

# Australia is still only a dream for many American travellers

Americans love the thought of visiting Australia but hold off on booking that holiday

Latest research by Tourism Australia[1] shows that Americans see Australia as an aspirational destination and lack any urgency to travel down-under.

Lisa Murray, Director at Australia Trip Planner said we're a beautiful and safe country but American's still only see Australia as a dream destination and lack motivation in booking that holiday.

"This finding is surprising considering the world now seems smaller, overall travel takes less time, and people are more adventurous than ever before. The obvious question is, how do we convert being the aspirational place to visit into real visitors."

According to the research, tourism contributed more than \$28 billion to the Australian economy in 2013, courtesy of the 6.4 million visitors to Australia.

Ms Murray said "Tourism is a major contributor to Australia's economy, and it is a market that continues to grow each and every year. However, we cannot rest on our laurels and we need to keep nurturing our markets and find out exactly what they want to experience when they visit Australia.

"The Tourism Australia research findings show the US as Australia's fourth biggest visitor group, and by the year 2020, the US will contribute more than \$5.5 billion annually into our economy.

"This is great news for Australia not only financially but socially. We have a special relationship with Americans and they really 'get Australia' and seem to enjoy (although not understand) our unique sense of humour and style."

The research also shows that the key American travellers are considered to be affluent and aged 45 or over.

"This is hardly surprising. Australia is a long-haul destination therefore you would expect that the average US traveller to have both time and money on their side. Younger couples and / or families (no matter where they are in the world) tend to take shorter holidays that are closer to home and more affordable. It's when people become more established in their career and family life that the long haul 'dream holidays' get more focus.

"What I find concerning is that while Americans rank Australia among their top dream destinations, there is lack of urgency to book that holiday. The main barriers to booking that Australian holiday continue to be distance, time and cost, therefore it's imperative that Australia's tourism industry continue to look at incentives to overcome these barriers," Ms Murray said.

Ms Murray said that Australia Trip Planner is one of the many companies that looks at the individual needs of travellers to find out what holiday experience they want and how best to stretch the travellers dollar further. It is no longer an option to expect every traveller to want the same thing.

The Tourism 2020 plan and report was announced at the G'Day USA 2014 - Australia Tourism Summit ([www.tourism.australia.com/gdayusa](http://www.tourism.australia.com/gdayusa)) in Los Angeles by Tourism Australia's Chairman, Mr Geoff Dixon.

[1] <http://www.tourism.australia.com/statistics/tourism-2020.aspx>

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