



Destination
North Coast NSW



Visitor Economy News

Image: Forster Tuncurry, Courtesy of Destination NSW

Key Updates



Image: Destination NSW

Red Tape Overhaul Frees up Venues and Outdoor Events

The new Cultural State Environmental Planning Policy will reduce the amount of time it takes to have an event, gig or festival approved by the local council or state agency, removing outdated and lengthy planning pathways for simple and fun events. To support the rollout, the NSW Government will release practical resources including a Vibrancy Guidelines and an Events Guide to help councils and businesses make the most of the new opportunities.

These changes are part of the Cultural SEPP, that will be implemented through updates to the Codes SEPP 2008, to support creative, cultural and hospitality opportunities across NSW, and drive a thriving, inclusive 24-hour economy.

[Read media release](#)



Reflections Launches Unique Venues for Hire in Spectacular NSW Destinations

Reflections Holidays is expanding beyond holiday accommodation by also opening its venue spaces for event hire – from corporate retreats, weddings and festivals to school excursions and sports events – in some of New South Wales’ most spectacular locations.

With 40 holiday parks on Crown land in stunning coastal and inland locations and 17 established venue spaces, Reflections has strong potential to tap into the events sector with profits to be reinvested back into the holiday parks and reserves.

[Read media release](#)



EOI: Support Camping in NSW National Parks

NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service invites Expressions of Interest from qualified businesses to provide supported camping services in NSW national parks and reserves including tent or caravan hire and/or setup, equipment and bedding hire, optional food and related offerings.

EOI's close 10am Tuesday 28 October 2025.

[Learn more here](#)



NSW Tourism Awards - Regional Elements RFQ

NSW Tourism Association are seeking regional partners across NSW to contribute exclusive elements to the 2025 NSW Tourism Awards Gala Night, which will be held at Waterview in Bicentennial Park on Thursday 27 November.

This year's opportunities to showcase the unique character of areas across regional NSW include:

- **Regional Gift Hampers for Judges** – featuring local produce, artisan goods, and regional specialties.
- **Regional Welcome Display or Floral Feature** – regionally inspired displays or arrangements using native or locally significant materials.
- **Regional Ingredient Feature (Menu Collaboration)** – partnership with the caterer to highlight regional produce in the gala menu.

EOI's close 27 October 2025.

[Find more here](#)

DNC Communications Survey: Last Call!

We want to keep you informed with the latest industry insights and Destination North Coast news. Take a moment to complete our quick survey and help shape the updates you receive.

Survey Closes EOD 10 October.

[Complete our 3-minute survey here](#)

Industry Insights

Visitor Spending: Record High in NSW

NSW led the nation in visitors, nights and expenditure in the financial year ending June 2025.

[Tourism Research Australia data](#) shows total visitor expenditure reached \$55.9 billion, up 5.7 per cent year on year. International visitor expenditure grew even faster, rising 15.1 per cent to a record \$13.9 billion.

China was the largest contributor to NSW's international visitor growth (+23.7 per cent) during the period, followed by the United States and New Zealand.

Top Travel Priorities

A [report by consumer intelligence and marketing platform Brandwatch](#) has analysed millions of social media conversations to understand how each generation is shaping trends in travel. For Gen Z, food is regarded as a vital part of the travel experience; road trips are a popular topic for millennials; Gen X

Domestic Tourism Statistics June 2025

Domestic overnight tourism results were stable in the June quarter 2025 when Australian residents took 27.6 million overnight trips and spent \$21.9 billion. The June quarter results suggest that Australians remain eager to undertake holiday travel, while remaining cautious with their spending.

The [June quarter 2025 release](#) marks the first release of daytrip data under the Domestic Tourism Statistics collection. In the June quarter 2025, Australian residents took 69.0 million daytrips and spent \$11.2 billion.

AI in Travel: Job Loss Fears

While some see exciting opportunities for increased efficiency from the introduction of AI, many worry about being left behind.

[A recent study](#) released on World Tourism Day, reveals that nearly half – 44% – of

favours urban getaways; and Baby Boomers are focused on romance.

travel pros see AI in travel as a potential threat, concerned it could replace the human element so vital to crafting memorable, custom trips.

