

TNZ investing millions more into markets

TNZ says it is putting more resources into its key markets to keep New Zealand top of mind as the growth in overseas arrivals continues to slow.

Latest international visitor arrival figures just released by Statistics New Zealand show that the number of visitors coming to New Zealand in December decreased 1.9 percent to 307,061.

CEO George Hickton says: "A slow down in the world economy, oil prices, the strong New Zealand dollar and an increase in spending by some of New Zealand's main competitors are all impacting on visitors' decisions to come to this country."

The demand for long haul travel has also slowed with travellers tempted by lower cost short haul holidays due to the rapid increase in low cost airline activity in many parts of the world. But with more challenges ahead it will be important to keep 100% Pure New Zealand in the minds of potential travellers - and a \$10 million dollar injection from government into key markets will help that happen. "

Annual arrivals up 1.5%

TOTAL arrivals for the year ended December increased 1.5 percent to 2,382,950.

Oh, dash

THE conventions of printing clashing with the rules of cyberspace. So says Otago University's Eric Shelton in pointing out that the website Queenstown-property.com - highlighted in last week's story on the high percentage of Queenstown properties owned by foreigners - is a porn site!

Five star, with a hint of home

THE Langham Hotel, Auckland, has gone against the current minimalist décor trend creating "an elegant and opulent new environment befitting that of an authentic five-star hotel."

The new look follows a \$12 million transformation of the Symonds Street property which was completed this week.

Roaming through Wyoming - in Ruapehu!

IF as a child you dreamed it. Now, as an adult, you can live it! Mellonsfolly is 400ha of isolation Western-style. This Badlands place is where you can be a star gunslinger - or take on any other identity during your stay. This is where you are never too old - but you have to be old enough!

It's a getaway born out of a love for the wilderness and the peaceful surroundings of the Ruatiti Valley back o' Raetihi, Ruapehu...somewhere near the Bridge to Nowhere.

Nine steam trips in one

NINE steam train journeys in one. That's Grand Pacific Tours' new 14-day rail odyssey through the South Island, starting on October 14.

Holidays Act is hurting industry - TIA

THE Holidays Act *is* hurting tourism, believes TIA. "Thousands of visitors looking for fun and activity on Waitangi Day will find closed doors as many tourism and hospitality businesses can no longer afford to stay open on statutory holidays," CEO Fiona Luhrs said on Friday. "This is the peak season...yet the punitive penal rate provisions of the Holidays Act are seeing many businesses catering to New Zealand and international holidaymakers simply close their doors because it is uneconomic for them to stay open,"

* The results of our survey into surcharges will be published next issue.

Decline due to low exchange rates?

THE quick answer as to why there's been a decline in the backpacker market is the exchange rate. But the problem is the low exchange rate we suffered earlier in the decade, says Budget Backpacker's Eric Foley

Once in lifetime chance served here...

IT'S described as the culinary event of the year: the World Association of Cooks' Societies' (WACS) Congress 2006 to be held in Auckland next month.

2005 may have been a good year - Moran

WHILE it has been a patchy season the 2005 calendar year may well prove to be the second most successful year on record, Destination Marlborough CEO Dominic Moran points out.

Tourism Online popular

HITWISE has named New Zealand Tourism Online (www.tourism.net.nz) the most popular travel destination and accommodation site in New Zealand last year.

Former “hermits” integral to our success

THE number of Koreans travelling abroad passed the 10 million mark for the first time in 2005, growing at 14.2 percent for the year. PATA says the most popular destinations were Asia (72.6 percent), the Americas (8.1 percent), Europe (5.8 percent), and the Pacific (4.5 percent).

Mt Aspiring Hotel for sale

THE 38-room three star Mount Aspiring Hotel, Wanaka, with a turnover of \$1 million, is for sale.

Blitz uncovers safety breaches

NO unlicensed tourist operators were found in a blitz by Land Transport New Zealand, the Ministry of Tourism and the NZ Police Commercial Vehicle Investigation Unit at sites in Auckland, Rotorua and the Waitomo Caves.

But an unknown number of vehicles were issued with green stickers for safety breaches. This means the operator has to fix the faults and go through a Certificate of Fitness (CoF) check before the vehicle is allowed back on the road. Others were found operating without the necessary CoF, and many instances of unpaid RUC were discovered.

Mavis arrives in Porirua...

MAVIS, a multi-coloured VW Beetle, is in Porirua to help raise the profile of i-SITES and Interislander - and encourage local families to experience the Cook Strait ferries.

Maori are the third greatest entrepreneurs in world - report

THE Maori Party is calling on government to offer Maori entrepreneurs more support after a study found they take more risks in business.

The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) released this week has found that Maori are the world's third most entrepreneurial people. One in three Maori aged 35-44 are businessfolk.

Green Globe for White Island Tours

WHAKATANE-based White Island Tours Ltd has received the Green Globe Benchmarked Certificate.

New Zealand is “dreamland”

NEW Zealand is the cover story in the latest issue of *National Geographic Traveler* with a 14-page feature and an editorial by editor Keith Bellows.

Marlborough may change targeted rates

THE tourism targeted rate on baches and similar property being available for short term rental is likely to be increased by Marlborough District Council from \$90 a year to \$168.75.

Tahiti linkto bring more New Yorkers?

A move by Air Tahiti to launch a direct air link between Auckland and New York is being hailed as a way to entice more American visitors here.

And still they fly...

A record 4,000 million passengers took to the skies in 2005, up 5.5 percent on the previous year despite higher fuel costs and concerns over terrorism and bird flu, the main airport operators' association says.

Bureaucracy could close castle

LARNACH Castle, Dunedin's iconic heritage attraction, could be shut or sold because of earthquake strengthening rules, its owners fear. The Barker family worry that they might have to raise at least \$100,000 to comply with new standards which they say their category one historic property should not have to meet.

Good to great summer for Northland

NORTHLAND operators are generally experiencing a “good to great” summer, and many predict that the best part of the season is yet to come.

Destination Northland GM Robyn Bolton says in contrast to some reports, “the best information available to us at this time indicates that overall, business has been consistent with - and in some instances, better than - last year.”

Who has “best shore excursions”?

THE best shore excursion experienced by 600 passengers aboard the luxury liner Radison was in the Bay of Islands when Culture North set up a temporary Maori village to welcome them.

Ways to counteract a recession...

MARKETING business guru Richard Gee suggests 19 strategies to counteract any recession, should there be one.

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