

# Directions

## ... Tour Guiding Issues and Activities!

### ***A Word From the Chair***

By now you will have heard that the project we have so laboriously been working on since June 2005, the national tour guide accreditation has been launched. Guides of Australia was launched at Healesville Sanctuary in Victoria on the 26<sup>th</sup> June and was attended by Minister Fran Bailey and a number of GOA and member organisation representatives.

The accreditation programme has been framed with very broad consultation over the whole industry in all states. Our previous President, Russell Boswell, who took on the project management, had nearly 100 consultants and we can be conservatively confident that the program will ensure benchmarks of guiding quality to enhance the visitor experience of the huge variety of features and environments of our wonderful, vast nation.

We know we have a job in front of us to enthuse guides and operators that accreditation, like education generally doesn't cost, but it actually pays. GOA now has nine member organisations representing about 450 guides around Australia, but there are estimates of three, four, even five thousand guides at work in a huge variety of situations - from specific site guides, day casuals, long journeys, and so on - and we've got to get to them all.

If you haven't yet received your brochure for Guides of Australia accreditation, please email your postal address to [goa@goa.org.au](mailto:goa@goa.org.au)

Our website is going through a few changes and will soon have a face-lift. You'll notice things being changed around a little and a few new things being added. The Guides of Australia information and Application Kit, information for businesses on becoming an Associate Member, the Code of Conduct, and much more can be found on the website. It is the hub of tour guiding information.

We are all looking forward to expanding our network of tour guides, tour operators and related organisations over the next few months. If you can help out, we would appreciate it.

Yours in Guiding

**Rob Johnston**  
GOA Chair



### **GUIDING ORGANISATIONS AUSTRALIA**

GOA has a long-term commitment to identifying required standards, encouraging training, promoting best practice and reducing unethical guiding practices. Its vision is:

*To develop a universal and cooperative Tour Guiding network and standard in Australia that will be world's best practice.*

By establishing Guides of Australia as a National Accreditation Program for all Tour Guides, Guiding Organisations Australia will be better able to achieve its objectives, to:

- Provide a national forum to develop best practice and promote a high degree of professionalism for Tour Guides.
- Raise private, public and government awareness, locally and nationally, of the importance of the Tour Guide's role.
- Maintain cooperative relationships with related national, international, State and Territory tourism industry organisations.

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**The Hon. Fran Bailey, Federal Minister for Small Business and Tourism, launched the Guides of Australia Accreditation Program.**

"Could I begin by thanking very much the Healesville Sanctuary for allowing us to launch what I think is a tremendously important program this morning," said the Yarra Valley "local" of 32 years, as a flock of ibis landed on the lawn among the guests soaking up the winter sunshine.

Australian tourism today is a \$75 billion industry and five and a half million international visitors came here last year. "The experiences that all of our tourists take home with them," the Minister continued, "depends on the quality of the experience that they have.

"Today we're here to celebrate, and thank, people like Rob (Robert Johnson, President of GOA), Anne (Anne Bottomley, Treasurer of GOA), Jeff (Jeff Floyd, CEO AAA Tourism), and many others who couldn't be with us this morning, for being so persistent and believing so strongly in the need for professional guides and for there to be not just a standard in individual areas but a national standard of excellence for professional guides and guides everywhere.



*At the Guides of Australia launch on 26<sup>th</sup> June are (from left) Anne Bottomley (GOA Treasurer), Rob Johnston (GOA Chair) and Minister Fran Bailey.*

"The launch of our National Tour Guide Accreditation Program is a very important step in ensuring that all of our tourists get the very best possible experience that they can have. Congratulations."

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### **Guides of Australia**



*Guides of Australia* accreditation provides tourists with an assurance that the guide has met industry specific requirements and has a commitment to best practice standards, ongoing professional development and the Australian Tour Guides' Code of Guiding Practice.

The accreditation is industry driven and run by the major tour guiding organisations around Australia. It is suitable for all tour guides in all sectors of the tourism industry and provides industry recognition for guides and encourages training in the necessary skills of a tour guide.

Details of the *Guides of Australia* criteria and processes are available at GOA's website, [www.goa.org.au](http://www.goa.org.au) or you can order brochures for distribution in your business by emailing [goa@goa.org.au](mailto:goa@goa.org.au).

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### **Directions Newsletter**

*Subscription* - The GOA Directions Newsletter is published every 3 months. If you don't normally receive this newsletter then register and subscribe at the GOA website.

