



MEDIA RELEASE

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SALT VILLAGE RETAIL TRADE SOARS

Salt Village's multi-award winning retail precinct has defied the economic gloom to post a bumper Christmas and New Year trade, with sales up 15 per cent on the same time last year.

The local IGA, Saltbar Beachbar and Bistro and Salt Cellars bottle shop turned over a combined \$540,000 over the two week period commencing Christmas Eve, compared to about \$469,000 the year before.

The Christmas-New Year splurge saw guests at Saltbar wolf down just under two tons of chips, 640 pizzas, nearly half a ton of steak, 688 cakes, 2338 glasses of wine and 4000 litres of tap beer, to name just a few items on the festive menu.

The IGA also doubled its normal trade during the Christmas/ New Year fortnight, with customers snapping up 5471 bottles of soft drink and water, 3496 newspapers and magazines and more than 1,000 loaves of bread.

Ray Group CEO Tom Ray says the boost in business has set a strong precedent for the rest of the year, with trading anticipated to remain solid due to the relatively positive outlook for domestic tourism, continued growth of the village and the imminent announcement of new retailers.

"The retail figures for the recent Christmas and New Year break are outstanding, but it's not only the record holiday crowd that has helped increase trading," Mr Ray said.

"We actually started noticing an upswing in trade around September last year as interest rates began to fall.

"We're expecting that these improved retail figures will continue - historically low interest rates, combined with Salt Villages' comparatively affordable beachside property and the opening of the Tugun Bypass are underpinning our real estate sales, meaning there is a growing permanent population here to support the retailers.

"There are now an extra 51 homes at Salt Village compared to this time last year, meaning the community has grown by about 20 per cent.

"In addition, the drop in the Australian dollar will continue to boost domestic tourism as people opt to holiday at home rather than overseas, as demonstrated by Salt Village's Peppers Salt Resort and Spa and Mantra on Salt Beach achieving an increase of more than 2,000 room nights over Christmas/ New Year compared to last year.

“Salt Village’s resorts are perfectly positioned to capitalise on growth in visitor numbers, providing a further boost to the retail precinct.”

Mr Ray says Salt Village will soon be home to some exciting new retailers, which will give shoppers more variety.

The new retailers will replace the Cult surf shop, which closed its doors on Australia Day in line with Cult’s national strategy to centralise its retail operations to Burleigh headquarters, and focus more on third party retail distribution.

Mr Ray says Ray Group is already in advanced negotiations with two new tenants, both popular Byron Bay retailers – one specialising in food and the other in clothing and home-ware products.

“The development applications and designs are currently being put together, and will be lodged in the next few weeks,” Mr Ray said.

“We hope to be making an announcement about these exciting additions to our retail area in the near future.”

Over the last four years, Salt Village has posted land, house and apartment sales totalling more than \$400 million.

On completion, the 73 hectare masterplanned Salt Village community will comprise approximately 1500 homes, resort apartments, residential apartments and villas.

Situated at South Kingscliff, the community features 1.2 kilometres of beach frontage, 13.5 hectares of park and almost 7 kilometres of bicycle tracks and walkways.

Salt Village also features three major hotels – Peppers Salt Resort & Spa, Peppers Balé Salt Resort and Mantra on Salt Beach – along with a range of bars and restaurants, a Golden Door Day spa, retail outlets, Salt Surf Life Saving Club, IGA X-press supermarket and Salt Central Park beachfront amphitheatre.

Salt Village Sales and Information Centre is located on Bells Boulevard, Salt Village, South Kingscliff.

The Sales and Information Centre is open seven days and can be contacted on 1300 CALL SALT (1300 225 572) or visit www.saltvillage.com.au

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