

First Peoples tourism visitor profile

Year ending December 2023



Prepared by Tourism and Events Victoria
Released January 2025



First Peoples tourism

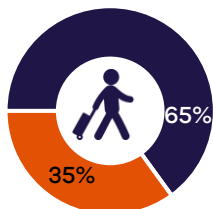
Year ending December 2023

In 2023, overnight visitors experiencing a First Peoples activity spent \$1.3 billion in total tourism expenditure in Victoria. This was from 511,000 visitors to Victoria who included First Peoples activities on their overnight trip. This equates to 2% of visitors which aligns with the national average. Notably, almost two-thirds (65%) of these visitors to Victoria were international overnight visitors.*

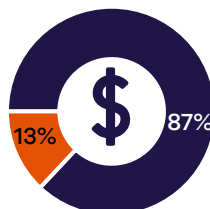


- International and domestic visitors to Victoria tend to engage only superficially with First Peoples and culture while travelling in Australia, choosing to view displays, performances and galleries rather than participating in more immersive experiences like visiting First People communities and sites or going on guided tours.
- A significant opportunity exists to encourage more international visitors to engage in First Peoples experiences in Victoria. In 2023, there were an estimated 51,500 who cited Indigenous experiences as a reason for choosing Australia for a holiday, and they visited Victoria, however 42% (21,800) did not end up including any First Peoples activities on their trip.

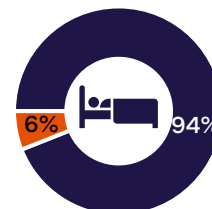
■ International overnight visitors
■ Domestic overnight visitors



511,200
overnight visitors



\$1.3 b
overnight visitor spend



9.1 m nights
visitor nights



International overnight

330,700

▼ -21% 19/23

16% of all international overnight visitors to Vic

\$1.1 b

▲ 6% 19/23

18% of all international overnight spend in Vic

8.6 m

▼ -1% 19/23

17% of all international visitor nights to Vic



Domestic overnight

180,500

▲ 16% 19/23
▲ 27% 22/23

0.6% of all domestic overnight visitors to/ within Vic

\$169m

▲ 67% 19/23
▲ 26% 22/23

0.8% of all domestic overnight spend in Vic

512k

▼ -0.1% 19/23
▲ 7% 22/23

0.6% of all domestic visitor nights to/within Vic

* figures include domestic overnight visitors with the activity in Victoria, as well as international overnight visitors with the activity on their trip to/within Australia.
 Note: "First Peoples activity visitor" = any visitor who reported including a First Peoples activity on their trip – refer to the [Notes section](#) on page 12 for a list of included activities.

First Peoples tourism in Victoria

In 2023, 2.2 million visitors included First Peoples activities on their overnight trip in Australia.



1.2 m (1.1%) domestic overnight visitors
970k (15%) international overnight visitors

30.5 million overnight visitors to/within Victoria in 2023



First Peoples activities in Victoria

180k (0.6%)

Domestic overnight visitors who experienced a First Peoples activity in Victoria

154k (8%)

international overnight visitors who experienced a First Peoples activity in Victoria



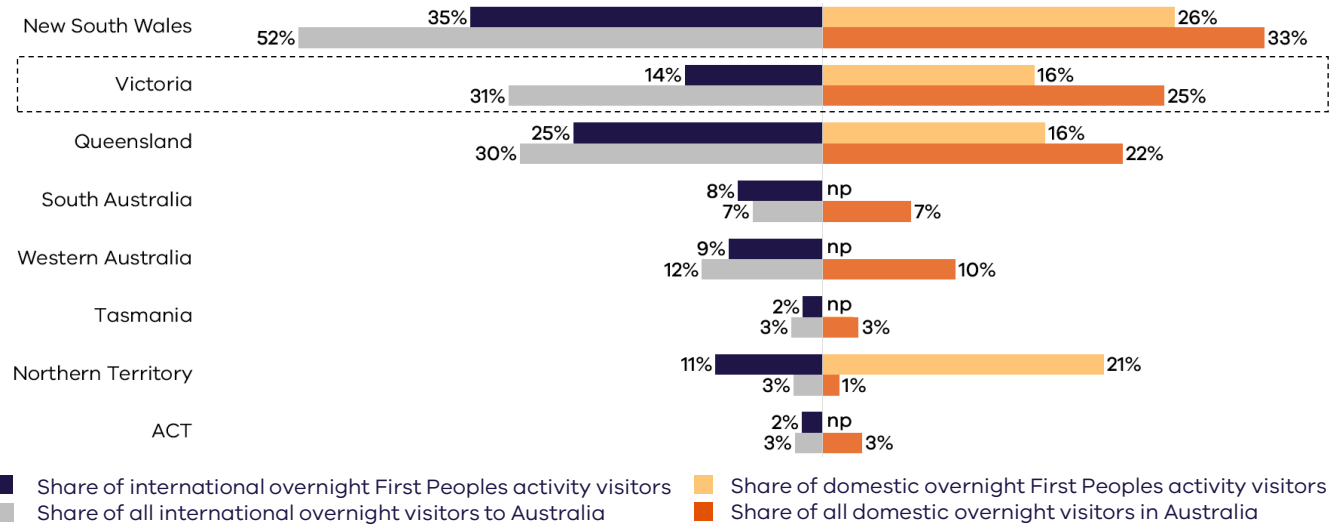
Share of First Peoples activity visitors

