

TOURISM AND HORTICULTURE

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Abstract

This article provides information on basic tourism concepts for an audience not traditionally exposed to tourism. It aims to show the interrelationships between tourism, tourists and horticulture and gardening. It also examines briefly the media coverage of horticulture, horticultural features and horticultural events to show the direct interrelationship between tourism and horticulture.

Keywords: Horticulture, gardening, tourism,

INTRODUCTION

The pulling power of horticulture and gardening to bring in visitors has been identified by managers of various gardens and parks including the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and the Parks and Recreation Department in Nelson.

In both cases visitor numbers and visitor experiences were vital to the success of each, however, success was measured differently.

Christchurch Botanic Gardens prides itself on botanical/horticultural features and the ability to provide information about its plants to a wide range of people. It has an educational role as well as a recreational role.

In Nelson the public parks and gardens are viewed as free tourist attractions and as such offered, colourful interesting displays and recreational opportunities for people. Nelson prides itself on being a tourist city.

TOURISM

There are a number of definitions of tourism. Murphy (1982) defined Tourism as “Tourism is the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created to cater for their needs.”

The four factors identified which are important in tourism to ensure profitability of businesses and regional development are (Jolliffe 1993):

1. visitor numbers
2. length of stay
3. level of expenditure
4. repeat and referral visits

Visitor Numbers

Figure 1 The Truth about Tourism Figures

	Current	Year 2000 Estimate
International Market		
International Visitors	1.2 million	2.5 million
Gross Expenditure	\$3.5 billion	\$10.0 billion
Less Air Transportation	\$1.2 billion	\$3.6 billion
Nett Ground Expenditure	\$2.3 billion	\$6.2 billion
Domestic Market		
Domestic Trips	15 million	20 million
Pleasure	\$2.7 billion	\$3.5 billion
Business	\$1.5 billion	\$2.0 billion
Gross Expenditure	\$4.2 billion	\$5.5 billion

Source NZTB

When examining figures like this we have to know what they are made up of. Gross figures are fine but one large area of expenditure like air travel can make a big difference to the picture that is often painted by those wishing to enhance the value of tourism to the economy.

Ground figures are also general because there are two main components of each:

1. Business Travel
2. Pleasure Travel

Business travel has a different set of expenditure patterns to pleasure travel.

Pleasure travel can be subdivided into the following distinct groups:

1. **FIT** - Free independent traveller - people who, hire camper vans, cars bicycles etc. and make up their own itinerary as they travel around. This is a growing market.
2. **SIT** - Semi independent traveller - people who have a partly organised itinerary but can fit in a range of other activities of their own choice.
3. **Package Tours** - Fully inclusive trips where groups fly in, get on a coach and are taken around New Zealand and only visit predetermined locations. This type of traveller is predicted to decline or at least stay level in the future.

In general we are told of a rapid increase in numbers. What businesses need to know is which group is growing to determine the marketing mix of a business.

LENGTH OF STAY

Length of stay is defined in this article as the time period visitors stay in New Zealand, a region or in accommodation or an attraction.

Historically the average length of stay in New Zealand was about 27 days. Currently the average length of stay is about 19 days. A significant drop.

In the future there is a world wide trend towards short break holidays. It is expected that this will fall even further.

Regionally one can measure tourism in length of stay because it has high economic impact. Auckland's length of stay up to 6 days with Wellington at 2 days (NZTB).

EXPENDITURE

There are a range of measures looked at in determining expenditure.

Figure 2

Mean Expenditure/person/holiday		
Germany	Japan	Australia
3314	3148	1320

Figure 3

Mean Expenditure/person/day		
Germany	Japan	Australia
105	237	96

NZTB (NZ Tourism Board) has a policy to attract medium to high income earners to visit NZ to increase expenditure patterns.

REPEAT AND REFERRAL BUSINESS

This is vital to all businesses, and services. Organisations totally focused on the customer will have no problem at all obtaining repeat business. Service, customer focus, activities, programmes and social interaction all have a major part in repeat business.

SUMMARY

It is the mix of these four factors which will increase profitability of regions and individual businesses.

