

Butt out, DoC told

DOC should keep its nose out of areas where tourism operators are protecting the environment and focus on its own performance targets, says National Party conservation spokesman Simon Power. He's met the Queenstown-Milford Users' Group and is "surprised at DoC's nerve" in trying to restrict flights over Fiordland National Park.

The department wants to set a limit on the number of aircraft which can fly into Milford. But Mr Power says commercial operators are entitled to continue running their businesses without having the rules changed underneath them.

Maori to be industry cornerstone?

MAORI product will be the cornerstone of the industry in Taranaki by 2010, according to local Maori RTO Maori Tourism Taranaki.

Sales executive Tom Parsons says the stories of Taranaki's Maori history are only just being tapped. But there are many stories, which are to be presented in a professional Maori way. Contact: 027-2772442.

Northland spin-off for Campbell win

MICHAEL Campbell's US Open win has the potential to create spin-off benefits for Northland tourism. He is the touring professional for the Kauri Cliffs Golf Course in Matauri Bay, carrying out promotional activities for the course and his golf bag bears the Kauri Cliffs name and logo.

Destination Northland manager Robyn Bolton says Mr Campbell's success will raise the international profile of Kauri Cliffs, hopefully bringing more

visitors to the region.

In addition, Destination Northland is about to consider options for a fresh wave of promotions for Northland's Twin Coast Discovery Golf Trail.

"We now have an opportunity to incorporate aspects of Michael Campbell's win in the promotion of the Twin Coast Discovery Golf Trail," says Ms Bolton. "The sudden surge of interest in his line of clothing is a demonstration of the positive associations that come with success in a major tournament."

Industry entering new development phase, Luhrs believes

WE are entering a new phase in the industry's development, TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs told a media briefing at TRENZ.

We are half way through our 10 years strategy - and at first glance we are on track.

"We are seeing more focus on destination

management...particularly by local authorities who took time to be convinced that really they are, or should be, in the tourism business."

Government is investing in infrastructure and there are increasing public/private

(over)

QF denies SQ merger

QANTAS and Singapore Airlines have denied talks of a merger, after remarks by Australian trade minister Mark Vaile that he would back such a move.

Qantas says while it supports the move toward consolidation in the aviation industry, there are no plans to merge with another airline.

Mr Vaile is quoted as saying that his government should not rule out a merger between the two carriers.

"My view is if (a merger) should occur then the government should not rule that out. Quite frankly, that is the direction that the international aviation is moving in," he is quoted saying.

A Qantas spokesman says: "We understand the minister was taking about a hypothetical situation."

Singapore Airlines adds that the proposal is novel - but not under consideration.

TEN years ago in IT...

A strong New Zealand dollar is blamed for a projected 10 percent downturn in forward bookings out of North America. Southern Pacific Hotels (SPHC) regional director John Farrell says the industry has had a good summer. "But I think the exchange rate may have taken the shine off things. Corporate and leisure bookings are down..." He says Australia is the same.

IT's readership jumped 35 percent in the first six months of the year to 2,700 readers. For the first time subscribers are given the option of receiving the publication by email as well as fax and post.

ROTORUA is way out! It's name has been given to a crater on the asteroid Gaspra. The international Astronomical Union has named all its features after spa resorts.

TOURISM earns the West Coast more than \$117 million a year and provides 1,037 jobs. Yet many ratepayers are objecting to paying as little as \$1.98 a year per \$100,000 capital value to fund the region's tourism council.

HANZ - reportedly the industry's largest trade association with more than 1,400 members and a turnover of \$1 million - is changing its name, logo and image. No longer does HANZ stand for the Hotel Association. Now it's the Hospitality Association to better reflect the nature of its members' business, according to CEO Bruce Robertson.

THERE'S huge gains for tourism in Wellington if the capital can get the synergies right, says NZTIA (now TIANZ) CEO Paul Winter.

He told a meeting called to disband Tourism Wellington and to introduce a new organisation and board that the new body will provide economic muscle to get things going.

Mayor Fran Wilde said that in 1989 Wellington and tourism weren't even used in the same sentence. But, thanks to the previous Tourism Wellington, the city is considered the leader in tourism and marketing initiatives.

Industry entering new phase

(from pg1) partnerships included in research.

Ms Luhrs said it was good to see big players like Ngai Tahu taking over smaller companies.

"It's good in that it provides career paths for people and ups the professionalism. One of the challenges is a lack of skills and places for people to go once they are trained. So the more the larger companies develop the industry the better it is as it does give people somewhere to go. They can stay in the industry."

Competition

She noted that global destinations which are competing against us are India, Vietnam, Cambodia, South America, Africa and China.

Australia also has big marketing budgets and we are working hard to be smarter. But the NZD exchange rate makes us dearer and the weakening US dollar has made America more affordable worldwide.

Ms Luhrs said we will always be longhaul and never mass market. "So we have to focus on yield and ensure businesses are sustainable and we have to deliver good holiday experiences."

She said tourism's contribution to the national economy is often misunderstood. We are the single largest sector, creating 18 percent of total exports and 9.6 percent of GDP. We are the only export industry to have to pay GST and in the last five years we have created 26,000 new jobs.

Between now and 2014 we can expect an extra million visitors a year, taking the total to three million.

By then a third of all arrivals will be from Australia, a third from Asia and the rest from the UK, US and the rest of the world.

Operators see their priorities as continued and increased support for international marketing; protection of the industry's greatest asset - the natural environment; substantial investment in infrastructure.

We need to be energy efficient and sustainable. "So, we are on the right track and it's a case of doing more of what we do now and to do it better all the time."

How to contact Januskiewicz...

SHOTOVER Jet CEO Adrian Januskiewicz leaves today (Friday) and after a month's holiday in Europe he can be contacted via 021-677830 or adrian@pernik.co.nz.

ADVERT

Visiting Stewart Island?

There's plenty of room at Beach House and Kereru House.

Bookings: Brenda and Roger

Hicks on phone/fax 03-2191348

TEC to decimate staffing?

By Aviation, Tourism and Travel Training Organisation (ATTTO) CEO Gayle Sheridan

THE industry is at risk of losing up to 2,000 tourism graduates annually as a result of the Tertiary Education Commission's "Assessment of Strategic Relevance" of courses offered by private training establishments.

This poses a significant risk. The broader industry sectors have already been experiencing difficulty in recruiting staff and rely on the graduates of tourism courses to fill many of their entry level positions.

Review

Earlier, the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) announced that it would embark on a three-year review of courses offered by private training establishments (PTEs) to ensure that they were "strategically relevant" - tourism courses (including travel courses) was one of the four areas selected for review in 2005.

PTEs were required to complete an assessment profile for every course offered, which was then evaluated by their TEC regional office. The majority of courses failed this assessment in that they were deemed of low strategic relevance,

thus would not be funded after 2005.

This is despite the findings of the *Tourism Workforce and Skill Projections Report* released in October stating a need for 17,250 new entrants to the broader industry per annum.

