



Great Britain Tourism Survey: Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

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Domestic GB Tourism Statistics (Overnight Trips) Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Introduction

The statistics in this release are based on a new combined online survey that replaces the separate Great Britain Tourism Survey and Great Britain Day Visits Survey that ran until the end of 2019.

These statistics are used to monitor domestic tourism demand and measure the contribution and impact of domestic tourism on the visitor economy. A key purpose of these statistics is to uncover insights into market trends over time. Changes in survey methodology introduced in 2021, together with the interruption in data collection due to COVID-19, mean that results published in this release are not directly comparable with data published for 2019 and previous years. Please see the 2022 Methodology and Quality Report and accompanying Background Quality Report for further details.

This report details the main estimates for the volume and value of domestic overnight trips taken by British residents in Scotland and Great Britain in Quarter 3 2023. The statistics published in this release cover the period from the beginning of July to the end of September 2023.

Detailed results for England and Wales are being published by [VisitEngland](#) and [Visit Wales](#).

These statistics are labelled as ‘Official Statistics in Development’ to enable testing and further modification to meet user needs. Further information on this is available on the [Office for National Statistics website](#).

Key Points

Overnight Tourism Performance in 2023

Summary of GB Overnight Tourism Performance so far in 2023 (January to September)

- Between January and September 2023, Great Britain residents took 89.2 million overnight trips in Great Britain with 264.7 million nights and £23.9 billion spend overall.
- 10% of trips taken in GB included an overnight stay in Scotland.
- The average duration of GB trips during the reporting period was 3.0 nights with an average spend of £268 per trip and £90 per night.

Summary of Scotland's Overnight Tourism Performance so far in 2023 (January to September)

- Between January and September 2023, Great Britain residents took 9.3 million overnight trips in Scotland with 25.8 million nights and £2.4 billion spent during these trips.
- The volume of overnight trips and nights in Scotland during this time were lower compared to the same period in 2022. Expenditure on these trips was similar between the two time periods.
- The average spend on an overnight trip in Scotland between January and September 2023 was £258 compared to £268 average for an overnight trip in Great Britain.
- The average spend per night in Scotland was marginally higher at £93 compared to the GB average of £90.

Summary of Scotland's Overnight Tourism Performance in Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

- Great Britain residents took 3.8 million overnight trips in Scotland with 11.1 million nights and £1.03 billion spent during these trips.
- Holiday visits were the most popular type of overnight trip to Scotland during the third quarter of 2023, followed by visits to friends and family.
- Cities and large towns were the preferred locations for most overnight visitors to Scotland during the third quarter of 2023, followed by countryside/villages.

Trips and Spend in Great Britain

January to September 2023

Between January and September 2023, Great Britain residents took 89.2 million overnight trips in Great Britain with 264.7 million nights and approximately £23.8 billion spend overall. During the same period, there were 9.3 million overnight trips to Scotland with 25.8 million nights and a total expenditure of £2.4 billion. Approximately 10% of all overnight trips, nights and spend by British residents were to Scotland.

Total volume overnight trips, nights and spend to Great Britain and Scotland, January to September 2023

	GB	Scotland
Trips (millions)	89.2	9.3
% GB trips	100%	10%
Nights (millions)	264.7	25.8
% GB Nights	100%	10%
Spend (£ million)	£23,885	£2,405
% GB Spend	100%	10%

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2023 (January - September)



Domestic Trips, Nights and Spend in Great Britain, January to September 2023

Great Britain tourism performance saw a 2% increase in expenditure between January and September compared to the same time period in 2022. However, there was a reduction in the number of total trips and nights spent on trips compared to the previous year.

Domestic overnight tourism performance to Great Britain, January to September 2022/2023

Year	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Year to date 2023	89.2	264.7	£23,885
Year to date 2022	90.5	283.6	£23,520
% change	-1%	-7%	2%

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2022/2023 (January - September)

Overall, the spend per night and spend per trip in Great Britain were higher between January and September compared to the same period in 2022. Nights per trip were reduced.

Year	Spend/trip	Nights/trip	Spend/night
Year to date 2023	£268	3.0	£90
Year to date 2022	£260	3.1	£83
% change	3%	-5%	9%

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2022/2023 (January - September)



Domestic Overnight Tourism Performance in Scotland, January to September 2023

A total of 9.3 million overnight trips were made to Scotland by residents of Great Britain between January and September 2023, staying for 25.8 million nights and spending £2.4 billion. The number of nights and overnight trips to Scotland were lower between January and September 2023 compared to the same period in 2022. The spend was similar between the same time periods.

