

# Cook Islands Visitor Economy FACTSHEET

VOLUME 2: SEPTEMBER 2024



## Kia Orana!

Te Mato Manava Turoto, Cook Islands Tourism Corporation (CIT), the national tourism authority promoting the Cook Islands and ensuring sustainable management of the tourism industry, presents the Visitor Economy Factsheet, Volume 2. Headquartered in Rarotonga, CIT oversees six key markets: New Zealand, Australia, North America, the United Kingdom, Southern, and Northern Europe. This edition offers an updated overview of key tourism data and insights, highlighting the significant economic contributions of the Cook Islands' largest industry, alongside Destination Marketing highlights from the 2023/24 financial year. Information is current at time of publication.

### ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION

Tourism contributes significantly to the economic prosperity of the Cook Islands. Visitor expenditure flows into the country through receipts (visitors spending while on island) and VAT paid by businesses to Cook Islands Government. For 2023, Tourism contributed \$428.9 million. An increase of 65% from 2022 (\$259M).



Source: \*Ministry of Finance & Economic Management (MFEM). \*\*International Visitors Survey, Jul 2023 - June 2024



### TOURISM RECEIPTS

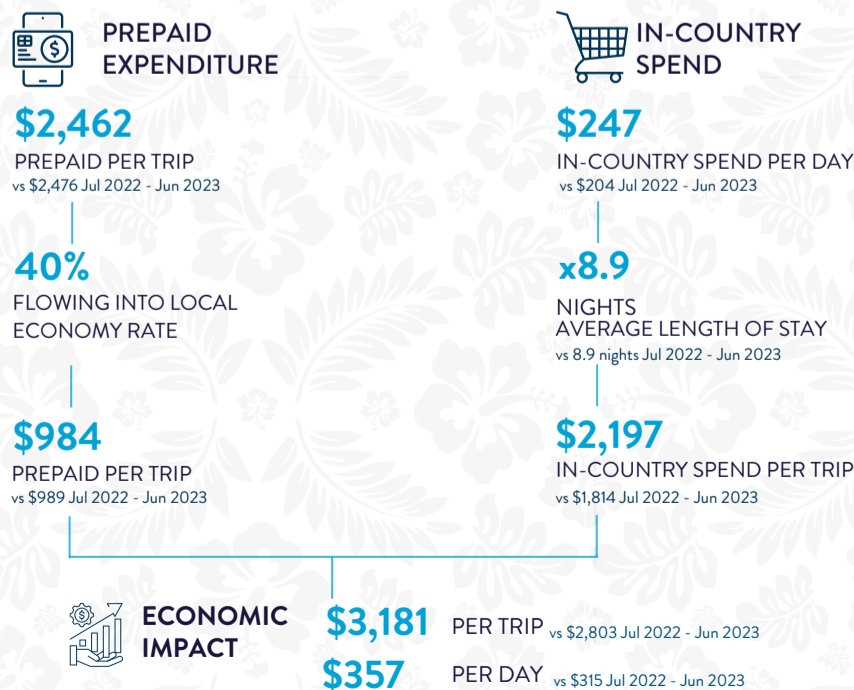
Tourism receipts represent the contribution of the tourism industry to the local economy. For 2023, the tourism industry accounted for 70.6% of gross domestic product (GDP) meaning that 70 cents of every dollar added to the Cook Islands economy comes from tourism. The tourism industry is critical to the funding of government services, including healthcare, education, and infrastructure.

YEAR	TOURISM RECEIPTS (NZD)	% OF GDP
2019	301m	55.5%
2022	259m	56.8%
2023	428.9m	70.6%
2024 (Predicted)	520m	73%

Source: Ministry of Finance & Economic Management (MFEM). 2024 Predicted data: International Visitors Survey, Jul 2023 - Jun 2024

### ECONOMIC IMPACT

The International Visitor Survey data from July 2023 to June 2024 shows an increase in tourist spending to \$3,181 per trip, with an average stay of 8.9 nights. Prepaid expenses per trip were \$2,462, with 40% contributing to the local economy. Daily in-country spending rose to \$247, leading to an overall economic impact of \$357 per day.



Source: International Visitors Survey, Jul 2023 - Jun 2024

### INDUSTRY CAPACITY

Capacity refers to the maximum number of passengers or guests that can be accommodated at any given time. This section includes a breakdown of travel and accommodation capacity as well as airline inventory.

#### AIRLINE INVENTORY

##### SEAT CAPACITY BY ORIGIN CALENDAR YEAR

Seat capacity from origin markets per calendar year from 2019 to 2023 with predictions for 2024 and 2025.