Apparently the TEC regional offices deemed this report (by BERL) irrelevant because it was funded by a consortium of industry partners (Ministry of Tourism, TIANZ, ATTTO, HANZ and HSI).

Appeal

PTEs were able to appeal the assessments and this has resulted in some being reclassified as strategically relevant and these will be funded. However, courses involving some 1,400 student places remain assessed as of low strategic relevance and will not be funded in 2006. Additional courses involving some 600 student places have been given provisional acceptance, which means they will be funded for 2006 and then reviewed again.

There is insufficient capacity within the state sector to pick up the 1,400 places that will not be funded in 2006 and many of the students serviced by the PTE sector would become "lost" in the state sector.

The PTE sector has an excellent track record in providing pastoral care (ie support and mentoring) to students to enable their development.

The PTE sector also has excellent outcomes in relation to students gaining employment, indeed many of the larger PTEs report that their students are spoken for before they graduate because of the strong linkages that the PTEs have with their local employers and of the confidence that employers have in their graduates.

The reduction in training places means that industry would have to look at taking on school leavers, which has not been their preference in the past. Employers complain that many school leavers do not have the personal attributes, basic literacy/numeracy skills and knowledge of New Zealand geography for employment in the tourism industry.

intensive

Employers would thus then need to provide intensive induction and ongoing training programmes to train these young people to perform at the required level.

This will be at a cost to the employer and the majority of employers, SMEs, already do not have the capability to support in-house training and can not afford to resource off-job training. Similarly, ATTTO funding from TEC is capped and there is no capacity for growth. Indeed, ATTTO has a track record of stretching its funding to service twice the trainees funded by TEC and it is impossible to do any more within the capped funding system.

Moose Lodge for sale

MOOSE Lodge and Golf Resort, overlooking Lake Rotoiti is for sale for only the third time in its 70-year history. It is famous for the royalty and celebrities who have stayed at the 38.34-hectare property.

There are 19 guest rooms, with en suites, 13 of which are in the main lodge, which also encompasses a covered swimming pool, conference area, games room, lounge and dining area, offices and bar. The remaining rooms are in a separate two-level chalet.

Bayleys Real Estate executive director David Bayley says the lodge is in one of the most picturesque locations in the North Island, bordering the lake and surrounded by mature bush and farmland.

The double nine-hole golf course, which runs alongside a rainbow trout spawning stream, is rated by the New Zealand Golf Association as the second most difficult in the Bay of Plenty. Details: 09-3096020 or 021 920 440.

Nudists want island for themselves

NATURISTS from Christchurch, Dunedin and Auckland have asked Tasman District Council if Rabbit Island near Nelson can be turned into a nudist area. Police have advised that "nudity is not an offence per se to be naked. It is however an offence to engage in behaviour likely to cause offence." Some "sun worshippers" already use the island.

Ferry master suspended: concerns over safety in the Sounds

A Bluebridge ferry master has been suspended for at least two weeks after a near grounding in the Marlborough Sounds.

Maritime Safety Authority director Russell Kilvington said the *Santa Regina* went off course as it was leaving Tory Channel on June 9. Had it remained on the unscheduled course, it would have grounded.

It comes after a stinging report into another near-grounding in Tory Channel last September, by the Interislander ferry *Aratere*.

* Steps must be taken to stamp out an increasing array of maritime hazards in the Sounds, according to Marico Marine NZ director John Riding. He has told the Marlborough District Council that some of the most pressing hazards listed in a report he has written are approaching eight on a danger scale of one to 10. "The risk of a grounding or collision at Tory Channel is not reducing, and it should be. A ferry striking a smaller craft is a credible outcome. Too many ranked at the top end are recurring on an annual basis, and the potential for loss of life exists," he said. Mr Riding provided a range of recommendations to make the waterways safer.

Apprenticeships still available

MODERN apprenticeships are still available in the industry, says ATTTO. They provide opportunities for anyone 16 to 22 to gain employment and nationally recognised qualifications on the job - without incurring a student loan.

ATTTO supports employers by providing a training subsidy. This is set for this year at \$1,000 less NZQA costs provided the apprentice meets set requirements. "Modern apprenticeships are a great way for employers to recruit and retain staff and provide them with a pathway to completing formal qualifications on the job," says ATTTO CEO Gayle Sheridan. Details: www.attto.org.nz/modern-apprenticeships.html.

"Six Pack" of parks proposed

A proposal for a "Six Pack" of new parks in the South Island high country has been launched by Forest and Bird and Federated Mountain Clubs. They include the Kaikoura Ranges conservation park, Marlborough; St James/Spenser Mountains and Upper Rangitata/Arrowsmith/ Lake Heron in Canterbury; and Hawkdun/Oteake, Pisa Range and The Remarkables conservation parks in Otago.

ADVERT



Chief Executive Officer

Applications are invited for the position of Chief Executive Officer to lead a small team promoting the region as one of New Zealand's premier tourism destinations. Reporting to the Board, the role is responsible for strategic and operational business planning and management of the Regional Tourism Organisation and two i-SITE Visitor Centres.

Destination Marlborough is the Regional Tourism Organisation for the Marlborough region and is charged to work with tourism stakeholders on behalf of the people of Marlborough to develop, collaboratively manage and market the Marlborough Tourism Experience.

This role is suitable for a person with experience in business management / tourism industry or related service based industries, who is highly organised, has strong marketing experience in a tourism related role, financial and budgetary management skills, strong communication skills and enjoys being an integral part of a highly focused team. The person we require must have a passion for the tourism industry with an ambition to succeed and make a real contribution to the positioning of Marlborough as a visitor destination.

For a position description please phone Lyn Porter on (03) 577-5523, or email admin@destinationmarlborough.com

Applications for the position including resume should be sent by email to:

Trevor Hook
Chairman
Destination Marlborough
trevor@temahia.co.nz

Applications close on 15 July 2005

DM continues to rebuild

DESTINATION Marlborough chairman Trevor Hook says his board is disappointed to be losing the services of Paul Yeo, who was on Friday named successor to Peter Lowry as CEO of ITOC and TAANZ (IT550/2). Mr Yeo moved to Marlborough from Taupo only in November.

But Mr Hook says they understand his decision to take up “such a unique opportunity that rarely becomes available.”

He adds: “Destination Marlborough is continuing a rebuilding phase and receives the full support of both council and the Marlborough tourism industry. “Paul’s appointment as CEO in November 2004 allowed us to maintain the momentum towards re-establishing

Destination Marlborough as a credible regional tourism organisation not only locally but at a national and international level.”

Mr Yeo says his decision to move was a difficult one, given the timing and his commitment to Destination Marlborough. But the opportunity to take up a national position within an industry he is passionate about was one he could not turn down.

“I am extremely committed to my career in the tourism industry and I believe my new national position will continue to enable me to support the Marlborough region.” Mr Yeo leaves on July 15.

Stay with us and we’ll pay your petrol!

