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7.5 MILLION AUSTRALIANS TAKE TIME OUT IN NSW – AUSTRALIA’S NUMBER ONE SHORT BREAK DESTINATION

Quick getaways a growing trend for domestic travellers

New South Wales has retained its number one spot as the most popular short break destination for travellers, attracting almost a third of Australian short break visitors in 2015.

According to the latest National Visitor Survey, Australians took 23.6 million domestic short breaks (one to three nights), in the year ending December 2015, of which 7.5 million occurred in NSW - more than any other State or Territory.

The number of short break visitors to NSW for the year increased by 3.8% on 2014, with the number of nights stayed increasing by 2.1% to a total of 14.3 million nights.

Regional NSW is the winner when it comes to enjoying the economic benefits of short break tourism, receiving 76% of all domestic short break visitors to the State.

The most popular NSW regional destinations for short stay travellers were the South Coast (16% of visitors), North Coast (16%), Hunter (12%), Central NSW (6%) and Central Coast and Blue Mountains (5% each).

Minister for Trade, Tourism and Major Events Stuart Ayres said, “In the past decade, the domestic short break market in NSW has grown by 11.8% with NSW maintaining the top position, beating other states and territories.

“The popularity of short breaks in Regional NSW has ensured the State remains the top choice for short stays with short break arrivals to Regional NSW growing by 9.7% over the past decade alone,” he said.

Destination NSW Chief Executive Officer, Sandra Chipchase puts the continued popularity of NSW short breaks down to the state’s diverse offering of destinations and experiences.

“While domestic travellers dominate the short break market, NSW attracts the bulk of international travellers as well, with NSW receiving 50% of international short break visitors to Australia in 2015.

“With our beautiful beaches and 14 wine regions, to national parks, a packed calendar of festivals and events, and world-class attractions across the state, NSW offers visitors, both domestic and international, many reasons to take a short break, and to come back to experience additional destinations in State.” said Ms Chipchase.

The most frequent domestic short break travellers to NSW in 2015 are young visitors aged between 15 to 29 years (27%). Whilst on break, visitors’ favourite activities were eating or dining out, going to the beach, sightseeing and visiting pubs and clubs.

For Aussies with a quick break in mind, Destination NSW suggests a sample of some of the State's short stays options:

1. Getting out onto the highway can be the best way to forget the hustle and bustle of city life and the **Grand Pacific Drive** on the **NSW South Coast** is one of the most spectacular experiences for short break road trippers. Kick off in Sydney in the **Royal National Park** then head south along the coast to **Austinmer** before continuing on to **Thirroul** and into the northern stretches of **Wollongong**. Pack a picnic blanket and a good book and spend the next few days relaxing under the shady trees of the **Wollongong Botanic Gardens**. Enjoy a barbecue and plan a fun day out with the family at **Byarong Park picnic area**, or unwind while you stroll through the peaceful buildings and landscaped gardens of **Nan Tien Temple** before driving back to Sydney ready to take on the week ahead
2. Wanting to getaway with the boys? Consider a visit to **Terrigal** on the NSW central coast. With a reputation as one of NSW's top surfing beaches, and boasting great fishing, boating and diving facilities, it's a perfect spot for a few days away with your mates. Stay at the **Clan Lakeside Lodge** to make the most of **Terrigal Beach** and **Lagoon**, and enjoy the convenience of being a short 5 minute walk right to the centre of town where dining options and entertaining are plentiful. Before you head home, be sure to make the 20 minute drive to nearby **Gosford** to visit newly opened **Gosford Classic Car Museum**. The ultimate way to wrap up a great NSW bro-cation!
3. All things delicious and fine come together in the **Hunter Valley**, a three hour drive from Sydney that is best visited with a group of friends, or with your significant other. Whether you're after a round of golf at the **Cypress Lakes Golf and Country Club**, a pamper session at the **Golden Door Spa**, or a rustic long lunch at the award-winning **Margan**, the **Hunter Valley** is primed to satisfy your senses. Stay at **Spicers Vineyard Retreat** and explore the local surrounds including fantastic nearby wineries, **Hungerford Hill** and **Scarborough**, or take a leisurely horse drawn carriage tour
4. Be at one with nature in **The Blue Mountains**, the perfect short break destination for families, nature lovers, and adventure seekers. Bushwalks abound in the region and are an excellent way to take in the natural attractions. Visit **Scenic World** in **Katoomba** to enjoy a day in the wilderness, visiting waterfalls, valleys and rugged sandstone tablelands by cablecar, or the famous **scenic railway**. The surrounding picturesque towns of **Blackheath**, **Faulconbridge**, **Katoomba**, **Leura**, **Megalong Valley**, **Mount Victoria**, **Springwood**, **Wentworth Falls**, **Hartley**, **Lithgow** and **Oberon** offer a great range of restaurants and accommodation close enough to all the action, adventure and nature you could want to experience in a 48 hour period!
5. Wave goodbye to the big city and hello to a few days of relaxation with a girl's getaway to **Bowral** in the **Southern Highlands**, approximately 90 minutes south west of Sydney. Check in to the stylish and elegant **Peppers Craigieburn**, a century-old homestead sure to guarantee an exquisite stay. Well-known as a 'fashionable holiday destination' for Sydneysiders, **Bowral** is best explored on foot with a leisurely stroll through the quaint town-centre, taking in an array of **shopping experiences**, from **antiques** to **home wares**, **jewellery**, **arts and crafts**. After the exploring, settle in for dinner at **Biota Dining**, one of the Best Restaurants in Australia. A hints... try timing your short break with the **Biota monthly farmers' market**, which calls for a special 'celebration Sunday' picnic menu. An amazing way to wrap up the ultimate ladies weekend escape
6. Only a short drive for Victorian short break goers, or accessible by air by flying into Albury airport, **The Murray River Region** is home to a wide range of attractions including national parks, lakeside towns and beaches, making it a wonderful short break destination for adventure and water activities. Dubbed the Sun Country, one of the great locations to visit is the twin towns of

Mulwala-Yarrowonga, which are located right on the banks of the **Murray River** and **Lake Mulwala**. Stay at **ClubMulwala**, the perfect place to dive straight into a range of activities including **fishing, river cruising and kayaking**, or if you're looking for some R&R, sit back and enjoy the view of this picturesque 'inland aquatic paradise'.

For more information on these great getaways, and more NSW short break experiences and destinations, check out www.visitnsw.com

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Definitions and further information

In this document 'Short Break Visitor' is defined as a visitor who spends between one and three nights away from home/ overseas for Holiday purposes.

For more information and statistics about tourism in NSW, see the Tourism – Facts & Figures page on the Destination NSW Corporate website at <http://www.destinationnsw.com.au/>