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The premium luxury travel market is booming with spending in luxury lodges up 19 per cent in the last year and those running tour companies and serving private jets reporting a record summer.

The ultra-high net worth travel market is growing at a faster rate than other tourism and is a key target of Tourism New Zealand's marketing around the world.

Visitors are being lured by experiences that can't be Googled and Tourism NZ has rolled out All Blacks to attract the wealthy and one operator says acting out scenes from *The Lord of the Rings* - in full costume - is popular with some visitors.

Tourism NZ's manager business events and premium, Lisa Gardiner, said global travel and the tourism industry is forecast to grow at an average of 4.8 per cent a year between 2015 and 2025.

However, the Tourism Economics survey says luxury travel is expected to grow at average of 6.2 per cent year - almost a third greater than travel overall.

"We're seeing general trends towards high-net-wealth individuals wanting to spend their money and their time on experience and travel. We're seeing that push for people to want to invest in amazing experiences rather than handbags," she said.

While the country's luxury lodge network don't disclose dollar figures the mega rich can spend tens of thousands of dollars a night on accommodation depending how many people are in their party.

"Premium travellers can spend more in one day than a traditional tourist would spend over their entire visit, so they are an incredibly important tourism market," said Gardiner.

The 19 per cent increase spent on premium accommodation came from the 29 members of Luxury Lodges of New Zealand.

"It's especially good to see that spend over the winter season grew 15 per cent on the same period last year," said Gardiner.

Last month former New Zealand first five Andrew Mehrtens spoke to an audience of premium travellers in Singapore about New Zealand's culture, attractions and luxury offering.

Tourism New Zealand and luxury travel agency Lightfoot Travel, who represent affluent travellers in Asia's key cities of Hong Kong and Singapore, hosted the event.

The 70-test All Black spoke about how New Zealand's calendar of high profile sporting events that could be incorporated into a premium travel itinerary.

Chasing the premium market became a priority three years ago and Gardiner said Tourism New Zealand was focused on Australia, Europe, the United States, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The US luxury market was performing "very well" helped by a 30 per cent increase in capacity across the Pacific. "They are interested in those 'only money can buy' type of experiences - utter exclusivity."

This could be a helicopter trip to a remote coast to catch seafood and cook it on a beach, going to high end golf courses or on cycling tours where they enjoy wine and food.

Gardiner said there were times when there was pressure on accommodation but at least four new luxury lodges had helped and her organisation was promoting low-season travel extensively.

Seasonz Travel designs bespoke tours for the ultra-rich including billionaires.

Director Matt Lines said business was booming for those who could spend between \$30,000 to \$50,000 a day in some cases.

"Our business is great at the moment, air capacity has certainly helped but many of our clients fly here privately."

The company's primary market was North America which had been traditionally strong but it did get nuggets of gold from the Middle East, Europe and Asia which was growing.

His firm runs tours for between 200 and 300 parties a year, many of them families.

The company works with Weta Workshop and had flown some of their prosthetics experts down to Queenstown to dress a family up as orcs and dwarfs to act out Lord of the Rings scenes.

Other clients loved fishing and diving - using a chopper to get to the coast.

"It's a Kiwi experience but with a luxury mode of transport. No matter if someone is worth billions a lot of the motivation is to do the simple things that Kiwis do."

The mega-rich also liked the relative anonymity here.

"Having a coffee in a cafe, fly fishing in a braided river with no-one here for miles is their idea of luxury. We have business people who have definite profile overseas and couldn't walk down the street in Manhattan or Beijing but here they are nobody and they love that mental break."

Select NZ also runs tours for the megarich and its business development manager Guy King said the company had had its best season ever.

However, he was worried at the high volume of visitors.

"We are in danger of all our visitors destroying the things they come here to see."

Some clients had bad experiences with overpriced hotels and poor service.

King said discouragement of tipping worked against improved service. Poor pay in the hospitality sector meant staff were transient and often unmotivated and service wasn't celebrated here.

"The Americans do want to tip for very good service."

Air Center One services private jets in Auckland and Queenstown and its chief executive Robin Leach said the past summer was the best season ever.

Numbers of private planes - including \$90m Gulfstream G650s which can fly direct from deep within the United States or China - were up by 14 per cent on last summer.

Between December and March there were 70 private aircraft movements in Queenstown. There was pressure on infrastructure and jets had been "squeezed in like sardines" on the runway ramp at the resort town.

"If you haven't made money this summer you'll never make it," said Leach.

He said though there were signs of a peak and that there was resistance by the rich to high accommodation and other costs.