Visitor Experience and Expectations Research (VEER) 2023-24

August 2024

OVERVIEW

| Executive Summary | 4 |
|-----------------------------|----|
| Visitation | 6 |
| Motivation | 9 |
| Experience and Expectations | 12 |
| Value for Money | 17 |
| Advocacy | 22 |
| Aboriginal Tourism | 27 |
| Dark Sky Tourism | 34 |
| National Parks | 38 |
| Sustainability | 43 |
| Workforce | 45 |
| Appendix | 47 |



Background and Methodology

Objective

The research objective is to better understand visitor experiences in Western Australia. The survey measured visitors' experiences, expectations and general thoughts of WA and their holiday.

Sample

The survey involved 400 face to face intercept interviews with international and interstate visitors on holiday in WA for 2 or more nights, and WA residents who were currently on a WA short break/holiday or who had holidayed in WA in the past 6 weeks.

Timeline

Fieldwork was conducted by Thinkfield in 2023-24 in three waves over the course of the year from September 2023 to June 2024.

Travel restrictions

Due to travel restrictions in 2020 and 2021 it was not possible to survey interstate and international visitors so those years have been excluded from historical comparisons.

Comparison

Significant difference testing has been included throughout this report. The green circles/upward pointing arrows represent a significantly higher score and the red circles /downward pointing arrows represent a significantly lower score at 95% confidence level. Significant differences are shown between years and for source markets vs. total sample, as relevant.

○○ ①♡

| Sample Structure | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------|------------|------------|---------------|--|
| Interview Location | Total | Intrastate | Interstate | International | |
| Kings Park | 77 | 12 | 30 | 35 | |
| City of Perth | 51 | 6 | 21 | 24 | |
| Perth Visitor Centre | 3 | - | 2 | 1 | |
| Fremantle | 76 | 12 | 35 | 29 | |
| Mandurah | 50 | 36 | 3 | 11 | |
| Elizabeth Quay | 41 | 7 | 19 | 15 | |
| Other Perth | 102 | 38 | 18 | 46 | |
| Total | 400 | 111 | 128 | 161 | |





Executive Summary

Summary of Key Findings

- Visitors continue to be very satisfied with their holiday in Western Australia (WA). In 2023-24 nearly all (99%) rated their experience positively, with more than half (55%) describing their trip as 'excellent', although this is a drop of -8 percentage points from 2022-23.
- Expectations of nearly all visitors (99%) were therefore easily met in 2023-24, and almost two-thirds (65%) said their WA holiday surpassed their expectations.
- WA's natural assets, including its beaches and coastline, pristine natural environments and unique natural sights, as well as good food and wine are the main reason visitors choose to holiday in Western Australia. These also continue to be the main reason visitors would recommend WA as a holiday destination to their friends/family.
- Advocacy to recommend WA as a holiday destination is high, with a strong Net Promoter Score of 75, though this is down -9 points from 2022-23.
- In 2023-24, 62% of visitors rated their holiday as 'extremely good' or 'good' value for money. This is a decrease of -6 percentage points since 2022-23 but still a strong result compared to earlier years. One in twenty visitors (5%) said their WA holiday was poor value for money, with cost of accommodation and/or food and drinks most commonly cited as the reason.
- Aboriginal tourism in Western Australia continues to grow in interest to visitors, with almost nine in ten visitors (87%) saying they would be interested in experiencing Aboriginal tourism in Western Australia if it were easily accessible. Participation in Aboriginal tourism is increasing, with four in ten visitors (36%) actually having an Aboriginal tourism experience in 2023-24, up +8 percentage points from 2022-23 and the highest level recorded to date.
- Interest and participation in Dark Sky Tourism was measured for the first time in 2023-24. Interest in these experiences is very high at 95%, though participation is only at 24% which shows there is considerable opportunity here.
- National Parks were also a new area measured this year. Interest and participation in National Park experiences are both very high 71% and 97% respectively. Interest is highest in beach and water activities, whereas the activity with the highest participation is hiking, trekking, bush walking and trail running.
- The majority of visitors (79%) believe it is important for the places they go on holiday to operate sustainable practices. Tourism in WA was rated strongly in terms of operating in a sustainable way, with 67% of visitors rating it either 'fairly well' or 'very well'.
- Visitors were asked to rate their satisfaction with the tourism workforce in WA, and the results show high levels of satisfaction across knowledge, professionalism and helpfulness of the workforce (90% either fairly satisfied or very satisfied).



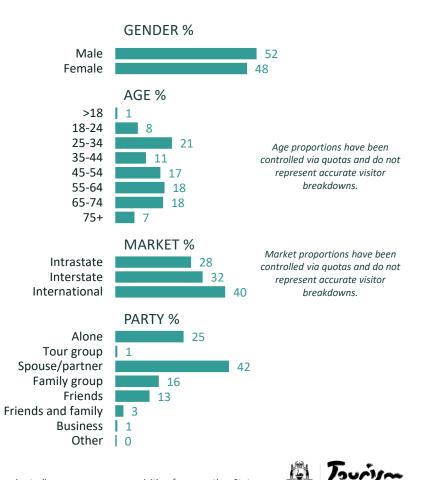


Visitation

Total Sample

Visitors to Western Australia surveyed in 2023-24 consisted of mainly couples, solo travellers and family groups. Split of genders was almost even.

For details of the split by market, see appendix pages 47-49.

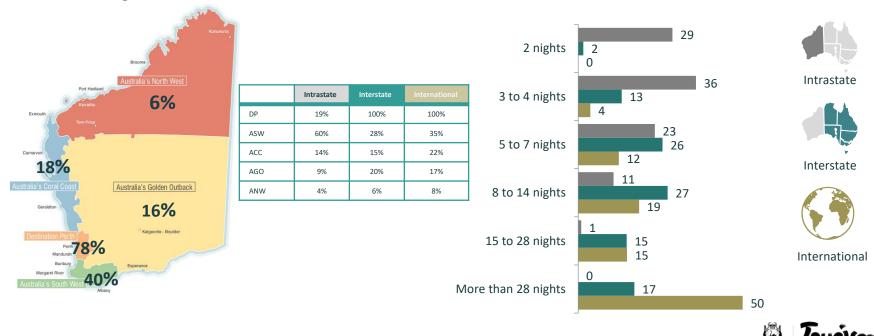


SOURCE: S6. Gender S5. Which of these age groups do you belong to? S8. Do you live in Western Australia or are you are you visiting from another State or overseas? S9. Who did you travel with on your most recent in WA? (Multiple Response).
BASE: All respondents n=400.

