

# MEDIA RELEASE

**EMBARGO UNTIL**  
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## Lights, Camera, Action: The Whitsundays Tourism Awards Steal the Spotlight, Hollywood-Style

The red carpet was rolled out, and stars of the tourism industry shone brightly at the Whitsundays Tourism Awards held in true Hollywood style at the Proserpine Entertainment Centre this evening. Over 300 guests attended the star-studded gala Awards event presented by Bishopp Advertising and the Reef Gateway Hotel, which celebrated the successes of the tourism and business industry in 2022/23.

Dressed in their finest Hollywood-themed cocktail attire, guests strolled down the red carpet with an undeniable aura of Tinseltown charm. Amid the dazzling lights and the flashes of paparazzi cameras, the night unfolded as a well-deserved night off for many. The first Tourism Awards event to be held at the new Proserpine Entertainment Centre saw guests enjoy a relaxed evening of entertainment on the lawn, followed by an awards ceremony in the auditorium. Beyond celebrating excellence, it was a night to pay homage to the extraordinary contributions that the tourism sector makes to The Whitsundays region.

Rick Hamilton, the CEO of Tourism Whitsundays, described the Whitsundays Tourism Awards as the region's most anticipated event.

"Crafting an award submission isn't for the faint of heart," Mr. Hamilton shared. "It is an intentional journey that encourages operators to delve deep into their businesses, reflecting on how their efforts rippled through to benefit not only customers but also the local community and the region at large."

He went on to say, "We are the most tourism-reliant region in Queensland, with 1 in 3 jobs dependant on tourism. This evening's event is a tribute to the region's reliance on tourism, with everyone gathered to applaud their own achievements, their competitors' feats, and, most importantly, the collective triumphs of the tourism industry."

Tourism Whitsundays would like to congratulate all the entrants and recognise the following winners of this year's award categories:

Tourism Awards	
Adventure Tourism	Ocean Rafting
Caravan & Holiday Parks	BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort
Ecotourism	Bell Tents Whitsundays
Excellence in Accessible Tourism	BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort
Festivals and Events	Great Barrier Reef Festival
Major Tour & Transport Operators	Ocean Rafting
New Tourism Business	Driftwood Tours
Outstanding Contribution by a Volunteer or Volunteer Group	Bowen Tourism and Business
Self-Contained Accommodation	Pinnacles Airlie Beach
Tourism Retail, Hire & Services	Whitsunday Coast Airport
Tour & Transport Operators	Iconic Whitsunday Adventures
Unique Accommodation	Cruise Whitsundays
Visitor Information Services	Bowen Tourism and Business
5 Star Luxury Accommodation	InterContinental Hayman Island Resort
4-4.5 Star Deluxe Accommodation	Mirage Whitsundays
3 – 3.5 Star Accommodation	Magnums Accommodation Airlie Beach
Best of Queensland – Accommodation	Elysian Retreat
Best of Queensland – Dining	Three Little Birds Espresso
Best of Queensland – Experience	Portland Roads
Bob Porter Award for Outstanding Contribution by an Individual	Craig Turner

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Young Achiever Award	James Unsworth
<b>Business Awards</b>	
Award for Excellence in Customer Service by an Individual or Business	Three Little Birds Espresso
Award for Most Outstanding Whitsundays Booking Service	Magnums Accommodation Airlie Beach
Award for Most Outstanding Whitsundays Hospitality Venue	Three Little Birds Espresso
Award for Most Outstanding Whitsundays Retailer	Airlie Health Hub
Award for Most Outstanding Whitsundays Services Provider	Shiift
Bowen Business of the Year	Birds Fish Bar – Bowen Fishermans Seafood
Collinsville Business of the Year	Pit Pony Tavern
Proserpine Business of the Year	Whitsunday Creatives
Whitsundays Business of the Year	Magnums Accommodation Airlie Beach
Business Legacy Achievement Award	Allan Milostic
<b>People’s Choice Awards</b>	
People’s Choice Award – Accommodation	BIG4 Adventure Whitsunday Resort
People’s Choice Award – Experience	Ocean Rafting

The Whitsundays Tourism Awards was supported by generous sponsors (in alphabetical order): Star 101.9 and 4MK, Bendigo Bank, Bishopp Advertising, Bookeasy, Bowen Tourism and Business, Cruise Whitsundays, Daydream Island, Fraser Ford, Graphic House, Hamilton Island, KB Design, Proserpine Entertainment Centre, Reef Gateway Hotel, R Jean Photography, TP Events & Styling Whitsunday, Whitsunday Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Mackay and Whitsunday Life Newspaper, Whitsunday Transit, Whitsunday Tickets.

Information on winning businesses is below.

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To view a Word Document of this release and supporting images, [click here](#).

To view The Whitsundays destination video, [click here](#).

**About Tourism Whitsundays:** *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

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