

# Tourism business flying

## Days on high after success

GRAEME and Ruth Day are floating on air.

Things just seem to keep happening for the couple and their Ipswich-based business, Floating Images.

For starters, they are one of four tourism operators in the greater Brisbane region to be showcased in the new Brisbane Visitor Information Centre in the Queen Street Mall.

A giant plasma screen displays the QT-sponsored balloon to international and domestic visitors for 24 hours, seven days a week - a fantastic promotion, according to Mr Day.

Population growth and industries moving to the area meant there were "huge tourism opportunities for south-east Queensland," he said.

Mr Day said he was also looking forward to Ipswich City Council's "See it, live it, do it" campaign, which would promote the business further. Currently the couple has one balloon, which carries 10 passengers at a time.

"By 2007 we are looking at doubling that capacity," Mr Day said.

In 10 years the couple hopes to have three balloons, meaning they could take 60 passengers at once. Mr Day said Floating Images was once again the only Ipswich Tourism operator ac-



Floating Images is one of four tourism operators in the greater Brisbane region to be showcased at the new Brisbane Visitor Information Centre. Pictured are owners Graeme and Ruth Day.

cepted to attend Oztalk 2006, hosted in Auckland, New Zealand, in April.

Oztalk is a travel industry expo that showcases Australian tourism products to travel industry wholesalers and retailers.

"New Zealanders are 30% of the market flying into Brisbane's airport and 94% are repeat business," Mr Day said.

"We're excited to see the results from our first Oztalk in April 2005 with a number of

bookings direct from the New Zealand retail travel agencies.

"Not only is it a great coup that the New Zealanders are flying over the heritage city of Ipswich and the scenic Rim region, they are driving up from their Gold Coast accommodation to experience city and country balloon flights."

If you want to go ballooning, be prepared to get up early (4.30am or 6.30am). Dinner and accommodation packages are about \$670 a couple.



Photo: Damien Dunlop N0090RGC