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Media release

Tourism spend a ray of sunshine as industry heads into summer

Total tourism spending is as strong as pre-pandemic levels, boding well for the economy as the tourism industry heads into its second summer of recovery.

The Monthly Regional Tourism Estimates (MRTes) by the Ministry, Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) shows that \$30 billion was spent by both international and domestic visitors in the year to September 2023, up \$6.6 billion on the year earlier (YE September 2022). In the same period pre-Covid, total spending was \$30.1 billion.

The spending data shows the tourism industry is strongly recovering, but also that the contribution of the industry was far reaching, said Rebecca Ingram, Chief Executive of Tourism Industry Aotearoa.

"The contribution of visitors makes a difference to communities right across the country. It's a signal of coffees being drunk, experiences being enjoyed and valuable employment in regions."

While total tourism spending is positive, international tourism spending is still recovering, at just over 76% of the level in 2019.

International visitors in the year to September 2023 spent \$9.3 billion, \$5.9b more than 2022 but less than the \$12.2 billion they spent over the same period in 2019.

Domestic visitors, on the other hand, spent \$20.7 billion in the year to September, up \$731 million on 2022 and stronger than the \$17.9b they spent in 2019.

The MRTes figures are a valuable data set which was stopped during the Covid-19 period. The reinstated MRTes fills the gap over the Covid-19 period up to the current September 2023 release.

Ingram said that the importance of tourism to Aotearoa New Zealand meant that good data was vital.

"The MRTes provide reliable indicator data on how tourism spending is going across the country, allowing regions to track progress over time and to understand their tourism customers," she said.

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“Quality data is vital for building this understanding, and the MRTes are an important part of the mix, so we welcome their return.”

Based on analysis of a vast number of electronic card transactions, the MRTes are produced for MBIE by Data Ventures, a Stats NZ subsidiary. They can be accessed on [MBIE's website](#)

For more information, please contact:

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism Industry Aotearoa is New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of New Zealand's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA is deeply involved in discussions on recovery and what the future of tourism in New Zealand will look like.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's [Tourism Sustainability Commitment](#) which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and the Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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