

PO Box 1430, Paraparaumu Beach, New Zealand.
Tel/Fax 64-4-2987-747.
Email: nigel@insidetourism.com

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Mixed views on QF buy-in...

Could alliance be worth \$1B to country?

UP to 50,000 extra tourists could be arriving in New Zealand each year if Qantas is successful in its bid for 22.5 percent of AirNZ. And, AirNZ chairman John Palmer added, an alliance between the carriers will see a more effective promotion of this country in overseas markets. Why more visitors would be attracted here as a result of a buy-in, Mr Palmer did not say.

E-Travel director Bill Liscom commented: "I see nothing but dangers to inbound from Australia, and dangers in inbound from elsewhere because Qantas will dominate AirNZ even more than it does now in the international marketplace."

Benefit

In announcing Qantas' offer to pay \$550 million for a minor share in AirNZ, Mr Palmer said the economic benefit to New Zealand could be \$1,000 million over five years.

Government will on December 18 tell the airlines if they can seek approval from the Commerce Commission and the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

If the go-ahead is given, QF directors on the AirNZ board will have to sign any written resolutions drawn up by the board.

* National says its 'No Qantas' campaign is gathering pace with 100 letters, opposing the buy-in, being downloaded from its website and sent to government.

* Former AirNZ chairman Bob Matthew says any alliance will be doomed. He gives it three years. Having AirNZ's main competitor on the inside will create conflicts of interest and make for an unhappy relationship, he adds.

* Media reports reckon a Virgin Blue take-over of Freedom Air could be on the cards if the merger goes ahead.

But Virgin commercial head David Huttner says: "We don't understand in anyone's mind why they would want to do this deal."

* HANZ CEO Bruce Robertson says an AirNZ-QF partnership will not be good for the country. "We can expect a drop in airline passenger capacity as well as freight carrying capacity and both are bad news for New Zealand." Competition means extra flights and competitive rates, he adds.

* TIA CEO John Moriarty is optimistic.

"This type of arrangement has worked in other industries and it has the potential to expand access to key visitor markets and contribute to our economy."

The proposal is a combination 'compete and co-operate' model that has worked well in other industries.

He adds: "Success will come from a commitment by management to a fair sharing of benefits between both Australia and New Zealand as well as both Qantas and Air New Zealand."

Waikato now offers tours of Middle Earth!

A major new product with international appeal opens near Matamata on Monday when the first Hobbiton Movie Set Tours take visitors through the only Lord Of The Rings location still containing remnants from the film.

Tourism Waikato CEO Lynda Keene says there's already enormous interest. "This'll really delight Rings fans from around the world," she adds. "It means we can now provide a unique and special Waikato experience!"

She tells *IT* the tours are organised by Rings Scenic Tours, a company set up by the Alexander family who own the 500ha farm on which Hobbiton was created.

Adds Ms Keene: "Guides will show visitors all the spots where filming took place. For most, it is enough just to be there. The fact that anything remains is clearly a great bonus!"

Picture panels orientate visitors and from a vantage point they will be able to see the whole area. "The sight explains the tourism catchphrase 'Waikato...where the grass is greener'," Ms Keene adds.

"Previously visitors had to be content with having their photograph taken in front of the 'Welcome to Hobbiton' sign in Matamata!

"Having the Hobbiton site available for tours makes a big difference to us with our **(over)**

Tours to Middle Earth... 1

(from pg1) marketing of the region...the international market, particularly Rings fans, will really enjoy visiting the farm and hearing how the Alexander family worked with the film crew, and what happened on a daily basis."

Tours leave the Matamata VIC daily, last two hours and cost \$50, with children eight to 14 \$20 and under eight free.

* LOTR director Peter Jackson selected the Alexanders' farm after an aerial search. The views and rolling countryside of the farm closely resembled that of Middle Earth as described by Tolkien.

With the second film in the trilogy, The Two Towers, due to be released Ms Keene says Matamata VIC can expect a big jump in the number of enquiries concerning Hobbiton. "To date, staff have been fielding 10-20 calls a day. Now at least they have something to sell to a public eager for anything to do with LOTR. Hobbiton will go down a treat."

* TIA CEO John Moriarty is pleased to see such innovation. "I hope there's a good international market that's enthused about it. It's clearly a specialised market around the world."

Details: 07-8886838, fax 8885653, info@hobbitontours.com or www.hobbitontours.com.

Buoyant summer predicted

WE can expect a buoyant summer season, according to the Tourism Research Council. Its latest leading indicators' monitor shows that not only has a recovery occurred since the terrorist attacks in the US, but arrivals are now at a higher level than the year before.

