

# Inside Nigel Coventry Tourism

PO Box 100, Taumarunui, New Zealand.

Tel/Fax 64-7-8957-737.

nigel@insidetourism.com

www.insidetourism.com

Subscription rates on application.

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## Rotorua steams ahead

IS this Rotorua's year? With more than \$140 million being invested in new product and accommodation, operators are confident they will successfully raise their image as a quality destination attracting droves of TNZ's international travellers.

Agrodome MD Warren Harford has written in the local paper: "Let's set a new goal. Let's aim to be more focused, strategic and hungry to succeed with our objectives - and lay claim to a 50 percent share of total international arrivals by the year 2010. What would a share of \$11,000 million do for our city - New Zealand's number one visitor destination?"

He believes this can be achieved, although Rotorua's share of total international arrivals is now only about 27 percent.

A major impediment is a lack of direct trans Tasman air services, apart from the occasional charter. But airport owner Rotorua District Council is determined to lengthen the runway in readiness. And a new terminal building is due to open.

Unfortunately Finance Minister Michael Cullen now says new international airports will have to meet the full cost of government services.

The Rotorua industry says this is unfair because government is fully funding such services at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch airports and partly funding them at Hamilton, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Queenstown. Rotorua was not even consulted.

## Industry well placed to tackle challenges

TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs says the industry is well placed to face any challenges that may come through our rapid growth.

**"We are now going into another strong summer season, we have a supportive government, and the industry continues to provide a higher quality range of places to stay and ways to get around."**

She adds: **"The partnerships we have developed with central government will help us address issues generated from rapid growth."**

**"Ms Luhrs says TIANZ will also work to strengthen our relationships with local government, and to grow the level of research and development in the industry."**

## Record expenditure

OVERSEAS visitors spent a record \$6,600 million in New Zealand the year to September - six percent more than last year.

Latest IVS figures show that Australians spent \$1,400 million, up 23 percent in the year to June. Spending by UK and Japanese visitors increased seven percent and three percent respectively.

## Invercargill left in lurch?

GOVERNMENT proposes that border control services at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch international airports remain state-funded while regional airports at Hamilton, Palmerston North, Dunedin and Queenstown should pay between \$26 and \$121 per passenger. But Invercargill could be charged up to \$300 per passenger.

## More Aussies may come after tsunami

**WE could find more Australians and others coming here on holiday following the tsunami in the Indian Ocean, says TNZ CEO George Hickton.**

## Operators busy despite poor weather

THE season so far has been busy for operators, despite the fact that the weather has been less than favourable, says TNZ CEO George Hickton.

## Lynx facing axe?

**THE Interisland Line is not commenting on media reports that the company's fast ferry, *The Lynx*, faces the axe.**

## Trampers asked for track "tax"

USERS of the Queen Charlotte Track in the Marlborough Sounds, from January 1 were asked to contribute to a new environment protection fund designed to ensure the walk can grow sustainably. Adults are asked to give \$2 and children \$1. The fund will initially be used to pay for a \$5,000 toilet near Furneaux Lodge.

## Beaches closed

**DUNEDIN'S main swimming beaches have again been closed because of high bacterial levels.**

## **YHA packages Mount Cook**

YHA has arranged special deals for guests staying at its Mount Cook property enabling them to see our highest peaks - and Australasia's only accessible icebergs. Packages combine a boat trip or scenic flight with Mount Cook YHA accommodation.

## **Ski areas reinvest after good season**

**TREBLE** Cone ski area has just had its best season in its 37 years of operation. Developments costing \$4 million are planned and include a quad chair to be installed in Saddle Basin.

## **Beaut, but boring, say Poms**

NEW Zealand may be the world's most beautiful country - but it's not the top place to live, says a new English survey.

## **CAA investigates crash**

A paragliding company whose pilot crashed into an Akaroa building, seriously injuring his teenage passenger, is being investigated by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA).

## **Coach ban on Mount Eden year away?**

IT will be another year before it'll finally be decided what's to happen to coach passengers who want to enjoy Mount Eden's unparalleled views over Auckland.

## **Demanding job**

**ONE** of the most demanding construction jobs to have taken place in Auckland city - or below it! That was the construction of Stingray Bay at Kelly Tarlton's Antarctic encounter and Underwater World, Auckland.

## **Tourism blamed for rising land costs**

THE predicted growth in ecotourism is being blamed for the skyrocketing cost of land on Stewart Island.

## **Cat founders, but Fullers still busy**

**CRUISES** run by Fullers Northland are operating fully again, after *Tiger III* was lost off Cape Brett on December 18. CEO Kit Nixon says the company has obtained *Tiger V*, a 22-m state of the art vessel registered only on November 29.

## **Praise for Taranaki's Maori product**

THERE are excellent Maori tourism experiences in Taranaki that would surprise even locals, believes Maori Tourism Taranaki marketing manager Steve Sole.

## **Queenstown quieter**

**INTERNATIONAL** visitor numbers are slightly up on last year in Queenstown but the number of domestic tourist number has fallen because large numbers of New Zealanders have been heading overseas.

## **DoC policing track abuses**

DOC has employed a warden on popular South Island tracks to help crack down on illegal tour operators. Too many day walkers were being booked on the Milford Track without permission and the overcrowding is ruining the experience for everyone, says DoC spokesman Martin Rodd.

## **Lodge for Kaikoura**

**A** multi-million dollar tourist lodge is to be built on Kaikoura's seafront, at 154 Beach Road. It will open in October.

## **Six new World Heritage sites?**

SIX new sites around New Zealand have been suggested as possible World Heritage sites, according to Conservation Minister Chris Carter.

## **Tourism Online in Fast 500 - again**

**NEW** Zealand Tourism Online - [www.tourism.net.nz](http://www.tourism.net.nz) - made the list for the Deloitte Asia Pacific Technology Fast 500 for the second year running and ranked 85th against companies from countries like Australia, China, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

## **Motel one jump ahead**

THE Lake Motel, Taupo, is the 1,000th property to apply for Qualmark star grading. Owner Manish Vara and Qualmark CEO Geoff Penrose celebrated by taking a jump with Taupo Tandem Skydive - from 12,000ft (4,000m).

## **Half millionth visitor**

**HANMER** Springs Thermal Reserve welcomed its 500,000th visitor of the year on December 29 by giving Marc and Karla Williams, and their extended family and friends a prize pack to celebrate their visit.

## **Where wishes go unfulfilled...**

FEW New Zealanders seem to get to do what they really want, according to the first New Zealand Pleasure Survey by online gift voucher service RedBalloon Days.

## **New director for ATTTO**

**TWO** new directors have been appointed to the ATTTO board. They are Travel Training Council chairman James Langton and Tourism Training Council chairman Bryan Hughes.

## **Milford cruise company to appeal**

**CRUISING** Milford Sound says it will fight an Environment Southland ruling refusing it consent to operate a second launch in Milford Sound.

## **Holidaying with family and friends**

**TOGETHERING** - travelling with family and friends - is a big new trend, according to Jasons.