

BUNDABERG REGION

Destination Tourism Plan
2019 - 2022



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

OUR VISION

To be the destination of choice for the Great Barrier Reef, home of Australia's premier turtle encounter as well as Queensland's world famous food and drink experiences.



KEY ECONOMIC GOALS

Increase Overnight Visitor Expenditure to \$440 million by 2022

Increase visitation to our commercial visitor experiences by 8%

Achieve an increase of 5% in average occupancy rates for commercial accommodation



FOUNDATIONAL PILLARS

GREEN AND MEANINGFUL

Sustainability is at the forefront of the visitor experience, with a strong community sense of responsibility for the land, for the turtle population and for the Great Barrier Reef.

REEF CUSTODIANS

As the southernmost gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, the Bundaberg region is committed to delivering an outstanding reef experience that is interactive, educational and sustainable.

OWN THE TASTE BUNDABERG BRAND


By sharing the vibrant stories of our people, place and produce, we will enhance the Bundaberg region's reputation as a quality agri-tourism destination.



ENABLERS OF SUCCESS



Data Driven Culture



United Team Bundaberg



Resourcing to Deliver



STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS



Product and Experience Development



Visitor Experience



Identity and Influence



Upskilling and Training



Marketing & Events

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This Destination Tourism Plan is an evolution of the direction set in 2014. It has been developed in consultation with the region's tourism sector and key stakeholders, as well as the community at large, to provide clarity and future-focused direction, as we lead the destination into 2022.

This Destination Tourism Plan is based on the tourism data available at the time of publishing. It considers and connects the Queensland strategies specific to tourism, workforce planning, culinary, Great Barrier Reef, sustainability and Asia. It will act as a living document and should be annually reviewed to measure its progress against the identified targets.

It is considered that "Bundaberg region" encompasses the Bundaberg and North Burnett region's.





BUNDABERG REGION TODAY

With its pristine landscape and easy proximity to Brisbane (one hour flight or four hour drive), the Bundaberg region is fast growing a reputation for cultivating passionate food and drink purveyors.

Located at the southernmost gateway to the Great Barrier Reef, the Bundaberg region is home to the largest rookery in the southern hemisphere of the endangered loggerhead turtle, and the only ranger guided turtle experience on the Australian east coast.

Tourism is a significant industry for the region, providing employment and a sense of pride and identity for local communities. The Bundaberg region attracts more than a million visitors each year, spending \$352 million in overnight visitor expenditure, year ending December 2018.

The Bundaberg region has rapidly grown in the last seven to ten years, with Think Tank Regional Australia Institute predicting Bundaberg will be among the fastest growing regional cities in Australia. It continues to be a highly desirable destination for interstate and intrastate visitors, with data showing a growth in both visitor numbers and domestic overnight visitor spending.

The Bundaberg region's tourism industry is an engaged and proactive collective, with a clear sense of passion and commitment to the destination's offerings and the region's overall prosperity.

The state designated boundary, as a regional tourism organisation, also takes in the neighbouring region of North Burnett. Located one hour west of Bundaberg, the region boasts spectacular national parks, fertile farming land, as well as friendly, country hospitality and the RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre. On the drive route, known as Australia's Country Way, the North Burnett region is further developing the Bush Learning Centre and a robust destination events calendar that showcases the region's strengths.

Increased confidence in the Bundaberg regional economy and destination has resulted in some significant tourism development projects in the past three years.



Note: Approximate investment figures used.

VISITATION SUMMARY

DOMESTIC VISITORS

\$416 million spent in region by domestic visitors **↑ 6.7% YOY**

96.9% domestic visitors

↑ 14.8% YOY 690,000 overnight domestic visitors

3.12 nights average stay

797,000 domestic day trip visitors **↑ 19.3% YOY**

50,000 visitors across three Bundaberg Visitor Information Centres

INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

47,000 overnight international visitors **↑ 4.4% YOY**

20.5 nights average stay

\$47 million spent in region by international visitors

TOP 4 international source markets for Southern Great Barrier Reef

- 1. United Kingdom**
24,000 visitors
- 2. Germany**
20,000 visitors
- 3. New Zealand**
20,000 visitors
- 4. USA**
16,000 visitors

* Year Ending December 2018 figures used.

By the year 2041 the population of the Bundaberg region is expected to increase to 134, 568 (current population: 94,711)².

