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MEDIA RELEASE

Alexandrina Region celebrates the 2021 SA Tourism Awards with 9 businesses announced as finalists across 7 categories

23 September 2021

Alexandrina region is well represented as nine (9) businesses make their way into the 2021 SA Tourism Awards announced today as finalists across seven (7) categories.

Local tourism businesses were invited by Council's Business Alexandrina team in June this year to attend an information session about the South Australian Tourism Awards, in the Business Hub, Goolwa. In partnership with Tourism Industry Council of South Australia (TiCSA) businesses were presented with the benefits for participating in the awards. Nine businesses came on board and submitted their award.

The 9 Finalists include:

- Canoe the Coorong – Category 5, Ecotourism Tourism
- Carriage of Occasion – Category 12, Tour & Transport Operators
- SA Skydiving – Category 13, Adventure Tourism
- Kimbolton – Category 16, Tourism Wineries, Distilleries and Breweries
- Glenbarr Homestead – Category 19, Unique accommodation
- Woodburn Homestead – Category 19, Unique accommodation
- Beach Huts Middleton – Category 21, 3-3.5 Star accommodation
- Hammer and Tongs – Category 24, New Tourism Business
- Foodbuilder – Category 24, New Tourism Business

Mayor Keith Parkes was excited to hear today's news.

"I am very proud to hear all nine Alexandrina entrants have made it through to the 2021 SA Tourism Awards finals. These businesses have done it tough through the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, especially hurt by the lockdowns and restricted regional travel in April 2020. This recognition as finalists is well deserved demonstrating the resilience and 'can do attitude' of our local community," he said.

As an initiative of the Business Alexandrina program the session provided guidance and confidence to put forward a strong submission that acknowledged business excellence, innovation and rewarded exceptional customer service in the tourism industry.

Award submissions incorporated an introduction to the business, outlining how they responded to COVID-19, business development achievements and plans, and an overview of marketing and customer experience activities. Entrants are judged on their written submission, online reviews, customer rating and on-site visit by a member of the judging panel.

Chief Executive Officer, Glenn Rappensberg remarked that this is fantastic example of the role Council can play in supporting its local businesses to survive and “Thrive”.

Council’s focus on economic development over the past 18 months has been crucial to ensure businesses are adequately equipped to adapt to the new normal of our ever-changing environment. Congratulations to the businesses committing to the significant work involved with preparing a submission whilst using the opportunity to improve their chances of future success” he said.

Business Alexandrina curated a mentoring program to assist the nine Alexandrina nominees to complete a 360° review on their businesses for the awards submission period. The goal of the mentoring program was to elevate tourism businesses during a significant downturn in the industry by providing them with the tools and skills needed build a more resilient, customer centric business plan.

The nine finalists were matched with individual mentors, sourced from TiCSA’s member partners. This was complemented by the Business Alexandrina team providing access to the co-working space at the business hub, marketing and planning workshops, meetings with the Business Hub’s Experts in Residence and weekly updates providing useful information and encouragement to maintain momentum throughout the program.

Winners and medallist will be announced at the Gala Dinner on 4 November at the iconic Adelaide Oval. It will be great to see the Alexandrina region so well represented and all nine finalists will receive comprehensive feedback from their judges to make further business improvements in the future.

You can show your support in the lead up to the Gala Dinner by voting for your favourite Alexandrina South Australian Tourism Awards Finalist <https://bit.ly/2XLe74m>. The winner of the Voters Choice will be announced at the Gala Dinner.

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