LOEWS Hotels in Annapolis, Chicago, Washington DC, New Orleans and Denver have reportedly been giving guests who take advantage of special summer roomrates a \$20 petrol voucher. It’s said to get Americans driving again as the cost of fuel nudges US\$3 a gallon.

Business Development Manager - Business Travel Sales, Northern Region

Accor, one of the world’s largest hotel and tourism groups, is able to offer you the chance to join an organisation that sees its people as its greatest asset.

We are seeking a highly motivated and enthusiastic sales professional to join our successful team. Reporting to the Director of Sales and Marketing - Business Travel Sales, you will have proven sales experience and the ability to build and maintain business relationships. A strong focus in new business development is essential. You will also demonstrate excellent communication and presentation skills, determination, passion for sales, resilience, drive and most importantly a ‘can do’ attitude. Tourism experience is essential, preferably hotel based.

This role is part of the Business Travel Sales team - Northern Region, based at the Mercure Hotel Auckland.

If this unique role is the challenge for you, please apply in writing by Friday 8 July to Susan Harpur, Human Resources Manager, Mercure Hotel Auckland, PO Box 1707, Auckland or email: h1721-hr01@accor.com

ADVERT

Rotorua launches major NZ campaign

UNDER the banner of *There you are Rotorua!* the city’s \$265,000 media campaign was due to kick off on TV2 on Wednesday - during the high rating *Friends* sitcom. It will be followed by a full page in the *NZ Herald’s Canvas* lifestyle magazine tomorrow (Saturday).

The seven-month print and TV campaign last year focused on families and resulted in a 16.2 percent growth in domestic visitors. That’s an extra 150,736 visitors.

Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing’s new assistant GM Ruth McIntyre is running this year’s campaign. “It’s been a great introduction to Rotorua,” says Ms McIntyre.

“The industry support has been outstanding.”

So good in fact that Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing has been able to significantly extend the reach of last year’s print and TV campaign due to the “magnificent sum” of \$115,000 pledged by local industry stakeholders.

“This is in addition to the tourism marketing and travel office’s contribution of \$150,000.

Ms McIntyre says while the results spoke for themselves last year, the focus has shifted so it’s not just targeted toward families this time.

“We needed to broaden the campaign to include other domestic markets like couples, adventure seekers, and frequent flyers that are primed for short break holidays. So it may be that Walter goes to stay with Nana while his parents escape to Rotorua for some adventure, spa rejuvenation or romance without him....”

Expo offers China connection

WITH the fastest growing economy in the world and with the rapid expansion of travel outside China, forward thinking cities throughout the world are implementing strategies for attracting Chinese visitors. So they should consider attending the World Leisure EXPO in Hangzhou, China, next year.

Hickton tells media quality is no longer an option

QUALITY is not an option for operators, TNZ CEO George Hickton told a media conference at TRENZ, which was also attended by Tourism Minister Mark Burton and TIANZ CEO Fiona Luhrs.

"We are not the only NTO (national travel organisation) focusing on quality."

Mr Hickton quoted Tourism Vancouver as saying that many tourism destinations are now driven by quality. "So quality is no longer a distinguishing factor for Canada. Consumers are looking for reliable quality and value for money." Visit Britain also requires operators to be quality-accredited.

He added: "We have, for some years, been working hard to support Qualmark. As part of this, from 2007 all New Zealand businesses which wish to work with us will need an independent assurance quality accreditation. "We do not believe we can continue to take with us people who are tourism providers who do not have some degree of assurance about the style and quality and safety and other elements which are so important..." In reply to questions, Mr Hickton said, to laughter that he didn't want to see the China market "grow *too* much."

Baby boomers

On the US market, Mr Hickton added that the USD still goes a long way in New Zealand - just half as far as it used to!

The emphasis is on baby boomers in LA, San Francisco and New York. One problem is that itineraries give the impression holidaymakers take three days to fly here. "Itineraries show they leave LA on a Monday and arrive here Wednesday. They say 'wow, that's too far' - so we have to get over that."

Ms Luhrs said Maori tourism is developing at two levels: small operators, who are focusing on quality from the start; larger companies who are buying up smaller ones.

Mr Hickton, asked if TNZ should leave the Australian market alone if it is not providing a high yield, replied to laughter: "I think if we left our largest market for a while I'd get killed!"

He said there's spectacular growth thanks to an airlines war across the Tasman. There's been 25 percent growth in the last two years alone. "The issue is to drive value out of the market. So we are focused on Australia - as it provides the foundation for our international client base for much of the industry."

Asked why models in TNZ advertising always look young, Mr Hickton replied: "The funny thing is that none of us want to go on holiday where people look like us. We always have this young image. I know it doesn't sound right but if you put a bunch of 50-year-olds on then we are in trouble..."

The Minister was told the Lions 100%Pure Welcome campaign could easily become a domestic tourism campaign. Mr Burton replied that more work might have to be done "to ensure we nurture and build it (domestic tourism). But I think it is complementary to our international marketing." Key "tools" are a strong TIANZ and RTOs.

In other answers the Minister said Australia and New Zealand complement each other as destinations. "*It's in our collective interest...to collaborate and welcome visitors to each other...it's in our collective interest to have this part of the world as a strong quality destination. But we are confident enough about our points-of-difference and our uniqueness that we are attractive destinations in our own right.*"

Mr Hickton said the downside to cooperatively marketing with Australia is that we would be treated as another state. **"So we must market as a mono destination because when we do this Australia is the attraction and New Zealand the satisfaction."**

Asked if government's infrastructural support should be linked to increases in GST earned from tourism, Ms Luhrs agreed that was a good idea. It would enable the industry to plan ahead. "We have to plan long-term. Hotels and transport companies have to invest with 10-15 years timeframes and they need some surety..."

Visitors "sick of buffets", says Callesen

JAPANESE visitors are tired of buffets for breakfast, lunch and dinner. And The Hermitage at Mount Cook is doing something about it, according to GM Denis Callesen.

He reckons the Japanese market is the toughest it's been in 20 years. This is putting pressure on rates, which is affecting service and quality in some properties, hence the preponderance of smorgasbords to keep prices down.

"We are flipping the other way. At the Panorama Restaurant we are doing a quality sit down table d'hote mainly aimed at the Japanese who are sick of buffets. This is one place where they can relax and have a one to one and half hour lunch. We are doing the same for dinner. While they may still want to dine quickly, we provide a set menu but they enjoy the fact that staff are serving a meal to them at their table. It's very unlike any other market as they get a four-course meal in 30-35 minutes...we can serve 60 main courses at once, so the food is in front of the customer in 60 seconds. We have to change to the needs of the market."

It's made easier because The Hermitage has state of the art kitchens on which the owners spend \$100,000 every year upgrading.

Mr Callesen says the current downturn in Japanese numbers won't last. AirNZ have taken jumbos off

flights from that market to refurbish them. Japanese are also staying away because of the Lions rugby tour. "The market feels that if they are in New Zealand in the next month somewhere they will meet a bottleneck. So it's easier simply to avoid NZ at present. By August things will be starting to get back to normal. Forward bookings are looking very positive and a lot of IBOs in the market are being very aggressive and that's a positive for us."

