From the classic Sydney sights, shopping and dining to award-winning parks, cultural institutions, and learning and business opportunities, there are many reasons people come to Sydney.

Another great drawcard is the range of events held throughout the year, from world-renowned, big-ticket items to community festivals. With many of these events held in our local area, plenty of visitors enhance their experience by having a drink and a meal and exploring the area and its shops, benefitting local business owners.

We want small business owners to maximise business opportunities during the event season. That’s why we’ve created this guide. You’ll find a calendar of annual major events, attendance numbers, facts and figures about Sydney’s visitor industry, and profiles of small business operators who have benefitted from the increased footfall.

With so many great events in our city each year and a booming visitor economy, there’s plenty of opportunity to attract new customers and make their visit even more memorable.

Sydney is one of the world’s most beautiful cities and a must-visit destination for millions of people each year.

Did you know?
Each weekday, 1.2 million people live, work, study, shop and visit in the local area, with more than half of these day-trippers. Our visitor and international student markets are booming; with numbers predicted to steadily increase.

**Visitors**

**How many people visit metro Sydney?**

50% of all international visitors to Australia

44% of international business visitors to Australia

A total of 6.4 million visitors stayed overnight in our local area (June 2015 – June 2016)

- 2.3 million international visitors
- 4.1 million domestic visitors

$8 billion is spent annually in our local area by overnight visitors

**International students**

In 2016 nearly 500,000 international students came to Australia, with more than 30% visiting Sydney

Between June 2015 and June 2016, international students each spent on average $19,570, compared to $5,265 by other international visitors

**Cruise ships**

In 2015/16, 308 cruise ships docked in Sydney Harbour, bringing $1.67 billion to the local economy

In 2016/17, 336 cruise ships will dock (peak season from October to April) bringing about 1.5 million passengers

**What’s On**

List your event on the City of Sydney What’s On website

Free

What’s On is one of Sydney’s most trusted events platforms, with more than 2 million visits a year and over 37,000+ subscribers to the weekly e-newsletter.

We also run specific marketing campaigns for City of Sydney-produced events such as Sydney Chinese New Year and Sydney Christmas. Getting involved during these international events may benefit your business through this extra promotion.

www.whatson.sydney

Major events in Sydney

How to maximise business opportunities

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www.whatson.sydney

All images are the property of City of Sydney unless otherwise specified.

Sources:
1. City of Sydney estimates of daily users, derived from City of Sydney Floorspace and Employment Census Survey (FES)
2. Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey (various years); Tourism Research Australia, Tourism Forecasts 2016
3. Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey (Year ended June 2016)
4. Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey (IVS), and National Visitor Survey (NVS) (Year ended June 2016)
5. Estimated by City of Sydney from Tourism Research Australia, IVS and NVS (Year ended June 2016)
6. Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor Survey (Year ended June 2016)
7. Tourism Research Australia, International Visitor survey (Year ended June 2016)
9. Port Authority of NSW Cruise Schedule

The information and figures are correct at the time of printing (April 2017).
Trading later
If you're keen to stay open later during an event, plan ahead and find out your options by contacting one of the City of Sydney's Duty Planners on 02 9265 9333 or drop by your local Neighborhood Service Centre. Visit cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/council for location details.

Stay in the know
Sign up to the City Business e-newsletter at cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/business to stay up-to-date on opportunities, events and business resources.

Why take part?
It's a great opportunity to introduce your business to a brand new audience. Sydney's established annual events enjoy a large and loyal following. Imagine who you could attract during Sydney Festival, Sydney Chinese New Year, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival, Sydney Writers' Festival, Sydney Film Festival, Vivid Sydney, Sydney Christmas and Sydney New Year's Eve. Local festivals are another great chance to reach new customers. Festivals in Newtown, Glebe, Surry Hills, Paddington and Chippendale are just a few of the local events your business could benefit from.

Not in the heart of the action?
Don’t miss out if your business is outside the event location—get creative and tie into the theme. For example, Sydney Writers’ Festival is held in May each year. Why not create a cocktail or dish in honour of your favourite writer or host book readings in your retail space? You could team up with your local bookstore and cross promote your event.

Free event promotion
Take advantage of the City of Sydney’s free events platform, What's On, to promote your events to tens of thousands of people. Sign up to the weekly e-newsletter at www.whatson.sydney

Local businesses getting involved

Sydney Chinese New Year
Robin Gibson Gallery
Since 2007, Robin Gibson Gallery in Darlinghurst has taken part in Sydney Chinese New Year, now the biggest celebration outside of Asia. Each year, staff at the gallery tailor a four week exhibition around the specific New Year zodiac animal, a simple yet effective way of getting involved.

Zensation Tea House
Zensation Tea House in Redfern has been involved since 2009. It hosts Chinese tea tastings with matching food, calligraphy demonstrations and traditional musical performances. Through offering an associated event as part of the festival, both these businesses have increased their exposure, attracted new customers and converted many into return clients.

Benefits of being involved in Sydney Chinese New Year can include promotion of your business through marketing channels such as:
• The festival’s printed event program
  – 50,000 copies printed
• City of Sydney What’s On website
  – a free event marketing platform, with 2 million page visits a year
• City of Sydney What’s On weekly e-newsletter
  – sent to 37,000+ subscribers
• City of Sydney social media channels
  – close to 500,000 followers across Facebook, Instagram and Twitter

Vivid Sydney
Vivid Sydney is a 23-day festival of light, music and ideas. From May 28 to June 17, 2017, the event will transform the Harbour City into a colourful creative canvas. Visitor numbers have increased year-on-year, with a record 2.3 million people attending in 2016, making it the largest event of its kind in the world.

How retailers attract visitors during the event:
• An ice cream retailer created a Vivid Sydney flavour and hosted a ‘design-a-flavour’ competition, selling more ice cream during Vivid than over the summer holidays.
• A clothing retailer installed an inexpensive lighting display in their window, increasing brand identity and sales.
• A bike shop owner installed an exercise bike with a lighting effect that lit up more brightly the harder you rode. They capitalised on customer interest by handing out discount vouchers for the bike hire business.
• Many bar operators created Vivid cocktails, meal deals and early-bird offers.

What to do next
Here are some tips to promote your associated event:
• Create a free event listing on the City of Sydney’s What’s On website
• Create an event on your business Facebook page and communicate it across all your social media channels
• Check the event organiser’s website for any collateral you can print and display in-store
• Find out if the event organiser has an e-newsletter, social media platform/s or webpage where you can list your event
• Let your customers know about your event at point-of-sale
• Consider a letterbox drop to alert locals of your event
• If you’re co-hosting an event with another business, coordinate your marketing efforts to reach an even wider audience.

Spread the Word
Destination NSW