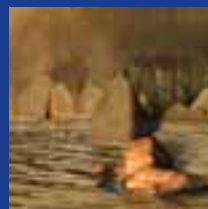


# IN ESSENCE

rotorua news - product updates & essential extras



SUMMER 2010

**ROT@RUA**  
*feel the spirit*  
Manaakitanga



Kia Ora

Everyone in Rotorua is very excited about the new direct trans-Tasman flight services, which Air New Zealand launched on December 12, 2009.

The new flights will make Rotorua more accessible to the Australian market; people will now be able to pop across the Tasman for short breaks. Rotorua's profile in Australia is expected to significantly grow as a result, leading to more visitors and increased opportunities for them to participate in a wide range of activities.

Recent trips to Australia by Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing representatives have received positive feedback, showing that leisure and business travellers in Australia are also excited about the new flights.

We are continuing to promote Rotorua as a top conference destination in Australia, and we look forward to seeing many more corporate clients in Rotorua as a result of the direct flights.

Many tourism operators have developed new products for the Australian market in time for summer and you can read all about them, and other product updates, in this publication. Enjoy your summer.

Best regards,

Don Gunn,  
General Manager,  
Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing

By pledging continual improvement to the sustainability of their businesses, Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter members collectively work towards making Rotorua a sustainable destination. [www.sustainableNZ.com](http://www.sustainableNZ.com)



Qualmark® is New Zealand tourism's official mark of quality. [www.qualmark.co.nz](http://www.qualmark.co.nz)



Recognising the top performing Qualmark Green businesses is easy via the new enviro logos. [www.qualmark.co.nz/responsibletourism](http://www.qualmark.co.nz/responsibletourism)



**ROT@RUA™**  
*feel the spirit™*  
Manaakitanga

[www.rotoruaNZ.com](http://www.rotoruaNZ.com)

Front cover: Time out on Lake Rotoiti with Pure Cruise.  
PHOTOGRAPHER: MATT HORDER

Back cover: Blue Baths' latest show 'Pirates of the Blue Pearl.'  
PHOTOGRAPHER: GRAEME MURRAY

## UP, UP AND AWAY

After five years operating V8 jet boats on Lake Rotorua, **KAWARAU JET** owners Ross and Fiona Kelly decided it was time to add a new thrill. To that end they secured a variation of their license to allow them to add a parasailing string to their bow.

They bought a 26-foot purpose-built parasail boat in Australia last winter, and have since refitted and rebranded it. The boat has twin Suzuki 140 four-stroke engines and is surveyed for 12 people. The couple hope to operate the new tours year-round, weather permitting.

Although based at the Rotorua lakefront, the parasailing operation has the flexibility to move to other lakes. Kawarau Jet can also work with fellow tourism operators to create exciting combos for the conference and group markets.

The parasailing trips will run under the guidelines of Maritime and CAA laws. All boat drivers hold local launch operator and flight radio-telephone operator licenses.

**CONTACT** Fiona Kelly  
**TEL** +64 7 343 7600  
**FAX** +64 7 343 7900  
**EMAIL** [kjetrotorua@xtra.co.nz](mailto:kjetrotorua@xtra.co.nz)  
**WWW** [kjetrotorua.co.nz](http://kjetrotorua.co.nz)



## SEALED WITH A HAKA

### NEW ZEALAND MAORI WEDDINGS

NZ Maori Weddings will launch a new package in the Australian market in January 2010.

Maori Weddings now offers cultural-themed wedding ceremonies with a haka performed during the ceremony that is dedicated to the bride and groom.

Couples are serenaded with Pokarekare Ana, Rotorua's most renowned love song while wearing Maori cloaks and receiving a blessing from a Maori priest.

"A lifetime commitment that two people are about to make to each other on their wedding day has got to be the ultimate challenge, so what better way for Aussie couples to seal their marriage than to cross the ditch to Rotorua and receive the New Zealand haka on their wedding day as a mark of dedication and respect?" New Zealand Maori Weddings director Darren Brown says.

New Zealand Maori Weddings has been offering traditional wedding experiences for five years.

