

Domestic Tourism Snapshot

Year ending December 2019

Note

These results do not include the major impacts from the Australian bushfires or COVID-19, these impacts will be apparent in the March 2019 data.

New NVS methodology, 2019

Tourism Research Australia has transitioned NVS sampling to 100% mobile phone interviews (from 50% mobile phone/50% landline) to reflect current phone usage trends. The change in methodology has seen a break in series, so please use caution when comparing 2019 results with previous time periods.

Should you wish to access the updated estimates please refer to TEQ's [Tourism Data Explorer](#)

	Visitors	Annual ¹ change	Avg stay ²	Annual # change
Total Australia³	117,448,000	12.0%	3.6	0.0
Holiday	46,228,000	9.7%	3.7	0.0
VFR ⁴	39,944,000	12.8%	3.2	0.0
Business	27,041,000	15.3%	3.5	0.1

Intrastate	81,375,000	12.4%	2.9	0.0
Holiday	34,015,000	10.3%	2.9	-0.1
VFR	28,400,000	13.0%	2.5	0.0
Business	14,743,000	16.9%	3.4	0.1

Interstate	38,344,000	11.6%	4.7	0.0
Holiday	13,208,000	8.3%	5.5	0.1
VFR	11,936,000	12.8%	4.8	-0.1
Business	12,569,000	12.9%	3.4	0.2



Domestic travel grows nationally?

A record 117.4 million domestic trips were taken in the year ending December 2019, an increase of 12.0% over the year. These trips generated a record \$80.7b in expenditure, up by 12.4%. In comparison, domestic overnight visitor expenditure grew by 8.3% over the year in Queensland, 11.8% in New South Wales and 13.1% in Victoria. South Australia recorded the strongest growth (up 26.9% to \$5.2b). Intrastate travel led visitation growth (up 12.4% to 81.4b), compared to interstate travel (up 11.6% to 38.3m), but interstate spend (up 13.4% to \$37.4b) grew faster than intrastate spend (up 11.5% to \$43.3b).

All the states reached record levels of overnight visitor expenditure, except for Western Australia, Tasmania and the ACT. Much of the effect of the Australian bushfires and concerns about COVID-19 occurred after the year ending December 2019.

Benefiting from business?

Visitation records were reached for all domestic overnight travel categories. Business travel continues to be the fastest-growing of these categories due to continuously improving business sector conditions, with visitation increasing by 15.3% to 27.0m, and overnight visitor expenditure increasing by 15.2% to \$15.3b. Intrastate business travel growth was particularly strong with visitation increasing by 16.9% to 14.7m and intrastate spend grew by 16.4% to \$6.5b.

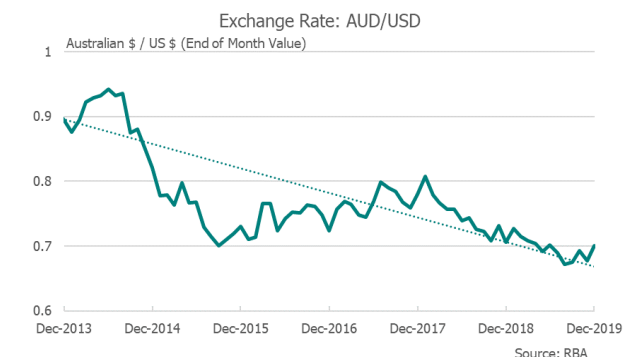
The improved business sector improvements are evidenced by company profits which have reached record highs, increasing 8.2% year-on-year. Growth was led by the mining sector (up 19.9% year-on-year) which supports a lot of business travel. The sector was supported by high commodity prices throughout the period. Non-mining business profits also rose, though far more modestly (up 1.5% year-on-year). (Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics).

Holiday visitation is the largest segment, accounting for 39% of visitation. Holiday visitation grew by 9.7% to 46.2m visitors who spent \$33.5b (up 11.3%). Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) visitation grew by 12.8% to 39.9m trips which supported \$12.6b in overnight visitor expenditure (up 11.1%).

