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## North Coast News & Views No. 182

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### 2024 North Coast Tourism Symposium and Tourism Awards - SAVE THE DATE

Mark Thursday 1 August 2024 in your diaries!

Destination North Coast are pleased to partner with [Port Macquarie Hastings Council](#) to bring together the 2024 North Coast Tourism Symposium and North Coast Tourism Awards. Following the success of the 2023 events held in the Tweed we are equal parts excited and delighted to be able to deliver these events in one of our most prominent destinations.

The Symposium provides a great opportunity to bring our industry stakeholders together to collectively inspire the continued evolution of our industry. Likewise, the Tourism Awards provide an ideal opportunity to collectively celebrate our industries achievements and inspire us for the year ahead. Both events sold out in 2023 so make sure you have the dates marked in your calendar and keep your eye out for when tickets go on sale as they will go fast!

Further information on both events will be provided in the new year.



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### Creative Communities: Putting Culture At The Heart Of NSW

The NSW government has unveiled details of Creative Communities, the new arts, culture and creative industries policy. Creative Communities is a 10-year vision, the state's first creative industries policy, supporting the traditional arts sector and cultural institutions, but encompassing industries informed by the state's unique and diverse cultural strengths, including: First Nations cultures, Galleries, libraries, archives and museums, Performing arts including theatre, dance, circus, comedy, cabaret, Music including classical and contemporary composition, performance, and recording, Screen and digital games, Visual arts and crafts, Literature, writing and publishing, Broadcasting and digital media, Design, architecture and fashion, Built and physical heritage, Creative and arts education, Creativity in the food and beverage sector, and Creative innovation in the technology sector.

[Read media release.](#)

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### Destination NSW Sell Online Workshop - Port Macquarie

Along with many highly engaged industry stakeholders, Destination North Coast attended the recent Sell Online Workshop delivered by Destination NSW in Port Macquarie.

The workshop aided operators with tips on how best to leverage their [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse \(ATDW\)](#) profile, encouraged the use of online booking systems to enable live direct bookings and to facilitate connection to Online Travel Agents (OTA's) like Expedia, Booking.com, Viator etc. to reach more visitors, and generally guided attendees in ways to uplift their online presence.

This workshop was delivered by Destination NSW as part of the [NSW First Program](#), which assist visitor economy businesses to develop, promote and sell world-class visitor experiences.



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### Great Southern Nights Is Back!

The much-loved concert series will return from 8-24 March 2024, featuring more than 300 live gigs in venues across Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, Tamworth, Wagga Wagga and the Northern Rivers.

[See the full program here.](#)



## Industry Insights

### National Satellite Accounts Released

The [National Tourism Satellite Account](#) is now published. It looks at the 2022-23 financial year and compares to performance in previous years. The results include a 77% increase in tourism GDP, which rose from \$35.6 billion in 2021-22 to \$63 billion in 2022-23 in current price terms. Tourism GDP as a share of the national economy increased from 1.5% in 2021-22, to 2.5% in 2022-23. Tourism's share of total filled jobs in the economy increased from 3.1% in 2021-22, to 4.1% in 2022-23 (1 in 24 jobs).

### Visitor Survey Results For September 2023

Tourism Research Australia has released its **National Visitor Survey** results for [September 2023](#), which show visitor expenditure in Australia was \$8.8 billion, down 11 per cent compared to September 2022. Visitors spent 31.7 million nights away, down 10 per cent; there were 8.8 million overnight trips, down nine per cent on September 2022. Early data shows domestic overnight trips for October 2023 were weaker compared to October 2019 and 2022. Data for the first three weeks of November 2023 also shows weaker results compared to November 2019 and 2022.

The **International Visitor Survey** results show international visitor expenditure in Australia exceeded pre-COVID-19 levels by 11 per cent in [September 2023](#). Trips and nights to Australia were 84 per cent and 91 per cent of pre-COVID-19 levels respectively. International visitors took 549,000 trips to Australia, had 18.3 million nights away and spent \$2.2 billion during their visit. Australia's top three international markets were New Zealand (100 per cent of pre-pandemic levels), China (60 per cent) and the United States (75 per cent).

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released the [international arrivals numbers for October](#).

The arrivals show we are starting to welcome a greater volume of travellers as we head towards the peak season, with 607,930 coming to Australia in October, which is up from 584,620 in September. Arrivals are back to about 79%, compared to October 2019, and we are pleased to see holiday has surpassed visiting friends and relatives as the primary purpose for travel to Australia over a 12-month period.

