

**TOURIST SPECIAL INTEREST | GOLF TOURISM**  
NEW ZEALAND | APRIL 2013

**INTRODUCING GOLF TOURISM**

This report provides an overview of golf tourism in New Zealand including trends and characteristics of international golf tourists.

Golf is a popular tourist activity. New Zealand offers more golf courses per capita than any other country in the world.

Golf tourists are defined as international visitors, aged 15 years and over, who play golf at least once while travelling in New Zealand.

As a priority Special Interest, Tourism New Zealand is focusing future marketing activity on attracting more International tourists to visit New Zealand to participate in golfing holidays.

**TRENDS IN GOLF TOURISM**

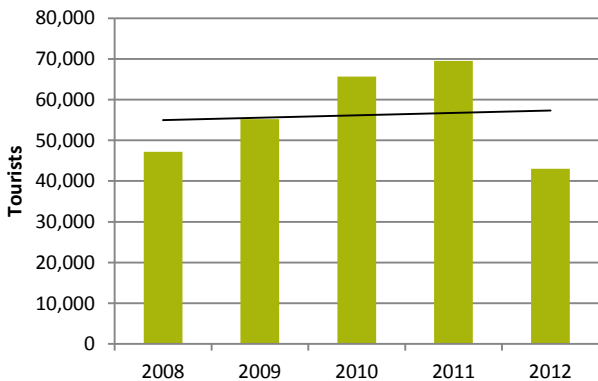
**How many tourists play golf?**

Over the last 5 year period, 280,000 golf tourists have visited New Zealand. Annually around 3% of International holiday visitors play golf while visiting New Zealand.

Markets that provide the most golf tourists include Australia, UK and USA. Despite a recent dip in numbers (shown in the graph below), the level of participation in golf by International visitors has been stable to increasing over time.

It is anticipated that participation rates will continue to grow and golf will be a significant attraction for future international visitors to New Zealand

Figure 1: International Tourists Playing Golf in NZ, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>

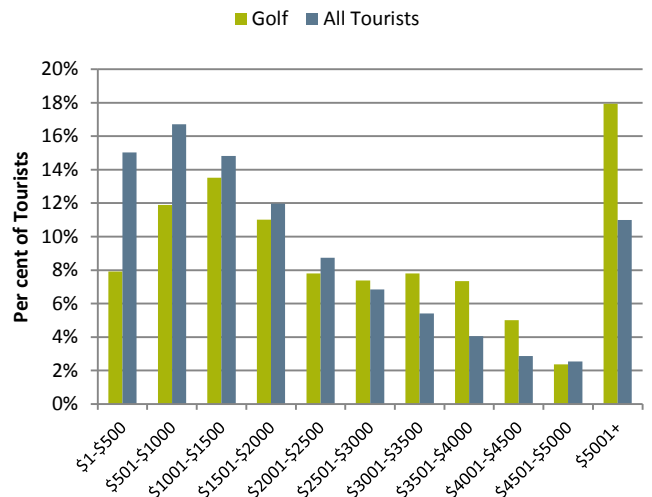


**How much do international golf tourists spend on their trip in New Zealand?**

Golf visitors spend more on their visit to New Zealand on average compared to a typical visitor.

On average international golf tourists spend \$3,300 compared to the \$2,500 average spend of all visitors. There is a significant high value segment in the golfing market with 17.9% of international golf tourists saying they spend over \$5,000 on their visit to New Zealand.

Figure 2: Expenditure, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



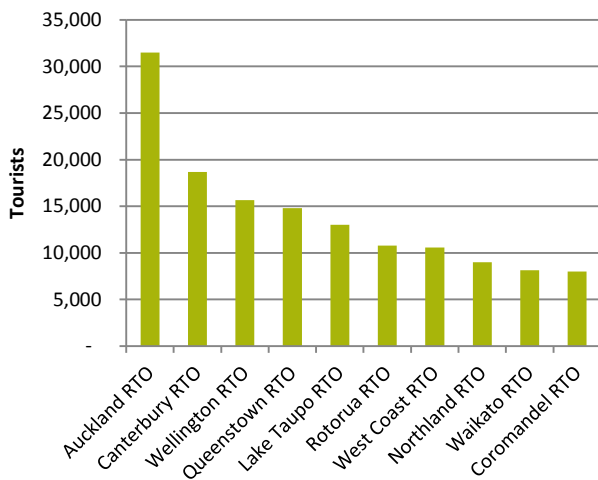
Chris McLennan

### Where do tourists play golf?

The Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) area with the most golf tourists are Auckland (31,500), Canterbury (19,000), Wellington (15,000), Queenstown (15,000) and Taupo (13,000).

