

# 1.25 million Australians cruised in 2023

## Australian cruise market rebounds

The number of Australians taking holidays at sea has overtaken pre-pandemic levels, rising to 1.25 million in 2023, slightly more than the 1.24 million who sailed in 2019.

CLIA's 2023 Source Market Report for Australia confirms a solid recovery in the local cruise market, coming little more than 18 months after the resumption of operations in this region.

The recovery has come at a faster pace than in other markets worldwide – where cruising resumed much earlier – and ahead of many other areas of international tourism.

### Australians Cruising ● 2019 ● 2023



### Local cruising leads recovery

Australians showed a clear preference for domestic cruises and other itineraries within the local region during 2023.

### Australians sailing in Australasia & South Pacific

#### ● 2019 ● 2023



### Key Trends



Demand for close-to-home itineraries



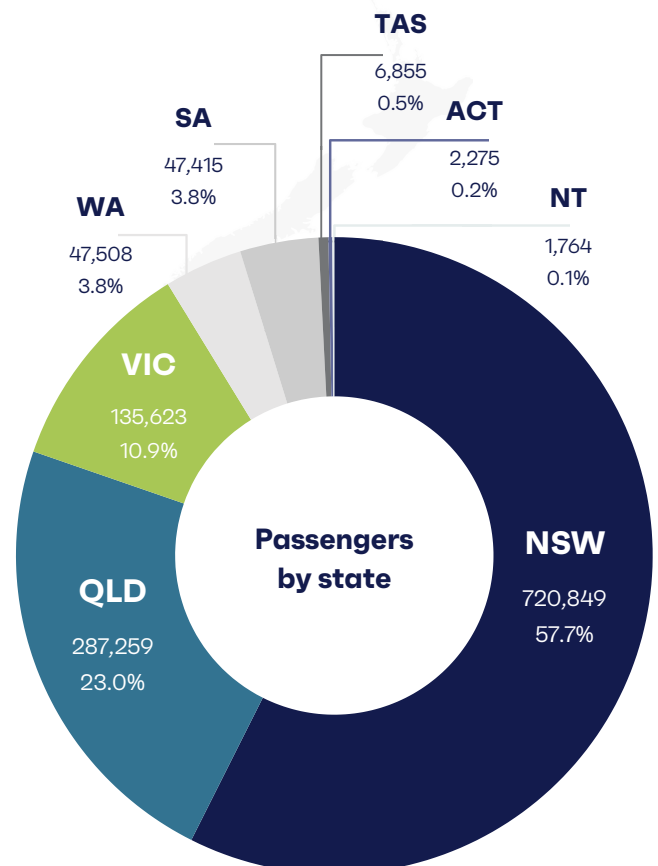
Decrease in average passenger age



Slight decrease in average cruise duration

### Australian passenger origin

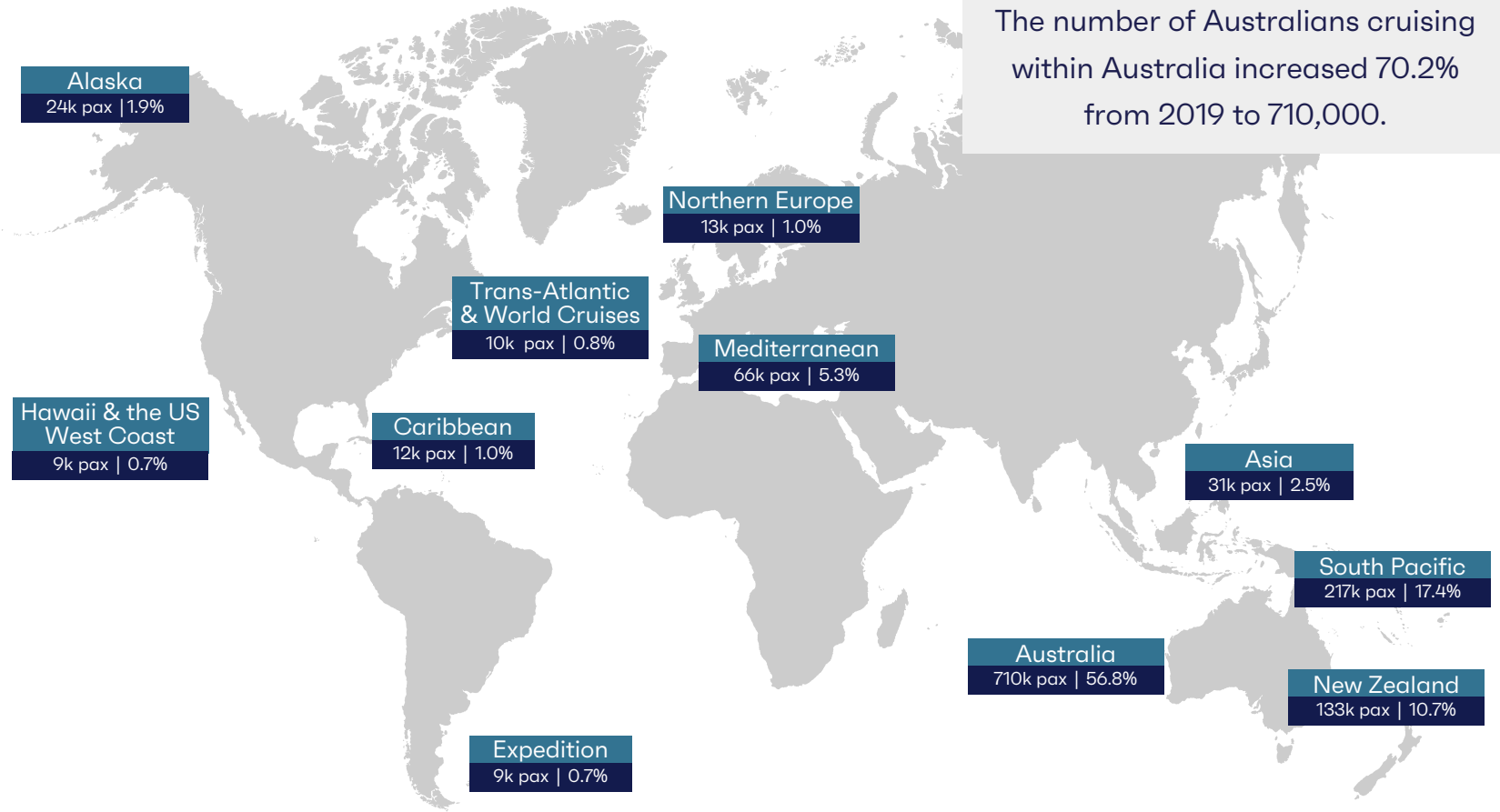
New South Wales remained the biggest source of Australian cruise passengers in 2023, followed by Queensland. Both these states increased their contribution to the Australian source market over 2019, reflecting their roles as key cruise gateways and the preference for close-to-home sailings.



## Where did Australians cruise?



The number of Australians cruising within Australia increased 70.2% from 2019 to 710,000.

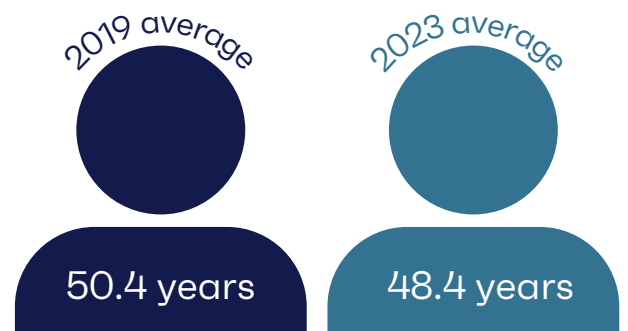


The vast majority of Australians (84.8%) cruised within the local region, including in Australia, the South Pacific, and New Zealand.

