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Media release

Pandemic changes NZ domestic travel habits, satisfaction high

The pandemic has changed Kiwis' domestic travel habits and we are loving holidaying at home, new research shows.

TIA's latest **Domestic Visitor Satisfaction survey**, carried out by Angus & Associates, has found that in the second half of 2020, half of the New Zealanders who travelled domestically for leisure enjoyed a holiday or short break, despite Alert Level restrictions during some of that period. This was up from 42% in July-December 2019.

Other reasons for leisure travel were to visit family and friends, or to attend an event.

More New Zealanders visited Queenstown, Bay of Plenty and Central Otago compared to the same period in 2019, although a smaller proportion visited Northland and Wellington.

And we were more satisfied with our domestic travel, with 63% of us rating our trip a 9 or 10 out of 10 (up from 58%).

The TIA/Angus & Associates survey questioned 2196 New Zealanders on their perceptions of regional travel. It complements other domestic market research carried out by Tourism New Zealand.

"It's great that New Zealanders are heeding the call to get out and enjoy their own backyard. Not only are they helping to support thousands of jobs and businesses around the country, they are discovering why we have long been one of the world's most desirable destinations," TIA Chief Executive Chris Roberts says. "Our tourism product and our tourism operators are world-class."

In 2020, three in four New Zealanders took at least one overnight domestic leisure trip. Almost half of these trips were for a holiday or short break.

The average trip was for three nights, but almost a fifth of New Zealanders travelled for seven nights or more.

Because of the national lockdown that occurred during March and April 2020, the proportion of autumn trips dropped to 17% (from 31% in 2019) but we got moving again in the second half of the year.

Almost half of New Zealanders had their expectations exceeded on their most recent trip.

Those who travelled to Canterbury, The Coromandel or Northland showed the highest levels of satisfaction with their trip. Older travellers and those on longer trips tended to be the most satisfied.

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“With so much to see and do in every region, it’s not surprising that those who have more time to explore are the most satisfied with their experiences,” Mr Roberts says.

With border restrictions remaining in place for the foreseeable future, New Zealand’s tourism operators will be focused on continuing to deliver memorable experiences for kiwis.

To read the latest Domestic Visitor Satisfaction research, go to:

<https://tia.org.nz/resources-and-tools/insight/domestic-satisfaction-report/>

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KEY FACTS

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Tourism in New Zealand was a \$114.8 million per day industry. Tourism delivered more than \$48 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributed another \$66.7 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism was New Zealand’s biggest export earner, contributing \$17.5 billion or 20.1% of New Zealand’s foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2020).
- 13.6% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand worked directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 384,186 people were working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025 & Beyond](#) sustainable growth framework/Kaupapa Whakapakari Tāpoi has a vision of growing a sustainable tourism industry that benefits New Zealanders.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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