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ULURU-KATA TJUṬA NATIONAL PARK

CENTRAL AUSTRALIA VISITOR PROFILE AND SATISFACTION SURVEY

Report Period: 2011

The Central Australia Visitor Profile and Satisfaction (VPS) project was completed as part of the Destination Visitor Survey Program (DVS) managed by Tourism Research Australia (TRA) in partnership with Tourism NT, to gain a better understanding of visitors to the region, including their motivations and satisfaction with their visit to the Central Australia region and attractions within the region. A copy of this research can be found on the Tourism NT corporate site at www.tourismnt.com.au.

The survey was able to capture information relating to each attraction visited during the trip in Central Australia, thus making it possible to develop a customised report focused around visitors that stopped at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park (UKTNP).

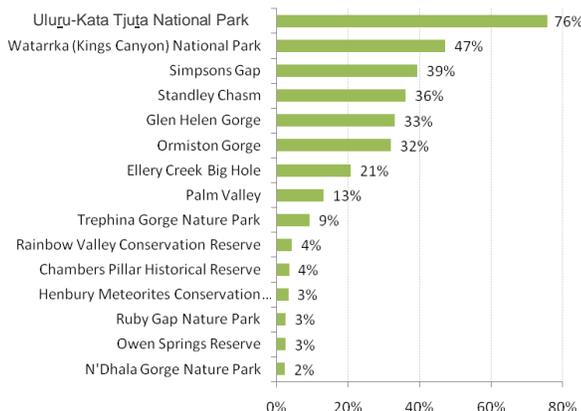
Visitors to Central Australia were recruited to take part in this research over two waves in 2011 as well as from a range of locations within the region (such as the Alice Springs Airport, Ayers Rock Resort and Alice Springs commercial attractions). A total of 533 responses were received and of these 403 had visited UKTNP. An **UKTNP visitor** throughout this report is defined as having gone to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park whilst on their trip in Central Australia. None of the questions asked in survey were specifically targeted at Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

ATTRACTIONS WITHIN CENTRAL AUSTRALIA

Of all 36 attractions, Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park was the most visited at 76%.

- Both natural and commercial attractions were included in the scope of the survey. In total there were 36 attractions - 15 natural and 21 commercial.
- Of all 36 attractions, UKTNP was the most popular at 76%.
- The second most popular natural attraction was Watarrka (Kings Canyon) National Park (47%) followed by Simpsons Gap (39%) and Standley Chasm (36%).
- Respondents who did visit the National Park, on average, also went to another three natural attractions or another seven of the 36 attractions.

Natural attractions visited in Central Australia



ULURU-KATA TJUṬA NATIONAL PARK

Overview

73% of visitors to Alice Springs also included Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park in their trip.

- The majority of visitors to UKTNP surveyed were domestic visitors, while 31% of visitors were from overseas.
- Rail/Coach visitors (84%) were more likely than Fly visitors (75%) or Drive visitors (74%) to visit the National Park.
- Of the 403 respondents that visited UKTNP, 86% of those also went to Alice Springs and 13% did not go to Alice Springs.
- There were 475 visitors surveyed that travelled to Alice Springs and of those, 73% also went to UKTNP while 27% did not go. When visitors were asked why they did not visit UKTNP, their typical responses included 'not enough time', 'been there before', 'too far', 'travelling to Alice on business', 'expensive', and 'fees'.
- UKTNP visitors were more likely to come to the region for a holiday (89%) compared to all respondents (82%) and less likely to visit friends or relatives or conduct business.

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UKTNP visitors were more likely to visit a cultural centre and go on short and day walks compared to all visitors.

Activities

- Activities that UKTNP visitors are more likely to partake in compared to all visitors in general included visiting a cultural centre (67% compared to 57%); going on a short walk for less than two hours (69% compared to 62%); going on a day walk (2 to 8 hours) (56% compared to 48%); and going on an organised tour (52% compared to 46%).
- UKTNP visitors were significantly more likely than those that did not go to the National Park to go on an organised tour, visit attractions, go for short and day walks, and visit a cultural centre. These visitors were also less likely to be visiting friends or relatives or travelling for business.
- Domestic UKTNP visitors were significantly more likely than international UKTNP visitors to do general sightseeing, visit museums or art galleries, and go shopping. International UKTNP visitors were more likely to go on an organised tour.

