The majority of leisure visitors to the Mournes were NI residents. This destination had the highest proportion of NI visitors staying over compared with other regions. Reflecting the Mournes significant domestic market, revisits to the region and in particular visits to favourite places were key reasons for visiting. Visitors were drawn to the region specifically to enjoy the coast or to be active and take part in outdoor activities.

### ORIGIN OF THOSE VISITING DESTINATION

- **Northern Ireland**: 79%
- **Republic of Ireland**: 8%
- **Great Britain**: 7%
- **Other Europe**: 2%
- **USA & Canada**: 2%
- **Other**: 1%

### MEANS OF TRANSPORT INTO ISLAND OF IRELAND

- **By air into the Republic of Ireland**: 36%
- **By air into Northern Ireland**: 30%
- **Belfast International Airport**: 16%
- **George Best Belfast City Airport**: 12%
- **By sea into the Republic of Ireland**: 19%
- **By sea into Northern Ireland**: 21%

### PARTY TYPE

- **38% with own family**
- **30% with partner/spouse**
- **12% with friends**
- **7% wider family (incl friends and family group)**
- **9% on my own**
- **3% three generation group (incl grandchildren)**

- **Party size of 3.48 is slightly lower than the average across all 9 destinations**

### AGE

- **Under 35**: 24%
- **35-54**: 55%
- **55+**: 21%

### LEISURE VISITORS

- **53% NI residents overnight in area**
- **27% Out-of-state overnight in area**
- **8% NI residents day trip only in area**
- **13% Out-of-state day trip only in area**

- **51% were taking a day trip only in NI**
- **1% were staying elsewhere in NI**

- **53% were in NI for the day only**
- **3% were staying elsewhere in NI**

- **82% had decided to visit this region before arriving in NI, a level that was around average compared to other destinations**

- **Just under half, 49%, of visitors from GB and other overseas arrived via the Republic of Ireland – lower than for most other destinations**

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DESTINATION MOURNES

KEY REASONS TO VISIT

- Been before and wanted to return: 37%
- To visit a specific attraction: 32%
- To take part in a particular activity: 28%
- To visit a favourite place: 21%
- To discover or explore somewhere new: 17%
- To visit a number of different places in the area: 13%
- To visit friends or relatives: 10%

More than for any other region, visitors to the Mournes were motivated to visit because they had been before and wanted to return (reflecting the high proportion of domestic visitors) or because they wanted to take part in a particular activity.

61% of all visitors chose the Mournes specifically to enjoy the coast and lakes, exploring the surrounding towns and villages, beaches, eateries and water. Most of the remainder (31%) chose this region to be active and take part in activities in the outdoors.

GB and other overseas visitors were more likely than those visiting most other areas to have been motivated to visit NI by wanting to escape from the normal routine and enjoy exploring the landscape and rural surroundings, local attractions, authentic pubs and cafes.

ARRIVAL AND GETTING AROUND

While there may be room for improvement in terms of taxi and public transport provision and service, the Mournes has a strong welcome and sense of place, with out-of-state visitors in particular rating these aspects highly.

- Signs that help you to find interesting/key tourist locations: 3.76
- Road signs that help you find your way around: 3.64
- Public transport availability, service and value for money: 3.09
- Taxi availability, service and value for money: 3.18
- Car touring routes which point out places along the way: 3.6
- A feeling of being welcomed when you arrive at destination: 3.93
- A sense of the place you are visiting when you arrive at the destination: 4.05
- Clear signs to let you know you have arrived in destination: 3.83

Mean scores: 5=Excellent

OTHER KEY DESTINATIONS ALSO VISITED

Out-of-State visitors also visited:

- BELFAST/GREATER BELFAST: 31%
- CAUSEWAY COAST & GLENS: 25%
- STRANGFORD: 16%

60% of visitors from GB and other overseas (one of the lowest levels recorded) also visited the Republic of Ireland on the same trip and while most likely to visit Dublin they were more likely than any other destination to also visit Meath.

Source: Tourism Northern Ireland Visitor Attitude Survey 2014 (Millward Brown)
**DESTINATION MOURNES**

**POPULAR PLACES VISITED**

- **ALL**
  - Newcastle Promenade: 38%
  - Silent Valley: 38%
  - Dundrum Castle: 18%
  - Murlough National Nature Reserve: 18%
  - Bagenal’s Castle and Newry & Mourne Museum: 8%
  - Rostrevor Mountain Bike Trails: 8%

- **NI RESIDENTS**
  - 50%
  - 46%
  - 16%
  - 24%
  - 7%

- **OOS**
  - 30%
  - 32%
  - 20%
  - 14%
  - 10%

*Based on all visitors to the region
**OOS refers to visitors from outside of NI*

