



Visitor Industry Newsletter



Dunedin Visitor Industry Update April 2026

Kia ora,

The pace is not letting up for the Destination team as 2026 progresses.

We are particularly heartened that work to drive trans-Tasman demand has delivered results in terms of consumer interest, visitor numbers - and the addition in March of the fourth weekly direct Dunedin - Gold Coast flight.

In the coming weeks, we will be sharing a summer wrap up across our key areas outlining key insights, statistics and achievements. It's encouraging to see sustained interest in Ōtepoti Dunedin as a destination, and to hear that many operators have had a successful summer, despite ongoing difficulties in our operating environment. We will continue to monitor local impacts of the current global uncertainty, please do reach out if there is anything we can support you with from an RTO perspective.

It was wonderful to see cruise passengers enjoying our city and its many experiences over the summer. Despite the unfortunate number of cancellations this year those arriving had wonderful experiences and made a significant economic impact. The post-season debrief will take place on 5 May - please let us know if you have not received an invitation and would like to attend.

Looking ahead, the Cruise Action Group will shortly be looking to redeveloping the Cruise Action Plan. We look forward to working with our partners to grow this valuable market in a way that delivers positive outcomes for the city.

Our industry familiarisation programme the Discover Dunedin Pass is open for staff registrations now! The city-wide programme encourages frontline workers in food and drink, retail, accommodation and tourism to experience all of Dunedin's leading attractions, venues and visitor experiences while building their confidence as ambassadors for the city.

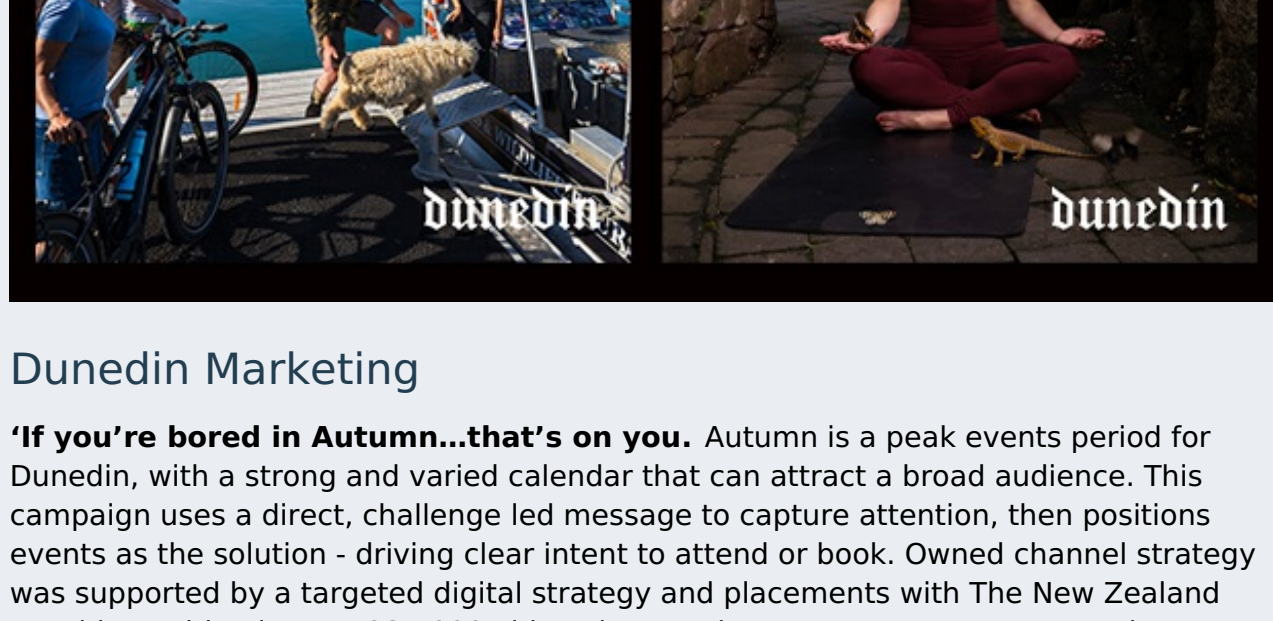
[Find out more and sign up here.](#)