Industry Development

Destination NSW Inbound Strategy Workshop

The practical Inbound Strategy workshop is designed to provide visitor economy businesses with the necessary steps to develop and sell export-ready products to international visitors via the inbound travel trade. The workshop will suit visitor economy businesses, including accommodation, tours and activities, and visitor attractions including wineries, distilleries, breweries and farm gates that:

- Offer bookable experiences
- Have a presence in the domestic market, with at least one year of operational experience
- Are currently connected with or considering working with an online travel agent
- Are exploring opportunities in the international market

Date: Tuesday 28 October 2025

Time: 10:00 - 16:00 (AEDT) *Check-in from 09:30*

Location: Elements of Byron, 144 Bayshore Drive, Byron Bay

Cost: FREE

[Register here](#)

DNC Business Events Workshops

Join us for our Industry Workshops - Shaping Success Trends, Strategies & Bold Ideas for North Coast Business Events, an interactive session for North Coast Business Events stakeholders.

- Discover current trends, innovative event concepts, and practical strategies to boost destination appeal and event success.
- Gain insights into sales best practice, client expectations, and how bold ideas can deliver results.
- Network, share ideas, and align on approaches that position our region as a competitive national player.

We'll wrap up with a brief **Q&A session**, providing an opportunity for you to ask questions, share insights, and connect directly with our Business Events team and other operators.

Our Collaboration for Success workshops delivered outstanding results last year, with operators actively building connections and forming valuable partnerships across the region. A great example of this spirit of collaboration is the Wine Trail, created through the joint efforts of Cassegrain Wines, Bago Winery, Long Point Vineyard, and Douglas Vale Homestead and Vineyard.

Duration: 2 hours

Format: In-person - various locations

Registration is free - Light refreshments included

We encourage all Business Event operators and industry partners to attend.

[Register here](#)

Regional Capability & Needs Survey

Tourism in regional communities is about more than visitor numbers, it strengthens wellbeing, resilience, and pride of place. Yet without the right tools, these impacts are hard to measure and often overlooked in policy and investment. Australian Regional Tourism (ART) is inviting Local Councils and Regional Tourism Organisations to complete a Social Impact Survey.

[Complete the survey](#)

Measure Digital Performance

If you've created a digital presence for your business, you'll need to track it to make sure it's effective.

Check out some new information on how to set goals, choose metrics and track performance on a range of digital platforms.

[Find more here](#)

Sustainability Spotlight



Why Sustainability Certification Matters

People are more aware than ever of the impact their travel has; not just on the environment, but on the communities they visit. As sustainable habits become mainstream, so too does the demand for action and accountability.

This growing awareness presents both a responsibility and a major opportunity for tourism operators, destinations and businesses alike

[Learn more](#)

DNC Out & About



DNC in the Nambucca Valley

Our most recent Destination North Coast Board meeting took us to the beautiful Nambucca Valley, where we had the chance to connect with a great group of local business owners at a networking event, followed by a series of insightful site visits the next day.

It was a valuable opportunity to hear firsthand from the local economic development and tourism team and operators, see their passion in action, and gain a deeper understanding of the LGA's unique visitor experiences and opportunities for growth.