The estimated Gross Regional Product (GRP) for the Bundaberg region was \$4.1 billion in 2017/18, showing continued growth from the previous years and above the national growth of 2.9%². Notable contributors to the GRP were health care and social assistance, financial insurance services, retail trade, construction, education and training and agriculture. This presents an opportunity for the business events/conferencing sector.

KEYSTATS

\$463

million

visitor expenditure

Over three

million

visitor nights

5,220

tourism jobs

* Year Ending December 2018 figures used.



Seasonality

A high variation in seasonality patterns for visitation is a common characteristic across many Queensland destination's, especially where large segments of the market are holiday visitors, and external factors such as weather and school holiday periods have major influences on time of travel. These peaks and troughs of visitation can have significant impacts on the local economy, community and environment.

The available data from Tourism Research Australia (TRA), shows low periods in February and November, in line with the Southern Great Barrier Reef destination trends. Local data from individual accommodation and attraction product tells us that the low season for the leisure tourism industry in the Bundaberg region is more likely to be during May, after the buoyancy of the turtle season and the Easter school holidays.

Strategically scheduled destination events are an effective way of drawing in visitation and encouraging overnight stays during off-peak months. Whilst the region already hosts significant events, there is an opportunity to support and encourage events that could occur during the shoulder season, encouraging diversity in the timing of visitation and lessen the impacts of seasonality on the region.



Hero Experiences



Great Barrier Reef



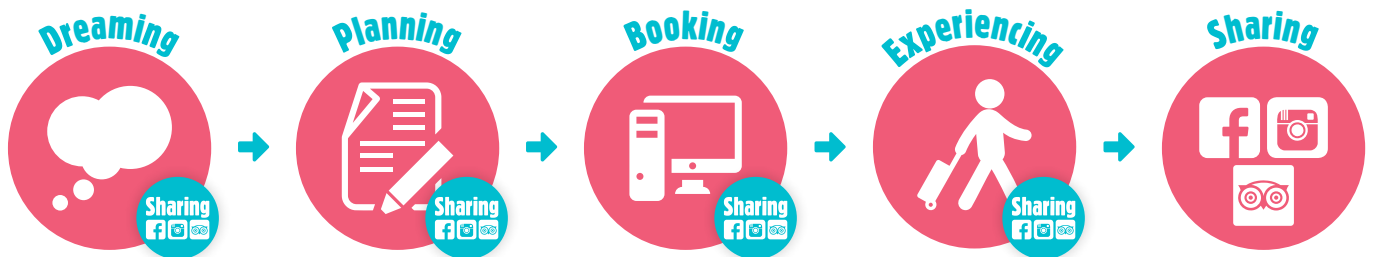
Turtles



Food and Drink

Emerging Trends and Experiences

The next four years will see the continued rise of the experiential traveller. Connectivity is becoming standard, with travellers expecting available WiFi, with social sharing now a common feature across all five stages of the traveller cycle.



Eight key trends have been identified that present opportunities for the Bundaberg region.

1. **Seniors** are the new Millennials. This high spending sector travels outside peak periods and is a trillion dollar economy globally. New research shows if the over 55s market was its own economy, it would be the third largest economy globally behind the US and China³.
2. **Passports become cookbooks** - Visitors want to learn the local ingredients of a destination and get close to the source⁴.
3. **Getting off the tourist path** - There is an increased desire to switch off and as such the visitor is looking for destinations where they can escape the crowds and destinations that are not seen as touristy (over tourism)⁵.
4. **Dark skies** - Sky gazing is becoming increasingly important with visitors seeking places where there is no light pollution to gaze at the stars⁵. Dark skies and star gazing is a significant trend for the international visitor in particular Asia and an opportunity for an evening activity where the 'night time economy' is lacking to compliment the turtle season and low glow movement.
5. **Micro trips** - Weekend trips away to switch off and reset especially for couples and groups of friends with no kids⁶.
6. **Curated experiences** - Experiential travel continues to grow with visitors valuing experiences over possessions when travelling⁶.
7. **Sustainably minded** - Millennial and Generation Z travellers will increasingly seek sustainable experiences in their destination choices⁶.
8. **Multi-generational travel** - This is a sector that will see continual growth in many forms as groups travel together or separately and come together at a destination as their meeting spot⁷.

Enablers of Success

While the economic goals are recognised as ambitious, reaching \$440 million in overnight visitor expenditure by 2022 will invariably have a positive effect on the growth of the industry and the further development of the Bundaberg region as a destination.