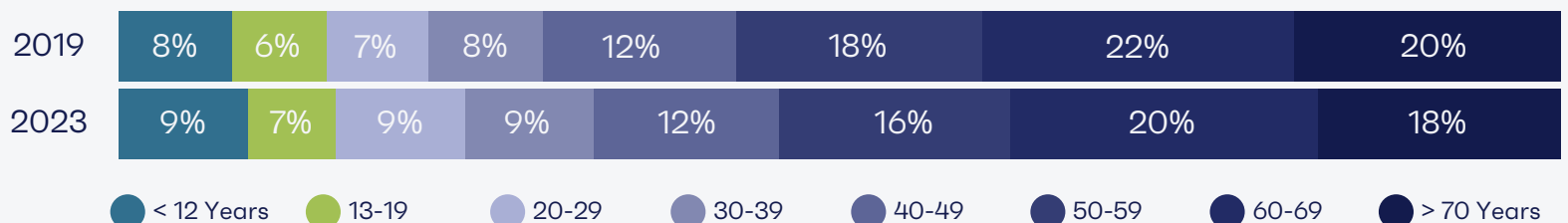
The Mediterranean was the most popular choice outside the local region, followed by Asia, Alaska, Northern Europe, the Caribbean, and Hawaii & the US West Coast. Relatively smaller numbers chose Trans-Atlantic & World Cruises, and Expedition Cruises.

## Australian cruise passenger age groups

The typical age of an Australian cruiser has fallen further as the sector continues to attract younger generations. The average age of an Australian cruise passenger was 48.4 years in 2023, down from 50.4 in 2019, while almost one third of cruisers (34%) were aged under 40.



