted by the Queensland Tourism Industry Council and presented by Queensland Airports Limited in partnership with Tourism and Events Queensland and supporting partner Tourism Australia.

The Sunshine Coast region collected 2 Gold, 1 Silver, 3 Bronze, and 1 highly commended award. For the first time in the Awards' 33-year history, Queenslanders were given the opportunity to vote for their favourite tourism experience as part of the RACQ People's Choice Award, which saw the Sunshine Coast's RACV Noosa Resort come out on top.

Winners included:

RACQ People's Choice Award	RACV Noosa Resort	Accommodation
Gold Awards	RACV Noosa Resort	Self-Contained Accommodation
Silver Awards	Rivershore Resort	New Tourism Business
Bronze Awards	Australia Zoo	Major Tourist Attractions
	Narrows Escape Rainforest Retreat	Hosted Accommodation
	Tourism Noosa 2016-2017 Interstate Marketing Campaign	The Richard Power Award for Destination Marketing
Highly Commended Awards	Bli Bli House	Hosted Accommodation

A total of 83 awards, including 28 Gold, 24 Silver, 24 Bronze, 5 highly commended and 2 individual awards across 28 categories, as well as the inaugural RACQ People's Choice awards, were presented at Brisbane's Convention and Exhibition Centre tonight where 900 guests gathered to celebrate Queensland's tourism achievements.

*See separate list of all of this year's 2017 Queensland Tourism Awards winners.*

QTIC Chief Executive Daniel Gschwind said the 33rd Queensland Tourism Awards had attracted an outstanding array of tourism operators across all award categories, with more than 160 nominations received state-wide.

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“This year’s entrants across 28 business, event and individual categories reflect the diverse and dynamic range of tourism operators helping Queensland’s tourism industry flourish,” he said.

“Queensland’s tourism industry continues to do much of the heavy lifting for the state’s economy, this year growing by more than 5.5% and employing more than 225,000 people.

“International visitor numbers for Queensland have seen record growth in the 12 months to June 2017, growing 5.6% per cent. Some 2.6 million international visitors generated \$5.2 billion in overnight expenditure.”

“While these numbers are certainly positive, the industry faces intense global competition for market share. Queensland must continue to excel in every business to capture the attention of first-time and returning visitors from Australia and around the world.”

Tourism Minister Kate Jones said the Queensland Tourism Awards recognised excellence in the tourism industry.

“The Queensland tourism industry is growing from strength to strength thanks to the hard work of our tourism operators who deliver fantastic products and experiences.

“The Palaszczuk Government will continue working with tourism operators on the Sunshine Coast to grow the industry and deliver jobs for Queenslanders.

“Congratulations to all Sunshine Coast region nominees and winners for your dedication and showcasing the best of Queensland to visitors.”

Queensland Airports Limited CEO Chris Mills said the annual Queensland Tourism Awards provided the perfect platform to recognise the industry’s leading operators.

“Our tourism industry is critical to the state’s ongoing growth and prosperity, and the Queensland Tourism Awards winners are the best of the best,” he said.

“We are proud of our 11 year association as presenting partner of the Queensland Tourism Awards, which highlight the contribution Queensland businesses and individuals have made to domestic and international visitors.”

The Queensland Tourism Awards are judged by a panel of industry experts who volunteer their time to assess written submissions and travel throughout Queensland to experience the amenities and services of nominated businesses.

Queensland’s Gold Business Award winners will gain automatic entry into the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards, which will be held in Perth on 23 February 2018.