

# TRAVELLERS' PULSE GREAT WESTERN PLAINS RESEARCH INSIGHTS



# Great Western Plains

## TRAVELLERS' PULSE

Qualitative research was undertaken by DMS to understand the perceptions and motivations of visitors to the network area. This included an internet-based focus group, where 24 participants entered into a dialogue around travel experiences in the destination. Sentiment analysis was also used to explore over 1000 Tripadvisor and Google reviews of key experiences in the destination. Analysis of the data has led to an understanding of visitor motivations and experiences under the following three themes.



Time together



On safari



New experiences

Within these three themes the results were analysed through a process of coding and theming, to highlight the key thoughts and sentiments of participants. The results are presented under the following topics:

- Key experience themes
- Motivations to visit the destination
- Visitor segments

# Theme 1: Time together

The theme of *time together* relates to enjoying time on the road, as well as visiting family and catching up with friends. Travelling is a time to spend quality time with family and friends and share new experiences.

## GEN X FAMILY

Wanted to spend some time with family

We did camping and glamping. Our friends suggested to go with them for the trip. Everyone wanted the same experience. We were excited to go as a big group, specially our kids.

A chance to spend quality time together

We were away for 10 days all up and enjoyed being on the road together with fewer distractions and demands

We enjoy our family holidays together, it's a nice experience and sadly soon the kids will no longer want to holiday with the family so we try to enjoy our family time together

## BOOMERS

I also took the opportunity to catch up with an old colleague from our previous workplace and looked around as I had never been to Dubbo before in my entire life!

part of a driving holiday to celebrate my birthday. My husband & I enjoyed our visit which included going some wineries & restaurants

I travel to Dubbo to visit my Aunt and cousins about once a year.

arranged to feed the giraffe's one time, with my kids and my son was so excited.

We were away for 10 days all up and enjoyed being on the road together with fewer distractions and demands

My wife & I like to travel around NSW

Enjoyed the company of my wife

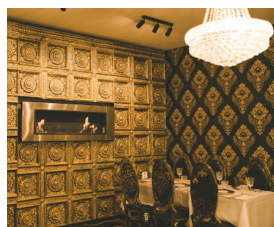
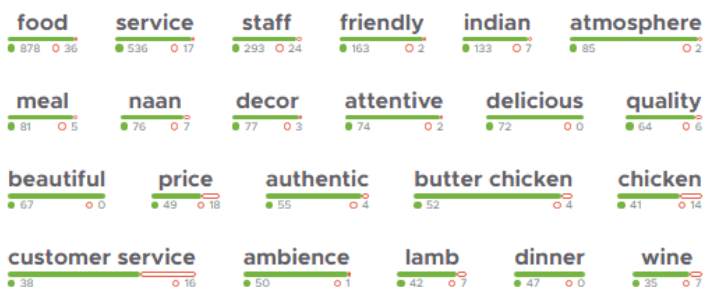


# Experiences related to the *Time together* theme

Sentiment Analysis of the products/experiences related to this theme highlights the importance of spending time together dining and visiting attractions together, as a family or as a couple. Note the importance of the whole family experience with kids meals and kids entertainment. While most sentiment is positive, a few issues were raised around the affordability for families.

## Royal India Restobar

434 reviews



Reviewed 31 July 2020 via mobile

### Amazing food

We enjoyed amazing Indian food that suited all age groups. My prawns and Roti were sensational whilst the kids were absolutely delighted with the Mango Chicken and Butter Chicken Great local wine selection.

Reviewed 21 August 2022 via mobile

### Unexpected fantastic experience.

As you entered the restaurant there was chandeliers every where and a massive one in the middle to the roof to the floor. There was also a lot of gold on the walls and the tables and plates it was so fancy. The food is so good it is served on gold and silver plates and the food is just perfect and Divine. The portions were generous and the service was excellent.

## Old Dubbo Gaol

1,062



Good historic experience

### Good historic experience

Jan. 2023 • Couples

Visited here, was an informative few hours walking around reading & seeing the exhibits. There was a characters in costume performance at 10am which was comedic & an escape talk at 11am which was really good. Great experience for all ages.



# Theme 2: On safari...

The theme of being *on safari* relates to enjoying the experience of the zoo, but also exploring other **related experiences** around dinosaurs, mega fauna, Wellington caves. The key aspect to a safari is being **guided through** a safe and fun adventure, with some learning along the way.

