

# Visitor Economy Profile 2023-24: South Korea

South Korea is Australia’s eighth largest inbound market, having reached 126% of pre-pandemic levels in FY2023-24. Total spend from South Korean visitors was $1.4 billion for FY2023–24.

## Visitor numbers

* Total visitors: 353,200
* Change vs last year: 108%
* Change vs pre–pandemic: +26%
* Rank: 8th

## Visitor group type

* Solo traveller: 36% (Total INT: 57%)
* Adult couple: 15% (Total INT: 20%)
* Family: 27% (Total INT: 12%)
* Other: 22% (Total INT: 11%)

\*Total INT = The average for total international visitors to Australia

## Visitor spend

* Average visitor spend: $4,300
* Total spend in Australia: $1.4 billion
* Change in total spend vs last year: +84%
* Change in total spend vs pre–pandemic: +35%

South Korean visitors numbers have recovered completely since COVID-19 and are forecasted to grow. 9 in10 South Korean visitors come to Australia for a holiday or visiting friends and relatives (VFR).

## Forecast visitor growth

**Table 1: Forecast visitors to Australia, from 2015 to 2029**

| **Year** | **South Korean visitors to Australia** |
| --- | --- |
| 2015 | 227,000 |
| 2016 | 280,000 |
| 2017 | 302,000 |
| 2018 | 288,000 |
| 2019 | 280,000 |
| 2020 | 54,000 |
| 2021 | 2,000 |
| 2022 | 73,000 |
| 2023 | 288,000 |
| 2024 | 377,000 |
| 2025 | 402,000 |
| 2026 | 420,000 |
| 2027 | 435,000 |
| 2028 | 450,000 |
| 2029 | 463,000 |

## Main reason for visitation

**Table 2: Main reason for visitation**

| **Reason** | **Number of visitors from South Korea** | **Percentage of visitors from South Korea** | **Total INT percentage of visitors\*** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Holiday |  268,984  | 76% | 43% |
| Visiting Friends or Relatives (VFR) |  41,746  | 12% | 34% |
| Business |  13,748  | 4% | 9% |
| Education |  12,476  | 4% | 6% |
| Employment |  5,442  | 2% | 4% |
| Other |  10,786  | 3% | 4% |

## Where visitors stay

**Table 3: Where visitors stay**

| **Location** | **Percentage of visitors from South Korea** | **Total INT percentage of visitors\*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Capital cities & Gold Coast | 99% | 93% |
| Rest of Australia | 10% | 29% |
| New South Wales | 82% | 50% |
| Victoria | 21% | 34% |
| Queensland | 32% | 29% |
| South Australia | 1% | 6% |
| Western Australia | 4% | 11% |
| Tasmania | 1% | 3% |
| Northern Territory | 2% | 3% |
| ACT | 0% | 2% |

South Korean visitors spend less nights in Australia compared to the average international visitors. Key demand-driving experiences include going to the beach, sightseeing and shopping.

## Nights stayed

**Table 4: Nights stayed**

| **Nights** | **Number of visitors from South Korea** | **Percentage of visitors from South Korea** | **Total INT percentage of visitors\*** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1–7 nights | 188,661 | 59% | 34% |
| 8–14 nights | 68,769 | 21% | 23% |
| 15–30 nights | 22,853 | 7% | 17% |
| 31 or more nights | 40,035 | 12% | 25% |

## Visitor experience rating and trip type

* Positive trip sentiment (7+ out of 10): 96% (Total INT: 96%)
* First trip to Australia: 70% (Total INT: 36%)
* Return trip to Australia: 30% (Total INT: 64%)

## What visitors do

**Table 5: What visitors do**

| **Activity** | **Percentage of visitors from South Korea** | **Total INT percentage of visitors\*** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Go to the beach | 90% | 64% |
| Sightseeing/looking around | 90% | 75% |
| Go shopping for pleasure | 86% | 79% |
| Visit botanical or other public gardens | 83% | 45% |
| Eat out / dine at a restaurant and/or cafe | 77% | 89% |
| Visit national parks / state parks | 76% | 48% |
| Visit wildlife parks / zoos / aquariums | 68% | 34% |
| Charter boat / cruise / ferry | 66% | 22% |
| Visit history / heritage buildings, sites or monuments | 58% | 27% |
| Bushwalking / rainforest walks | 57% | 25% |

Aviation capacity for South Korea remains below pre-pandemic levels. Almost 120,000 Australians visited South Korea in FY2023–24.

## Aviation capacity

**Table 6: Aviation capacity**

| **Year** | **Passenger Load Factor** | **Seats Available** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2015–16 | 81% | 281,373 |
| 2016–17 | 82% | 293,474 |
| 2017–18 | 79% | 322,256 |
| 2018–19 | 80% | 327,343 |
| 2019–20 | 80% | 255,595 |
| 2020–21 | 10% | 19,685 |
| 2021–22 | 56% | 45,116 |
| 2022–23 | 85% | 301,132 |
| 2023–24 | 86% | 538,135 |

## Australian visitors to South Korea

* Australian visitors to market: 119,700
* South Korean residents coming into Australia: 353,200
* NET visitor balance: + 233,400

## Data sources

* Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey (IVS)
* Australian Bureau of Statistics, Overseas Arrivals and Departures
* Tourism Research Australia, forecasts (arrivals to Australia forecasts)
* Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics, Aviation Statistics

Data may not sum to 100% for all measures due to rounding and visitors can visit more than one location and/or experienced more than one activity. Updated November 2024.

Prepared by Tourism Research Australia, Australian Trade and Investment Commission (Austrade).

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Email us at: Tourism.Research@tra.gov.au