

Media Release

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Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

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BIGGEST EVER TOURISM SPEND BACKS LOCAL JOBS AND BUSINESSES

The Allan Labor Government is continuing to back Victorian businesses and jobs, with new data showing tourists have spent a record amount this year and the state is outpacing the rest of Australia.

Overseas travellers continue to flock to Victoria and today's Tourism Research Australia's *National Visitor Survey and International Visitor Survey* shows tourism spend has hit a record \$39.7 billion, in the year ending September 2024.

International spend is now surpassing 2019 levels, growing by a massive 57 per cent versus last year and outpacing the growth across the rest of Australia.

Spending by international travellers in regional Victoria has reached a new all-time high at \$630 million – creating jobs and backing local businesses and economies. The Labor Government's Regional Events Fund continues to secure iconic events in regional Victoria that attract thousands of visitors.

Victorians are reaping the rewards of the Labor Government's investment in the Indian tourism market, with Victoria continuing to be the destination of choice for Indian visitors travelling to Australia – with 203,600 visitors staying a total of 11 million nights and spending \$590 million in the 12 months to September 2024.

Expenditure from India is up more than 31 per cent versus last year – this follows the Premier's visit to India and a number of announcements to strengthen ties with the country through tourism, education and sport.

Visit Victoria and the Melbourne Convention Bureau (MCB) recently toured a delegation of influential Indian tourism companies around Victoria, so they could experience first-hand our iconic tourism wonders across the state.

China remains Victoria's biggest international market with visitors spending \$2.6 billion – up 63 per cent versus last year. Melbourne remains the top choice for interstate Australians travelling overnight for leisure – with 3.8 million visitors staying a total of 15 million nights and spending \$5.5 billion.

Supporting the record growth this quarter was the Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) held in May, where more than 400 global travel agents and buyers came to Victoria to experience 64 travel itineraries for themselves, featuring more than 330 local businesses.

These delegates, having experienced Victoria's renowned tourism offering firsthand, will return to their home countries with a clear understanding of how to sell Victoria to their clients back home.

The state's blockbuster major events calendar continues to back our visitor economy growth – September's AFL Grand Final saw hotel occupancy at 86.9 per cent on the day according to STR data, 6.6 percentage points higher than the Saturday before.

Upcoming highlights of the state's packed major events calendar include the Yayoi Kusama exhibition at the NGV, the Boxing Day Test, the Pro Kabaddi League Melbourne Raid and the 2025 Australian Open.

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

"We continue to secure blockbuster, internationally-exclusive major events for our state – generating a record \$39.7 billion in tourism spend, giving Victorians and visitors unparalleled access, and giving a huge boost to local jobs and businesses."

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"It's no surprise that Victoria is outshining other states when it comes to international tourism – we're the only city on the planet with a Grand Prix and Grand Slam, the Boxing Day Test, the AFL Grand Final, the race that stops the nation, gigs across the state and a world-class major events calendar all year round."

"Who wouldn't want to come here – we're the major events capital, the sporting capital, the live music capital and the culinary capital of Australia."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"We know visitors from all over our country and the globe want to visit our incredible products and destinations and that is emphasised by this record \$39.7 billion tourism spend."

"The growth in the international market, particularly India and China, shows the success of recent programs including the Australian Tourism Exchange and Indian Trade Mission."