International overnight visitors to Australia

International First Peoples activity visitors are greatly underrepresented in Victoria. In the year ending December 2023, Victoria received 31% of all international overnight visitors to Australia, however only 14% of those who included a First Peoples experience on their trip. Conversely, the Northern Territory received only 3% of all international overnight visitors to Australia, however 11% of international First Peoples activity visitors.

Domestic overnight visitors in Australia

Domestic overnight First Peoples activity visitors are underrepresented in Victoria. In the year ending December 2023, Victoria received 25% of all domestic overnight visitors in Australia, however only 16% of those who included a First Peoples experience on their trip. Conversely, the Northern Territory received only 1% of all domestic overnight visitors in Australia however 21% of domestic overnight First Peoples activity visitors.



'np' = percentage based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds;

Note visitors may over add to more than 100% as visitors can stay in more than one state or territory on their trip within Australia.

First Peoples activities around Australia

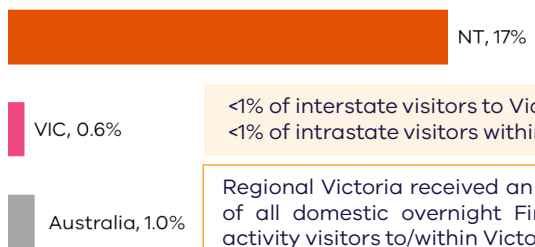
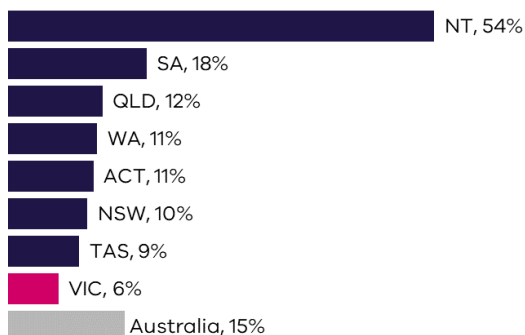
International overnight visitors to Australia

In the year ending December 2023, 15% of all international overnight visitors to Australia included a First Peoples experience on their trip. Victoria had the lowest rate of participation in First Peoples activities in the state or territory (6% of international overnight visitors to the state), while Northern Territory had the highest rate (54% of international overnight visitors to the territory).

Domestic overnight visitors in Australia

In the year ending December 2023, only 1.0% of domestic overnight visitors around Australia included a First Peoples activity on their trip.

Northern Territory had the highest rate (17% of domestic overnight visitors to/within the territory), with all other states and territories at approximately a 1% rate of participation.



^4 year average based on 2018, 2019, 2022 and 2023

Drivers of international holidays

First Peoples experiences as a driver of international holidays

International visitors who included a First Peoples activity on their visit to Victoria

17% of international overnight visitors who included a First Peoples activity on their trip to Victoria, gave "Native or Indigenous experiences" as one of the reasons they chose to visit Australia.

