

AWARD WINNERS

GOLD MEDALS

- Major Tour and Transport Operators, **Pennicott Wilderness Journeys**, Hobart, Bruny Island, Tasman Peninsula, Coles Bay
- Tour and Transport Operators, **Gordon River Cruises**, Strahan
- Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services, **Mures Tasmania**, Hobart
- Unique Accommodation, **Pumphouse Point**, Lake St Clair
- 5 Star Luxury Accommodation, **Saffire Freycinet**, Coles Bay
- Tourism Retail and Hire Services, **Coal River Farm** Cambridge, Hobart, Launceston
- Visitor Information Services, **Wonders of Wynyard Exhibition and Visitor Information Centre**, Wynyard
- Covid-19 Judges Choice, **Blue Derby Pod Rides**, Derby

SILVER MEDALS

- 4-4.5 Star Accommodation, **MACq 01 Hotel**, Hobart
- New Tourism Business, **Kittawa Lodge**, King Island
- Excellence In Food Tourism, **Coal River Farm**, Cambridge, Hobart, Launceston
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tourism, **Wukalina Walk**, Irapuna, North-East Tasmania

BRONZE MEDALS

- Business Event Venues, **Peppers Silo Hotel**, Launceston
- Hosted Accommodation, **Ashdowns of Dover Bed and Breakfast**, Dover
- Ecotourism, **Tasmanian Walking Company**, Cradle Mountain, Bay of Fires, Tasman Peninsula

Tassie proves it's gold class

TOURISM DRAWCARDS CROWNED NATION'S BEST

WILDERNESS experiences, food providers, luxury hotels and a community visitor centre in the North-West are among the Tasmanian tourism ventures to have been crowned the best in the nation.

From Wynyard to Bruny Island, the state's leading tourism operators won gold medals in eight of the 25 categories at the industry's national awards held in Queensland on Friday night, cementing Tasmania's reputation for outstanding tourism.

"What's great about these results is the winners are spread right across the state and reflect the resilience and commitment to excellence that has shone through our industry the last two years we have been dealing with Covid," Tourism Industry Council Tasmania chief Luke Martin told the Mercury.

"We can cheekily claim a ninth gold medal with Tasmanian tour-



PUMPHOUSE POINT

ism legend Robert Pennicott also winning gold for Australia's best new tourism development for his new tour based out of Wilson's Promontory in Victoria."

Tasmanian Premier and Minister for Tourism Peter Gutwein last night praised the winners.

"It's clear the world's best kept secret is out, and when it comes to

tourism you need not look any further than Tasmania for an extraordinary experience," he said.

Regular high-profile achievers Saffire Freycinet (5 Star Accommo-





PENNICOTT WILDERNESS JOURNEYS



GORDON RIVER CRUISES



BLUE DERBY POD RIDES

ation), Pumphouse Point (Unique Accommodation) and Pennicott Wilderness Journeys (Major Tour and Transport Operators), all won gold, while the Wonders of Wynyard Exhibition and Visitor Information Centre won gold for Visitor Information Services.

“The Wonders of Wynyard has been the gold standard of visitor information centres in Tasmania for many years, and I know how much this win will mean to the council, local tourism industry, and everyone involved in the centre,” Mr Martin said.

“The iconic Mures Tasmania claimed their first ever Qantas Australian Tourism Awards for Tourism Restaurants and Catering Services. Confirming what every Tasmanian knows – there are few better experiences than devouring fresh Tassie seafood on the Hobart docks.”

Mr Martin said another first-time Australian Tourism



WONDERS OF WYNARD



SAFFIRE FREYCINET

Awards winner was Gordon River Cruises, in the Tour and Transport Operators category.

“This win is testament to the vision of RACT, as the past owners of Gordon River Cruises, who invested in an outstanding new modern cruise boat that has completely contemporised the

whole visitor experience,” he said.

“Coal River Farm have collected their first gold for Tourism Retail and Hire Services.

“Few Tasmanians would truly appreciate the scale of investment Daniel Leesong has made through Covid in opening three new Coal River Farm retail stores, as well as in

the iconic Bank Arcade in central Melbourne.

“To say this has been a challenge for him with the border restrictions would be a massive understatement, and this award is testament to his resilience and courage,” he said.

“And we’re delighted to see Blue Derby Pods Ride win a

special Judge’s Choice Award for their innovation and resilience through Covid.

“This is another start-up Tasmanian business who had their entire market ripped from under them when Covid hit, but were able to quickly reset to a local market, and are now coming out of Covid an even stronger business.”