## GEN X FAMILY

More like a safari than a zoo

I never knew this place [Wellington Caves] existed and was intrigued as we drove past on our way to Dubbo so made the plan to stop on our way back home breathtaking and most beautiful place

we stayed at the zoo one night and whilst it was expensive it was a one experience that was great

It was definitely a learning experience for the kids and also providing a range of experiences for them as well.

Loved the zoo, it was fun see the animals up close in their "natural" habitat

We loved it and kids really enjoyed coming back twice to the zoo

Definitely the zoo, it was a great experience for both adults & kids to be able to see the animals in a more "free-er" environment than Taronga Zoo, it felt like the animals had more space to roam & their habitats seemed more natural

## BOOMERS

The zoo visit was a great experience. The biggest zoo my husband and I have been too. The laid back and relaxing atmosphere was so refreshing.

We had the best time at the zoo, its so spacious and clean and the enclosures are very large. We would love to return and stay in the wildlife retreat accommodation

Doing the zoo stay was the highlight. Standing on the verandah and just looking out at the giraffes was amazing and something I will not forget

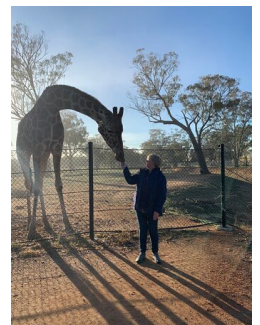
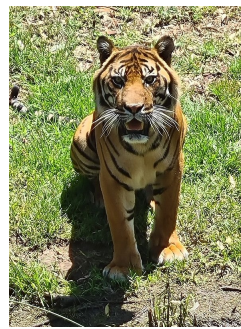


# Experiences related to the *On Safari* theme

Sentiment Analysis of the products/experiences related to this theme primarily focusses on the Taronga Western Plains Zoo, with over 3,000 reviews. Key perceptions related to the positive children's experiences and the interaction with the animals, however parts of the experience were perceived as expensive. Note the importance of the friendly staff/guides to the interpretation of the experience.

## Taronga Western Plains Zoo

●●●●● 3,637



Sentiment Analysis of the Wellington Caves also demonstrates the positive perceptions of the experience and the importance of the guide to the experience.

## Wellington Caves

●●●●● 337

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Great cave tour with Paul

Jan. 2023 • Couples

We did an afternoon tour at 2.30pm for the Gaden cave with our guide Paul. It was really informative & amazing to see the underground cave. A great cave tour & you can only book tickets at 9am the day you want to visit & each tour only takes 12 people.

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Must do but book on the day when tickets go on sale at 9am

Jan. 2023

What a great experience. We took our 2 teenage boys and were led to the caves by Bec. She was so informative with the kids, our 2 teenagers and the adults. We learnt so much. Currently only 1 cave is open and you can't really appreciate how difficult it is for the staff to only be able to open 1 cave at present until you go there. Its hour by hour pretty much as to whether tours can go ahead.



# Theme 3: New experiences

The theme of new experiences relates to discovering a range of new and sometimes unexpected adventures and experiences. For Boomers there is an excitement to finding little gems along the way such as cafes, museums, shops, food and wine. For families it can be new accommodation (Glamping) big attractions such as a zoo or caves, or even just a good playground.

## GEN X FAMILY

Visiting somewhere unique and interesting is important and jam packing the holiday with adventures and experiences

Our trip to Dubbo was a real Australian adventure and a magical experience we will never forget!

We always love new experiences and places we have not visited before.

I wanted to find new experiences as I had never been to Dubbo Zoo

It met our needs and what we were seeking on this holiday....adventure, culture, fun, unique experiences

The opportunity to experience Glam Camping which was a new experience to us.



## BOOMERS

Seeing the planets in the night sky. Of course one doesn't have to go to Dubbo for this but the astronomer who showed us the planets etc really opened my eyes.



I loved taking a look in the shops and obviously finding lovely cafes.

We are big foodies and had been told Dubbo was an up and coming gastronomy area and had great wines. it did not disappoint.

I love getting in the car and just driving around places I haven't been and finding the hidden gems





# Experiences related to the *New Experiences* theme

Sentiment Analysis of the products/experiences related to this theme highlights the importance of the staff and interactivity at these attractions. Interestingly visitors perceive the café, food and service as part of the whole experience.

