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Talking Tourism is Tourism Western Australia's e-newsletter detailing all the latest news, events, products and other information of interest to you in the WA tourism industry.

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Tourism WA news

New Barbagallo Raceway to host V8 Supercars

Motorsport fans will see a 'new look' Barbagallo Raceway when they visit for the V8 Supercars from May 4 to 6, thanks to a \$10.4 million dollar redevelopment of the raceway. Construction work includes a new in-field pit lane and garage facility, a pedestrian bridge to link the in and out fields, a driver briefing room and media interviewing area, stewards' facilities, race and timing control, commentating and spectator viewing area, and administration facilities. The 2012 [Tradingpost Perth Challenge](#) will offer another great line-up of world-class motorsport over three days with the V8 Supercars being supported by the V8 Supercar Development Series, Porsche City Index Carrera Cup, Auto One V8 Ute Racing Series and QBE Australian Superbike Championships. The event is proudly supported by Eventscorp. Tickets are on sale from [Ticketek](#).

Opportunity to showcase your product at ATE 2012

Western Australia will host the [Australian Tourism Exchange \(ATE\)](#) this year and Tourism WA is developing an exciting familiarisation program for ATE delegates to showcase the very best of the west. Tourism WA is encouraging industry to get behind the ATE Familiarisation Program by providing product free of charge or at a significant discount. By showcasing your product, you will have an opportunity to promote it directly to key buyer and media delegates, develop new partnerships and nurture existing relationships. Tourism WA is planning more than 55 accommodated pre and post ATE touring famils across the State for more than 500 international trade and media delegates. The ATE would not be possible without the support of WA's tourism industry and Tourism WA would like to thank all those who have already provided assistance to date. If you are interested in being a part of the ATE Familiarisation Program, please email the ATE 2012 Famils Manager [Loretta De Stefani](#).

Funding available for regional events

Funding for regional events across Western Australia is available through Eventscorp's 2012/13 Regional Events Scheme (RES), which is jointly funded by Royalties for Regions. Event organisers can apply for funding between \$5,000 and \$50,000 for smaller, developing regional events held between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. Applications for RES close on February 16, 2012 at 4pm. For more information on the Regional Events Scheme click [here](#) or contact [Eventscorp](#) on 9262 1932.

Industry news

Tourism summit helps businesses with sustainability

Tourism businesses are invited to the Qantas Sustainable Tourism Summit on ways to combine sustainable operations with effective marketing. With Australia's carbon price system coming into effect on July 1, there is an opportunity for tourism businesses to take part in green investments and operate more sustainably. Set for Friday March 2 at the Sebel Cairns, speakers include Tourism Australia Managing Director, Andrew McEvoy; ABC's Gruen Planet panelist, Leo Burnett; and WWF Australia CEO Dermont O'Gorman. Please register [here](#).

Nominations open for heritage awards

Nominations are open for the Heritage Council's 20th Western Australian Heritage Awards. These prestigious annual awards showcase excellence in revitalising heritage places, setting standards for interpretation, conservation and adaptive reuse of places on the State Register of Heritage Places. The awards attract extensive media interest and winners are acknowledged for innovative contribution and best practice standards. Outstanding conservation projects will be showcased in the Asia-Pacific region in partnership with the Office of Heritage and UNESCO. For more information visit the [website](#).

Virgin and Skywest expand alliance

Virgin Australia will expand its alliance with Skywest by offering corporate customers a tailored solution for their air travel needs, including scheduled and charter services to regional, domestic and international destinations. Virgin Australia and Skywest received interim approval from the ACCC for the expanded alliance, which would enable the two airlines to jointly contract with corporate customers. The agreement will improve the airline's ability to meet the growing demand from the resources and mining industries.

Public comment on template labour agreement to improve skill shortage

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) has developed a discussion paper on the need for a template labour agreement to help the tourism and hospitality sectors attract skilled workers from overseas. The Labour and Skills Working Group under the National Long Term Tourism Strategy, is overseeing this work with DIAC. The discussion paper is now open for comment by the tourism and hospitality industry. The proposed template agreement establishes a common set of requirements tailored specifically for tourism and hospitality businesses recruiting skilled overseas workers, and follows discussions with industry at the Tourism Employment Roundtable in August 2011. The discussion paper is open for comment until March 16, 2012 and can be found by clicking [here](#).

Position available at Tourism Council WA

Tourism Council WA is seeking a permanent, part-time (two-three days per week with potential progression to full time employment) industry advisor to join its team. The successful applicant will assist with the implementation of the Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (WA) and work with tourism operators to help them apply the program to their business. The industry advisor will also provide industry with advice regarding quality standards, audit accredited businesses throughout WA as well as contribute to other activities such as events, policy and training programs. Applications close Thursday, February 9, 2012. For an application kit, please contact [Emma Page](#) at Tourism Council WA.