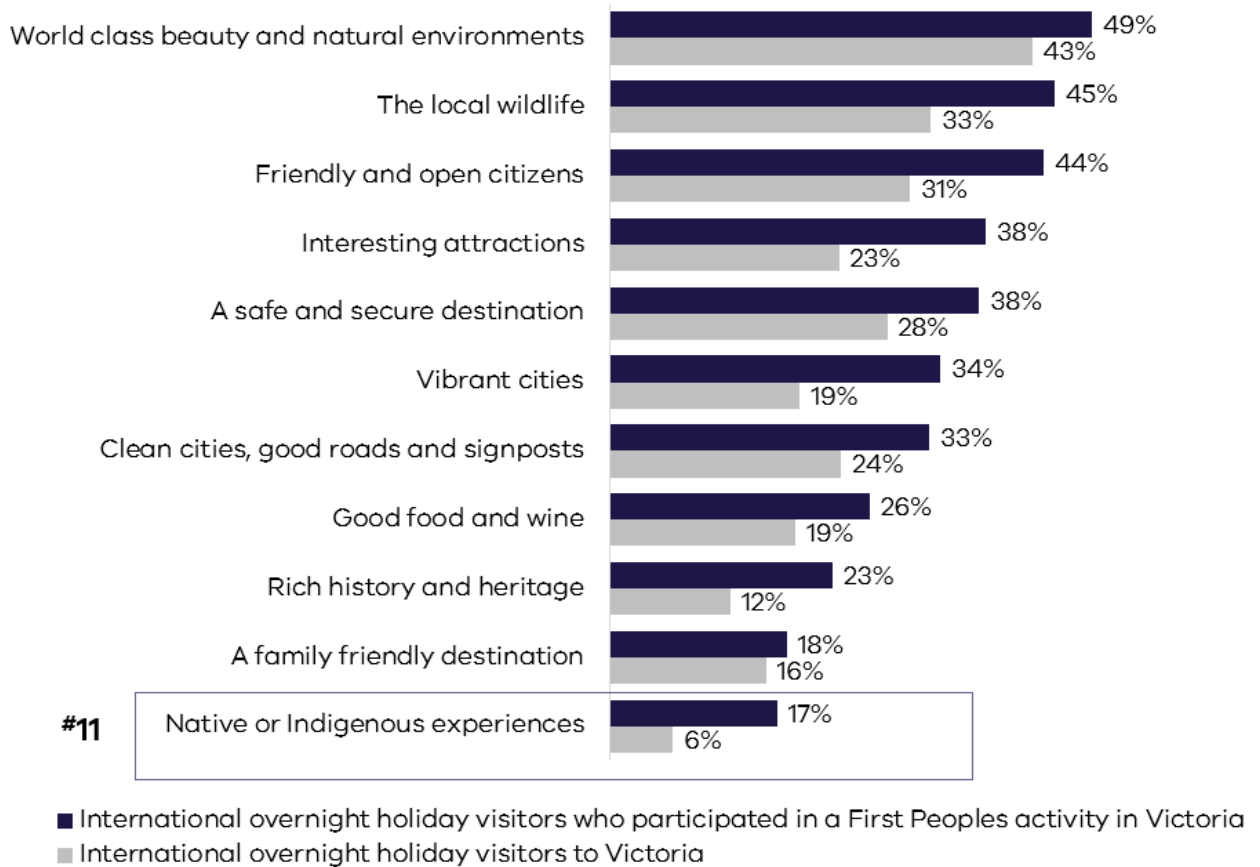
#11 "Native or Indigenous experiences" was the 11th most common reason for visiting Australia among international overnight holiday visitors.

All international overnight visitors to Victoria

6% of all international overnight visitors to Victoria cited "Native or Indigenous experiences" as one of the reasons they chose to visit Australia.

#16 "Native or Indigenous experiences" was the 16th most common (second to last) reason for visiting Australia among international overnight visitors.

In 2023, there were an estimated 51,500 visitors who cited "Native or Indigenous experiences" as a reason for choosing Australia for a holiday, and they visited Victoria, however 42% (21,800) did not end up including in any First Peoples activities on their trip.



* Based on combined years ending December 2019 and December 2023 data. Measures that are based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds are not included in this chart. Drivers question only asked of visitors whose main reason visit to Australia was for a holiday.

First Peoples activities in Victoria

Types of First People activities engaged in by visitors to Victoria



2.1 million international overnight visitors to Victoria in 2023
330,700 First People activity visitors* in 2023

16% (330,700) of all international overnight visitors to Victoria included a First Peoples experience on their trip to Australia in the year ending December 2023.

- **53%** (176,700) of these visitors experienced the activity **outside** of Victoria **only**.
- **47%** (154,000) of these visitors experienced the activity **in** Victoria.

* International overnight visitors to Victoria who included a First People activity on their trip to Australia.

#1 See any Aboriginal art, craft or cultural display



6% 115,800
of international overnight visitors to Victoria

#2 Visit an Aboriginal gallery



2% 42,300
of international overnight visitors to Victoria

#3 See an Aboriginal site or Aboriginal community



1% 23,500
of international overnight visitors to Victoria

#4 Visit an Aboriginal cultural centre



1% 19,800
of international overnight visitors to Victoria

#5 Purchase Aboriginal art/craft or souvenirs



0.9% 17,900
of international overnight visitors to Victoria

#6 Attend an Aboriginal dance or theatre performance



0.7% 13,500
of international overnight visitors to Victoria



28.5 million domestic overnight visitors to/within Victoria in 2023
180,500 First People activity visitors** in 2023

#1 Experience Aboriginal art/craft and cultural displays

0.3% 85,300[^] ^{^ 3 year average}
of domestic overnight visitors to/within Victoria

#2 Visit an Aboriginal site/community

0.2% 54,900[^] ^{^ 3 year average}
of domestic overnight visitors to/within Victoria

** Domestic overnight visitors to/within Victoria who included a First People activity on their trip to/in Victoria.

[^] - average based on years ending December 2019, 2022 and 2023.