The lower Australian dollar corresponds to a slowdown in growth in international outbound travel by Australian residents. The low Australian dollar may have deterred some Australians to travel overseas, and instead they elected to travel within Australia. (Source: Reserve Bank of Australia and ABS).

Domestic overnight visitor expenditure in Australia

	Expenditure	Annual change
Total Australia⁵	\$80,692.0m	12.4%
Holiday ⁶	\$33,528.6m	11.3%
VFR ⁶	\$12,585.6m	11.1%
Business ⁶	\$15,273.4m	15.2%



Domestic Tourism Snapshot

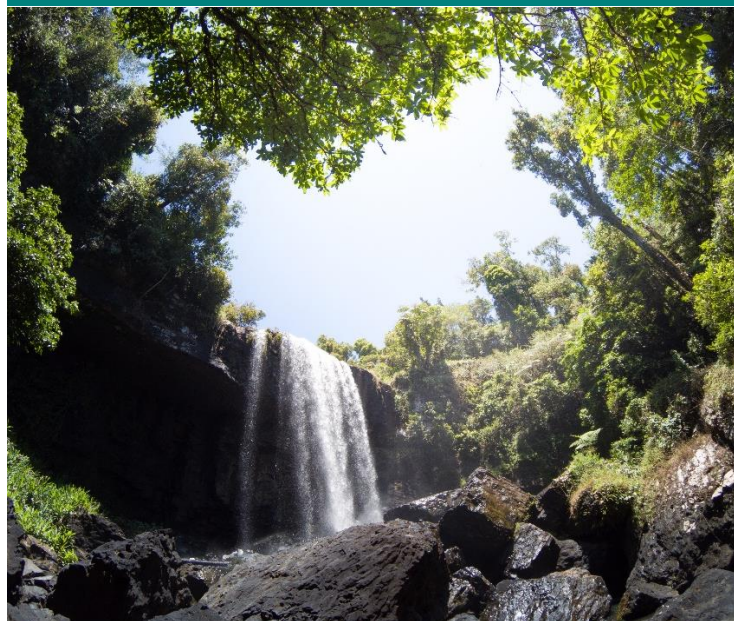
Year ending December 2019

Domestic overnight visitors in Queensland

	Visitors	Annual change	Avg stay	Annual # change
Total Queensland	25,914,000	9.6%	4.0	0.0
Holiday	10,008,000	7.9%	4.3	-0.1
VFR	8,945,000	14.7%	3.4	0.1
Business	6,127,000	12.4%	3.7	0.0

Intrastate	17,784,000	7.8%	3.3	0.1
Holiday	6,657,000	5.8%	3.1	-0.2
VFR	6,454,000	14.7%	2.7	0.1
Business	3,932,000	8.6%	4.0	0.3

Interstate	8,130,000	13.7%	5.5	-0.2
Holiday	3,351,000	12.4%	6.8	-0.1
VFR	2,491,000	14.7%	5.4	0.0
Business	2,195,000	20.1%	3.1	-0.5



Queensland's visitation on the up

Domestic overnight visitor expenditure grew by 8.3% to a record \$19.4b on the back of overnight visitation which grew by 9.6% to a record 25.9m visitors, although spend per visitor decreased by 1.2% to \$750 per visitor.

Visiting friends and relatives in Queensland

VFR led both expenditure and visitation growth. VFR overnight visitor expenditure grew by 11.2% to a record \$2.9b on the back of VFR visitation growing by 14.7% to a record 8.9m.

Holiday overnight visitor expenditure grew by 9.2% to a record \$8.8b on the back of visitation growth of 7.9% to a record 10.0m. The growth in holiday visitation was led by interstate visitation, which grew by 12.4% to a record 3.3m, while intrastate visitation grew by 7.8% to 17.8m.

Business overnight visitor expenditure grew by 6.8% to \$3.3b as business visitation grew by 12.4% to 6.1m.