* Total international arrivals increased 2.8 percent in the year ended October with a total 1,985,554 arrivals. Statistics New Zealand figures show Australian arrivals were down two percent to 620,765, while the US increased 3.6 percent to 197,456. Japanese arrivals dropped 1.7 percent to 158,615. Koreans increased 23 percent to 104,459 but Taiwanese were down one percent to 37,638 and Germans dropped 10.6 percent to 48,082. The UK/Ireland market increased 10.3 percent to 245,258 and China went up 39.4 percent to 71,308.

Overall, holiday arrivals increased 1.6 percent to 1,028,595 and VFR two percent to 513,484.

Arrivals for the month were up 14 percent to 162,327, with 13 percent more Americans to 16,000. Japanese arrivals jumped 86 percent to 15,210.

* The council reckons that between now and 2008 international visitor days will increase faster than domestic, at 6.6 percent and 2.3 percent respectively. Total visitor days are forecast to increase by 35 percent to 123 million. It says this represents an increase of 32 million visitor days, which includes 23 million for international travellers.

Mystery Creek to be NZ's biggest venue

A multi million dollar development at Mystery Creek, Hamilton, will make the venue New Zealand's largest convention, exhibition and concert centre - with seating for 7,000.

The 9000 sq m facility will attract new events to the country, according to owners National Agricultural Fieldays. Tenders are being called and work is expected to be completed by mid-year.

Rata Trail popular

PROVING popular with visitors to the Northwest Nelson region is the Rata Trail which begins at Takaka VIC. Brochures available from DoC Takaka. Details: 03-5258026, fax 5258444.

Global branding for backpackers

THE first globally branded backpacker network in the world will be launched by hotel giant Accor mid-2003 with the opening of hostels in Auckland and Wellington.

Already known for its Sofitel, Novotel, Mercure, All Seasons, Ibis and Formule 1 brands, Accor is to launch its "base brand."

Heading the brand is Graeme Warring, who has had 15 years in the market, helping set up the Backpacker Headquarters network, VIP Backpacker Resorts International, Oz Experience and Kiwi Experience.

He says he has seen great changes in the face of the average backpacker over the years and that the market will no longer stand for the flea-infested beds and dodgy facilities that were once a 'right of passage' for backpackers.

The company says the base name will become a guarantee of high standards in a sector "not exactly known for quality."

Typical services offered will include themed bars with chill-out areas with DVD and large screen TVs, games lounges and dancing; regular entertainment; state-of-the-art security; modern shared cooking facilities; travel advice; and assistance with visas, banking and employment.

Details: Nick Harriman 0274700096 or nick@basebackpackers.com.

TNZ board fees didn't go up

THERE has been no change in TNZ board member fees, apart from new chairman Wally Stone receiving an increase. TNZ says the information we quoted last week was incorrect. "The confusion arose from some board members only receiving part payments in the 2000/2001 year due to being new appointments," we have been told.

HAPNZ pleased with Go Wild

MORE than 9,000 attended the Go Wild Caravaning and Camping Show in Auckland. And HAPNZ says that of the hundreds of visitors to their stand, 25 percent intended buying either a van or a tent for camping and 50 percent were seasoned

holiday park customers. More than 600 signed up to the HAPNZ Holiday Club.

HAPNZ president Lana Morgan says a number of caravans and campervans were sold during the show, adding: "I wouldn't want some of the big ex-coach motorhomes calling as they would be a bit of a problem for most sites."

BlueBridge is name of new ferry

STRAIT Shipping has paid \$12 million for a French flagged passenger ship, renamed the BlueBridge, for use as a new ferry service to compete against The Interisland Line. It will go into service as soon as possible.

Davies was CO2

JON Davies, due to open his lodge, Aoturoa, 17km from Wanaka, next month, worked for what is now TNZ from 1964 until 1993 when he left as deputy CEO and GM marketing. (IT429). Contact: 03-4435000, fax 4435001 or aoturoa@ihug.co.nz.

Express pax up 20 percent

SINCE AirNZ introduced its budget service, passenger numbers have increased 20 percent and online domestic bookings have surged from five to 40 percent, according to media reports.

Golden group

A dozen UK wholesalers, who combined sell 30 percent of all travel from that market to New Zealand, are here on a two week sponsored visit. The Gold Famil is an annual event organised by TNZ and AirNZ. The group is visiting Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Dunedin, Invercargill, Stewart Island and Queenstown.