ORIGIN	2019	2022	2023	2024*	2025*
New Zealand	202,479	150,901	157,267	160,000	160,000
Australia	16,972	0	17,496	42,000	47,568
USA (HNL)	16,777	0	5,312	9,776	9,776
Tahiti	3,593	884	4,832	6,500	6,500
TOTAL	239,821	151,785	184,907	218,276	223,844

\*Predicted

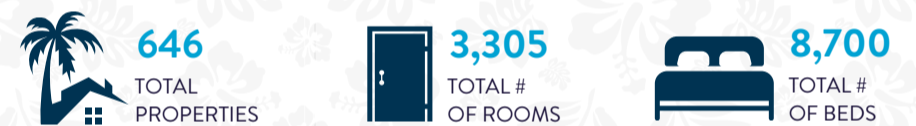
##### SEAT CAPACITY BY CARRIER CALENDAR YEAR



Source: Cook Islands Tourism, Airline Data

#### ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY

Accommodation capacity is the number of properties, holiday homes and rooms available in destination during the 2023/24 financial year period.

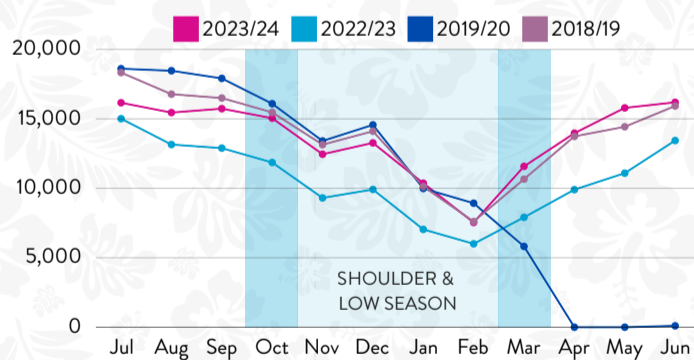


Source: Cook Islands Tourism Data Collection, Room Stock as at July 2024.

### VISITOR ARRIVALS

When looking at annual visitor arrivals, it is important to understand the varying seasons and the associated visitor numbers. The graph below shows that CIT's marketing efforts to attract visitors in the low and shoulder months has been successful, with room for further growth.

#### VISITOR ARRIVALS BY FINANCIAL YEAR (JUL-JUN)



163,552  
VISITOR ARRIVALS  
2023/24  
+28%  
VS 2022/23

FINANCIAL YEAR	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	TOTAL
2023/24	16,159	15,452	15,734	15,049	12,453	13,270	10,368	7,539	11,579	13,968	15,790	16,191	163,552
2022/23	15,012	13,151	12,893	11,860	9,308	9,916	7,041	6,003	7,910	9,904	11,091	13,440	127,529
2019/20	18,612	18,464	17,913	16,092	13,410	14,567	9,986	8,928	5,814	0	0	98	123,884
2018/19	18,332	16,777	16,499	15,468	13,141	14,109	10,128	7,608	10,659	13,739	14,430	15,928	166,818

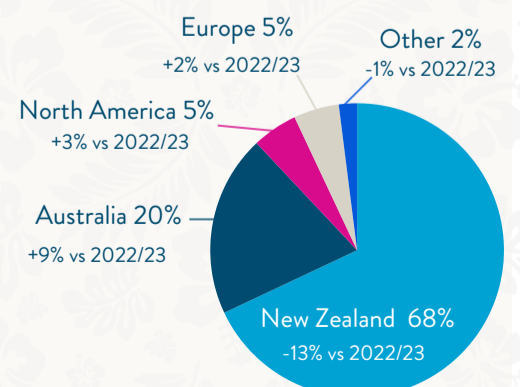
Source: Ministry of Finance & Economic Management (MFEM)

#### VISITOR SATISFACTION



Source: International Visitors Survey, Jul 2023 - Jun 2024

#### VISITOR ARRIVALS BY MARKET



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## DESTINATION MARKETING 2023/24 KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

The primary focus of Destination Marketing is to promote the Cook Islands' tourism offerings and drive economic growth through visitor arrivals. Known for its leadership in the digital space, Destination Marketing uses data and analysis to make informed decisions that not only meet strategic goals but that benefit our tourism industry as a whole. By staying up to date with the latest technology and industry trends, the team adapts quickly to changes in online behaviour, ensuring the Cook Islands remains competitive. Key platforms used to promote, market and measure annual performance include our website [www.cookislands.travel](http://www.cookislands.travel), social media channels, and our public relations programs.

