

27 SEPTEMBER 2022

BREATHE IN, BREATHE OUT: GOLD COAST INDUSTRY UNITES FOR WORLD-WIDE TOURISM CELEBRATION

This World Tourism Day (September 27), Destination Gold Coast is marking the occasion by bringing more than 80 industry peers together over an invigorating yoga session and networking breakfast at the JW Marriot Resort and Spa.

With a focus on the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's theme for 2022, *Rethinking Tourism*, the mindfulness event will inspire discussion around tourism's environmental footprint and opportunities to grow more sustainably.

One venue who is rethinking tourism in a new way with a strong sustainability ethos is JW Marriott Resort and Spa, who sets the scene for the celebration, with its famous salt-water lagoon, sandy man-made beach, cascading waterfalls, and tropical fish.

Destination Gold Coast CEO Patricia O'Callaghan said this year's theme gives industry the opportunity to tap into the future of tourism where sustainability, inclusivity, connection, and authentic experiences are leading the path forward.

"With travel restrictions now largely lifted along with rising traveller confidence, this World Tourism Day is cause for celebration," said Ms O'Callaghan.

"COVID-19 has been the catalyst for many industries to reassess and look at new and innovative ways to remain sustainable, and we have seen this with the welcomed release of THRIVE 2030 and Queensland's Towards 2032 – Action Plan for Tourism Recovery, which we look forward to continuing working with Government, our partners and industry to rebuild and reimagine a stronger, more inclusive visitor economy of the future.

"This time last year, the Gold Coast was on track to lose \$1 billion in the September quarter due to the pandemic, and today domestic capacity has been largely restored with international markets gradually returning to the region.

"With the September school holidays underway, Gold Coast Airport has welcomed more than 62,000 arriving passengers during the first week of the holidays alone while occupancy is sitting at 80 per cent on average and spiking as high as 90 per cent on some days according to STR data."

Ms O'Callaghan said it comes as latest National Visitor Survey (NVS) and International Visitor Survey (IVS) figures are released by Tourism Research Australia for the year ending June 2022.

"The Gold Coast welcomed 3.2 million domestic overnight visitors who spent \$3.3 billion in the twelve months to June, both up on the previous year, while total nights saw growth of 3.5 per cent to 11.8 million nights," Ms O'Callaghan said.

"The significant increase in spend per visitor to over \$1,000 per head is a great sign for many small businesses that make up Gold Coast's tourism industry.

"This increase in expenditure per visitor across Australia has meant that total holiday expenditure for the Gold Coast in the June quarter increased 29 per cent.

“As Australia and the world reopens, our visitor mix will start to look more like 2019 than 2021, however even as choices increase, we expect fluctuations in our core markets.

“Overall, interstate visitors to the Gold Coast reached 1.3 million people, up 8.9 per cent on last year, showing strong interest as a destination of choice for domestic overnight visitors.

“At the same time, intrastate visitors marginally dipped by 4.5 per cent to 1.9 million visitors, which is to be expected as the world reopens.

“With our international borders opening in February, the Gold Coast still welcomed 87,000 international visitors primarily from New Zealand, the UK, and Singapore and we look forward to growing this with our aviation partners as new routes come online direct to the Gold Coast’s doorstep.

“While there are still many challenges ahead for our industry including the need for skilled workers and strengthening the weekday economy, these results are a good step forward in a sign that recovery is well underway.

“After two years of disruption, we hope operators will continue to benefit from a bounce-back, but we still have a long road ahead of us to rebuild Gold Coast’s \$5.9 billion visitor economy.”

Total Gold Coast Visitors Overview (for 12 months to June 2022).

Total Visitors	Total Spend	Total Nights
9.5m (-2.8%)	\$4.2B (-1.6%)	13.3m (+16.5%)

Domestic Overnight Visitors (for 12 months to June 2022).

	Total Visitors	Total Spend
Australia	85.8m (-1.8%)	\$69.0B (+12.6%)
Queensland	21.7m (+4.7%)	\$19.6B (+20.6%)
Gold Coast	3.2m (+0.5%)	\$3.3B (+15.2%)
GC Daytrips	6.2m (-5.6%)	\$739.5m (+9.1%)

Gold Coast Domestic Overnight Visitors (for 12 months to June 2022).

Visitors	Spend	Nights	ALOS
3.2m (+0.5%)	\$3.3B (+15.2%)	11.8m (+3.5%)	3.7 nights

About JW Marriott Resort and Spa

JW Marriott Resort and Spa’s onsite worm farm consists of over 80,000 worms and allows kitchen food scraps to be recycled into compost and absorbed into the garden – a valuable resource of fresh herbs and vegetables.

The introduction of Australian Native Bees has proven to be exceptional for pollinating the resort’s fresh herbs and vegetables also.

Offering experiences that install a mindful connection for how food is grown paired with a strong emphasis on salvaging materials, the culinary team hosts *Family by JW garden tours* and herb planting to provide guests with valuable insight on the importance of sustainability at the resort.

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