



Media release

From the Acting Premier and Minister for Environment

Thursday 21 October, 2004

PLENTY OF REASONS TO HEAD FOR THE HILLS THIS SUMMER

The Acting Premier, John Thwaites, today congratulated Victoria's alpine resorts on managing a bumper snow season and on the work they've already done to attract tourists to the alps this summer.

Mr Thwaites said that the ski season had attracted huge numbers, providing a great economic benefit to the Alpine region and Victoria as a whole.

"Overall, as at October 10, the resorts attracted more than 840,000 visitors for the winter season, a 17 per cent increase on 2003 which was also a good year," Mr Thwaites said.

"Visitor days for all resorts were around 1.5 million - a 10 per cent increase on 2003.

"Victoria's Alpine Resorts have made great progress in implementing the Alpine Resorts 2020 Strategy, announced at the start of this year's snow season

"The 2020 strategy was largely developed to provide a strategic vision for Victoria's Alpine Resorts and attracting tourists in summer is a key part of that vision."

Speaking at an industry forum at Lake Mountain, Mr Thwaites said Alpine Resorts had an exciting range of events on offer over coming months including interpretive nature tours at Lake Mountain, a showcase of regional food and wine at Falls Creek and a series of music festivals at Mt Buller.

"All Alpine Resorts are working hard to make summer as exciting for tourists as winter," he said.

"With events such as the Sun Tour bike race, incorporating a hill climb at Mount Baw Baw, and the famous CRAIC Irish Music Festival at Mt Buller, there's no doubt that the Victorian alps are the place to be this summer," he said.

The Minister said that the Alpine Resort Co-ordinating Council (ARCC) had begun to implement the 'summer elements' of the 2020 strategy including:

- Input into Tourism Victoria's Regional Development Plans
- Consolidation of existing market research related to summer tourism in the alps
- Devising an accurate method of measuring summer visitation
- Commencement of a discussion paper on special tourism values of the alps.

"All resorts are working closely with their sub alpine regions to promote complementary activities for tourists," Mr Thwaites said.

Mr Thwaites also welcomed the release of the Alpine Resorts Leasing Discussion Paper.

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He said that the proposed changes in alpine leasing rules outlined in the discussion paper would provide incentives for all season tourism and therefore long-term investment in alpine resorts.

“If the proposed leasing changes are implemented, costs related to document preparation and conveyancing will be reduced and the interests of all leasehold parties and financiers will be better protected,” he said.

Details of the Discussion Paper and how to make a submission can be found on the ARCC's website: www.arcc.vic.gov.au.

A glimpse of summer events being held at Victoria’s alpine resorts is attached.

ALPINE SUMMER EVENTS 2004/05		
EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Cycling race from Warrugul to Mt Baw Baw	TBC	Mt Baw Baw
The Gathering of the Moths is a fly-in open to all aviation enthusiasts.	21 – 22 November	Mt Beauty
Taste of Buller: Outdoor festival with food and wine stalls from around the region, live music and a fantastic variety of children’s amusements.	1 November	Mt Buller
Services in the Alpine Chapel. Christmas dinners around the Village and visits by Santa.	25 December	Mt Buller
Mt Buller chairlift open for scenic rides	26 December – 30 January	Mt Buller
Music on the mountains - Melbourne Conservatory Quartet	29 – 30 December	Mt Buller
Parties in lodges and hotels to see in the New Year	31 December	Mt Buller
The Merlin Ensemble: this group brings together a wealth of varied musical experiences from highly qualified and acclaimed musicians.	21 – 22 January	Mt Buller
Porsche Mt Buller Sprint: . Rivalling some of the most exciting motor sport challenges, this event sees competitors race up the Mt Buller tourist road	21 – 23 January	Mt Buller
Romantic dinners for Valentine's Day at Mt Buller.	14 February	Mt Buller
MTBA 2004/2005 National Series: Cross-country mountain bike event.	12 –13 March	Mt Buller
CRAIC Irish Music and Comedy Festival.	18 – 20 March	Mt Buller
The RT Edgar Alpine Mt Buller Art Prize and Exhibition; Film Festival; Easter Service in Alpine Chapel; Giant Easter Egg Hunt	25 – 28 March	Mt Buller
Motorbike tour through the Victorian Alps.	TBC	Dinner Plain

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The Succulent Wild Women Weekend: based on the book by SARK "Succulent Wild Woman".	6 – 7 November	Falls Creek
Christmas Eve Carols at Falls Creek	24 December	Falls Creek
Ripparoo Lodge at Falls Creek and local personality and chef Lyn Greene are famous for their Christmas lunches.	25 December	Falls Creek
A Taste of Falls Creek: annual food and wine festival perched high up in the alpine resort of Falls Creek.	1 November	Falls Creek
Australia Day: Help re-plant Snowgums and other native alpine plants in areas damaged by the bushfires of 2003, enjoy an Aussie BBQ with Aussie music, in the unique Australian Alps.	26 January	Falls Creek
Romantic Valentines Escape packages at Falls Creek for the weekend leading up to Valentines Day. Includes accommodation, sparkling wine, spa and saunas, massage	14 February	Falls Creek
Wellness Week @ Falls Creek	12 – 14 March	Falls Creek
The Falls Creek Easter Festival	25 –28 March	Falls Creek
Scenic chairlifts and mountain biking at Mt Hotham over the Christmas/New Year period.	Christmas to mid January	Mt Hotham
Nordic Walking: provides a whole body aerobic work out while reducing the stress on leg and hip joints. All gear and instruction provided free.	16 January	Lake Mountain
Free Alpine Tour - three hour tour of Lake Mountain's beautiful trails and summit.	23 January	Lake Mountain
As part of the Marysville's world's longest lunch weekend enjoy an evening of fine local wine, food and music.	12 March	Lake Mountain
Lake Mountain Roller Ski Championship events	TBC	Lake Mountain
Leadbeater Possum spotting	November TBC	Lake Mountain
Austin Healy Sprite Drivers Club time trial event	31 October	Lake Mountain

For details of any of the above events, go to the relevant alpine resort website.