Activities that are based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds are not shown.
Note: the term 'Aboriginal' is used in the Tourism Research Australia (TRA) visitor survey.

Other activities by First Peoples visitors

Overnight visitors to and within Australia who included at least one First Peoples activity on their trip also undertook other activities. First Peoples visitors were more than twice as likely to visit museums or art galleries, visit history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments and go on bushwalks/rainforest walks than overnight visitors overall.



Domestic overnight First Peoples visitors within Australia

More than a third of domestic overnight visitors within Australia who included at least one First Peoples activity on their trip also:

- ate out (77%)
- visited national/state parks (53%)
- went sightseeing (52%)
- went bushwalking/on rainforest walks (52%)
- visited museums or art galleries (38%)
- went to pubs, clubs, discos (34%)
- visited history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments (33%)

Domestic overnight visitors within Australia who included at least one First Peoples activity on their trip were at least twice as likely to visit museums or art galleries, visit national/state parks, go bushwalking/on rainforest walks and/or go sightseeing than domestic overnight visitors overall, and 9 times as likely to visit history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments.

International overnight First Peoples visitors to Australia

More than half of international overnight visitors to Australia who included at least one First Peoples activity on their trip also:

- ate out (94%)
- went sightseeing (91%)
- went shopping (86%)
- went to the beach (83%)
- visited national/state parks (77%)
- visited museums or art galleries (76%)
- visited botanical/other public gardens (72%)
- went to markets (68%)
- visited wildlife parks/zoos/aquariums (56%)
- went to pubs, clubs, discos (54%)
- went bushwalking/on rainforest walks (53%)
- visited history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments (51%)

International overnight visitors to Australia who included at least one First Peoples activity on their trip were at least twice as likely to visit museums or art galleries, visit history/heritage buildings, sites or monuments and go on bushwalks/rainforest walks than international overnight visitors overall (with eating out and shopping more in line with total visitors).

Note: Activities that are based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds are not shown.

