

*For immediate release  
20 December 2023*

## The Whitsundays Continues to Captivate Visitors

The Whitsundays, Australia's premier holiday destination, continues to captivate visitors, showcasing continued growth in domestic tourism post-pandemic and promising signs of recovery in international travel. Updated National and International Visitor Survey (NVS and IVS) data reveals a vibrant picture for the region as of September 30, 2023.

### **Divine Domestic Destination**

- Domestic visitation thrives: 513,000 domestic travellers graced the Whitsundays shores, a 15.8% increase over the past three years.
- Interstate escapes: 266,000 interstate visitors escaped to The Whitsundays, an increase of 36.6% over the three-year trend.
- Shorter stays: Visitors stayed a slightly shorter time with average length of stay equating to 4.2 nights, down 1.3nights over the three-year trend.
- Spending Spree: Despite economic jitters and shorter length of stay, domestic visitor expenditure held strong at \$1.3 billion, a 28.4% increase over the three-year trend, and a testament to the Whitsundays' diverse offerings.
- Per-person spending remains strong at \$1,756, a 22% increase over the past three years.

### **International Appeal Grows**

- Recovery on track: International visitor numbers saw a welcome jump to 102,000, up from 68,000 in the previous quarter.
- Longer sojourns: International visitors are soaking it all in, with an average stay of 8.2 nights, an impressive 1.9 nights longer compared to 2019.
- UK leads the way: British travellers are back in force, with 26,000 arrivals, 90% of 2019 UK Visitor numbers for the same period.
- Emerging markets: North American and German markets continue to recover, with 10,000 and 14,000 arrivals respectively, reflecting a promising upward trend.

Tourism Whitsundays CEO Rick Hamilton commends the region's resilience and strong return in visitor numbers.

"While not record-breaking this time, these results solidify The Whitsundays' position as an unmatched holiday destination. We're seeing a slight shift in length of stay as economic factors influence holiday budgets and duration. However, the Overnight Visitor Expenditure and visitor numbers remain strong, showcasing the enduring appeal of our region. We're incredibly proud of our world-class operators and businesses who continue to deliver exceptional experiences for all visitors, regardless of their budget."

### **Solidifying Success**

The Whitsundays remains Queensland's tourism powerhouse, with one in three jobs directly linked to the industry. These latest results solidify the region's position as a must-visit destination, poised for continued growth as the global travel landscape evolves.

For more information on NVS and IVS data, please [click here](#).

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To view a Word Document of this release and supporting images, [click here](#).

To view The Whitsundays destination video, [click here](#).

# MEDIA RELEASE



THE HEART OF THE GREAT BARRIER REEF

**About Tourism Whitsundays:** *Tourism Whitsundays (TW) is the organisation responsible for destination marketing and visitor attraction for the Whitsunday region. It is the lead agency recognised by Tourism and Events Queensland and the Whitsunday Regional Council to lead the promotion of the region as a tourism destination. Tourism Whitsundays markets all aspects of the region including the Great Barrier Reef, Whitsunday Islands and Coast, accommodation, boating and sailing, fishing, touring, recreational activities, adventure, dining, shopping, weddings and honeymoons, conferencing and business events.*

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