**CONTACT** Darren Brown  
**TEL** +64 7 347 6589  
**FAX** +64 7 347 6589  
**EMAIL** [maoriweddings@xtra.co.nz](mailto:maoriweddings@xtra.co.nz)  
**WWW** [maoriweddings.com](http://maoriweddings.com)



## EXCITING SUMMER ADVENTURES UP FOR GRABS

**MULTI-DAY ADVENTURES** is offering three exciting new products for summer.

A twist on Multi-Day's current action-packed Rotorua adventure day of mountain biking, waterfall rafting and kayaking, the Rotorua leisure day offers a casual approach to mountain biking in Whakarewarewa Forest and kayaking to the Manupirua Hot Pools on Lake Rotoiti.

"The Rotorua adventure day has been such a successful tour for us, we thought to cater this seamless product for younger, older and not-so-adventurous clientele as well," Multi-Day Adventures managing director Kim Chater says.

"Having an option without the rafting opens up a brand new product for those eight and older, making it perfect for families."

Another great family option is the Wharepapa rock climbing adventure. Visitors can climb and abseil in Wharepapa's Hobbiton-like landscape.

"We were really keen to include an option that allowed groups and families of all ages to enjoy activities together. This tour offers fresh air, great outdoor adventure and stunning landscapes to explore," Kim says.



Also on offer is the Moerangi mountain bike challenge, using the new MTB track opened in Whirinaki Forest Park in September 2009 (see story below).

"The Moerangi ride will rival the ever-popular 42- Traverse in Tongariro for an excellent adventure in New Zealand wilderness," Kim says.

**CONTACT** Kim Chater

**TEL** +64 7 362 4399 **FAX** +64 7 362 4399

**EMAIL** [newzealand@multidayadventures.co.nz](mailto:newzealand@multidayadventures.co.nz)

**WWW** [www.multidayadventures.co.nz](http://www.multidayadventures.co.nz)



## TRACK REVAMPED FOR MOUNTAIN BIKERS' USE

One of New Zealand's newest overnight adventures has been re-designed to cater for mountain bikers.

The **MOERANGI TRACK** weaves through the Whirinaki Forest, one of the world's oldest, most spectacular and interesting forests, close to Rotorua. It passes three Department of Conservation (DOC) huts, one of which is a historic deer cullers' hut.

The 35km track is a mix of pumice and crumbled rock, and climbs 640m or 840m depending on the route. A medium fitness level is required.

Users can stop overnight and experience the majesty of the forest, far from the city lights, with only the calls of native birds such as kiwi and morepork providing a soundtrack.

The track is approximately 90km south-east of Rotorua via SH38. It is accessible from Okahu Road (easy) or River Road (hard).

The Moerangi Track is ideal for commercially guided biking groups. Commercial activities within DOC-administered land require concessions. Information on concessions and the application process is available at: [www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/concessions-and-permits/concessions](http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/concessions-and-permits/concessions).

**CONTACT** Steve Brightwell

**TEL** +64 7 349 7408 **FAX** +64 7 349 7401

**EMAIL** [sbrightwell@doc.govt.nz](mailto:sbrightwell@doc.govt.nz)

**WWW** [www.doc.govt.nz](http://www.doc.govt.nz)



PHOTO: DAVE DONALDSON - ROTORUA MTB CLUB



PHOTO: DAVE DONALDSON - ROTORUA MTB CLUB



## GREENSTONE CARVING SHOWCASES MAORI TRADITION



Visitors are able to get a glimpse into a sacred Maori tradition with **TE PUIA'S** latest initiative.

The Pounamu Training and Development Unit, launched in October 2009, has been established alongside Te Puia's long-standing Te Wananga Whakairo Rakau (carving school) and Te Rito (weaving school) within the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute.

Pounamu - New Zealand jade was (and still is) a prized resource for old-time Maori, who used it to craft tools and war weapons due to its hardness as well as taonga and jewellery for highly regarded chiefs. Pounamu also has spiritual significance for Maori and is used as the mauri (life force) stone for a building or structure.

The new pounamu carving team is led by Lewis Gardiner of Ngati Pikiiao and Ngai Tahu descent. The workshop is situated next to the carving school and items produced are available for purchase through Te Puia's retail store.

The new initiative enhances the visitor experience at Te Puia, providing an authentic and unique view into the time-honoured arts and crafts of the Maori people.

**CONTACT** Karl Johnstone  
**TEL** +64 7 343 1873  
**FAX** +64 7 348 9045  
**EMAIL** karl@tepuia.com  
**WWW** .tepuia.com



## SIGNS POINT TO SPA'S COLOURFUL HISTORY

New signage at **POLYNESIAN SPA** celebrates the site's 130-year European history.

