

## NZ's best-performing visitor market of 2023 tops 126% of pre-Covid

23rd February 2024 By Sara Barker | sara.barker@tourismticker.com | @tourismticker

**The best-performing visitor market in 2023 was India, with arrivals 126% of pre-Covid 2019.**



Total visitor arrivals in 2023 reached 76% of pre-Covid 2019, with India and the US leading the recovery

Tourism Export Council of New Zealand's analysis of Stats NZ's arrivals data for 2023 found that India was the fastest recovering market, with 84,399 arrivals from that country easily surpassing 2019.

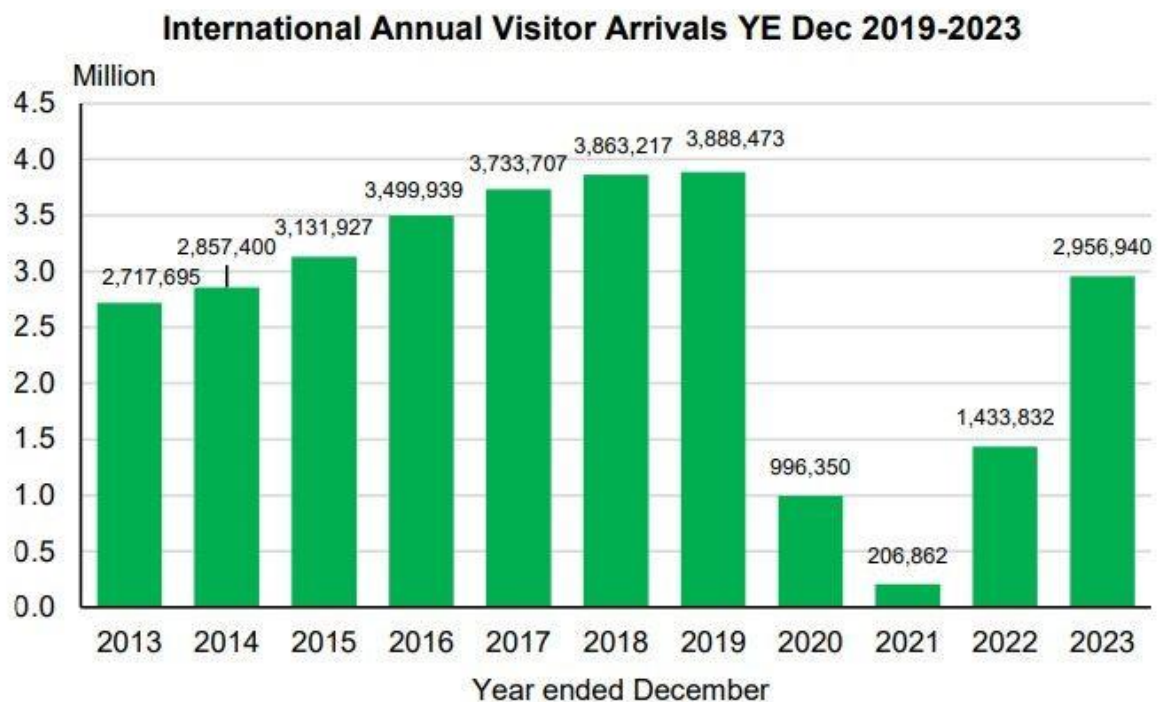
“The India market has a higher VFR and education recovery pattern compared to holiday arrivals at this stage,” said TECNZ chief executive Lynda Keene.

India was followed by Fiji at 119% of pre-Covid arrivals last year with 39,980 visitors, and then the Philippines, which saw 31,162 visitors equating to 113% of 2019.

The country with the most arrivals during the year was Australia at close to 1.26 million, however, it was only an 82% recovery compared to 2019.

“Australia and the US are the star performers to date due to the higher return of holiday visitors,” said Keene.

“This is a promising trend we expect to continue in the January to March 2024 period.”



Source: TECNZ

Across all markets, there were close to 2.96 million arrivals in 2023, a 76% recovery on 2019.

The slower recovery from China – albeit picking up momentum over the summer – saw it return last year to about 37% of 2019.

“China is currently at an annual recovery rate of 37% but we expect this to head towards 50% over the next three months,” said Keene.

“Most Asian markets are recovering more slowly. Some of this result may be attributed to less travel approaching the Christmas period but we do expect to see an upward trend in the second half of the 2023-24 season with Chinese New Year travel.”

Other lower-performing markets included Hong Kong with 48%, and Indonesia at 50%.

On holiday travel, Stats NZ data showed that there were 1.32 million tourists in 2023, which equated to a 67% recovery on 2019's level.

In the month of December 2023, visitors from the United States reached a 92% recovery compared to the same month in 2019, followed by India with an 89% return, and Australia at 82%. The Chinese market recovered during the month to 53% of the number seen in December 2019.