Northern Territory tourism businesses are showcasing their wares at the largest international travel trade show in the southern hemisphere this week.

Chief Minister and Tourism Minister Adam Giles said he was today travelling to Melbourne to join with 27 local tourism businesses who are attending the annual Australian Tourism Exchange.

“The Australian Tourism Exchange is the country’s premier tourism trade event bringing Australian tourism businesses together with airlines, wholesalers, travel media and retailers from around the world,” he said.

“The trade expo gives our local operators the opportunity to showcase their products, gather market intelligence to develop new and improved experiences, meet with international buyers and negotiate new contracts.

“Tourism is the Territory’s largest employer, providing jobs for around 16,000 people so a strong NT delegation to this important event is crucial to growing tourism in the Territory.

“Each year around 1200 Australian seller delegates from approximately 460 companies, 600 key buyer delegates from over 36 countries, and over 50 international and Australian media attend this global event.

“I am delighted that we have the highest number of Territory exhibitors in five years representing all our regions from Darwin to Katherine, Kakadu, Arnhem Land, Alice Springs and Uluru.”

The NT section of the Australian Tourism Exchange has a booth dedicated to Tourism NT’s Virtual Journeys initiative, while renowned Central Australian chef, Athol Wark, is preparing NT inspired canapés at the NT Café throughout the event.

Mr Giles said the Territory Government had increased Tourism NT’s overall budget for 2015-16 to $50.4 million to help market the Northern Territory and its attractions.

“A thriving tourism industry will help to develop our regions, boost local businesses, create more jobs and grow the Territory economy,” he said.

“It’s all part of the CLP Government’s plan to drive the development of North Australia and build a $2.2 billion visitor economy by 2020.”

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