

TRENZ now more than a trade show

TRENZ this year is more than a trade show. It's a business meeting - the largest ever held in New Zealand, according to TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs.

A record 33,000 15 minute

Alexander warns (again) of lean times

IS the industry about to go into a lean period?

BNZ chief economist Tony Alexander says that over the April quarter the seasonally adjusted change in visitor arrivals was +0.4 percent - "which is a very low rate of growth."

He adds: "The data supports the view that visitor number growth is essentially flattening out. Taken in conjunction with evidence of falling average number of days stayed in NZ and some exchange-rate related easing in spending levels the tourism sector looks like it will be going through a lean time - after the Lions tour is out of the way."

*** This is the third time Mr Alexander has warned of a possible slowing in growth.**

sessions have already been scheduled between operators and buyers in advance of the event, which is in Christchurch from June 13-16.

"This year we are also getting those outside tourism to come to understand not only how big TRENZ is but how important tourism is to the country," Ms Luhrs adds.

This is being done through VIP programmes for 20 DoC managers and more than 30 local authority mayors, councillors and staff.

Partners

"The reason many of our overseas visitors come to New Zealand is for our natural environment. Most of that is on public conservation lands so tourism and DoC have to be real partners," she adds.

"A lot of DoC people have not been exposed to tourism at this level. So we are bringing managers from throughout the country and giving them a special programme on the Wednesday. We will provide them with a brief overview and the key facts which a lot will not be aware of in terms of the size and scope of industry. We will then give them a

guided tour of the booths so they can see how operators present their products, quite a lot of which takes place on DoC land. They will also learn how TNZ is positioning New Zealand as a destination with its 100%Pure campaign and how this all fits in with what they do."

Local authority representatives will also be "brought up to speed" on the size and importance of tourism to the nation and their community.

* DoC manager concessions and tourism Andy Thompson will brief media delegates on his department's role and its relationship with the industry.

There will also be a media session on cultural tourism, to be led by Nelson Bays Arts Marketing Trust CEO Martin Rodgers.

Increasingly important

Ms Luhrs says TRENZ is increasingly important to the industry.

"Some operators say that around 75 percent of their international business comes from contacts made at TRENZ. This indicates that around \$2,000 million potential revenue is generated over the four days. The statistics are staggering."

Using the most modern event management and booking system, the event is based around three days of meetings between 450 New Zealand companies and 400 international professionals.

All leading agencies attend including the Ministry of Tourism, TNZ and the Maori Tourism Council.

Pages Past

TEN years ago in *IT*...

TOURISM is a major threat to conservation lands, Forest and Bird says in a submission to DoC. Conservation director Kevin Smith says: "This is because of the predicted rise in their usage with the surge in international arrivals over the next five years and beyond and the associated pressures for increased facility development and commercial recreation."

TOURISTS are a bigger menace to New Zealand than rats and possums combined. They are a form of global rodent, gnawing away at the last patches of unspoilt land. Jobs in the industry are for lackeys "grovelling for money in resorts where, as often as not, the lackeys can no longer afford to live. Patriotic New Zealanders should discourage the tourism invasion by being relentlessly rude to tourists." So wrote a Dave Witherrow. In quoting the letter to a newspaper Tourism Dunedin says that happily the writer is a minority. "Study after study tell us that Dunedin people have a high regard for tourism."

FOR a week in September Christchurch will be out of beds and buses. And probably beer too!

The Golden Oldies Rugby Festival attracts 6,300 players aged 35 to 85 from 23 countries. Some 50 teams have been turned away. But so many are coming when delegates set off for a taste of country life at the Mount Hutt Festival, there will be 156 buses stretching 11km along the road.

TOURISM Minister John Banks has confirmed it. Our public toilets are inadequate and far from visitor friendly. Releasing a government report on the problem Mr Banks says there are not enough quality toilets.

ITOC and TAAZ have saved members thousands of dollars by getting the ACC levy down from \$1.17 to \$1.10 per \$100 earnings.

A major international conference in Auckland is to examine how heritage meets the needs and aspirations of host cultures, guests and industry.

Southern Lakes to have highest profile?

SOUTHERN Lakes area at TRENZ incorporates 55 booths, the largest single area at the exhibition!

Exhibitors include adventure tourism operators, luxury lodges and hotels, vineyards, ski areas, flightseeing operators and tourist attractions, reflecting the diversity of all the region has to offer.

Southern Lakes chairman Jon Davies says: "Agents and wholesalers will be able to experience first hand a little of the unique atmosphere that makes the Southern Lakes such an appealing destination."

Ave case still open - 10 years on

POLICE files on former PATA chairman Joop Ave remain open, it was confirmed to *IT* this week.

A spokesman said an investigation into claims Mr Ave made sexual advances to a male employee of the Carlton Hotel, Auckland, on April 24, 1995, has not reached a conclusion. "As far as can be ascertained Mr Ave has not been back into New Zealand since. You may be aware that at the time Mr Ave left the country before police could interview him. Should he return to New Zealand police would interview Mr Ave. The matter is not being investigated overseas."

Mr Ave, then 61, flew out of Auckland in a private jet shortly after the hotel rang police. Mr Ave is said to have attacked the employee after calling him to his room. At the time, the Indonesian Embassy said Mr Ave "had been called by the president on very urgent business."

PM Jim Bolger called for a report into the incident. But this has never been made public. (*IT*62 and *IT*542)

Emirates announces new Chch service

EMIRATES this week announced a new daily connection between Christchurch and Sydney, starting on July 16.

The link will operate as an extension of the carrier's Sydney-Dubai daily non-stop service and replace its Christchurch-Melbourne-Dubai routing, which will instead operate Auckland-Melbourne-Dubai from the same date.