DQ: Setting the record straight

IT ran out of time last week and therefore did not give DQ the opportunity to immediately reply to a story on it. We had intended to let the organisation give its views this week, when there would be more space for its opinion.

This has meant that we quoted operators as making statements which DQ maintains are incorrect. We willingly apologise to DQ for not contacting it on Wednesday night and verifying the situation as it sees it. We did not intend for this to be an unbalanced article, taken over two issues.

The statement that DQ newsletters go worldwide to media and agents is incorrect, CEO David Kennedy tells us.

"We send a fortnightly newsletter to local Queenstown member operators.

"We do send a different monthly newsletter to international travel and tourism contacts.

"The 'Kennedy' comments, have not been sent to the international marketplace."

"Concerning the quote: 'When DQ makes so many gross errors in public, but doesn't correct them, it begs the question: what do they do in their private communications and analysis that we don't see?'

Our media releases and publicised analysed information is taken from official Statistics New Zealand information, which is freely available for all New Zealanders to view."

As regards our Queenstown correspondent's statement that "For those under the impression the town's on a never-ending visitor boom, latest figures show international guest nights down 13.1 percent in September compared to a year ago. DQ cites 'an expected nervousness to travel' compared to a year ago... But local operators are asking themselves: "Shouldn't we be doing better - not worse - compared to the month when we suffered cancellations after September 11?", DQ says it did not cite an "unexpected nervousness to travel" as the reason for the decline in September international guest nights.

Adds Mr Kennedy: "DQ cited the excellent Australian ski season as the reason for the decline of our biggest market."

But local operators are asking themselves: "Shouldn't we be doing better - not worse - compared to the month when we suffered cancellations after September 11?" As regards this, Mr Kennedy tells us: "Queenstown did not suffer cancellations in September 2001. Queenstown area guest nights were up 6.4 percent (12,806) in September 2001, compared with September 2000. The reason for this was explained that many travel bookings were too late to cancel without losing full fares."

Taupo development mooted

TAUPO District Council has paid \$600,000 for a 17ha block adjoining Centennial Park for the possible development of existing motor racing, gliding and horse racing facilities.

Destination Lake Taupo Marketing Events Coordinator Brent Pirie says development proposals include expansion of the motor racing track to international standard.

Mayor Clayton Stent says the purchase enables the existing park users to expand their activities.

"It also provides for the development of other recreational facilities in a single location where their effects can be contained."

Ashburton's first GG21 benchmarking

WARREN and Marita Jowett's Tussock and Beech Ecotours is the first business in Ashburton to be benchmarked to Green Globe 21.

Te Papa increasingly popular

THE number of visits to Te Papa increased by 26,000 to 1,314,208 last year, according to its annual report. This was 31 percent above the museum's target. And by the end of the financial year Te Papa had recorded 6.5 million visits since opening. It thus continues to be the most visited museum in Australasia.

Visitor satisfaction remained high at 94 percent,

with 97 percent of visitors surveyed reporting that they would recommend Te Papa to others.

Overseas visitation increased to 41 percent of total, up from 35 percent in the previous financial year and well above Te Papa's projection of 25 percent.

The deficit of \$13,781,000 million is \$300,000 better than budget.

* GM communications and marketing Paul Brewer says that contrary to media reports Te Papa's financial position is healthy. "Te Papa is not funded for depreciation which means that every year, on paper, a deficit is reported. Instead, government funds work arising from depreciation on an as-needed basis," he tells us.

* New research shows Te Papa adds \$29 million to the capital's economy each year and a further \$23 million to the region.

Wellington Mayor Kerry Prendergast says: "These phenomenal results quantify just how much Te Papa has cemented its place as one of Wellington's key economic drivers." It's the city's cultural cornerstone and premier visitor attraction, she adds.

400 registered for TRENZ

MORE than 400 businesses have registered for TRENZ, to be held in Auckland next year. TIA says there's also considerable interest in the trade show by international buyers.

*** As the registration deadline has passed, acceptance of registration applications is now subject to availability, a late registration fee and additional conditions. Details: www.trenz.co.nz.**

Te Anau has four top holiday parks

TE ANAU has enhanced its reputation as the best place to go for quality holiday parks.

In the past year, 23 holiday parks nationwide have achieved the official Qualmark 5 star or 4 star plus gradings - four of them in Te Anau.

Te Anau Top 10 Mountain View Holiday Park has been rated five star and the Fiordland Holiday Park 4 star plus.

The Te Anau Lakeview Holiday Park has been upgraded from 4 star to 4 star plus, and the new Te Anau Great Lakes Holiday Park achieved a 4 star plus grade on its first assessment.