*Articles* - Because of the scope of tour guiding in Australia we endeavour to cover a multitude of subjects, but if you know of something interesting in your area, please let us know. We accept articles, advertisements and employment opportunities.

## ***Guiding Organisations Australia – the story so far.....***

*An excerpt of history as given by Rob Johnston, GOA Chair, at the launch of Guides of Australia.*

In the late '90s, a number of tourist authorities began to express some concern that tour guiding was somewhat undersold by the multiplicity and diverse nature of its organisation. The organisations that had been formed include the Institute of Australian Tourist Guides (IATG, Sydney in 1994), Interpretation Australia Association (IAA) in 1992, Ecotourism Australia (EA) in 1991, Savannah Guides Limited (SGL) in 1988, Professional Tour Guides Association of Australia (PTGAA, Victoria in 1985), and Tour Guides of Western Australia (TGWA) in 1980.

In June 2000 Jeff Floyd, then CEO of Tourism Victoria, arranged a meeting of a broad spectrum of the tourism industry administration, including the federal department, to acknowledge the significant place of tour guides and to encourage support for a national umbrella organisation. This meeting in Canberra was chaired by Wayne Kayler-Thomson of Tourism Victoria and set us on a course to achieve unity and ultimately to establish the quality controlling accreditation program.

The steps that followed were not without setbacks, but still very strongly supported by visionary tourist authorities, so we were not on our own.

In November 2000, Bill Spur, the CEO of Tourism South Australia, convened a meeting of four tour guide associations in Adelaide, and then guided a resolution through that year's ASCOT (Australian Standing Committee on Tourism) to formalise support for a national approach. November 2001, a broader representation of tour guide organisations met in Adelaide, where the name CATGA was agreed upon, Council of Australian Tour Guide Associations. A couple of months later, in February (2002), the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources arranged and paid for a meeting in Sydney and we were introduced to Wayne Graham, from that department, who mentored us into a most productive administration, with an ambitious but realistic business plan to submit to ASCOT, with an application for a specific grant to form Guiding Organisations Australia.

This application was successful with the very critical ASCOT members, and we got GOA going with a small grant. We appointed a secretariat and met in March 2003, having incorporated in Queensland, and were supported by eight committed founding organisations right across Australia. Our first formal, in incorporation terms, general meeting, was held in Sydney in June 2004.

For the latter portion of that year much energy was directed to an application to the Australian Tourism Development Project, for a follow-up grant specifically for the national accreditation program. Meanwhile our Victorian colleagues, led by Anne Bottomley and Lynne Furness, the present president of PTGAA, were preparing for the very successful World Federation of Tour Guide Associations biennial convention held in Melbourne in January 2005.

In May 2005, we received news that we were successful with an ATDP grant, though it was half the time and half the amount we had applied for. The next year was spent in consultation and development of an appropriate accreditation system that would cover all tour guides in all sectors of our vast Australian tourism industry.

Our near future lies in marketing the accreditation (Guides of Australia), administering accreditations, building a network of businesses as Associate Members of GOA, and fulfilling the vision and mission of the organisation.



*To find out more about Associate Membership and advertising opportunities with GOA that reach over 500 guides and even more organisations, visit the website – [www.goa.org.au](http://www.goa.org.au)*

### **ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL ATE**

The 2006 Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) wrapped up on Friday 23 June with nearly 2,000 Australian delegates from 650 companies having met with more than 700 travel experts from 40 International countries converged in Adelaide for one of the globe's largest travel trade shows. The social highlight of the event was the ATE Gala Dinner where all buyers and sellers had the chance to network over dinner, with entertainment by famous Aussie acts Christine Anu and Human Nature. This year was the first time that ATE has ever been held in Adelaide and has provided a great opportunity for both buyers and sellers to enjoy South Australian attractions and to get to know the city of Adelaide and its surrounding areas.

### **INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS DEREGULATION**

The Independent Contractors Bill 2006 was presented to Federal Parliament on 22 June 2006. Also presented was an amendment package to the Workplace Relations Act 1996, regarding independent contractors.