Trip Details

2023-24 Region Visited

Other than Perth, the South West was the most visited region in 2023-24, with two in five having visited the region. The length of stay among the visitor source markets varies; intrastate visitors were most likely to have taken breaks of up to one week (88%) while the majority of international visitors (84%) and six in ten (59%) interstate visitors were visiting WA for more than a week.



2023-24 Length of visit – by visitor type %

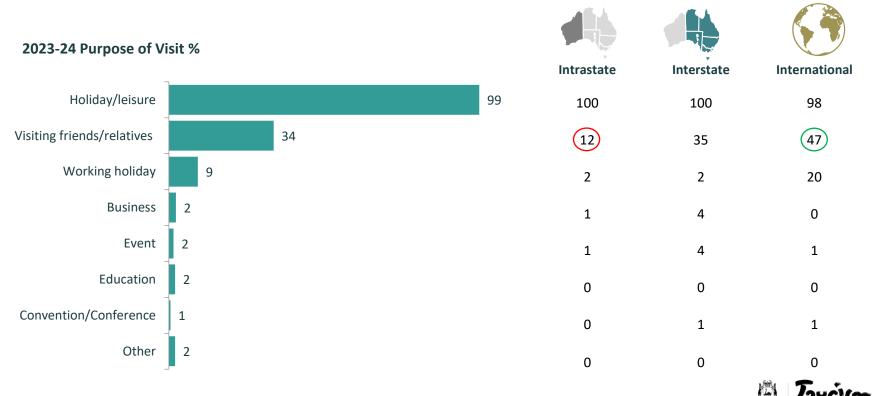
SOURCE: S7. Which of these regions have you stayed/ did you stay overnight on your current/ most recent holiday or break?
S3a. How many nights... Do you plan to be away from home? Do you plan to be in WA?
BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.



Motivation

Purpose of Visit

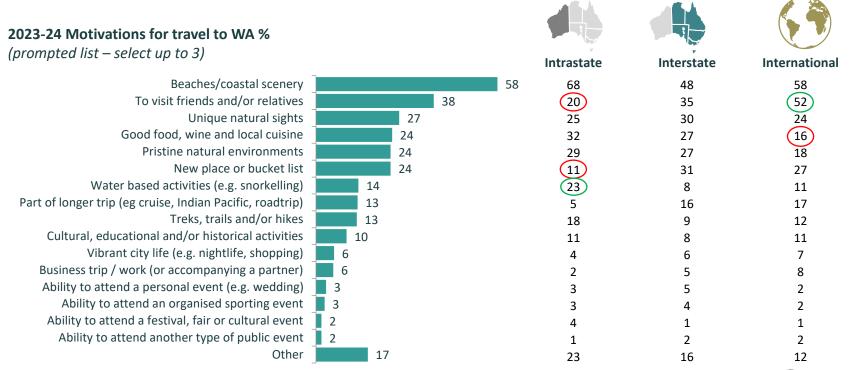
To qualify for the survey, all visitors had to be visiting WA for a holiday (or a working holiday, for international visitors). A third (35%) of interstate visitors and half (47%) of international visitors were also visiting friends and relatives living in Western Australia.



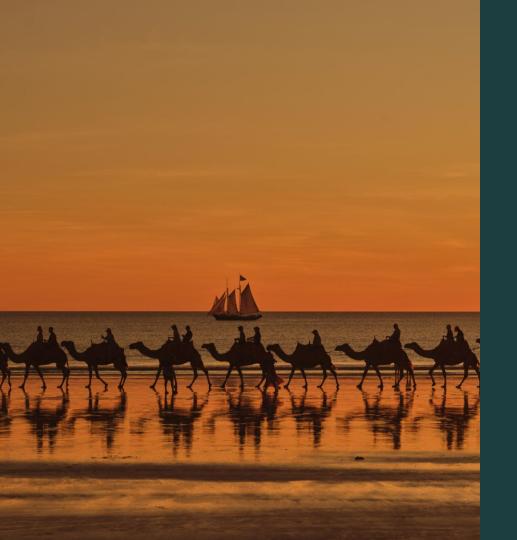
 SOURCE: S4. What are/what were your reasons for taking a short break or holiday in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Motivations for Travel to WA

The most important factors influencing the decision to travel to/in Western Australia among all visitor types were nature-based; the beaches and coastal scenery, unique natural sights, and pristine natural environments all in the top 5. Visiting friends/relatives is also a top factor for out-of-state visitors, as is visiting somewhere new / a bucket list destination.







Experience and Expectations

Rating of Overall Experience

Visitors to Western Australia continue to rate their holiday experience very highly. In 2023-24, 99% described their experience as 'excellent', 'very good', or 'good'.

Nett: Excellent/ Very Good / Good Nett: Excellent/ Not measured in Very Good 2020-21/2021-22 due to border closures VEER 2012-13 VEER 2013-14 VEER 2014-15 VEER 2015-16 VEER 2016-17 VEER 2017-18 VEER 2018-19 VEER 2019-20 VEER 2022-23 VEER 2023-24

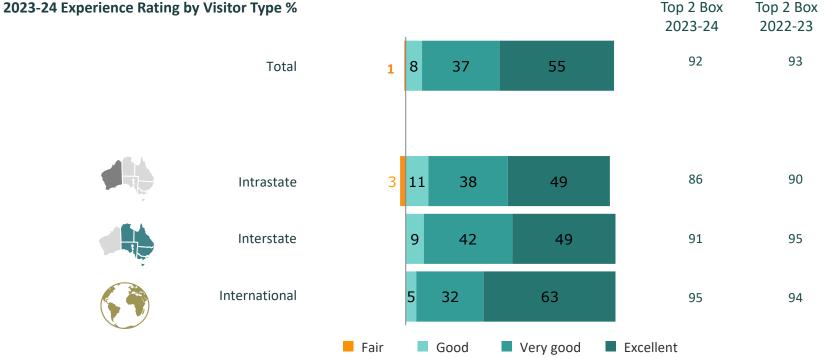
Overall experience rating by year %



 SOURCE: Q1. Using this scale, could you please rate your holiday in Western Australia. BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400, 2022-23 n=400, 2019-20 n=270, 2018-19 n=400; 2017-18 n=400; 2016-17 n=400; 2015-16 n=400; 2014-15 n=401; 2013-14 n=400; 2012-13 n=400

