

**Media Release**

**28<sup>th</sup> July 2007**

## **Gippsland Tourism Gets That Winning Feeling**

The Gippsland Tourism Sector was inspired last night by passionate and insightful speeches from renowned restaurateur Dur-e' Dara and Tourism Victoria Director Geoffrey Conaghan at the Gippsland Tourism Awards hosted by Bis Cucina in Sale.

On a happy evening marked by cheers, laughter, fine Gippsland Wine and a sense of unity, the tourism industry celebrated the achievements of their peers.

Mr Chris Buckingham, Gippsland Tourism said: 'While it was fantastic to see so many businesses judged to a high standard, the highlight for many were the inspiring words of our guest speakers.'

Mr Geoffrey Conaghan acknowledged the passion and resilience of the Gippsland Tourism sector and called on the industry to: 'Recognise what makes Gippsland a great visitor experience and stay focussed on delivering the plan to promote the region.'

Dur-e' Dara wowed the 130 people attending the awards with her enthusiasm for Gippsland and inspiring outlook on life. Dur-e' Dara made a note of commending the 'Inspired By Gippsland Food and Wine Guide'. 'It is one of the best regional food and wine guides I have ever seen' said Dur-e' Dara.

Mr Tom Stafford, Chairman of Judges, observed that the overall standard was high: 'Given the great diversity of product in the region and the high standard of businesses entering the awards, we want to see businesses promote themselves more. It is time to take the light from under the bushel.'

Mr Buckingham was delighted by the support from sponsors and reserved particular mention for Jenny Brown, who played a key role pulling the Gippsland Tourism Awards together.

Ms Kaye Brown from Springbank B&B, a finalist in the Deluxe Accommodation Category, summed it up for many: 'It was enjoyable, refreshing, encouraging, and great to see and meet the people behind the businesses in Gippsland – a huge network demonstrating dedication and perseverance and a willingness to share something in the face of adversity. We were delighted to receive a finalist acknowledgement and particularly inspired by the addresses given by the presenters especially Dur-e-Dara, indeed a woman of experience, understanding and adventure.'

Media representatives: Please see list of Winners, Finalist and Commendations below. For more information or photos of the evening, please call Chris Buckingham on 0429 869 638

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## 2007 GIPPSLAND TOURISM AWARDS – List of Awards Winners

Category	Result	Organisation
2. Tourist Attractions	Finalist	Candalaraine Alpacas, Neerim South
2. Tourist Attractions	Commendation	Darnum Musical Village
8. Specialised Tourism Services	Commendation	Catherine's Creek Camp, Allambee Reserve
<b>9. Visitor Information Services</b>	<b>Joint Winner</b>	<b>Latrobe Visitor Information Centre, Traralgon</b>
<b>9. Visitor Information Services</b>	<b>Joint Winner</b>	<b>Prom Country Visitor Information Centre</b>
<b>13. Adventure Tourism</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Aerial Skydives, Churchill</b>
<b>14. Tourism Marketing</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Prom Country Regional Tourism</b>
<b>16. Tourism Restaurants &amp; Catering Services</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Bis Cucina, Sale</b>
16. Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services	Finalist	The Outpost Retreat Noojee, Noojee
16. Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services	Finalist	The Grange Café & Deli, Warragul
16. Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services	Finalist	Piglets, Neerim South

16. Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services	Finalist	The Grayn Restaurant, Pakenham
<b>17. Tourism Wineries</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Brandy Creek Wines, Drouin</b>
17. Tourism Wineries	Finalist	Wild Dog Winery, Warragul
<b>18. Tourist and Caravan parks</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Toora Tourist Park, Toora</b>
19. Backpacker Accommodation	Finalist	Cambrai Hostel, Maffra
<b>20. Hosted Accommodation</b>	<b>Joint Winner</b>	<b>Stringybark Cottages</b>
<b>20. Hosted Accommodation</b>	<b>Joint Winner</b>	<b>Waverley House Cottages, Lakes Entrance</b>
20. Hosted Accommodation	Finalist	Springbank, Nilma North
20. Hosted Accommodation	Finalist	Bloomfield Cottages, Nilma
20. Hosted Accommodation	Finalist	Janalli, Neerim South
<b>23. Deluxe Accommodation</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Limosa Rise, Yanakie</b>
23. Deluxe Accommodation	Finalist	Yarragon Villas, Yarragon
23. Deluxe Accommodation	Finalist	Frog Gully Cottages, Longford
<b>24b. Luxury Boutique Accommodation</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Montfort Manor, Traralgon</b>