Find out more about health tourism

Health tourism operators are invited to attend an international symposium on *The Business of Health Tourism* at Curtin University's Bentley Campus on Monday, February 13. Recognising that the desire for a healthy lifestyle has also created opportunities for new health services in a leisure setting, this symposium will cover topics including health tourism marketing, health and wellness as a motivator for travel and human resource management in the health tourism industry. The health tourism sector covers a wide range of businesses including leisure activity providers, spa treatments, spiritual retreats, sports holiday and medical wellness providers. For full details including cost please click [here](#) or call 9266 7748.

Events

Yallingup Surf Film Festival hailed success

The Yallingup Surf Film Festival has been hailed a great success, with more than 2,500 people attending the three-day event. Held on January 20 to 22, the festival included day and night film screenings, discussion forums, art exhibitions and live local music. *Finnsurf* by director Aleksi Raik was awarded Best Feature Film, while *The Surfer* by Dominic Coleman was awarded Best Short Film. Best Cinematography was presented to two winners - *El Mar*, *Mi Alma* and *Come Hell or High Water*, who have the same cinematographer, Dave Homcy. The People's Choice Award went to *The Still Point* by director Taki Bibelas.

Busselton to host popular swimming event

As one of the largest open water swim events in Western Australia, the [Busselton Jetty Swim](#) is eagerly anticipated by locals and visitors alike. Using Western Australia's historic Busselton Jetty as a feature of the event, it is the only open water swim where spectators can watch the entire 3.6-kilometre course from the jetty itself. The event will be held on February 4-5, 2012.

Cricket City Perth Commonwealth Bank One Day Internationals

Cricket fans are in for a treat when the WACA hosts two Commonwealth Bank One Day Internationals. First up will be a rematch of the last ICC World Cup final between India and Sri Lanka on February 8. Then Australia takes on Sri Lanka on February 10. The One Day Internationals complement the 2011/2012 Vodafone test between Australia and India. For more information click [here](#).

Perth International Arts Festival to entertain crowds

The [Perth International Arts Festival](#) will be held from February 10 until March 3, 2012 and is the longest running, annual international multi-arts festival in the southern hemisphere. It offers some of the world's best theatre, music, film, visual arts, literature and free community events. Since 1953, the festival has welcomed some of the world's greatest living artists to Perth.

Nation's top track and field stars to compete in Perth Track Classic

Up to 20 invited international track and field stars will compete alongside Australia's top athletes at the [Go for 2&5 Perth Track Classic](#). Be there for your chance to see home-grown heroes like reigning world, Olympic and Commonwealth pole vault champion Steve Hooker and world champion hurdler Sally Pearson go head to head with overseas rivals. The event is held on February 11, 2012 at the WA Athletics Stadium.

WA's premier country music festival to rock Boyup Brook

The five-day [Boyup Brook Country Music Festival](#), held from February 15-19, 2012, is Western Australia's premier country music event. Visitors will get to enjoy the WA Country Music Awards and the Boyup Ute and Truck Muster plus arts and street performances. The event will also feature Australia's biggest Bush Poets Breakfast.

Busselton to host largest yachting regatta

Celebrating its 10th anniversary this year, the [Geographe Bay Race Week](#) is Western Australia's longest running and largest annual yachting regatta. More than 100 yachts and 1,000 sailors will set sail from Busselton's Port Geographe Marina in this eagerly anticipated event. The action continues on shore with a range of family friendly activities. The event is held from February 17-24, 2011.

Harness racing action at Gloucester Park

Regarded as the 'Melbourne Cup' of harness racing, the [V75 Inter Dominion Championship Final](#) is Australia's only million dollar pacing event. Perth's Gloucester Park was the birth place of the Inter Dominion, hosting the initial championship in 1936 and since then the Inter Dominion has developed into one of the world's great harness racing events. The event is held on February 17, 20, 24 and March 2.

South West's finest beer showcased

For the first time, the best of the South West craft breweries will come together for a celebration of the region's produce, music and of course beer. The [South West Craft Beer Festival](#) enables festival goers to sample the region's finest brews - from the more traditional pale ales and pilsners to creations like ginger and chocolate beer. Activities include staged performances and a children's amusement area. The festival is held from February 25-26, 2012.

Cottesloe Beach showcases extraordinary sculptures

Iconic Cottesloe Beach will be transformed into a stunning sculpture park when more than 70 local, interstate and international artists display their unique works of art from March 1-19, 2012. Now in its eighth year, Sculpture by the Sea on the shores of the Indian Ocean has become one of Perth's largest free public events. For more information click [here](#).

The Great Southern showcases the very best of food and wine

In its eighth year, Taste Great Southern showcases the rich and diverse flavours of one of Western Australia's most beautiful destinations. Events will take place in various locations such as Perth, Albany, Denmark, Mount Barker, Porongurup, Broomehill and Kojonup. The festival also features long table lunches, markets, tastings, master classes, exhibitions, workshops and celebrity guest chefs. Events will be held from February 11, 2012.

Nannup comes alive with the sound of music

Visitors to Nannup will enjoy national and international musical talent from March 2-5 at the Nannup Music Festival. The Nannup Music Festival celebrates its 23rd year with a diverse program of concerts, workshops, dance and activities for children and young people. It will also feature more than 80 acts over the weekend, entertaining thousands of music lovers.