Experience by Source Market

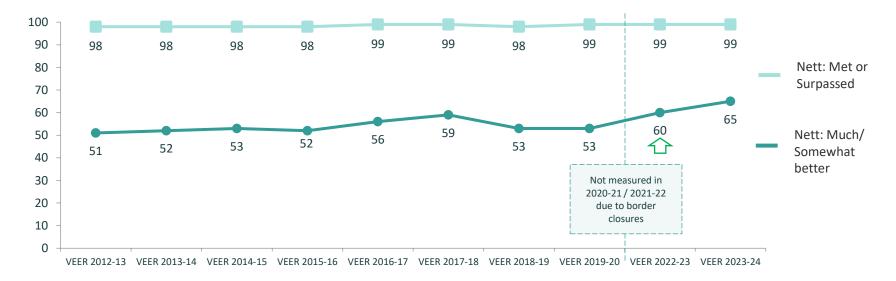
In 2023-24 there was little differentiation in experience among the source markets, with nine in ten intrastate, interstate, and international visitors rating their holiday in WA as 'excellent' or 'very good'.



 SOURCE: Q1. Using this scale, could you please rate your holiday in Western Australia. BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Expectations

Western Australian holidays surpassed the expectations of almost two-thirds of the State's visitors, with 65% stating that their holiday in WA was somewhat or much better than they had expected – the highest result measured over the last decade!



Overall experience rating by year %

Indicates statistically significant increase year on year

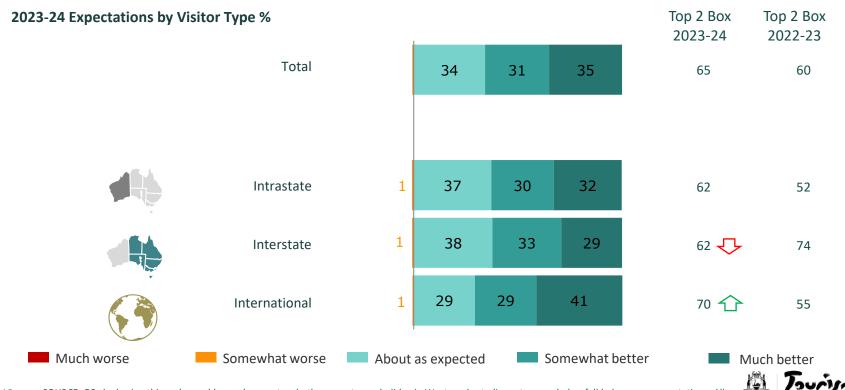
SOURCE: Q3. And using this scale, could you please rate whether or not your holiday in Western Australia met, exceeded or fell below your expectations.

BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400, 2022-23 n=400, 2019-20 n=270, 2018-19 n=400; 2017-18 n=400; 2016-17 n=400; 2015-16 n=400; 2014-15 n=401; 2013-14 n=400; 2012-13 n=400



Expectations by Source Market

International visitors were the most likely to say that their holiday in WA was even better than they had expected.



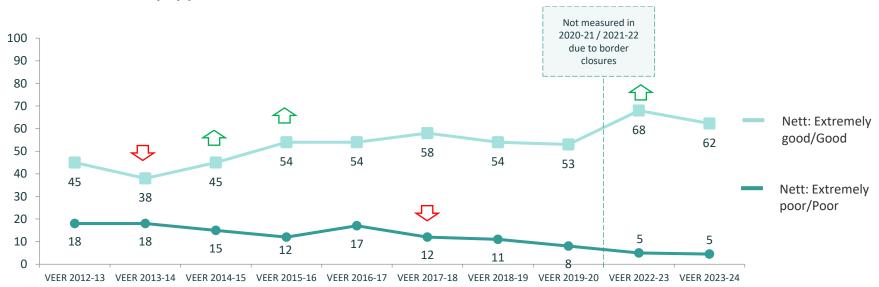
• SOURCE: Q3. And using this scale, could you please rate whether or not your holiday in Western Australia met, exceeded or fell below your expectations. All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.



Value for Money

Value for Money

Almost two thirds (62%) of all visitors surveyed in 2023-24 perceived their holiday to be 'good' or 'extremely good' value for money. Whilst below the record high of 2022-23, this is still a significant improvement on previous years. The number of visitors who perceive WA to be 'poor' or 'extremely poor' value for money remains very low (just 5% in 2023-24).



Overall value for money by year %

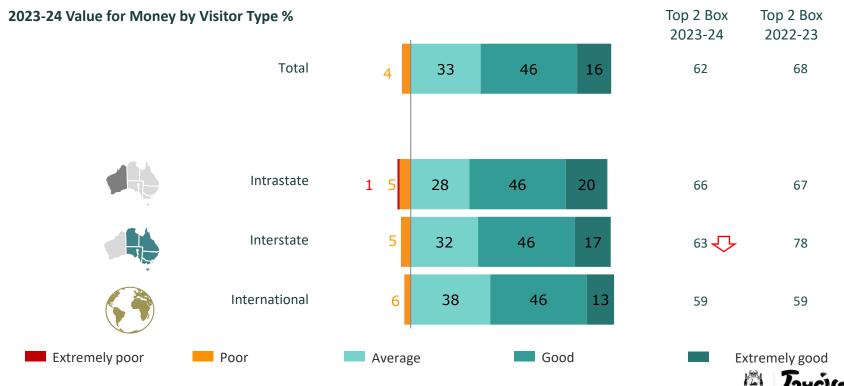
SOURCE: Q7. Now using this scale, could you please rate the overall value for money of your holiday in Western Australia?



BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400, 2022-23 n=400, 2019-20 n=270, 2018-19 n=400; 2017-18 n=400; 2016-17 n=400; 2015-16 n=400; 2014-15 n=401; 2013-14 n=400; 2012-13 n=400

Value for Money by Source Market

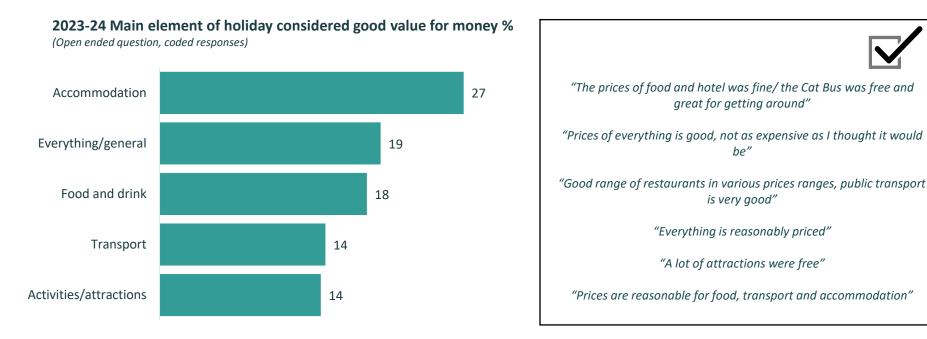
In 2023-24, intrastate visitors were the most likely to rate their holiday in WA as 'good' or 'extremely good' value for money. Ratings of value for money remained largely unchanged for intrastate and international visitors year on year. However, this metric dropped for interstate visitors with only 63% rating their holiday as value for money, down from 78% last year.



 SOURCE: Q7. Now using this scale, could you please rate the overall value for money of your holiday in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Reason for good value for money

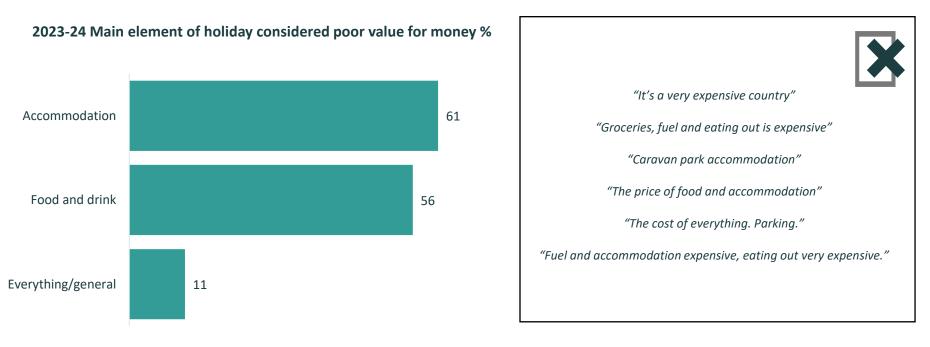
Amongst the 62% of visitors who rated their holiday as 'good' or 'extremely good' value for money, accommodation was the most common reason cited, followed by everything in general, then food and drinks.



Mentions 5% or more shown.

Reason for poor value for money

Amongst the one in twenty (5%) visitors who said their holiday in WA was poor value for money, the expense of accommodation followed by eating out and/or food and drinks were most commonly cited. (Note: small sample sizes; results are indicative only)



Mentions 5% or more shown.

 SOURCE: Q8. What was the main thing that was poor value? Why did you give that rating? BASE: Those who rated their holiday in WA as 'Poor' or "Extremely poor' value for money (n=18)



Advocacy

Net Promoter Score (NPS)

Net Promoter Score is a common metric used by businesses to monitor customer experience and loyalty. It is based on a question asking likelihood to recommend on a 0 - 10 scale, and subtracts those who are 'detractors' (0-6) from those who are 'promoters' (9-10) to give a score on a scale of -100 to +100.

Q: Using this scale, how likely are you to recommend Western Australia as a holiday destination to other people?



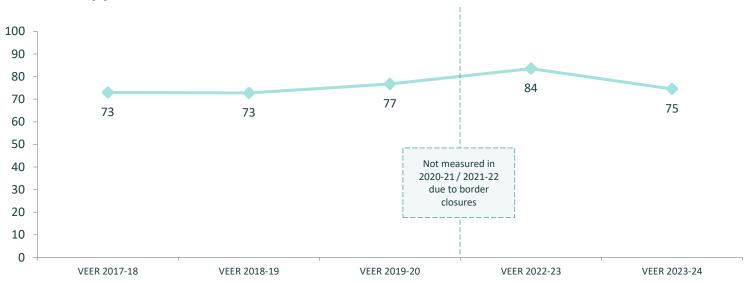
Promoters % - Detractors % = NPS



Net Promoter Score (NPS) over time

WA's NPS is very high at 75 out of a maximum possible score of 100. As a comparison, Australia's NPS in 2023 amongst international leisure visitors was 66*. After an increase in 2022-23, WA's NPS has dropped back in line with previous years.

Overall NPS by year %



*Source: Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey, 2023.

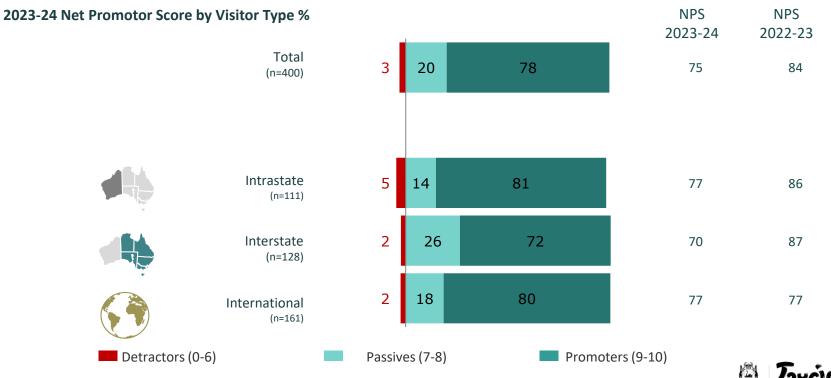
SOURCE: Q10. Using this scale, how likely are you to recommend Western Australia as a holiday destination to other people?

 BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400, 2022-23 n=400, 2019-20 n=270, 2018-19 n=400; 2017-18 n=400 Not asked prior to 2017-18.



Net Promoter Score (NPS) by market

The year on year drop in WA's NPS was driven by a drop in the proportion of 'promoters' (from 86% to 78%), and an uplift in 'passives' (from 13% to 20%). The number of 'detractors' remained stable (3% in 2023-24, compared to 2% in 2022-23). The drop in NPS was driven by the domestic market, while the international market NPS remained stable.