Centennial Park gets \$2M blessing

TAUPO District Council has voted 10-2 to go ahead with plans to put \$2 million towards the proposed \$12.8 million Centennial Park motor racing circuit.

Drinkers not so cheerful

DRINKERS found it harder to say "cheers" from Wednesday when the price of what's in their glass was given another hike with what the Hospitality Association says was a price increase that didn't need to happen. The increase is triggered by CPI movements and the government has the option on whether or not to pass the increases on to the consumer.

*By Jasons publisher and
CEO John Sandford*

FIONA Luhrs, CEO of TIANZ, was reported in *IT542* as saying: "We don't have any solid information that a domestic tourism campaign is needed... I'm not convinced. I have nothing against it - I have just not seen anything that says there is a need for one." She is correct - there is no solid information - but in that statement lies the problem and challenge for our industry. It must be a major concern to everyone in tourism that we have such little understanding of a part of our industry worth \$9,100 million annually and still over half of all visitor expenditure and visitor nights (\$9,100 million vs. \$7,400 million expenditure for international visitors in the year to May 2003).

Overshadowed

Domestic tourism has long been the 'Cinderella' part of our industry - overshadowed by the glamour, media attention and growth of international tourism. While international tourism has been expanding so strongly, any issues with domestic tourism have been hidden or seldom discussed. But there are now clear signs that all is not well on the 'home front'. "Domestic use has decreased to such an extent it is worrying," says Top 10 general manager Kevin Gough "If we can't make that up from overseas visitors we'd be going backwards." Outbound international travel was up 26 percent in 2004. This represents an additional 357,000 New Zealanders holidaying overseas - spending an estimated \$800 million extra of their leisure dollars. This money has to come from somewhere - and this likely includes a significant impact on domestic tourism. Total spending by the 1.5 million New Zealanders on overseas

The \$9.1 billion Cinderella sector

holidays totalled \$3,000 million in the year to June 2004. Most other countries have a more coordinated approach to domestic tourism. Almost every state in the US focuses the vast bulk of its marketing efforts on domestic visitors - along with a national week of events focused on promoting domestic tourism. With 290 million consumers close at hand it is easy to understand why.

Overseas

However, countries as diverse as Venezuela, The Philippines, Chile, South Africa ('Sho't Left' Campaign), Thailand ('Unseen Thailand'), Australia ('See Australia'), Canada ('Get Going Canada') and England ('Enjoy England') also have active national campaigns to support and promote domestic tourism.

Why is New Zealand the odd one out? Are all these countries wasting their dollars - or are these national campaigns generating a stronger domestic tourism industry? We don't know - but we do know it is a question worth asking and answering.

After the annual tourism conference in Taupo last year - at which Paul Yeo challenged the industry to get serious with domestic tourism - Jasons wrote to the Ministry of Tourism and TIANZ with the following suggestions on progressing the debate:

1. Assess if 'co-ordinated' national domestic campaigns work. As Fiona highlights - the simple reality is that no one knows. Until we do know, any meaningful debate on the value of domestic tourism campaigns is impossible. However, there are a wide range of overseas domestic travel campaigns that can be reviewed to help answer this question. Past campaigns in New Zealand (many people still remember 'Don't Leave Home Till You've Seen the Country') could also be re-assessed.

Recommendation: The industry should fund a research project to

consider the evidence on the costs and benefits of national co-ordinated domestic campaigns and if they may benefit us.

2. Urgently improve the quality of domestic tourism research. Anyone working on domestic tourism marketing is reminded time and again of the limited range of domestic tourism research. There is sparse segmentation and motivational research available (compared to international visitor markets) and the latest Domestic Visitor Monitor has been delayed several times and is now a year late (for 2002 and 2003 data).

Recommendation: The tourism industry (through the Tourism Research Council) should commit to the same quality, timeliness and range of research being available on the domestic market as is available on major international visitor markets.

3. Review the industry structure and responsibilities for domestic tourism, which are fragmented. There is neither a strong forum nor a point of accountability for the state of domestic tourism - despite the fact that its future will have a major impact on the health and growth of the overall tourism industry.

Recommendation: These structural issues need urgent review. Again international examples would be useful. Consultation and research could be included as part of the update to the National Tourism Strategy 2010.

The industry has enjoyed many successes and is well organised and competitive. Such a description however, could not be applied to our management and marketing of domestic tourism.

In the event of a major negative event impacting our visitor arrivals - could our industry quickly turn the 'Cinderella' sector into the bride of the ball? We may find that long neglect will mean that the slipper no longer fits. This would not be a fairy tale ending for anyone in tourism.

On the move...

TIM Cantlon has joined THL as GM of the company's coaching business which includes Johnston's Coachlines, Great Sights, Discover New Zealand, Kiwi Experience, Airbus, Tourist Transport Fiji and Feejee Experience. He is also responsible for THL's Contact Centre.

Mr Cantlon was most recently MD for Eagle Global Logistics.

THL also announces that Grant Webster has been appointed COO Attractions beginning on June 20. He was previously GM Attractions and Support Services SkyCity.

ROB Finlayson has been appointed sales and marketing manager for Rainbow Springs Nature Park and Kiwi Encounter, Rotorua. He has had 19 years' experience in the industry and was previously sales director at Lake Plaza Hotel, Rotorua, as well as regional director and director of sales with Mitchell Corp.

"Working to promote an established attraction such as the Rainbow Springs Nature Park, which is now 72 years old, certainly appeals," Mr Finlayson says.

DESTINATION Marlborough marketing manager Tom Humphries left on Tuesday to become a tourism marketing consultant. He will be officially farewelled at the next industry forum on July 6.