Other popular RTOs popular with golf tourists include Rotorua (11,000), West Coast (10,500), Northland (9,000) and Waikato (8,000).

Figure 3: Where Golf Tourists Visit, 2008-12 <sup>\*\*</sup>



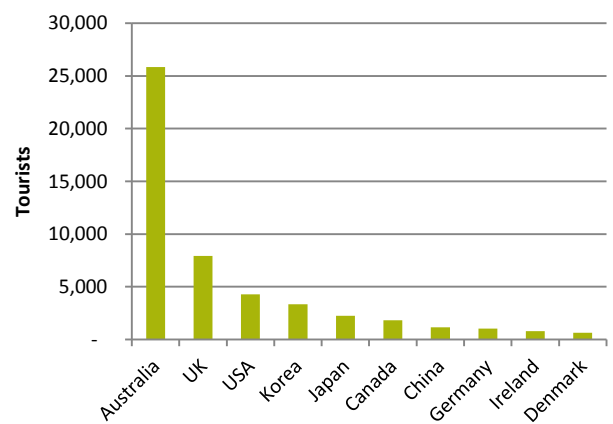
### CHARACTERISTICS OF GOLF TOURISTS

#### Where do golf tourists come from?

The international markets which provide the most golf tourists to New Zealand per year include Australia (26,000), UK (8,000) and USA (4,000).

Other important markets include Korea (3,500), Japan (2,200), Canada (1,800), China (1,100) and Germany (1,000).

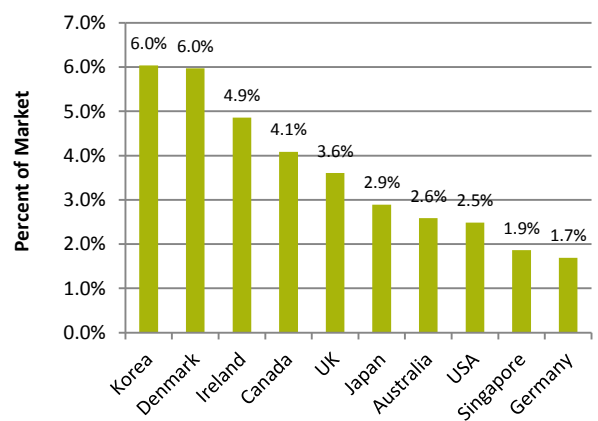
Figure 4: Where Golf Tourists Come From, 2008-12 <sup>\*\*</sup> (per annum)



As a proportion of the total market visitation, Korea (6% of all visitors played golf in New Zealand) shows the highest propensity to play golf while in New Zealand, followed by Denmark (6%), Ireland (4.9%), Canada (4.1%), UK (3.6%) and Japan (2.9%).

The top 10 markets with the highest propensity to play golf is rounded out by Australia (2.6%), USA (2.5%), Singapore (1.8%) and Germany (1.7%).

Figure 5: Propensity of International Golf Tourists by Market, 2008-12 <sup>\*\*</sup>



### What is the age profile of golf tourists?

The age profile of international golf visitors highlights a younger segment aged 15 to 24 (15.9%) and 25 to 34 (21.5%) and an older segment aged 45 to 54 (21.5%) and 55 to 64 (19.1%).

This is a male dominated sport with 73% of international golf tourists male to 27% female.

Figure 6: Age of International Golf Tourists, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>

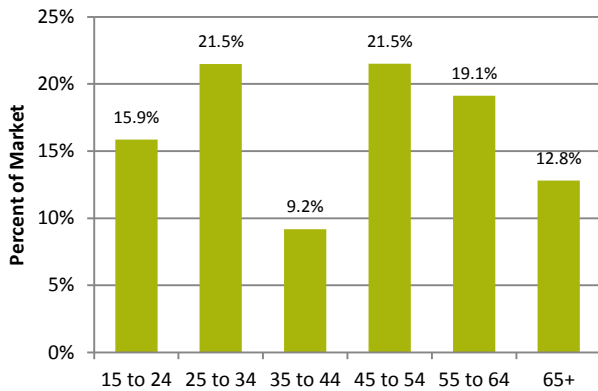
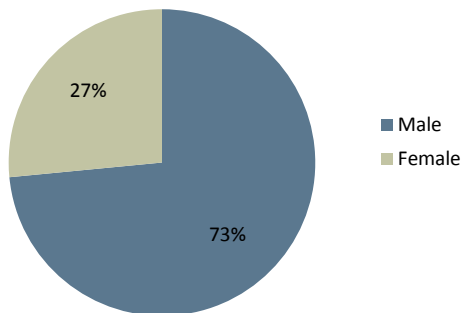