### % by age range

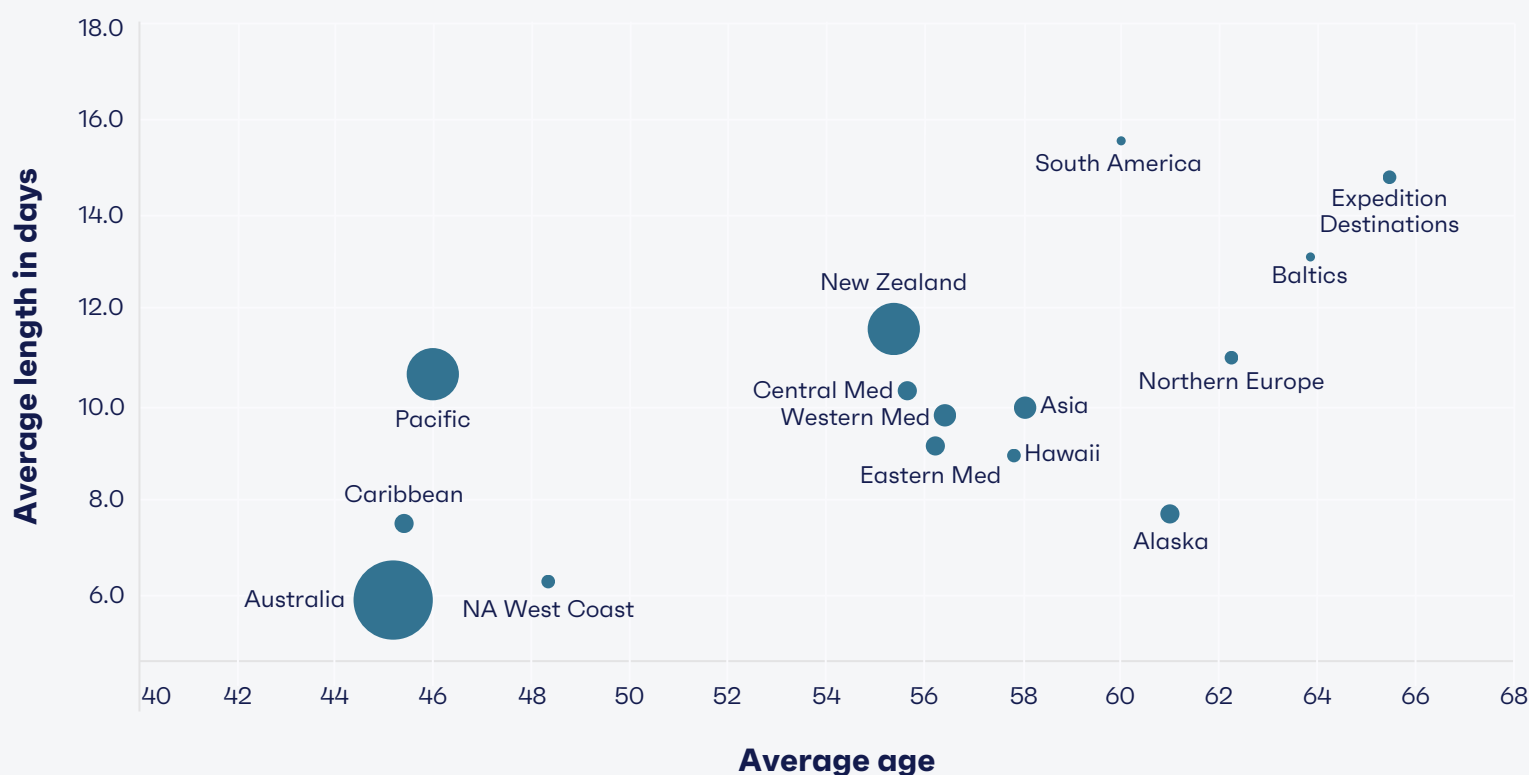




## Cruise itinerary duration

The average duration of an ocean cruise taken by Australians in 2023 was 8.1 days, down from 9.0 days in 2019. This reflects the rise in short-break cruises offered by cruise lines. The age of guests continues to influence the duration and destination of cruises. Younger travellers favour shorter itineraries close-to-home, while older travellers tend to longer itineraries in fly-cruise destinations in Europe, Asia and Alaska.

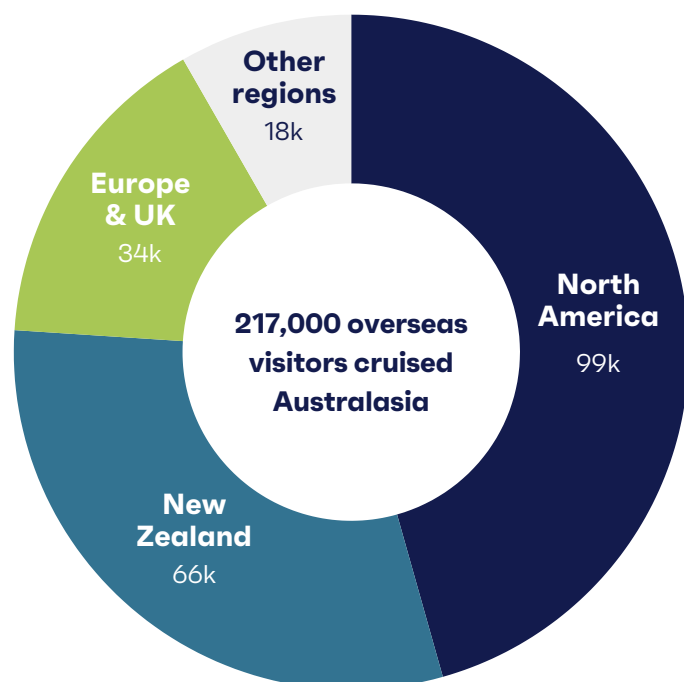
## Average age and cruise length by trade route



## Who cruised in Australasia?

The number of overseas visitors who cruised in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific reached 217,000 during 2023, a similar level to 2019.

The largest portion of overseas visitors came from North America (99,000), followed by New Zealand (66,000), Europe & UK (34,000), and other regions (18,000).