## Royal Flying Doctor Service Visitor Experience

320



### Educational and Informative

"Very informative and educational self-guided tour through the education centre. Kids were very engaged and enjoyed lots of interactive exhibits. Very informativ..."

## Western Plains Cultural Centre

186



### Fascinating Historical Displays

"Great displays of all sorts of Dubbo and surrounds history. Great cafe there too and easy parking. Within walking distance of Victoria Park."



# Motivations for travel

Tourism Australia has developed a typology of visitor motivations which assist us to understand why visitors come to a destination. The themes discussed from our research into Great Western Plains align well with many of the general motivations. Interestingly, it demonstrates the diversity of motivations and reasons that visitors have to explore the area. It also suggests that Great Western Plains is providing a range of relevant experiences to meet the interests and motivations of visitors.

Motivation	Activity	Forum quotes
Reconnection	Reconnect, spend quality time with others	We enjoy our family holidays together and making good memories with the kids
Into nature*	Get in touch with nature and feel relaxed	
Exploration	Explore new destinations, Learn & experience new things	Our first experience was two nights at Zoofari Lodge, great experience with giraffes, rhinos, zebras roaming close by
Adventure	A sense of adventure, challenge and fun	We are jam packing the holiday with adventures and experiences
Wellness, Transform	Focus on mental and/or physical wellbeing and transformation	It was nice to find something new for mental stimulation
Passions, hobbies, events	Engage in activities, and events which focus on hobby or passion	We are big foodies and had been told Dubbo was an up and coming gastronomy area and had great wines. It did not disappoint.
Restoration*	Indulge & pamper, Have fun & enjoy myself.	

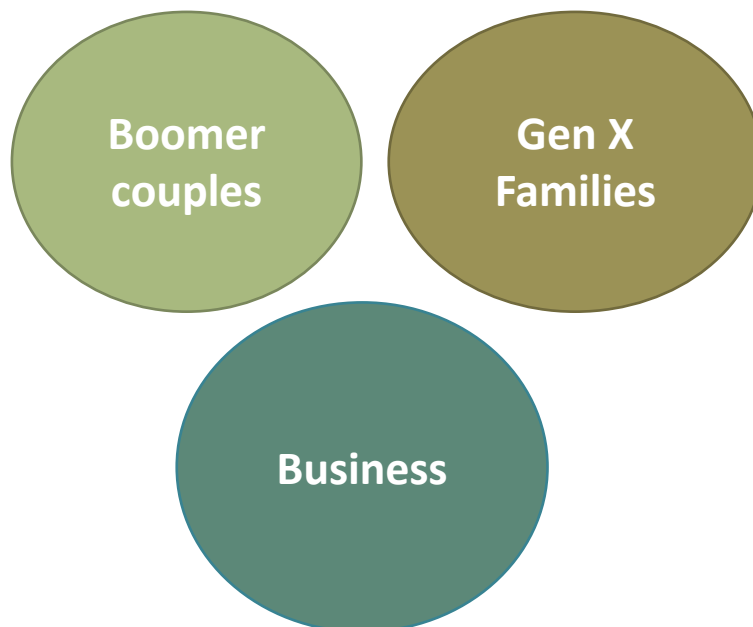
Note: The majority of responses related well to five of the seven typologies. It is however acknowledged that smaller segments may travel to the area for both restoration and nature experiences. These were not captured in the current research study.

# Traveller segments

Visitor Segment Analysis highlights the common characteristics and behaviours of the main segments of the total road tripper market. As shown the two key generational markets are Boomer Couples and Families. These two segments have different needs and behaviours.

Older couples are in the Baby Boomer generation (58-75 yrs). They are decisive, confident travellers that prefer slow exploration, arts/heritage and sightseeing. They like friendly country comfort and simplicity and enjoy dine/wine travel experiences. They enjoy finding peace in off-peak travel times and off the track cultural places.

Families are mostly in Gen X (43-57 yrs) using jam packed itineraries to meet the needs of the kids and adults too. They enjoy exploring hands-on and active attractions, and seek food and accommodation that can suit the whole family. They need regular breaks in the roadtrip and look for good value (or free) activities.



Business travellers comprise a third of all visitors. They are looking for accommodation with specialized facilities such as: **Wifi**, computer desks, USB charging, lighting, breakfast to room, fast checkout and enjoy being recognised as valuable return customers. Business travellers are less likely to visit attractions or activities, yet will spend well on dining. Some were noted to return with their families for holidays.