Deacons Lawyers have provided a Workplace Reform Update which includes:

- a summary of the Bill
- an overview of the Employer Response and the Union and State Government Response
- a definition of Who is "in" and who is "out" of independent contractor regulation
- an overview of the impact of the Bill on Workplace Relations Matters and Industrial Instrument Coverage
- details of the implications for State Unfair Contracts Jurisdictions and for on-costs of engaging independent contractors
- details of the penalties for "Sham" Contracting Arrangements

A summary of the specific regulation of Owner-Drivers and Other Industry Specific Reform can be found at Deacon's website [http://www.deacons.com.au/wrreform/012wr\\_reform\\_260606.htm](http://www.deacons.com.au/wrreform/012wr_reform_260606.htm)

### **WORKFORCE CHALLENGES IN TOURISM**

A House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Workplace Relations and Workforce Participation has requested written submissions for a new inquiry about workforce challenges in the tourism sector. The inquiry focuses on employment trends, skill shortages and retention strategies, workforce demands, regional employment and innovative measures to support growth in the tourism sector. Submissions are invited until 25 August. Further details can be obtained at [www.aph.gov.au](http://www.aph.gov.au)

### **INFLUENZA PANDEMIC INFO KITS FOR BUSINESSES**

The Federal Government has recently launched information to prepare businesses for a possible human influenza pandemic. *Being Prepared for a Human Influenza Pandemic - A Business Continuity Guide for Australian Businesses* and *A Kit for Small Businesses* provide useful tools and information and can be downloaded from [www.industry.gov.au/pandemicbusinesscontinuity](http://www.industry.gov.au/pandemicbusinesscontinuity). In addition, the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources has recently updated its avian influenza information webpage at [www.industry.gov.au/avianinfluenza](http://www.industry.gov.au/avianinfluenza).

### **KAKADU AND ULURU ONLINE**

In mid-2008 it will be compulsory for all tour guides operating in Kakadu National Park or Uluru Kata Tjuta National Park to have successfully completed an online training course. The training is aimed at ensuring all tour guides have accurate and culturally appropriate information about the parks. You can download FAQ's on this subject from the GOA website.

### **CHINESE OFFICIALS EXPERIENCE AUSTRALIA**

The Chairman of the Chinese National Tourism Authority (CNTA) recently lead a delegation of Chinese government and industry officials to Melbourne, Brisbane, Cairns and Sydney to discuss bilateral tourism relations between China and Australia and to strengthen Quality Tourism Experiences and Australia's Approved Destination Status (ADS) scheme. During the visit, Chairman Shao and Tourism Minister Fran Bailey, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding ADS operational and quality processes. Australia currently leads the way in tourism development in China and CNTA believe this MOU will become the blueprint for the other ADS destinations in promoting Quality Tourism Experiences.

### **'ECO' TOURIST ATTRACTION**

South Australia's newest attraction for discerning tourists looking for seclusion and spectacular scenery has opened at Rawnsley Park Station in the State's Flinders Ranges. Tourism Minister Jane Lomax-Smith attended last month's opening of the park's four new eco-villas, which offer an unparalleled standard of accommodation in the Flinders. "This is a great environmentally-friendly development that will give tourists another reason to visit South Australia and our majestic Flinders Ranges," Dr Lomax-Smith said. Rawnsley Park Station is located 430km north of Adelaide and offers activities such as four-wheel drive tours, scenic flights, horse riding, bushwalking and cycling.

### **GOONDIWINDI TOP TOURS**

Goondiwindi's latest tourism venture "Goondiwindi Top Tours" is proving to be a hit with visitors and numbers are growing steadily during what is traditionally Goondiwindi's peak tourism period. The tour established by a number of local business people aims to give the visitor an experience with visits to a local cotton farm, Euraba paper, cotton gin, the Natural Heritage Water Park, and Goondiwindi's own label, Goondiwindi Cotton. For more information contact the Goondiwindi Visitor Information Centre, Ph (07) 4671 2653.

### **HEIDE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

One of Melbourne's most treasured galleries, has re-opened its doors to the public following a major refurbishment of the gallery and grounds. The redeveloped Heide III accommodates the long-awaited Albert & Barbara Tucker Gallery and adjoining Tucker Study Centre. This gallery opens with the highly-anticipated *Meeting a Dream: Albert Tucker in Paris 1948-1952* exhibition and includes many of the paintings.