McClelland says Queenstown development is putting clients off

QUEENSTOWN is being overbuilt and is no longer as charming as it was, says Michael McClelland, who owns The Best Of New Zealand Fly Fishing, an LA-based company which sends almost 1,000 anglers to New Zealand each year. As a result, fewer clients want to stay so long in the resort.

While areas like Hawke's Bay and Nelson are maturing nicely Mr McClelland says Queenstown is being spoilt. "Hawke's Bay: we love the wineries, restaurants, good fishing, golf, Cape Kidnappers, bicycle tours to wineries, the great weather and diversity of accommodation with cottages in vineyards, and all good value...I remember visiting 10 years ago and there was not a whole lot going on. Nelson is the same."

He wonders what will happen when the hundreds of apartments now being built in Queenstown are finished. *"How will they come on the market without people doing silly things with rates? Queenstown is certainly not as charming and delightful as it was. We are not putting our clients in there for as many days as we used to. It's ultimately the clients who say 'it is very touristy we don't want to stay as long' or 'we'd rather stay somewhere else'. Word soon gets around."*

Balloting "silly"

Mr McClelland, whose company specialises only in New Zealand fishing and is the largest company of its kind, says the balloting system for anglers wanting to use South Island rivers is silly. "They used faulty information to determine what to do. I am not concerned that the Greenstone (River) is not available. What does worry me is the message this sends out: foreign anglers are not as welcome in New Zealand. They want to...preserve the fishing for the Kiwi and that is a very troubling message that becomes many times distorted and magnified by the time it reaches the States."

Will the balloting see a downturn in US anglers coming here? "No, the exchange rate is already doing that! We are hearing from people that this exchange rate makes guides very expensive in relation to US ones, or those in other destinations. I have heard from repeat clients that they are giving New Zealand a rest this year. They are going to South America instead."

Mr McClelland first came to the South Island on holiday 30 years ago when roads were of gravel and people were few.

"We've been specialising in New Zealand for the past 15 years. It is our only destination. Some 44.5 percent of revenue is from repeat clients. We concentrate on more out of the way places...only five percent of accommodation revenue involves hotels and motels as it's mostly lodges, cottages, b and bs..."

Price conscious

He points out that most New Zealand fishing guides are charging NZ\$650-\$675 a day, making it almost US\$500 a day.

"Maybe a guide in the US would be US\$250-\$300. Last season the rate moved up - but people had booked well before..."

"Clients are looking at prices now and we are seeing some resistance. People either lower the level of their accommodation, limit the number of activities, or shorten the trip as they have a budget. Our hope is they still come and not choose other destinations..."

Rates

Mr McClelland says accommodation providers are upping their rates because they say that's what others are doing in their area.

"My response is that my people are not looking at others in your area, they are looking at value and other destinations. They say 'that's where I want to travel and I can go there for \$300 a day or \$500 in New Zealand. That will influence some people, how much we don't know..."

Mr McClelland says he flies to New Zealand several times a year and has more friends here than in the US. He started fishing tours to Bhutan - but finds that working in New Zealand is much easier.

Unsure

"If there are problems the good Kiwi will solve it. We don't get the phone calls in the middle of the night."

He says clients love New Zealand and there is a high return rate. For how much longer he seems unsure.

What is appealing about New Zealand is the range of accommodation now available, from super luxury lodges, to cottages, apartments and b and bs where the standard can be as high as the best lodges.

The country has to keep a focus on quality. It is a problem with hotel and restaurant staff as New Zealand has a smaller population than Thailand or even California where, in the former, wages are a quarter of what they are here - and in the latter there's no shortage of illegal workers.

On tipping, he believes it is already creeping into New Zealand but that it should only be for good service. We should never allow it to become automatically expected.

* Mr McClelland says he subscribes to *IT* because it makes interesting reading. "Your *Pages Past* column, now that brings back memories..."

TRENZ report...TRENZ report...TRENZ report...

New trend: Indian honeymooners travelling in pairs...

A new trend where honeymooning Indian couples drive through the South Island using rental cars, has been highlighted by TNZ manager India Kiran Nambiar. "It sometimes sounds odd. But they often travel with two other friends - even if it is a honeymoon. So, there's four hiring the car. They say they can have a better time that way."

He says Indians are less likely to book campervans because the last thing they want to do on holiday is to empty septic tanks.

New Zealand will become an increasingly popular destination for Indians seeking a motoring holiday. Why? Because we are one of the few countries where Indians do not require an international driving permit before they get behind the wheel. That's because Indian licenses are in English. Indians also drive on the left. Mr Nambiar says they are attracted to the South Island because of the empty roads. And lack of wandering cows, presumably.

Asked if we should try to provide more Indian cuisine, he says there are enough restaurants providing Indian food already. "Even in Hokitika there is an Indian restaurant!"

Cultural differences to be aware of include not being offended if older Indians appear rude when they ask for something. They are not being rude. It's just that they know so little English often single words like "water" is all they can use.

We attract about 17,000 Indians a year. But Mr Nambiar's ambition is for this to grow to 25,000 so the industry here takes the market more seriously.

"Everyone is aware this is a market for the future and it will be really big three to seven years from now."

Where will they come from? Half are already from Bombay with the rest from Delhi and Calcutta. The fastest growing market is in South India, where Australia is already popular.

Steam train trips planned for both islands

MONTHLY steam train trips for up to 100 passengers at a time through the North and South islands are planned by Great New Zealand Train Journeys from January. MD Paul Hashfield says six, seven and 14 day trips will take visitors from Auckland to Wellington via Ruapehu and Wairarapa and then Picton-Queenstown. Historic carriages will be pulled by engines build in the 1920s and 1950s.

Mr Hashfield, a former newspaper advertising sales manager, says some trips will be on lines normally closed to passengers.

He's been planning the trips for three years and says the decision to return ownership of the tracks to the

government last year was the catalyst to get things going. That, and the success of the TV programme *Off The Rails*, which was the most watched show every week during April and May.

Mr Hashfield says there's a lot of interest from Britain and Europe, where such trips are popular. The six night North Island tour will cost \$4,130 and the South Island leg \$5,670. The full journey will set enthusiasts back \$7,550. This includes bed and breakfasts in hotels. www.GreatNZSteamJourneys.co.nz.

Tamaki Hikoi highlighted

A new cultural walking tour is available in Auckland, allowing visitors to learn about the city's landscape, culture and heritage.

Tamaki Hikoi guided walks are a joint initiative between Tourism Auckland and Ngati Whatua.

Tourism Auckland CEO Graeme Osborne says it's the first product of its kind in the city and is the only one which allows visitors to enjoy the landscape, while interacting with guides from Ngati Whatua, who highlight Maori culture and heritage. "We know the landscape is one of the key reasons that people come to New Zealand. We also know New Zealand culture is a huge drawcard, and international visitors want to experience cultural products while they are here."

Contact: Steffan Panoho 09-97970409, 027-5797040 or panoho@aucklandnz.com.