 SOURCE: Q10. Using this scale (1-10), how likely are you to recommend Western Australia as a holiday destination to other people? BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

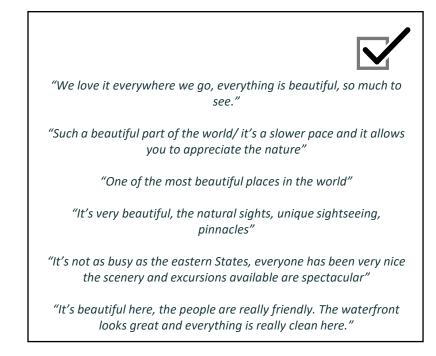
Reason for recommending WA

Amongst the 97% of visitors who were likely to recommend WA as a holiday destination, WA's natural beauty was the most common reason cited, followed by its weather/climate. Friendly people also rated highly.



Mentions 5% or more shown.

 SOURCE: Qx. What is the main reason you gave that score? BASE: All respondents n=400.







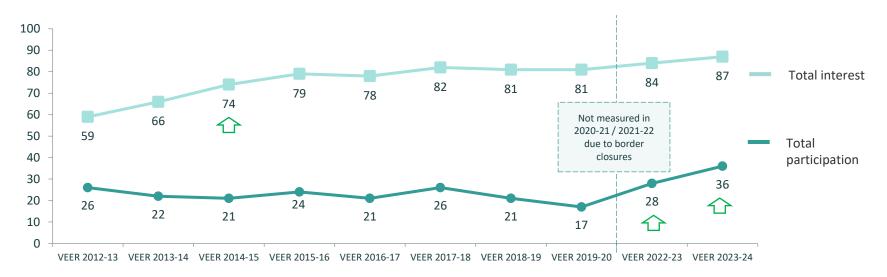
Aboriginal <u>T</u>ourism

Interest and participation in Aboriginal tourism

More than one third (36%) of visitors surveyed said they participated in an Aboriginal tourism experience; the highest proportion recorded since tracking began in 2012-13. However, visitor interest in Aboriginal tourism experiences continues to far outweigh participation, with almost nine in ten visitors (87%) in 2023-24 saying they would be interested in an Aboriginal tourism experience or activity if it were easily accessible in WA.

Overall interest and participation in Aboriginal tourism by year %

n=400

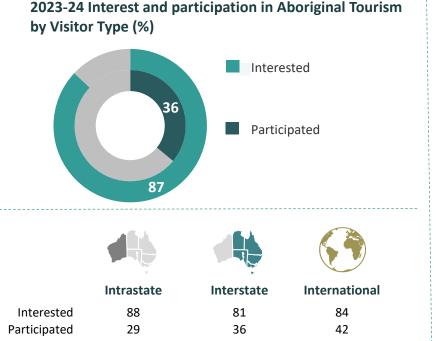


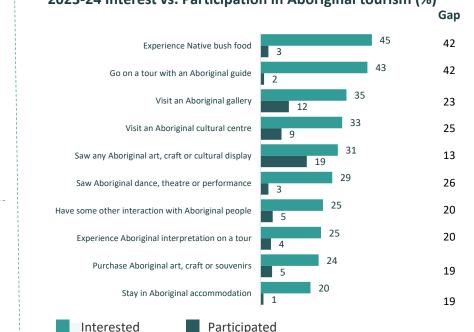
SOURCE: Q12. Which of the following Aboriginal activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? Note, "Experience Native bush food" was added to list of Aboriginal tourism experiences in 2017-18, which has resulted in a higher result for total interest from 2017-18. BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400. 2022-23 n=400. 2019-20 n=270. 2018-19 n=400: 2017-18 n=400: 2016-17 n=400: 2015-16 n=400: 2014-15 n=401: 2013-14 n=400: 2012-13



Interest and participation in Aboriginal tourism

The growth in participation in Aboriginal tourism was seen across all markets. "Experience Native Bush Food" and "Go on a tour with an Aboriginal guide" generate the most interest, and also the largest gap between interest and participation, indicating an opportunity for development. Seeing an Aboriginal art, craft or cultural display, and visiting Aboriginal galleries and cultural centres, were the most common activities undertaken.



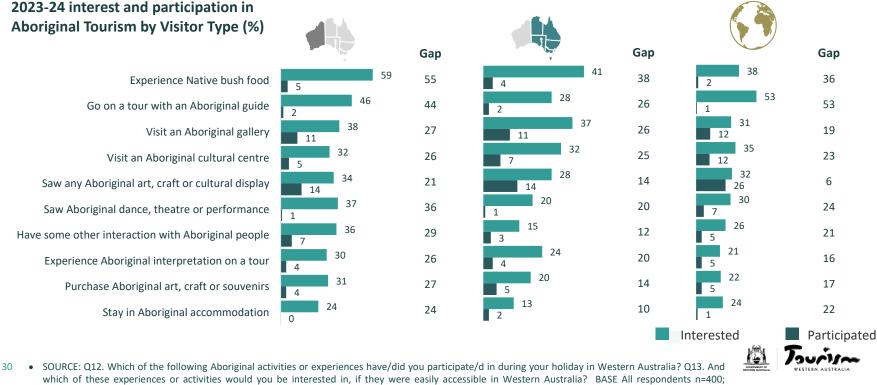


2023-24 Interest vs. Participation in Aboriginal tourism (%)

SOURCE: Q12. Which of the following Aboriginal activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=400.

Interest and participation in Aboriginal tourism

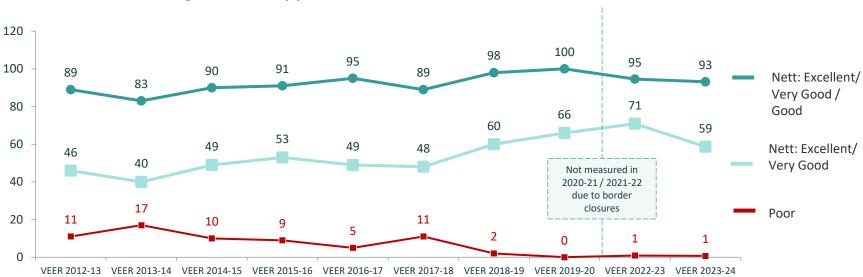
The gap between interest and participation is most significant for intrastate visitors; they are the most interested audience yet have the lowest participation rate. Across all visitor markets, the types of experiences visitors are more interested in is largely similar – with experiencing native bush food and going on a tour with an Aboriginal guide ranking in the top five most appealing experiences across all three markets.



Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Satisfaction of Aboriginal tourism

Those visitors who had participated in Aboriginal tourism continue to rate their experience highly. 59% rated their experience as 'excellent' or 'very good'.



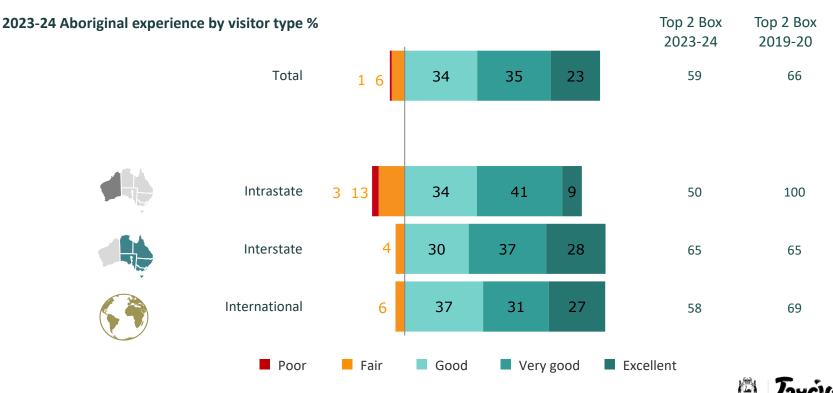
Overall satisfaction of Aboriginal tourism by year %



• SOURCE: Q14. And using this scale, can you please rate overall the Aboriginal activities and experiences you experienced in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents who participated in an Aboriginal activity, 2023-24 n=145, 2022-23 n=110, 2019-20 n=47, 2018-19 n=83; 2017-18 n=103; 2016-17 n=85; 2015-16 n=95; 2014-15 n=83; 2013-14 n=86; 2012-13 n=102.

Satisfaction of Aboriginal tourism by source market

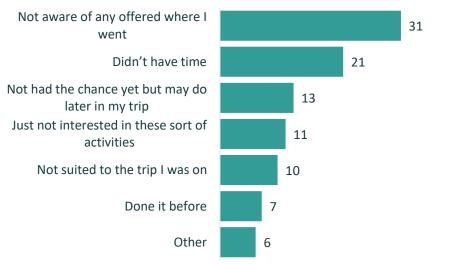
Indicatively, interstate visitors were most satisfied with their Aboriginal tourism experience(s), and intrastate visitors were least satisfied. *Note: small sample sizes; results are indicative only.*



• SOURCE: Q14. And using this scale, can you please rate overall the Aboriginal activities and experiences you experienced in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=145; Intrastate visitors n=32; Interstate visitors n=46; International visitors n=67.

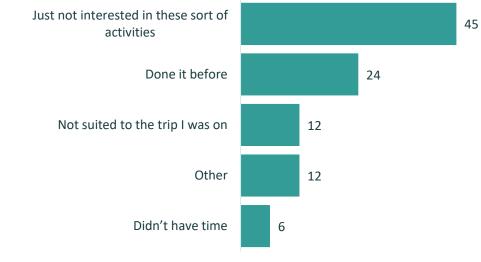
Non-participation in Aboriginal Tourism

Almost a third (31%) of those who did not participate in Aboriginal tourism said they were not aware of any such experiences being on offer where they went. Another 1 in 5 (21%) cited lack of time. For those who were not interested, their main reasons were a lack of enthusiasm and a feeling of 'been there, done that'. Upselling the breadth and uniqueness of experiences available in WA may help to overcome these barriers.



2023-24 Non-participation in Aboriginal Experience %

2023-24 Non-<u>interest</u> in Aboriginal Experience %



Mentions 5% or more shown.

SOURCE: Q16. Can I ask why you chose to not participate in Aboriginal activities or experiences? BASE: Respondents who had not participated in an Aboriginal activity n=291. Q17. Why are you not interested in participating in an Aboriginal activity or experience in Western Australia? BASE: Respondents who were not interested in an Aboriginal activity n=49.

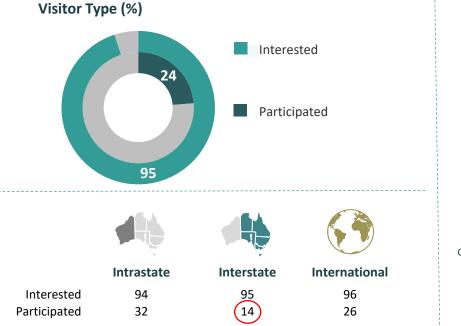


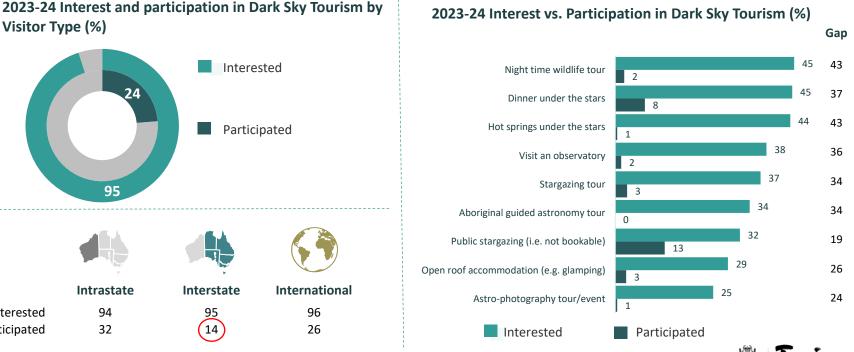


Dark Sky Tourism

Dark Sky Tourism

Interest in Dark Sky Tourism is very high across all markets, with almost all visitors (95%) stating they are interested in this type of experience/activity. Stargazing was the most common activity undertaken (public / non-bookable). "Night time wildlife tour" and "Dinner under the stars" generate the most interest and are also among the largest gaps between interest and participation, indicating a potential opportunity for development.

