

CEO Commentary

Tasmanian Tourism Snapshot for the year ending March 2018



The latest set of results from the Tasmanian Tourism Snapshot for the year ending March 2018 reveal steady growth in visitor numbers with strong growth in total visitor spending and strong growth in average spend per night.

The figures reveal that for the year ending March 2018, total visitors were 1.28 million, up 2% from the previous year. While the average length of stay by all visitors decreased by 2 per cent, total expenditure increased by 7 per cent to a total of \$2.37 billion and average spend per night increased by 7 per cent.

The record spending by all visitors and an increased length of stay by holiday makers are positive developments as we move towards a strengthened focus on visitor yield and dispersal.

The profiles of visitors and their purpose for visiting identify that whilst the visiting friends and family (VFR) segment remains steady, holiday visitors are up 3%, their spending increased by 6% and the total number of nights spent by holiday visitors to Tasmania was 5.79 million up 8% from the previous year.

The overall growth rate of 2% in visitor numbers indicates a slowdown in growth which may be a reflection of a known sensitivity to pricing in the VFR market (which remains steady) which may have impacted travel decisions during this period.

The Tasmanian Tourism Snapshot typically includes information on international visitation to Australia and Tasmania from the International Visitor Survey (IVS). Unfortunately we have been informed by Tourism Research Australia that the results from the March 2018 IVS have been delayed. We are still waiting on a revised release date and will update the Tasmanian Tourism Snapshot when the figures are released.

I was pleased to catch up with many operators around the state at our recent Tourism Tasmania roadshow and information sessions. It was a great opportunity to share some of our work program and hear directly from our tourism operators about their thoughts and ideas. We are planning more sessions before the end of the year.

Last month, many of our team travelled to Launceston for the Tasmanian Tourism Conference organised by the Tourism Industry Council of Tasmania. The conference theme was Better

Together and it was a wonderful opportunity to hear from a great program of speakers including tourism industry operators as well as national and international tourism thinkers and leaders.

The conference provided an ideal platform to launch the T2I Mid-term Update which reflects the progress we are achieving towards our shared T2I goals. The update includes the government and industry's priorities to attract visitors, invest in quality visitor infrastructure, grow our air and sea access and build capability, capacity and community.

The Premier also announced at the conference that he has tasked the Premier's Visitor Economy Advisory Council with developing a new yield and dispersal Action Plan for Tasmania as a matter of priority. It will chart a course for how the benefits of our tourism boom can be realised in every region across Tasmania. Critically, the focus will be on how we can increase the amount visitors spend while they are here and how we can attract them to every region.

In other news, the eleventh iteration of Go Behind the Scenery – Feed Your Curious was launched in early May and is garnering a lot of attention. It is our longest campaign and is being delivered in key domestic markets in Sydney, Melbourne, South East Queensland and Adelaide for 17 weeks. It includes television, cinema, print and digital advertising as well as social media, PR, direct marketing, events and conversion partnerships.

The campaign's creative story invites the curious to go on a journey of discovery around Tasmania seeing stunning and surreal sights and encountering quirky characters. Building on previous campaigns it demonstrates that the true essence of Tasmania lies in what's beneath the surface.

Throughout the campaign consumers will be directed to gobehindthescenery.com.au where they will find inspirational content and practical information on planning a trip to Tasmania including suggested itineraries, feature articles and product and distribution partner deals.

There is also an industry toolkit with a range of campaign-aligned assets that are freely available for use. It includes information on an overview of campaign activity and strategy and a fact sheet that provides insights on how best to communicate the Tasmanian winter holiday experience. Videos are also available for use on marketing channels. Please visit the website to access the [Industry Toolkit](#).

Our team is also currently very busy preparing for TasTalk which will be held in Hobart at the end of June. TasTalk is our inaugural trade event held in partnership with the Australian Tourism Export Council.

It will be attended by Inbound Tour Operators and Tassie Specialist travel agents who will meet with the local tourism industry as well as having the opportunity to get out and experience some of the wonderful visitor experiences that our state has to offer.

Warm regards

John Fitzgerald
CEO, Tourism Tasmania

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