INTERNATIONAL VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Over the years there have been a variety of surveys undertaken to determine what activities visitors undertake. In 1984 the International Visitor Survey the main attractions visited were:

Figure 4

Top 7 Activities
1. Historic Homes
2. Sightseeing
3. Forest Parks
4. City Parks
5. Scenic Drives
6. Tramping/Walking
7. Cable Car

The 1993 International Visitor Survey which is a different format to the 1984 version provides the following information.

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

In this survey 9% (90,000) of people visited gardens. Notice though the activities which could have some horticultural/conservation content.

Figure 5

Top activities undertaken by international visitors

- Short bush walk
- scenic boat cruise (views)
- jet boating (views)
- wine tasting - vineyards
- long bush walk
- golf

ATTRACTIONS VISITED

Again note those attractions that have a horticultural/conservation content -

Figure 6

- geothermal
- historic site
- wildlife park/zoo
- formal attractions.

One of the prime reasons we are attracting people to New Zealand is the 'Clean Green' image we are portraying to the world. Every piece of New Zealand seen by visitors is judged by the imagery we send overseas.

The Tourism Product

The tourism product is composite in nature and includes everything that the tourist purchases, sees, experiences and feels from the time they leave home until they return. (Collier 1991)

From the definition alone one can deduce that it is the total experience that is vital to the success of tourism in New Zealand. If everything that is seen and experiences is important, much of that seen in the urban and rural landscape is related to horticulture in its broadest sense.

TOURISM - INBOUND/OUTBOUND/DOMESTIC

Turning now to relate tourism more directly to horticulture we need to consider the three areas of tourism.

Inbound is people coming into New Zealand - many arriving to experience the 'clean and green' that is promoted overseas. This image should be enhanced.

As far as horticulture is concerned 9% of international visitors visit gardens in New Zealand and that is increasing. Currently there are various package tours of New Zealand which have a horticulture aspect to them including,

- Garden Tours
- Botanical Tours (gardens, flora etc.)

- Historic Tours (Historical Homes and Gardens)
- Specialist Tours (Rhodos)
- Horticulture Event Tours (Roses etc.)
- Tree Tours (IDS)
- Alpine Trekking.
- Eco Tourism

Almost without exception each of these requires some knowledge of growing things to protect them and to put them on display. Even from this quiet look at eco-tourism from only the flora side there is great potential.

NZ should be taking advantage of this interest and bringing the flora to the visitor through a different style of horticulture. Can NZ gardeners take an idea from Kelly Tarltons and provide a wide range of flora in attractive environments?

OUTBOUND TOURISM

To further illustrate the relationship between tourism and horticulture consider some aspects of outbound tourism. There are two examples

Garden Tours - pick up any magazine and you will find an advertisement by a travel agent taking a special interest in garden tours to England, Europe, Japan, California, Australia etc. New Zealander's are great travellers with a love of gardening. These tours, often led by personalities (Maggie Barry, Eion Scarrow etc), are very popular.

Wild Flower Tours - wildflower tours to South Africa, Nepal or Western Australia are regularly advertised.

DOMESTIC TOURISM

One of the long forgotten elements in the whole tourism promotion is Domestic Tourism, "Kiwis on holiday in Kiwiland". They can be divided into two markets: Day Trippers, and long stay (1 night or more).

Day Trippers - people leaving home for less than 24 hours. A market that is being exploited more and more in New Zealand. In horticultural terms there are many opportunities to capture this market including

Open Gardens - Absolutely gone mad in NZ. This Spring (1994) in Wellington up to 4 different groups organised open gardens for various reasons - mainly community fund raising.

- Some areas like Marton (town of small population) use Open Gardens as a major draw card for visitors to the town. The whole community benefits through the increased expenditure. Increases in petrol sales, food sales, product sales, nursery sales and the like are made.

Many of special events are run for this particular market. The significance of it has been recognised in such things as Garden Festivals, Ellerslie Flower Show, Garden Tours, Wine events even the Alexandra Blossom Festival.

Longer stay tourists - These are people who stay away from home more than 24 hours, i.e. stay away overnight. This group is broken down into Business Travellers, Pleasure Travellers and visiting friends and relatives.

Business Travellers - may or may not visit a horticultural attraction but be sure that they will notice horticultural features in a city or region. Business travellers enjoy going to well maintained areas.

Pleasure travellers - particularly FIT (free independent travellers), take advantage of the opportunity to visit many areas of the country including parks, gardens (private and public etc.)