NZLA will grow slowly and carefully

THE New Zealand Lodge Association (NZLA) has 22 members but that could rise to 30 if the right properties qualify, says marketing director Garrick Emms.

What makes a lodge? The basic criteria include an all-inclusive tariff for pre-dinner drinks, dinner, bed and breakfast, more than four rooms and fewer than 20, fully licensed, and Qualmark five stars or equivalent. But the more important aspects involve the individual hosting of the Lodge and a "sense of place" in unique surroundings.

He says the association has joined TIANZ and ITOC, is a member of Major Hospitality Providers and is invited to be involved in major overseas marketing initiatives. So NZLA is being recognised by the industry as the market leader.

While NZLA can take more members, Mr Emms says a number of properties which call themselves lodges are far from that. "There is a lot of confusion in the market place as to what a lodge is and what guests can expect from the lodge experience. A number of lodges who ask to join are not, to our mind, exclusive lodges at all."

NZLA will therefore grow slowly and carefully. Details: 06-3088289 or longwood@xtra.co.nz.

Everyone loves nature, says successful Furhana

NATURE appeals to everyone, whatever their race, reckons Ruggedly Range owner Furhana Ahmad of Stewart Island.

"It knows no boundaries or cultural distinctions," says the Kenya born operator of Seychelles and Indian descent.

"It does surprise people to see someone of Asian origin running a business like mine. But no matter which country or culture you come from, nature is all around and you can appreciate it no matter where you come from."

She adds: "What I am trying do is sell nature and there are Indians that are into nature, as are Alaskans, South Americans..."

She says Stewart Island is increasingly popular because it's New Zealand's least modified island.

"It's very special and if we overnight we camp out or stay in a hut. We are getting top end clients who enjoy roughing it a bit in the wilderness."

Ms Ahmad is into her sixth season and is seeking more staff to cater for the influx of interest not only from inbound operators and overseas wholesalers but from people around the world who access her website.

At present she guides all groups, which range from six to 35. At times she provides up to six different options a day. Once a second guide starts she will be able to offer back-to-back trips.

"Last season business was up 50 percent over the previous year...we are doing cruise ships, groups and FIT...I work all day every day at present."

Her walks are from \$80 for a half day to helicopter flights from Invercargill for three days on the island for \$1,750. Sea kayaking trips started last year and range from \$95 a day to five days for \$2,550, which includes a boat charter to the "true wilderness" area of the southern tip of the island. "I think you can't get more off the beaten track!" Details: 03-2191066, fax 2191078 or mail@ruggedlyrange.com.

Wanaka coming of age

WANAKA is at least coming of age and having its place in the sun, reckons Mount Aspiring Hotel owner operator Robbie Quinn.

He says more wholesalers and tour operators are seeing the town as a destination in its own right.

To cater for the increased demand, he says the 38-room property will see another 30 added next year. There will be 90 rooms by 2010.

Planned is a new restaurant, bar and conference facilities, together with a heated pool and spa complex. Details: 03-4438216, fax 4439108 or Robbie@wanakanz.com.

Paddling a Maori canoe...

PADDLING a Maori canoe is the highlight of trips with the aptly named Abel Tasman Waka Tours of Marahau, near Nelson. Glenn and Tania Gribben run the business from their home and offer year round journeys of half a day to two days. Rates are \$120 to \$395 per person. The couple can cater for groups of up to 60 with a combination of water taxi and luggage transfer from bay to bay. Contact: 0800-925227, 03-5278160 or info@wakatours.co.nz.

Strongman and Kawau Kat launch four day Coromandel escape

STRONGMAN Coachlines and Kawau Kat have launched a year-round, four-day cruise/tour of The Coromandel, which is available for groups of 10-40 from \$859 per person. This includes transport, accommodation, entry to attractions and most meals. Departures are Sundays from Auckland, returning on Wednesdays. Partner Jocelyn Strongman says the trips enable visitors to see the eastern side of the peninsula, which includes Cathedral Cove and Hotwater Beach. Details: 07-8668175, njstrongman@xtra.co.nz or www.coromandeldiscoverytours.co.nz.

GOLDMINE OPEN

TOURS of New Zealand's largest goldmine, Macraes', 90 minutes from either Dunedin or Oamaru, are now possible. Visitors are able to enter part of the underground workings as well as see the massive equipment used.

Clients who combine the trip with a ride on the Taieri Gorge Railway also pass spectacular scenery on the way. Details: 0800-465386, 03-4652089 or www.oceangoldtours.com.

Motels well placed for interactive travellers

MOTELS are ideally placed around the country to appeal to the interactive traveller, says MANZ CEO Michael Baines.

"It's interesting that once you get out of the five major centres the accommodation options available for interactive travellers is the product we offer. And if they are going into smaller centres the quality offer is motels from five to three star - and they operate in every community from Kaitaia to Oban."

He says moteliers host 30,000 people every night and it's a \$1,200 million a year industry. "Tourism, as a sub set is significant."

Campervans are no longer considered to be in competition to motels. In fact, he adds, they complement each other. New properties being built must take them into consideration with adequate parking outside each unit.

TRENZ report...TRENZ report...TRENZ report...

“Some people can only stay in a campervan for a few days without wanting to strangle the wife. A trend that’s started is that campervan users will check into a motel every three days or so to stretch out and do their washing. So we are adding value to the campervan experience.”

Mr Baines says MANZ members now work with farmstays and b and bs and travellers can be referred to them when motels are full.

Accor reports record occupancies - and more of the same!

ACCOR Asia Pacific saw record occupancies in its 20 New Zealand hotels last year - and expects more of the same in 2005, fuelled by low airfares, a buoyant economy and the country’s positive image in main feeder markets. The average occupancy in 2004 was 77 percent, up from 70.9 percent the previous year. Best performing destinations were Queenstown, where the three Accor properties averaged 81 percent, and Auckland where it reached 79 percent.

Despite increased room supply in Auckland, the Mercure boosted its occupancy from 71.1 percent to 84 percent.

In Wellington, Accor’s three properties averaged 74 percent while the Novotel Tainui Hamilton increased 6.3 percentage points to 76.4 percent.

In September the Sofitel Queenstown will open, debuting the company’s prestige five star brand. Two All Seasons motels in Auckland have been added to the group, which is set for expansion in the motel, hotel and serviced apartment sector.

Accor New Zealand GM Thomas van Vliet says the climate in hospitality here is positive although price-sensitive. New Zealand is still seen as a bargain destination and will remain an attractive destination into the foreseeable future. Accor plans to open its first Formule 1 brand in the next two years

Chinese want quality

BAY of Plenty tourism lecturer Julie Kerry says that after going on a mayoral visit to China and Japan she realises operators must be Qualmarked if they are to reach the standards expected by North Asian visitors. It’s good that TNZ is moving its office from Hong Kong to Shanghai. Now AirNZ should launch direct flights between the PRC and us.

