



# Cooloola Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Report

The following information is based on a sample of 206 people who visited Cooloola Shire between May and June 2006. The Cooloola Shire includes Rainbow Beach, Gympie, Mary Valley and Tin Can Bay.

The top two reasons for visiting the Cooloola Shire were:

- 'For leisure or a holiday' (64%).
- 'Visiting friends and relatives' (20%).

In particular visiting a specific attraction drew many visitors to Cooloola (37%).

## What do the visitors to the destination expect?

- An opportunity to 'relax and rejuvenate' (76%).
- 'Spend quality time with family or friends' (70%).
- 'An opportunity to tour around and explore' (67%).
- Only a small number of Cooloola Shire visitors expected luxury and indulgence (15%) or an enjoyable nightlife and entertainment (13%).

## Were they satisfied with their experience?

Overall the majority of visitors to Cooloola Shire (89%) were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their visit. In regard to specific experiences of the destination, visitors were either 'fairly' or 'very satisfied' with:

- 'Friendliness of locals' (91%).
- 'Local atmosphere' (88%).
- 'Personal safety and security' (87%).
- 'Attractions' (86%).

Visitors were relatively 'less satisfied' with:

- 'Local transport' (49%).
- 'Entertainment' (48%).

In general, visitor experiences either 'met' or 'exceeded' expectations. The experiences that substantially 'exceeded' expectations were:

- 'Quality family time' (59%).
- 'Kids enjoyment' (59%).

Overall, 'local atmosphere' was rated the most important - either 'important' or 'very important' (79%).

## What is the visitors profile?

- More than half of all respondents (58%) visited on a day trip. The remaining stayed for at least one night. Overnight stays averaged 5.7 nights.
- Intrastate visitors accounted for 79% of all visitors to the Cooloola Shire - Brisbane (32%) and the remainder from Queensland (47%).
- The largest source markets outside of Queensland were: New South Wales (6%), Victoria (5%), South Australia (3%) and overseas (3%).
- Nearly half of all visitors to the Cooloola Shire were aged 55 or over (44%).
- Almost three quarters of visitors did not have children living at home with them (72%).
- More than half of the visitors had an annual household income of \$77,999 or less (60%).
- Just over a third of visitors were travelling with friends/relatives (36%) or as an adult couple (35%). Another 21% travelled with their immediate family and only 3% travelled alone.
- Standard hotel/motel/motor inn style accommodation was most widely used (24%), followed by backpacker hostels (16%), caravan parks/camping grounds (16%), the properties of friends/relatives (14%) and rental properties (11%).
- Just over half of the visitors to Cooloola walked or drove around/took in the sights/general sightseeing (58%). Other popular activities included, but were not limited to, eating out at a hotel/restaurant/clubs (57%), 'going to markets' (37%) and 'shopping' (36%).

## How did the visitors travel in and around the destination?

- Visitors primarily used their own transport to travel to the Cooloola Shire (74%). A further 12% used a bus to visit (possibly on the OZ Experience Backpacker bus).
- Overall the places most visited by Sunshine Coast visitors included Noosa (45%), Maroochydore (43%), Mooloolaba (36%), Caloundra and Eumundi (31% respectively).

## How did the visitors decide to visit?

- Just over a third of visitors (39%) made the decision to visit the Cooloola Shire either during their trip or the week or the day they were due to leave for their trip.
- Just over one third of the visitors were first time visitors (34%).
- Approximately one third of visitors relied on their previous experience or friends/relatives as a source of knowledge about the destination. Other more formal sources of information include travel guides, books or brochures (28%) and the internet (25%). The tourist office/Visitor Information Centre also provided a source of information for 13% of visitors.
- Most visitors did not consider an alternative destination for their trip (83%). Of the small number of visitors who did, the main competitive destinations included other destinations on the Sunshine Coast, followed by Coolangatta/Tweed Heads and the Gold Coast.

## Will they visit the destination again?

- Commitment to the Cooloola Shire was high, with 79% of respondents reporting that they were either 'extremely likely' or 'likely' to return in the next 12 months.
- A notably higher proportion of travellers Visiting friends and relatives (58%), and visitors from all areas of Queensland outside Brisbane (54%) were 'extremely likely' to return in the next 12 months. This compared favourably to an overall figure of 41% across all visitors to Cooloola.
- Despite the travel distances involved for interstate and overseas travellers, over half (56%) reported that they were either 'likely' or 'extremely likely' to return to the Cooloola Shire in the next 12 months.

Image courtesy of Tourism Queensland.