



Shoalhaven Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Report

The following information is based on a sample of 121 people who visited Shoalhaven during June and July 2006. The researchers noted that wet weather in the region during the survey period may have affected visitors' experience of the destination.

The top two reasons for visiting the Shoalhaven were:

- 'Variety of things to see and do' (29%).
- Place to spend time with 'partner' (27%), 'family' (23%) or 'friends' (20%).

What do the visitors to the destination expect?

- 'A place to spend quality time with partner/family/friends' (88%).
- 'Relaxation and rejuvenation' (84%).
- 'Nature based experiences' (75%).
- 'An opportunity to tour around and explore' (69%).

What are visitors experiencing in the destination?

- 'Just walk or drive around/taking in the sights/general sightseeing' (63%).
- 'Go shopping' (59%).
- 'Eat out at hotel/restaurants/clubs' (52%).

Were they satisfied with their experience?

- The majority of visitors to Shoalhaven (75%) were satisfied with their visit. At least nine out of ten visitors felt that the experiences they had anticipated were 'as expected' or 'better'. Of those experiences, the following particularly exceeded expectations:
 - A place to spend quality time with partner/family/friends - 54% of visitors stated this was better than expected.
 - Offers a chance to experience arts and culture (46%).

Some of the key strengths consistently mentioned about Shoalhaven were: the beach; the friendliness of the locals; and personal safety. Visitors considered these attributes 'highly important' and they were 'highly satisfied' with their experience of these attributes. The Shoalhaven's National Parks also rated 'highly' on satisfaction.

What is the visitors profile?

- Overnight (73%) and Day trippers (27%).
- 88% of visitors were from Sydney.
- 64% visited for Holiday/leisure purposes, 30% Visited friends or relatives and 7% for Business or Other purposes.
- Visitors were likely to have travelled with their partner/spouse and the majority used private transport/their own vehicle.
- Just over half of all visitors (54%) to Shoalhaven did not make a booking prior to departing on their trip. Of those who did, accommodation was the most common form of booking (18% of visitors).
- 38% of all bookings were made using the internet.
- The average length of stay for Overnight visitors was 3.3 nights.

How did the visitors travel in and around the destination?

- The majority of visitors to Shoalhaven (71%) travelled south down the Princes Highway from Sydney.
- On average, visitors travelling to Shoalhaven visited or passed through between three and four destinations during their trip - Berry (70%), Nowra (55%), Ulladulla (34%), and Kangaroo Valley (33%).

How did the visitors decide to visit?

- One third of visitors made their decision to visit Shoalhaven the week before departure. A further quarter made the decision 2 to 3 weeks prior, and another quarter between 1 and 3 months before. Overall, Overnight and Holiday/leisure visitors tended to have a longer lead time.
- 79% of visitors did not consider another location as an alternative to Shoalhaven.
- Among those who did consider another location, there was no standout alternative.
- Many visitors to Shoalhaven relied on their previous experience of the region or friends and relatives. Those who did source information from more 'formal' channels prior to their visit, tended to use the internet.

Will they visit the destination again?

- 84% of visitors stated they would be likely to visit again in the next 12 months.
- 92% said they were likely to recommend Shoalhaven to others.
- Travellers Visiting friends and relatives (59%) were more likely to recommend Shoalhaven as a destination to visit.

Image courtesy of Tourism New South Wales.