Visiting Friends and Relatives - to capture this part of the market needs a high awareness of horticultural features within the local population.

A recent survey by Wellington City Council showed that:

98% of residents knew of the facilities 84% used parks and gardens Botanic Gardens was at the top of the list

One could extrapolate from this that domestic visitors may also like to visit such attractions when in another location.

HORTICULTURE

Gardens - Crompton (1993) suggested it was public parks and recreation facilities that attracted tourists to the area. Gardens vary in their type in different areas and are attractions in their own right.

Botanic Gardens - Concentrate on high quality displays including colour and form, geographical collections, plant trials, specialist collections and many more. A great deal of work is put into interpretation work such as signs and various educational programmes.

These are a major drawcard for both domestic and international visitors.

In the results of a survey in Christchurch Botanic Gardens (Jolliffe, 1976) where a question asked "What is the main reason you came to the Botanic Gardens". The most responses were, "to feed the ducks". Maybe there is a lesson there. The need some excitement, movement or something people can relate to.

Public Gardens and Domains - these are generally nice places to go, have a high profile in the local community.

Horticultural features - there are many of these in every town or city. Outside the town hall and in prominent places. All to beautify the area and make it more attractive to both locals and visitors.

The survey in 1976 examined what people did in the CHCH Botanic Garden.

Activities in order of importance	
1	Strolling
2	Looking at trees and plants
3	Looking at wildlife
4	Relaxing
5	Visiting conservatories

Jolliffe 1976

This provides a guide to the type of design elements that need to be included.

Private Gardens - contrary to popular opinion some of the best plant collections in New Zealand are in private gardens. These are owned and maintained by serious amateurs or semi-professionals.

Today many of these are open to the public either regularly, occasionally or seasonally. There may be a charge for charity or a charge to pay for the upkeep or even run as a business. Some of the better ones have associated food and beverage outlets, souvenirs, merchandise, plants etc. to increase revenue.

Farms - one of the fastest growing tourism ventures in New Zealand today is Farm Stay/Home Stay. Everything from the Hobby Farm to the High Country Station is offering a range of truly NZ "get to know you" opportunities.

Associated with many of these areas are some of the country's best private gardens. In fact, in some cases the garden is the prime attraction.

Not only is it the garden but also the farm with its high number of trees planted on the land. Some of the country's largest collection of trees either generally or in specific generic collections are to be found on farms (McKay, 1993).

Attractions - Kiwifruit Country, Disneyland, Sea World, Dreamworld they all use horticulture to enhance the quality of the visit.

Take for example Disneyland. It always looks great, extremely well landscaped, not a plant out of place with the highest maintenance standards. It is the gardens - its horticultural expertise in planning, design, planting and maintenance that sets it apart from others.

Kiwifruit Country serves to enthuse people to learn more about horticulture. Living education - and it is only a small part of the horticulture that fascinates people.

Nurseries Retail - there are the old fashioned plantsman nurseries which are a joy for the specialist to visit. However, Palmers have changed the face of nursery retailing turning it into an adventure and a day out. With its special guests - Maggie Barry and Bill Ward, coffee shop, range of other garden related products and of course plants.

The pulling power of Palmers - and other chains has changed the way we look at gardening horticulture, retailing and turned it into a leisure, recreation outing - ie tourism in domestic market. Swafield (1992) stated "Garden centres rival shopping centres as a weekend leisure focus".

ECOTOURISM

Turning now to another aspect of Tourism Ecotourism. In the forest, alpine areas, along the coastline and in National Parks the visitor/tourist is offered many opportunities to experience nature. Short bush walks are the most popular visitor activity by tourists (IVS 1994/5) Skills are needed to preserve these assets to ensure they are sustained in the future.

Already alpine walks and treks, mountain bike trips, all terrain tours, mountain walks, coastal walks are operated by tour companies. This will grow and mean more work for horticulturists, park managers, planners and rangers. More and more horticultural skills will be required to maintain the natural heritage.

RESORTS

(Swafield 1992) stated resorts were "created because of particular scenic attraction". Take for example Rotorua where the Government Gardens has long been regarded as one of the major attractions in Rotorua. Featured on postcards in promotional leaflets, books, movies, videos etc.

