

Friday, 28 March 2008

BAROSSA SHINES ON WORLD TRAVEL STAGE

South Australia's Barossa has outshone international tourist locations to make the *New York Times*' list of 53 "must-see" destinations for 2008.

The Barossa was the only Australian destination on the acclaimed list and was chosen as a favourite along with the likes of the Maldives, Prague, Easter Island, London and Vietnam.

The *New York Times* is recognised as having one of the world's most respected travel sections and with a circulation of more than one million, the inclusion of the Barossa is a coup for the region and South Australia.

The article heaps praise on the Barossa as one of the world's oldest Shiraz regions and also describes Adelaide as a "foodie" destination.

Tourism Minister Jane Lomax-Smith says the Barossa is one of the State's tourism gems and this international recognition will ensure its attractions are publicised to the world.

"We all know what the Barossa has to offer and now we can proudly show this off to the world. The *New York Times* is a high-calibre publication and each year the travel list edition is extremely popular," she says.

"The inclusion of the Barossa highlights how the State's tourism experiences are becoming more and more competitive on an international stage."

Only this week, a new reward card was launched in the Barossa, capitalising on the booming food and wine industries in the region.

The *Butcher, Baker, Winemaker Trail Card* has been developed to offer food and wine lovers a taste of all things gourmet in the Barossa, and will further strengthen the region's reputation as the home of Australian wine and food.

Minister Lomax-Smith says the State Government, through the South Australian Tourism Commission and regional marketing organisations, continues to develop targeted and innovative marketing initiatives to attract international visitors in key target markets.

"We are always looking at new ways to get the attention of international travel audiences in what is an increasingly competitive market," she says.

"South Australia's recent international visitor statistics, released in March, 2008 showed a rise in visitors from the US and this latest accolade can only help to boost these figures."

The Barossa also recorded impressive international visitor statistics in 2007, with visitor nights up 21 per cent, from 45,000 in 2006 to 115,000 in 2007.