Regional highs

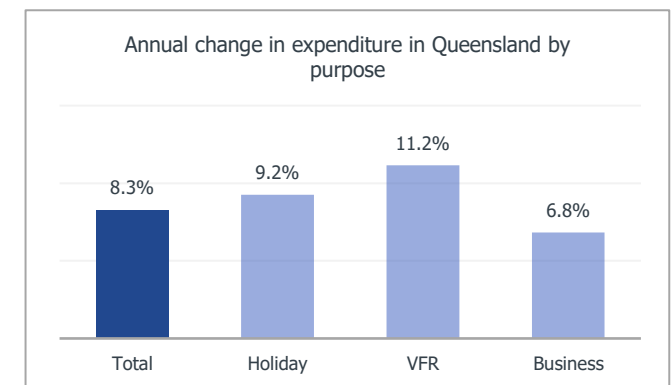
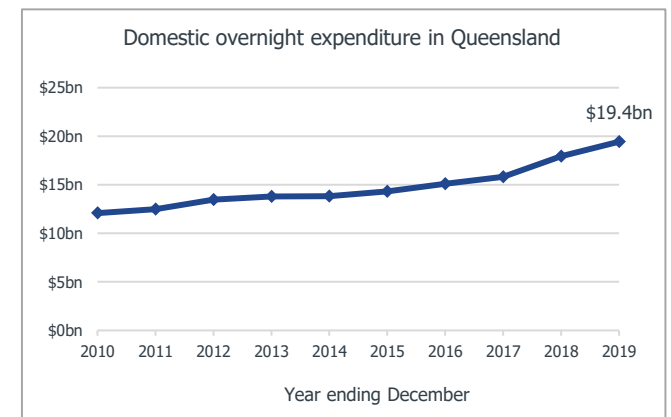
Four of Queensland's tourism regions reached record levels of visitor expenditure in the year ending December 2019: Brisbane (\$5.3b), Sunshine Coast (\$2.7b), Tropical North Queensland (\$2.5b) and Outback (\$745.1m).

Five of Queensland's tourism regions welcomed a record number of visitors. These were Brisbane (8.3m), Gold Coast (4.2m), Sunshine Coast (4.0m), Tropical North Queensland (2.2m) and Outback (1.1m).

The record visitation and expenditure mark the successful completion of the Year Of Outback Tourism.

Domestic overnight visitor expenditure in Queensland

	Expenditure	Annual change
Total Queensland	\$19,437.6m	8.3%
Holiday ⁶	\$8,814.1m	9.2%
VFR ⁶	\$2,887.9m	11.2%
Business ⁶	\$3,287.9m	6.8%



Domestic Tourism Snapshot

Year ending December 2019



Domestic visitors by region

	Visitors	Annual change	Holiday visitors	Annual change
Total Queensland	25,914,000	9.6%	10,008,000	7.9%
Brisbane	8,271,000	11.8%	2,378,000	12.0%
Gold Coast	4,202,000	11.1%	2,163,000	5.8%
Sunshine Coast	4,048,000	11.8%	2,210,000	12.2%
SQC ⁷	2,195,000	1.9%	642,000	11.5%
SGBR ⁸	2,317,000	9.8%	735,000	0.0%
Townsville	1,297,000	-2.9%	403,000	-13.1%
TNQ ⁹	2,218,000	9.6%	1,150,000	10.0%

	Visitors	3-yr trend ¹⁰	Holiday visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	767,000	8.6%	403,000	8.9%
Mackay	1,063,000	7.3%	207,000	3.7%
Outback	1,080,000	7.4%	297,000	-1.4%
Whitsundays	631,000	10.8%	394,000	10.0%

Expenditure in Queensland regions

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share	Spend per visitor
Total Queensland	\$19,437.6m	8.3%	100%	\$750
Brisbane	\$5,334.9m	17.2%	27.4%	\$645
Gold Coast	\$3,691.3m	5.3%	19.0%	\$878
Sunshine Coast	\$2,745.4m	16.8%	14.1%	\$678
SQC	\$810.2m	5.8%	4.2%	\$369
SGBR	\$1,197.6m	4.7%	6.2%	\$517
Townsville	\$789.8m	-8.6%	4.1%	\$609
TNQ	\$2,508.0m	6.7%	12.9%	\$1,131

	Expenditure	3-yr trend	Share	Spend per visitor
Fraser Coast	\$412.0m	13.2%	2.1%	\$537
Mackay	\$515.0m	13.6%	2.6%	\$484
Outback	\$745.1m	13.0%	3.8%	\$690
Whitsundays	\$542.8m	2.7%	2.8%	\$860

* STR Global surveys Queensland accommodation establishments with 10 or more rooms. STR Global's North Queensland region includes Cairns, Port Douglas and Palm Cove.