Whilst there are a number of variables in the Bundaberg region's future, including the number of planned infrastructure projects, all will have a positive influence on realising the objectives of the Destination Tourism Plan (DTP).

It is important to highlight the following critical success factors that are applicable across the region and will play a key role in enabling success of this DTP.



Data Driven Culture



United Team Bundaberg



Resourcing to Deliver

- A commitment to the principle and practice of partnership and collaboration, and to ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholder's are participative and complimentary, rather than duplication or competitive.
- A commitment to maintaining levels of funding to ensure that the actions outlined in this DTP can progress and opportunities can be further leveraged.
- A focus on monitoring, measuring and reporting on the implementation of this plan, and an emphasis on celebrating success. Recognition of success will breed success.
- A commitment to embracing a data-driven culture. This applies across all areas and is vital to enable better decisions, education, advocacy, perception and governance to drive decision making.





STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

Product and Experience Development

Visitors are looking for authentic experiences, that share the story of people, place and produce.

Mission: To be a destination of quality and authentic products, experiences and infrastructure that showcase the Bundaberg region, drive overnight visitor expenditure (OVE), deliver on the visitor experience and increase length of stay.

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
1.1	Identify infrastructure projects and investment potential that will enhance destination appeal and drive OVE.	BRC , BT, TEQ, DITID Austrade, TA, NBRC	O
1.2	Nurture the development of authentic culinary (food and drink) visitor experiences.	BT , BRC, BFVG, Chamber, TEQ, Operators	M
1.3	Empower operators and Traditional Owners to share authentic indigenous experiences into current product, as well as exploring the establishment of new cultural tourism product.	BT , Operators, PCCC , DES, QTIC, NBRC	O
1.4	Support development of infrastructure to position the Bundaberg region as the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.	GPC, BT , BRC, Operators	O
1.5	As an objective from the Project Asia strategy ¹⁰ , implement Asia-friendly product enhancements to create a competitive advantage for the destination.	BT , BRC, Operators	M
1.6	Support North Burnett in the development of cultural tourism product.	NBRC , BT, Community	M
1.7	Support ongoing enhancements of the RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre.	NBRC , BT	O

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
1.8	Support the Bundaberg Gin Gin Rail Trail development plan, and explore opportunities for nature-based tourism along the trail.	BRC , BT	O
1.9	Continue to work with QPWS to implement a sustainable growth and management plan for Mon Repos and the delivery of the Turtle visitor experience.	QPWS , BT, Operators	M
1.10	Support consideration and development to cruise infrastructure at the Port.	GPC , BT, BRC	O

The urgency and importance of strategies have been classified into different priorities, as explained below:
M = Must (implemented in 0-12 months) **S = Should** (implemented in 1-3 years)
O = Opportunity (Future/aspirational opportunities to be pursued) = Game Changer




Marketing & Events

The Bundaberg Region will focus on sharing remarkable, authentic visitor experiences that highlight the destinations point of difference in a crowded global marketplace, through targeted and strategic events and destination marketing.

Mission: Present a unified and consistent brand for Bundaberg and the Southern Great Barrier Reef to key target audiences.

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
2.1	Support implementation of a regional destination events strategy, including destination packaging to increase length of stay and business events as a key opportunity for growth.	BRC , BT, TEQ	M
2.2	Embed the Taste Bundaberg brand into the Queensland food story, in line with the Taste Bundaberg strategy.	BT , BRC, BFVG, Chamber, TEQ, Operators	M
2.3	Enhance themed drive journeys across regional boundaries, to encourage regional dispersal and increase length of stay, as well as building partnerships with neighbouring and complimentary destinations.	BT , DTMR, BRC, GAPDL, CE, FCTE, NBRC, Operators	M
2.4	Grow the ex-HMAS Tobruk diving experience, as part of the Queensland dive trail.	BT , FCTE, TEQ, Operators	M
2.5	Continue to work collaboratively with complimentary destinations to showcase the Great Barrier Reef, under the Southern Great Barrier Reef destination brand.	BT , GAPDL, CE	M
2.6	Review the effectiveness of the destination's digital presence and ensure the region is showcased in the best way possible, with ease of consumer functionality, whilst delivering return on investment.	BT , TEQ, BRC	S

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Visitor Experience

The visitor experience reflects a united Bundaberg region that delivers on the promise of our foundational pillars of sustainability, reef custodians and Taste Bundaberg.