Photographs must be the best

TOP quality photographs are a must, says Tourism Coromandel CEO Jim Archibald. If product is export ready then the illustrations used to represent them has to be the best as well. The RTO has moved away from typical beach scenes to using candid shots of people enjoying themselves. These are often used offshore.

Choice, logo more colourful

CHOICE Hotels International’s largest global brand - Comfort - has a new logo. The updated version has retained the familiar sunburst icon, but with a blue background and a revised modern feel.



Choice Hotels Australasia president and CEO Brent Russell says the new logo is part of a larger initiative to build the Comfort profile.

Choice Hotels Australasia (CHA) has launched a new Encompass programme, enabling overseas travel agents to pre-book non-standard hotel rooms like apartments, suites and business-style accommodation in Australia and New Zealand.

It will operate in conjunction with the existing Choice HotelPass, which is used by agents to book standard rooms.

CHA senior sales director Aileen Cobern says wholesalers and agents want the chance to lock in a full range of accommodation for clients before they leave home, particularly since they receive a large number of requests from families seeking apartments and suites.

GM is stoatcatcher, too

AS well as hosting top VIPS from around the world The Hermitage Hotel GM Denis Callesen has every month a more mundane duty to perform: he visits a 12km long stoat trap line - and clears out any festering carcasses! “It’s not a nice job. If I have to clear something out a trap after it’s been there a month, it can be quite smelly...”

Why does he do it? Hotel owners Tourism Milford Ltd have agreed to help DoC cull all forms of exotic life from the Hooker Valley.

“This includes all animals that have arrived since Europeans: stoats, ferrets, cats, hedgehogs ...500 traps have been set...this will make a huge difference to the birdlife such as black stilts, rifleman as well as skinks, lizards, wetas.” Exotic trees are also being removed. Adds Mr Callesen: “The only thing sacrosanct will be the lawn grass in front of the Hermitage!”

As a tribute to fellow cullers a stoatcatchers’ ball was held at the hotel on Saturday. The dress code? Formal or feral, of course. Some 70 “feral types” attended.

* Apart from being a stoatcatcher par excellence, Mr Callesen is also the first GM to climb Mount Cook, although he is now allowed only to climb to the snowline without needing a guide.

On the move...

KATHY Guy takes over as Bayview International Hotels and Resorts' group GM on July 1, based at Wairakei Resort, Taupo. She will oversee Chateau Tongariro - where she is at present GM - and Wairakei Resort.

"I am returning to Wairakei where I started with the company in 1991 and have been based at the Chateau since mid-1999. With the two hotels only 100km apart, the plan is to centralise a number of departments to bring more synergy to the operation of both hotels."

* The Chateau's current sales and marketing manager **Gareth Pearce** will become executive manager. His role will change to one of strategic planning for both hotels. Sales and marketing for both hotels will be part of a yet-to-be-announced new structure at Wairakei.

* After 10 years at Wairakei Resort, **Dean Newell** has resigned as GM to take up a similar role at the Clarion Tradewinds Hotel in American Samoa. Mr Newell has been GM at Wairakei for three years and was prior to that in sales and marketing and f and b. He tells *IT* : "Despite what some may say I am still only young! Having stepped into the role of General Manager at the relatively young age of 32 I don't want to find myself stuck in a rut due to the comfort of familiarity. "The opportunity to take on the GM's role at the Clarion is one that is too good to pass up. Aside from the professional considerations, with three children under the age of ten, the move is one that will be sure to produce lifelong memories for my family."

VANESSA Eparaima has replaced Jarmie Piripi as CEO at Whakarewarewa Thermal Village, Rotorua.

FORMER New Zealand Herald journalist **Paul Gregory** has been appointed SkyCity Entertainment Group manager - media relations and investor communications. Mr Gregory was more recently manager - media relations at Westpac New Zealand.

TNZ international media programme manager **Tim Burgess** will be Tourism Bay of Plenty's new GM from August. Mr Burgess has been in his current role since 2000, since when he has had a close liaison with government agencies and tourism groups, such as RTOs.

SCENIC Circle Hotels' sales team has two new Auckland-based staff: **Shannon Taylor** has been appointed North Island sales manager, and **Nicky Spackman** has returned as sales executive.

Ms Taylor has a combination of travel and sales experience, having worked as a travel agent before spending 15 years in sales. Ms Spackman has returned to her old job after a study break last year.

JENI Baylis will start in Wellington on Monday as Accor's sales and marketing co-ordinator central region. She has been a graduate management trainee at Novotel Ellerslie for the last 18 months.

KENNEDY Park, Napier, has appointed tourism marketer **David Aflallo** as its new manager. Mr Aflallo has spent the last three years at Waipukarau's Farrier's Arms where he has been the bar manager.

Prior to coming to New Zealand in 2001, Mr Aflallo was VP for Israel's The Qumran Group, a company responsible for marketing key Israel tourist sites to the rest of the world.

Support world class programmes, hoteliers urged

HOTELIERS are being urged to take advantage of world-class management programmes, being offered in Queenstown Resort College's executive education series, which will provide an international perspective on the industry along with innovative concepts in training.

New Zealand Hotel Council CEO Jennie Langley says it is vital for the hotel industry to stay alongside new trends.

"The calibre of the international facilitators and the content of their courses will ensure New Zealand hotel executives are well up to speed with advances in the industry. "Everyone knows how important it is to deliver quality services, but to have the opportunity to focus on what is regarded as the 'world's best' is invaluable for their businesses."

Initiative

The council welcomes the college's initiative in bringing international experts here.

Adds Ms Langley: "The hotel industry is suffering from skill shortages across the board and it's not easy for those who are leading it to take time out. But given the changing trends and new challenges many executives are facing, the chance to access ideas from people who are recognised as leaders in their field is too good to miss." Jan Hunt, who was until recently GM hotels, conventions and Sky Tower in Auckland, has endorsed the council's stance. Ms Hunt has been appointed the college's industry relations manager.

Isolated

She says New Zealand hotels are often isolated from international industry trends and the executive education series, which runs from June- November, offers hoteliers the rare prospect of being exposed to top line hospitality educators. The range of courses is pitched at people throughout the industry from senior management to department leaders and emerging managers.

Petition protests at Japan's plans to expand whale slaughter

A petition launched in Kaikoura opposing Japanese government plans to expand its slaughter of whales, which opposers claim will hurt the town's whale watching industry, has well over 1,200 signatures already. The petition was launched by Green Kaikoura candidate Steffan Browning.

The Japanese government wants to begin killing humpback and fin whales, and increase the number of minke whales it already kills.

At the International Whaling Commission in South Korea this week it has been seeking to overturn a worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling.

Initiative

"This is a wonderful community initiative that will send a strong message to the Japanese government that its whaling plans will hurt our whale-watching industry and rob Kiwis and visitors to our country of the opportunity to see these wonderful, beautiful mammals in our oceans," says Green co-leader Jeanette Fitzsimons.

Mr Browning says the petition is part of a campaign among local Greens to harness community opposition to the Japanese whaling plans.