Domestic overnight tourism performance in Scotland January to September 2022/2023

Year	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Year to date 2023	9.3	25.8	£2,405
Year to date 2022	9.6	29.6	£2,411
% change	-3%	-13%	0%

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2022/2023 (January - September)

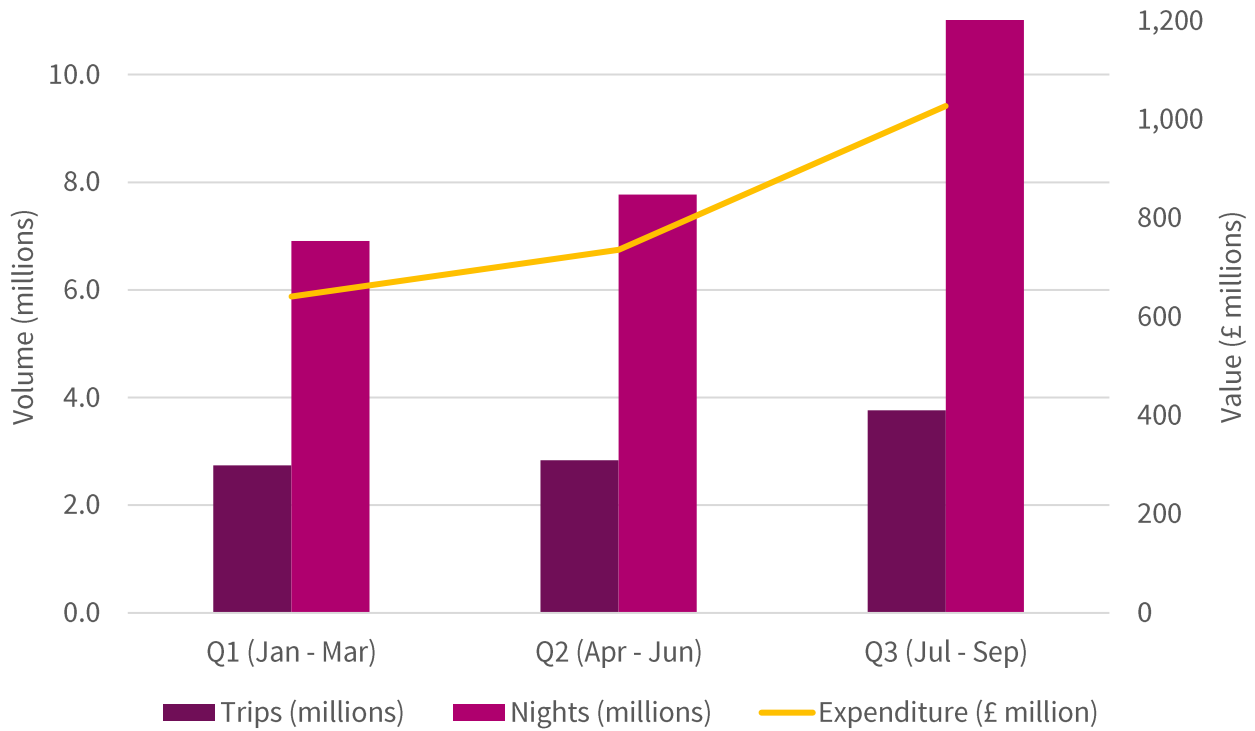
The average domestic overnight visitor in Scotland between January and September 2023 spent a total of £158 over a 2.8 night trip with a daily expenditure of £93. Domestic overnight visitors to Scotland spent on average 15% more per night, and 3% more per trip compared to the same period in 2022. The average domestic overnight visitor in Scotland had less nights on their trip between January and September 2023 compared to the same time period in 2022.

Year	Spend/trip	Nights/trip	Spend/night
Year to date 2023	£258	2.8	£93
Year to date 2022	£250	3.1	£81
% change	3%	-10%	15%

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2022/2023 (January - September)

Domestic Trips, Nights and Spend in Scotland by quarter, January to September 2023

The third quarter of 2023 had a higher level of trips, nights and spend in Scotland than the first two quarters of the year.



2023	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Q1 (Jan-Mar)	2.7	6.9	641
Q2 (April-June)	2.8	7.8	736
Q3 (July-Sept)	3.8	11.1	1,027

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey (Q1-Q3 2023)