### **THE BEACHOUSE: ADELAIDE'S NEW \$20 MILLION AMUSEMENT COMPLEX**

Adelaide's new \$20 million amusement complex opened on 1 July, packed with Australian-first and world-class attractions. Located in the premier seaside suburb of Glenelg, The Beachouse is just a 20-minute tram ride or drive away from the city centre. Its line-up of attractions includes: Soli Italian Formula One dodgem cars, Play Castle – It's five stories high with giant sea animals hanging from the roof, Waterslides – There are three to choose from - all fully enclosed and heated, Carousel, Mini golf, Bumper boats, Ferris wheel – An impressive one-armed wonder - European designed and the first of its kind in Australia. Arcade games, Café and much more.

### **TASTY NEW INDIGENOUS SERIES**

An exciting and innovative Indigenous program *The Outback Café* starring Aboriginal chef Mark Olive – aka the Black Olive - debuts on the Lifestyle Channel. Tourism Australia is proud to be a major sponsor of the new six-part series that promotes Indigenous culture in a contemporary way while making Indigenous cultures, communities, and tourism experiences accessible to a wider audience. The Outback Café website is [www.theoutbackcafe.com](http://www.theoutbackcafe.com)

### **SPA & WELLNESS GUIDE**

Tourism Victoria's latest brochure, the Spa & Wellness Guide, aims to boost the State's profile in spa tourism. The comprehensive booklet, which was officially launched last week, is a guide to Victoria's day spas and spa retreats.

### **FOOD, WINE AND DINING GUIDE**

Gold Coast Tourism has released its first *Food, Wine and Dining Guide* - a free guide showcasing the best offerings from the region's burgeoning food and wine industry. The guide is available at travel outlets, visitor information centres and online at [www.VeryGC.com](http://www.VeryGC.com)

### **GOLD COAST HINTERLAND GREAT WALK**

Construction of the Gold Coast Hinterland Great Walk will start soon, following Federal Government approval for the project. The walk will start in Green Mountains in Lamington National Park, go through the park and Numinbah Valley and finish on Springbrook Plateau. About 47km is existing tracks and fire breaks, and 4.6km will be newly constructed track.

## Coming Events

### **AUGUST 23-25, CRUISE DOWN UNDER CONFERENCE – CAIRNS, QLD**

The 2006 Cruise Down Under Conference will be held in Cairns from 23 - 25 August. The extensive program will cover a wide range of relevant cruise issues, including keynote speeches and panel forums. The conference is open to anybody interested in the growing cruise shipping industry. For a copy of the registration brochure visit [www.cruisedownunder.com](http://www.cruisedownunder.com)

### **SEPTEMBER 11-14, INTERPRETATION AUSTRALIA ASSOCIATION WORKSHOP – CAIRNS**

The Interpretation Australia Association (IAA) is holding a national training workshop in Cairns 11–14 September 2006. The *Making a Difference* Workshop is an opportunity for interpreters at every stage of their careers to network and improve their skills. Through a series of interactive sessions, the Workshop will feature experienced interpreters and communicators from around Australia and overseas. Visit [www.interpretationaustralia.asn.au](http://www.interpretationaustralia.asn.au)

### **SEPTEMBER 19-22, AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS TOURISM CONFERENCE – ALICE SPRINGS**

The conference is aimed at Indigenous tourism operators, Regional Tourism Organisations, State and Federal Tourism Organisations and Federal Organisations dealing with Aboriginal Economic Development. It provides a great opportunity to exchange ideas on growing Indigenous tourism, showcase Indigenous art and culture and promote Indigenous tourism success stories.

### **OCTOBER 4, INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIAN TOUR GUIDES ½ DAY WORKSHOP – SYDNEY**

*Professional Development for the Guiding Industry* – This half-day workshop will cover hints for business, insurance and voice projection. Targets tour guides and offers free tours of the Queen Victoria Building. Information and enrolment information available at [www.goa.org.au](http://www.goa.org.au)

### **OCTOBER 27-30, SAVANNAH GUIDES SCHOOL – TOWNSVILLE, QLD**

This 4-day school will look at *Climbing the Peak of Tour Guiding – best practice and ongoing development* with workshops, training and activities for all tour guides and operators. For more information contact: [info@savannah-guides.com.au](mailto:info@savannah-guides.com.au) or visit [www.savannah-guides.com.au](http://www.savannah-guides.com.au)

### **OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 3, ECOTOURISM AUSTRALIA CONFERENCE – TOWNSVILLE, QLD**

The 14th National Ecotourism Conference will present you with a program relevant to all nature based and ecotourism operators, State and Regional Tourism organisations, National Parks and Protected Area Managers, Government agencies, Guides, students and individuals. An innovative conference format will see delegates experience the best that regional North Queensland has to offer through the provision of four Regional Themed Streams. For more information visit [www.ecotourism.org.au](http://www.ecotourism.org.au)

### **NOVEMBER, GOA AGM and General Meeting – GOLD COAST, QLD**

Details to be confirmed.

