

New Zealand Hotel Performance Focus

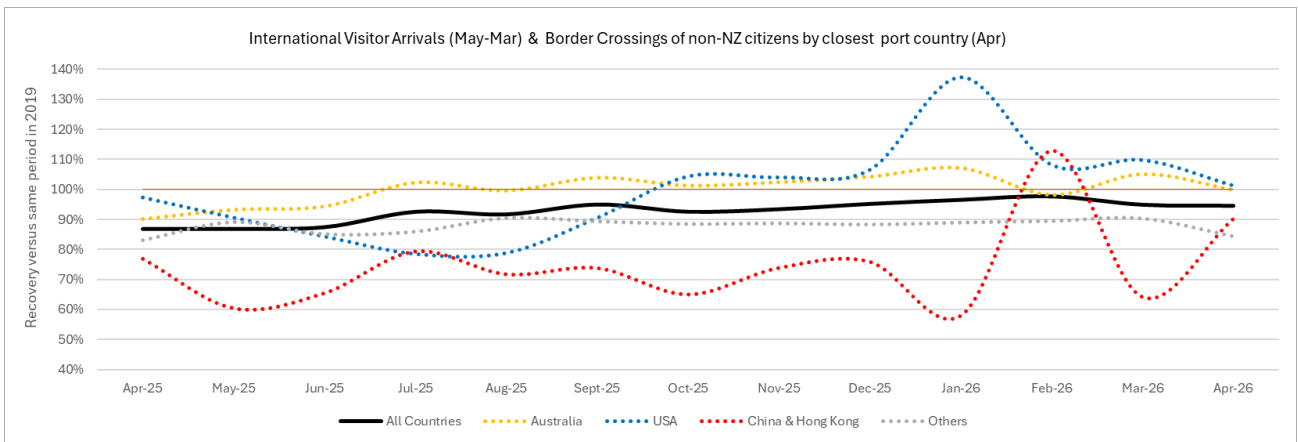
International Visitors and Events Sustaining Hotel Performance

April - 2026



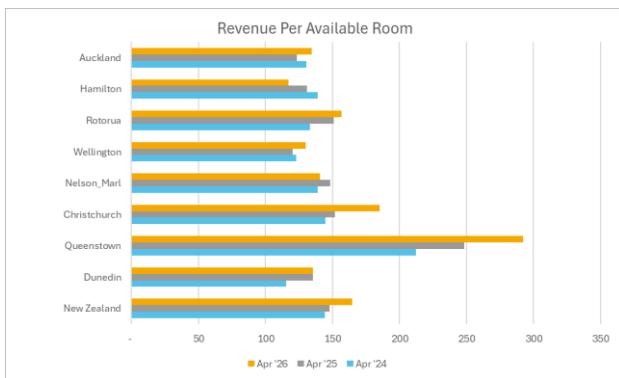
Despite ongoing geopolitical turmoil globally, New Zealand’s hotel sector delivered another strong month in April, with hotel performance data according to Hotel Data New Zealand (HDNZ) showing healthy RevPAR growth across the country’s key centres, supported by robust international arrivals and a full calendar of major events. While domestic demand showed some early signs of softening, international visitors continued to drive performance, particularly in higher-quality hotel segments in Auckland, Queenstown, Wellington, and Christchurch.

International visitor arrivals, measured by border crossings by non-New Zealand residents, were up 9% year on year in April. Growth was led by an 11% increase in arrivals from Australia, a 17% increase from the People’s Republic of China and a 4% rise from the USA. Compared to 2019, total international arrivals reached 95% of pre-pandemic levels, with China still down around 10% and other smaller arrival markets down 16%, while arrivals from Australia and the USA were on par with April 2019. Demand from Australia was likely supported by the strength of Australian dollar which was around 13% up against the NZD compared to a year ago.

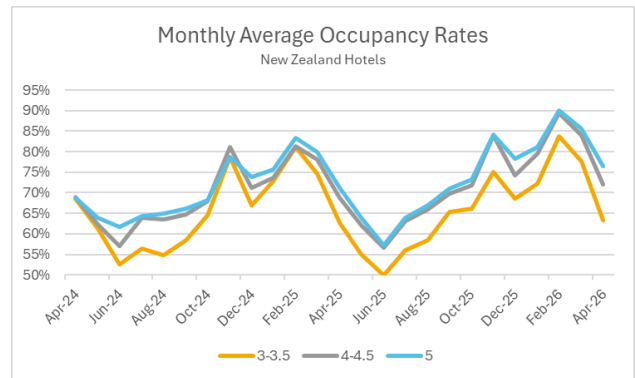


(Source: Stats NZ)

Across **New Zealand**, hotels reported an 11.2% increase in RevPAR year on year in April, driven by a 6.1% rise in room nights sold and a 5.8% increase in ADR. Most of the growth in room nights came from international visitors, while domestic room nights increased by only 2.1%. This slower domestic growth appears to reflect the more immediate impact of inflationary pressures and economic uncertainty on local travellers, in contrast to international visitors whose plans are typically made many months in advance.



