

TTNQ Talk

Rob Giason's column in The Cairns Post Wednesday 20 January 2010

This week eight travel writers from Shanghai arrive in Cairns to write about the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region as a holiday destination for Chinese visitors. These journalists are part of a TTNQ, Tourism Queensland and Tourism Australia initiative for continual exposure in our core and emerging tourism markets, at home and overseas.

It may be a little known part of our activities at TTNQ, but hosting travel media and giving them the opportunity to experience the region first-hand, is a very effective way of generating influential travel stories.

In the last six months of 2009 media representatives from USA, Japan, India, UK, New Zealand, Korea, Italy, China and Australia produced stories on the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region seen by more than 30 million people. The publicity value of those stories is almost \$21.5m.

Marketing this fantastic destination to Australia and the world, requires a range of activities. Visiting media allow us to communicate directly with consumers through the trusted voices of the journalists, broadcasters and social media they know, from their local newspaper and radio station, their favourite magazine, on high rating television programs and respected websites.

At TTNQ we arrange itineraries for travel writers in our region to showcase the leisure experiences and convention facilities this destination provides. Local travel and hospitality operators join us in showcasing their products and services. The natural attractions, the Great Barrier Reef and the wet tropics rainforest are the stars in many of the publications however stories on Indigenous culture, tropical Australian lifestyle, food and wine, wildlife, Cape York and the outback are included in newspapers, magazines, websites and on blog sites, TV and radio travel programs.

Among the travel media we have hosted recently are writers and presenters for niche market publications and programs focussing on the dive experiences of the Great Barrier Reef, weddings in paradise, cooking local produce and seafood, short breaks, yachting, bird watching, conferences and meetings, spa experiences, holidays with kids, caravanning, fishing, adventure holidays, festivals and island and beach getaways. Special interest publications are as varied as the people who subscribe to them, and as varied as our visitors.

In 2010 TTNQ will again be co-ordinating visits from travel media, and quietly generating huge publicity worldwide for holidays and business events to the Cairns & Great Barrier Reef region.