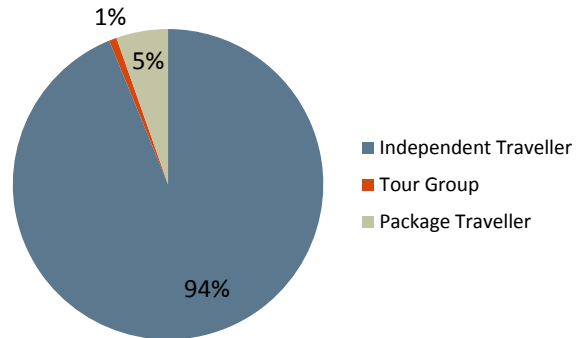
Figure 7: Gender, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



### What are the travel styles of international golf tourists?

International golf tourists are predominantly Independent Travellers (94%). Only 1% visit New Zealand in a Tour Group while 5% visit as part of a Package.

Figure 8: Travel Style, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



### What information do golf tourists seek before they arrive?

Golf visitors to newzealand.com are highly engaged within and beyond the golf content hub. Golf visitors spent on average 12 mins 43 sec on newzealand.com, well above the average. They spent on average 2 mins 11 sec in the golf hub of newzealand.com indicating peripheral content is very important. <sup>\*2</sup>

Golf visitors tend to have a lower bounce rate from their first page of visit than the typical visitor and view more pages on average on newzealand.com. <sup>\*2</sup>

There is also less seasonality than what we might see with other special interests. Golf visitors to newzealand.com tend to research year round. <sup>\*2</sup>

### What other content do golf visitors to newzealand.com view?

Popular peripheral content for golf visitors is an important part of their visit to newzealand.com. This content includes New Zealand destinations with high-end golf courses e.g. Auckland, Queenstown, Hawke’s Bay. Also they view Luxury features & listings, Food & wine content, Facts (currency, climate, hygiene content) and content related to Flora & fauna, geology & geography features.

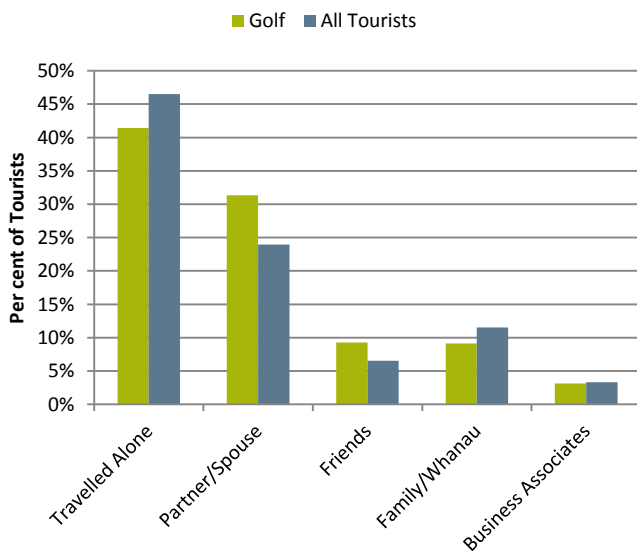
There is a strong tie-in with luxury and many golf visitors are searching for ‘iconic’ New Zealand locations, and golf-centric places, e.g. Queenstown, Napier, Cape Kidnappers, Rotorua, Coromandel, Akaroa.

### Who do golf tourists travel with?

International golf tourists are slightly less likely than the norm to travel alone, although 41% do travel by themselves. Just over 31% travel with a Partner or Spouse and this is higher than the norm for international visitors.