In Nelson in 1982 the Council decided to reduce bedding plants by 25% to save costs. Inspection showed that the uncontrolled use of bedding plants had led to a dilution of their effect. The new plan concentrate bedding where it mattered - high profile and set in the landscape to provide excellent bedding features. Two years later Council were asking for more because visitors commented on it, locals loved it and it did something for the city - pride! Needless to say staff actually refused to plant more because - it would water down what was being done and reduce the dramatic impact on people of those displays.

Attractions should be absolutely fabulous with design, displays and maintenance being of a high standard, but often they are not.

In summary there is a great deal that can be done to improve horticulture as a major drawcard to a city ,town etc. based upon the way people are flocking to horticultural events, garden tours and the like.

TOURIST ATTRACTIONS - GARDENS

There is a growing interest in visiting gardens. Everywhere there are garden visits organised. In the Wellington Region in August 5 or more separate organisations are running garden visits with some 150 private gardens open to the public. In addition NZ Rail organised a train trip to the Wairarapa to visit gardens. Palmers Garden Centre and Williams Garden Centre also organised them and the list goes on.

Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (1993) conduct an annual visitor survey of attractions in NZ.

The following chart shows the dates when gardens were opened to the public:

Pre 1930	2.7%
1930-49	35.1%
1950-69	18.9%
1970-79	8.1%
1980-85	10.8%
1986-90	0%
1991-92	24.3%

Visitor numbers to Gardens

Total visitors

Gardens 2.76 million visitors (includes domestic and international tourists)

This compares with

Museums 3.82million

Attractions 4.09 million

Average number of visitors per garden 95,366

77% of all gardens have less than 30,000 visitors.

International Visitors

Estimates only 9% (248,000) if international visitors visit gardens

70.3% of gardens predict an increase in visitor numbers of between 1-20%.

Opening Hours

Gardens have the longest opening hours of all attractions.

51% of all gradients have an entrance fee.

Marketing

92% spend less than \$5,000 on marketing.

Gardens have the lowest marketing budget of all attractions.

Gardens know less about visitor make up than other attractions.

When looking at this information one gets the impression that everyone is getting on the bandwagon - especially private gardens. One thing this survey does not state is the quality of those gardens, best season, outstanding feature or landscape design. This issue needs to be addressed.

Note that the majority of the visitors are not international but domestic. Of the domestic visitors I suggest a high % are local ratepayers. If the locals take their out of town visitors to the gardens are they going to feel proud of the gardens? that is the test!

The RNZIH has started a scheme to list all gardens that are or could be open to the public free or for a charge. Quality is an issue that is particularly addressed in that scheme.

Local authorities which want to be in tourism and use their parks and gardens to add to the overall landscape of the city or be an attraction have to meet the competition head on. Take a look at their parks and gardens, change them, improve them or loose the tourism race.

MEDIA SURVEY

In order to test the popularity of horticulture as a tourism attraction I looked at some recent media and the programmes being offered.

Television

Documentaries	Several have featured gardens. The Ellerslie Flower Show is being filmed as a documentary.
News	Various news items feature high profile horticultural events.
Palmers Garden Show	Includes gardening, garden visits, landscaping, nurseries, etc. Its ratings are extremely high.
Living Earth	Conservation, gardening, gardening visits etc.
Advertisements	Flowers, plants, gardens all feature.
Travel Programmes	Places to visit
Videos	Gardening Gardens etc.

Magazines

The following information was taken from the New Zealand Gardener August 1994 Circulation 60,000.

Advertisements

National Trust Gardens
Small Acorns 15 gardens to visit
Taranaki Garden Festival
Eden Garden
Huntly School Garden Festival
Stallard Farm

Garden to Visit -	Brown Sugar Cafe
	Pams Lavender Patch
Flowershows	Ellerslie
	Roseworld (Christchurch)
	Waikato Flower Show
	Dunedin Rhododendron Festival
	Matamata Festival of Flowers
	Manawatu Rose & Garden
Nurseries	Cannock Wood
	Bay bloom
	Cross Hills
	Coehaven
Travel	To New Caledonia
	Thomas Cook
	Coromandel Peninsula
	Small Acorns 8 garden tours advertised
	Nelson Town and Country Tours
	Travel Works 4 tours overseas
	Travelwise 6 NZ and overseas tours
	Youngs Garden Tours East Coast
Education	Garden Marlborough
	Garden Galaxy - Masterton

Articles

Gardener holiday in New Caledonia

This shows the range of advertising using horticulture to promote tourism.