"Kaikoura is the community in New Zealand most directly impacted by the Japanese plans, and local residents are clearly opposed to them. The economic benefit of whale-watching is considerable to Kaikoura, and the community is very keen to safeguard them."

He adds: "Whales were once a common sight off New Zealand's coast, and tourists and locals are thrilled to see them. However, sightings of whales are becoming more and more rare.

"The numbers of whales has diminished from about 100,000 to only a few thousand, and this is a direct result of the whaling undertaken by only a handful of countries, including Japan."

Think about others, Kahu appeals

CONSIDERATION should be given to the views of everyone connected to whales before extractive and or management decisions are made that affect the resource says Whale Watch Kaikoura spokesman Thomas Kahu.

Application of a precautionary approach must be considered when planning how to utilise a resource shared by so many that is impossible to replace if lost.

Alternative

Mr Kahu tells *IT* his company has supported whale watching as a preferred alternative to hunting at the last three International Whaling Commission meetings.

"Many whales including humpbacks are international travellers. During their annual migration they journey through multiple economic zones. This makes whales a shared resource."

He adds: "We enjoy hosting them in Kaikoura between May and July, they are viewed and cherished in parts of Australia and in some of the Pacific Islands at later dates. When these whales are outside of our economic zone they are subject to international law, they are open to international whaling pressure."

Scientific whaling is an extra pressure for whales to deal with, alongside shipping traffic, global warming, over fishing, pollution and habitat depletion.

"The pressure is continually mounting," Mr Kahu says. "We don't get a second chance when dealing with natural resources. When the resource is gone it's over, and not just for us, for all user groups that share this resource in the southern hemisphere."

* National's conservation spokesman Simon Power says there's a problem looming for Labour because the man picked by many to be their next leader does not agree with their stance on maintaining the moratorium on whaling.

Aussies confident!

TOURISM Australia MD Scott Morrison describes his organisation as one that can "chew gum and walk at the same time."

Speaking at his first Australian Tourism Exchange, Mr Morrison explained: "We are putting a more global psyche into the organisation. For a long time, the Australian Tourist Commission, as it then was, became a very localised organisation focused on a lot of different markets.

"Now, with so many competing destinations whose resources match or exceed our own, we need to have global structures and protocols in place."

* TA has set ambitious new yield targets - A\$22,100 million in international visitor spend by 2007/2008 - a quarter more than in 2003/2004.

May growth is good sign

THERE were 135,708 visitor arrivals in May and 2.38 million for the year-ended May, representing increases of 2.3 percent and 6.9 percent respectively.

TNZ CEO George Hickton says that May has traditionally been the lowest month for inbound tourism.

"One of our goals is to ensure tourism is a year round industry. So this growth is an excellent sign."

The increase also comes on the back of a 29 percent rise in May 2004. So over the last two years we've had 30 percent more traffic during this shoulder period "excellent proof of the increasing appeal of New Zealand during the autumn months."

Mr Hickton adds: "New Zealand is a year round destination. In our offshore marketing work we are increasing our focus on showcasing New Zealand's cultural activities, wine and food, and off-the-beaten track tourism experiences. These are all great autumn and winter activities, and it's good to see the international marketplace responding so favourably. With the Lions Tour set to bring around 15,000 fans...and the ski season looking good, the low-season...looks to be on a new high."

Cossar promises stunning capital campaign

WITH airfares costing about the same as domestic flights, Wellington is competing with Australian cities for visitors, says Positively Wellington Tourism CEO Tim Cossar.

“To remain competitive we needed to fully refresh our campaign and keep Wellington as the number one short break destination for New Zealanders.” That’s why the city is launching a “bold new” domestic campaign on TV next month.

“All commercials will direct people to wellingtonnz.com or the 0800-Weekend number to make bookings.

“The new campaign is going to be stunning,” Mr Cossar adds. “We’re aiming to capture the imagination of New Zealanders by redefining Wellington in their minds.”

He’s hoping it will set a new benchmark in regional marketing.

The \$2 million campaign is paid for by Positively Wellington Tourism, Te Papa, AirNZ and city hotels.

Internet mine

A new centralised information resource for the industry - TourismInnovations.co.nz - is going online and will be launched next month. Over the past year the company says it has been gathering basic information from a variety of sources such as RTOs and business associations.

“Tourism in New Zealand is still fragmented with a multitude of associations, regional bodies, clubs and special interest groups. This makes it difficult for the average business person...to find information and resources they need to do their jobs better. Our goal is to change that.”

The business is run by Cabbage Tree Creative owner Lawrence Smith and Brian Westwood, who has experience in the RTO sector working for Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing, and Hurunui Tourism. Contact: info@tourisminnovations.co.nz.

Big plans for Lilybank and Bluewater

THE owner of Lilybank Station at the head of Lake Tekapo has bought the Bluewater Resort development and will link the spa and wellness centre with his exclusive tourist lodge.

In a move that will be seen as a major boost to South Island tourism, Lilybank Station Ltd’s company manager Dennis Thompson says plans are to build a golf course and airstrip - and re-open the lodge.

“The key reason for buying Bluewater is the fact that the health and spa industry is one of the fastest growing worldwide and resorts of the calibre of Lilybank need to have access to such facilities.

“By having ownership of both Lilybank and Bluewater, the two resorts can work together in conjunction with the health spa and golf course. Bluewater will provide for 4.5 star villa accommodation and Lilybank will re-open as an exclusive lodge providing for a range of eco-tourism activities,” he adds.

Nothing Doubtful about Real Journeys’ investment

REAL Journeys is buying two purpose-built 45 seater Volvo B7R coaches and a new catamaran to be used by clients travelling to Doubtful Sound. The company says the fiord is New Zealand’s most sought after wilderness destination.

The coaches will be used on the Wilmot Pass road. The 31.6m catamaran, the *Patea Explorer*, is for daytime cruises, which start in November. It will accommodate 150 passengers over two decks with floor to ceiling picture windows and expansive external viewing areas.

Real Journeys’ chief engineer Jim Young says: “This vessel will set the standard for catamarans and wilderness cruising in New Zealand.” A specialist nature guide will be on board to give lectures.

Taupo has People’s Choice

WINNERS of the inaugural Lake Taupo Tourism awards will be named at the Outrigger Terraces Hotel on June 29. Visitors and locals have been voting for their favourite tourism business as part of a People’s Choice competition.

Virtual Natasha

NELSON’S Monaco Hotel and Resort has received a lot of media coverage for its virtual barmaid, **Natasha**.

New East Cape service

KIWI Trails is expected to launch a new round trip service from Rotorua around East Cape to Lake Waikaremoana and Te Urewera in October. Maori drivers will share their own stories of each area they pass through. Customers will be able to travel in either direction. Details: Joanna Doherty on 07-3663484, fax 3437911 or info@kiwitrails.co.nz.

Walking Legends

WALKING Legends now runs a 7m catamaran on Lake Waikaremoana as an addition to its guided walk service. The company has also launched a website in Japanese. Details: Hilary Sheaff and Rob Franklin on 07-3457373, fax 3457364 or hilary@walkinglegends.com.