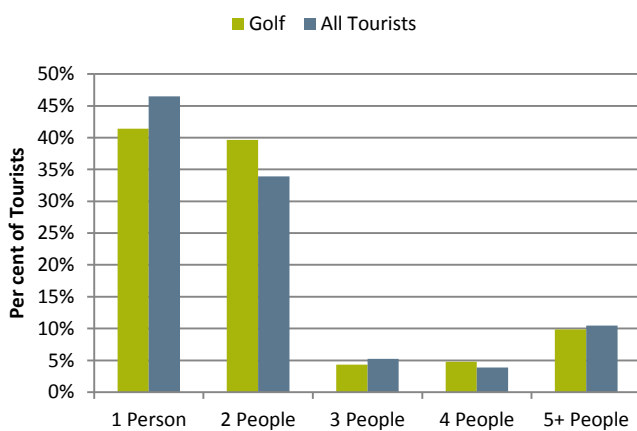
International golf tourists are more likely to be travelling with friends (9%), 9% travel with their family/whanau and 3% are travelling with business associates.

Figure 9: People Travelled With, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



40% of international golf tourists travelled in a pair, 4% travelled as three people, 5% travelled as a four (the perfect number for golf) and just over 10% travelled as a group of 5 or more.

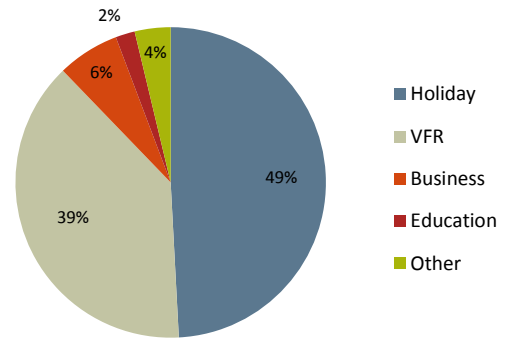
Figure 10: The Number of People Travelled With, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



### What are the main purposes of travel of golf tourists?

International golf tourists are predominantly holiday visitors (49%) although there is a significant VFR segment (39%). Only 6% of golf tourists are in New Zealand on business (as their main purpose of visit) and 2% are here for Education.

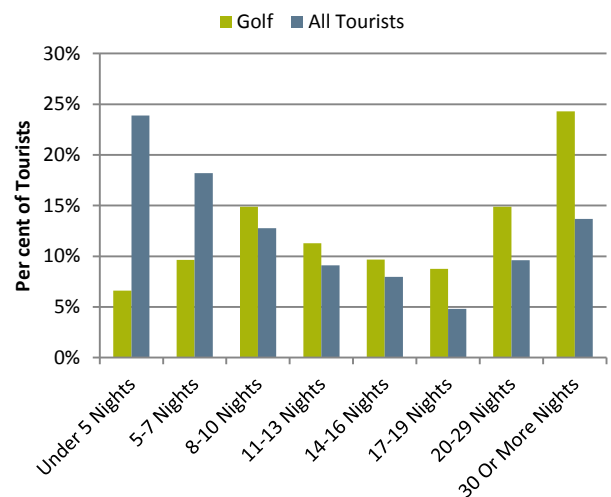
Figure 11: Purpose of Visit, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



### How long do international golf tourists stay in New Zealand?

International golf tourists tend to stay in New Zealand for longer periods of time than typical visitors. A quarter (24.3%) stayed in New Zealand for a month or more, 15% stayed for 20-29 nights and a further 30% combined stayed for more than 10 and less than 20 nights.

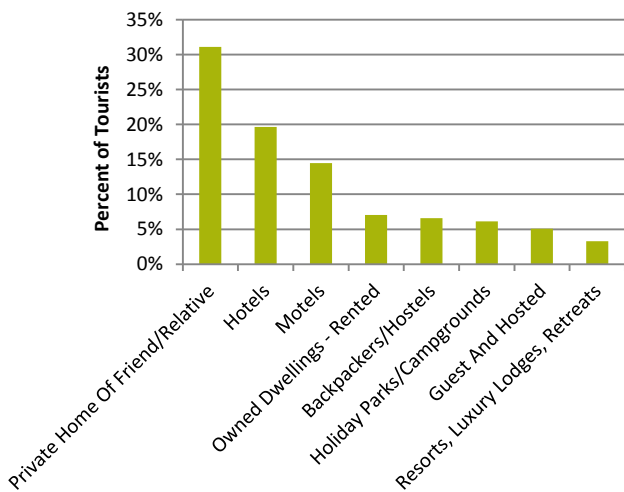
Figure 12: Length of Stay, 2008-12 <sup>\*1</sup>



### What accommodation types do international golf tourists use?

Because of the prevalence of the VFR segment, there is a high proportion of international golf visitors who stay at a private residence. The next most common accommodation type is Hotels (19.6% of golf visitors stay in a hotel), Motels (14.5%) and Rented accommodation (7.0%).