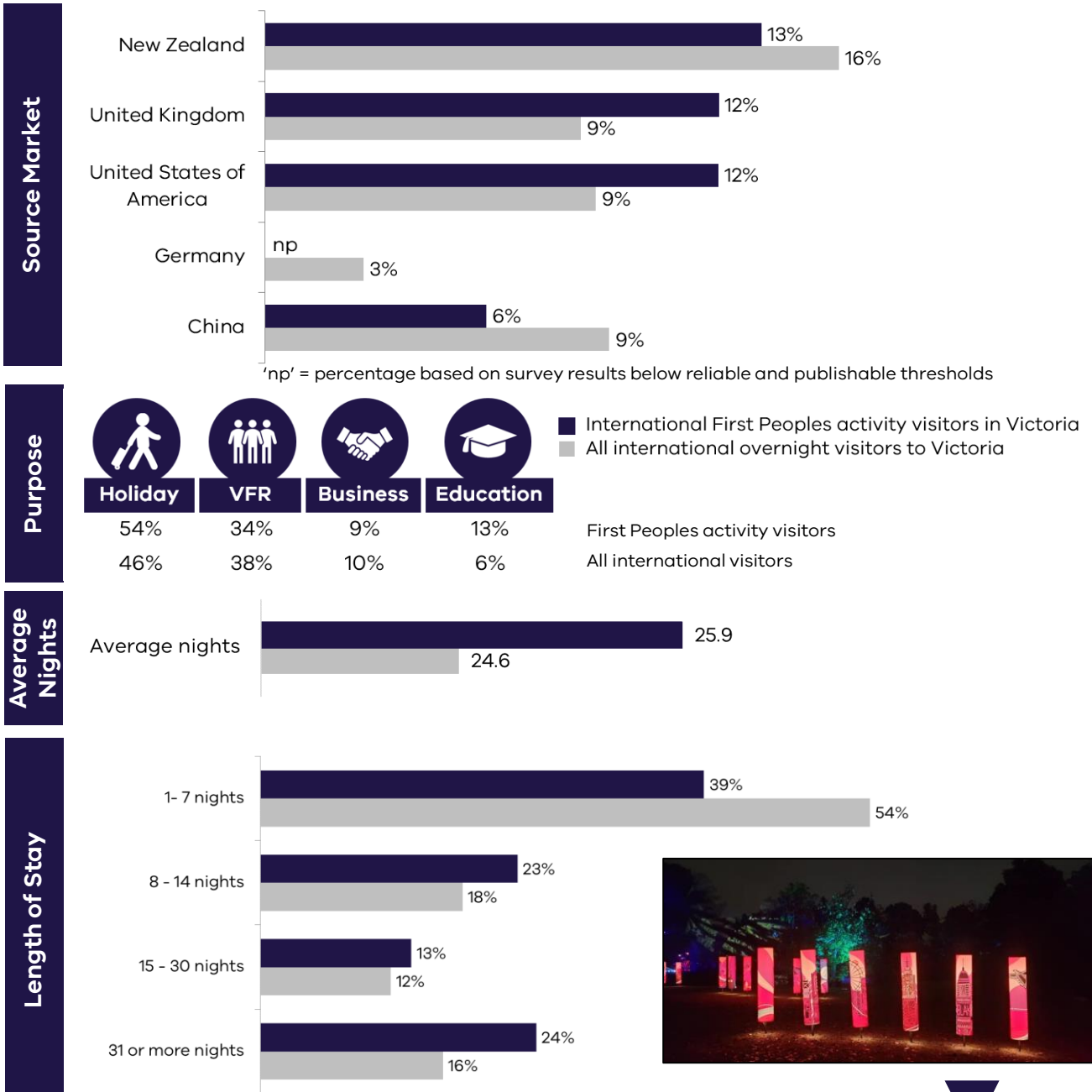
International profile

- Year ending December 2023

International overnight First Peoples tourism visitors in Victoria

Compared with international overnight visitors to Victoria overall, international overnight visitors who participated in a First Peoples activity in Victoria were more likely to be:

- from the UK, the USA
- visiting on holiday or for education purposes
- visitors who had a longer length of stay
- backpackers
- visitors to regional Victoria
- in a younger age group (15-34 years old)
- young/midlife singles and couples (no kids)
- travelling with friends and/or relatives



International profile

- Year ending December 2023

International overnight First Peoples tourism visitors in Victoria (continued)

Backpackers



11%
8%

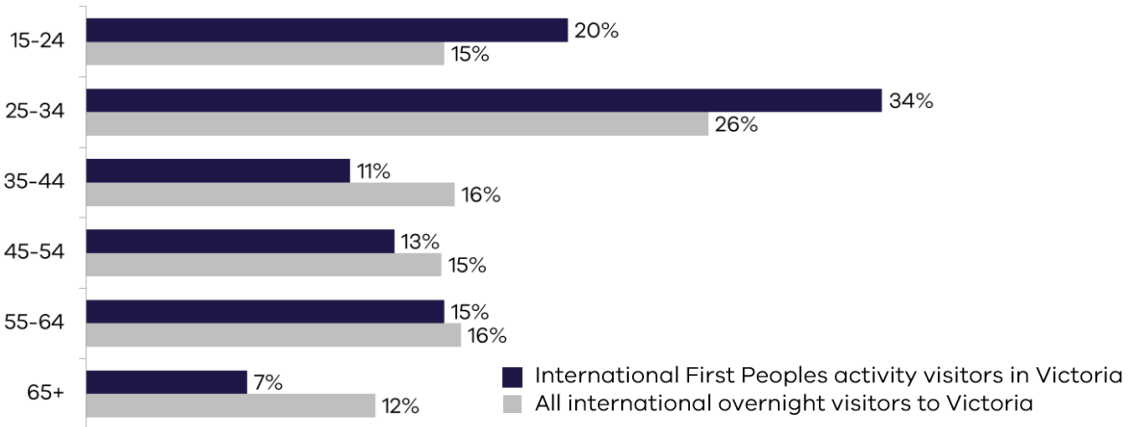
First Peoples activity visitors
All international visitors

