

Eden Visitor Information Centre

Annual Report 2022-2023



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A message from the Centre Manager



What a truly incredible year it has been for the Eden Visitor Information Centre, a year that has made me immensely proud to lead this team to so many successes - not only for our centre but also for our town and community.

Hard work and financial contribution led to us taking home two awards this year - Bronze in the NSW Tourism Awards for Visitor Servicing and Silver for Eden in the Top Tourism Town Awards. For our centre and our town to be recognised at a state level proves that we have something truly special that is up there among the best of the best.

We were also successful in the grant space, obtaining funding to install new baby change tables in two public toilets (installed in October 2022) as well as some new interpretive birdlife signage for Eden's beloved Lake Curalo (due to be installed in the second half of 2023). We are particularly proud to be able to work on these projects that better Eden's infrastructure and facilities for our local community and its visitors.

Our work on lifting the exposure of Eden as a top coastal destination continued with a brand new Official Visitor Guide released. The centre financially contributed to the guide with the goal of a coffee table worthy book, and we feel that we definitely delivered - with a 48 page guide featuring fresh new content, stunning imagery and produced on beautiful thick high quality non-gloss paper. We hope that this is a guide that the whole town is proud of.

We also continued our work in the event space this year, assisting with the Eden Whale Festival (organising the art/photography competitions, hosting a special dinner in conjunction with the Abalone Industry Association of NSW, hosting the official opening as well as Chef Miguel's famous paella cook up!). We also organised and hosted various functions including Member's Nights and the very successful inaugural EAT Eden Progressive Dinner.

I was particularly proud to be invited as a guest speaker to the 2023 Local Government New South Wales Destination and Visitor Economy Conference held in Manly last May, a fantastic opportunity to showcase the work we are doing here at the centre and testament to the fact that we are leading the way in the field of visitor centre operations in a modern and self-sustaining way.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my amazing team of staff and volunteers who have a true passion for Eden and hold our beloved centre in their hearts, as well as our board of volunteers whose commitment to our success is second to none. To the organisations we have collaborated and worked with throughout the year including Bega Valley Shire Council, Sapphire Coast Destination Marketing, Destination Southern NSW, Destination NSW, Port Authority of NSW and our amazing visitor centre network, both locally and statewide, it's been a pleasure and we look forward to continuing to build our strong relationships in the years to come.

Lastly, our immense thanks to all those small businesses who continue to support us through membership to our centre, this is a vital contribution to our operation and we are immensely proud of our tough, resilient, hardworking, innovative business community. We love working with you and look forward to another successful year ahead.

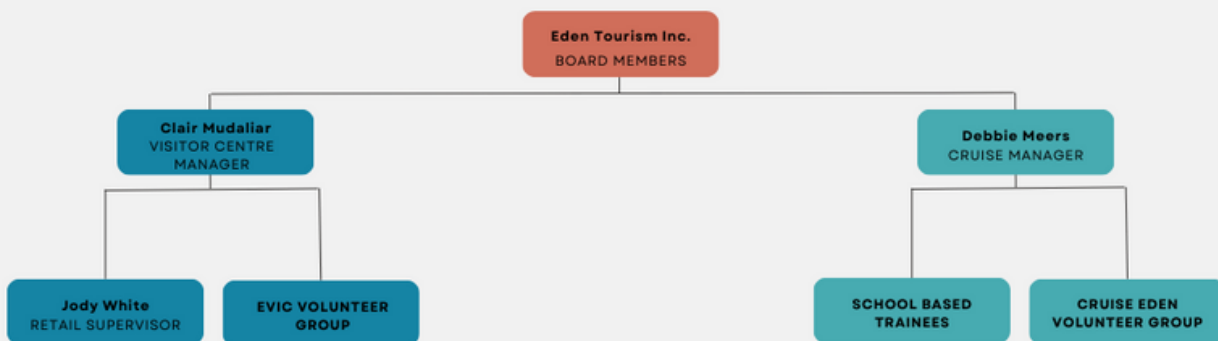
Overview



The Eden Visitor Information Centre (EVIC) is operated by Eden Tourism Inc, an independent incorporated non-profit association that is governed by a constitution and operates in accordance with the Association Incorporations Act 2009.

EVIC receives funding from Bega Valley Shire Council via a special rate variation for tourism purposes and is responsible for the provision of visitor information services and tourism marketing for the town of Eden and surrounds. The centre is also financially supported by a strong 120+ membership base of local businesses as well as the various revenue streams that management has worked hard to put in place including strong retail / souvenir sales, sub-lease arrangements, event space hire, commission on tour bookings, and tour guide services for visiting bus groups.

EDEN TOURISM INC ORGANISATIONAL CHART



EDEN TOURISM INC. MISSION STATEMENT: *To contribute to the social and economic growth of the area by providing direction, support and coordination to maintain, enhance and promote Eden and the Sapphire Coast as a year round tourist destination and cruise ship port for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors to Eden and surrounding districts.*