"There are great holiday parks right across the country, catering to all tastes and budgets," says Qualmark CEO Fiona Luhrs. "But to have four parks in such close proximity, all offering recreational and camping facilities at these standards is unique in New Zealand."

TIA CD-ROM distributed

ALL full members of TIA have now been sent the innovative Tourism Business Builder CD-ROM package. "This new business tool will help operators in their business decision-making and help entrepreneurial ideas reach their full potential," says TIA CEO John Moriarty.

Tourism Waikato CEO Lynda Keene says the CD ROM is a valuable business tool. "It is a resource that will support our operators to develop ideas, identify opportunities and grow their businesses."

Details: www.tianz.org.nz or info@tianz.org.nz.

Affiliate members can buy the package by upgrading to full member. Details: 04-499-0104.

Brochures snapped up

IT usually takes a year for all 70,000 copies of Destination Taranaki's official visitor guide to run out. But in just three months, more than half have already been picked up by visitors, says GM Irena Brooks. Mrs Brooks puts the guide's popularity down to a wider distribution network and a growing interest in the region.

Glenorchy Air gets top marks

SINCE taking to the air 10 years ago this month, flightseeing operator Glenorchy Air could be forgiven for taking time out to mark the occasion, but the company has been too busy with product development.

Qualmark recently tested their flightseeing assessment criteria with the airline before rolling it out nationally.

Glenorchy Air is the first Queenstown-based aviation operator to receive the quality mark. MD Robert Rutherford says; "The Qualmark endorsement provides market credibility and visibility and affords the leisure market informed choice when deciding which operators will meet their needs."

Recent demand for the company's flightseeing product, Trilogy Trail™ showcasing Lord of The Rings® film locations in and around the Wakatipu basin, has been strong and has justified the release of a product brochure next month.

With the imminent global release of the second film - The Two Towers - Mr Rutherford expects interest in New Zealand to even surpass that following the initial release. Details: 03-4422207 or air@glenorchy.net.nz.

More speed controls proposed

TIA says Marlborough District Council is proposing more speed controls in the Sounds. Details: <http://www.marlborough.govt.nz/assets/variation3webpage.pdf>>www.marlborough.govt.nz/assets/variation3webpage.pdf

Visiting Stewart Island?

ADVERT

**There's plenty of accommodation at Beach House and Kereru House.
Bookings: Brenda and Roger Hicks on phone/fax 03-2191348**

If you want to tell TIA what you think of the proposals contact: David Barnes at davidb@tianza.org.nz.

Sky City gives museum more space

THE Sky City Auckland Community Trust is giving Auckland War Memorial \$450,000 to provide an enhanced overall visitor experience and increased floor space of up to 80 percent. It's to be spent on a 150-seat auditorium to be used for cultural performances, lectures, concerts and film screenings. Work will start in September next year.

There will be 9000 sq m of floor space. Other features include improved service and transport facilities, enhanced collection care and six new levels in the internal courtyard comprising an exhibition hall, international standard gallery, education centre, roof-top garden restaurant and event centre.

As a result of the extra exhibition space, some of the Pacific's most significant historical collections will be brought out of storage and onto display at the museum.

The Maori and Pacific collections are arguably the most important of their kind in the world.

Virgin Blue cool to Dunedin

THE \$300,000 annual cost of pest control at Dunedin airport will be a major factor in Virgin Blue's decision whether to fly to the city. The cost is passed on to international airlines using airport facilities. So far that's only Freedom Air. But if Virgin Blue starts trans Tasman services it'll have to pay as well. And the carrier's Dave Huttner points out: "Dunedin is not a huge city. It's a marginal call..."

The government subsidises biosecurity charges at Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch. But not Dunedin.

Boutique hotel for Dunedin

AZALEA House is the name of a 12-suite \$1.5 million boutique hotel planned for Dunedin.

AirNZ strict on luggage now

AIRNZ is making no apologies for its tough enforcement of its 20kg baggage allowance. Cycling Southland and Southland Golf are dependent on airlines to transport competitors to national events. Now they are considering which airline to use - because of AirNZ's "excessive baggage costs."

Bikes now cost \$50 a time to be carried, and golf clubs now come in for a \$5/kg excess baggage fee. Southland Golf CEO Bruce Sanford says Origin Pacific don't charge. "We have a choice in Southland now, so we will be taking advantage of that." Cycling Southland CEO Bruce Ross says: "AirNZ has reduced fares on one hand, but have no flexibility at all. Several riders have two bikes, so it's made it a bit tougher.