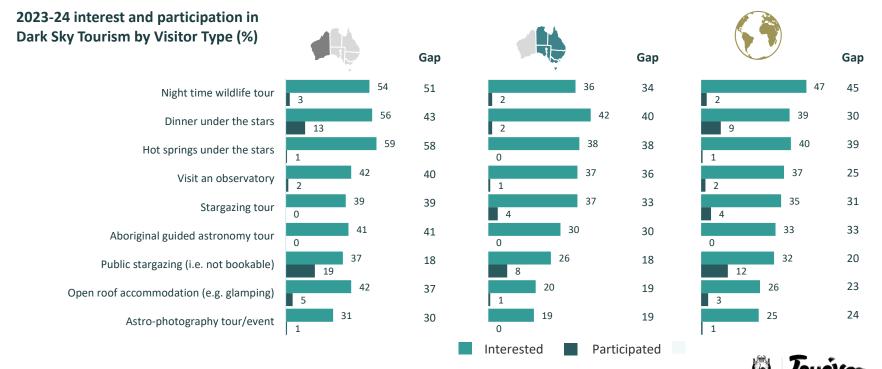




35 SOURCE: Q12DS. Which of the following Dark Sky activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13DS. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=400.

Dark Sky Tourism by Market

The gap between interest and participation is most significant for interstate visitors; they are the most interested audience yet see low participation. Participation is low across all markets despite high interest. Visitors from all markets are interested in similar types of experiences – with "night time wildlife tour" and "dinner under the stars" ranking in the top three most appealing experiences across all three markets.



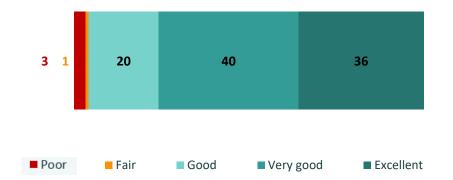
 SOURCE: Q12DS. Which of the following Dark Sky activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13DS. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? BASE All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Satisfaction of Dark Sky tourism

Those visitors who had participated in a Dark Sky activity rate their experience very highly. 76% rated their experience as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

(Note: as this was a new question this year, there is no comparison to prior years. Breakdown by market not possible due to small sample sizes.)

Overall satisfaction of Dark Sky tourism %





• SOURCE: Q14DS And using this scale, can you please rate overall the Dark Sky activities and experiences you experienced in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents who participated in a Dark Sky activity, 2023-24 n=95. Due to small sample size, ratings have not been a market breakdown has not been provided.



National Parks

National Parks

Participation in National Park activities is very high, particularly for International visitors where 8 in 10 participate in at least one of the activities listed. "Hiking, trekking, bush walking and trail running" has the highest participation closely followed by "beach/water activities". The largest gap between interest and participation is for "aboriginal cultural experience/tour" which is examined in detail in the earlier section on Aboriginal tourism experiences.



11

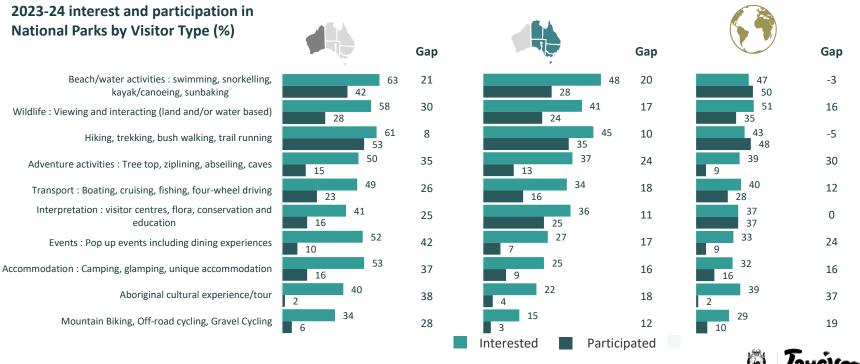
20

3

39 SOURCE: Q12. Which of the following National Park activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=400.

National Parks by Market

Viewing and interacting with wildlife is the number one most appealing National Park activity for international visitors, while beach/water activities ranks top for intrastate and interstate markets. The largest gap between interest and participation in National Park activities is seen for the interstate market.

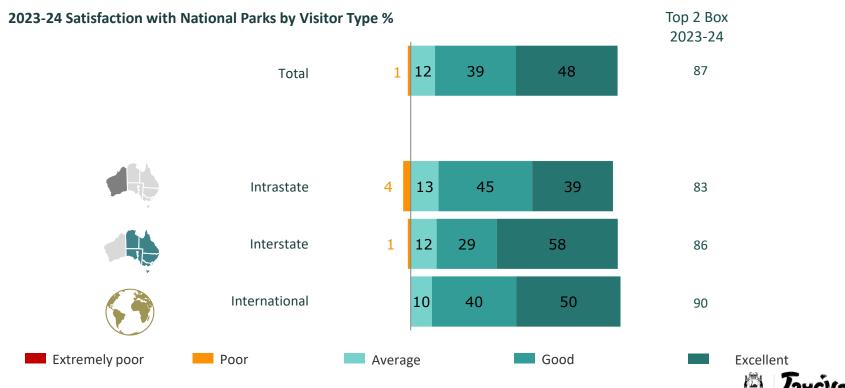


SOURCE: Q12NP. Which of the following National Park activities or experiences have/did you participate/d in during your holiday in Western Australia? Q13NP. And which of these experiences or activities would you be interested in, if they were easily accessible in Western Australia? BASE All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

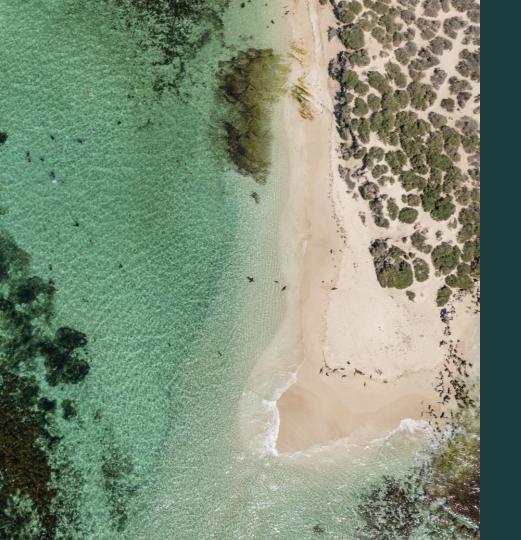
Satisfaction with National Parks by Source Market

In 2023-24, international visitors were the most likely to rate their satisfaction with National Parks as 'good' or 'excellent'. Satisfaction overall was very high.