### **JANUARY 22-26, 2007 WFTGA CONFERENCE - CAIRO, EGYPT**

The World Federation of Tour Guide Associations is hosting its 12<sup>th</sup> biennial convention. Early Registration is now available, only until Sept 1 2006. The conference is open to all in the Industry! The theme of the convention is "Guiding From the Ancient World to the Modern World Tourist Guiding, the Evolving Profession". For details visit [www.wftga.org](http://www.wftga.org)

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### **Other Events?**

Is your guiding or tourism event, conference or workshop not listed here? Or do you know of one in your region not listed here? Let us know – email details to [goa@goa.org.au](mailto:goa@goa.org.au)

## Resources and Readings

### 1421

While we're in the mood for all things Chinese, Global Gypsies have brought to our attention a book they recently came across called "1421". If you're into history & exploration, you'll love this one! It turns history as we know it on its ear with the theory that the Chinese actually discovered Australia, the USA & South America decades before the Spanish, Portuguese & French explorers we all learned about in school. There's also a website that is constantly updating information about this controversial topic - [www.1421.tv](http://www.1421.tv). Check it out – it'll certainly get you thinking!

### Outback Interpretation Manual



This publication was produced to assist existing and potential tour guides and operators working in Outback Queensland to develop quality nature-based guided activities and tours. The manual is divided into two sections: interpretation, providing information on planning and running guided tours; and basic information on significant nature-based elements of Outback Queensland such as plant and animal adaptations, dinosaurs and the artesian basin. This publication is presented in a hard cover folder to enable guides and operators to build a useful reference resource or download at [www.tq.com.au/tq\\_com/dms](http://www.tq.com.au/tq_com/dms).

### Body Language

The fastest way to change the sound of your voice is to change your physiology. A smile on your face puts a smile in your voice. Energetic, expressive body language will add more energy and vitality to your speech. Make your body language BIG.

Source: [http://www.greatvoice.com/speaker/vc\\_library/selfconfidence.html](http://www.greatvoice.com/speaker/vc_library/selfconfidence.html)

### A Guide to Plants of Inland Australia, by Philip Moore

ISBN 1 876334 86 X

Features over 900 inland plants (covering nearly three quarters of the Australian mainland) with detailed descriptions, colour photographs and distribution maps. Categorisation of plants for the book occurs in relation to distinctive plant groups such as Cassias, Goodenia Family, Grasses, Grevilleas and Hakeas, and Wattles. The book also contains descriptions of some inland plant communities and other relevant information. Published in 2005, A5 size with over 500 pages.

### Bush Heritage, by Pat and Sim Symons

ISBN: 0 646 20750 4

An introduction to the history of plant and animal use by Aboriginal people and colonists in the Brisbane and Sunshine Coast (QLD) areas.

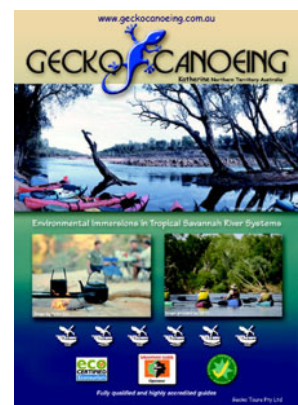
## Product Profile

### Gecko Canoeing

Since 1994 Gecko Canoeing has been successfully running a Guided Canoe/Kayak service in the Katherine Region of the Northern Territory. Gecko specialises in high quality personalised, small group environmental experiences with a fully guided canoe/safari service on Tropical Savanna and other Australian rivers. This an exceptional nature-based product with aspects of adventure, wilderness, culture and the environment.

Gecko Canoeing is well acclaimed having won the Northern Territory Tourism Awards for Tourism Excellence in Ecotourism in 2003, 2004 and 2005, Adventure Tourism in 2003 and 2004 and Outstanding Interpretive Guide in 2004. They are also a Savannah Guide Operator. Gecko Canoeing is an Associate Member of GOA.

