



# Destination Visitor Survey

## Strategic Regional Research - Victoria

### Alpine resorts: Summary of results

#### Introduction

In 2006, Tourism Research Australia and Tourism Victoria commissioned a survey of visitors to Lake Mountain, Mt Baw Baw and Mt Buffalo, three of Victoria's smaller snow resort areas. The survey was undertaken over a 12 week period across the Winter/Spring months of July through to October 2006 (targeting the region's snow season market). Two hundred and ninety two visitors were interviewed in total, 164 of which were recruited at Lake Mountain, 84 at Mt Buffalo and 44 at Mt Baw Baw.

The small number of responses to this survey was mainly due to two factors:

- an insufficient level of participation by the voluntary recruiters at each of the destinations
- there was no snow at any of the resorts at the official commencement of the season, and most resorts closed early due to the very poor snow falls.

#### Summary

##### Reasons for visit

The most common reasons to visit any of the three resorts were:

- close/easy to get to/accessibility (83%)
- tobogganing and snow play areas (37%)
- family friendly resort (34%)
- affordability/value for money (32%).

##### Visitor profile

- The majority of visitors (67%) were 'snow visitors' who had travelled to the snow in the last three years but did not ski.
- This was followed by 'ski enthusiasts' (23%) who had skied every season over the last three years.
- The majority of visitors (95%) were from Victoria.
- The most common travel parties were with immediate family (parents and children) (46%), friends or relatives (24%), or partner (19%).

- The average group size was 3.71 adults, with a maximum reported group size of 45 people. The average number of children in a group was 2.8, with a maximum of 26 in one group.
- The maximum reported number of nights away from home was 10, with an average of 2.69 for those visitors on overnight trips.
- Of the visitors, 21% stayed in a standard hotel/motel/motor inn, followed by ski lodge accommodation (20%), a luxury hotel/resort (15%) and a rented house/apartment (13%).
- The most common form of transport was a private car (94%), of which 39% were 4WD/AWDs.
- Tobogganing (36%), cross country skiing (22%) and sightseeing/snow play (19%) were the main activities undertaken by visitors at the three resorts.
- Common sources of information for visitors to Lake Mountain included 'www.lakemountainresort.com.au' (61%), 'Friends/family/word of mouth' (31%), and 'www.ski.com.au' (29%).
- Common sources of information for visitors to Mt Baw Baw included 'www.mountbawbaw.com.au' (77%), 'Friends/family/word of mouth' (44%), and 'www.ski.com.au' (30%).
- Common sources of information for visitors to Mt Buffalo included 'www.mtbuffalochalet.com.au' (37%), 'Did not look (own knowledge)' (33%), and 'Friends/family/word of mouth' (31%).

## Visitation

- Within the past 12 months, an average of 1.3 trips were taken to the respective mountain on which the visitor was recruited. Over the past five years, visitors had made an average of 6.4 trips to that particular mountain.
- Overall, 51% of visitors had travelled to a snow resort in Australia the year before (2005), while 17% stated that this was their first snow season.
- Other Victorian resorts visited in the past five years included: Lake Mountain (62%); Falls Creek (55%); Mt Hotham (49%); Mt Buller (48%); Mt Buffalo (36%); and Mt Baw Baw (34%).
- Resorts outside Victoria visited in the past five years included: Thredbo (12%); Perisher (11%); Other Australian snow resorts' (15%); and New Zealand snow resort (11%).
- Of the Lake Mountain visitors, 58% were very likely and 34% fairly likely to visit again next season.
- Of the Mt Baw Baw visitors, 49% were very likely and 41% fairly likely to visit again next season.
- Of the Mt Buffalo visitors, 56% were very likely and 25% fairly likely to visit again next season.
- The majority of visitors indicated they knew the mountain resorts were open all year round: Mt Buffalo visitors (94%); Mt Baw Baw visitors (78%); Lake Mountain visitors (76%).
- Nearly two thirds (65%) of Mt Buffalo visitors had visited the resort out of snow season, with 34% of Mt Baw Baw visitors and 31% of Lake Mountain visitors also having travelled to their respective resorts out of snow season.
- Reasons for visiting Mt Buffalo and Lake Mountain out of snow season included bushwalking/hiking (90% and 86% respectively) and general sightseeing (76% and 53% respectively). There was insufficient information for out of season visits to Mt Baw Baw to include in this report.

## Satisfaction

- Overall, 37% of visitors were very satisfied with their trip to Lake Mountain, Mt Baw Baw or Mt Buffalo.
- Visitors to Mt Buffalo were most satisfied with their visit, with 58% stating they were very satisfied. In contrast, 31% of visitors to Lake Mountain and 22% of visitors to Mt Baw were very satisfied with their visit.

## Importance of mountain services

Mountain services that were very important to visitors included:

- access to/from resort (64%)
- value for money (62%)
- snow coverage (59%)
- car parking (52%).

Services that were not at all important included:

- entertainment/nightlife (58%)
- standard of instructions (39%)
- service from lift attendants (39%).

## Satisfaction with mountain services

Visitors were very satisfied with:

- car parking (70%)
- access to/from resort (65%)
- ease of getting around resort (59%).

One quarter of visitors were very dissatisfied with the snow coverage and 11% with the quality of the runs/trails.

## Key areas nominated by visitors for improvement

- Visitors to Lake Mountain, Mt Baw Baw and Mt Buffalo named more snowmaking on runs (59%, 50% and 34% respectively), more activities for children (46%, 38% and 35% respectively), and more information available about conditions and activities before they arrive at the resort (29%, 28% and 32% respectively) as important issues.

For a copy of the full Strategic Regional Research report, please email [tra@tourism.australia.com](mailto:tra@tourism.australia.com)

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