

2023 WAS A RECORD YEAR FOR SCOTTISH TOURISM



Scotland's tourism industry.

The 2023 International Passenger Survey results bring great news for Scottish tourism. Last year, the number of international visitors to Scotland recovered and surpassed pre-pandemic levels. This independent survey, conducted by VisitScotland, reveals that a staggering 82% of visitors would recommend the destination to their loved ones, a testament to the resilience and allure of

In 2023, Scotland welcomed a record 3.9 million international tourists, a 15% increase from 2019. The National Office's 2023 International Passenger Survey **statistics confirmed a significant 23% increase compared to 2022, when 3.2 million visitors were recorded.** This surpasses the previous record of 3.7 million visitors set in 2018. Scotland is the only UK nation to have exceeded its 2019 international tourism levels.

Scotland's appeal as a global tourist destination is evident in the diverse range of visitors it attracts. In 2023, North American and European visitors increased by 16% and 19%, respectively, while visitors from other countries, such as Australia and China, jumped by 53% compared to 2022. This data indicates that international visitors spent £3.5 billion, reflecting a 41% increase from 2019, a clear sign of Scottish tourism's global appeal and economic impact.

Visitor spending from "other countries" showed the highest growth, increasing by 47% compared to 2022. Meanwhile, spending by North American and European visitors increased by 3% and 9%, respectively. North American tourists accounted for 24% of all visits and 39% of total spending, while European visitors comprised 58% of visits and 39%. Visitors from the rest of the world contributed 17% of visits and 21% of spending.

These figures indicate a significant milestone for the Scottish tourism sector, showcasing a recovery and an increase in international visitor numbers, with visit numbers and spending now surpassing 2019. Scotland is the only region in the United Kingdom to have achieved this milestone.

The 2023 VisitScotland survey, one of the largest conducted by the Scottish National Tourism Organization, has provided valuable insights into the experiences and intentions of visitors. **An overwhelming 80% of the respondents expressed their intention to return to Scotland in the next five years,** a clear testament to the positive experiences they had during their visit.

This high rate of repeat visits and the positive word-of-mouth recommendations are crucial for the sector's recovery from the pandemic and further promote Scotland as a must-visit destination.

Usually carried out every two years, this survey has provided insight into visitors' motivations and experiences. Landscapes were the main attraction of Scotland for 70% of respondents. Personal recommendations strongly influenced more than half of visitors, with 71% rating their Scotland experience 9 out of 10 or higher. Nearly 60% of non-EU visitors rated it as their best vacation.

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