NZ Gardener 1993-94

From the index - feature articles on gardens and tourism

13	Country Gardens
13	Gardens to Visit
1	Article about gardens to visit
8	Articles on nurseries.

Radio Gardening shows

Newspapers Garden Sections
Articles
Advertising

Brochures General

When looking at brochures promoting cities and regions parks and reserves feature strongly.

NZTB uses amazing photographs of flora, scenery, parks and gardens. The range of photographs is wide.

Brochures Specific

Brochures of specific attractions always features plants, garden setting, views or scenery.

SPECIAL EVENTS - HORTICULTURE

The range of horticultural events are proving more and more popular all the time. Next week in Auckland is The Ellerslie Garden Festival. At the same time Roseworld is going in Christchurch another show in Hamilton and Lower Hutt has just completed a Garden Festival. Taranaki and Dunedin have their rhododendron festivals as well as all private rhododendron gardens.

Events like this create a major inflow of the domestic tourist. The daytripper is just as important as the overnigher.

No doubt at some point it will reach saturation - or the decline will be caused by too many poor quality events rather than too many good events and horticultural attractions.

OTHER HORTICULTURE

Looking further at the nature of tourism then a range of other horticultural influences tourism.

<u>Horticulture</u>	<u>Use</u>
Pot plants	decoration
Cut flowers	decoration, gifts
Food	vegetables
Salads	food
Fruit	fresh fruit
Timber	souvenirs, packaging
Highway landscape	scenery
Open space	green image
Decorations	Events
Turf	Stadiums, sports grounds

The influence of horticulture is immense.

IMPACTS ON TOURISM

There are 4 major impacts of tourism. Each has its good points and bad points. Right now everyone is pushing for the good points and in some cases ignoring the bad.

Economic Impact

Councils and others see tourism as a saviour creating employment and wealth in the region. Jobs are created in three ways directly, indirectly and induced. The indirect and induced jobs are as a result of the multiplier effect of tourism dollars spent in your community.

There may also be jobs created in horticulture.

Environmental Impact

Natural areas often don't have a high level of development and may deteriorate rapidly and unseen to the eye. Photographs on a 12 monthly basis help if a comparison needs to be made.

Use and effects on the environment must be considered under the Resource Management Act. The normal aspects of new developments are dealt with but managers must now consider the physical carrying capacity of the area.

Gardens for example have a high carrying capacity with good paths that don't wear out, grass well maintained, vandalism minimised and with litter cleared up. Gardens areas are very suitable to develop to take pressure off natural areas.

Social carrying capacity is also important. Visitors do not mind sharing the discovery of a fine garden with 50 others. This issue is greater in National Parks where low social carrying capacity has to be managed to ensure a high quality experience.

Cultural Impact

What impact does tourism have on the NZ culture? What is the typical NZ garden? Does the number and type of visitors influence garden design? A range of issues need to be addressed.

Social Impact

How does tourism impact on the local population - more or less crime, attributed in society towards tourism and more.

These impacts while dealt with separately need to be considered in an interrelated way. How does one impact effect and other positive or negative impact.

Managers need to understand the nature of tourism , tourist behaviour and land management issues to derive the greatest benefit form increased visitor numbers.

CONCLUSION

1. Horticulture and Tourism are intertwined to such an extent that without horticulture tourism would suffer.
2. Public agencies provide the bulk of good horticulture.
3. Gardens visitors are made up of 91% domestic and 9% international visitors.
4. Horticulture impacts more on tourism than just aesthetically as the food and beverage and decoration industry also rely on horticulture.
5. There are opportunities for horticultural businesses - from arborist to food production, from landscape to garden maintenance etc.
6. Promotion of regions often depends upon the images portrayed by horticultural features.
7. The local population need to have pride in their area to generate more visitors.
8. The role of horticulture will change in the future as we will use different techniques to maintain and improve our environment.
9. The influence of the media, festivals shows, open gardens and the like will place more pressure on professionals to provide higher quality public horticulture features.

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