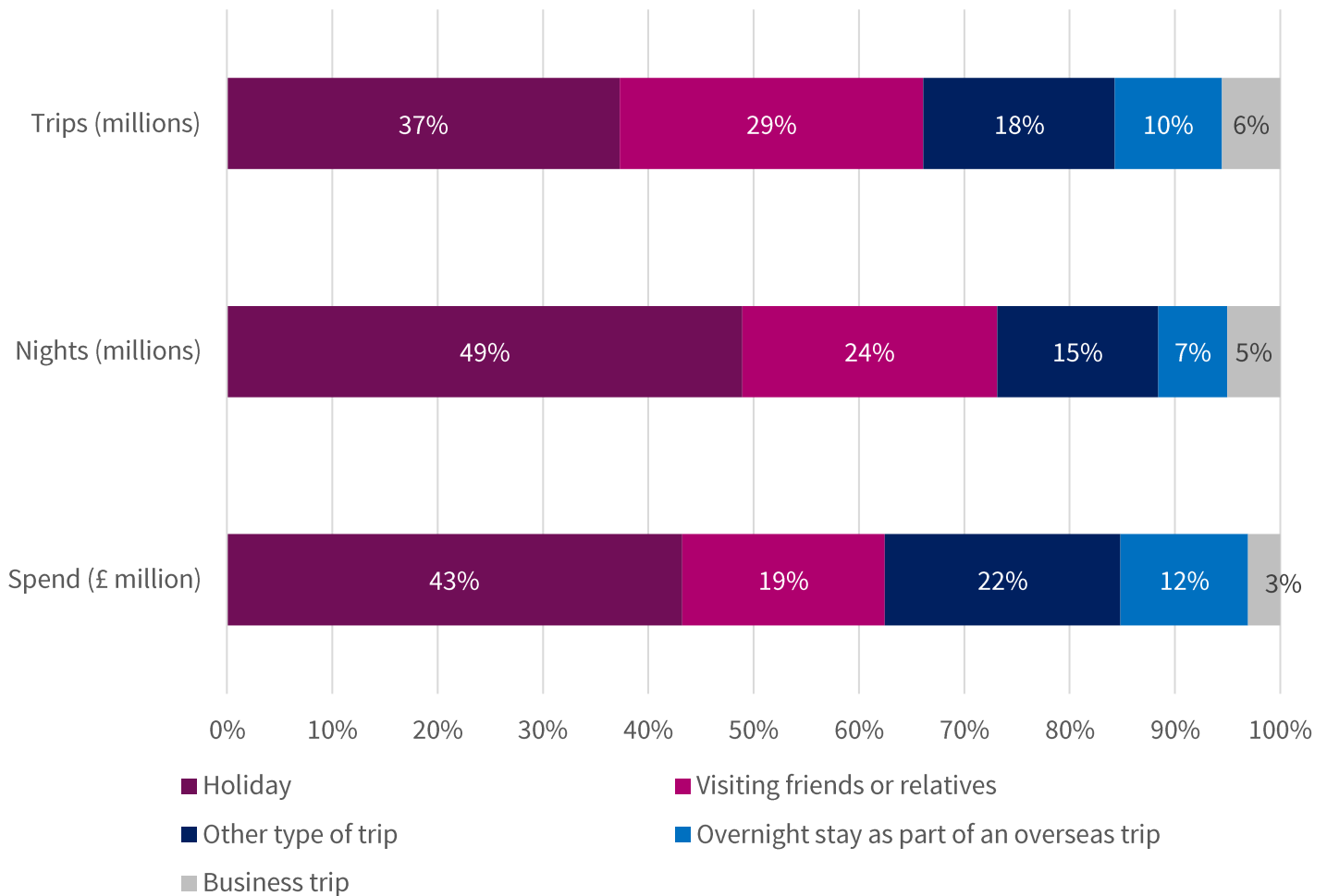
Purpose of Domestic Overnight Trips in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Holiday trips made up the largest proportion of overnight trips taken in Scotland in Q3 2023, accounting for just over a third of total trips, 49% of total nights and 43% of spend.

Visits to friends and family made up the second largest proportion of overnight trips, making 29% of total trips and 24% of total nights but only 19% of total expenditure.

Other types of trips* made up 18% of total trips, 15% of total nights and 22% of the total expenditure. Business trips and overnight stays as part of an overseas trip both made up smaller proportions of the total trips.

Domestic overnight trips, nights and spend in Scotland by purpose of trip, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

*Other types of trip include personal events, public events, and travel for the purposes of study, medical, religious reasons

Domestic overnight trips, nights and spend in Scotland by purpose of trip, Q3 2023

Purpose of Trip	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Holiday	1.4	5.5	444
Visiting friends or relatives	1.1	2.7	198
Other type of trip	0.7	1.7	230
Overnight stay as part of an overseas trip	0.4	0.7	125
Business trip*	0.2	0.6	31
Total	3.8	11.1	1,027

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey 2023 (July - September)

Other types of trip include personal events, public events, or travel for study, medical or religious reasons.

*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

Those taking a holiday stayed in Scotland for the longest on average (3.9 nights) and had the second largest spend per trip at £317.

Visitors on a business trip had the lowest average spend per trip of £157. Those who had been on a “other” trip (including personal events) had the highest average spend per trip at £335.

In terms of average spend per night, those staying overnight in Scotland as part of an overseas trip spent the most per night (£170), while those on a business trip spent the least per night (£56).

Purpose of Trip	Average length of trips (nights)	Average spend per night (£)	Average spend per trip (£)
Holiday	3.9	81	317
Visiting friends or relatives	2.5	73	182
Other type of trip	2.5	135	335
Overnight stay as part of an overseas trip	1.9	170	326
Business trip*	2.7	56	150
Total	3.0	92	273

