



# News Release

March 13, 2018

For immediate release:

## **FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR *SASKATCHEWAN TOURISM AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE***

Tourism Saskatchewan is pleased to announce the names of 33 finalists for the *Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence* for 2017.

Nearly 100 nominations were received in the 12 award categories that acknowledge quality in marketing, service, business practices, human resource development and other areas.

The finalists and award recipients will be honoured at the 29<sup>th</sup> annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala, which will be celebrated on April 12 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Regina. The gala will be held in conjunction with the HOST Saskatchewan Conference, which takes place earlier that day in Regina.

Recipients of the Tourism Builder Award will also be honoured that night. The Tourism Builder Award recognizes individuals who have made tourism an important part of their life's work and have helped position Saskatchewan as a welcoming destination.

"Congratulations to the businesses and individuals whose impressive achievements have earned the respect of their peers," Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan Gene Makowsky said. "The 33 finalists and the Tourism Builders are exceptional ambassadors for the province and inspiring role models. Their efforts help make Saskatchewan a great place to live, work and visit."

"Tourism Saskatchewan is delighted to acknowledge the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence finalists and Tourism Builders who will be honoured on April 12," Tourism Saskatchewan CEO Mary Taylor-Ash said. "The annual gala is a showcase of remarkable Saskatchewan experiences and the people who deliver on the promise made to visitors. It is a pleasure and honour to host this special evening and celebrate their achievements."

Tickets for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala are \$120 (plus GST) or \$800 (plus GST) for a corporate table of eight. The evening will start with a networking reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner service at 6:30 p.m. and the award presentations at 8 p.m.

For more information about the *Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala*, visit [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com). To order tickets, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844 or [awards@tourismsask.com](mailto:awards@tourismsask.com).

The Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence finalists for 2017 are:

**Rookie of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Roughrider Football Club*

FIBA 3x3 World Tour, Saskatoon

Spiritwood Area Recreation, Culture and Sports Annual Bull Riding Competition, Spiritwood

Waskimo Winter Festival, Regina

**Service Excellence Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce*

Black Fox Farm and Distillery, Saskatoon

Ghostown Blues Bed & Breakfast, Maple Creek

Gold Eagle Lodge, North Battleford

**Tourism Employee of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by Harvard Broadcasting Regina*

E Haffermehl, Aroma Resto Bar, Radisson Hotel Saskatoon, Saskatoon

Calla Michell, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon

Chris Standing, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

**Tourism Employer of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by Regina Airport Authority*

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre, Regina

Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatoon

Tourism Saskatoon, Saskatoon

**Gil Carduner Marketing Award**

*Sponsored by Phoenix Group*

Saskatchewan Roughriders Football Club, Regina

Town of Eastend, Eastend

Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

**Fred Heal Tourism Ambassador Award**

*Sponsored by Wanuskewin Heritage Park*

Grotto Gardens Country Market, Maple Creek

Historic Reesor Ranch, Maple Creek

Saskatchewan Craft Brewers Association, Saskatoon

**Travel Media Award**

*Sponsored by Vendasta*

Jim Byers, Toronto, ON

Ashlyn George, Saskatoon

Craig Hilts, Swift Current

**Community Event of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Arts Board*

2017 Living Skies Come Alive International Fireworks Competition, Moosomin

Gateway Festival, Bengough

YXEats, Saskatoon

**Marquee Event of the Year Award**

*Sponsored by CTV*

Canadian Western Agribition, Regina  
Ness Creek Music Festival, Big River  
Pinty's Grand Slam of Curling, North Battleford

**Business of the Year Award**

**(Under 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority*

Historic Reesor Ranch, Maple Creek  
Prairie River Cruises Ltd., Saskatoon  
Waskesiu Marina Adventure Centre, Waskesiu Lake

**Business of the Year Award**

**(Over 20 Full-time Employees)**

*Sponsored by The Western Producer*

d3h Hotels Inc., various locations  
Grassroots Restaurant Group, Saskatoon  
Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, Saskatoon

**Tourism Builder Award**

*Sponsored by Tourism Saskatchewan*

Ian McGilp, Saskatoon  
Bernadette McIntyre, Regina

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Tourism in Saskatchewan is a \$2.19-billion industry, employing 67,200 Saskatchewan residents.