Visit [www.geckocanoeing.com.au](http://www.geckocanoeing.com.au)



## ***Preserving the Social Norms and Cultures of Local and Indigenous Communities***

Socio-cultural sustainability is achieved when businesses make a concerted effort to work with local people to maintain and protect the social structures, economies and cultures of the local communities where they operate.

**Measuring Your Impact:** Measuring your socio-cultural impacts on local and indigenous communities can be difficult. The best way to find out what impacts you are having on the local communities where your business operates is to create opportunities for them to provide you with feedback. Meet with representatives from local communities at least once annually to determine how your business is affecting them socially and culturally and to ensure that their rights and aspirations are recognized and incorporated into your operational decisions. These types of forums can also be used to deliver and discuss any important news, such as the expansion of your business, new programs, etc.

Also consider offering bi-annual focus group discussions and creating feedback questionnaires for representatives from local communities. Additionally, you may wish to hire a professional to conduct a socio-cultural impact assessment.

Quantifiable variables used to measure socio-cultural impacts include the following:

- The amount of negative feedback from local or indigenous people regarding misleading or inaccurate portrayal of products and or services.
- Total number of compliments received from local and or indigenous people last year in the form of positive feedback.
- The amount of time spent by the business in meeting with community leaders to ensure their needs are met and that they have a stake in tourism operations and development.

**Managing Your Impact:** To help preserve the social norms and cultures of local and indigenous communities, consider the following:

- Meet with local representatives where your company operates to determine socio-cultural and economic impacts, and to ensure that their rights and aspirations are recognized and incorporated into your operational decisions.
- Be aware of local customs that may offend your clients as well as sacred or local customs that are banned from outsiders' view.
- Educate your employees and clients about these customs and social norms. Prejudices will be reduced and mutual understanding will develop when there is a cultural exchange between host communities and travellers.
- Develop accurate educational materials for your clients in conjunction with local and indigenous people. Ensure that these materials address the natural, cultural, and social values of any given destination, and advising them of appropriate behaviour and taboos before visiting culturally sensitive regions.
- Integrate appropriate and authentic cultural elements from the local regions where you operate into your product offerings.
- Provide clients with a means of accessing additional information about the region(s) they will be visiting e.g., books, websites, etc.
- Train your staff and require them to be well informed in the natural, cultural, and social aspects of any destination where they work.
- Encourage clients to keep all protected and culturally significant areas clean and unspoiled.
- Prevent any commercialisation of rare, endangered, or protected flora and / or fauna.
- Invest in cultural arts and crafts and encourage your clients to do the same.
- Provide opportunities for clients to engage in one on one reciprocal interaction with local and indigenous people.
- In summary, be sensitive, be supportive, involve locals, and educate your staff, clients and service providers.

*Source: Sustainable Tourism*

## ***New Portal for the Tourism Industry***

Qualitytourism.com.au, a new portal for the Australian tourism industry is now live and provides a one-stop shop for business improvement and accreditation. Funded by the Australian Government, and designed specifically for Australian tourism operators, the portal is an online gateway to all the business improvement information, and tools that you need to improve your profitability, credibility and sustainability.

Whether you are a tourist attraction, provide accommodation or run events and conferences, qualitytourism.com.au includes all the information you need to know about getting started, getting assistance, getting informed and getting known, so you can grow your business. It is available in one central place and with personalised searches; you can set parameters to only receive information that is relevant to you and your business.

Qualitytourism.com.au is the first industry portal that allows online accreditation. It simplifies the traditional paperwork component of accreditation and lets you search programs and undertake these at your own pace and in your own time. It helps you find the right program and then, in many cases, lets you register, pay and complete the program paperwork online.

A range of industry organisations, from the Australian Tourism Export Council to Restaurant and Catering Australia, have partnered to bring the portal to life. According to John Hart, CEO Restaurant & Catering Australia, "This is the greatest advance in consolidating business improvement and accreditation offerings to tourism businesses in recent times. Restaurant & Catering Australia sees the portal as a vital resource for our businesses, especially in facilitating the uptake of business improvement and accreditation systems."

According to Paula Quirk Russo, CEO of Decipher Technologies, the company contracted to build and manage the portal with industry, "With this new portal, tourism operators can have online access to information about growing their business, improving customer service, marketing their business, planning and OH&S guidelines and managing finances."

"It is a one-stop shop to help you make the most of your business and find out what others are doing locally and internationally. The portal has been designed to ensure you need only receive the information relevant to you," Russo added. There are three main sections of the portal designed to help businesses become more professional, sustainable and profitable. These are Business Improvement, Quality Systems and Success Stories.

