

Hawaii: Visitor Spend, Cruise Up

The Hawaii Tourism Authority says spending by visitors swelled nearly 9% during the first half of the year compared to last year.

It reports visitors spent \$8.4 billion Jan-Jun—an increase of 8.7%.

Meanwhile, the number of travellers to Hawaii topped 4.6 million. That's 4.3% more than the same six-month period a year ago.

Meanwhile, New Zealand's year-to-date visitor arrivals were up 6.3% to 27,084, and rose 1.3% to 7118 in Jun.

HTA reveals the figures were boosted by a growth in cruise numbers (arrivals by air were up 4% to 4,534,893 compared with cruise ships which

were up 23.9% to 70,083).

The cruising statistics represent 40 out-of-state cruise ships entering Hawaii in the first half of 2017—from 29 (or 56,555 visitors) that called in on the destination during the same period last year.

Arrivals by air to embark the Hawaii home-ported cruise ship also rose substantially (up 21.9% to 61,624) compared to the first half of 2016, when the ship was in dry dock for a four-week period for refurbishment.

HA Strata Access

Clients travelling in business class with Hawaiian Airlines will receive complimentary access to Auckland Airport's new Strata Lounge, the carrier has announced today. Clients will receive an invitation to the lounge upon check-in at HA's premium check-in counter; and those flying extra comfort or in the airline's main cabin are able to purchase access to the lounge as an optional extra on-line at the Strata Lounge website, or at the door.

"I was fortunate to experience the Strata Lounge yesterday evening, and am very impressed with the level of service, comfort and convenience offered," says HA's country director, New Zealand, Rusty Willis. "It perfectly complements our new lie-flat business product," he adds.

Hotel On Track

Pacific Beach Hotel is on track to reopen in Oct as the Alohilani Resort at Waikiki Beach following a USD115 million redevelopment. The resort, operating during its transformation, has 839 guestrooms and suites, a lobby oceanarium, two-pool deck, bar, signature restaurant Masaharu Morimoto and casual dining option Momosan Waikiki.

Latest HNL Hotspots

Honolulu has embraced three new top eateries in the last nine months. Top of the bill is Chinatown restaurant Senia, which opened in Dec. The restaurant, a collaboration between chefs Chris Kajioka and Anthony Rush, offers a la carte dining in the main dining room, a tasting menu and private dining.

Another fresh face is the Leahi Concept Kitchen at the Waikiki Parc Hotel, which opened in May as a partnership between the Waikiki Parc Hotel and Kapiolani Community College's Culinary Institute of the Pacific. The kitchen features cuisine by chefs from the Culinary Institute and multiple dining concepts. Guest chefs have their own pop-up events.

Meanwhile, Kuhio Beach Grill Restaurant & Bar at Waikiki Beach Marriott Resort & Spa opened in Jan. Overlooking Waikiki Beach, the restaurant serves dishes inspired by Hawaii's ocean and farmlands.



Zip N Swim

If clients heading to the Island of Hawaii are looking for a thrilling ride from great heights, then suggest the zipline adventure with KapohoKine Adventures. Sitting high off ground, riders fly over waterfalls and a lush forest canopy and the 3.2km course allows for side-by-side riders with its dual track zipline. There is also the chance to Zip N Swim, which includes a deli style lunch, and an optional swim in one of the waterfalls. Prices start from USD179 or USD238 for Zip N Swim. See kapohokine.com



Shore Bird Shuts Shop

The Shore Bird Restaurant and Beach Bar Waikiki will be closing 01 Oct to refresh and rebrand as The Reef Bar and Market Grill. Once it reopens (tba) it is expected to offer all day beachfront dining, daily sunset happy hour and plenty of fresh local seafood and premium steak. The Ocean House Restaurant will provide temporary buffet breakfasts, lunch and dinner during the renovations.

The Sweet Sounds

Hawaii's first steel guitar festival takes the stage 10-12 Nov at Mauna Lani Bay Hotel, on the Island of Hawaii, advises Hawaii Tourism. This free event will feature steel guitar performances by local masters, workshops, jam sessions where festival guests can play along with the masters, and open stage sessions for amateur and professional guitarists to present their own programme.



Agent Hotel Incentives

Honolulu's recently refurbished Kahala Hotel & Resort is offering agents the chance to redeem bonuses on three-night minimum bookings to 21 Dec.

The hotel has a new-look reception area, revamped spa reception and a new Kahala Logo store. The experience at the Kahala's Plumeria Beach House now features the incredible ocean front views and guests at the beach and pool can now choose from an enhanced service at Seaside Grill (which now has a new kitchen). The resort also renovated its arrival and spa reception areas.

The double-booking bonus equates to USD70 for a Scenic View to Ocean View Room, USD100 for Ocean Lanai to Beach Front Lanai and USD200 for all Suites. The offer ends on 05 Dec. Go to kahalaresort.com/ta for the promotion.

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