Figure 13: Accommodation Used, 2008-12 <sup>11</sup>

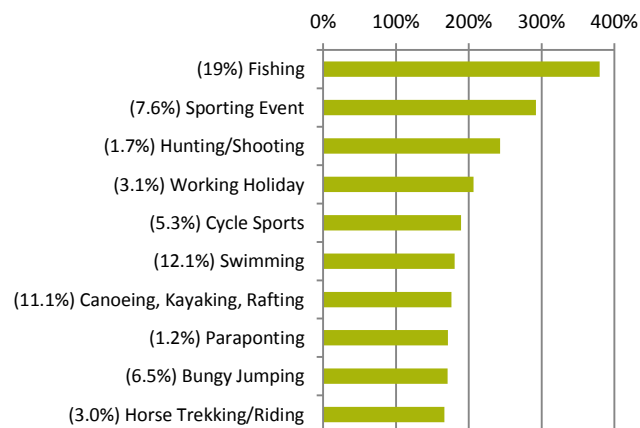


### What other activities do golf tourists do?

International golf visitors tend to participate in a wide range of activities especially due to their typically longer length of stay in New Zealand.

Top 10 activities that they tend to over index on (i.e. are more likely than the typical visitor to participate in) include Fishing, Sporting events, Hunting, Cycle Sports, Swimming, Canoeing or Kayaking, Paraponting, Bungy Jumping and Horse Riding. The breadth of activity highlights this as an active segment that enjoys outdoor activities.

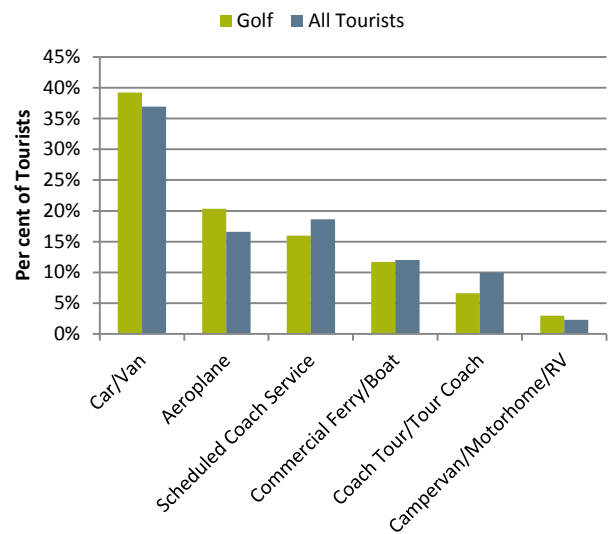
Figure 14: Top Ten Activities Golf Tourists Over Index On, 2008-12 <sup>11</sup>



### What transport do golf tourists use?

The most common transport options used by international golf tourists include Car/Van (39% used a Car or Van), aeroplane (20%), a scheduled coach service (16%) or a ferry (12%). 6.6% travelled on coach tour while 3% travelled in a Campervan or Motorhome.

Figure 15: Transport Used, 2008-12 <sup>11</sup>

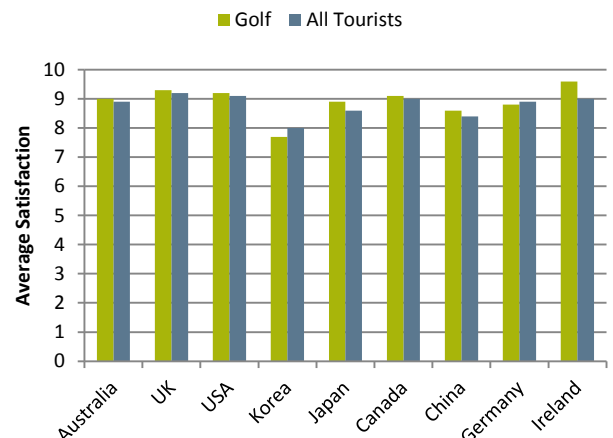


### How satisfied are international golf tourists?

New Zealand typically delivers a high satisfaction for international holiday tourists and this is no different for golf tourists.

