Australian families are happy campers and ‘Grey Nomads’ are real

While friends’ and relatives’ places (34.1%) and hotels/motels (28.3%) top the list for the types of accommodation used by Australians who took a domestic holiday in the last 12 months, just 7.3% of travellers report camping in a tent and 6.0% stayed in a caravan, campervan or motorhome on their last holiday, the latest results from Roy Morgan Research reveal. However, among certain groups, this figure is considerably higher.

In the 12 months to March 2015, 12.0% of Australians 14+ who travelled with a friend or small group of friends on their last domestic holiday went camping, ahead of people who travelled as a family with kids (10.9%) and those who took their last holiday with other family/family and friends (8.5%).

Camping is noticeably less popular among people who took their last domestic holiday by themselves (6.2%) or with a partner/as a couple (5.0%). However, people travelling as a couple were the most likely to have stayed in a caravan/campervan (10.3%) on their last trip, while those who holidayed with a friend or small group of friends were the least likely (2.0%).

Camping vs Caravans/Campervans: who did what on their last domestic holiday?

Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), April 2014 – March 2015 (n=8,425).

Age plays a very real part in determining whether a traveller will choose camping over caravans/campervans and vice versa. Without exception, Australians aged under 50 years old...
are more likely than their older counterparts to have stayed in a tent on their last holiday, and those in the 50+ bracket are more likely to have stayed in a caravan/campervan.

Compared to the average Australian, people who camped on their last domestic holiday are much more likely to have holidayed in the Northern Territory, Western Australia and Tasmania.

Angela Smith, Group Account Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Our data clearly shows that camping is most popular among younger Australians: groups of friends and young families, primarily. Older people are far less enamoured of this form of accommodation: probably because they’re too busy hitting the road in their caravan!

“That’s right, ‘Grey Nomads’ are not just the product of media hype — they’re real. Indeed, folks over 50 are 42% more likely than the average Australian to have stayed in a caravan or campervan on their last domestic holiday.

“When viewed through the filter of Helix Personas, Roy Morgan Research’s in-depth consumer segmentation tool, these trends are reiterated. For example, people belonging to the young, outer-suburban ‘Today’s Families’ community are more likely than any other group to go camping. Although they earn above-average incomes, Today’s Families have a lot of domestic expenses, so camping with the kids offers them a fun, affordable holiday option.

“Meanwhile, people from the ‘Golden Years’ community are the nation’s most avid caravanners/campervanners. Not only are many Golden Years retired, but they tend to prefer a simple life to an adventurous one: so taking their time exploring the country by caravan would hold great appeal for them…”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s tourism data, please contact:

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Related research findings

View our extensive range of tourism reports and profiles, including our Travellers who stayed in a tent/camping profile and the Travellers who stayed in a caravan profile.

Roy Morgan’s travel and tourism research quantifies the dollar-value of the tourism industry’s diverse markets; and includes detailed information and insights into what activities people look for when travelling, who they travel with, where they get their information, whose advice they seek when planning a holiday and much more.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in Indonesia, the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.
Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

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