Brisbane

Domestic visitor expenditure grew by 17.2% to a record \$5.3b on the back of visitation growing by 11.8% to a record 8.3 million visitors and visitors spending more per night on average (up 6.0% to \$223 per night). Visitation in Brisbane reached records across all purposes. The growth in visitation was driven by VFR travel which increased by 15.9% to 3.3m, while holiday visitation grew by 12.0% to 2.4m and business visitation grew by 15.2% to 2.1m. Interstate visitation grew by 22.5% to a record 3.6m. The largest interstate markets for Brisbane are Sydney (up 21.5% to 1.1m), regional New South Wales (up 16.0% to 937,000) and Melbourne (up 18.6% to 655,000). Intrastate visitation grew by 4.7% to a record 4.7m, with the largest intrastate markets being Brisbane residents travelling within the region (up 5.0% to 1.5m) and the Sunshine Coast (up 28.4% to 898,000).

Gold Coast

Visitor expenditure grew by 5.3% to \$3.7b on the back of visitation which increased by 11.1% to a record 4.2m. The growth in visitation to the Gold Coast was due to VFR travel, which increased by 31.9% to a record 1.4m. Holiday travel (up 5.8% to 2.2m) also grew, while business decreased 7.0% to 501,000. The intrastate market drove growth (up 16.7% to 2.0m), particularly for VFR visitors (up 36.4% to a record 752,000) and business visitors (up 27.7% to 213,000). The largest intrastate market is Brisbane (up 15.2% to 1.4m). Interstate visitation grew by 6.4% over the year to 2.2m with particularly strong growth coming from Sydney (up 11.7% to 694,000) and Melbourne (up 6.5% to 423,000). Visitation decreased year-on-year in the September quarter, which may be related to bushfires that occurred around Northern NSW and Beechmont that may have deterred holiday and business travellers around the Gold Coast region, however holiday visitation has bounced back quite strongly in the December quarter to be in line with the same period in 2018.

Fraser Coast

Annual visitor expenditure grew by 13.2% on average over the past three years to \$412.0m. This reflected visitation growth of 8.6% on average over the same period, to reach 767,000 visitors, as well as a 7.8% average annual increase in spend per night. The holiday market grew by 8.9% on average to 403,000 and VFR grew by 3.3% on average over the past three years to 240,000. Intrastate visitation grew by 8.4% on average over the past three years to 579,000, while interstate visitation grew by 9.0% on average to 188,000.

Sunshine Coast

Sunshine Coast's overnight visitor expenditure grew by 16.8% to a record \$2.7b on the back of visitation which grew by 11.8% to a record 4.0m, and as visitors also spent more per night on average (up 2.6% to \$189 per night). Visitation grew across all travel purposes, including holiday (up 12.2% to a record 2.2m), VFR (up 11.2% to 1.4m) and business (up 13.3% to 360,000). Interstate visitation grew by 29.2% to a record 1.1m, thanks to interstate holiday visitation which grew 42.5% to a record 692,000. Interstate growth was particularly strong from Sydney (up 43.0% to 312,000), regional New South Wales (up 30.0% to 256,000) and Melbourne (up 26.6% to 248,000). Intrastate visitation grew by 6.3% to 2.9m, with the largest intrastate market being Brisbane (steady, down 0.9% to 1.8m). In the September quarter, visitation decreased year-on-year which may in part reflect bushfires that occurred around Peregian beach in early September, whereas visitation grew over the year to December.

Whitsundays

Annual visitor expenditure increased by 2.7% on average over the three years to \$542.8m on the back of visitation which grew by 10.8% on average over the same period to 631,000. Holiday visitation accounts for 62% of Whitsundays' domestic market, growing by 10.0% on average over the past three years to 394,000. The intrastate market (up 15.6% on average over three years to 400,000) drove growth, as interstate visitation grew by 3.4% on average to 231,000.