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

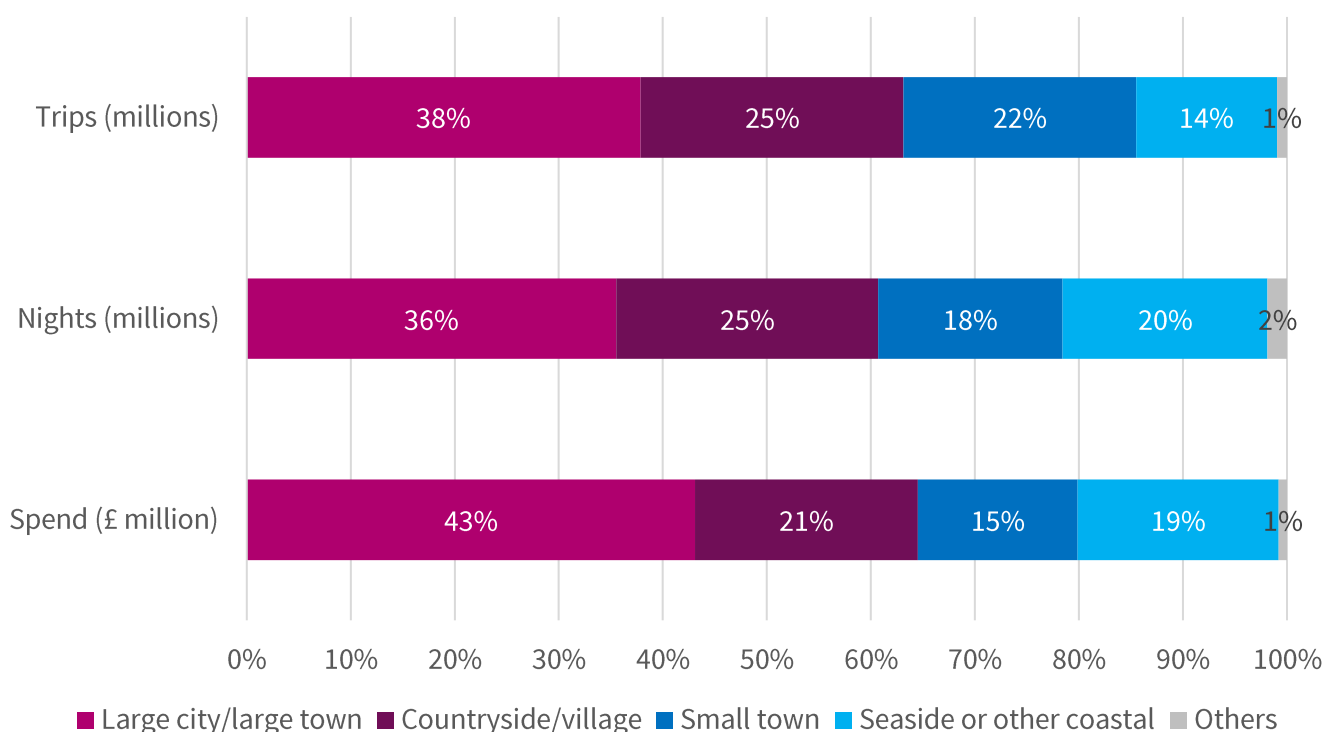
Other types of trip include personal events, public events, or travel for study, medical or religious reasons.

*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

Main Location visited in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Almost two fifths of overnight trips in Q3 2023 were to the cities and large towns of Scotland. Trips to large cities and towns also made up 36% of the total nights and 43% of the total expenditure. A quarter went to countryside/village locations, making up a quarter of the total nights and 21% of total expenditure. Just over a fifth of all overnight trips were to small towns, making up 18% of the total nights and 15% of the total expenditure. An additional 14% of overnight trips to Scotland took place in seaside or coastal locations.

Main location type visited by domestic overnight visitors to Scotland, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Main Location Type	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Large city/large town	1.4	4.0	443
Countryside/village	0.9	2.8	220
Small town	0.8	2.0	158
Seaside or other coastal	0.5	2.2	199
Others*	0.0	0.2	8
Total	3.8	11.1	1,027

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

Main Region Visited in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

There was a relatively even spread of overnight trips between the East and West of Scotland, with each of these regions accounting for over a third of trips. The North of Scotland was the main region visited for just over a quarter of trips with the South of Scotland accounting for 4% of overnight trips. The largest proportion of nights was for the North of Scotland, followed by the West. Expenditure was split fairly evenly across the North, East and West regions of Scotland (30%, 31% and 34% respectively).

Main region visited on trips taken by domestic overnight visitors to Scotland, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Main Region visited	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
North of Scotland	0.8	2.7	218
East of Scotland	1.3	3.8	396
South of Scotland*	0.3	1.0	70
West of Scotland	1.1	3.1	294
Total**	3.5	10.6	978

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July-September)

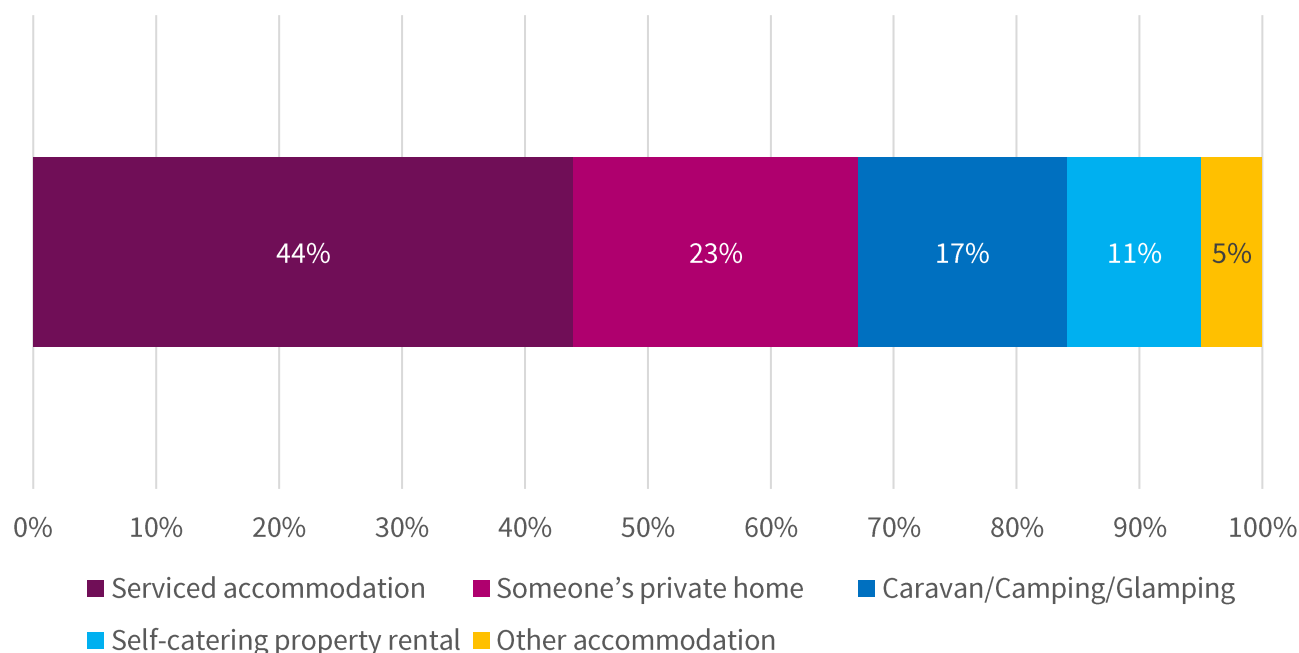
*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