**ACTIVITIES**

- **NI RESIDENTS**
  - Hiking or Walking: 71%
  - Visited a forest, park or garden: 68%
  - Visited a beach: 46%
  - Visited a pub: 36%
  - Visited a castle, house or other historic monument: 27%
  - Attended an event or festival: 19%
  - Cycling: 16%

- **OOS**
  - 50%
  - 46%
  - 16%
  - 7%

**RATING OF OFFERING**

- A range of outdoor activities to do: 3.96
- Information at visitor attractions in your own language: 3.95
- Information to tell you about the places you visit: 3.86
- Information at visitor attractions which tells the story of the place you are visiting: 3.77
- A range of activities suitable for families: 3.77
- The places you visited had a positive buzz about them: 3.74
- A range of interesting/enjoyable visitor attractions: 3.7
- Cities, towns and villages that give the destination its own distinctive sense of place: 3.64
- Staff on tours and in attractions tell stories about local history and places of interest: 3.61
- Opportunities to attend local events/festivals: 3.55
- Unique things to do and see that reflect the destination’s own local culture: 3.52
- Value for money of attractions (historic sites, museums, visitor centres, etc.): 3.51
- Range of things to do on Sundays: 3.09
- Range of things to do in the evenings: 2.94

*Not necessarily significantly higher

Source: Tourism Northern Ireland Visitor Attitude Survey 2014 (Millward Brown)
The Mournes did rate higher than most other areas in relation to accommodation that is distinctive to the destination and a key part of the holiday experience. In general, this region performed close to or above average for all other measures, most notably so among those from out-of-state.

Cafes (49%) and pubs or bars (30%) were the most popular types of places to eat.

Visitor Information Centres were rated very highly across Northern Ireland for all measures, especially seen as having a friendly and efficient service and staff that convey a sense of pride or belief in their local area. The centres in this area were similarly rated very positively on these factors, with all ratings generally close to the average of all regions.

As a rule, NI in general is not particularly well rated across most aspects of the eating out experience.

The Mournes also performed close to or above average for all other measures, most notably so among those from out-of-state.

ACCOMMODATION

Visitors to the Mournes region were more likely than most others to be utilising camping/caravanning or self-catering facilities during their stay, reflecting the high proportion of domestic visitors to the region who favour this type of accommodation. Hotels were also a popular choice for those overnighting in the Mournes.

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DESTINATION MOURNES

PLACES TO EAT

Mean scores
5=Excellent

CAFES 49%
PUBS OR BARS 30%

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VISITOR INFORMATION

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As a rule, NI in general is not particularly well rated across most aspects of the eating out experience.
Overall leisure visitors had a very good time in the Mournes and as such a clear majority are highly likely to recommend the region to others. In terms of overall experience this region scored higher than average on nearly all measures. For most their experience in the Mournes matched or exceeded their expectations with the majority comparing it similarly or even more favourably than other destinations outside of NI for a holiday or short break.

### Destination Experience

- Somewhere to enjoy the scenery of the local area: 4.47
- Somewhere to rest and relax: 4.28
- Somewhere to enjoy outdoor activities: 4.28
- Somewhere you feel safe: 4.2
- Somewhere with a friendly, genuine welcome: 4.14
- Somewhere that is good for families with children: 4.13
- Somewhere you could meet and mix with local people: 3.7
- Somewhere vibrant and exciting: 3.66
- Somewhere to find out stories about the people and places: 3.59

*Not necessarily significantly higher

### Destination Ratings

**Rating of Time Spent in Destination as “Excellent”**

- 51% EXCELLENT
- 32% VERY GOOD
- 14% GOOD
- 2% FAIR
- 0% POOR
- 1% DON’T KNOW

**The Mournes is “Much Better Than Expected”**

- 36% MUCH BETTER THAN EXPECTED
- 23% A LITTLE BETTER THAN EXPECTED
- 37% SAME AS EXPECTED
- 3% A LITTLE WORSE THAN EXPECTED
- 2% DON’T KNOW

**“Would Definitely Recommend Area to Friends and Family”**

- 77% DEFINITELY
- 15% PROBABLY
- 5% FAIRLY LIKELY
- 1% PROBABLY NOT
- 1% DON’T KNOW

**“Much/ Slightly Better Than Other Regions Outside of NI for Holiday”**

- 54% MUCH BETTER
- 31% SLIGHTLY BETTER
- 31% THE SAME
- 6% SLIGHTLY WORSE
- 1% MUCH WORSE
- 8% DON’T KNOW

---

**Visitors Thought There Would Be Enough To Do In This Destination For:**

- 44% A week or longer
- 38% A weekend
- 5% A day only
- 3% Weather dependent
- 4% Don’t know
- 7% Depends

The Mournes area was more likely than most other destinations to be seen to have enough to do for a week or longer.
Visitors to this region were more likely than average to share their experiences by uploading trip photos to the internet on sites such as Flicker and Facebook.