Visit regional Victoria

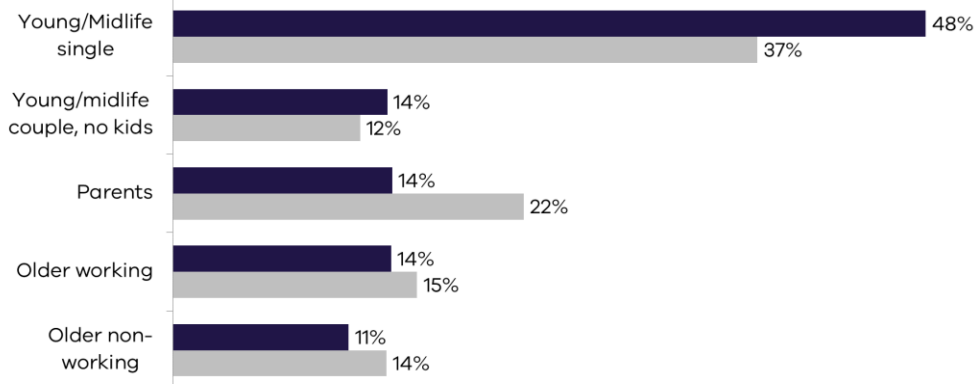


28%
18%

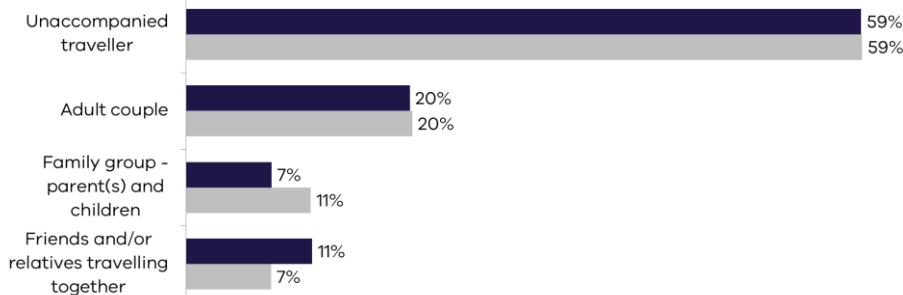
Age Group



Lifecycle



Travel Party



Domestic profile

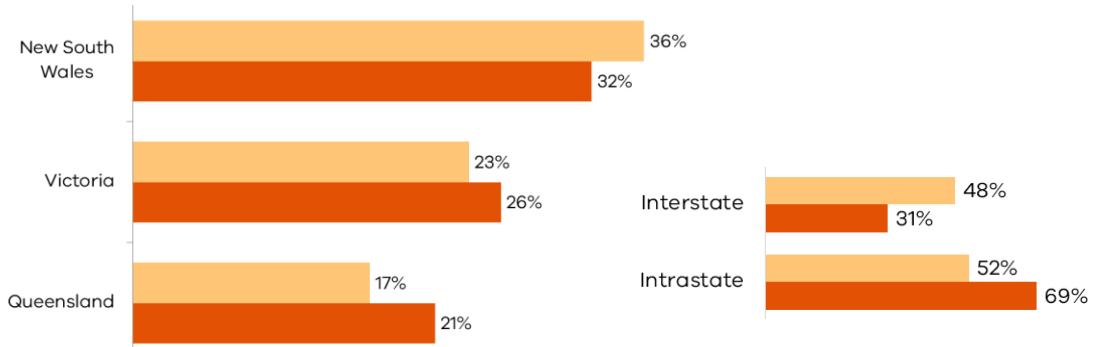
- Year ending December 2023

Domestic overnight First Peoples tourism visitors within Australia

Compared with domestic overnight visitors around Australia overall, domestic overnight visitors who included a First Peoples activity on their trip were more likely to be:

- from New South Wales
- interstate travellers
- on holiday
- visitors who had a longer length of stay (of at least 4 nights) and a more complex itinerary with multiple stopovers
- users of Visitor Information Centres (VICs)
- in an older age group (45 years or over)
- older working or older non-working travellers
- travelling with others (friends or relatives travelling together or in a family group (parents and children))

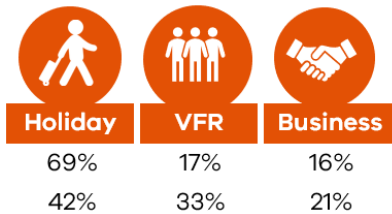
Source Market



Interstate/Intrastate

Note that percentages for other states and territories are not shown as based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds.

