

# Eurobodalla - the Inclusive Holiday Destination

## - Reaching the Less-able Holiday Makers

Madam Mayor, Councillors and Council Staff,

Thank you for the opportunity to talk with you today.

You may remember that I presented a paper to you at the last Council meeting giving an overview of Inclusive Tourism as it may apply to the Shire, under the heading **Eurobodalla: The Inclusive Holiday Destination of Choice.**

Today, I would like to make you aware of information contained in two tourism brochures, the Eurobodalla Holiday Guide and Tasmania by Sunlover Holidays. (I happened to pick up the Tasmanian brochure as my wife and I are contemplating a trip to Tasmania later in the year).

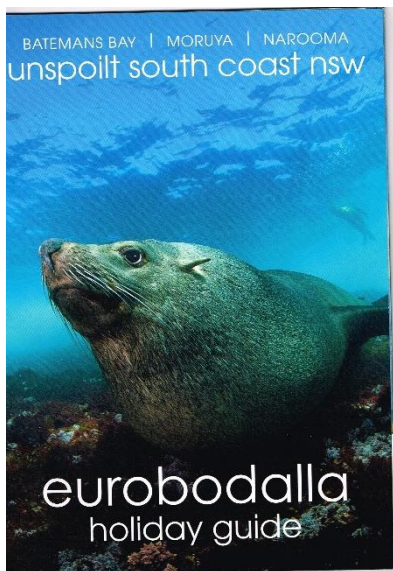


Fig 1. Cover of ESC Holiday Guide



Fig 2. Premier accommodation ads.

In figure 1 above is a copy of the cover of the Eurobodalla Holiday Guide. The Guide was picked up in the Mall in Batemans Bay free of charge. If you know the brochure, you will know that it is of high quality, with great content, excellent images and graphics, and printed on good quality paper. In figure 2 is a copy of the page within the brochure advertising our premier accommodation. I draw your attention to the fact that on this page there is not one mention of accommodation being inclusive or suitable for less-able folk.

In figures 3 and 4 below, are shown the equivalent pages of the Tasmanian brochure – figure 3 shows the cover and figure 4 a page of accommodation ads. The quality of the Tasmanian brochure is high, although not as high as Eurobodalla's, and has understandably more content. I draw your attention to the small note at the bottom of the cover that says, "Hotel reviews provided by TripAdvisor". Further, on the detailed accommodation page, notice at the bottom left-hand corner of each of the three ads a small wheelchair logo, an outline of a person in a wheelchair in a blue square. While not every service provider (accommodation and experience provider) advertising in the brochure has this logo, a good proportion do, approx. 50% from my observation.

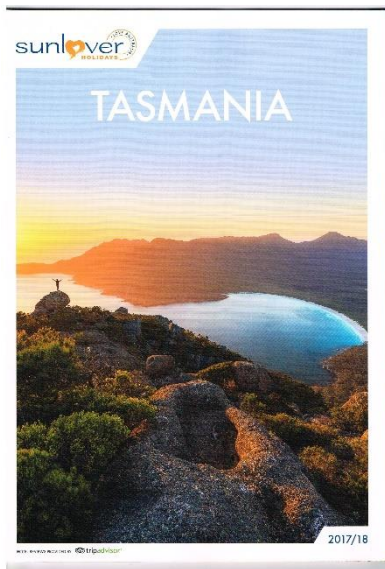


Fig 3. Cover of Tasmanian brochure.

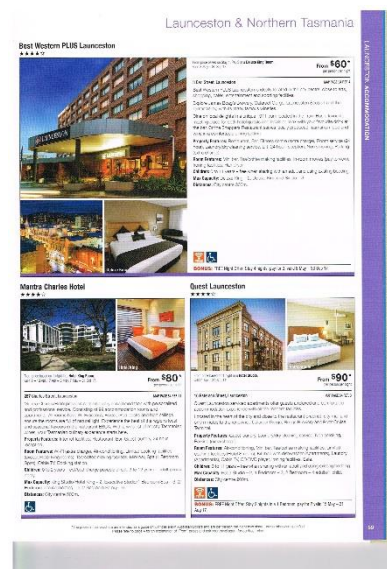


Fig 4. Detail of accommodation ads.

What lessons may we draw from this simple comparison?

1. Other holiday destinations are further advanced than Eurobodalla in presenting material to potential less-able tourists making decisions on where they will spend their tourism dollars. I have a sense of urgency to establish **Eurobodalla – the Inclusive Holiday Destination**, as I believe there are rewards for those that are established early in an opportunity, and delay in becoming established only slows down the potential contribution of Inclusive Tourism to Gross Regional Product (GRP).
2. Service providers in other holiday destinations are more aware of advertising facilities for the less-able than those in the Eurobodalla. As no accommodation provider in Eurobodalla displays the wheelchair logo, presumably they are either unaware of being able to display the logo, or are ineligible to display it.

The first point is the easier of the two to address, as the Council has staff that have shown that they are quite capable of producing high quality advertising to the tourist community. The nub of the problem is raising the awareness of the service providers in Eurobodalla to the benefits of inclusive tourism, and encouraging them to come on board and contribute to making **Eurobodalla - the Inclusive Holiday Destination**.

The way to raise awareness is through education. I suspect that the most successful way would be to engage at the grass roots level, talking with each service provider one-on-one. Perhaps volunteers, coached for the purpose, could undertake this exercise – I, for one, would be prepared to help.

As a way forward, may I talk with staff of the Tourism Section of Council to discuss this matter further, as I understand that Council staff have considered similar proposals at other times in the past?

Peter Glen

21 September 2017