

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP
Minister for Environment
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events
Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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VICTORIA'S ROARING VISITOR ECONOMY REACHES RECORD HIGH

The Allan Labor Government is making sure Victoria's world-class tourism industry continues to thrive, with strong investment in the state's visitor economy and blockbuster major events generating a new record high of \$37.8 billion in tourism spending in Victoria in 2023.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today announced the record results published by the *National and International Visitor Survey*, with expenditure \$5.4 billion higher in the year ending December 2023 compared to 2019 levels in a boost for local jobs and businesses across the state.

Melbourne's status as the city of choice for Victorians has been cemented – taking the crown as the nation's top overnight interstate leisure destination on visitation, nights and spend. In 2023, 3.9 million visitors spent \$5 billion in Melbourne, with our jam-packed calendar of major events drawing visitors from far and wide to the hearts of the city.

Last year's epic line-up included musicals *& Juliet*, *Moulin Rouge! The Musical* and *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* alongside blockbuster sporting events like the FIFA Women's World Cup, *NHL Global Series Melbourne*, Australian Open, Bledisloe Cup, and Ed Sheeran at the MCG.

Victoria's domestic tourism market continues to go from strength to strength, with total domestic expenditure in Melbourne 27 per cent higher compared to the year ending 2019 and 39 per cent higher in regional Victoria.

More visitors are flocking to our vibrant tourism regions, with total domestic expenditure increasing in Geelong and the Bellarine by 72 per cent compared to 2019 levels while Philip Island experienced an increase of 59 per cent and High Country boosted by a 52 per cent increase.

Victoria's status on the world stage as the nation's major events capital and food bowl of Australia has captured the hearts of international visitors, with global travellers generating \$6.4 billion in tourism expenditure last year.

This year's major events calendar is no different, with visitors from interstate and overseas flocking to Melbourne to enjoy the 2024 Australian Open, the Matildas Olympic Qualifier, the NGV Triennial, Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, *Groundhog Day the Musical*, Melbourne Fashion Festival and the Formula 1[®] Australian Grand Prix.

The record-breaking Australian Open was the perfect launching pad for the state's new global tourism marketing campaign, *Every bit different*, which continues to showcase Victoria's diversity, passion and creativity to local, national and global audiences.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"This record tourism spend is proof that visitors come from across the globe to see our blockbuster events, experiences and destinations."

"From culture to sport and music, we're investing in the tourism industry so it can continue to grow and thrive, supporting thousands of jobs and businesses across the state."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"It's fantastic to see Victoria's visitor and events sectors thriving with these record results and there's still an incredible opportunity for growth to drive that number even higher."

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