"Even though the fares are cheaper, we are probably back where we started."

Some tourism's bad - WTO

NOT every kind of tourism is good! The World Tourism Organisation (WTO) says unguided tourism development can have profound negative environmental as well as adverse social and cultural impacts.

"Without an appropriate strategic vision, regulatory framework, efficient planning, sound management and clear sustainable development guidelines, tourism can cause much harm," it adds.

Policy makers have to look ahead, decide priorities and make hard choices today, to ensure that tomorrow's tourism makes a central contribution to a fairer and more sustainable planet.

That's why the WTO is holding the fourth International Forum for Parliaments and Local Authorities in Panama this week. Attending are MPs, mayors and councillors from around the globe.

Tempting with an Apple

TO celebrate the launch of The Interisland Line's online booking service and new-look website, the ferry operator is offering customers the chance to win a new Apple iMac computer - as well as a daily 'travel for free' prize.

Every customer who books and pays for their ferry travel on The Interislander or The Lynx using the new easy-to-use web-based reservations system, will go into a draw to win an iMac.

Over the month-long promotion, there'll be a daily 'travel for free' prize draw enabling everyone who has booked and paid online for their ferry travel to win their booking for free.

The first customer to make a booking on the Net was a US-based NASA employee, travelling on December 31 with his motorbike.

Marketing and sales manager Peter Monk says consumers can view all fares available on their given travel date and choose the one that best suits their plans.

"It also means that passengers won't have to spend time waiting in phone queues to our call centre to make a booking. They'll be able to log-on, select their sailings and pay there and then. That's the beauty of this new system - it operates 24/7 and it's quick, easy and 'live'."

Mr Monk says the launch of the new online booking is phase one of several new services planned.

"Our next task will be to start working on phase two of the project which will include a facility to amend a booking online. Other long-term ideas include the possibility of electronic ticket kiosks and the ability for customers to be able to check themselves onto the ferries."

WOMAD full of colour

DRUMMERS from Burkina Faso, Cuban bass players of Buena Vista Social club fame, Mexican punk bands, traditional Xhosa music, Irish singers, British cellists will perform at The World of Music and Dance from March 14-16 in New Plymouth. Details: 06-7598412, fax 598458 or taranakifest4@xtra.co.nz.

Behind the nz.com secrecy: quality internet branding

THEY'VE been a bit secretive over the years. And many in the industry have wondered what "nz.com" is all about. Now, for the first time, director Tim Brown tells *IT* the reasoning behind it all...

"Nz.com has a vision for a national approach to developing and marketing New Zealand on the world stage using innovative internet technology," he tells us. "This vision includes marketing New Zealand as a tourism destination and as a source of high quality goods and services.

"We have developed an internationally unique branding proposition which uses domain names in the nz.com internet name space."

Examples he cites in the tourism areas are www.tourism.nz.com, www.pure.nz.com, www.queenstown.nz.com, www.jetboating.nz.com, www.shotoverjet.nz.com.

Adds Mr Brown: "We plan to allow organisations that comply with quality guidelines to use appropriate nz.com names. These guidelines are yet to be set. In the tourism industry, we may use Qualmark certification as the measure of quality."

He says nz.com names will not be allocated on a by request, first come, first served basis. "Regional names will be reserved for local government accredited agencies. Generic names for industry groups will not be available to individual companies."

By including quality control for name holders, he adds, nz.com can be the trusted brand for quality New Zealand information, products and services. "We plan to combine the network of consistently named quality controlled sites with sophisticated listing and searching facilities. This will allow Internet users to both find the information they desire and to trust the information that they have found."

He says the company's idea is to use nz.com for the good of New Zealand. "The second proposal is to use nz.com as a commercial namespace and it follows the business models of a number of international businesses (au.com, uk.com, Dot tv). We

decided to initially pursue the public good model over the standard commercial model."

The concept has been promoted to TNZ and other government agencies. But although many have listened few have believed.

"We have not succeeded in gaining traction with central government organisations in this time-frame," Mr Brown adds. "The challenge for us remains how long shall we pursue a public good model before reviewing our direction and pursuing a purely commercial business?"

* NZ.com came live in 1995 and was the first internet brand established for New Zealand. Over the years it has been successful, having 15,000 sites linked to it compared to www.purenz.com's 1,800. NZ.Com Ltd was established in 1999 with the intention of developing nz.com as the country's premier national portal. Today, it generates more than 100,000 unique visitors to the site each month with 700,000 pages of information transferred in that time.