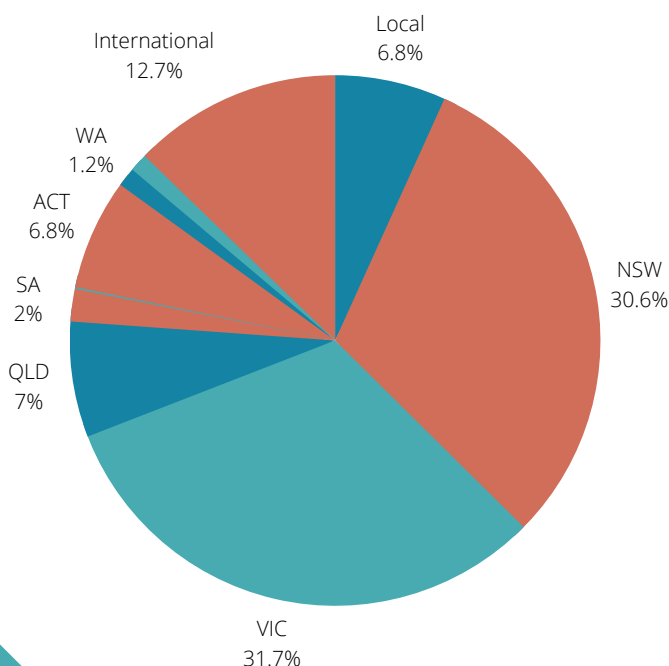
Visitor Statistics

2022-2023 was a record year for visitation to EVIC with a full year of trading for the tourism industry noting there were no forced closures of the centre, no border closures, the return of cruise ships, and many international borders open again. This provided the opportunity to really test out the new location and the results speak for themselves.

107,899
Visitors to the Centre
in 2022-2023



Visitor Origin Data 2022-2023



- Victoria was the largest visiting segment providing the higher numbers throughout peak periods.
- The drive market remains healthy for Eden with visitors from all over the country passing through on 1-3 night stays (on average).
- Visiting cruise ships contributed to the solid international visitor numbers.

7,299
Locals came through
the doors

Local Products

The centre continues to showcase local products, working closely with producers, artists, authors, jewellers, potters, photographers and woodworkers to support these amazing local small businesses. The thoughtfully curated offering together with the cleverly designed fitout continue to provide the centre with its largest revenue stream. Product lines are changed frequently to ensure the offering is fresh, modern and up to date. This financial year saw enough growth in retail sales to support a permanent part-time Retail Supervisor being added to the team of staff.



*\$324,314.00
of retail product sold*

EDEN - A NATURAL PARADISE

*260
pieces of handmade
pottery from Emily
Laszuk sold*

*358
jars of Gloria's
jams/chutneys sold*

*246
Seabeadz necklaces
sold*



Grants & Events

This year the centre has been successful with a variety of grants that have assisted not only the centres operations but the local community as well, to mention just a few:

- ClubGrants to fund new winter uniforms for all volunteers and staff (to be issued in August 2023)
- Birdlife Australia Grant to fund interpretive birdlife signage for installation around Lake Curralo at various locations (to be installed in late 2023)
- Business Boost Seed Funding to assist with setup costs for an online store making it possible to ship local product and souvenirs Australia wide
- ClubGrants funding the purchase and installation of new baby change facilities in two public toilets in Eden



We have continued to support events in Eden organising and/or hosting Eden's first EAT Eden Progressive Dinner as part of the EAT Festival, the Eden Whale Festival Art & Photography Competition and Exhibition (including Bubbles and Oysters Launch Night), the Official Opening of the Eden Whale Festival, an exclusive (sell-out!) evening of abalone with the Abalone Industry Association of New South Wales as well as the festivals famous big paella cook up with guest Chef Miguel.

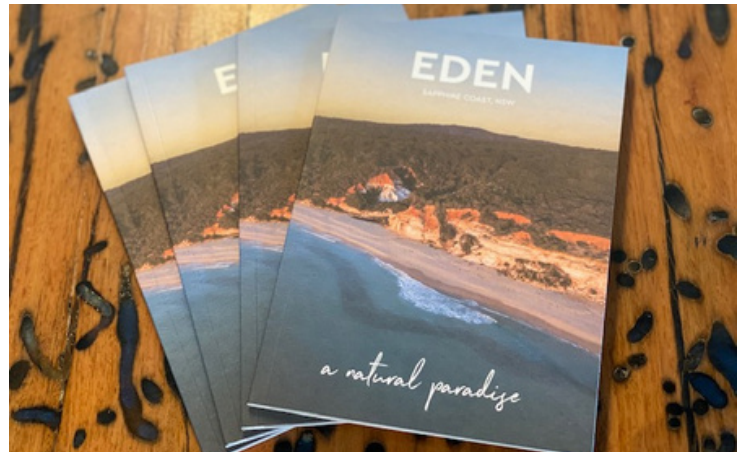
Marketing & PR

Throughout the year the centre has used a variety of channels to market Eden including the Visit Eden website, various social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn, and secured many editorials in publications such as iMag, Gem, the Magnet, Eden Connections Newsletter and Coastal Life.

Bringing home Bronze in the category Visitor Servicing at the NSW Tourism Awards, and Silver for Eden in the Top Tourism Town Awards was a fantastic contributor in increasing exposure of Eden as a destination, and the visitor centre itself. Through part of this award process the centre also worked closely with Sapphire Coast Destination Marketing to produce a fantastic Eden video which was not only used in the awards submission but has been and continues to be great material for various advertising channels.

*13,122
followers across
social media platforms*

*44,333 reach
on most engaging post*



Where to from here.....



After such a successful year packed full of achievements, EVIC is poised for a bright future. The relocation to Snug Cove has transformed opportunities and prospects and cemented the operation for years to come. EVIC invites businesses to join in these successes by coming onboard as a member, not only so that your business may reap the rewards but so that you can also contribute to EVIC's work in building Eden as a destination and providing an exceptional visitor experience to those that visit. More information about membership can be found on the website here - www.visiteden.com.au/membership

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