

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Whitsundays Welcomes a Record Number of Domestic and International Visitors

The latest insights from the National and International Visitor Surveys (NVS and IVS) for the year ending June 2024 show a promising outlook for tourism in The Whitsundays, with the region achieving a new record of 968,000 combined international and domestic visitors—an increase of nearly 14% compared to pre-COVID figures.

International visitation has seen significant growth, with the region welcoming 181,000 visitors over the past year. This marks a recovery of 82.3% compared to 2019, showing a resurgence among international travellers eager to explore The Whitsundays. Total international visitor expenditure reached \$184.1 million, with average spending per visitor at \$1,016. International visitors spent an average of 6.4 nights in the region.

On the domestic front, total visitation reached 787,000. Domestic overnight expenditure has risen to \$1.4 billion, up 6.7% year-on-year. Intrastate visitation remains promising, with 501,000 visitors recorded, while interstate visitation is down by 12.5%, suggesting that interstate travellers are opting for international trips instead. Domestic visitors contributed a total of 3 million nights spent in the region, reinforcing The Whitsundays appeal as a holiday destination.

Aimee Cameron, Interim CEO of Tourism Whitsundays, is optimistic about the growth seen in the region particularly in international visitation which was slower to recover.

"We're thrilled to see The Whitsundays reach a record number of international and domestic visitors, with the growth in international visitors and the rise in domestic overnight expenditure highlighting our region's enduring appeal.

"This momentum reinforces our optimism for the outlook in our region. With one in three jobs directly linked to tourism, it highlights the importance of continuing to attract and support both domestic and international travellers to visit the beautiful Whitsundays."

Whitsunday Regional Council Mayor Ry Collins said he was proud of Council's role in partnering with Tourism Whitsunday in supporting the region's success with record visitor numbers.

"Our Whitsunday Coast Airport broke the 500,000 passenger barrier for the first time in 2023/24, a milestone that underscores its role as a key driver for the region's appeal as a world-class destination," Mayor Collins said.

"It is exciting times for our tourism industry with such strong leadership from Tourism Whitsunday and the willingness of all stakeholders to partner and ensure our region explores new tourism markets to remain a premium destination for domestic and international travellers."

International Insights

- **International visitation:** 181,000 visitors for the year ending June 2024, a recovery of 82.3% compared to 2019.
- **Visitor expenditure:** Total international spending reached \$184.1 million, an increase of 20.9% from 2019.
- **Average length of stay:** International visitors enjoyed an average stay of 6.4 nights, up 0.2% from 2019.
- **Source markets:** The UK remains a key market with 50,000 arrivals, while North America (USA and Canada) has achieved record numbers with 34,000 visitors to the region.

Domestic Insights

- **Visitation trends:** Total domestic traveller numbers to The Whitsundays reached 787,000, a 2.9% increase over the year.
- **Intrastate visitation:** Intrastate visitors totalled 501,000, up 14.5% year-on-year.
- **Interstate visitation:** Interstate visitation declined by 12.5%, totalling 287,000 visitors compared to the previous year.
- **Nights spent in the region:** Domestic visitors contributed a total of 3 million nights spent in the region, a decrease of 29.1%.
- **Average length of stay:** The average stay decreased by 1.7 nights to 3.8 nights, suggesting that while travellers still want to explore, they are seeking ways to manage costs amid living pressures.
- **Visitor expenditure:** Overnight visitor expenditure reached \$1.4 billion, an increase of 6.7% over the year.

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](#).

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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