

25. EXCELLENCE IN FOOD TOURISM

This category is open to food producers, providores, tour operators, cooking schools, food attractions, farm gate experiences, farmers' markets, trails and other food tourism experiences in (state/territory), featuring (state/territory) produce as the core component.

This submission is limited to 8000 words.

1. TOURISM EXCELLENCE (20 marks)

- a) Demonstrate your eligibility for this category as related to the descriptor above and provide a brief overview on the nature and history of the business. (6)
- b) What food tourism products, experiences and services do you offer? (5)
- c) Describe how you highlight food and/or produce as part of the visitor experience. (6)
- d) Describe your involvement in the tourism industry. (3)

Tips:

- a) *Take care to ensure you have entered the right category and that your response aligns to the category descriptor. Failure to demonstrate your eligibility will be reflected in your score. Describe where you are located geographically (include a map shot) and include pictures to help judges visualise your food tourism experience. Refer to the ABOUT US section of your website as this may assist with this response. Judges will want to know how and when the business started, who works in the business, where it is located and how it has developed over the years.*
- b) *The focus of this question is tourism. Describe how your food and/or produce are featured in your business.*
- c) *Detail or give examples of the state or territory food and/or produce showcased, sourced and used, and how this is integral and integrated into the visitor experience.*
- d) *Explain how you have been involved with and contributed to the tourism industry locally, regionally and nationally.*

2. BUSINESS PLANNING (10 marks)

- a) What are your business' goals and strategies and outline your outcomes? (5)
- b) How do you make your business safe for visitors? Describe your 'risk management' strategies. (5)

TIPS:

- a) *Include product/experience development, human resources, budget, financial performance and operations as part of your answer.*
- b) *Risk management relates to all parts of your business including risk to the visiting public, specific business-related risk and health and safety. Consider using a practical example or detail an incident and outcome to prove how your risk management strategy works. Also consider displaying information in a matrix form and identifying levels of risk.*

3. MARKETING (30 marks)

- a) Who are your customers (*tourists/ target markets*)? Describe the marketing strategies for each target market and detail the success/outcomes of those strategies. (10)
- b) What are your unique selling points and how do you promote to your target markets? (10)
- c) Explain how your food tourism experience contributes to your region's tourism appeal and to your State or Territory tourism as a whole. (10)

Tips:

- a) *Explain how you identify your customers (tourists/ target markets). Displaying your target markets, strategies and outcomes in a table format is recommended. Ideally there should be a strategy and outcome described for each target market listed in your answer. Consider all elements of marketing (e.g. digital, mobile, social networking, sales, advertising, PR and word of mouth) where appropriate. Give examples to back up your statements where you can.*
- b) *Describe your unique selling points. Demonstrate how you differ from your competitors, what sets you apart? Can you provide an example of some of the different ways you promote to each of your target markets?*
- c) *Explain how your tourism experience aligns with your region's tourism plans and/or strategies. Explain how you collaborate with other tourism organisations in your region.*

4. CUSTOMER SERVICE (20 marks)

- a) Explain how you achieve and maintain quality customer service. (10)
- b) How do you identify and provide for customers with specific needs? (10)

Tips:

- a) *Points to consider could include your repeat business strategy, feedback collection and changes implemented based on feedback.*
- b) *Demonstrate how you consider visitors' special and specific needs. Think about who your customers are and their specific requirements. Do you offer any accessible tourism products, experiences and services to visitors? How do you identify your customers' requirements and provide for them appropriately? Specific needs could include cultural, language, physical, intellectual, dietary and other specific needs e.g. groups, special interest etc. Provide examples of how you catered for customers with specific needs, explain the outcome or successes.*

5. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND COMMUNITY (20 marks)

- a) Describe how your business cares for the local environment? (7)
- b) How do you involve the local community in your business? (7)
- c) How do you support your local economy? (6)

Tips:

- a) *Explain your commitment to environmental sustainability and detail the activities you conduct in relation to water conservation, waste management and recycling, fuel and energy reduction, carbon reduction/offset.*

Outline the activities you conduct on an ongoing basis as well as any new initiatives implemented during the qualifying period.

Demonstrate how the initiative benefited the environment and where possible include a measurement/evidence of how the activity has reduced your environmental footprint. The inclusion of actual measurement data including the amounts saved/reduced in comparison to the previous year may enhance response.

This is always best presented with a table and include some words before the table with an explanation of the table and your overall commitment to environmental sustainability.

- b) *Consider the social benefits you provide to your local community, for example, supporting local businesses, product packaging, charitable donations, sponsorship, engagement with community groups, working with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people etc.*

Outline how your financial contribution/spending in the local economy has benefited the community. Select some interesting examples and tell several stories such as:

- *Employing locals and the impact their employment has had on the person*
- *Operators who stock and sell a local artisan's products and how the business has boomed because of it for the manufacturer/producer (or something similar).*
- *Mentoring other businesses*
- *Speaking at schools*
- *Work experience opportunities that are offered*
- *Offering gifts for the school raffle that allowed the school to raise money for an item they wouldn't have otherwise been able to afford*
- *Waiving conference room fees for local not-for-profit groups to give them somewhere to meet which allows the group to keep going*

- c) *Explain how your business financially contributes to the local economy in your region, for example; local purchasing, employing local people etc.*

The focus should be the economic contribution (money) in dollars. What have you spent. Include calculations to show how you know the economic impacts.

This is ALWAYS best presented in a table, and always include some words before and/or after the table with an explanation.

It is recommended for businesses that spend a significant portion of their money in the region, to determine the percentage of total contribution. Eg. '75% of all our expenses were spent in X region.'

TOTAL SCORE: _____/100