Ngā manaakitanga,

- Teresa Fogarty, Dunedin Destination Manager

In This Issue

- [Dunedin Marketing](#)
- [Dunedin in the Media](#)
- [Events and Key Dates](#)
- [Destination, Trade and Business Events](#)



Dunedin Marketing

'If you're bored in Autumn...that's on you. Autumn is a peak events period for Dunedin, with a strong and varied calendar that can attract a broad audience. This campaign uses a direct, challenge led message to capture attention, then positions events as the solution - driving clear intent to attend or book. Owned channel strategy was supported by a targeted digital strategy and placements with The New Zealand Herald, resulting in over 235,000 video views and strong engagement across key channels.

Destination Campaign

Four new moments launched this month as part of the ongoing Destination Campaign. These short-form videos and static support domestic and Australian awareness activity, combining new content with proven high-performing scenes from last year. Rollout will continue through to year-end to maintain consistency and reach.

[Catch the campaign content here](#)

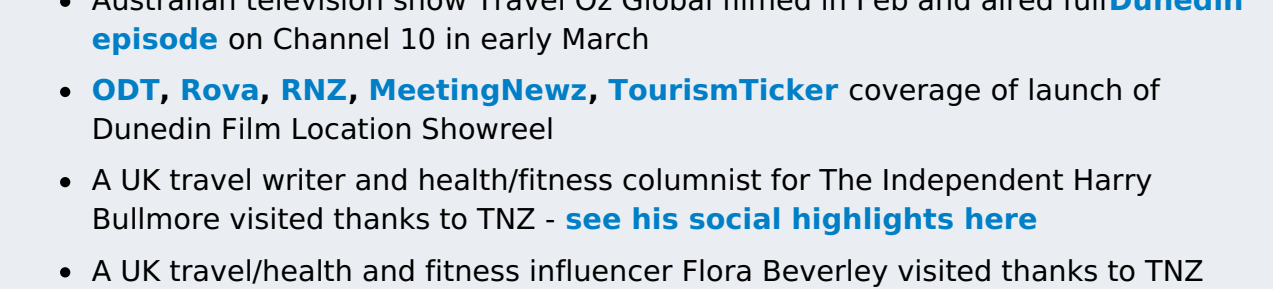
Dunedin: Auditioning Now

The recently released "Infinite Worlds. One Location." showreel was created to position Dunedin as a compelling screen production destination, using video as the primary storytelling medium to engage international producers, directors, and location scouts. Dunedin has long attracted productions of every scale - from The Hobbit and East of Eden, to Mārama and The Light Between Oceans. With infinite worlds in one location - Dunedin is a director's dream. Filmed entirely in Dunedin, James Mustapic's 'cinematic' showreel to land a role in a Hollywood movie is a must-a-see.

[If you haven't seen the showreel check it out here](#)

What's up next?

Next phase activity includes Domestic and Australian Winter in Dunedin campaigns, alongside an always-on family campaign to drive visitation among key audience segments. Our INSIDERS, Dunedin Deals and event remarketing continues on owned channels.



Dunedin in the Media

- Inclusion in New Zealand Herald Travel feature on family activities
- Inclusion in NZ Herald Travel feature for [Easter activities](#)
- Stuff Travel "Ask the Expert" interview arranged with [Australian Railways](#)
- Media coverage on the launch of the new [Dunedin Pass initiative](#)
- Australian television show Travel Oz Global filmed in Feb and aired full [Dunedin episode](#) on Channel 10 in early March
- [ODT, Rova, RNZ, MeetingNewz, TourismTicker](#) coverage of launch of Dunedin Film Location Showreel
- A UK travel writer and health/fitness columnist for The Independent Harry Bullmore visited thanks to TNZ - [see his social highlights here](#)
- A UK travel/health and fitness influencer Flora Beverley visited thanks to TNZ
- Australian writer Julie Miller visited on famill last week for travel features in Sydney Morning Herald and Explore