39% uploaded trip photos

9% left online reviews

Compared to all other regions the Mournes was more likely to be described as Adventurous (42%), Inspiring (42%), Invigorating (30%) and Familiar (23%) and more likely than most other regions to be seen as Relaxing (71%), Memorable (63%) and Unique (57%).

“Great outdoor adventures, very good food.”

“I climbed The Devil’s Bite in the Mournes and had a picnic at the top. Breathtaking view!”

“Rostrevor bike trails are first class, I have ridden all over Europe and North America and it is comparable.”

“Silent Valley. Beautiful beyond belief. Stunning walks with stunning views.”

“A really lovely meal with local produce and a sea side walk afterwards.”

‘Always have magical experiences in the Mournes...where the air is fresh and clean and lovely.”

‘...To be on the beach at Newcastle looking at the mountains sweeping down to the sea...was like falling back into happier carefree days, like travelling a long way to unknown parts and finding out it’s always been home. Amazing place.”

Source: Tourism Northern Ireland Visitor Attitude Survey 2014 (Millward Brown)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Mourne Average</th>
<th>Average for all Destinations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre - Friendliness and efficiency of service</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre - Availability of useful information</td>
<td>4.46</td>
<td>4.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre - Staff convey a sense of pride / belief</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in their local area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre - Staff provided ideas about things to see</td>
<td>4.35</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and do</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhere to enjoy the scenery of the local area</td>
<td>4.47</td>
<td>4.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Information Centre - Suitable opening times</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and informative staff (accommodation)</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>4.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information at visitor attractions in your own language</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport connections to and from the air or sea port (e.g. buses/</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>4.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>car hire/taxis)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The availability of useful information to help you to plan your trip</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it is somewhere you feel safe</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff convey a sense of pride/belief in the local area (accommodation)</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff / hosts help make this trip a more enjoyable experience</td>
<td>4.03</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(accommodation)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it is somewhere friendly, genuine, welcome</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff on tours and in attractions tell stories about the local</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>4.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>history and places of interest</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it is somewhere that is good for families with children</td>
<td>4.13</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ease of finding suitable accommodation</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it is somewhere to rest and relax</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>4.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information to tell you about the places you visit</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information at visitor attractions which tells the story of the place</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you are visiting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of the place when you arrive in NI</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficient customer service in accommodation</td>
<td>4.04</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A sense of the place you are visiting when you arrive at your</td>
<td>4.05</td>
<td>3.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>destination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling of being welcomed when you arrive in NI</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and efficient service in places to eat out</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability/ease of finding information about the different regions</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>within NI</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhere to enjoy outdoor activities</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>3.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The places you visit have a positive buzz about them</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A feeling of being welcomed when you arrive in chosen destination</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of interesting/enjoyable visitor attractions</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on things to do / see in local area (accommodation)</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.89</td>
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### DESTINATION MOURNES

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<tr>
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<th>THE MOURNES</th>
<th>AVERAGE FOR ALL DESTINATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clear signs to let you know when you have arrived in your destination</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation that is a key part of the holiday experience itself</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money of accommodation</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs that help you find interesting /key tourist locations</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The availability of tourist information at the air or sea port you arrive at (Excludes NI &amp; ROI residents)</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>3.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff tell you about what is unique about the local area (accommodation)</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you are able to find out about the stories of the people and place you are visiting</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A range of outdoor activities to do</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique things to do and see that reflect the destination's own local culture</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation that is distinctive to the destination</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>3.71</td>
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<td>Road signs that help you to find your way around</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.69</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cities, towns and villages that give the destination its own distinctive sense of place</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to experience good local food and drink</td>
<td>3.69</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it is somewhere vibrant and exciting</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to eat available at the times of day and night that suit you</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money of attractions (historic sites/museums/visitor centres)</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to attend local events/ festivals</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>3.55</td>
</tr>
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<td>Public transport availability service and value for money</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value for money of places to eat out</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>3.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menus demonstrate the use of locally sourced ingredients</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>3.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on places to eat and drink out</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range of things to do in the evenings</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>3.16</td>
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<td>Range of things to do on Sundays</td>
<td>3.09</td>
<td>3.14</td>
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For further information please contact Anne-Marie Montgomery at Tourism NI (a.montgomery@tourismni.com)

For a full report and to access Tourism NI’s fact cards for the other key tourism destinations click the arrow.

For Tourism NI’s fact cards on the value and volume of tourism in each of the 9 key tourism destinations and 11 council areas (based on data released by NISRA) click the arrow.

Source: Tourism Northern Ireland Visitor Attitude Survey 2014 (Millward Brown)