

Mackenzie Tourism Insights

April 2024



- April's data presents a positive picture for tourism in the Mackenzie. Overall accommodation usage remained on par with April '23, clearly outperforming the national average, and employment grew significantly by +13% in filled jobs in select tourism industries.
- The drop in domestic guest nights by -9% over April '23, likely caused by Easter falling into March this year, was balanced by a significant growth in international guest nights (+13%).
- While occupancy in commercial accommodation rose by +2%pt, occupancy in short-term rentals fell by -4%pt, indicating a potential preference for commercial accommodation by international visitors. Especially smaller Motels & apartments with 6-20 units did especially well with an occupancy rate of 90%.
- The average length of nights stayed by guests decreased slightly from 1.7 nights in April '23 to 1.6 nights in April '24. It remains unclear whether this trend is linked to an increased proportion of international guests, who may stay for shorter durations in the region, or if it reflects changes in visitor behaviour.
- Growth in select tourism industries was primarily driven by the 'Activity & Tour Services' industry followed by the 'Accommodation and Food & Beverage Services' industry, with filled jobs increasing by +16% and +13%, respectively, compared to April '23. Employment earnings across all select tourism industries showed growth ranging between +27% and +35%, with the highest increase observed in the 'Accommodation and Food & Beverage Services' industry.
- Occupancy in short-term rentals provides valuable insights into daily activity within the region. Overall, occupancy levels remained relatively stable throughout the month with a slight dip just before the start of the school holidays. Peak visitation occurred on the Thursday and Friday of ANZAC day weekend.
- Card spend data is now available up to March. Although a month behind the other data in the report, annual (12 month rolling) figures provide insight into longer term trends.
- Electronic card spending by international visitors surged by +66% compared to the year ending March '23, while spend by domestic visitors slightly declined by -4%.
- While accommodation usage by international visitors increased, year-end spending patterns among internationals indicate a rise in expenditures on 'Retail Food & Beverages' and 'Retail Fuel', causing 'Accommodation' to drop from first to third rank among product categories over a span of four months.

Note: The monthly Tourism Data Insights are provided by Vistr who are contracted by Mackenzie Tourism (part of Mackenzie District Council).