



Media Release
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Hawke's Bay tourism operators' time to shine

Entries have opened for the 2019 Hawke's Bay Tourism Awards, which recognise the best and brightest among the region's collective of tourism businesses.

The awards are open to all member businesses of the Hawke's Bay Tourism Industry Association, with the process culminating in an awards evening in September.

Five categories are up for grabs, including Accommodation, Visitor Experience, Culture and Heritage, Essence of Hawke's Bay, and, new for 2019, an Environment Award to recognise businesses putting environmental sustainability at the heart of their operations. Each of the category winners will then vie for the Supreme Award, won in 2018 by Black Barn Vineyards.

Hawke's Bay Tourism Acting General Manager Hamish Saxton says the awards are an opportunity to celebrate the visitor economy's contribution to the region, now valued at \$658million annually.

"For many visitors to Hawke's Bay, their lasting memories will be of the interactions and experiences created by our region's tourism businesses. So it's important we recognise the value our members are creating for visitors each and every day."

The judging process incorporates written submissions and in-person interviews, with the 2019 judging panel including Kim Thorp – co-owner of Black Barn Vineyards, Jane Wilson – General Manager for Destination Great Lake Taupō, and Glenn Fulcher – Head of School, EIT Tourism and Hospitality.

"We're delighted to have secured three highly credentialed industry professionals as our judges for 2019, which provides our members the opportunity to have their businesses assessed by, and get feedback from, experts in their field," says Mr Saxton.

Sponsorship of the Tourism Awards includes all four Territorial Authorities – Central Hawke's Bay District Council, Hastings District Council, Napier District Council and Wairoa District Council, along with key tourism

About Hawke's Bay Tourism: Hawke's Bay Tourism is the Regional Tourism Organisation. Our mission is to ensure Hawke's Bay becomes significantly more attractive to New Zealand and international visitors as a place to visit, do business and to live.

Contact: Hawke's Bay Tourism, PO Box 12009, 19 Waghorne Street, Ahuriri, Napier, Hawke's Bay, New Zealand.
Telephone + 64 (0) 6 834 1918
www.hawkesbaynz.com



enablers, Hawke's Bay Airport and EIT Eastern Institute of Technology, which Mr Saxton says is due recognition of the importance of the visitor economy to the region's prosperity.

For more information contact:

Hamish Saxton

Acting General Manager, Hawke's Bay Tourism

Tel: 021 440 726

hamish@hawkesbaytourism.co.nz

Notes

The Hawke's Bay Tourism Awards include five categories:

- Accommodation Award, sponsored by Hawke's Bay Airport
- Visitor Experience Award, sponsored by Hastings District Council
- Essence of Hawke's Bay Award, sponsored by Napier City Council
- Culture and Heritage Award, sponsored by Wairoa District Council
- Environment Award, sponsored by Central Hawke's Bay District Council

All category winners are eligible for the Supreme Award, sponsored by EIT Eastern Institute of Technology

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