

# Media Release

**The Hon Martin Pakula MP**

Minister for Jobs, Innovation and Trade  
Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events  
Minister for Racing



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Wednesday, 19 June 2019

## INTERNATIONAL VISITORS FLOCK TO VICTORIA'S REGIONS

Victorian tourism is breaking records, bolstered by unprecedented growth in international visitors drawn to country and regional areas.

Tourism Research Australia today reported that in the year to March, Victoria welcomed 3.1 million international tourists – up 5 per cent on the previous year – who spent \$8.5 billion, up 7.6 per cent.

The rise in international overnight visitors in regional Victoria was even more pronounced at more than triple the national regional average – 12 per cent compared with 3.3 per cent in other states.

Phillip Island experienced monster growth, up 39.1 per cent, with six other hotspots recording double-digit rises: Gippsland (17.1 per cent), Goldfields (16.8 per cent), Murray (16.2 per cent), Mornington Peninsula (13.6 per cent), Geelong/Bellarine (11.4 per cent) and Great Ocean Road (10.9 per cent).

International visitor spending in Melbourne increased by 7.9 per cent on the previous year to reach \$8 billion, while overnight visitors increased by 4.7 per cent to 2.9 million, outperforming Sydney and the Gold Coast.

Chinese visitors continue to lead the charge to Victoria with almost 680,000 visitors in the past year. Total spending by Chinese tourists was \$3.2 billion.

A significant increase in visitor spending was also recorded by visitors from the United States – up 14 per cent thanks in part to the launch of direct flights between Melbourne and San Francisco.

These key growth figures show Victoria is on track to reach the Andrews Labor Government's goal of growing the state's total international and domestic visitor expenditure to \$36.5 billion by 2025.

Last year, total visitor expenditure was \$28.7 billion, supporting more than 214,000 jobs including 85,600 in regional areas.

While the new international visitor figures are welcome, more can always be done.

That's why the Labor Government is conducting the Regional Tourism Review, led by Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas, to investigate ways to expand the industry and boost local businesses and jobs.

Ms Thomas has led consultation around the state and a discussion paper will be released for public comment in coming months.

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula**

*"More international visitors than ever are choosing to come to Victoria and it's paying dividends in terms of thriving businesses and growing job opportunities."*

### **Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaclyn Symes**

*"Our mix of natural beauty, world-class food and wine and unbeatable year-round events for the whole family provides a compelling reason for travellers to venture beyond the city limits."*

**Media contact:** Shaun Phillips 0407 553 763 | [Shaun.Phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:Shaun.Phillips@minstaff.vic.gov.au)