

MEDIA RELEASE

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RECORD DOMESTIC TRAVEL SPENDING IN NSW AND SYDNEY

Visitor spending has broken records in NSW, reaching \$31.3 billion for domestic overnight expenditure across the state in the year ending September 2024.

New Tourism Research Australia data shows Sydney also achieved its highest total domestic expenditure on record at \$15.8 billion.

NSW was the number one destination for Australians during the period, drawing 37.3 million domestic overnight visitors (up 3.2 per cent).

NSW received a total of 100.5 million domestic and international visitors during the period, who spent \$52.9 billion, up 5.8 per cent compared to the year ending September 2023.

Destination NSW Acting CEO Stephen Mahoney said: "NSW has the leading visitor economy in the nation and received the highest number of visitors, visitor nights and expenditure in the year ending September 2024.

"The NSW Government's Visitor Economy Strategy review has adopted an ambitious goal of \$91 billion in annual visitor economy expenditure by 2035 and its experience-led approach to tourism will ensure the state continues to draw visitors seeking authentic connections with local culture and natural wonders.

"Australians continue to prioritise travel despite cost-of-living pressures and NSW is their destination of choice.

"The meaningful moments that a trip to NSW brings through the diversity of visitor experiences on offer has ensured that visitors return over and over again."

Regional NSW continued to be the best performing destination across regional Australia in terms of visitors and nights, with 64.6 million international and domestic travellers visiting regional NSW in the year ending and spending \$26.2 billion across the period, an increase of 30.7 per cent compared with the year ending September 2019.

The North Coast celebrated the highest increase in domestic overnight visitor numbers during the period (up 5.8 per cent), while visitor expenditure was up 2.1 per cent to \$4.8 billion.

Let's Go Surfing Byron Bay Surf School Director Brenda Miley said: "The iconic road trip to Byron Bay is the quintessential Aussie summer experience. Instead of looking overseas for summer family trips, Aussies are turning to good, old-fashioned fun in the sun in beautiful Byron Bay.

"As pioneers of the surfing industry, we're so excited to see it. We've been enjoying the great surf and amazing community in Byron for years and we couldn't be more stoked about the growth in domestic tourism on the North Coast. And we're looking forward to a great summer season."

NSW was the top destination in the country for international visitors, nights and expenditure. There were 3.7 million international visitors to the state in the year ending September 2024 (up 18.4 per cent compared to the year ending September 2023). International visitation to the state

reached 84 per cent of pre-pandemic levels (compared to year ending September 2019), while the number of nights spent in NSW and expenditure exceeded 2019 levels.

International arrivals at Sydney Airport are predicted to surpass 2019 levels over summer, accelerated by Destination NSW's Aviation Attraction Fund, with new routes by Turkish Airlines and Juneyao Air landing at Sydney Airport this month.

Sydney Airport CEO Scott Charlton said: "Sydney Airport is preparing for its busiest Christmas season for international travel on record, with 300,000 more passengers forecast than the same period in 2019.

"Around 5.8 million domestic and international passengers are expected to travel through our terminals from 13 December 2024 to 27 January 2025, up 460,000 on last year."

FAST STATS

- In the year ending September 2024, NSW received 3.7 million international visitors. This is a significant increase of 18.4 per cent since the year ending September 2023 and just 15.7 per cent below the pre-COVID-19 (year ending September 2019) visitor numbers.
- In the year ending September 2024, there were 10.5 million international seats to NSW, an increase of 19.8 per cent (or up 1.7 million) as compared to the same period in 2023
- During the year ending September 2024, NSW achieved 50 per cent of the international expenditure target of the revised NSW Visitor Economy Strategy 2035.
- The year ending September 2024, NSW had an average monthly accommodation occupancy rate of 73.1 per cent (up 0.9 percentage points on the year ending September 2023) and an average daily rate (ADR) of \$257.9 (up 1.2 per cent on the year ending September 2023).
- China's recovery continues to improve with visitors at 57 per cent of year ending September 2019 level. Vietnam and South Korea led in visitor recovery (150 per cent and 141 per cent respectively), while Indonesia led in visitor nights recovery (182 per cent). South Korea and Indonesia led in expenditure recovery (151 per cent).
- NSW was the top destination for caravan and camping visitors nationally. In the year ending September 2024, five million international and domestic overnight visitors to NSW participated in a commercial and non-commercial caravan and camping experience across NSW. They stayed 19 million nights in NSW.
- In the year ending September 2024, 37.7 million international and domestic visitors to NSW engaged in nature and outdoor based activities during their trip.