



Venture Timaru

DISTRICT - ECONOMIC & TOURISM AGENCY

Kia ora

Happy New Year and welcome to our January News update.



- **Timaru District shows economic resilience amid national downturn**
- **Major events help boost our economy**
- **Super Rugby returns to Timaru**
- **Timaru tennis event scoops international award**
- **Multiple cruise ships due over the next 2 weeks**
- **Huge draw to social media posts**

Timaru District Shows Economic Resilience Amid National Downturn

While New Zealand's economy has contracted sharply in the year to March 2025, Timaru District outperformed the national trend, demonstrating resilience in the face of challenging conditions.

Last week, Infometrics released its Annual Economic Report for the year ended 31 March 2025, which details the performance of our economy.

GDP fell just 0.3% locally compared with a 0.9% national decline, supported by strong growth in primary and goods-producing industries, which delivered \$15.7 million in GDP gains. Timaru District's diversified economic base helped offset downturns in construction and manufacturing and positioned Timaru as one of the more resilient regional economies.

Productivity was a standout success. Timaru businesses lifted productivity by 1.1% more than three times the national rate, outperforming national productivity in agriculture, manufacturing and construction. Business confidence also strengthened, with new business growth ahead of the national average, signalling adaptability and momentum despite wider economic pressures.

Housing affordability remains a significant competitive advantage. House prices are substantially lower than the national median, and mortgage servicing costs consume a smaller share of household income, supporting workforce attraction and business growth. Together, these factors place Timaru District in a strong position as it enters 2026, with solid foundations for sustainable growth.

[View the Regional Economic Profile for Timaru District](#)



Major events help boost our economy

Events are major drawcards for visitors to our region, and we're thrilled to have been able to support the two events below through the Major Events Support Fund.

The events add vibrancy to our district, but equally important is the flow on economic benefit that occurs. Whenever possible, we carry out an analysis after a major event of economic impact to gain insights about the benefit of holding the event in the region.

The impact varies depending on the event, the attendees it attracts and the length of stay per visitor.

As an indication of the impact, reports undertaken in the last 18 months show that spending for visitors has ranged from \$350 - \$405 per day, depending on the event. The spending is on a range of things, from accommodation to dining out, retail and fuel.

With hundreds to thousands of attendees coming to our events, these figures quickly add up, hence the economic benefit to our businesses.

Venture Timaru administers the Major Events Support Fund for the Timaru District Council.



Super Rugby returns to Timaru

There's less than 10 days to go until the Crusaders and Highlanders head to Timaru for a special pre-season showdown on Friday 30 January at Fraser Park.

This exciting match will kick off the Super Rugby season and gives locals the chance to see two top teams in action right here in our district.

If you haven't already purchased tickets, there's still time, but you'll need to be quick as the event is close to selling out. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster via the link below.

Venture Timaru has supported the event through the Major Events Support Fund, which we administer for the Timaru District Council.

[Purchase tickets](#)



Timaru tennis event scoops international award

Outstanding news for Timaru District and provincial New Zealand this month, with news that our World Tennis Tour Timaru has received a prestigious [International Tennis Federation](#) award, putting Timaru firmly on the global tennis map.

This recognition is a testament to what can be achieved when a community comes together with passion, purpose and a “can-do” attitude.

Our heartfelt congratulations go to [Tennis NZ](#) and [Tennis South Canterbury](#), tournament organisers, volunteers, sponsors and the wider community — your dedication has driven this event from an idea into a world-class experience.

Read more about this achievement [here](#).

This year’s event runs from 9 - 15 March. Tickets are for finals weekend are on <https://tennis.kiwi/timaru/>

Venture Timaru supports this event through Major Events Support Fund.

Purchase tickets



Multiple cruise ships due over next 2 weeks

Expect a solid run of cruise ships coming over the next couple of weeks, as we look forward to welcoming five ships from 22 Jan – 5 Feb.

Among those arriving is The World – an exclusive ship where the passengers live on board and simply travel the world. Its capacity is 200 passengers and it arrives on 22 Jan at 9am, leaving at 11pm the same night bound for Dunedin. The ship has requested that shuttles returning for passengers from the CBD run until 10pm so we expect that they will be taking the chance to dine out while here.

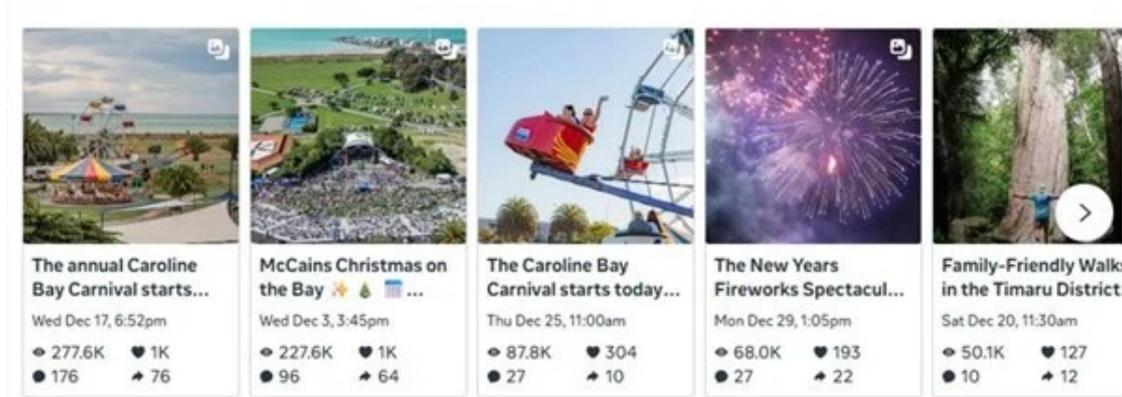
On Wednesday, 28 January, Scenic Eclipse 2 arrives and will be the first cruise ship to stop at PrimePort and stay overnight to take on fuel and supplies, plus there will be a changeover of passengers for the first time. As a result, on 29 January, Scenic Eclipse will still be in port when Seabourn Quest returns. The two ships are both due to leave around 6pm.

Feedback from our community this season continues to be very enthusiastic about our cruise visitors. The retail sector enjoys a boost in spending, and locals simply enjoy seeing and chatting to the international visitors wandering in our CBD and through the Bay.

[View the cruise schedule](#)

Huge draw to social media posts

We've clocked up some impressive stats during December on our welovetimaru social channels. Take a look at these top posts for the month – notably the Caroline Bay Carnival having over 200,000 views and 1000 likes. If you're not following us already, please do!



Ngā mihi nui, hope to see you at an event in the district over coming weeks.

Nigel Davenport

Kaiwhakahaere Matua / Chief Executive



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