UKTNP visitors came to the region to visit an iconic destination

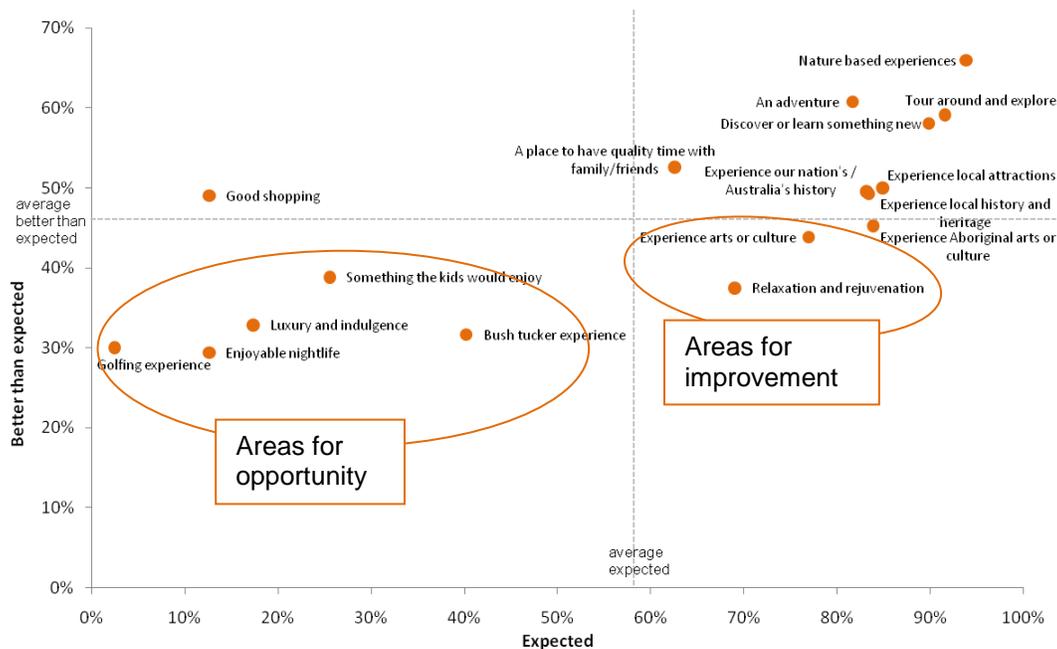
Reasons for visiting Central Australia

- The most important reason nominated for visiting Central Australia by UKTNP visitors was to visit an iconic Australian destination (39%) which was higher than for all respondents (33%). This was followed by wanting to visit a specific attraction (21%).
- When asked to identify all reasons for visiting, again the majority of UKTNP visitors wanted to visit an iconic Australian destination (76%). A third wanted to experience nature (33%) and 27% wanted to visit a specific attraction. Visitors also wanted to learn about Aboriginal culture (22%).
- UKTNP visitors were significantly more likely than those that did not go to the National Park to visit the region to learn about Aboriginal culture and the natural environment. It was also recommended by friends/travel agents to visit.

UKTNP visitors expected a number of experiences around nature, culture, history and heritage, adventure and to learn something new.

Expectations

- The majority of UKTNP visitors had a number of expectations with their trip to Central Australia. In particular, they expected to experience nature, culture, history and heritage, to have an adventure and learn something new.
- When comparing what was expected to whether those expectations were exceeded, it is possible to determine areas for opportunity and improvement. The graph below highlights that UKTNP visitors expected relaxation as well as to experience arts or culture however, they were not blown away with these, as more felt their experience was 'as expected'.