Mr Humphries is being replaced from June 27 by Katie Covell, who will work alongside Christine Brown. Ms Covell is at present working for Montana's Brancott Winery.

ANDY Gibb, new executive chef at Christchurch Convention Centre, apparently brings to the role "a blast of freshness and enthusiasm as well as a background in catering for large numbers." Trained in New Zealand by German and French chefs, he has had many years'

experience in leading tourist hotel chains, complemented by time in London, California and Melbourne, which he considers the birthplace of Asia-Pacific food trends.

He was previously at Jade Stadium where, at big match time, he was responsible for serving up to 2,000 meals to 64 corporate boxes.

With a team of 25 to 30 chefs and as many kitchen hands and runners, it was a case of moving meals from the main kitchen to the servery kitchens, upstairs and along passageways that were also used by crowds of fans attending the games.

"I see myself as a conductor. At Jade Stadium I learned about coordination and organisation, as well as refining my wages and food cost budgeting skills.." he says.

Venue manger NCC (NZ) Ltd has also appointed Nikki Goodwin as the centre's sales executive, a position she was due to start on Wednesday when she returns from two years working in London.

NAPIER Top 10 Holiday Park manager David Peters has been appointed GM operations with Wellington-based The Wellesley Group, which offer boutique lands and sea based accommodation and harbour cruises and are expanding with the redevelopment of a Fijian resort, and rooms in London.

SCOTT Thomson is the new manager at the Langham Hotel, Auckland. He reports to GM John Dick.

Mr Thomson has worked for the last 20 years in New Zealand, firstly at The George, Christchurch, then Parkroyal Hotels and Resorts in Auckland and Queenstown. He then spent two years at Christchurch Casino before moving to the Hotel Grand Chancellor Christchurch, the James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor, Wellington. He then accepted his most recent role as GM of the Hotel Grand Chancellor in Christchurch.

Rebranding idea for one small town

KNOW any small rural town that'd be ideal for "rebranding" as a book town? Otago University's Brent Lovelock would like to know. He visited Wigtown in Scotland to research the developing tourism phenomenon of the book town.

"In the early 1990s Wigtown was deep in recession. The town's rural economy base had crumbled, key services like banks had shut down, people were leaving the area and there were few tourists. There were literally tumbleweeds blowing through the town centre."

Now the town is thriving and it's all thanks to the enthusiasm and skills of local people and an academic called Tony Seaton.

Dr Lovelock also researched the phenomenon focusing on Hay-On-Wye, Wales, which became a book town in the 1980s. It subsequently experienced booming tourism and huge economic spin offs.

Since rebranding as a book town Wigtown has experienced increased investment including the reopening of the town's whiskey distillery, an increase in population an a booming visitor industry.

What is a book town? Dr Lovelock says: "It is a small town normally with a population of fewer than 1,500, which has a concentration of antiquarian books retailers, binders and publishers. They generally have a culturally significant base and have to be close to a large metropolitan area - to ensure tourism flows.

"It will be a fascinating project to replicate a book town here. I'd love to see a small rural town in New Zealand become a book town." He says that because of our comparatively small population such a centre would likely have to be in the North Island. Contact: 03-4798520.

Qualified tour guides get ID cards

ITOC/ATTTO tour guide identification cards are now available for those who qualify. First to receive a card was David Kinnaird of THL Auckland.

Nats will listen, assures Smith who, as minister, signed off on the 100%Pure campaign

IT was while current National tourism spokesman Lockwood Smith was Tourism Minister in 1999 that the now successful 100%Pure campaign gained sign-off. Mr Smith reminded us of this when we asked if the present government deserves a pat on the back for the campaign's international success!

He said a lot of work had already gone into the campaign and branding image for New Zealand Inc when TNZ shared its thinking with him - plus its alternative thinking, and that was a 100%Pure concept. "It didn't take much time to decide on the 100%Pure campaign and branding. Believability is hugely important in any branding exercise and the concept of New Zealand as a clean, green place was very believable. I could see the breadth of application..You can have 100%Pure excitement, adrenalin, pure indulgence...the possibilities were limitless." So it was that on July 3 1999, in the presence of one Neil Finn and several hundred annual conference delegates, that 100%Pure was launched in Queenstown.

Staggering

Added Mr Smith: "That campaign has worked well. The figures are staggering - with arrivals up 44 percent since then with the industry's contribution to the economy rising 106 percent to \$7,400 million."

He listened to the industry then, and Mr Smith adds, he will continue to listen to it.

"It's something I have learned over nine years as a Minister in the 1990s, with many portfolios from education, forestry, agriculture, and deputy finance, to international trade...you have to listen. National has been listening and, with industry, has developed a sensible approach to help industry continue to develop successfully."

He said that government often forgets the service industries, although they contribute 65 percent of GDP. "I suspect government has not really thought a lot about that - because tourism happens. Fortunately it's a recent development and doesn't have huge government controls or have a history of government 'fingerprints' all over it. And that's been to the advantage of tourism in many ways."

Interrelated

Mr Smith added: "Two huge areas of service are education and tourism. The two are interrelated. With thousands coming here from overseas for education, we can build tourism on that..."

But the last thing anyone needs are politicians telling the industry how it should be run.

"You do, however, need politicians to ensure thought is given to policies that apply to services like tourism to make sure that where they are impeding things they are fixed up. That's why our policy includes skills develop, infrastructure, employment law and research work ...We want to help industry help itself rather than say 'National knows better' and tells industry what to do. That is not our approach."

Is the 100%Pure campaign still 100%Fresh? "No way can I be informed on that until this becomes available to me as a Minister...I can't assess that from the Opposition. But every indication is that it continues to work well."