**Please note main region visited may have been outside of Scotland

Accommodation Used on Overnight Trips Taken in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Over two fifths of all overnight trips to Scotland were in serviced accommodation. Around a quarter chose to stay in someone’s private home, which includes the home of friends or relatives as well as second homes. Caravan/camping/glamping was the choice for 17% of trips, followed by self-catering property rental (11%).

Accommodation type used on overnight trips taken in Scotland, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Accommodation Type	Trips (millions)
Serviced accommodation	1.7
Someone's private home	0.9
Caravan/Camping/Glamping	0.6
Self-catering property rental	0.4
Other accommodation*	0.2
Total	3.8

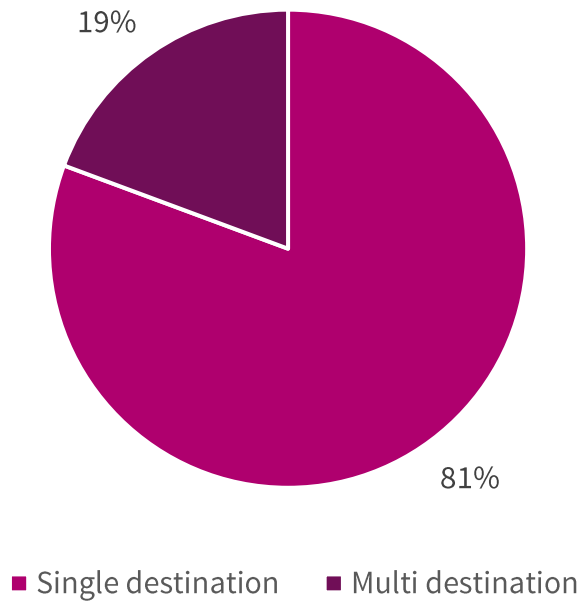
Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

Number of Places visited on Overnight Trips in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Most trips in Q3 2023 were single destination trips, with just 19% visiting two or more places.

Number of places visited on overnight trips in Scotland, Q3 2023



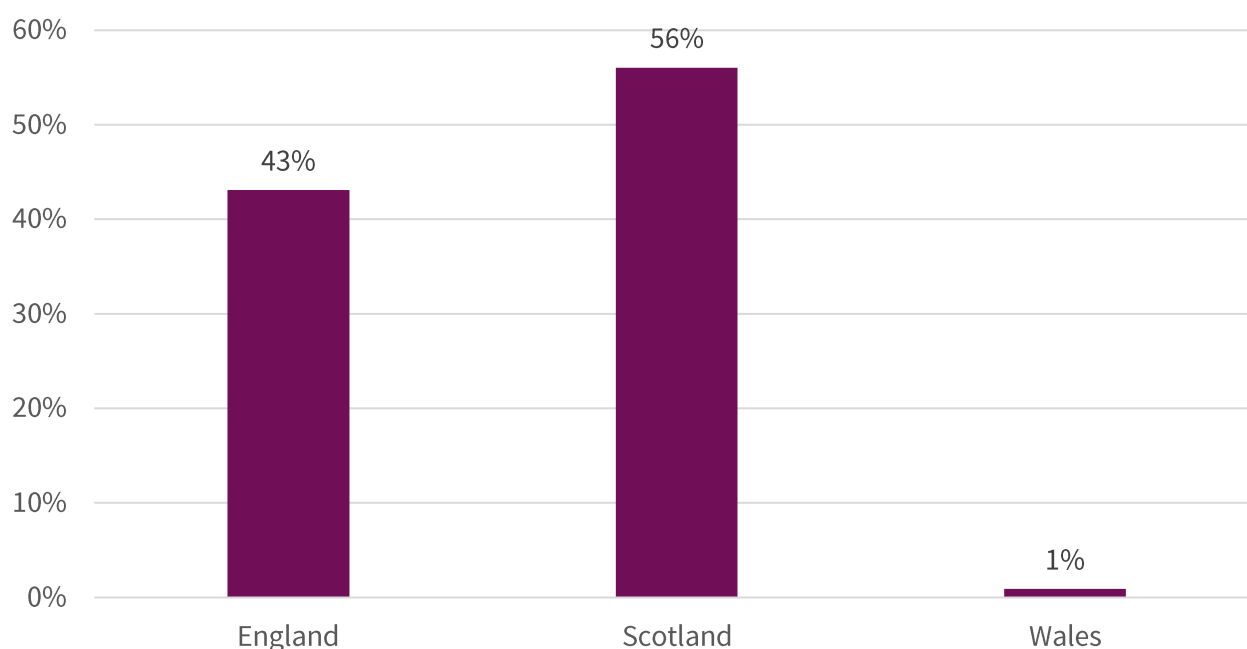
Number of places visited	Trips (millions)
Single destination	3.0
Multi destination	0.7
Total	3.8

