



# Hunter Valley Wine Country Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Report

Hunter Valley Wine Country is part of the Lower Hunter region centred around Pokolbin and including places such as Rothbury, Broke Fordwich, Lovedale, Wollombi Valley and Mount View. The following Visitor Profile and Satisfaction Report is based on a sample of 198 people who visited the Hunter Valley Wine Country between May and August 2007.

The top two reasons for visiting the Hunter Valley Wine Country were:

- 'To taste/drink/buy wine' (56%).
- 'A great place to relax/unwind' (45%).

## What do the visitors to the destination expect?

- 'Food and wine experiences' (95%).
- 'Relaxation and rejuvenation' (92%).
- 'Quality time with partner/family/friends' (91%).
- 'Tour around and explore' (86%).
- 'Luxury and indulgence' (72%).
- 'Discover or learn something new' (68%).

Visitors to the Hunter Valley Wine Country are expecting the region to cater more to an adult market in terms of food, wine and relaxation. There is also a degree of luxury expected, which was higher for overnight visitors (79%) than those on a day trip (57%). Visitors do not expect to experience 'Nightlife and entertainment'.

## What are visitors experiencing in the destination?

- 'Visit winery' (89%).
- 'Eat out' (77%).
- 'Just walk or drive around/take in the sights/general' (76%).

## Were they satisfied with their experience?

- Overall, the majority of visitors (89%) were satisfied with their visit, with 54% very satisfied and 35% fairly satisfied. There are no significant differences across different types of visitors in terms of satisfaction, indicating that Hunter Valley Wine Country manages to deliver to all.
- Among those visitors anticipating particular experiences, expectations were somewhat better or much better than expected in the case of:
  - 'Food and wine experiences'
  - 'Relaxation and rejuvenation'

- 'Quality time with partner/family/friends'
- 'Touring around and exploring'

Although many visitors did not expect to experience 'Nightlife and entertainment', those that did felt their expectations were exceeded. In contrast, a large proportion of visitors expected 'Luxury and indulgence', but for many these expectations were not met.

### What is the visitors profile?

- 77% of visitors stayed at least one night, while the remainder (23%) were day visitors.
- 92% of visitors are from Australia, of which 88% are from New South Wales, 6% from Queensland, 2% from Western Australia and 1% from each of the other States and Territories.
- Of the New South Wales visitors, 57% are from the Sydney region, 44% of which specifically come from the northern areas of Sydney.
- Hunter Valley Wine Country is a favoured destination for couples (49%) followed by family and friends (45%).
- The majority of visitors (69%) are between 25-54 years of age, with 28% aged between 25-34, 18% between 35-44, 23% between 45-54, 17% between 55-64 and 6% were 64 years or older.
- The average stay for overnight visitors was 2.4 nights, and the average overall trip length across all visitors was 5.7 nights.
- Visitors under 55 years of age (63%) are more likely to just stay for one or two nights than over 55s (40%). In contrast, 30% of visitors over 55 are more likely to stay longer than two nights than those under 55(15%).
- 72% of visitors have visited the Hunter Valley Wine Country previously, and of these, 71% have visited once or twice in the last 12 months.
- Overnight visitors mostly stay in:
  - Luxury accommodation (43%).
  - Guest house/bed and breakfast (17%).
  - Standard hotel/motel or resort (14%).
  - Caravan park or backpacker/visitor hostel (1%).
- 15-34 year olds require the greatest mix of accommodation types.
- The internet is the main source of information for visitors, with 7 out of 10 overnight visitors using it to provide information.
- 55% of overnight visitors booked accommodation in advance and only 12% of overnight visitors did not make any bookings before reaching Hunter Valley Wine Country.

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

- 82% of visitors used private vehicles as their main form of transport, as did 93% of intrastate visitors.
- 72% of day visitors use a private vehicle as their main form of transport.
- One in three (35%) interstate and international visitors use rented/hire vehicles.
- Bus/coaches are only utilised by day trippers, with 13% indicating that this is their main form of transport to Hunter Valley Wine Country.
- 53% of all visitors stop at Cessnock, with Broke (33%) and Lovedale (27%) the other key stopover points.
- Day visitors are likely to stop at Cessnock (48%) but few stop at other destinations.
- Overnight visitors also stop at Cessnock (55%), as well as Broke (38%) and Lovedale (30%).
- First time visitors (45%) are significantly more likely to stop at Broke than those visitors who have previously been to Hunter Valley Wine Country (29%).

## How did the visitors decide to visit?

- 90% of overnight visitors made their decision to visit the Hunter Valley Wine Region at least two to three weeks in advance, and 68% over a month in advance.
- One in five (22%) day trips were impulse decisions, made either the day before or while on the road.
- Of all visitors, only 19% considered an alternate destination. In particular, day visitors (9%) were less likely than overnight visitors (22%) to consider an alternate destination.
- Just over one third of all visitors (37%) relied on their experience from a previous visit.
- One third of all overnight visitors and one third of all day trip visitors also relied (at least in part) on friends and relatives as a source of information about the destination.
- Of those visitors making advance bookings, the internet was used by around half (53%), with the internet mainly used to book accommodation.

## Will they visit the destination again?

- Nine out of ten visitors were satisfied with their trip to the Hunter Valley Wine Country, with over half (54%) expressing that they were in fact 'very' satisfied.
- Overnight visitors (76%) are more likely to revisit in the next three years than day visitors (55%).
- The majority of overnight (96%) and day visitors (93%) are likely to recommend the Hunter Valley Wine Country to others.

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