### International Traffic Exceeds Forecasts

Australian aviation network traffic has hit 98 per cent of pre-COVID-19 levels according to the Aviation Australia [Network Overview](#) report for November 2023. International recovery was led by China, the United States and other Asia markets, which recorded 29 per cent, 18 per cent and 14 per cent increase in flights respectively compared to the previous month.

### Expedia Travel Trends For 2024

Expedia has released its [Unpack '24 annual report](#), which provides a comprehensive look at travel trends, collated using extensive first-party data from Expedia, Wotif and Stayz. Wotif data reveals 2024's top trending domestic flight routes, based on the biggest increase in demand over the last year. Stayz data shows NSW was front of mind with travellers seeking a holiday home stay, rather than a hotel room or apartment. Among the top Australian destinations for 2023 were Byron Bay or Ballina on the North Coast.



## Around The Region

### Tourism Australia In Region

A visit to the North Coast by Dominic Mehling, Tourism Australia's Industry Relations Manager (NSW, ACT, NT & QLD), is always cause for celebration and a chance to engage with businesses moving along the development trajectory to becoming export-ready.

Destination North Coast with Dominic, visited [Husk Farm Distillery](#), [Selah Valley](#) and [Crystal Creek Rainforest Retreat](#) before attending the [Tweed Tourism Company](#) end of year wrap-up event where Dom was a special guest.

Held at [Potager - A Kitchen Garden](#), the Tweed's tourism industry was treated to delicious canapés made using locally sourced produce and drinks from Husk and [Earth Beer Company](#).



### NSW Open Golf Regional Series

Australia's best golfers will test their skills on some of the state's finest courses, with venues confirmed for the 2024 NSW Open Golf Regional Qualifying Series, supported proudly by Destination NSW. The following events will be held on the North Coast: South West Rocks Country Club, 2-4 August; Coffs Harbour Golf Club, 5-7 August and Teven Valley Golf Course, 8-10 August. [Find more information here.](#)

### Australia's Number 1 Beach Front Bar

Australian Traveller magazine has named [Australia's 12 best beachfront bars for summer](#). Congratulations to [Raes Cellar Bar, Byron Bay](#) for coming in Number 1.

### Lismore To Host National Junior Baseball Competition

Lismore has been selected to host two major junior championship baseball events at the newly upgraded Albert Park Baseball Facility in 2024. Touted as one of the biggest junior events in the Australian baseball calendar, the Junior League (Under 15) and the Intermediate League (Under 14) will fight it out at Lismore's premier baseball ground, Albert Park from 27 to 31 May 2024.





#### The Tweed's Inclusive Commitment

The Tweed Tourism Company has unveiled new travel content to reflect the region's warm welcome for all visitors, including LGBTQ+ travellers and those with accessibility requirements. Accessible holiday options are also more easily found via the [Visit the Tweed](#) website, with a dedicated guide to some of the accessible experiences around the region that cater to various travel needs.

#### The Seven Most Welcoming Towns in NSW

World Atlas have released their list of the most welcoming towns in NSW, with both Lismore and Port Macquarie making the list. [See the full list here.](#)

Lismore also features alongside the likes of Venice, Japan and London to name a few, as one of the ['The Coolest Places to Visit in 2024'](#) according to this Qantas Travel Insider article.

#### Tweed Regional Gallery Welcomes New Director

The Tweed Regional Gallery and Margaret Olley Art Centre has announced the appointment of Ingrid Hedgcock as their new Director. Ingrid has over 25 impressive years in the arts sector and has been Curator of the Margaret Olley Art Centre since its inception in 2014. [Read media release.](#)

#### Rainforest Rattler Returns

The Rainforest Rattler have announced their Coffs Harbour trips will commence on 5 January 2024 They will be running until 19 January in Coffs and then heading to Casino/Kyogle for the weekend of the 20-21 January 2024. [Find more information here.](#)



### Industry Development And Other Opportunities

#### TA Industry Webinar

Tourism Australia's final Industry Webinar for 2023 will take place on Friday 15 December at 11am. Along with an update on the latest insights and activities from Tourism Australia, Chief Marketing Officer, Susan Coghill, will give an update on Tourism Australia's 'Come and Say G'day' marketing campaign, and the team from Google will join to provide an update on some of the trends they are seeing online and how Google can help travellers and businesses better connect. [Register to attend here.](#)

#### Google Tips For Holiday Opening Hours

Visitor economy businesses have been advised to update their Google listings to reflect altered operating hours during the festive season. Rather than simply using the standard line "public holidays may affect operating hours", it is suggested to schedule 'Special Hours' that display your opening hours on public holidays to make it easier for customers to seek goods and services when businesses are open. [Find more information here.](#)

#### Tourism Tribe's Online Training Calendar

Tourism Tribe have released their 2024 online training calendar which focuses on opportunities available to all operators and will be delivered through their online training portal.