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Who Took Domestic Overnight Trips in Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Residents of Scotland generated the highest volume of trips nights and spend in Scotland between July and September, accounting for 56% of trips, 48% of nights and 46% of overall spend. Residents of England generated almost all remaining trips (43%), nights (51%) and spend (52%), with Welsh residents making up just 1% of overnight trips and nights and 2% spend.

Percentage of overnight trips taken in Scotland by region of residence, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Trips, nights and spend in Scotland by region of residence, Q3 2023

Region of residence	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
England	1.6	5.7	539
Scotland	2.1	5.3	468
Wales*	0.0	0.1	20
Total	3.8	11.1	1,027

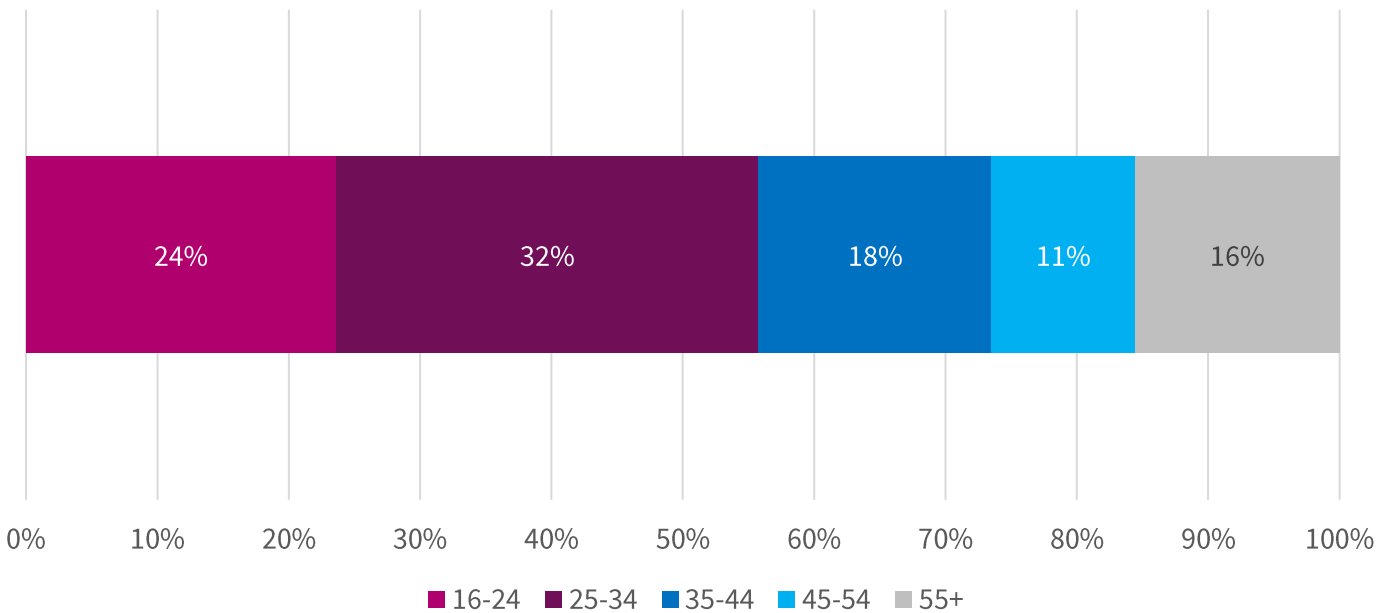
Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

*Data based on a sample size lower than 30

Age Range of Overnight visitors to Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Over eight out of ten overnight trips during Q3 of 2023 were taken by visitors under the age of 55 (84%). Visitors aged between 16 and 34 generated well over half of overnight trips (56%), while those aged 35-54 generated almost a third of overnight trips (29%).

Age of visitors on domestic overnight trips taken in Scotland, Q3 2023



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July-September)