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Expectations continued

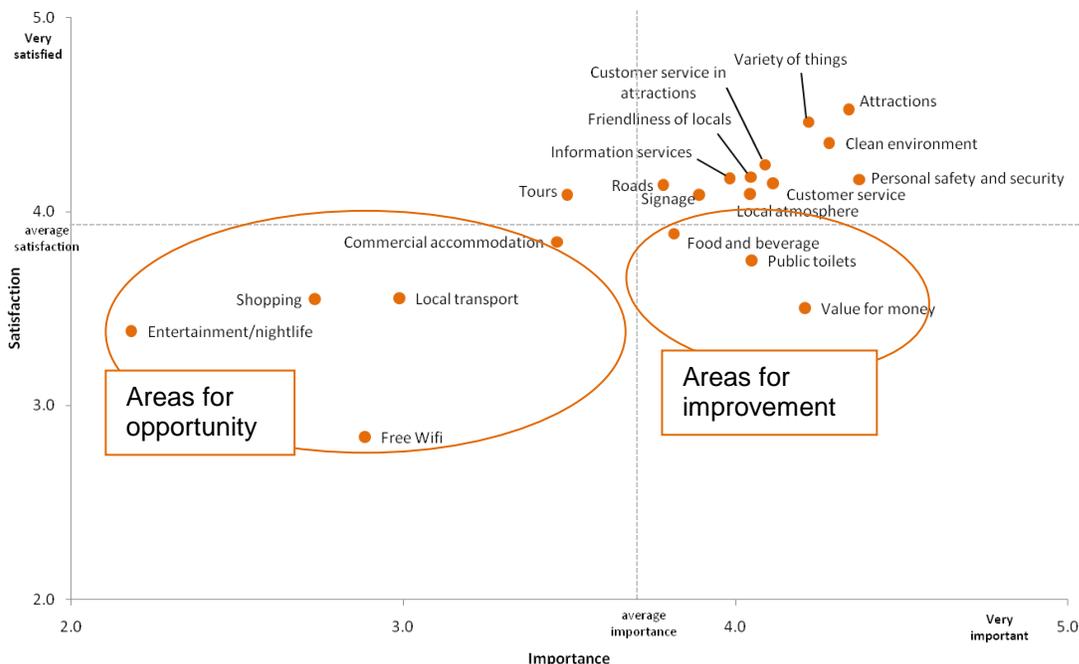
Domestic visitors were more likely to have their expectations met with their relaxing and rejuvenating experience and the enjoyable nightlife.

- UKTNP visitors were significantly more likely than those that did not go to the National Park to have their expectations exceeded with good shopping.
- Expectations were met with good shopping, a place to spend quality time with family/friends, nature based experiences, an adventure, an opportunity to tour around and explore, an opportunity to experience local attractions, history and heritage, as well as a chance to discover or learn something new.
- Domestic UKTNP visitors were significantly more likely than international UKTNP visitors to have their expectations met with relaxing and rejuvenating and enjoyable nightlife.

Satisfaction & Importance

The majority of UKTNP visitors were overall satisfied with their trip to Central Australia.

- The majority of UKTNP visitors were satisfied with their overall visit to the region with 50% 'very satisfied' and 38% 'fairly satisfied'. Satisfaction was positively driven by the friendliness of locals, local atmosphere, the variety of things to see and do, customer service, attractions and shopping.
- UKTNP visitors however were significantly less satisfied with value for money compared to visitors that did not travel to the National Park.
- Domestic UKTNP visitors were significantly more satisfied than internationals with personal safety and security, free Wi-fi access, the variety of things to see and do and shopping.
- When comparing the level of importance placed on certain attributes with the level of satisfaction, it is possible to determine areas for opportunity and improvement. The graph below highlights that UKTNP visitors regard food and beverage, public toilets and value for money to be important however they were not as satisfied with these attributes compared to others such as attractions and variety of things to see and do.