* Mr Brown welcomes comment on whether the industry considers a series of quality regional and national websites using nz.com naming will enhance New Zealand's tourism branding...

"Do you think that your business would benefit from being associated with this high quality Internet branding," he asks. "Do you think that this initiative should be controlled by industry or by central government?"

* NZ.Com Ltd is a joint venture between Unify Ltd and Akiko International Ltd. Akiko is Maori for "away from home" and part of the motivation in starting the site was to bring "home" to New Zealanders and others living overseas things-Kiwi. Details: 0800-4-NZCOM or Tim.Brown@nz.com.

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View from on high

TANDEM Skydive Wanaka which already boasts "the most visually spectacular backdrop in the world" for jumping into, has another leading point-of-difference - a new purpose-built Cresco 750 aircraft with Perspex door and camera pod on the wing. The camera photographs participants as they hang out the aircraft prior to their dive at 200kph from either 9,000ft (2,740m) or 12,000ft (3,658m) Details: Dave and Juliet Hall on 0800-786877 or skydive@lakewanaka.co.nz.

Don't waste rates, says Mayor

GORE District Mayor Owen O'Connor warns that Venture Southland must be careful not to spend rates on commercial operations.

Mr O'Connor says he is aware of discussions in committee where this possibility had been considered. He declined to say if the discussions involved airlines coming into Invercargill.

James' 10 keys to success....

THERE are 10 keys to success, according to Waimangu Volcanic Valley CEO Harvey James. He says that to plan for the future we must study change. We should learn from past changes, adapt to the present by managing change - and plan for the future by anticipating it.

The keys are: continuous planning; constant consultation; managing all stakeholder expectations in a meaningful way; being realistic about what you can achieve; to focus on quality; to avoid strong positions on public issues and the use of slogans; to acknowledge differences; to listen and learn; to be open and transparent; to build ownership of processes and outcomes; to be prepared to improvise.

Mr James says that if consultants are ever used they should be credible and thought-provoking. The company's sustainable tourism business plan says Waimangu is a unique environment, geothermally, botanically and historically. DoC

uses it as a benchmark for tourism lease management and practice.

Mr James says new products are trialed continuously and they should be flexible - to give customers choice.

The plan shows that preliminary investigation has been carried out into developing opportunities with other Rotorua businesses such as Wai-O-Tapu, Tarawera Mountain, Te Wairoa Buried Village, Whakarewarewa and Tikitere.

The company also plans three environmental restoration projects in conjunction with DoC within the next three years. Waimangu is a founding member of the Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter, the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development and Better Bay Business.

This year Mr James has addressed seminars on sustainable development in Japan, Dunedin and Rotorua.

Highlights for Japanese visitors are walks - and shopping!

HIGHLIGHTS for Japanese visitors to New Zealand are short walks and shopping (each done by 97 percent of total) with 18 percent considering the former a highlight but only six percent considering shopping as a highlight.

Then comes local cuisine, enjoyed by 88 percent, but considered a highlight by only seven percent. Meeting local people is experienced by 83 percent, of whom 17 percent think it a highlight. Next in popularity are museums and galleries (83 percent) with 10 percent considering this a highlight. Botanical gardens are enjoyed by 71 percent with seven percent recalling this as a highlight. Sightseeing and boat tours are each done by 70 percent of Japanese visitors with 12 and 14 percent respectively being highlights.

Hiking is done by 67 percent and is considered a highlight by the largest number: 19 percent.

Maori performances attract 64 percent with 11 percent highlight and meeting Maori is rated a highlight by only seven percent, although done by 64 percent.

Glacier visits are done by 52 percent and considered a highlight by 15 percent of these.

Visits to historical places are en-

joyed by 47 percent of whom seven percent say this is a highlight. Evening entertainment was experienced by 41 percent with only three percent reckoning this is a highlight.

A similar number consider sunbathing a highlight, with this being done by 39 percent of visitors.

Scenic flights are experienced by 38 percent and considered a highlight by 13 percent. Experiencing marine life attracts 37 percent, while five percent of these reckon it's a highlight.

Birdwatching is enjoyed by 36 percent of whom three percent say it's the major highlight. Some four percent of Japanese visitors who experience special events consider this a highlight. It's done by 31 percent. Jetboating is taken on by 30 percent with nine percent considering it a highlight. Swimming is carried out by 25 percent but has the lowest percentage as a highlight: one percent.

The findings are in Dr Juergen Gnoth and Leah Walkins' report, *The Japanese Tourist Market To New Zealand*.