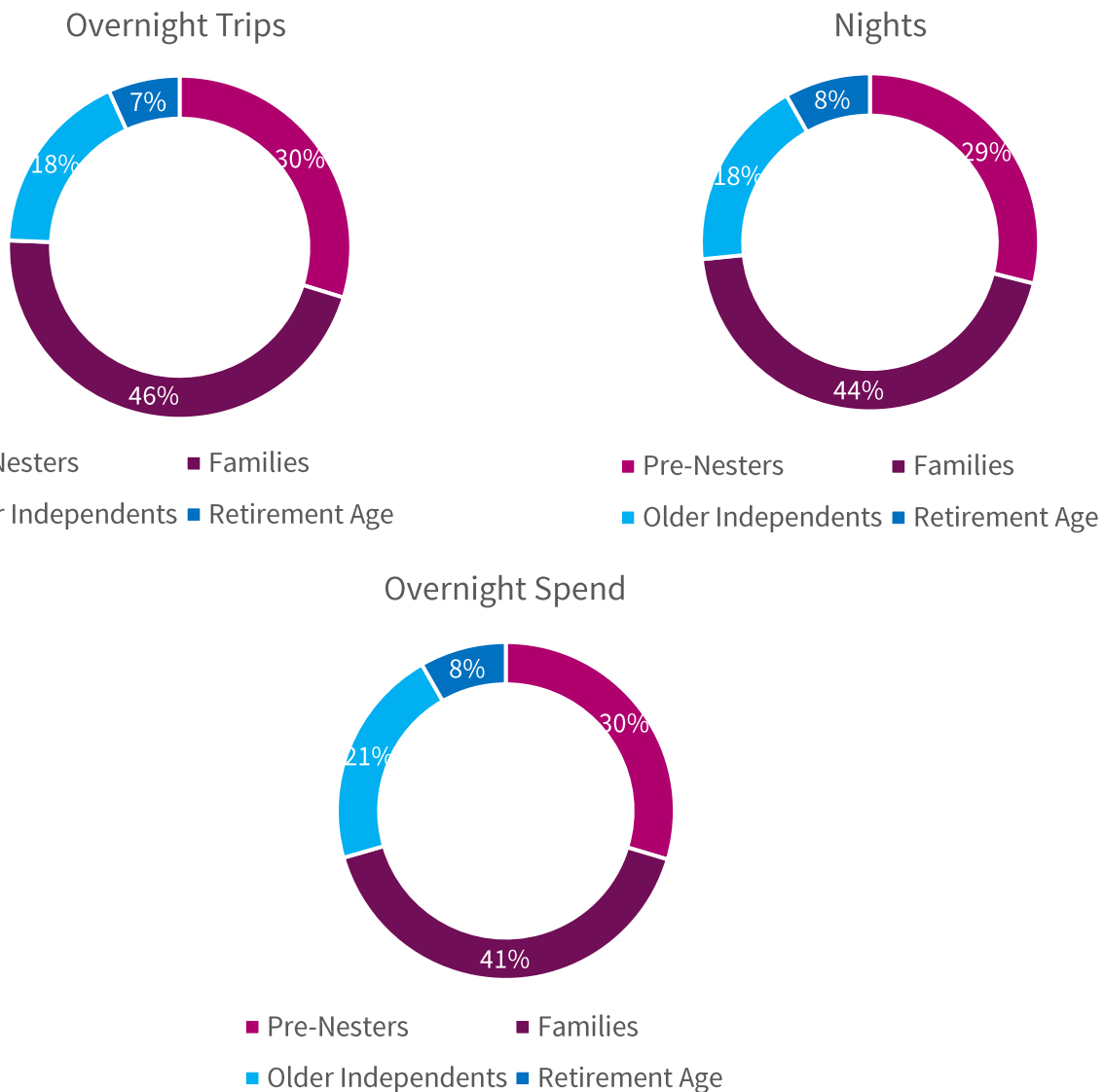
Age group	Trips (millions)
16-24	0.9
25-34	1.2
35-44	0.7
45-54	0.4
55+	0.6
Total	3.8

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

Life Stage of Overnight Visitors* to Scotland, Quarter 3 2023 (July to September)

Families accounted for the highest proportion of overnight trips (46%), nights (44%) and spend (41%) in Scotland. Pre-nesters represented almost a third of Scottish trips (30%), nights (29%) and spend (30%). Respondents of retirement age represented the lowest proportion of overnight trips (7%), nights (8%) and spend (8%).

Definitions of segments	
Pre-Nesters	16-34, no children
Families	16-64, with children
Older Independents	35-64, no children
Retirement Age	65+



Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)

*Please note the definition of life stages has been amended from previously published reports to bring consistency between Scotland, England and Wales reporting. Pre-Nesters remains the same, but changes have been made to the definition of Families, Older Independents and Empty Nesters (terminology has also been changed to Retirement Age).

Life stage of visitors on domestic overnight trips taken in Scotland, Q3 2023

Life stage	Trips (millions)	Nights (millions)	Spend (£ million)
Pre-nesters	1.1	3.2	304
Families	1.7	5.0	420
Older independents	0.7	2.0	218
Retirement Age	0.3	0.9	85
Total	3.8	11.1	1,027

Source: Great Britain Tourism Survey Q3 2023 (July - September)



Ossian's Hall overlooking the River Braan at The Hermitage, Dunkeld, Perthshire 2022 © VisitScotland / Kenny Lam

Appendix: Methodology and Quality

Definitions

To qualify as an eligible GB Domestic Overnight Trip the following criteria must be met:

- involved a stay of at least one night in the nations of Great Britain
- not taken on a frequent basis –takes place less often than once a week
- GB Domestic Overnight Holiday Trips – the main purpose of the trip was for holiday, pleasure or leisure
- GB Domestic Overnight VFR Trips –the main purpose of the trip was for visiting friends and relatives, including VFR trips that were combined with a holiday.
- GB Domestic Overnight Business Trips – the main purpose of the trip was for business
- GB Domestic Overnight Miscellaneous Trips – the main purpose of the trip was for any other type of trip taken not covered by the above classifications including personal events, public events, study, medical, religious reasons and any overnight stays in the UK as part of any overseas trip.
- **Volume** - an estimate of what the grossed-up number of overnight trips undertaken by the population within the time would be if the quota sample is representative of the whole GB population
- **Value** - an estimate of what the total expenditure relating to the volume of overnight visits undertaken by the population would be if the quota sample is representative of the whole GB population
- **Bednights** - an estimate of what the grossed-up number of nights spent on overnight trips undertaken by the population would be if the quota sample is representative of the whole GB population.