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Demographics

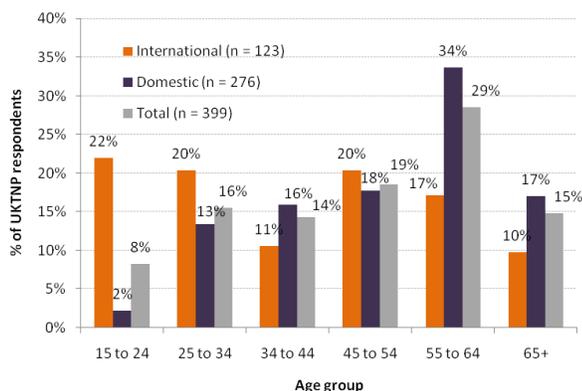
Usual Place of Residence

- While domestic travellers made up the majority of visitors to UKTNP compared to internationals (69% and 31% respectively), almost all (95%) of the international visitors generally went to the National Park.
- Nearly all (99%) domestic visitors were from interstate with a third (31%) of those coming from New South Wales / Australian Capital Territory, followed by 28% from Victoria and 19% from Queensland.
- International visitors were predominately from Germany; USA; other European markets including the United Kingdom, Netherlands and Switzerland; and New Zealand.

Age

- Of all UKTNP visitors, those aged between '55 to 64 years' (29%) comprised the largest individual age group. This was followed by those aged 45 to 54' (19%).
- Both domestic and international age groups to UKTNP followed similar patterns to domestic and international visitors generally.
- International visitors were more likely to fall in the younger age brackets while domestic travellers tended to be older (55 or more years).

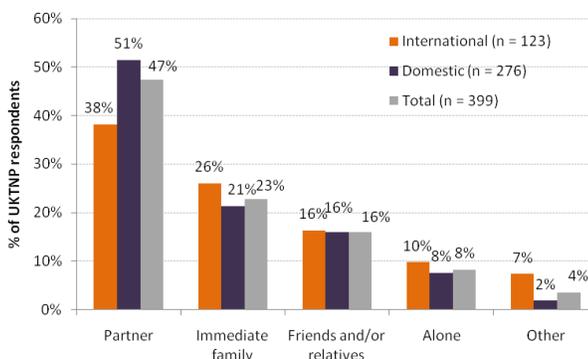
Age Group by Usual Place of Residence



Travel party

- Less than half (47%) of UKTNP visitors travelled with a partner while 23% travelled with their immediate families.
- International visitors to the National Park were more likely to be travelling with their immediate family compared to domestic visitors. Domestic visitors on the other hand were more likely to be travelling with their partner. They were also more likely to be an older non-working couple.

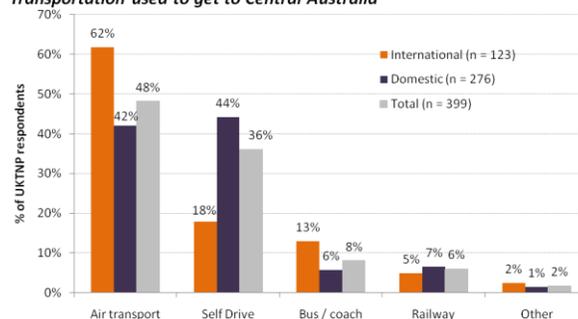
Travel Party Type by Usual Place of Residence



Transport to Central Australia

- More visitors to UKTNP flew to Central Australia (48%) than those who drove to the region (36%).
- The majority (91%) of those visitors travelling to the region by rail were also able to visit the National Park.
- International UKTNP visitors were more likely than Australians to fly to the region (62% compared to 42%).

Transportation used to get to Central Australia



The most common UKTNP domestic visitors are 55 years or older travelling with their partner.

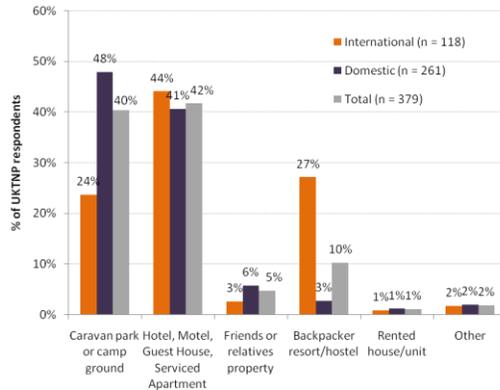
International visitors to UKTNP are most likely to be either younger and travelling with their partner or middle aged travelling with their family.

While almost half of UKTNP visitors flew to the region, a significant proportion drove.