(Source: HDNZ)

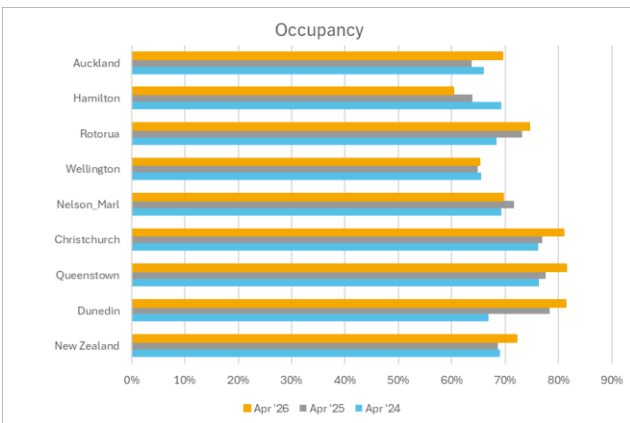


(Source: HDNZ & Horwath HTL)

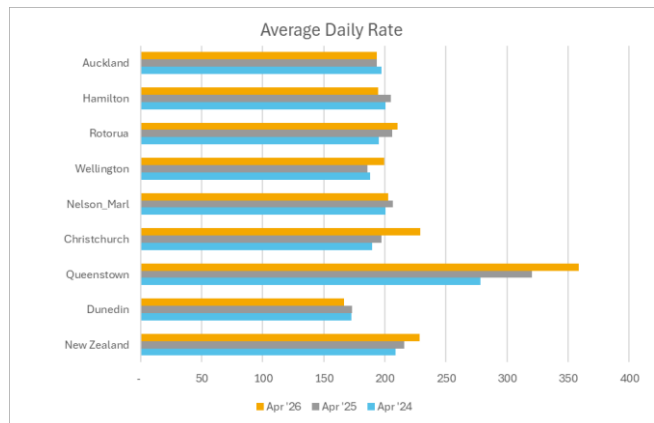
A key feature of the national picture is the ongoing outperformance of newer, higher-quality hotel product. The popularity of 4.5–5 star hotels relative to older 3–4 star stock is evident not only in Auckland but across the country, as seen in occupancy patterns reported by HDNZ. This suggests that guests are continuing to seek out higher standards and are willing to pay a premium when quality and experience are clearly differentiated.

In **Auckland**, hotels recorded solid RevPAR growth of 9% year on year in April. This uplift was driven primarily by strong demand in the 4.5–5 star categories. Despite the robust demand, ADR in Auckland reverted back to 2025 levels after some encouraging increases in the previous two months. The opening of the 325-room Radisson Red in February added around 8% to Auckland’s 5-star/luxury supply. While the Radisson is not yet included in the HDNZ figures, other 5-star and luxury hotels still achieved a year-on-year occupancy increase of 7 percentage points while maintaining ADR, highlighting the resilience of this segment even in the face of new competition.

Data from the New Zealand International Convention Centre (NZICC), which opened in February, reported seven major events in April that would have impacted hotel demand, attracting approximately 4,700 delegates from across New Zealand and Australia.



(Source: HDNZ)



(Source: HDNZ)

Christchurch hotels reported their highest April occupancy since 2019 at 80.9%, supported by two major events that drew significant crowds to the city. The inaugural Supercars ITM Christchurch Super 440 attracted a sold-out crowd of circa 65,000, while the DHL Super Rugby Pacific Super Round at the new One New Zealand Stadium drew a further 75,000 attendees. According to STR, the Supercars event alone helped push hotel occupancies close to 90% for the week, while lifting average daily room rate by 26% and revenue per available room by nearly 46%. Together, these events highlight the powerful role that large-scale sport and entertainment can play in supporting hotels and hospitality in the city.

Wellington hotels reported their fourth consecutive month of RevPAR growth in April, marking a clear shift from the year-on-year RevPAR declines that were typical throughout last year.

The city’s event calendar played a major role in lifting performance during April. Wellington hotel occupancy reached 92.5% on the night of the first ULTRA music festival in New Zealand, with the international event drawing around 23,000 fans and selling out the waterfront venue. Tākina Wellington Convention & Exhibition Centre also had a standout month, hosting its largest-ever international association conference, the 21st WONCA World Rural Health Conference.

Hotels reported a 5% decline in domestic room nights but a 19% increase in international room nights. This underlines the importance of international events and association conferences in supporting the city’s hotels, even as local demand softens.

Queenstown delivered another solid result in April, with RevPAR rising 17.6% year on year, driven by ADR growth of 11.9% and occupancy increasing to 81.5%. Regional demand was supported by the bi-annual Warbirds Over Wanaka airshow, which attracted more than 60,000 attendees over three days and was reported to have generated an economic impact of around NZD 40 million, indicating that visitor spend and overnight demand remained broadly in line with the 2024 event.



Horwath HTL New Zealand
 PO Box 628
 Shortland Street
 Auckland 1140
 New Zealand

Contact:
 Wim Ruepert
 +64 21 371 653
 wruepert@horwathhtl.com



About Hotel Council Aotearoa (HCA)

Hotel Council Aotearoa (HCA) is New Zealand’s dedicated industry body for hotels and hoteliers. HCA currently represents 255 New Zealand hotels; comprising almost 27,350 guest rooms or 9.98 million available room-nights per annum. Alongside airlines, airports and transport infrastructure, hotels are key tourism infrastructure without which New Zealand would be unable to attract high value international travellers. www.hotelcouncilaotearoa.com

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Our clients choose us because we have earned a reputation for impartial advice that will often mean the difference between failure and success. Each project we help is different, so we need all of the experience we have gained over our 100-year history.

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