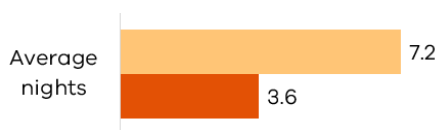
Purpose



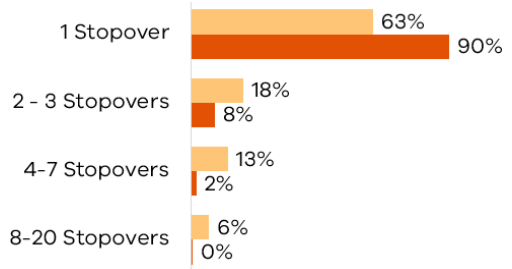
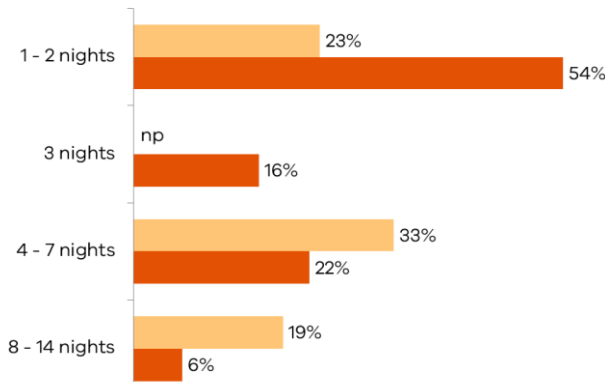
■ First Peoples activity visitors (AUS)
■ All domestic overnight visitors (AUS)

First Peoples activity visitors
All domestic overnight visitors

Average Nights



Length of Stay



Number of Stopovers

'np' = percentage based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds.
Note 15 nights or more not included in this table.

Domestic profile

- Year ending December 2023

Domestic overnight First Peoples tourism visitors within Australia (continued)

Went to a VIC

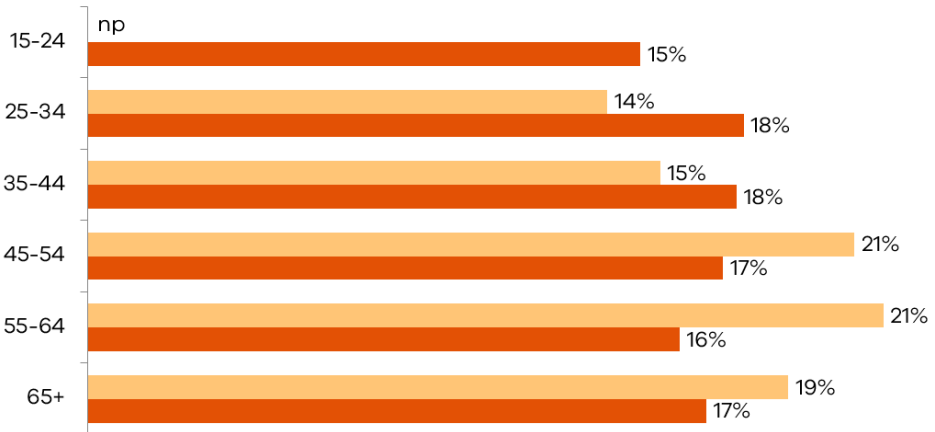
Visit regional Australia



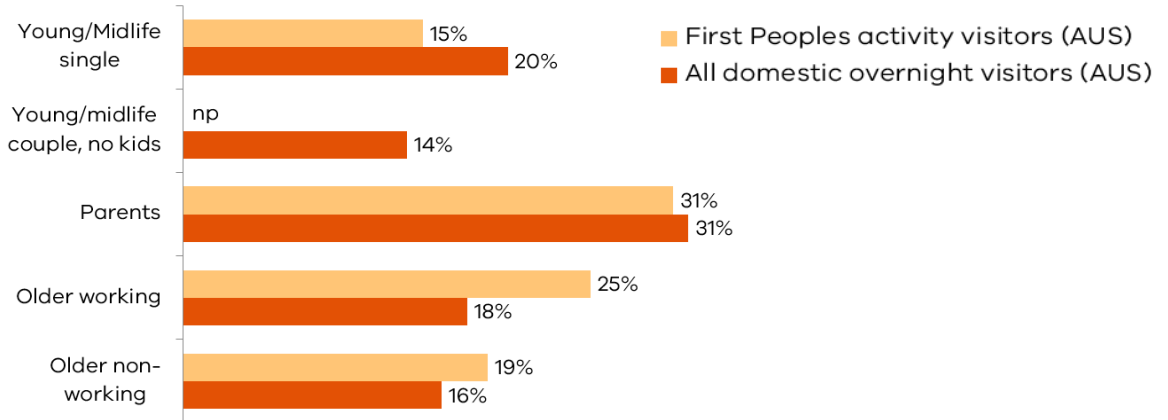
37% First Peoples activity visitors
6% All domestic overnight visitors

