

Media Release

The Hon Mary-Anne Thomas MP

Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture
Acting Minister for Industry Support and Recovery
Acting Minister for Trade
Acting Minister for Business Precincts
Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Acting Minister for Racing



Sunday, 20 March 2022

VICTORIA WINS GOLD AT AUSTRALIAN TOURISM AWARDS

Victoria and its iconic tourism accommodation, attractions and experiences have been recognised at the Qantas Australian Tourism Awards, with the state taking home eleven honours.

Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Mary Anne Thomas today applauded the successful local businesses and operators, commending them on their resilience and commitment as the sector continues its bounce back from the challenges of the global pandemic.

Held on the Sunshine Coast, Victoria was honoured with five gold, four silver and two bronze awards for 2021.

Leading the way with gold were the Royal Botanic Gardens in the Major Tourist Attractions category, Ballarat Heritage Festival in Festivals and Events, Destination Gippsland for their stunning tourism marketing campaign, Wilsons Promontory Cruises in New Tourism Business and Green Olive in Red Hill for Excellence in Food Tourism.

The Alexandra Hotel in Alexandra was awarded two silver awards for its three-star accommodation and restaurant and catering services, joined by Heytesbury House in Hosted Accommodation and the Bendigo Visitor Centre for their visitor information service offering.

Rounding out the Victorian winners were Searoad Ferries for their work as a major tour and transport operation and the Tesselaar Tulip Festival in the Major Festival and Events category.

The Andrews Labor Government is committed to the continued recovery of the state's tourism sector, injecting \$633 million in support under the Visitor Economy Recovery and Reform Plan.

A whole-of-state strategy to grow Victoria's tourism industry, the Plan has a goal of achieving \$35 billion in annual visitor expenditure supporting the industry to generate 300,000 jobs by June 2024.

Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Mary-Anne Thomas

"Victorians are back enjoying the things they love and that includes the best destinations and attractions in the state."

"It is fantastic to see the quality of the Victorian tourism industry recognised and we are backing businesses in this sector to grow and create jobs right across the state."

Quotes attributable to Victorian Tourism Industry Council CEO Felicia Mariani

"After an impossibly difficult two years, it's incredibly heartening to see so many Victorian businesses and communities rewarded for their mammoth efforts to recover."

"These awards are a testament to the resilience and passion of our sector."