

Margaret River takes out GWN7 Top Tourism Award

Margaret River has taken out the GWN7 Top Tourism Award for 2013, officially crowned Western Australia's 'Top Tourism Town' at the 24th Annual GWN7 Top Tourism Award Gala Dinner last Friday night.

Securing the title for the second time in just three years, Margaret River pipped other finalists Denmark and Busselton in a close race to the finish. Dunsborough took out the population under 5,000 category.

Chair of the judging panel, Robyn Fenech commented that "both Margaret River and Dunsborough showed a fantastic dedication to tourism both in their written submissions and in their site visits."

"The judges were very impressed with all the finalists – it was a tough decision as there are so many amazing experiences throughout Western Australia and all the finalists put their best feet forward." Margaret River blew the judges away with "the sheer quality and volume of tourism products and experiences, combined to deliver a world class visitor destination that goes well beyond food and wine."

"[Margaret River's] relaxed charm and endless possibilities are continually being reinvigorated to create memorable visitor experiences," said one of the judges.

Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association's (AMRTA) Acting CEO Jayme Hatcher was thrilled to accept the award.

"It is an honour to be named WA's Top Tourism Town for 2013, particularly with such close competition from Denmark and Busselton. We would like to congratulate the other finalists for their efforts," said Ms Hatcher.

"The unique diversity of outstanding tourism product in the Margaret River region, combined with the AMRTA's dynamic and proactive marketing approach and our high standard of visitor servicing made Margaret River a strong contender, and a thoroughly deserving winner of this accolade," she said.

Margaret River received from GWN7 an airtime package valued at \$25,000 to utilise in support of its overall marketing activities to attract visitors to the region.

A further special award was presented to Margaret River as the winner of the RAC Travel Services Business Planning and Marketing Award, in the form of a \$5,000 RAC Travel Services advertising package.

Ms Hatcher said she looked forward to the AMRTA's marketing team being able to use both the prize packages to help further promote the beautiful Margaret River region, via GWN7 and RAC.

Tourism Minister Liza Harvey congratulated Margaret River for winning the 2013 Top Tourism Award and also Dunsborough for taking out the Top Tourism Award for a town with a population of less than 5,000.

“Western Australia’s South West region is truly extraordinary, boasting spectacular beaches, tall timber forests, stunning caves and outstanding food and wine,” she said.

“In addition, [Margaret River] is home to a number of world-class events such as the Margaret River Gourmet Escape food and wine festival and the Margaret River Pro surfing event.”

“The Top Tourism Awards are very important as they acknowledge the significant role of the State’s visitor centres in attracting and welcoming visitors to WA.

“I would like to congratulate all the winners and nominees for their hard work and dedication to our tourism industry.”

The City of Armadale hosted the 24th Annual GWN7 Top Tourism Award Gala Dinner at the beautiful Araluen Golf Resort, which forms part of the Visitor Centre Association of Western Australia’s yearly Conference.

The Augusta Margaret River Tourism Association is a not-for-profit, self-funded regional tourism association with over 550 local and regional members.

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