They note that overall the satisfaction levels of Japanese tourists are high across all measurements. "Indeed, the visitors agree

that this appreciation even increased since they returned home," they write.

"The major reasons for this good result were the experiences they had with nature and New Zealanders." Unlike other visitors, Japanese never view landscape, scenery or nature as separate from the people.

But, the report warns, there is no reason for complacency as levels of indifference or even displeasure increase when tourists are asked about facilities and service levels. Many point to an apparent lack of excellent accommodation and staff's deficient understanding of the Japanese culture in service encounters. "Many visitors were also rather disappointed about shopping facilities and were missing some of the luxury they may be used to at home."

Overall, though, the industry can be pleased with itself. "The Japanese all report good to high levels of satisfaction with their holidays. Indeed, we could not find one tourist who reported overall dissatisfaction with his/her holiday."

The report costs \$50. Details: 03-4798368, fax 4798172 or marketing@otago.ac.nz.

Doc report puts spotlight on Milford

VISITOR numbers to Milford Sound have increased from 247,000 in 1992 to 410,000 this year. DoC says in its proposed Fiordland National Park management plan that when new facilities were built in 1992 they were designed for up to 4,000 visitors a day. But while this has managed the interface between coaches and boats there's still a problem with most visitors arriving at the same time.

Demand

The problem is how to manage an increasing demand for adventure tourism activities and how to fund and manage the village infrastructure and services.

The report says Milford is a juxtaposition. "Very noisy and busy during four to five hours of the day and very quiet and peaceful during the rest of the day and at night. On a fine day it has one of the busiest airports in New Zealand."

DoC expects mass market coach day visitors will still dominate but notes that facilities needed for them can be marginally financial because they are under-used during winter and the daily off shoulder periods.

It wonders if the noise and congestion associated with mass tourism affects the more experienced freedom traveller.

Milford has a relatively unmodified landscape and protection of these values is more important than large-scale developments, given the national park setting.

Provisions

DoC suggests a single, central authority be appointed to service provisions. It's also suggesting that coach visitors should be kept separate to the fishing industry, adventure tourism operators and permanent residents "to minimise the potential for conflict between the different sectors."

A possible exception to development at Milford could be the restructuring of Deepwater Basin to accommodate a base for adventure tourism and extra berths for vessels.

Concerning the road to Milford, DoC says it's an attraction in its own right!

Visitor numbers are increasing by seven percent a year with about 75 percent being from overseas. Almost all take a lunch time cruise on the fiord. To cope with crowding at visitor sites along the road, DoC

suggests providing visitors with better information in a bid to encourage them to travel outside peak times, possibly introducing regulations or to bring in site specific engineering solutions.

If other means of controlling traffic fail, the department says, the Ministers of Tourism and Transport should have enabling legislation to control traffic volumes. Commercial recreation or tourism proposals, including new facilities, may be authorised where appropriate.

Deep Cove

On Deep Cove, DoC says numbers have increased from 30,000 to 41,000 between 1992 and 2000. It notes that it isn't possible to manage Deep Cove for all groups all the time. So to minimise conflict it's suggesting using the area as a transit point only or designing different areas for different users. However, there is a general belief that Deep Cove should never develop into another Milford. An acceptable level may be between the high use of Milford and the use of wilderness areas in the park's interiors.

* To be continued.

Taranaki earns extra \$5M

A 10 percent increase in international visitors to Taranaki between December 2000 and June this year means an extra \$5 million has come into the region since Destination Taranaki began, says GM Irena Brooks.

Shades of things to come

THE future looks so bright for South Taranaki that the local council is giving away sunglasses as part of its summer promotional campaign.

STDC promotion and community facilities manager John Sargeant says that with accommodation statistics up, a buoyant economy, a summer full of tourists "We don't want Taranaki visitors blinded by our future!"

Overnight in Eastland winery

POHUTU Lodge Vineyard, Te Araroa, now has accommodation for one couple or a single person. Details: Brenda Ramage on 0800-764888 or info@PohutuWines.co.nz.

Tamaki *loves* Christchurch

PARIS of the South. That's what Christchurch should promote itself as internationally, reckons TNZ board member, entrepreneur Mike Tamaki. "The rest of New Zealand sees Christchurch as a romantic destination," he says.

"It has the gardens, punting down the Avon, all the arts and crafts. What I'm saying is that it can be seen as the romantic capital of the South Pacific, the city of love. Everything that's here would fit in well with that theme."

He believes the change would put more romance into the everyday lives of Christchurch people!

"What that will do is change the personality of the place. People will feel more romantic too. Christchurch people will get into the swing of it."