They will be running 3 different types of online training sessions.

- **Monthly FREE 30-min Quick Win informative sessions** on important digital concepts tourism operators must absolutely know.
- **Monthly paid 1-hour Training Sessions** where they'll demonstrate step by step how to set up what operators learnt in the Quick Win sessions
- Tourism Tribe will also continue to run their very popular **Fast-track programs** that focus on helping operators set up lead generation marketing on their website and assisting them to focus on sales generation by leveraging Google Analytics.

Ahead of session registrations opening via [TourismTribe.com](#), you can view and [download the training calendar here.](#)

#### Rail Trail Connect Program Opens Opportunities

The Northern Rivers Rail Trail has proven to be huge success since opening in March this year. Businesses looking to capitalise on the opportunities created by the Rail Trail are invited to join the [Rail Trail Connect Program](#) which aims to seamlessly 'connect' commercial and business operations with the [Northern Rivers Rail Trail.](#)



### Funding And Other Opportunities

#### Access to Government Grant Information

All government grants information is available for free from official sources - be wary of scam websites that charge fees for grant-related services. Check out these [tips for accessing grant information safely.](#)

#### Cultural Grants Program

Supports Aboriginal community organisations across NSW to celebrate Aboriginal culture and hold key cultural events and activities. **Closes 26 February 2024.**

#### Regional Arts Touring Fund

These grants support projects that provide access to arts and culture for audiences living in regional NSW. Funding is available for tours of all artforms, including performing arts, music, visual arts, literature, history, museums and multi-arts. **Closes 26 February 2024.**

#### Made In NSW

Screen NSW's Made in NSW Program is a five-year funding program to support the advancement of NSW as a production destination for feature films and major television drama programs. **Ongoing.**

### North Coast Product Development

#### **Uki Mountain Bike Park**

Mountain bikers rejoice with the opening of the new (FREE) Uki Mountain Bike Park. Covering more than 6.4 kilometres, with eight mountain bike trails and a pump track for kids, the new Park has something for all riders. Located in the hinterland town of Uki, surrounded by country vistas and views to Wollumbin Mount Warning, the trails include natural terrain, constructed features, obstacles, drop-offs and bridges.

#### **Pho Home - Port Macquarie**

This Vietnamese restaurant has recently opened a second location in the Port Mac CBD with the original shop location in the industrial area.

#### **The Artisans Table - Lismore**

Recently opened on Keen Street in Lismore, The Artisans Table is an art studio created from a collaboration between Vic from "Lines by Vic" and Jess from "Crafted Terrazzo". They are local makers who love being creative and sharing their passions! Looking to do something creative? Check out their schedule of exciting classes and workshops coming up.

#### **New Brew from Woopi Brewery**

A new beer release in time for Christmas, Headland Hazy, an easy drinking festivities-friendly summer hazy pale at 4.2 per cent alcohol. Expect lashings of soft pillowy tropical notes to lift from the glass which sit atop elevated passion fruit, guava, mango and the softest of malts and barley existing bitterness. A true summer hop driven hazy pale ale

#### **Florence Jones - Port Macquarie**

A new wine, cheese and charcuterie store. Dine in and take away options.



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### **North Coast Events**

To aid your planning and to support local events, please note these upcoming events on the North Coast or find [all events on DNSW's website](#).

#### **The Whitlams Coastal Tour with Scott Owen**

5 January 2024  
Port Macquarie

#### **Buckin' by the Beach**

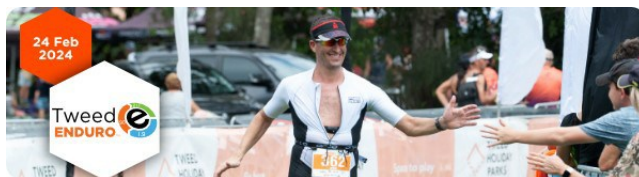
6 January 2024  
Evans Head

#### **The Legends Australia Concert Series**

27 January 2024  
Coffs Harbour

#### **Tweed Enduro**

24 February 2024  
Pottsville



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