Tropical North Queensland (TNQ)

Overnight visitation to TNQ grew by 9.6% to a record 2.2m leading to overnight visitor expenditure growth of 6.7% to a record \$2.5b. Visitation growth was led by the business category (up 15.0% to 473,000) while VFR (up 12.0% to a record 540,000) and holiday (up 10.0% to a record 1.1m) also grew. Intrastate visitation (up 16.9% to a record 1.5m) drove growth as interstate visitation decreased 3.1% to 717,000. The largest intrastate markets are intraregional travel (up 19.5% to a record 739,000), Townsville (up 75.0% to 288,000) and Brisbane (up 2.9% to 263,000). The largest interstate markets are Victoria (up 6.3% to 323,000) and New South Wales (steady, down 0.5% to 288,000).

Intrastate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total intrastate	17,784,000	7.8%
Brisbane	4,666,000	4.7%
Gold Coast	2,026,000	16.7%
Sunshine Coast	2,932,000	6.3%
SQC	1,754,000	-2.5%
SGBR	2,022,000	9.9%
Townsville	1,065,000	1.1%
TNQ	1,501,000	16.9%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	579,000	8.4%
Mackay	928,000	7.8%
Outback	879,000	9.4%
Whitsundays	400,000	15.6%

Interstate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total interstate	8,130,000	13.7%
Brisbane	3,605,000	22.5%
Gold Coast	2,176,000	6.4%
Sunshine Coast	1,116,000	29.2%
SQC	441,000	24.5%
SGBR	295,000	9.0%
Townsville	233,000	-17.7%
TNQ	717,000	-3.1%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	188,000	9.0%
Mackay	136,000	4.3%
Outback	201,000	0.3%
Whitsundays	231,000	3.4%

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Domestic visitors by region

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	Visitors	3-yr trend ¹⁰	Holiday visitors	3-yr trend
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Mackay	1,063,000	7.3%	207,000	3.7%
Outback	1,080,000	7.4%	297,000	-1.4%
Whitsundays	631,000	10.8%	394,000	10.0%

Expenditure in Queensland regions

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share	Spend per visitor
Total Queensland	\$19,437.6m	8.3%	100%	\$750
Brisbane	\$5,334.9m	17.2%	27.4%	\$645
Gold Coast	\$3,691.3m	5.3%	19.0%	\$878
Sunshine Coast	\$2,745.4m	16.8%	14.1%	\$678
SQC	\$810.2m	5.8%	4.2%	\$369
SGBR	\$1,197.6m	4.7%	6.2%	\$517
Townsville	\$789.8m	-8.6%	4.1%	\$609
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Outback	\$745.1m	13.0%	3.8%	\$690
Whitsundays	\$542.8m	2.7%	2.8%	\$860

Townsville

Overnight visitor expenditure decreased 8.6% to \$789.8m, reflecting a 2.9% decline in visitation (to 1.3m) and a decrease in the average amount spent per night (down 10.6% to \$165 per night). Holiday visitors (down 13.1% to 403,000) drove the decrease in visitation, while VFR visitation also decreased (down 1.1% to 397,000). However, business visitation grew by 3.6% to 376,000. Intrastate visitation increased by 1.1% over the year to 1.1m largely thanks to growth in intraregional travel (up 18.4% to 392,000). Over the same period interstate travel decreased by 17.7% to 233,000 visitors.

Southern Great Barrier Reef (SGBR)

Overnight visitor expenditure decreased 4.7% to \$1.2b on the back of a 9.8% increase in visitation to 2.3m visitors. The increase in visitation was due to the VFR (up 33.1% to 693,000 visitors) and business (up 8.2% to 749,000) markets, while holiday visitation remained steady (unchanged, at 735,000). The increase in visitation was largely due to the intrastate market which grew by 9.9% to 2.0m. The largest two intrastate markets are Brisbane (up 26.4% to 640,000) and intraregional travel (up 5.8% to 658,000). Interstate grew by 9.0% to 295,000, including 153,000 visitors from New South Wales (up 16.7%).