* Mr Tamaki was speaking after launching plans for a \$6.4m Maori village and cultural centre.

He reckons the village, adjacent to Ferrymead, will attract up to 460,000 visitors a year. He's hoping for an opening in November.

Northland has the X factor, says Roberts

DESTINATION Northland's new brand has the X factor, according to CEO Brian Roberts.

It uses the catch lines "Northland Naturally" and "First Region of New Zealand"

Mr Roberts, says in-depth research and community consultation has proved that "Northland Naturally" "speaks an essential and appealing truth...we are a region of outstanding natural beauty, and immense natural resources."

Her adds: "Northland Naturally is confident, provides a great platform to surprise and enthuse people, while being simple and endlessly adaptable. As a brand it also has the "X" factor that Northland deserves."

"Kokiri Ngatahi Taitokerau - Northland Forward Together" -

is used as a secondary catch line. Mr Roberts says the brand motif, which incorporates a fern frond and sun, celebrates a beautiful and unspoiled Northland, salutes a region rich in history, and upholds the integrity, charisma and mana of the region.

"One of the key strengths of the brand is that it is extremely adaptable, with the phrase 'Northland Naturally' able to be combined with powerful secondary sentiments, such as *Unexpectedly, Enterprisingly, Spiritually, Spectacularly* and *Essentially*."

To the heart of it

TO entice more visitors to Palmerston North, coaches and campervans will soon be able to drive into the eastern quadrant of The Square. A new 530-sq m information centre with showers, lockers and public email facilities will cost \$647,000. The Art Deco Ladies' Rest building will also be modernised.

Road access to The Square from Rangitikei Street will be opened up, though The Square will also be able to be closed off.

The proposal is designed to provide an integrated service to visitors, especially backpackers.

Sublime security

THE ultimate security is your understanding of reality, one H. Stanley Judd is quoted as saying in the latest America Hotel and Lodging Association newsletter.

In an article on "the search for security: you'll never see it, but it's there" the association says hotels are not top secret CIA installations. "A hotel can only be made so secure before it turns into something of a prison," it points out. Because no two hotels are the same, there can be no uniformity in determining whether a property is "safe" or "secure."

Walking holidays

HOLIDAY tours for walkers are being offered by Go Tours of Foxton Beach. Owners Warren and Diane Montgomery have a four night "energy walkers' delight" around New Plymouth which is \$375 inclusive except for lunch and dinner. "Top of the south" is of similar duration and takes in Marlborough after a trip on the interisland ferry. Cost is \$540. Other trips include Taupo, Rotorua and Napier. Details: 06-3638580 or 025-486558.

How to keep 'em happy!

USE your customers' names. Keep a smile in your voice. Look for connections with your customers and make them. And be more cheerful in the way you communicate.

"If you want visitors to widen their "tolerance zone" you have to be friendly with them. "Friendliness builds trust and inspires forgiveness," writes Leah Fisher of TMI NZ in the latest HAPNZ newsletter.

"Tolerance zone"? That's the difference between the service they desire and the minimum they will accept without feeling negative towards the provider. The idea is to have the client's tolerance zone as large as possible. To do that, all you have to do is be genuinely friendly, adds Ms Fisher.

Disabled buses an'all...

DO you have disabled buses Hamilton's Hilary "Larry" McLachlan is often asked. "And I always say 'no, they actually run very well!'" But she does have a coach to take people in wheelchairs. The Company is called Easy Rider Tours. Details: 07-8492402 or larry@easyrider.co.nz or www.easyrider.co.nz

Copthorne Hotel & Resort Bay of Islands

Copthorne Hotel & Resort Bay of Islands is located within the Waitangi National Trust Reserve, surrounded by bush walks, a scenic golf course, the historic National Treaty House and the sparkling waters of the beautiful Bay of Islands. The Waitangi Restaurant offers relaxed and informal dining, with a la carte or buffet menus whilst the House and Cafe Bars enjoy stunning views across the bay. The Bioharmonics of the rock swimming pool complex make this both a facility to enjoy and a marvellous place to relax and take in the Oceanside location. For the energetic, tennis and mountain biking are also on offer. For those guests who like to get out on the water there is a range of options to cater for all tastes, from leisurely cruises and visits to Islands through to fast rides and Deep Sea Fishing. Visit Copthorne Hotel and Resort Bay of Islands to relax to refresh and to be invigorated!

For Information and Reservations call toll free 0800 808 228, Email: central.res@mcqhotels.co.nz or visit our website at www.mcqhotels.co.nz

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