

## RAINFOREST TOURISM 'BAROMETER' PORT DOUGLAS AND DAINTREE SURVEY Quarterly Report # 1 January to March 2009

This quarterly report forms part of a series of reports presented by the Marine and Tropical Sciences Research Facility (MTRSF) and James Cook University (JCU) on tourism in Tropical North Queensland (TNQ) (see MTRSF Tourism Barometers at [http://www.mtrsf.org.au/publications/tourism\\_barometers.html](http://www.mtrsf.org.au/publications/tourism_barometers.html)). The geographic area of focus was expanded to include the tourism 'hotspots' of **Port Douglas and Daintree** in far northern Queensland, and data presented in this report summarise the results from the **first quarter (Q1)** of data collection from **January to March 2009**. Overall, a total of **174 surveys** were returned for this quarter from locations in Port Douglas and the Daintree area. The results include tourists' socio-demographic characteristics, travel behaviour, motivations and planning, and activities.



### Survey Methodology and Limitations

The methodology used in this research was structured visitor surveys collected by James Cook University researchers at various sites throughout the Port Douglas and Daintree area.

During this period, limitations included an overall drop in visitor numbers to the North Queensland region.

Additionally, the surveys were only collected in English, therefore the Japanese and Chinese visitor markets, for example, are under-represented in the data collected.



### Findings

#### Gender, origin and age

The sample consisted of 53.4% females and 46.6% males. Moreover, 75.4% of respondents were international visitors and 24.6% were domestic visitors. International visitors were mainly from Germany and Sweden (both 5.3%), and the United States, Sweden, Norway, Belgium and Switzerland (all 3.5%). Figure 1 illustrates the age groups of respondents.

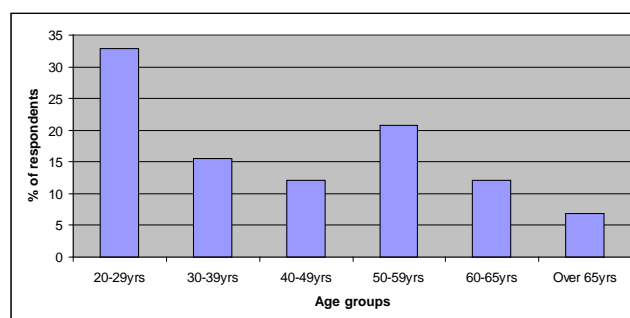


Figure 1: Age groups of survey respondents (Q1, 2009).

#### Travel party and income

The composition of respondents' travel parties is illustrated in Figure 2. Travelling as a couple was clearly the most preferred travel party composition amongst surveyed visitors.

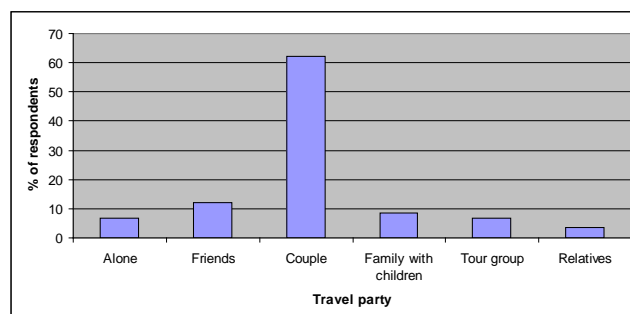


Figure 2: Survey respondents' preferred travel parties (Q1, 2009).

Figure 3 details the reported incomes of survey respondents. The majority of respondents had an annual income of between AUD\$25,000 and \$45,000.

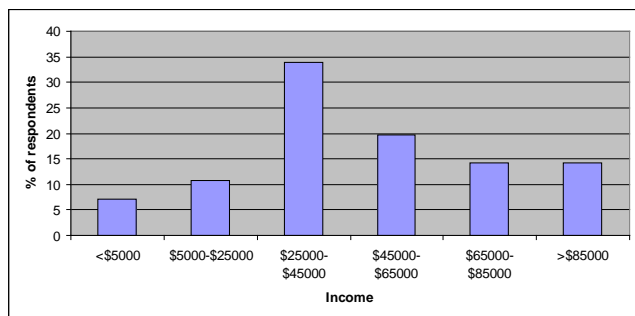


Figure 3: Survey respondents' reported annual income (Q1, 2009).