(Note: as this was a new question in 2023-24, there is no comparison to prior years.)



 SOURCE: Q14. And using this scale, can you please rate overall the National Park activities and experiences you experienced in Western Australia? BASE: All respondents n=285; Intrastate visitors n=83; Interstate visitors n=73; International visitors n=129.



Sustainability

Importance of Sustainability by Source Market

The majority of visitors (79%) believe it is important for the places they go on holiday to operate sustainable practices. Interstate visitors were most likely to say it is important (83%).

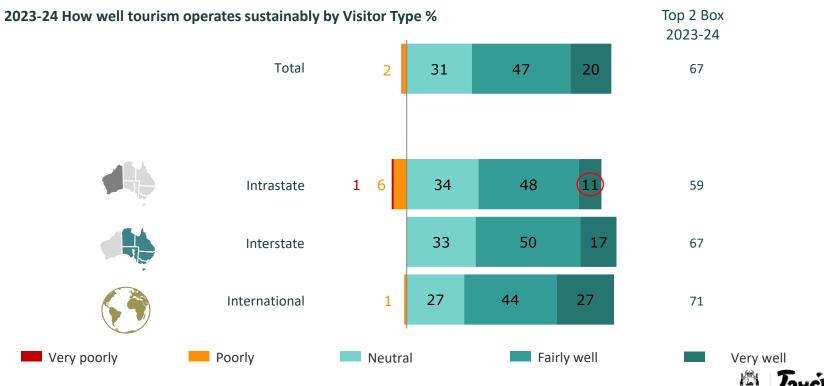
(Note: as this was a new question in 2023-24, there is no comparison to prior years.)



 SOURCE: Qxx1. Using this scale, how important is it to you that places you go on holiday operate sustainable practices? BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.

Rating of WA Tourism Sustainability

Two-thirds (67%) of visitors believe tourism in WA operates sustainably 'fairly well' or 'very well', while a further third gave a neutral rating. Intrastate visitors were least likely to believe tourism in WA operates sustainably.



 SOURCE: Qxx1. Using this scale, how well do you believe tourism in Western Australian operates sustainably? BASE: All respondents n=400; Intrastate visitors n=111; Interstate visitors n=128; International visitors n=161.



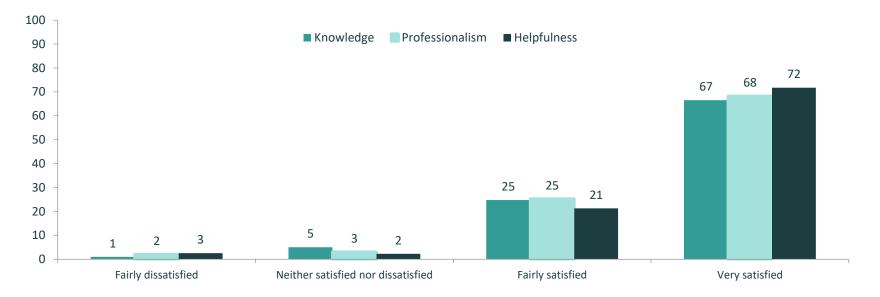
Workforce

Satisfaction with workforce

Satisfaction with the tourism workforce is generally high with over 90% of visitors fairly satisfied or very satisfied with every attribute (knowledge, professionalism, and helpfulness). Satisfaction is high across all markets with the highest experienced by overseas visitors. (Note: as this was a new question this year, there is no comparison to prior years.)

Satisfaction by workforce attribute %

46



SOURCE: Qxx3. How satisfied were you with the staff/workforce you engaged with during your holiday in Western Australia? • BASE: All respondents, 2023-24 n=400



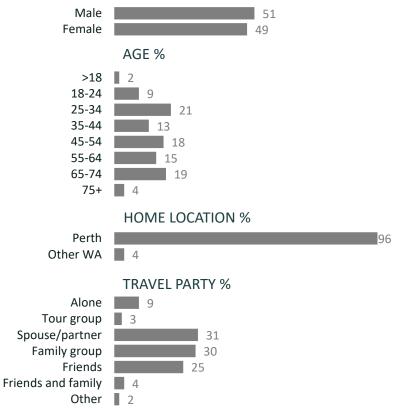


Appendix



Intrastate Sample

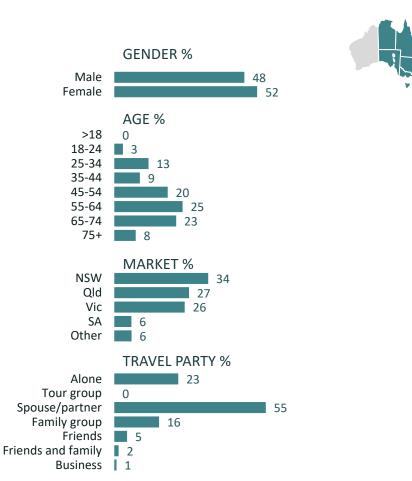
Of all visitors that were surveyed, intrastate visitors contained the highest proportion of tour groups and family groups. Majority of intrastate visitors surveyed were from metropolitan Perth.



GENDER %

SOURCE: S6. Gender S5. Which of these age groups do you belong to? S8. Do you live in Western Australia or are you are you visiting from another State or overseas? S9. Who did you travel with on your most recent in WA? (Multiple Response).
BASE: Intrastate visitors n=111





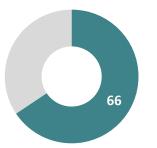


SOURCE: S6. Gender S5. Which of these age groups do you belong to? S8. Do you live in Western Australia or are you are you visiting from another State or overseas? S9. Who did you travel with on your most recent in WA? (Multiple Response).
BASE: Intrastate visitors n=128

Interstate Sample

Interstate visitors contained the highest proportion of couples and the largest portion fell into the 55+ age category. Visitors from interstate surveyed were mainly from New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria, and two thirds (66%) were repeat visitors to Western Australia.

REPEAT VISITORS %





International Sample

International visitors contained the highest proportion of solo travellers, as well as a large number of couples. Visitors tended to be on the two ends of the age spectrum (under 35 years old and over 55 years old). International visitors surveyed were mostly from the UK or other European regions and over a third (35%) were repeat visitors to Western Australia.