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Accommodation used

Accommodation Type by Usual Place of Residence



- Two in five (40%) of all UKTNP visitors stayed in a caravan park or camping ground. This result was driven by the domestic market.
- International UKTNP visitors are more likely to stay in hotels, motels, guest houses and serviced apartments (44%) or at a backpacker resort/hostel (27%).

First time visit

First Time Visit by Usual Place of Residence



- There was a higher proportion of first time visitors to UKTNP (76%) compared to all respondents (63%). This was due to more domestic UKTNP travelers visiting the region for the first time (68% compared to 55% of all respondents).
- As expected, for the majority (93%) of international UKTNP visitors this was their first visit to Central Australia.

Information sources

- A quarter of respondents that went to the National Park made the decision to visit Central Australia about 6 to 12 months before leaving, 22% between 1 to 3 months and 21% between 3 to 6 months. This pattern was the same for all respondents.
- UKTNP visitors mainly found out about the region by going online (67%) and this was high for both internationals and domestics. The most commonly used websites were search engines such as google.com, airline company sites such as qantas.com and accommodation operator sites such as accor.com. The most useful sites were airline sites and official government sites such as Australia.com.
- A number of UKTNP visitors also learnt about the region from travelling to a local visitor information centre after they arrived (45%) or through a travel book, guide or brochure (53%).

Information sources used by UKJNP visitors to find out / make bookings for this trip to Central Australia



For most internationals that went to the National Park this was their first visit to Central Australia, they were also more likely to stay in hotels or in backpacker accommodation.

Most visitors used the internet to search for information on their trip to Central Australia.



Visitor Comments

Comments were made by respondents specific to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park. These comments included:

Visitor comments highlight that many enjoyed the walks and the natural beauty of the area. Others were just happy to have visited an iconic site.

While not part of the national park, visitors commented on the cost and standard of accommodation in the area.

- *[Unhappy with] Not being able to climb Uluru.*
- *That the Uluru national park is over organised not natural.*
- *Tourist's ignoring signs to not walk up Uluru. Should be stopped all together if sacred.*
- *Visit to Uluru aboriginal cultural centre was too short. Too many made in china pretend souvenirs.*
- *[Unhappy with] People climbing Uluru.*
- *We couldn't climb the rock of Uluru because of the weather. I'd like to have another chance in the future.*
- *Felt 'the climb' should not be an option for tourists visiting Uluru-seems very disrespectful of aboriginal beliefs/culture.*
- *Visiting Uluru has been on my bucket list for many years. It was great to finally achieve. The Monolith itself is quite awe-inspiring.*
- *The beautiful scenery and landscape. The whole Uluru/Olgas experience was fantastic.*
- *The experience of being at iconic places such as Uluru, Kata Tjuta etc.*
- *[Happy with] The Mala walk (tour) at Uluru.*
- *Love the wide-open spaces, the beauty of Uluru and Kata Tjuta. The Aboriginal artwork is stunning.*
- *[Happy with] National parks and cleanliness of public toilets.*
- *[Happy with] The standard of upkeep of the National Parks in the area.*
- *[Happy with] Infrastructure around Uluru and how everything blended in with the environment. Cleanliness of area surrounding resort.*
- *[Happy with] The environment, the national parks, and the sealed roads.*
- *We liked the walks in the national parks, scenery was beautiful.*
- *NT National Parks have the best facilities and management in Australia.*
- *The Cultural Centre was well set out and the outdoors BBQ's a good idea.*
- *Surprised that aborigines were not running the tours or cultural centre at Uluru.*
- *Uluru and Kata Tjuta - guided walk around base of Uluru was excellent.*
- *Seeing Ayers Rock was the main reason for visiting Central Australia. It was absolutely beautiful and totally worth it. Amazing gorges and National Park as well!*
- *Absolutely loved the natural beauty of Uluru-Kata Tjuta.*
- *Uluru-Kata Tjuta was very special. The desert in bloom - wild flowers everywhere.*
- *Commercial accommodation outlandishly expensive, i. e Ayers Rock.*
- *Uluru National Park camping site very expensive.*
- *We did not think that the hotel in Uluru was the best experience. The room service and restaurant service at the hotel was lacking (very slow and inaccurate) - the staff need more training.*