### Previous visits and length of stay

A total of 82.5% of survey respondents indicated that this was their first visit to the Port Douglas and Daintree area. For those who had visited the area before, the average number of visits was 4.40.

Figure 4 provides a summary of the length of time respondents stayed in Port Douglas, Mossman, Daintree, Cape Tribulation and the regional beaches. Day visits were popular amongst international and domestic visitors alike.

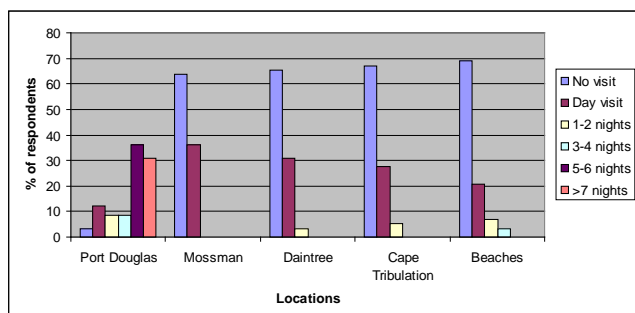


Figure 4: Length of time spent in locations throughout the Port Douglas and Daintree area (Q1, 2009).

### Accommodation and transport

Figure 5 illustrates the most popular types of accommodation used by survey respondents.

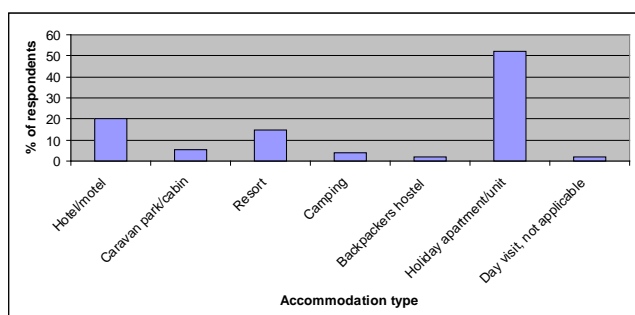


Figure 5: Most popular types of accommodation utilised by survey respondents (Q1, 2009).

Only for 29.8% of respondents did their chosen accommodation venue have an on-site restaurant. However, 79.6% of respondents reported having in-room cooking facilities available to them.

Respondents were asked to indicate, on average, how many meals they 'ate out' each day of their trip. The mean response was 1.72 meals.

Figure 6 shows the types of transport utilised by respondents to travel to and around the Port Douglas and Daintree area.

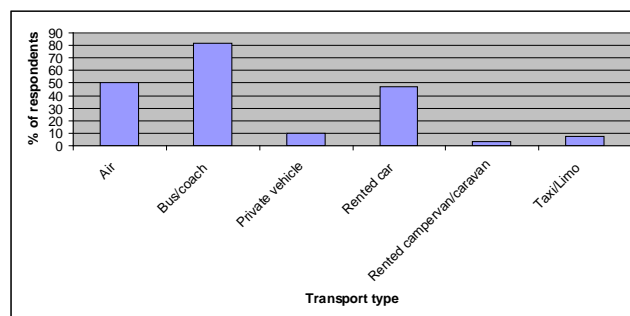


Figure 6: Most popular types of transport utilised by survey respondents (Q1, 2009).

### Information sources

Sources of information about the North Queensland tourism region used by survey respondents are outlined in Figure 7.