Elite Adventures

ELITE Adventures has a new full day tour around Rotorua which combines some of the best of the region’s natural and cultural attractions. Details: Kim Neilson on phone/fax 07-3478282 or eliteadventures@xtra.co.nz.

New site will have it all

A new website for Auckland, to go live next month, will list more than 1,700 restaurants and cafes, 700 bars and clubs and 500 parks. www.viewauckland.co.nz is like the successful www.viewlondon.co.uk site which attracts a million viewers a month. The Auckland version will have all venues, events and locations.

TIANZ, TNZ, AirNZ say they won't support new luxury travel show

UP to 70 international buyers and top end sellers apparently want last week's New Zealand Luxury Travel Show to be held again next year. But TIANZ, TNZ and AirNZ are not supporting it.

Organiser Neil Pollett of New World Safaris says the event - in Christchurch, just before TRENZ - received a fantastic response.

"Most of the people would be unhappy if we didn't run it again as they felt they got so much out of it," he tells *IT*.

"Everyone was happy with the quality and length of appointments. It was just in a different environment where they could focus on the luxury sector...we were trying to focus on the cream of the crop."

Why was the show organised?

"There were a number of people left having difficulty reaching that market so I put the concept together and managed it and certain people gave us assistance to do that. It was a team effort."

He added: "Having been an exhibitor at TRENZ and a member of TIANZ I did not go out of my way to publicise the show or show they were deficient, because they weren't."

"At the end of the day TRENZ is a show in its own right and neither TIANZ nor TNZ has a monopoly on running trade shows in New Zealand. We were adding value to the New Zealand experience and gave people another reason to come down."

Mr Pollett says his show had about one percent of the appointments that TRENZ had. "The offer was quite different. We had 350. Theirs was probably 100 times that. We were also creating a quite different environment."

"We were not trying to be a trade show but a blend between an appointments structure, where two people can meet, and having enough ambience around for people to relax and have an enjoyable time and get to know each other better. TRENZ is great at what it does but there was a gap in the luxury sector..."

* The event was to have been opened by Tamaki Heritage director Mike Tamaki. It wasn't in the end.

No alignment

THE New Zealand Luxury Travel Show is not aligned with nor supported by the New Zealand tourism industry event, TRENZ, or its managers, TIANZ. Nor is the show supported or endorsed by TNZ or TRENZ premier sponsor, AirNZ.

In a joint TIANZ/TNZ statement they told *IT*: "TRENZ is an event committed to New Zealand tourism at large and benefits the whole industry and wider New Zealand economy. As organisers and supporters we feel TRENZ gives the industry adequate opportunity to conduct business. We believe that breakaway events dilute these opportunities."

"TRENZ managers, representing the industry, are committed to delivering a quality product. Certainly some years have been better than others. In 2005 quality controls have been considerably tightened for both buyers and sellers. Exhibitors at TRENZ meet strict criteria so buyers are assured that only suitable export ready product is on show. Similarly the quality control of all aspects of TRENZ organisation, including the booth allocation and appointment process, was much stronger this year. Several top end' accommodation sellers volunteered their thanks for their booth positioning. "TRENZ organisers and sponsors trust that in future years the massive international and local relationships, investments, and organisational requirements that TRENZ demands will be for the benefit of those who have invested in exhibiting at TRENZ and not dissipated through events that have the potential to undermine TRENZ success."

TSA shows "modest" increase in expenditure

TOURISM generated \$17,200 million in expenditure in the year to March 2004, according to the latest Tourism Satellite Account, just released.

International expenditure was \$7,400 million and domestic expenditure \$9,800 million. This equates to a direct and indirect contribution of 9.4 percent to GDP and supports 103,000 jobs directly and 69,000 indirectly, representing 9.9 percent of the total workforce. Tourism's contribution to exports by international tourists was \$7,400 million, or 18.5 percent of exports. In comparison the dairy industry contributes \$5,700 million (14.3 percent of exports), meat \$4,300 million, forestry \$3,000 million and seafood at \$1,100 million.

Tourism Ministry research manager Bruce Bassett says the data shows a modest increase in total expenditure compared to the previous year. But the increase since 1999 is marked, with an increase in spending of \$5,000 million - "a substantial amount of extra economic activity" - half of which this was earnings through international tourism.

"What is clear is that these high levels of tourism expenditure have positive impacts nationally and in all communities throughout New Zealand," Mr Bassett adds.

Wine village will be big! ONE of the biggest non-farming developments in Hurunui for several years. That's how Waipara Wine Village director Richard Hunter describes the \$20 million tourist attraction being built 30 minutes' drive north of Christchurch.

It will include an international class hotel and villa accommodation, restaurant and wine bar, boutique alehouse, wine tasting facilities, food and wine school, information centre and conference facilities. Details: 021-398633.

Ohakune celebrates its carrots

IF you are interested in carrots or just a good time then be in Ohakune on July 30 for the Carrot Festival, advises a website called World.Net. It says partner GoManGo has been selected by Ruapehu District Council to develop new marketing initiatives and branding for the region. This includes the provision by World.Net of an integrated destination management system and ecommerce. "When fully implemented the project will provide a single cohesive environment for all stakeholders in the Ruapehu Tourism region and enable all local operators to participate in online ecommerce through the new Ruapehu Tourism portal.

A writer says: "Not generally known is that Ohakune is the carrot capital of the world as yours truly can attest to having followed a trail of carrots on the road from Ohakune to Taumarunui. No, not for some promotion, but a trailer loaded with carrots that was testing the road and the speed limit!"

* Ohakune's Mountain Mardi Gras is no longer part of the carrot festival because organisers feel that together they are too big. It's now on August 6.

US states plan to invest US\$603 million in industry

US states plan to spend US\$602.7 million on industry development and promotion this year, according to a Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) survey. The figure increased 10.6 percent compared to last year's actual budget.

PM highlights govt spending on culture

PM Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage Helen Clark this week launched two reports, which point to the development of a strong and vibrant cultural sector.

Ms Clark said the reports show substantial development across the sector, including growth in employment and in investment by central and local government.

"The updated report, *Government Spending on Culture 2000 - 2004*, shows that central government spending on culture, when adjusted for inflation, has increased 73 percent in the last 14 years, with spending of \$388 million in the year 1990/91 rising to \$675 million in 2003/04. In Labour's first four years spending rose 17 percent, in real terms."

She added: "Our Labour-led government invests in arts, culture and heritage because we believe it is important to both the economy and to the people of New Zealand. Culture delivers opportunities which not only generate wealth but also enrich our society.

The second report, *Employment in the Cultural Sector*, based on census figures, shows the number of people in paid cultural employment rose 17 percent from 1996 to 2001, almost three times the growth in total employment over the same period.

"Individuals making their living in the cultural sector, such as visual artists, performers, curators, film-makers, writers, publishers and gallery owners, know they are taken seriously as a vital component of our economy and our society," Ms Clark added.

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