



Welcome to the second edition of the West Gippsland Regional Tourism Newsletter!

What is the West Gippsland RTA?

The West Gippsland Regional Tourism Association is the peak body responsible for the management and development of sustainable tourism within our region. The RTA is made up of a board of 10.

The Board meets on a monthly basis and also holds quarterly meetings where we invite the Chairs of both LTA's being Gippsland Gourmet Country and Walhalla & Mountain Rivers to attend. We also invite Janiene Ayre and Debbie Saliba from Council and also the Chair and CEO of Destination Gippsland. This way we are all kept informed of what is happening within West Gippsland, Destination Gippsland and the State.

Regional Tourism Community Awareness Campaign on YouTube

The Regional Tourism Community Awareness Campaign is currently running on the Prime television network. The purpose of RTCAC is to raise awareness of the significance of tourism in, and to, regional and rural communities.

See the ad by going to the TAV website at www.tourismalliance.com.au, or click on the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an4s3q1dmnk>

For tourism information and bookings in West Gippsland phone: 1800 234 793

www.bawbawcountry.com.au

The West Gippsland Regional Tourism Association heads to the 2008 Melbourne Tourism Industry Exchange

On Monday the 22nd of September the West Gippsland Regional Tourism Association will be promoting West Gippsland at The Melbourne Tourism Industry Exchange in Melbourne.

More than 300 people are expected to attend with industry organisations, Destination Melbourne's regional and metro partners and attractions promoting their services.

We will be providing the Concierges, Ambassadors, Visitor Information Centre staff, taxi drivers and many others with news and information about our wonderful region in the hope that they will refer and recommend us to the many visitors they deal with on a day to day basis. We will be taking local product from our Local Tourism Association Members to showcase and will be doing our utmost to portray and represent each and every aspect of the West Gippsland region.

If you are interested in supplying us with any product or if you have any wonderful ideas you wish to discuss, please feel free to contact Joanne Kingwill – Communications Officer of West Gippsland Tourism to discuss. Email: admin@westgippsland.com.au

Victoria's 101 best tourism experiences

After more than 72,000 visits to this website voting has now closed. You can still view and read about the nominations and why people have voted for them by clicking on the names below. **Congratulations to Walhalla who are looking good for a top 10 position!** Considering there are almost 600 great places listed this is a wonderful achievement.

The WMRTA worked really hard to promote this by producing flyers which all businesses handed out and encouraged people to log onto the RACV site and vote. The top 101 tourism experiences as voted by visitors will be announced in a one hour television special on Channel 9 on the 26th September 2008 at 7:30pm. The results will also be available after the program at <http://www.101victoria.com.au/>

**Congratulations to Mt Baw Baw
for receiving their Better
Business Tourism Accreditation.
Well done!**

Don't forget the SP Ausnet Baw Baw Shire Business Excellence Awards Presentation Dinner will be held on Friday the 14th of November 2008 at the Fountain Room in Warragul. For more information or to book a ticket, contact Karen Meyers at the Baw Baw Shire in Warragul.

Melbourne Airport 2008 Victorian Tourism Awards

Entries have now been received for the Melbourne Airport 2008 Victorian Tourism Awards. Congratulations to all businesses who submitted an entry. All entrants should be proud of this achievement. A list of entrants will be available on the awards website early September.

Now that submissions are in, it's time to think about the fun part of the awards - the Presentation and Gala Ceremony.

Mark Monday 17 November in your diaries, dust off those dresses, suits and dancing shoes and keep an eye open for your invitation in the mail, in September. Tickets sell fast for the biggest tourism industry event of the year, so make sure you get your booking in early.

Visit www.victoriantourismawards.com.au for up-to-date information on everything awards.



Tourism Victoria's 2008 Marketing Masterclass

Get informed and inspired with what's new in the fast-paced world of marketing at *Tourism Victoria's 2008 Marketing Masterclass*.

Bookings are now open for the Masterclass, which will be held on 8 October at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

This is your opportunity to update your marketing skills, find out how to reach your target audience and learn how to ramp up your business marketing - even if you have a shoestring budget.

The Masterclass is an innovative forum designed to provide delegates with updates and insights on what marketing is happening in the tourism industry.