Call

Mr Smith said the then PM Jenny Shipley rang him at his hotel in Saudi Arabia at 4am to ask if he would take over the tourism portfolio from Murray McCully "He called me because decisions were not being made and so I had to make a decision quickly and I made it to proceed with the 100%Pure campaign very early on." Mr Smith introduced National's five policy points on tourism at a Victoria University organised industry seminar last Wednesday (17/5/98). He said a sixth point was introduced after he listened to his audience that day...

"A growing issue is the domestic tourist market. Three years ago there would not have been much focus on this. But by the month almost there is increasing interest because of the effects of low trans Tasman fares on New Zealand tourism," he added. "Industry is aware it is starting to lose some of its 'bread and butter' business...so I developed a sixth policy: the need to explore, with industry, mechanisms to provide research support including research on the needs of the domestic market."

* *IT* is apolitical and does not support any party.

\$10 to the Bay

INTERCITY Coaches is offering Wellington-Napier services and vice versa from \$10 provided bookings are made in advance.

Pacific Blue makes history

PACIFIC Blue will make history today (Friday) by apparently becoming the first carrier in the southern hemisphere to offer new era inflight entertainment systems on board its flights.

The DigEPlayer's 7" screens are designed to sit on the fold down tray table offering Guests a self contained, on-demand entertainment system.

The pre-programmed selection offers movies, children's favourites, recent TV shows and music videos. The entertainment system is being rolled out on selected services, but will be available on all flights from June 13 for \$12 a time. Pacific Blue announced its intention to provide Guests with the DigEPlayer in March, a move that other airlines have since followed.

Biggest day spa opens

REPUTEDLY New Zealand's biggest day spa, the luxury East Day Spa at the five-star SkyCity Grand Hotel, opened this week. It features 10 treatment rooms with hydrotherapy facilities. It is also said to be Auckland's first Eastern-style day spa.

Early snowfalls augur well for start of ski season

BAD weather over the weekend may have kept most people indoors but it means just one thing at Mount Ruapehu - snow!

Turoa and Whakapapa received 15cm - 20cm in their base areas with more on the upper slopes.

Ruapehu Alpine Lifts (RAL) marketing manager Mike Smith says the timing is perfect. "After quite a mild May it's great to see the snow falling. The milder weather has been great for finishing outside projects but with less than three weeks from our scheduled opening, snow is what we want now."

Snowmaking will start at both ski areas this week as temperatures are forecast to stay cold until at least the weekend. Turoa is scheduled to open on June 17 with Whakapapa on June 24. Details: 06-3858456 or 021-2242100.

South Island is fizzing

WINTER Snow sports enthusiasts in Canterbury and Queenstown were fizzing on Sunday as clouds cleared over Mount Hutt, Coronet Peak and The Remarkables ski areas to reveal mountains thickly covered in snow. They received more than 15cm.

Mount Hutt Ski Area manager Dave Wilson says the snowfall and cold weather bodes well for the targeted opening tomorrow (Saturday).

Coronet Peak mountain manager Russell Hall says the snow is a great help in the lead-up to Coronet's targeted opening on June 11. At The Remarkables, the targeted opening day is June 25.

* Coronet's new Greengates Express chairlift is ready for action. It has 64 comfortable six-seat chairs.

* Mount Dobson recorded 48cm of snow during the weekend, the skifield's biggest autumn snowfall since 1989. "It looks promising for a good season," says owner Peter Foote.

He intends to open the skifield in early July to coincide with the school holidays.

Mercure opens in Dunedin

DUNEDIN'S first internationally-branded hotel has officially opened as the Mercure Hotel Dunedin following a multi-million dollar refurbishment to the former historic Wains Hotel site.

The 50-room property is one of the oldest buildings in the city, being built in 1862. The new look hotel is a combination of restoration and renovation to create a contemporary hotel within an icon building.

The hotel features one of the city's most ornate facades, with sculptures carved in Oamaru stone by Godfrey, the master carver brought out to New Zealand by William Larnach to work on Larnach Castle. Behind its Italianate exterior, decorated with pilasters and columns, the hotel boasts a modern interior design.

Money for the birds

THE plight of the black stilt, the world's most endangered wading bird, has been enhanced with the decision by the Mount Cook Hotel Collection to give up to \$50,000 to their cause.

There are only 55 adult stilts left in the world, and they live in a 100km area of the Mackenzie Basin.

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ATTTO'S DRAFT PROFILE AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT

The ATTTO's draft Profile details the goals and aspirations of the organisation on behalf of the industry sectors we serve for the period 2006 – 2008. It also serves to overview our contribution to the Government's Tertiary Education Strategy and Statement of Tertiary Education Priorities.

Your input into our draft Profile is welcome. Please either download a copy from our website or contact us for a copy to be posted. Final date for your comments and feedback is 30 June 2005.



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Academics study implications of booming Indian market

OPPORTUNITIES exist for us to target the Indian market with urban-based activities, according to a paper by Asad Mohsin and Chris Ryan of Waikato University's Department of Tourism Management.

Dr Mohsin and Prof Ryan have just completed a study of more than 1,000 students at 20 institutes and universities throughout India.

They say that India is likely to be the next major emergent tourism-generating country after the People's Republic of China - but an advantage for us is that it is an English speaking market. And early indicators are that Indians can be the highest daily spenders after the Japanese.

Positive

The duo found that attitudes toward this country were positive, and evidence was uncovered which shows potential for the possible development of more urban-based tourism in New Zealand "to avoid the environmental damaging aspects associated with more traditional adventure tourists..."