85%
65%

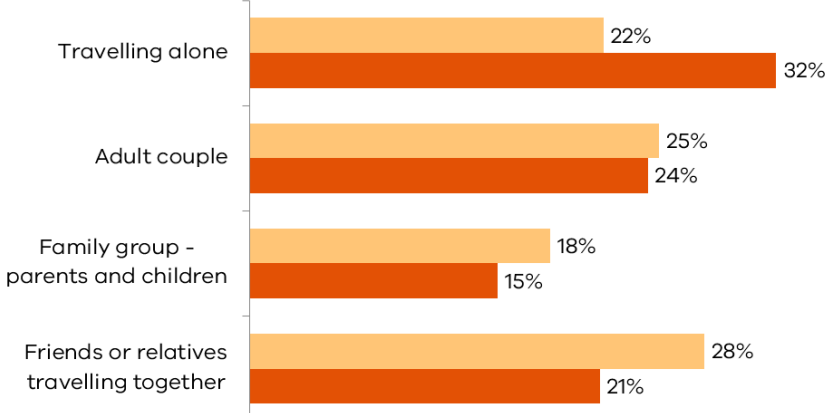
Age Group



Lifecycle



Travel Party



'np' = percentage based on survey results below reliable and publishable thresholds.

Activities asked in survey

Visitor type and activity	YE Dec 2019	YE Dec 2020	YE Dec 2021	YE Dec 2022	YE Dec 2023
Domestic overnight (activity at stopover)					
Attend Aboriginal performance	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓
Experience Aboriginal art/craft and cultural	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Go on a tour with an Aboriginal guide	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Have a camping experience on Aboriginal land	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Have an Aboriginal food experience	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Participate in traditional activities	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓
Visit an Aboriginal site/community	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
International overnight (activity on trip)					
Attend Aboriginal performance	✓	●	●	●	✓
Experience Aboriginal art/craft and cultural	✓	●	●	●	✓
Go on a tour with an Aboriginal guide	✗	●	●	●	✓
Have a camping experience on Aboriginal land	✗	●	●	●	✓
Have an Aboriginal food experience	✗	●	●	●	✓
Participate in traditional activities	✗	●	●	●	✓
Visit an Aboriginal site/community	✓	●	●	●	✓

Legend: ✓ Asked ✗ Not asked ● Not available

These activities are included in the surveys and responses are based on the interpretation of the activity by the respondents. For international overnight visitors, the activity is included on their trip to Australia (so although they visited Victoria the activity might have been in another state). The activities by domestic visitors are linked to location.

There were two supplementary questions in the IVS in 2019 and 2023 that captured the state or territory of the Aboriginal activity for those asked this question. This enabled additional analysis of the IVS data. These included:

1. which states and territories international overnight visitors undertook Aboriginal activities in
2. the types of activities that international overnight visitors included on their trip to Australia (note, individual activities are not linked to location). The activities included in the survey are:

- Go on tour with an Aboriginal guide
- Stay in Aboriginal accommodation
- Visit an Aboriginal cultural centre
- Visit an Aboriginal gallery
- Purchase Aboriginal art/craft or souvenirs
- Attend an Aboriginal festival
- Attend an Aboriginal dance or theatre performance
- See any Aboriginal art craft or cultural display
- See an Aboriginal site or Aboriginal community
- Some other interaction with Aboriginal people

Life stage categories definitions

Life Stage	Definition
Young or midlife single	15-44 years, young single living at home, midlife single
Young or midlife couple, no kids	15-44 years
Parents	Parents (any age), children (any age) still living at home
Older working	45+ years, working, married or single
Older non-working	45+ years, non- working, married or single

Survey results that are below reliable thresholds and unable to be published are represented by 'np'. Figures might not add up due to rounding.

Further information on [international](#) and [domestic](#) visitor statistics can be found at Tourism Research Australia

Sources:

All estimates are derived from the following sources:

- International Visitor Survey (IVS), year ending December 2019 and 2023, Tourism Research Australia
- National Visitor Survey (NVS), year ending December 2019 and 2023, Tourism Research Australia

Base for IVS data: Only those trips where International visitors aged 15 years or over who have stayed in Australia for less than 12 months.

Base for NVS data: Australian domestic travellers aged 15 years or over.

Photo credits (Visit Victoria Content Hub):

- Koorie Heritage Trust, Artra Sartracom
- Budj Bim Cultural Landscape - Tae Rak Aquaculture Centre, Carmen Zammit
- Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum, Artra Sartracom
- Connection exhibition at THE LUME, Kelly Lehmann
- Worn Gundidj at Tower Hill, Artra Sartracom
- Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre at Melbourne Museum, Artra Sartracom
- Retail at Murran Hub, Kelly Lehmann
- Djirri Djirri Dance Group, Lynton Crabb
- Australian Centre of Moving Images - ACMI - Near and Far
- Block Arcade - Jesse Hisco
- Hollow Mountain, Grampians National Park - Robert Blackburn
- Lightscape, Kelly Lehmann

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Due care is taken in the production of this factsheet, however, DJSIR accepts no responsibility for use of this information. Data correct at time of publishing.