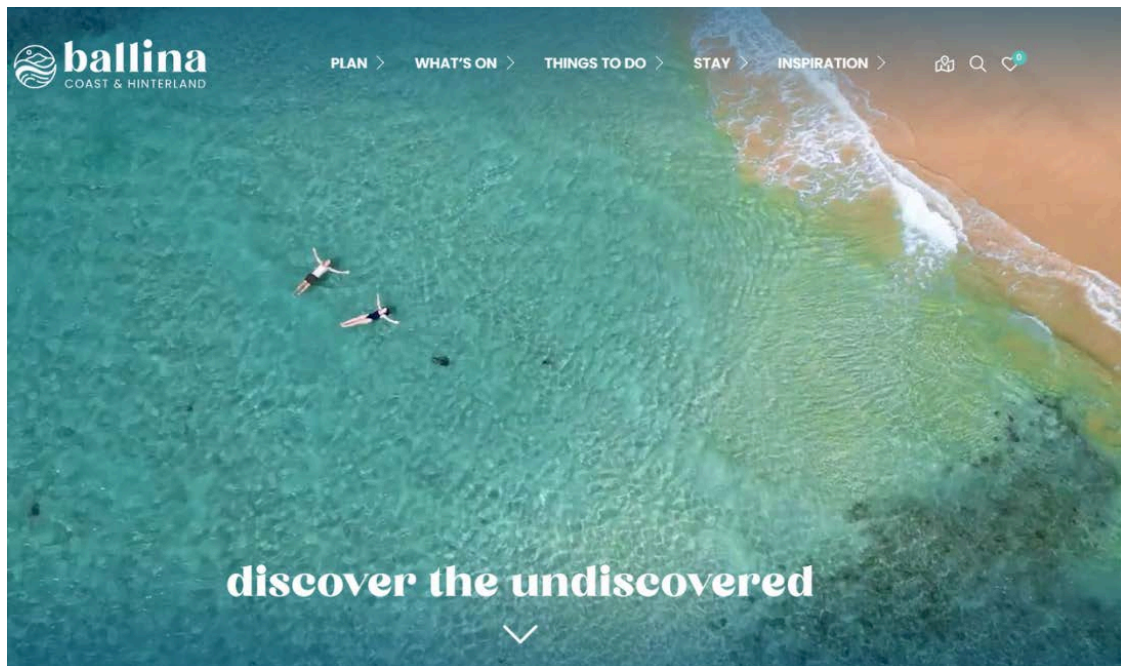
Around the Region



Capella Lodge Has a Fresh New Look

The world-class Capella Lodge on Lord Howe Island, a UNESCO World Heritage site, has just reopened with a stunning refurbishment, welcoming guests in time for spring.

[Find more here](#)



New Website for Ballina Coast and Hinterland

The Ballina Coast & Hinterland website has been refreshed and is now live! It's easier than ever to see what's on, plan a visit and discover the many businesses and experiences in the region.

[Check it out](#)

Where to Find the Best Fish and Chips in NSW?

Fresh local catches, mountains of handcut chips and tangy, housemade tartare – NSW's fish and chips are among the best in Australia. Destination NSW have included the following north coast towns for their fine fare:

- [Beach St Seafoods - Forster](#)
- [Fishy Fishy - Lennox Head](#)
- [Benny's Fish Truck - Lord Howe Island](#)
- [Fishmongers - Byron Bay](#)
- [Coffs Harbour Fishermen's Co-Op - Coffs Harbour](#)
- [Fishheads - Byron Bay](#)

Product Development

Have a new product or experience you'd like to tell us and DNSW about? **Submit it via the link below.**

[Submit updates here](#)

Public Supply Co.

Tweed Heads just got a little sweeter with this scroll-stopping new spot well worth the line-up! Public Supply Co is slinging fresh-baked cinnamon scrolls, cereal-topped coffee and

specialty drinks including match floats and mont blanca, just to name a few

[Check it out](#)

Seasalt - Brunswick Heads

At the heart of Brunswick Heads find Seasalt, a four-bedroom, three-bathroom retreat with a hotel-like private pool and spacious indoor living.

[Check it out](#)

Tavola - Ballina

Tavola Restaurant Bar opens its doors at the Ballina Byron Islander Resort recently.

[Check it out](#)

Prairie Coffee House - Brooklet

Prairie Coffee House is a gorgeous caravan cafe tucked into the greens hills of Brooklet in the Ballina hinterland. Priding themselves on serving delicious food made from local organic produce, Prairie is great spot to stop off for coffee.

[Check it out](#)

Grants & Funding

Looking for Grants?

Government agencies and organisations offer grants and funding programs, designed to assist with improving your business or product offering. Review the latest opportunities for **grants in NSW** and **nationally via Austrade**.

Destination North Coast may be able to provide a Letter of Support (LOS) for your project if it aligns with the **Destination North Coast Destination Management Plan (DMP)**. Letters of Support requests can be made **via the online form** found on our website.

[Request a letter of support here](#)

Surf Club Facility Program

The Surf Club Facility Program is part of the NSW Government's ongoing commitment to support the upgrade of local Surf Life Saving Clubs. Category 1 is for Upgrade projects (limited to off the shelf purchases) and aims to assist eligible Surf Life Saving Clubs throughout NSW to create new and upgrade existing facilities. **Closes 20 October 2025.**

[Find more here](#)

Travel and Tourism Fund

This quick response funding program is designed for domestic and international touring and travel activity for NSW contemporary music artists, acts and music industry professionals. **Closes 28 November 2025.**

[Find more here](#)

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](#).

Byron Bay International Film Festival

Byron Bay 17-26 October 2025

Savour The Tweed

Various locations 22-26 October 2025

Dorrigo Folk & Bluegrass Festival

Dorrigo 24-26 October 2025

Pave The Way: A First Nations Laneway Twilight Festival

Coffs Harbour 15 November 2025

Destination North Coast NSW, The
Professional Centre Park Avenue, Level
1/9 Park Avenue, Coffs Harbour, New
South Wales 2450, Australia
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