



PRESS RELEASE
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Tourism Adds Value to Local Economy

Tourism impacts at every level of a community, and the communities of Central Otago are no exception.

Tourism is a \$50 million per day industry delivering \$24 million in foreign exchange and \$26 million each day from domestic visitors, according to the latest figures release by Regional Tourism Organisations NZ (RTONZ).

Mayor Malcolm Macpherson, also Chair of the District Development Committee said 'RTONZ Executive Officer Charles Ives puts his finger on the spot when he says tourism has an impact at every level of every community in New Zealand.'

The economic value of tourism to regions is much wider than the tariff paid to the accommodation provider or the fare paid to the transport operator; it supports local services such as retail, supermarkets, cafes, service stations etc. It also sustains events and cultural experiences, provides extra incomes for part-time workers and is a catalyst for new capital investments and infrastructure which all enhance the rating base of local communities. Nearly \$6 billion is spent by industries that support tourism and one in ten New Zealanders are directly or indirectly employed by the industry.

From the Regional Tourism Organisation Benchmarking Survey 2008, Tourism Central Otago has the second smallest resource base compared with regions of comparable size and is located in one of the fastest growing tourism areas of New Zealand.

'Here in Central Otago we spend less and do more, much more, on tourism than any other equivalent district in New Zealand', says Dr Macpherson. 'Our focus on destination management, seeking the very best value for our visitors and our communities, also sets us apart. Combined with an effective, authentic regional brand, and a holistic viewpoint, we're well set up for future growth.'

According to the Ministry of Tourism's Commercial Accommodation Monitor, the number of guest nights (domestic and international) in Central Otago has increased by 10% in 2 years, from 321,000 in 2007 to 332,000 in December 2009. This is the third highest percentage increase amongst the RTO regions, albeit on a smaller base.

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