Dr Mohsin points out: "New Zealand possesses an advantage in that many of its major cities are within immediate access to natural settings that are already managed to cope with large numbers of users; thereby being able to offer a combination of urban comfort with immediate access to nature."

Auckland sits on the Hauraki Gulf and offers natural water-based activities such as dolphin trips, contains constructed natural experiences such as Kelly Tarlton's with its reproduction of Antarctica conditions, and includes within the region the natural forest associated with the Waitakere ranges. "It also offers all year round skiing in an indoor arena.

TNZ

"In short, given the scores on the scales and comments made in response to open-ended questions, it is possible for TNZ to successfully market New Zealand to a well educated Indian market likely to meet the criteria of high yield tourists desired by the NTO. Additionally, this market segment would not seemingly create the same levels of consumption of natural environments as is associated with adventure tourism."

India may become a viable market opportunity if New Zealand becomes increasingly expensive to European markets due to the introduction of carbon taxes.

Messrs Mohsin and Ryan add that the youth market is already one fifth of world travel business - and its fastest growing. "Hence, to attract and satisfy young travellers it is necessary to research motives and images of possible tourist receiving countries to better match travel motivations with perceptions of destinations."

The market cannot be ignored, youth travellers differ in their motivations - and there appears to be a dearth of literature applying to India.

"With a growing middle class and an education system where English is often the language of tuition, it can be expected that English-speaking countries can stand to benefit as host destinations."

They note that TNZ has already opened an office in Mumbai. "For its part, while wishing to attract increasing numbers of tourists, Tourism New Zealand has sought to identify what it terms 'interactive, high yield' tourists with a view to encourage high spending tourists who are interested in the generally rural-based products that New Zealand has to offer."

Question

But given concerns about the environmental impacts that tourism can have, there are real questions as to what extent New Zealand can absorb more tourists.

They add: "...if the Indian youth market simply duplicates those which currently exist for and in New Zealand, then it might even be argued that a need for 'de-marketing' might exist. If, on the other hand, Indian tourism is more related to business and family patterns, then a more urban-based tourism is arguably better for the environment, although it may be said to further extend the hegemony of urban over rural regions."

This lack of knowledge and the stated intention of TNZ to develop this market, became the impetus to conduct the study. Respondents were asked to indicate how important to them were a number of activities and attractions that are characteristic of holidaying in New Zealand.

"The first two items related to visiting beaches and viewing memorable sunsets. However, apart from the iconic bungy jumping general adventure tourism activities did not feature in the top one-third of the list, while visiting activities associated with Maori was rated less attractive than visiting film sites, or indeed visiting Buddhist, Hindu or Islamic places of worship. Farm shows also rated very lowly," they add.

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- Valid for industry staff only
- Rooms based on 2 persons. Additional persons incur extra person charge
- Valid until June 17th 2005

Includes GST



ADVERT

Lions tour latest - 1

TNZ plans 100% Welcome for fans

TNZ has made sure the 15,000 Lions fans expected here in coming days will feel welcome. It has organised lamppost banners in every game town, bus and ferry signs and on the centre line of each match. The theme is "Make Yourself 100 percent at home."

TNZ CEO George Hickton says: "We want the Lions fans to have the holiday of a lifetime and go home raving about New Zealand - no matter what happens on the pitch."

The board is also bringing British media here for the tour to "experience the country" and write features for publications including The Telegraph, The Observer and GQ magazine.

"We want to make sure New Zealand is top of mind amongst UK consumers over the next month, whether they are travelling to the games, watching TV coverage, or picking up the newspaper," adds Mr Hickton.

Visit brings back memories for Te Puia CEO

AFTER being officially welcomed to New Zealand in Rotorua on Sunday, the Lions finished the day with a visit to Te Puia. It was a chance for them to sign autographs, meet locals, mingle with the media and exchange gifts with Te Puia staff.

Te Puia CEO Andrew Te Whaiti says the visit allowed the players a glimpse of the Whakarewarewa Valley. Many of the touring party said they would return for a more extensive tour during their stay in New Zealand. "We wanted to send the Lions away from Rotorua feeling relaxed and welcomed. It was a chance for the boys to stretch their legs after their official welcome at Ohinemutu Marae."

The Lions were each given a small flute made by Te Puia's master carvers. Te Whaiti first approached the New Zealand Rugby Union several months ago asking how it could support the Lions visit to Rotorua.

"It is good for Rotorua to get as much mileage out of the Lions tour as possible. It's estimated the economic benefit to Rotorua could be in excess of \$8 million - as a local business we certainly wanted to get behind that

and at the same time promote our city to the rest of the world."

Mr Te Whaiti's interest in the tour also stems from his days playing the game.

"I spent a season with London Askean and played a lot of rugby against the clubs which some of the Lions players play for, such as Leicester and the London Harlequins."

Te Puia was chosen as the most appropriate visitor attraction for the Lions to visit because it offers a variety of tourist experiences.

"The Lions received a powhiri at Auckland airport on arrival and had just been welcomed officially at Ohinemutu during the afternoon. Although Te Puia has a great Maori cultural programme, we knew the Lions had been shown a good sample of culture during the day so we focused on showing them our geothermal valley and carving and weaving skills."

Te Puia was rebranded only two months ago to better reflect the visitor experiences on offer.

Black carpet treatment for Barmy Army!

BARMY Army members were due for a surprise when they turned up at Maui's Auckland Airport branch on Wednesday to collect motorhomes they will use to tour New Zealand in over the next six weeks. The red carpet will literally be rolled out for the Lions supporters but after that it all turns black - and white!

