



Press Release
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Australian's are discovering Central Otago

Twenty-three Australian travel wholesalers are now much better informed about Central Otago as a destination.

Tourism Central Otago, together with nineteen other regional tourism organisations throughout New Zealand attended a one day workshop and trade-day held in Sydney last week.

The workshop and trade-day highlighted how important the Australian visitor is to regional New Zealand, and Central Otago is no exception. With Queenstown and Dunedin as international gateways for Australia, Central Otago is well positioned to capture visitors travelling into either airport.

Michelle Kinney, Tourism Central Otago said 'It was encouraging to see the growing interest in Central Otago as a destination for Australian visitors. Australians know us for our wine (particularly Pinot Noir), food and the Otago Central Rail Trail. They also commented on our stunning landscapes and showed interest in outdoor activities, walks, self drive maps and the gold history. The intrigue factor for them was curling, particularly as the Winter Olympics had just finished and curling was a highlight,' said Ms Kinney.

"Creating awareness about the region and converting this to visitors to the region is vital", said Ms Kinney. "It is important we continue to build new, and maintain existing relationships with the travel wholesalers to ensure Central Otago is kept in the forefront of their minds when it comes to new destinations and visitor experiences in New Zealand", says Ms Kinney.

According to Tourism New Zealand, most Australians use the internet as their main source to research their holiday, followed by a travel agent then guide book. Ms Kinney said this would suggest that local tourism businesses need to keep their websites up-to-date.

Current statistics on Australian visitors supplied by Statistics New Zealand and Tourism New Zealand are as follows:

- *Australia is New Zealand's largest international visitor market, accounting for almost 45% of all visitors and 40% of New Zealand's holiday arrivals.*
- *Visitor arrivals from Australia to New Zealand are up 15.7% to 13,000 for January 2010, compared with January 2009.*
- *70% of Australian visitors to New Zealand are repeat visitors.*
- *The average length of stay is between 9 -13 days.*
- *The average spend per person for the Australian visitor is approximately \$1,800.*

- *The most popular activities and attractions that Australian visitors like to experience in New Zealand are walking/trekking, land-based sightseeing activities, natural attractions and museums/galleries.*

For more information, contact:

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