

Thursday, 13 July 2017

International visitor spend soars in Yorkshire

Yorkshire tourism has got off to a flying start in 2017 as new figures reveal international visitors have spent nearly £100 million in the year's first quarter.

267,000 overseas visitors spent £99 million from January to March 2017, up a huge 30 percent on the same period last year, according to figures released today from Visit Britain.

International spend in Yorkshire is also nearly double the national average which is up 16 percent year on year.

Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive of Welcome to Yorkshire said: 'This is fantastic news for the county and one of the main reasons why we put on global events like the Tour de Yorkshire and the UCI Road World Championships. These events are televised to hundreds of millions of people around the world creating a giant postcard beaming stunning images of Yorkshire across the globe.'

Businesses in Yorkshire have told us they're seeing a real influx of visitors from all over the world.

Justin Scully, General Manager at Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal, Ripon said: 'We're certainly seeing the benefit of Yorkshire hosting these huge events and are welcoming even more visitors to the World Heritage Site from overseas. Organised groups from Spain, the Netherlands, Germany and China are increasing as well as the number of independent travellers who are enjoying extended stays in this beautiful county of ours.'

Sarah White, from the National Coal Mining Museum of England, based in Wakefield, said: 'Our visitor numbers are up 20% this year and we are seeing a lot of people from France and Germany, and even some from as far as China. I think the way Yorkshire is promoted on a global scale has definitely boosted our visitor numbers.'

Richard Frank, Managing Director of the Crown Spa Hotel, Scarborough, said: "Our visitor figures are up 10 per cent so far this year and this is an events-driven increase brought about by the efforts of Welcome to Yorkshire and our local council. High-profile events like the Tour de Yorkshire, Scarborough Cricket Festival and

Armed Forces Day create great publicity for the whole county which we can see is generating real increases in business and leisure tourism.”

Louise Larcombe, Marketing Manager, Tropical Butterfly House and Wildlife Centre, near Sheffield said: We've seen a real increase in visitors from France and the US and even China. Yorkshire is real brand globally and events like the Tour de Yorkshire have really put the county on the world map attracting so many more overseas visitors.'

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Editors' Notes:

- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is the official destination management organisation for Yorkshire, working to grow the county's visitor economy.
- **Welcome to Yorkshire** is a not-for-profit membership organisation, funded in part by grants, sponsorship and Welcome to Yorkshire members. All money raised is reinvested directly back into promoting Yorkshire.
- Key facts include:
 - Tourism in Yorkshire is worth £7 billion annually
 - The county's tourism and hospitality industry employs almost a quarter of a million people

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