

NEWS – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



2011/12 TOURISM AWARDS OPEN FOR ENTRIES

This year's official tourism awards for Cornwall, Devon and the South West are now open - and businesses are invited to enter by the deadline of 5pm on 30th June!

This news applies to three separate but linked awards schemes covering Cornwall, Devon and the whole South West of England:

The Cornwall Tourism Awards, in association with Rodda's – www.cornwalltourismawards.co.uk

The Devon Tourism Awards – www.devontourismawards.org.uk

**The South West Tourism Excellence Awards, in association with South West Water–
www.southwesttourismawards.org.uk**

The awards celebrate excellence in tourism across the South West and aim to promote and reward leading businesses and individuals in the tourism industry, whatever their sector and size. They are free to enter, and there are 15 categories to choose from ranging from best hotel, event, attraction, activity, holiday park and self catering holiday to awards for customer service, access, sustainable tourism and business tourism.

Tourism awards have proven their worth in recent years, giving businesses the chance not only to showcase their quality, but also to build morale amongst staff and gain recognition as 'tourism's best'. The entry and judging process has also been recognised by business as an important tool in checking on the development of the business, as suggested by a recent winner, Adam Millward from the Somerville in Torquay:

“... winning the county and regional award has given our marketing efforts a real boost... Interestingly, we have also seen a massive jump in the number of bookings from abroad and in particular Germany. An unexpected benefit was that the process of reflection revealed areas needing development which, for us, meant creating a much more useable accessibility statement.”

The Cornwall, Devon and South West awards are all independent, but linked in that winners from the Cornwall and Devon awards are fast-tracked into the South West awards, with South West winners submitted to the national Enjoy-England awards. April 2010 saw major successes for the region in these national awards, with 7 South West businesses achieving Silver awards, and 2 achieving the top Gold awards – The Porthminster Beach and Scarlet & Bedruthan Steps Hotels.

Chris Loughlin, Chief Executive of South West Water and title sponsor of the South West Tourism Excellence Awards, said: “We are proud to again sponsor awards which prove why the South West is the UK’s favourite holiday destination.

“In the past, our Clean Sweep programme transformed the region’s bathing waters to be among the best in Europe. Our job now is to make sure that transformation lasts far into the future which is why together with Surfers Against Sewage and the tourism industry we are launching our Beach Live website this summer giving hour by hour information on water quality around our beautiful coastline.”

Nicholas Rodda, Managing Director of Rodda’s and Title sponsor of the Cornwall Tourism Awards commented: “The Cornwall Tourism Awards are all about Excellence and Cornishness, both of which are central to our ethos here at Rodda’s. We’re therefore delighted to be headline sponsors of this year’s Awards and wish everyone involved the best of luck”.

Robin Barker, Director of Services for Tourism Ltd, which coordinates all three awards schemes on behalf of the South West Tourism Alliance, VisitCornwall and VisitDevon, adds: “At a time of major change across domestic tourism, the tourism awards have shown year on year improvements with increasing benefits to all concerned – entrants, sponsors and judges. I urge every quality orientated tourism business in the region to ‘have a go!’ It’s free, you have nothing to lose, and everything to gain.”

The deadline for entering all three awards schemes is 5pm on Thursday 30th June, but businesses are encouraged to start preparing now and not leave it to the last minute!

Full details of the tourism awards, along with details of how to enter, top tips and entry forms can be found at the three awards websites:

The Cornwall Tourism Awards – www.cornwalltourismawards.co.uk

The Devon Tourism Awards – www.devontourismawards.org.uk

The South West Tourism Excellence Awards – www.southwesttourismawards.org.uk

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Notes to editors

For more information or interviews please contact Robin Barker at rbarker@services4tourism.co.uk or 07870 397438

The Awards are coordinated by Robin Barker of Services for Tourism Ltd, under contract to VisitCornwall, Visit Devon and the South West Tourism Alliance.

Services for Tourism Ltd is a private company led by Robin Barker, former Deputy Chief Executive and Marketing Director of South West Tourism. See www.services4tourism.co.uk for more information.