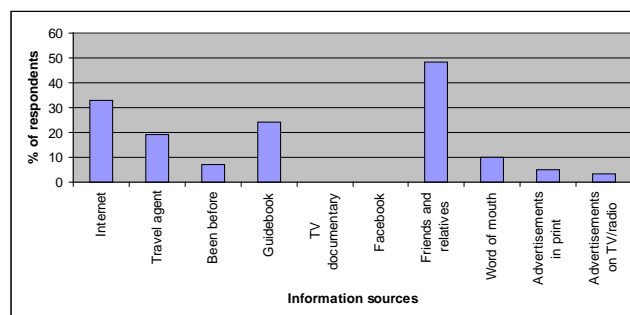


Figure 7: Sources of North Queensland tourism information utilised by survey respondents (Q1, 2009).

### Motivations for travel to the region

The most important motivations for visiting the area, measured on a scale of 1 ('not at all important') to 5 ('very important') are listed below. The comprehensive list is provided in Table 1.

Overall, the top five motives for travelling to the region in Quarter 1, 2009 were:

- Rest and relaxation (4.50);
- To visit the Great Barrier Reef (4.31);

- To visit the beaches (4.11);
- To experience the natural environment (4.04); and
- Climate (3.98).

**Table 1:** Overall motivations for travelling to the Port Douglas and Daintree region (Q1, 2009).

Motivation to visit	Overall rating
Rest and relaxation	4.50
To visit the Great Barrier Reef	4.31
To visit the beaches	4.11
To experience the natural environment	4.04
Climate	3.98
To visit the Daintree rainforest	3.69
Snorkelling and diving	3.68
Restaurants and dining	3.55
Cheap accommodation	3.49
To see Australian wildlife	3.43
To spend time with family	3.26
Adventure activities	3.21
Cheap airfares	3.19
Socialising and meeting new people	2.96
To experience Aboriginal culture	2.66
Eco-accredited products	2.60
Nightlife and entertainment	2.56
Carbon offsetting programs	2.51
To visit friends and relatives	2.23
Shopping	2.11
Fishing	1.89
Business/conference/meeting	1.44
To attend a wedding	1.35

### Visits to the rainforests and reefs

Survey respondents were queried about their rainforest and reef visitation patterns. A large number of respondents visited rainforests in the Mossman area (58.6% compared with 41.4% who did not). Following Mossman, the second most popular area to visit and experience rainforests was Cape Tribulation (48.3% of respondents visited these rainforests), followed by Daintree village (36.8% of respondents).

As for the Great Barrier Reef, the most popular destination for experiencing the reef was the outer reef (43.1% of respondents), followed by the Low Isles (27.6% of respondents) and departing for the reef from Cairns (12.1%).

### Service quality

Respondents were asked to reflect on nine given aspects of service quality during their time in the Port Douglas and Daintree area. Service quality

was gauged on a scale of 1 ('very unsatisfied') to 5 ('highly satisfied'). Table 2 provides a summary of the mean values.

**Table 2:** Survey respondents' satisfaction with service quality aspects in the Port Douglas and Daintree area (Q1, 2009).

Service quality aspect	Overall rating
Felt safe and secure	3.88
Courteous and friendly staff	3.76
Accommodation – value for money	3.53
Standard of restaurants	3.47
Visitor information	3.47
Attractions – value for money	3.33
Tours – value for money	3.28
Shopping / retail	3.10
Public transport	3.02

### Travel budget and overall satisfaction

The average mean budget for survey respondents who holidayed in the Port Douglas and Daintree area was AUD\$3,910, with an average of 1.96 adults and 0.02 children.

Respondents were largely satisfied (mean=8.07) with their visit to the Port Douglas and Daintree area, based on a scale of 1 ('very unsatisfactory') to 10 ('very satisfactory'), although some possible improvements might be necessary to boost this mean score further into the 8s and 9s.

Domestic visitors were particularly satisfied with their visit, with a mean of 8.43, compared to international visitors with a mean of only 7.95.

Moreover, 98.1% of respondents indicated that they would recommend the Port Douglas and Daintree area to prospective visitors.

For further information about the MTSRF-funded North Queensland tourism surveys, contact James Cook University:

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To access and download the series of quarterly Rainforest Tourism 'Barometers', visit [http://www.rrrc.org.au/publications/tourism\\_barometers.html](http://www.rrrc.org.au/publications/tourism_barometers.html)