Life stage Segment definitions (revised*)

Pre-nester: Age 16-34, no children

Families: Age 16-64, with children

Older independents: Age 35-64, no children

Retirement Age: 65+

These qualifying criteria and definitions have been revised to align with agreed international standards which impacts on comparability of the published domestic overnight tourism estimates for 2021, 2022 and 2023 with those published for 2019 and previous years.

*Please note the definition of life stages has been amended from reports previously published to bring consistency between Scotland, England and Wales reporting. Pre-Nesters remains the same, but changes have been made to the definition of Families, Older Independents and Empty Nesters (terminology has also been changed to Retirement Age).

Methodology

In 2019, the producers of the domestic tourist statistics, VisitScotland, Visit Wales, and VisitEngland, undertook a review of the requirements and methods for producing the statistics to help future-proof the data collection methods, whilst maintaining the reliability and robustness of the information reported. As a result, substantial changes were introduced as part of a new combined online survey method collecting data on both domestic overnight trips as well as domestic day trips. This represents a fundamental change in the way data is collected for overnight visits including moving to an online-panel, non-probability survey methodology from the previous face-to-face non-probability methodology.

The sample for the combined online survey is sourced from 4 ESOMAR accredited online panel providers and includes quotas for key demographic variables and region of residence to make the overall sample as representative as possible of GB population. The target annual sample size for GBTS is 60,000 completed interviews. For the Quarter 3 2023 survey, fieldwork started in England, Scotland and Wales in July 2023 and the number of interviews achieved for the period July-September 2023 is 16,618 interviews for GB residents including 2,207 interviews with Scottish residents.

As part of the survey changes, a revised weighting scheme has been introduced to improve efficiency, whilst making the results as representative as possible of the GB population. However, the use of a non-probability online sample limits the extent to which the survey responses are truly representative of the full GB population, a limitation of all online sample surveys.

Further details of the changes to survey method, sample design and estimation approaches are also available in the **GBTS 2022 Background Quality Report**. A 2023 report will be produced when all 2023 data is available.

Comparability and coherence

Statistics for domestic overnight tourism have been collected in a broadly similar way since 1989, initially through the United Kingdom Tourism Survey (UKTS), and since 2011 through the Great Britain Tourism Survey (GBTS). However, the changes in survey methodology introduced in 2021, together with the interruption in data collection in 2020 and early 2021 due to Covid-19, means that results published from April 2021 onwards are not directly comparable with data published for 2019 and previous years.

As part of the survey, respondents are asked about any overnight trips they have taken in the 4 full weeks prior to their date of interview (reference period). Estimates are reported for individual calendar months as well as for quarterly and annual periods. As the interview reference periods do not exactly correspond with calendar months and each month may contain a 4- or 5-week reporting period, an adjustment is made using a seasonal smoothing factor to improve monthly comparisons within and between years. The monthly estimates are subject to limitations on sample size and seasonal fluctuations in trip taking across the year.

The new combined survey includes revised questions to help align the key measures of trips, nights and expenditure with internationally agreed definitions for overnight tourism trips. This will enable more accurate reporting of tourism specific trips and improve comparability with trips reported by other destinations using the internationally agreed definitions. The new combined GBTS and GBDVS survey collects information on specific destinations visited in GB. This enables trips and spend estimates to be calculated for Great Britain, the individual nations of Scotland, England and Wales, and sub-national geographies, subject to sample size limitations.

Accuracy

The statistics produced from the Great Britain Tourism Survey in 2019 and previous years have been designated as official statistics, which provides reassurance to users that the statistics are produced to the very highest professional standards of trustworthiness, quality and value, set out in the [Code of Practice for Statistics](#). Due to the changes in methodology and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, the survey results for 2021, 2022 and 2023 have been badged as Official Statistics in Development. The intention is to return to official statistics status in the near future.

As the statistics are produced using a non-probability online survey method, they are subject to the limitations and potential sources of bias and error associated with such surveys. These include:

Coverage error due to the small part of the GB population that does not have online access.


Sample bias including differences due to those with online access and those that are online panel members compared to those who are not.

Measurement error due to respondents entering incorrect values.

Non-response error including survey refusals and drop-outs and the availability of don't know and prefer not to say options.

The GBTS data are weighted to correct for any imperfections in the achieved sample that might lead to bias and to rectify any differences between the sample and the target population. The survey uses a mix of panel partners to mitigate for possible panel specific biases, and keeping this panel mix consistent over time.

The survey script and data processing includes bespoke checks to verify the accuracy of responses. Imputation is used to cover missing data and caps are used to minimise the impact of extreme values that are entered. It is not possible to measure standard sample errors due to the non-probability sample being used, but base sizes are reported for eligible trip takers and users are advised to consider and be cautious of small base sizes particularly for monthly data and lower-level geographies when drawing inferences from the statistics.



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