

Australians Dump Domestic Travel because of Petrol Prices - Survey

April 28, 2006

Almost 40% of Australians say they are abandoning travel plans because of the high cost of petrol in a major blow to the domestic tourism industry, the first major survey on the issue has revealed.

The survey, involving more than 2000 respondents and conducted by leading destination site totaltravel.com, found four out five respondents (81%) said petrol prices had affected their travel plans. The survey was carried out during April and included the crucial Easter school holiday period.

Paul Fisher, spokesman for totaltravel.com - ranked the number one site for Australian's seeking information about destinations - said the survey result underlined the damaging impact high petrol prices were having on the domestic tourism industry.

"When you have almost 40% of those surveyed saying they have abandoned travel plans because of petrol prices, that means there is a crisis out there," Mr Fisher said.

"Domestic numbers were already down before the rise in petrol prices but it is going to be even harder to convince Australians to take their annual leave and explore there own backyard given the cost of filling up at the service station."

Earlier this month the National Visitor Survey showed an alarming slump in domestic tourists last year. Australians took 69.9 million overnight stays in 2005, which was 6% less than in 2004.

The totaltravel.com survey asked visitors to the site whether the price of petrol was affecting their travel plans.

43% said they would cut back their travel plans, 38% said they would cancel their travel plans and 19% said it had no impact.

totaltravel.com currently has up to 40,000 visitors a day and is now bigger than Lonely Planet, AAA Tourism and all the State Tourism Authority sites such as Tourism Qld for Australians seeking information about destinations.

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Launched in 2002, totaltravel.com delivers both a travel guide and a place to find accommodation, activities, transport, restaurants and other visitor information.

Users can seek information about a destination and then be directed to a local business in the area.

The site now offers more than 250,000 pages with contact details for more than 100,000 Australian businesses.

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