Events and Key Dates

Thousands attended the Year of the Horse celebrations across February with three key events, Chinese Cultural Festival launch - New Year Blessings: Lion and Dragon Dances on 15 Feb, the flagship event on Saturday 21 Feb Chinese New Year Celebration at Lan Yuan and the Toitū Lantern Display: A Shared Light from 20 Feb - 3 March. The lantern display was a masterclass effort of logistics and planning and this added enormous value to the attendee experience, on the flagship event and also across the period they were on display at Toitū.

Our successes this year were strong engagement with the community from conception in development and operationally we improved audio visual support, standardised communication templates and by using a cultural consultant throughout the development and delivery phases and delivered a culturally authentic event. The variety, authenticity and quality of the performances had something for all members of the family and many children sitting watching at the front of the stage and on the large screens was a success for the event production team.

Our Cultural consultant looks ahead to 2027 stating that we want local Chinese businesses to feel "they are waiting for this time of year." Next year, we will provide printed "Starter Kits" to Chinese restaurants and willing local businesses to turn this into a city-wide commercial opportunity.

Upcoming Events:

- [Shapeshifter Tour](#) 08 May
- [University of Otago Graduation](#) 09 May
- [Highlanders v Waratahs](#) 09 May
- [University of Otago Graduation](#) 16 May
- [Midwinter Carnival](#) 12 - 13 June
- [Matariki mā Puaka](#) 10 July
- [NanoFest](#) 15 - 19 July

[Click here for more upcoming events.](#)



Destination, Trade and Business Events

TNZ Connect Australian Regional Showcase

The Australian Regional Showcase in Sydney was a fantastic opportunity to speak with Australian trade about the amazing tourism experiences on offer in Dunedin. A hot topic was the uptick in Australian visitors generally, and those enjoying the direct Jetstar flights.

The trade companies spoke positively about their relationships with Dunedin businesses, and the experiences delivered to their clients. We also had productive conversations about adding more local experiences to their books so they can expand the experiences they offer and encourage longer stays in the city.

RTNZ ITO Days - Auckland

The tourism trade team represented Dunedin at the 2026 Regional Tourism New Zealand (RTNZ) Inbound Trade Event in Auckland mid March. The event provided a valuable opportunity to connect with key inbound tour operators, strengthen existing relationships, and position Ōtepoti Dunedin as a compelling destination within New Zealand travel itineraries.

Discover Ōtepoti Dunedin Business Events Familiarisation

We invited a handful of business event professionals from Te Ika-a-Māui to venture South and discover Ōtepoti Dunedin and be introduced to the amazing venues, accommodation, activities and culture that Dunedin has to offer for business events. The itinerary was jam-packed with our finest heritage buildings, culinary sensations, versatile venues, a kick off at Forsyth Barr Stadium and once in a lifetime wildlife adventures.

A big thanks to our local operators for showing true southern hospitality and celebrating everything that our wild and wonderful wee city has to offer for business events.

Destination Dunedin Hui

We were excited to receive such a positive response to our first Destination Dunedin Hui for 2026 held on 24 March at Forsyth Barr Stadium. It was fantastic to see stakeholders from across Dunedin's visitor-facing industries showing such strong engagement and shared commitment to growing Dunedin as a destination. If you have any inspiration on what topics you would like covered or who you would like to hear from for future hui, please get in touch businessesvents@dcc.govt.nz.

TRENZ

Looking ahead to TRENZ 2026 mid May, Dunedin will have a strong presence with eight local operators attending alongside us. This level of regional representation highlights a coordinated approach to the trade market and creates further opportunity to convert interest into future visitation.

Collaborations and Packages

Have you joined forces with your fellow retail, hospitality, accommodation, and tourism contacts to whip up some enticing packages for the cooler months? We would love to hear about them!

[Please check out our Dunedin Deals page for inspiration](#)

Please email your deals through to trademarketing@dcc.govt.nz.

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