



Kylie's Takeaways from the Wellness Tourism Summit 2025

1. Overview

The [Wellness Tourism Summit](#) brought together global and national leaders to explore the future of wellness travel.

Key themes included consumer demand for wellness experiences, the rise of sleep tourism, regenerative tourism practices, and the role of emotional well-being and connection in travel. This event offered a chance to connect with industry peers through the Wellness Connect networking sessions, which provided valuable insights and a few new contacts for collaboration.

2. Consumer Insights

Market Size: Australia ranks 8th globally for wellness tourism, with \$29 billion AUD in spend.

- **Travellers:**
 - Primary: Wellness is the main reason for travel.
 - Secondary: Add wellness elements to leisure/business trips.
 - Insight: 83% of spend comes from secondary wellness travellers - a major opportunity for product development.
- **Consumer Motivations:**
 - Seek transformational experiences and emotional wellbeing.
 - Travel out of season, spend more, want to “give back.”
 - Growing demand for social wellness, gut health solutions, and biohacking experiences.
 - Sleep Tourism is rapidly growing (+35% Google searches).

3. Global Trends & Key Themes

Transformational Experiences

- Travel designed as a “hero’s journey” - deeply personal, curated experiences.
- Guests expect purpose-driven food, emotional wellbeing support, and dopamine dining.



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- Generational shift: Younger travellers seek mindful, family-inclusive wellness experiences.

Regenerative & Community Tourism

- Case Study: Hawai'i Malama Initiative – prioritises community needs, cultural restoration, and visitor education.
- Local sentiment seen as a critical KPI.
- Opportunity: embed ecological and cultural values into tourism experiences.

Sleep & Longevity Tourism

- Growing market (projected to \$113B globally).
- Hotels differentiating through: Sleep menus, scent/sound/lighting activations, wellness partnerships. Examples: Westin, Equinox Sleep Lab, Ovolo x The Body Shop collaboration.
- Potential competitive advantage for regional operators.

Architecture of Wellness

- Environments designed to encourage rest, social connection, and human flourishing.
- Integration of food, culture, and space into the tourism experience.
- Social spaces, bathing houses and design for purpose

AI & Personalisation

- Use of AI for personalisation: packing lists, itineraries, dynamic pricing (+10–15% RevPAR).
- Balance tech with human touch to preserve emotional connection.

Mental Health & Resilience



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- Wellness travellers are seeking experiences that support emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Key insight: be confident to open the door, but resilient to push through challenges - highlighting the importance of personal growth, confidence, and coping skills
- transformative travel experiences
- Wellness offerings can focus on tools for resilience, stress management, and mental health support, integrated into experiences like retreats, workshops, and guided activities.

4. Opportunities for Destination Sydney Surrounds South

- Product Development: Support operators to embed wellness elements - sleep optimisation, culinary wellness, emotional wellbeing workshops.
- Seasonality: Promote off-peak visitation with wellness experiences (retreats, forest bathing, farm-to-table events).
- Partnerships: Collaborate with wellness brands, local producers, and regenerative tourism initiatives.
- Storytelling: Highlight local wellness assets - natural landscapes, Indigenous cultural connections, slow food producers.
- AI & Data: Explore personalisation and automation tools for itineraries and experience curation.
- Education & Industry Capability: Deliver operator workshops on wellness trends, pricing strategies, and regenerative tourism practices.
- Mental Health & Resilience Programs: Develop experiences that support emotional wellbeing, personal growth, and resilience... e.g., mindfulness workshops, guided nature experiences, and wellness retreats.

5. Personal & Professional Takeaways

This summit reinforced the growing importance of emotional wellbeing, purpose-driven travel, and human connection in shaping tourism experiences.

The insights and case studies shared provide a strong foundation for developing wellness-focused initiatives in our region that deliver economic impact while nurturing community and cultural wellbeing.



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I would highly recommend adding this summit to your calendar of events, both for yourselves and for industry colleagues. I walked away feeling completely inspired, rejuvenated and with a significant boost to my own wellbeing...especially after experiencing the ice bath!

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