Staff, faces painted black and white and wearing All Black beanies, were to let the Barmy Army know in short order which team they are backing. Other surprises lined up were the 'down under' side of that red carpet - once they have strutted their stuff, the carpet was to be flipped over to reveal a bold message "Go the Blacks" and the home team doesn't stop at that either..

Part of the Maui service for all customers is a welcome pack of staples like tea and coffee and All Blacks food like Weetbix and Marmite. Added to that, the regular bed linen was replaced with black and white sheets and pillowslips.

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email: info@minarapa.co.nz; webpage: www.minarapa.co.nz**

Lions tour latest - 2

THL coaches and campervans in the thick of it

THL'S coaching and rentals divisions are deeply involved in the Lions tour, transporting players and thousands of fans around the country.

Johnston's Coachlines is providing the official touring coaches for the All Blacks and the Lions teams and management, plus 80 coaches for Lions fans.

Official transport for the fans travelling under the banner of the Barmy Army is being provided by THL's Rentals division and its alternative coaching operation, Kiwi Experience.

THL owns the Maui, Britz and Backpacker brands, and nearly 1,200 motorhomes and rental cars have been assigned to the Barmy Army, while seven Kiwi Experience coaches will take to the road with Barmy Army passengers.

Most of the rental vehicles will be collected in Christchurch over two days prior to the first test in Christchurch on June 25.

Afterwards the convoy of motorhomes and campervans will fan out to visit scenic spots as they travel north to the next rugby fixture, a regional one in Palmerston North (June 28).

After the second test in Wellington (July 2), they will make for Auckland where a mega camping facility has been set up for them at Auckland's Alexander Park Racecourse. A regional match will be played at Eden Park on July 5 and the final Lions vs. All Blacks test is played there four days later on July 9.

It is then the turn of Auckland THL staff to operate with military precision as the Barmy Army fans drop off their motorhomes and cars before heading to the airport for home-bound flights.

More than 2,000 campervans on the road!

TOURISM Auckland believes that the number of campervans booked has increased to 2009.

CEO Graeme Osborne says they are expecting between 15-20,000 international visitors from the key UK and Ireland markets to come to New Zealand for the tour. Many of them will be in Auckland for the third test match on July 9.

His organisation is regularly surveying 497 accommodation providers and that accommodation is busy - but not full.

Preying on the unsuspecting

"WE do not want to insinuate that we have a crime problem just that, like any western developed country, we do have a criminal element that will prey (sic) on the unsuspecting," says the latest HAPNZ newsletter. For a miracle win by the Lions, presumably.

* HAPNZ was warning members to ensure that with a vast number of Lions fans travelling around in

campervans that guests should be conscious of security issues.

"With such a large number of vans in one area at the same time they could very easily become a target for thieves."

Adds the newsletter: "Remember to advise your guests that they should take normal security measures with their vehicle. Keep it locked and where possible do not leave valuables in the vehicle."

Room rates up 400%?

HOSPITALITY suppliers are reportedly quoting Lions tour fans room rates that are between 200 percent and 400 percent higher than normal, says business consultant Richard Gee.

"Don't they realise that the customer is now far better informed than ever before and that they've checked out the normal rack-rate prices for accommodation on websites and are probably going to be far better informed about what prices should be, than could be expected?"

He says we should be encouraging overseas sporting tourists to see what great value New Zealand is - in lifestyle, but also as a tourist destination.

"...so that they will come back with their families or supporters or friends on second repeat business. This sports tour is just a wonderful introduction to the joys of visiting New Zealand."

Flashpackers opens just in time...

WHO says that there are no spare beds in Wellington for the Lions tour, asks Gordon Burrow of Nomads World Hotels Pty Ltd. Nomads Capital, Wellington's newest "Flashpackers" hotel opens today (Friday).

The Edwardian style building opposite the Town Hall was first built in 1903. It has undergone state of the art earthquake strengthening and a multi-million dollar refurbishment to enter the market as the ultimate new Flashpackers.

Mr Burrow says Flashpacker is a term now used to distinguish the upper end backpacker, traveller or price conscious hotel user. It bridges the gap between five star backpacking and two star hotel accommodation.

"It offers the client, brand new ensuite accommodation with the welcoming and friendly common areas so sought after by backpackers."

There are 36 ensuite doubles, twins and triples, as well as four to 10 dorm share rooms. Its features and services include a 24 hour reception, security swipe cards, cosy TV lounge areas, kitchen and laundry facilities, lockers and mini safes, internet, tour desk as well as job support. It also features a spacious café/bar called Blend. Rates are \$22 to \$75. Contact: 0274-552122 or Gordon@nomadsworld.com.

Lions tour latest - 3

Marlborough plans to capture the fans...

MARLBOROUGH is hoping to capture some of the Lions fans as they travel between games, either between June 16-17 or June 26 to July 2.

Destination Marlborough is advising operators the biggest opportunity will likely come when the fans head north from Christchurch to Wellington.

“We know we have captured some of them already.

Many, who are on organised tours, have booked our major hotels and lodges to taste some Marlborough sauvignon blanc at a specially organised, invitation only, wine and food festival on the 27th. The cruise ship Pacific Sky will berth in Picton to handle the influx,” the RTO says.

“The bad news is that many of the fans - often referred to as the Barmy Army - are not on organised group tours travelling by coach and staying in hotels but are driving themselves in rental cars and campervans so that they can see more of New Zealand.”

But how many there will be, where they will go and where they will stay between games is anyone’s guess.

“We believe that many will gravitate to Marlborough but many will take that week off to head all over the South Island. At the moment many of our motels and camping grounds are less than full as few supporters are booking ahead, with the exception of those in groups coming to the wine and food festival. However, the ferries are close to full on key dates, as supporters with campervans have to somehow get them across the strait.” Rental cars will be dropped off in Picton and

there will be a scramble by air and sea.