Book now to take advantage of our special rates including our early bird exclusive, discounts for multiple bookings or for entrants into the Melbourne Airport 2008 Victorian Tourism Awards.

Registrations are now available. Book online at www.tourism.vic.gov.au

Friends of Tourism Breakfast The Windsor Hotel – 10th September

The Minister for Tourism and Major Events, the Hon. Tim Holding MP and Tourism Alliance Victoria invite you to the fourth annual Friends of Tourism Breakfast to be held at the Windsor Hotel, Melbourne on Wednesday 10th September at 7.30am – 9.00am. This year's event precedes the release of **VICTORIA'S NATURE-BASED TOURISM STRATEGY 2008-2012**, just announced by Tourism Victoria today, which will take place directly after the Breakfast in The Grand Ballroom at The Windsor. All breakfast attendees are welcome to stay on for this.

The breakfast is a great opportunity for Tourism Alliance Victoria members and the broader tourism industry to meet and network with Members of Parliament who comprise the Government Friends of Tourism group. There will also be an industry update from the Minister.

If you would like to attend this breakfast but have not yet sent through your RSVP please visit www.tourismalliance.com.au to download the registration form or phone Tourism Alliance Victoria on 03 9650 8399.

www.bawbawcountry.com.au

Gotta be GREEN to be seen!

Today more and more consumers are sourcing eco-friendly products and services. The tourism industry is certainly no exception.

Research shows that two out of three travellers would choose a 'green accredited' accommodation property over another so now is the time for accommodation operators to act.

Green STAR Accreditation rewards those properties implementing environmental good practices and shows guests that they are socially responsible by reducing the environmental impacts of their business.

The program is run by AAA Tourism – the national tourism body of Australia's Auto Clubs and manager of Australia's STAR Rating Scheme. It is available only to STAR Rated properties who pass a number of key criteria under areas of energy efficiency, water minimisation, waste minimisation/management, and encourage their guests to follow suit.

AAA Tourism is very pleased to announce that Green STAR Accreditation now has over 250 accredited properties – a figure that is growing weekly and boosted by a recent promotion campaign.

The Green STAR logo can be seen next to property listings in the Auto Clubs' National Accommodation Guide and National Tourist Park Guide and can also be seen on Auto Club websites. AAA Tourism encourages all tourism operators to recommend environmentally friendly properties to travellers where available.

Travellers can find out more about Green STAR Accreditation via our new STAR Ratings Australia website www.starratings.com.au, or alternatively properties interested in the program can visit www.aatourism.com.au.

Dates for the diary:

- Baw Baw Garden & Home Expo, 11-12 October at Lardner Park
- Tourism Victoria's Marketing Masterclass, 8 October in Melbourne
- Victorian Tourism Awards Gala Ceremony, 17 November in Melbourne

Forecast Visitation to Victoria

Tourism Victoria has recently posted its visitation forecasts for the period 2007-2017. Increased visitor numbers are expected from China and India. Annual average growth (AAG) for the period is estimated at 12.2% for China and 16.5% for India. Indonesia is also forecast to be a growth market, with an AAG of 10.6% for the same period. Visitor nights for these markets are also expected to grow over the ten years to 2017, India by 15.2%, China by 11.0% and Indonesia by 10.8%.

On the domestic front, visitor numbers are expected to grow at an annual average of just 1.4% for the period, whilst domestic visitor nights will decline slightly (AAG of -0.4% for 2007-2017).

The fact sheet is available from www.tourism.vic.gov.au

Regional Tourism Action Plan

Tourism Victoria has released the draft *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2008-11* for your comment. This plan will outline the direction for regional tourism for the next three years.

Businesses, industry groups and local communities have been asked to provide feedback to the Action Plan, with the final plan to be released later this year.

The recommendations and actions in the plan have been framed to respond to issues raised through consultation already undertaken.

The plan outlines four key priority areas that need to be addressed in regional Victoria. These priorities are:

- Industry Structures
- Investment Attraction
- Destination Marketing
- Skills and Service Standards

The Action Plan also identifies key development priorities for Victoria's 10 tourism regions.

[Click here](#) to download the draft *Regional Tourism Action Plan 2008-11*.