

MEDIA RELEASE

TOURISM COMPANIES LIGHT THE WAY TO A HEALTHIER REEF

Port Douglas, 18th February, 2020 – Inspiring steps towards sustainable practices by eco-tourism champions will be celebrated in this year’s Show Me Your Paradise marketing campaign by Tourism Port Douglas Daintree.

The tourism operators featured take responsible and innovative environmental measures as part of their operational DNA.

The four – Sweet Farm Tours, Mossman Gorge Centre, Sailaway and Port Douglas Beach House – show how their daily operations are imbued with healthy and sustainable environmental practices.

Tara Bennett, chief executive officer of Tourism Port Douglas Daintree, said their demonstrated commitment to ecological wellbeing perfectly aligned with the Show Me Your Paradise 2020 campaign.

This year’s theme Preserving Paradise aims to inspire people to make incremental changes in their day to day lives through compelling video content.

The idea behind the campaign, which is now in its sixth year, is for passionate ambassadors from the region to share their story and why home “is their paradise”.

“Each operator runs a successful tourism business while practising conservation principles on a daily basis, rather than just paying lip service.

“They have implemented sustainable practices to their business operations to minimise their impact on the reef and rainforest.”

The new campaign has been funded by the partnership between the Australian Government’s Reef Trust and the Great Barrier Reef Foundation.

Josh Gibson, chair of the Douglas Local Marine Advisory Committee, said it was great to be able to showcase the wonderful work of local marine advisory committee members.

“They are true community champions demonstrating that as individuals we can all make a difference.

“I hope these videos inspire others to follow suit and implement practices which support not only our local economy but the health of the Great Barrier Reef and our rich natural and cultural heritage.”

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Two of the stars of the Show Me Your Paradise 2020 campaign are Steve Edmondson, owner/operator of luxury catamaran reef tour company Sailaway, and Gerard Puglisi of Sweet Farm Tours, a fourth-generation cane farmer who also now grows cocoa – the two main ingredients of chocolate.

Steve Edmondson said his business doesn't shy away from the challenges of the Great Barrier Reef while extolling its beauty.

"Our expert team are as comfortable speaking about micro plastics, climate change and risk of coral bleaching as they are about the diverse marine life in this region."

Sailaway both talks and walks conservation – catering on board is from local suppliers to reduce food miles, no single use plastics are allowed and wind power is king.

The company also re-generated a former cane paddock into a tree plantation for carbon offsets and reforestation projects.

"At Sailaway we hope to educate visitors from around the world of the amazing yet fragile natural environment here in far North Queensland." Edmondson anticipates his company's ecological enthusiasm is infectious.

"We hope guests are inspired during a fun, relaxed day out on the reef on holiday and adopt some positive changes when they return home."

Sweet Farm Tours owner Gerard Puglisi, whose property sits between the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef, said his business "was very mindful of reducing nutrient, chemical and soil run off".

"We are always looking for ways to better our practices," Puglisi said. "Basically, if we can harness the lost nitrogen, and get it into the crop where it will do some good rather than get lost in the environment, we will have come a long way and done our bit in maintaining the health of the Great Barrier Reef."

The videos are aimed at social media and will be rolled out in coming weeks.

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