“Others will, sadly, fly direct from Christchurch and miss us completely, some being desperate to see the midweek game on the 28th in Palmerston North.”

Operators are advised: “So, mark your diaries and make sure you’re prepared to make them (Lions fans) welcome with good service and an open sign on the door! The worst thing we can do is leave them with an impression that Marlborough was closed for business!”

* The UK market is Marlborough’s biggest international market.

...Northland hopes to benefit too

ALTHOUGH it is not hosting a game, Destination Northland is aware of more than 650 bednights booked in the region already, and anticipates further spin-off from FIT and campervan bookings.

“Given the timing of the games in Wellington and Auckland, we believe we will see a number of the supporters up this way early July, and following the official tour games. New Zealand’s warmest welcome mat is out,” says marketing co-ordinator Vanessa Payne. The region has been working to entice supporters with a number of offers in the marketplace.

“The industry has responded well - we have a number of exciting special offers and events including ‘The Roaring Ball’ venue at Copthorne Hotel and Resort in the Bay of Islands - a sports venue with a rugby festival atmosphere, as well as the Winter in Waipu campaign and the Matariki Festival, which we hope will attract the followers to this region.”

Lodge and luge open

FLAGSTAFF Lodge and Serenity Day Spa has just opened in Russell, Bay of Islands. The restored 1912 villa has four ensuites, each with its own theme, elegant guest lounge, courtyard, established gardens, outside bathtubs and a private spa offering massage and relaxation. The lodge is available for group bookings. Contact: // flagstafflodge.co.nz.

* Tutukaka Wild has just opened in Northland, offering the only dirt track luge in the country, as well as a climbing wall, paintball target range, conference centre and self-contained cottages. Details: www.tutukakanz.co.nz

Also doing well is Dive Tutukaka’s Cave Rider, a 13m jet powered adventure boat that takes visitors on a two hour ocean ride Details: www.diving.co.nz/caverider.

Centre of entertainment

THEY are coming from far and wide. Or so it seems. Copthorne Hotel and Resort, Bay of Islands, has in the past few weeks hosted: a country and western barn dance for Tai Tokerau Principals’ Association; morning tea in Puketū Forest for the Sister Cities New Zealand Convention; cocktails and cabaret on Urupukapuka Island for the Collision Repairs Association; Hawaiian and rugby-themed nights for the Registered Master Builders Federation.

Subritzky has Sunday special

SUBRITZKY Sealink is running a same day return special on Sunday to Waiheke Island for two passengers and their vehicle for only \$99.

This is a saving of \$67 off the normal fare! There will be a host of activities being run on the island over the weekend.

CEO Michael Moore says:

“Queen’s Birthday weekend is a great time to go over to the island and enjoy everything Waiheke has to offer, including the additional activities a long weekend brings, while not forgetting to take time out to relax.” Contact: 09-3005900 or www.subritzky.co.nz.

Navy to take over Nelson

TEN naval ships - including a frigate and two minesweepers from Australia - will be in Nelson this October to help the city celebrate the 200th anniversary of the battle of Trafalgar. It’s thought to be the largest flotilla ever to berth in the port.

Ruakuri is major addition to Waitomo Caves

RUAKURI, the longest and most complex of the three original tourist caves in the Waitomo region, is about to reopen after being closed to visitors for 20 years.

It is a place of ancient Maori lore, meandering underground streams, vast chambers with intricate stalagmite and stalactite formations, secret passages, fossilised sea shells and the distant thunder of subterranean waterfalls.

The cave was first opened in 1904 by James Holden, an ancestor of the family that still owns much of the land above the cave system.

According to Maori legend, Ruakuri was first discovered 400-500 years ago by a young Maori hunter spearing birds for food.

Over the past 18 months, THL has laboured - mostly underground - to establish walkways and bridges and

a spiral entrance way. The project is said to be one of the most challenging in New Zealand.

Workers were at times required to descend to their daily toil via a shaft not much wider than a man's shoulder span. It was then necessary for them to swim along a stream and change into dry clothes before starting work on pouring concrete and building bridges and walkways. Ruakuri will be open every day except Christmas.

Groups need to book ahead as numbers will be restricted to enhance the experience.

The 90 minute tours will depart at 9am, 11am, 1pm and 3pm. Other tours are available on request, subject to cave management requirements. Rates are: adults \$45, 5-14 year-olds \$15, children four and under are free.

Via Ferrata now Rungway

THE Rungway is the new name for what was Via Ferrata in Queenstown. The company also has a new base location at the former Johnston's Coachline building and a new brochure.

Some 12 different cliffs make up The Rungway, which is a year round, all weather activity.

Discount for decade

INTERCONTINENTAL Hotels Group is celebrating 10 years of taking internet reservations with the world's largest and most global online sale.

From June 6-10 some 1,300 InterContinental, Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn hotels are offering from 20 to 40 percent off online bookings. Contact: 0800-154196 or www.ichotels.com/10years.



ADVERT

SOUTH ISLAND OPERATIONS

Grand Pacific Tours, the New Zealand Luxury Coach Holiday specialist is recruiting for the position of South Island Operations to be based in Christchurch. This is an incremental position which has emerged due to the enormous flow of passengers throughout both islands.

Aimed at the rapidly growing senior market, Grand Pacific Tours is recognised as the market leader for providing value for money and quality touring experiences throughout New Zealand.

This is a contract position with a seasonal commitment from 01 September - 31 May each year. The person will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of tours whilst travelling through the South Island. Duties include liaison with the drivers, hostesses, transfer drivers, entertainment and dinner hostesses and regular communication and quality control of all attraction and accommodation operators. An important element of the role will be acting as the key contact for all GPT passengers and dealing with any issues which may arise.