Southern Queensland Country (SQC)

Overnight visitor expenditure grew by 5.8% to \$810.2m reflecting a 1.9% increase in visitation to 2.2m and an increase in the average amount spent per night (up 2.7% to \$137 per night). The increase in visitation was largely due to holiday visitation which grew 11.5% to 642,000, while VFR visitation also grew (up 2.4% to 898,000). Business visitation remained steady (down 0.2% to 522,000). The interstate market drove the increase in visitation, increasing 24.5% to a record 441,000 visitors, including 273,000 visitors from New South Wales (up 12.1%). Intrastate visitation decreased 2.5% to 1.8m. The largest intrastate markets are Brisbane (steady, down 0.9% to 860,000) and intraregional travel (up 15.5% to 398,000).

Mackay

Annual overnight visitor expenditure in Mackay grew by 13.6% on average over the three years to December 2019 to \$515.0m, reflecting annual visitation which grew by 7.3% over the same period to 1.1m, and visitors increasing their average length of stay by 4.0% on average to 4.1 nights. Business visitation accounts for 55% of domestic travel to the Mackay region which grew by 11.6% on average over the past three years to 583,000 visitors. Over this period, holiday visitation grew by 3.7% on average to 207,000 and VFR travel grew by 2.6% on average to 207,000. Domestic visitation to the Mackay region is predominantly intrastate, growing by 4.3% on average over the past three years to 136,000 visitors.

Outback

Overnight visitor expenditure in the Outback grew by 13.0% on average over the three years to December 2019 to a record \$745.1m on the back of visitation which grew by 7.4% on average over the same period. Visitors also increased their average length of stay by 11.7% to 5.4 nights. Growth in visitation was due to business travel which makes up 54% of the Outback market. Business visitation grew by 21.5% on average over the past three years to a record 582,000, while holiday visitation decreased (down 1.4% on average to 297,000) and VFR decreased 6.3% on average to 165,000. Intrastate visitation grew by 9.4% on average over the past three years to a record 879,000, while the interstate market remained steady (up 0.3%) on average over the same period to 201,000.



Intrastate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total intrastate	17,784,000	7.8%
Brisbane	4,666,000	4.7%
Gold Coast	2,026,000	16.7%
Sunshine Coast	2,932,000	6.3%
SQC	1,754,000	-2.5%
SGBR	2,022,000	9.9%
Townsville	1,065,000	1.1%
TNQ	1,501,000	16.9%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	579,000	8.4%
Mackay	928,000	7.8%
Outback	879,000	9.4%
Whitsundays	400,000	15.6%

Interstate visitation

	Visitors	Annual change
Total interstate	8,130,000	13.7%
Brisbane	3,605,000	22.5%
Gold Coast	2,176,000	6.4%
Sunshine Coast	1,116,000	29.2%
SQC	441,000	24.5%
SGBR	295,000	9.0%
Townsville	233,000	-17.7%
TNQ	717,000	-3.1%

	Visitors	3-yr trend
Fraser Coast	188,000	9.0%
Mackay	136,000	4.3%
Outback	201,000	0.3%
Whitsundays	231,000	3.4%

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State expenditure comparison

	Expenditure	Annual change	Share of expenditure	Spend per visitor
Total Australia	\$80,692.0m	12.4%	100%	\$687
Queensland	\$19,437.6m	8.3%	24.1%	\$750
New South Wales	\$23,664.2m	11.8%	29.3%	\$607
Victoria	\$16,984.5m	13.1%	21.0%	\$571
Other States	\$17,788.9m	18.6%	22.0%	\$741