Business Improvement is broken down into four sections: Getting Started, Getting Assistance, Getting Informed and Getting Known. Whether you are planning on starting a tourism business or are already operating one, these sections provide legal, taxation, OH&S and employment advice, as well as information about what funding and grants you can apply for and how to go about it.

They also provide access to research and statistics on the tourism industry in Australia, together with advice on how to promote your business and develop marketing plans and strategies.

In Quality Systems users can access 18 industry recognised accreditation and rating systems that assess workplace practices, systems and procedures across all tourism and associated businesses. These can all be accessed online, with several accreditation systems able to also be completed and paid for online.

In Success Stories users can access 11 print and 5 video case studies that provide an overview of businesses that have undertaken accreditation programs, showing the business improvements these businesses have reaped as a result.

Email: [info@qualitytourism.com.au](mailto:info@qualitytourism.com.au)

Website: [www.qualitytourism.com.au](http://www.qualitytourism.com.au)

## **VEGEMITE – THE ICONIC AUSTRALIAN SANDWICH SPREAD.**

*Extract taken from an article in Melbourne's **The Age** magazine, issue 22, August 06 entitled **Black Gold**.*

Vegemite was created in Melbourne in 1922 by food technologist Dr Cyril Percy Callister. At the time, supplies of the imported British spread Marmite had been interrupted by the war *and industrialist Fred Walker (Callister's employer) saw an opportunity to capitalise on a contract he had to supply yeast for Carlton and United Breweries. Spent yeast was often discarded but was known to contain nutrients and vitamins. The trick was to make it palatable. Callister came up with a recipe that added celery, onions and salt to the concentrate yeast extract, turning it into a paste we now know as Vegemite.*

Walker held a public competition in 1923 to come up with a name for the new spread and to drum up publicity. His only daughter, Sheila, chose the name Vegemite from hundreds of entries. But the sales were slow. British Marmite, invented in 1902, regained its pre-war footing as market leader and in 1928 Walker, in desperation, decided to change the name of his product to "Pawill" (as in 'if Ma might, Pa will'). It bombed and the Vegemite brand name was restored. In 1935, Walker came up with a more successful marketing strategy and Vegemite came into its own.

The recipe is now American- owned by Kraft Foods but at least every last glob of it is made in Australia at a factory at Fishermans Bend in Melbourne. Surprisingly, only 26 people are involved in actually making the world's supply of Vegemite. Trucks from around Australia deliver loads of spent brewer's and baker's yeast, a white, thick, creamy liquid into six large silos. The yeast is then purified in hot, stainless steel vats where it is kept agitated until it is needed for the next stage. If allowed to settle it would harden at the bottom of the vats, forming a yeast concrete. The yeast extract is then pumped into a machine that splits the yeast cells and produces a concentrate that is siphoned off to be returned to the batch later, in a secret part of the process.

Dry ingredients (salts and spices) are blended with wet ingredients (malt extract, caramel and the yeast extract) in a 20,000 litre vat. The whole is cooked, then packaged into different sizes of glass jars. Vegemite is now exported to 16 countries, with New Zealand taking 10% of the exports and the UK coming in second, receiving 30 tonnes a year. But most stays in Australia where we buy it at the rate of 44 jars every minute.

### **Guide Profile**

### **Vicki Jones**



I specialise in Eco and nature-based tours and have a solid 13 years experience as an Interpretive Tour Guide in various locations around Australia. My main tour guiding employment has been as a full time employee of ecotourism resorts bordering national parks and world heritage areas - places such as Carnarvon Gorge (Qld), Heron Island (Qld), Undara Lava Tubes (Qld), Cradle Mountain (Tas), and Fraser Island (Qld). More recently I have been based in Alice Springs and Yulara (NT).

Through working in these places and with other tour operations, I have seen a wide variety of operational techniques and have gained vast experience in a number of tourism and hospitality related areas including human resources and resort management. For the past 5 years I have also developed and conducted tour guide training programs for both tour operations and through the TAFE system. I currently work for myself as a consultant to assist tour operations set up training programs, employee handbooks, procedures manuals, trouble shoot etc.

I am a Savannah Guide, an EcoGuide, and have recently been appointed as the GOA Secretariat.

### **GOA Contact Details**

National Secretariat

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