## COOK ISLANDS BRAND EVOLUTION

UPDATED LOGO



Te Mato Manava Turoto, Cook Islands Tourism Corporation presents the brand evolution from "Love a little paradise" to "Love our little paradise." Rooted in the Kia Orana values, this update champions a collective commitment to responsible tourism, and destination stewardship, nurturing authentic experiences that reflect the values of our Cook Islands residents and visitors while still maintaining our playful spirit. 'Love our little paradise' invites you to share in our commitment to developing a sustainable approach that ensures the ongoing benefits of tourism.

UPDATED TAGLINE



If you look after our little paradise, she will look after you.

**Akaperepere ia to tatou parataito,  
kia vai ruperupe te reira.**

Here is a breakdown of each word in the updated tagline:

**Love**

A deep, active appreciation and care for the Cook Islands, urging Cook Islanders, residents and visitors to cherish and protect its natural beauty and cultural richness.

**our**

Shifting from "a" to "our" represents a collective commitment among Cook Islanders, residents and visitors, reinforcing a shared responsibility for our little paradise.

**little**

Rather than being about size, "little" speaks to the intimate, personal experiences that the islands provide, where everyone can feel a personal connection to the place and its people.

**paradise**

What the Cook Islands offers, a tropical, idyllic escape, complete with friendly locals, lush landscapes, vibrant culture, and white sandy beaches - a place to do as little or as much as you like.

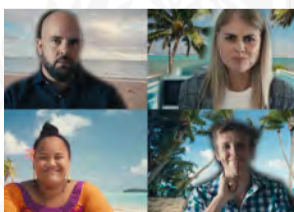
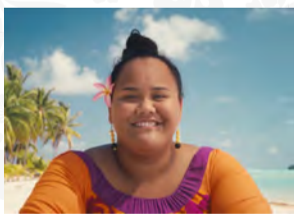
LOVE A LITTLE PARADISE (2015)



LOVE A LITTLE PARADISE... FOR REAL (2022)



LOVE OUR LITTLE PARADISE (2024)



## ...AND THE REST OF THE WORLD LOVE US TOO!

The Cook Islands have been recognised by the World Travel Awards as "Oceania's Leading Island Destination" for three consecutive years.



## MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

### DIGITAL PERFORMANCE SNAPSHOT

#### AWARENESS TO CONVERSION



#### FACEBOOK TOP POST & RANKING BY AUDIENCE

**Facebook Post:** "Driving a buggy is fun, they said. 🤪 on the track there is only a little bit of mud, they said. 🤪"

**Ranking by Audience:**

- Australia
- Hawaii
- Cook Islands
- Fiji
- Tahiti

#### INSTAGRAM TOP POST & RANKING BY AUDIENCE

**Instagram Post:** "Happy World Social Media Day! 🎉 Who has their one-of-a-kind passport stamp from One Foot Island, Aitutaki? Share with us your favourite Cook Islands memory! 📸"

**Ranking by Audience:**

- Australia
- Hawaii
- Tahiti
- Fiji
- Cook Islands

## KEY PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES (PROMOTIONS, SHOWS, AND ENGAGEMENTS)



- Cook Islands featured in Travel Guides, an Australian award winning TV travel show.
- First-ever 5-star rating from all Travel Guides.
- 2.18M viewers during the initial broadcast.
- 3001% spike of activity on [www.cookislands.travel](http://www.cookislands.travel)



- Cook Islands attends international promotional shows, both visitor facing and trade.
- North America: Travel & Adventure consumer shows throughout the Pacific North West.
- Europe: Meet the Pacific trade shows throughout United Kingdom, Italy and Germany.



- The Cook Islands People's Choice Awards (PCA) celebrates outstanding tourism operators and individuals for their exceptional service.
- 2023: 600 nominations, 50 finalists, 22,000 votes; winners - The Vaka Cruise and Moana Taio.
- 2024: 900 nominations, 57 finalists, 29,000 votes. The Top 5 Finalists for 2024:

#### BUSINESS CATEGORY

- Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruizes
- Charlies
- Koka Lagoon Cruises
- Taio Shipping Ltd
- Weddings with Florence Tia Cook Islands Marriage Celebrant

#### INDIVIDUAL CATEGORY

- Aisake Katonivere
- Ali Maa
- Florence Syme-Buchanan
- Kaina Karaponga
- Papatua Papatua (MBE)

Scan the QR code or visit the link below to access our digital resources, follow us on social media, watch the Travel Guides episode and subscribe to our Newsletter for the latest updates:

[www.linktr.ee/cookislands](http://www.linktr.ee/cookislands)