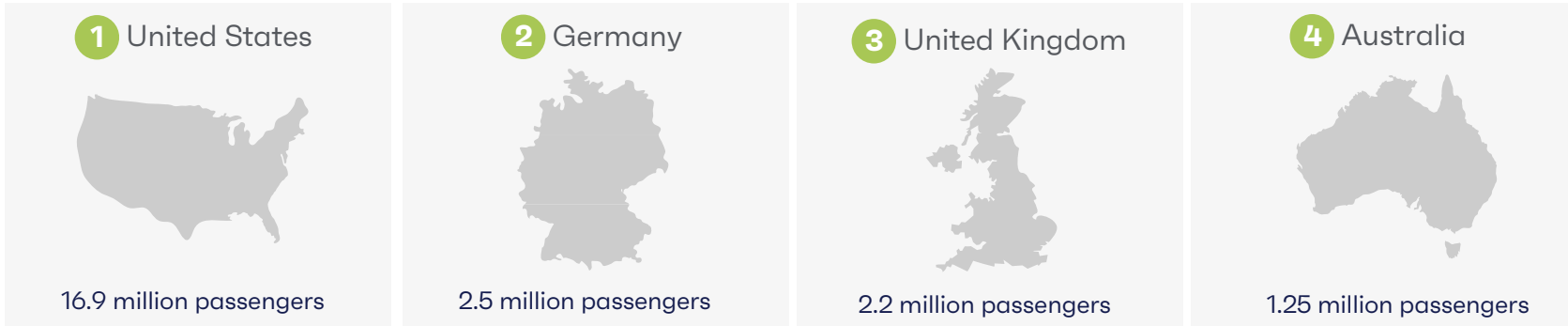


## The world perspective

Cruise tourism overtook pre-pandemic levels at the global level during 2023, with a new record of 31.7 million passengers reached, an increase of 6.8% on 2019.

### Global passengers

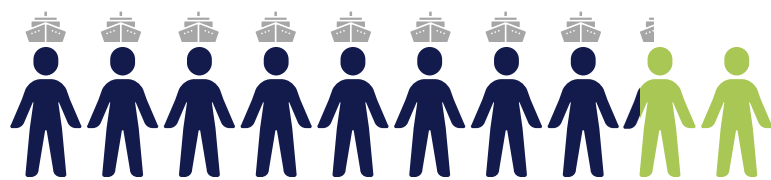
● 2019 ● 2023



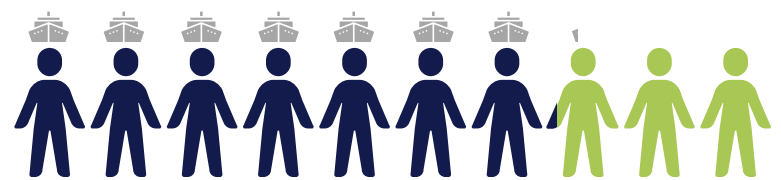
Australia was the fourth largest source market in 2023. China had been the fourth largest prior to the pandemic, but recorded just 156,800 passengers in 2023 during the initial stages of its cruise revival.

CLIA forecasts show a continuing increase in global passenger numbers over coming years, including 35.7 million in 2024, rising to 39.4 million in 2027.

The outlook is supported by ongoing strength in consumer sentiment.



Of those who have cruised before, 82% say they are likely to cruise again



Of those who have never cruised before, 71% say they would consider a cruise

## Future potential

While the Australian source market has exceeded 2019 levels, it remains shy of the record 1.35 million passengers achieved in 2018.

Global forecasts suggest a continuing rise in passenger numbers over coming years, in line with increasing cruise line capacity internationally. In Australia, future capacity may be restricted by ongoing berthing constraints in Sydney, and so CLIA and cruise lines continue to engage with the NSW Government to achieve solutions. Meanwhile, several cruise lines have extended their deployments to ports such as Brisbane and Melbourne.

Collaboration from governments and ports is needed to support the sustainability of cruise tourism into the future and maintain Australia's position as a leading destination. Balanced regulation as well as reasonable costs and competitive port charges are fundamental to fostering a thriving cruise sector capable of contributing significantly to the Australian economy.