Mission: Creating a positive visitor experience through the five stages of travel, from dreaming through to planning, experiencing and beyond. Ensuring Team Bundaberg (all stakeholders) are collaborating to deliver an easy, enjoyable and shareable experience for visitors in the Bundaberg region.

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
3.1	Nurture and grow products and experiences that showcase the destination and deliver a Best of Queensland [®] experience.	BT , TEQ, Operators, BRC, NBRC	M
3.2	Ensure visitor information services are viable, relevant and of best practice. Considering economic, social, environmental and cultural return on investment.	BT , BRC	M
3.3	Establish a commitment to sustainability for the Bundaberg region that visitors can connect with, and contribute to through their actions on holidays.	BT , Operators	M
3.4	Undertake a signage audit of the tourist signage and identify gaps for new and updated signage.	BT , DTMR, Operators, BRC, NBRC	S
3.5	Develop a program that builds a cohesive regional culture of customer service excellence, authentic hospitality and exceptional visitor experience at every touch point.	BT , BRC, Chamber, Community	S
3.6	Educate industry on the importance of accessible tourism and inclusive design.	BT , BRC, Operators	S

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Identity and Influence

Tourism unites the region through collaborative leadership and a sense of pride for the Bundaberg spirit of warmth, resilience and creativity.

Mission: Lead the destination as a united Team Bundaberg for the economic, social, environmental and cultural benefit of the Bundaberg region.

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
4.1	Communicate the destination's commitment to sustainability and position Bundaberg Tourism as a leader on environmental sustainability for the tourism industry, working towards ECO destination certification.	BT , Operators, BRC, EAA	S
4.2	Through partnerships across industries, support a formal regional leadership program that drives collaboration, builds resilience and enhances Team Bundaberg.	BT , BRC, Chamber, BEC, Impact, CQU	S
4.3	Embedding a tourism perspective in the economic development and investment attraction strategy for future Bundaberg.	BRC , BT	M
4.4	Lead informed decision making through business intelligence and data science.	BT , Industry, BRC, Chamber	M
4.5	Establish a clear pathway for advice and influence on securing support, funding and collaboration to progress projects of significance in the tourism industry.	BT , BRC, BBEC	S
4.6	Embed the knowledge in the community that 'Tourism is Everybody's Business' with the Team Bundaberg mindset.	BT , BRC, Chamber, BEC, CQU	M
4.7	Establish an integrated data project to maximise digital technology to gain better insights into visitation, visitor behaviour and spending.	BT , BRC , Operators	S

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Upskilling and Training

The region's tourism industry will grow their capacity as a strong business community.

Mission: Build business capability to enhance the visitor experience and a strong, sustainable industry for the Bundaberg region.

NO.	ACTIONS	STAKEHOLDERS (BOLD TO LEAD)	PRIORITIES
5.1	Build an annual training calendar to build business capability that focuses on increasing Best of Queensland ⁸ criteria scores.	BT, Operators, QTIC , TEQ, DITID	M
5.2	Support the implementation of the Queensland Tourism Climate Change Response Plan ¹¹ and educate industry in measures and adaption strategies.	BT , QTIC, Earth Check	M
5.3	In building a strong, sustainable tourism workforce, develop a mechanism to provide training and work experience placement for young people exploring the tourism industry, through a network of local tourism businesses.	BT , Operators, Bundaberg Regional Youth Hub,	S

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REFERENCE LIST

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Stakeholder Acronyms

Bundaberg Business Enterprise Centre (**BEC**) - Bundaberg Fruit and Vegetable Growers Cooperative Limited (**BFVG**)
Bundaberg Regional Council (**BRC**) - Bundaberg Tourism (**BT**) - Capricorn Enterprise (**CE**) - Central Queensland University (**CQU**) - Department of Environment and Science (**DES**) - Department of Innovation, Tourism Industry Development and the Commonwealth Games (**DITID**) - Department of Transport and Main Roads (**DTMR**) - Ecotourism Association Australia (**EAA**) - Fraser Coast Tourism & Events (**FCTE**) - Gladstone Area Promotion and Development Limited (**GAPDL**) - Gladstone Ports Corporation (**GPC**) - North Burnett Regional Council (**NBRC**) - Port Curtis Coral Coast (**PCCC**) - Queensland Tourism Industry Council (**QTIC**) - Tourism Australia (**TA**) - Tourism and Events Queensland (**TEQ**)