The person will be based in a home office environment with travel required throughout the South Island. Suitable candidates will need to have exceptional communication, relationship management & problem solving skills with knowledge of the coach touring market. The position will report to senior management in Melbourne and is a Contract position.

All applications will be highly confidential and will close 20 June 2005. To obtain a full job description or to submit an application for the role please email:-

Stacia Morris, General Manager, Grand Pacific Tours
stacia@grandpac.com.au

Peter Harding & Stacia Morris will be available at TRENZ for further discussions on the role.
Telephone - 0800 444 673.

Receptionist's dream comes true...ahhh!

CHRISTCHURCH Town Hall receptionist Jan Colley's dream has come true. Her first novel is being published this December by New York's Silhouette Desire, part of the Harlequin Mills & Boon publishing group. "Isn't publishing a novel everyone's dream?" she asks. *Trophy Wives* is a romance set on a high country station near Methven, but this is no prim Mills & Boon. It's definitely "raunchy" and a bit "saucy", she admits. While *Trophy Wives* is her third novel it is the first to be accepted for publication. Ms Colley is one of four Australasians - including two other Kiwis - to write for Desire, which has a stable of about 40 writers. The rest are all Americans. She works at the Town Hall from 1pm to 5pm then writes at night, often till 3 am. It seems dreams do come true, but you have to work at it!

Steam may yet return to Gisborne

STEAM trains may yet run again between Napier and Gisborne - once the line is upgraded. Ontrack spokesman Kevin Ramshaw, a spokesman says improvements to the line are planned so passenger services could restart. Steam enthusiasts have been keen to run excursions on the line.

* Napier Art Deco Weekend organiser Peter Moone is hoping to take a steam train to Wairoa next year as part of celebrations marking the 75th anniversary of the Hawke's Bay earthquake.

Choppers help Skyline

SKYLINE Skyrides is bringing in the big guns this week when Taupo-based Heli-Harvest use their Mill 16 Russian helicopter to manoeuvre three new towers into place on Mount Ngongotaha. They are part of the construction of a new Doppelmayr gondola.

With the towers and running equipment each weighing almost five tonnes, it's believed that the air manoeuvre is the largest ever in the North Island.

Resource consents up 11%
THE number of resource consents processed to a decision last year increased 11.5 percent to 54,658. Less than one percent was declined, according to Ministry of the Environment GM Sue Powell.

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Dunedin launches industry personality award

DUNEDINHOST, a local support network group of tourism operators and related businesses, has this year introduced the Michelle McCormack Dunedin Tourism Personality of the Year Award.

It celebrates the life of local tourism personality, Michelle McCormack, who was killed in a road accident in May last year. Her contribution to the industry is described as enormous. Coupled with her vivacious personality, she was an asset to the industry. Ms McCormack worked first for the Otago Museum and then Marine Studies. Her more recent role was as director of the International Science Festival.

Nominees for the inaugural award are: Sophie Barker, Larnach Castle; Dorothy Sinclair, First Church Heritage Centre; Kim Newman, Sir George Seymour Travel College; Keith McGrouther, Speight's Heritage Centre; Cheryl Mangan, Hare Hill Horse Treks; Vivienne Brooklands, Larnach Castle; Jenny Milburn, Monarch Wildlife Cruises; Perry Reid, Nature's Wonders; John Campbell, NZ Marine Studies Centre; Adelle O'Neill, NZ Marine Studies Centre.

The winner will be announced at the board's annual meeting on June 22.

Mayor wants ownership of airport

GOVERNMENT should hand ownership of New Plymouth Airport to the community to avoid it being stuck in a time warp, says New Plymouth's mayor Peter Tennent. "It is very much on our agenda to take control of the airport." Full ownership is essential so the community can become master of its own destiny.

"I want to see an upgrade for the public of Taranaki. The airport we have at present, I believe, is lost in the 60s," Mr Tennent adds.

He wants to use the \$3 million languishing in the Crown/council joint venture's account to upgrade the airport.

But because government policy requires a return of eight to nine percent from any capital expenditure, three-year-old council plans to upgrade the aging facility have been stymied.

Doing well, but not that well!

MANUKAU is doing well in tourism. But not as well as we indicated last week. We quoted Tourism Minister Mark Burton as saying there had been a

16.2 percent rise in visitors in February compared to the same month last year. We should have said it in the five years since February 2000.

Carlton offers upgrade

THE Carlton Hotel, Auckland, is offering a free upgrade Carlton Club room for guests who book a standard room before September 30.

The upgrade entitles guests to pre-dinner drinks and canapés and a complimentary continental breakfast.

They also have access to the gym, indoor heated lap pool and saunas. Complimentary garment pressing and shoe shine services are also on offer.

Quote, unquote

"NOT every region is interested in every offshore market. Some regions are strong in some and ignored in others. And that's the secret to success, taking the strengths of a region to a particular market and going for broke on that. We (THL) as a company go for Australia, the UK, US and central Europe and virtually don't worry about the others." - Fullers Bay of Islands CEO Kit Nixon at the Taupo Tourism Forum.



TALK TO THE SPECIALISTS IN TOURISM.

Opportunities abound right through the tourism sector, ranging from accommodation and hospitality through to recreation and tourist attraction businesses. We have a national team of specialists who have the skill, experience and contacts to find the property you are looking for, given your business and lifestyle objectives. To find out more about Bayleys' portfolio of outstanding tourism properties, and the specialist you should talk to, call Hamish Mitchell, National Tourism Manager 09 375 6868.

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