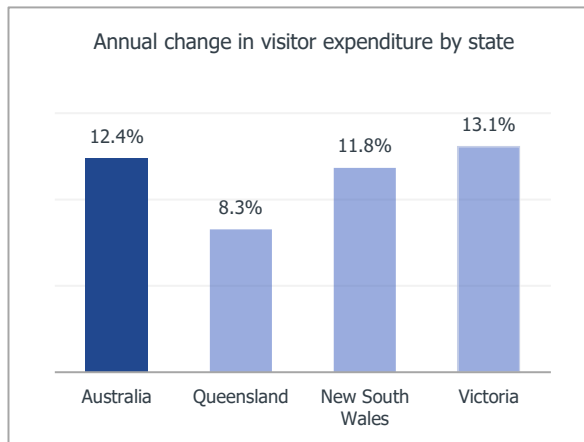
State visitation comparison

	Visitors	Annual Change	Avg stay	Annual # change
Total Australia	117,448,000	12.0%	3.6	0.0
Queensland	25,914,000	9.6%	4.0	0.0
New South Wales	38,968,000	11.9%	3.1	0.0
Victoria	29,748,000	13.5%	2.8	0.0
Other States	26,775,000	14.2%	4.1	0.0

Total holiday	46,228,000	9.7%	3.7	0.0
Queensland	10,008,000	7.9%	4.3	-0.1
New South Wales	14,795,000	7.3%	3.4	0.0
Victoria	12,453,000	10.8%	2.9	-0.1
Other States	10,559,000	13.7%	4.1	0.0

Total VFR	39,944,000	12.8%	3.2	0.0
Queensland	8,945,000	14.7%	3.4	0.1
New South Wales	14,058,000	16.2%	2.9	0.0
Victoria	10,283,000	13.2%	2.7	0.0
Other States	7,344,000	5.1%	3.5	-0.1

Total business	27,041,000	15.3%	3.5	0.1
Queensland	6,127,000	12.4%	3.7	0.0
New South Wales	8,335,000	11.8%	2.8	0.1
Victoria	5,814,000	16.1%	2.5	0.0
Other States	7,532,000	23.2%	4.4	0.2



Data Source:

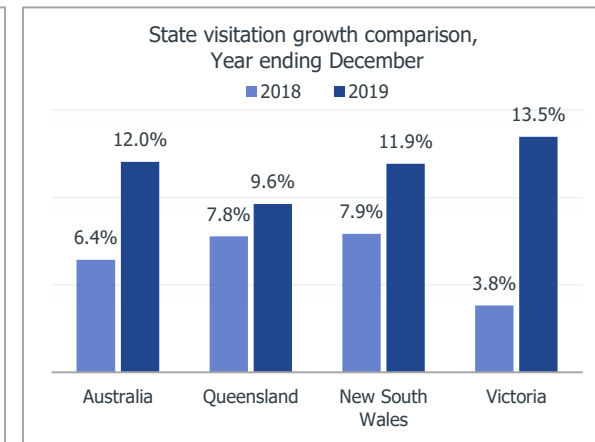
The information included in this report refers to overnight visitor data extracted from the National Visitor Survey (NVS), managed by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) a federally-funded body based in Canberra. Approximately 120,000 Australian residents aged 15+ are surveyed annually using a telephone interview. The statistics included in this report depict rolling annual data and are updated each quarter. The use of rolling annual data removes seasonality from the data allowing the measurement of real growth and decline.

For this publication, data has been adjusted to conform to Tourism and Events Queensland's (TEQ) tourism region definitions.

In 2019, TRA has transitioned to 100% mobile phone interviewing, after previously doing 50% of the sample from landlines. 97% of the Australian population aged 15 years or more owning a mobile phone. This change will improve the accuracy of national, state and territory estimates. Please visit tra.gov.au for more information on the methodology, back-casting process and impact on results.

Disclaimer:

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Notes:

1. Annual change refers to the percentage change between the year covered by this snapshot compared to the year prior.
2. Avg stay = Average length of stay.
3. Total includes visitors classified as 'Other' purpose. Total Australia includes visitors classified as 'Other/transit' i.e. not allocated to a state/territory.
4. VFR = Visiting friends or relatives.
5. Expenditure including airfares and long distance transport costs.
6. Expenditure excluding airfares and long distance transport costs.
7. SQC = Southern Queensland Country. Region is inclusive of the Toowoomba, South Burnett, Southern Downs and Western Downs regions.
8. SGBR = Southern Great Barrier Reef. Region is inclusive of Capricorn, Gladstone and Bundaberg.
9. TNQ = Tropical North Queensland.
10. Trend change refers to the percentage change between the three years to this year ended, compared to the three years to the prior year ending.

n/p = Not publishable

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