Golf tourists tend to be slightly more satisfied with their visit to New Zealand than the average with Irish golf tourists the most satisfied (9.6 out of 10 for Overall Satisfaction) followed by UK golf tourists (9.3), USA golf tourists (9.2), Canada (9.1) and Australia (9.0). Other markets include Japan (8.9), Germany (8.8) and China (8.6).

Figure 16: Satisfaction of Golf Tourists, 2008-12 <sup>11</sup>





## SIZING THE OPPORTUNITY FOR GOLF TOURISM

### The Active Considerer

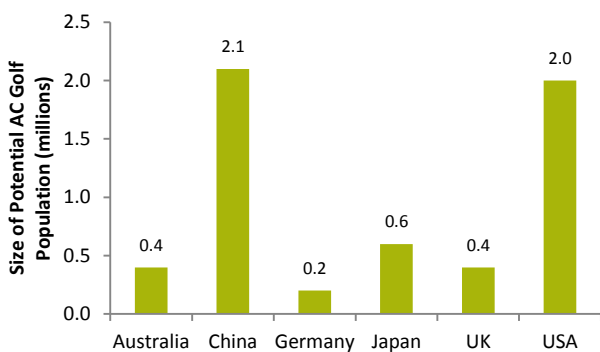
The Active Considerer is Tourism New Zealand’s global target audience. The Active Considerer is defined as aware of New Zealand, find New Zealand a highly appealing travel destination, seriously considering visiting New Zealand in future, have New Zealand as one of their preferred destinations for their next holiday and are willing to spend a certain amount on a trip to New Zealand.

It is with this audience that Tourism New Zealand has tested the appeal of Golf as a holiday type and the association of New Zealand as a destination for Golf.

### Size of the Potential Active Considerer-Golf Tourism Population

In terms of markets with the largest populations of Active Considerers who state they are personally interested in and would specifically travel for Golf, China (2.1 million ACs) and the USA (2 million) represent the largest potential markets, for Golf in New Zealand, followed by Japan (0.6m), UK (0.4 m), Australia (0.4 m) and Germany (0.2m).

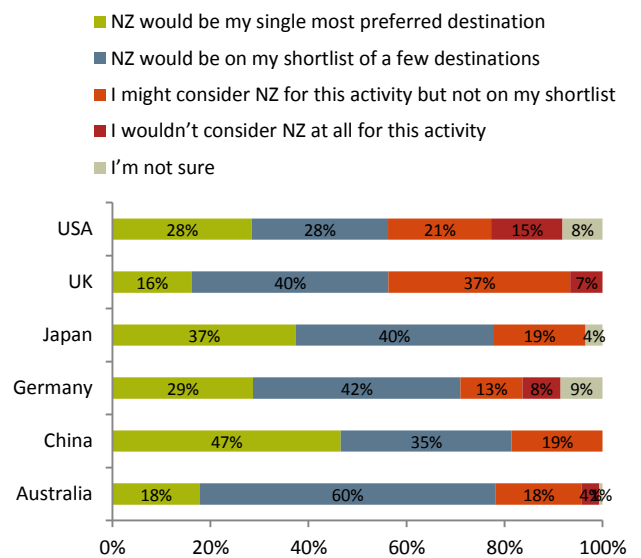
Figure 16: Estimated size of AC Population that are personally interested in and would specifically plan travel for Golf (m).<sup>3</sup>



## Consideration of New Zealand for a Golf Holiday

In China 81% of Active Considerers interested in Golf state that New Zealand would be their single most preferred or on their shortlist of a few destinations. This is followed by Australia and Japan (78%), Germany (71%) and the UK & USA (56%).

Figure 17: % of ACs interested in Golf who would consider travelling to NZ to participate in<sup>\*3</sup>



Produced by:

Insights Team  
Tourism New Zealand

[www.tourismnewzealand.com](http://www.tourismnewzealand.com)



#### DATA SOURCES

\*1 IVS: Statistics New Zealand - International Visitor Survey, Jan 2008 - Dec 2012

\*2 newzealand.com analytics via Adobe Site Catalyst

\*3 Tourism New Zealand – Active Considerer Monitor, Dec 2012 - Feb 2013