The historical signage recalls a fake beautician called Rachel peddling flim flam, a Roman Catholic Priest soaking his arthritis, and water jets treating 'hysteria, engorged liver or piles'.

"Tourists look for remarkable history in Rotorua and, here at Polynesian Spa, they find it," Polynesian Spa managing director Martin Lobb says.

Polynesian Spa's signage celebrates:

A women's only pool, where women bathed naked in The Rachel Spring's waters.

A thermal pool where men bathed naked, and which had a hoist capable of gently dropping them in.

Rheumatism sufferer Father Mahoney, who arrived in 1878, hand dug a pool on the current site. He claimed the water eased his pain and later said he had been cured from the soaking. Others said the Priest Spa, named for Father Mahoney, could 'reduce plethora and corpulency without prostration'

The (then) Duchess of Cornwall visited Rotorua in 1901 to open the Duchess Bath but refused to soak in it.

Aix therapies were introduced from France in 1903. The treatment was



said to help if you had 'hysteria, engorged liver or piles'. Nowadays, Martin says, the relaxing therapy simply pampers visitors.

**CONTACT** Martin Lobb  
**TEL** +64 7 348 1328 **FAX** +64 7 348 9486  
**EMAIL** martin@polynesianspa.co.nz  
**WWW** .polynesianspa.co.nz



## MORE DEVELOPMENTS COME ON STREAM

KYLIE DAY PHOTOGRAPHY



The new Waterfall Lakes development at **RAINBOW SPRINGS KIWI WILDLIFE PARK** opened on December 1, 2009, in time for summer.

Previously a coach parking area, the site has been transformed into a beautifully landscaped area. It features a majestic 4.2m waterfall, two spring-water lakes filled with rainbow trout, viewing platforms and a flat area suitable for events.

Rainbow Springs' event manager Kat Hicks says the site is perfect for weddings, functions and local events.

Also new is Wairere Café, serving organic food made from produce grown on-site.

Staff at Kiwi Encounter, the working kiwi incubation and hatching

facility at Rainbow Springs, welcomed their 750th kiwi chick in October 2009. The kiwi husbandry team is looking forward to reaching the significant milestone of 1000 kiwi hatches, which should happen next season.

Kiwi Encounter is sponsored by the Bank of New Zealand Save the Kiwi Trust. Purpose-built and open to the public, it is the largest centre of its type in the country.

**CONTACT** Michelle Caldwell  
**TEL** +64 7 350 0459 **FAX** +64 7 350 0441  
**EMAIL** michelle.caldwell@nttourism.co.nz  
**WWW**.rainbowsprings.co.nz



## AMAZING GROWTH MEANT EARLY OPENING



A new hedge maze opened in Rotorua on January 2, six months ahead of schedule.

**AMAZEME** comprises 1.4km of winding hedge-lined pathways designed to challenge any visitor.

Transplanted on to the maze site in December 2007, the hedges have grown to a height of 1.8m faster than expected, allowing the attraction to open early.

Owned and operated by Peer and Alexandra Jensen, aMAZEME aims to provide old fashioned fun for families at an affordable price. Kids will enjoy the chance to pet small animals and explore the aviary and playground. A butterfly house will open in February, and there will be themed night-time horror events such as Friday the 13th and Halloween.

"Visitors will be guaranteed to have an awesome time being scared witless while hopefully finding their way through the maze to find theme-based refreshments at the centre," Alexandra says.

Everyone can enjoy Mr McGregor's Garden (named after the garden in Beatrix Potter's Peter Rabbit books), which features raised garden beds full of fruit, berries and vegetables in season. Some of these will be available for purchase.

The new attraction can be found at 1335 Paradise Valley Road, near Agroventures.

**CONTACT** Peer or Alexandra Jensen  
**TEL** +64 7 349 1962 **FAX** +64 7 349 1968  
**EMAIL** amazeme@xtra.co.nz  
**WWW**.amazeme.co.nz



## MUD SOAK CHASER FOR WHITE WATER 'DIP'

**KAITIAKI ADVENTURES** and **HELL'S GATE** have joined forces to offer a new Raft, Mud Bath and Spa product.

A great combination of adrenalin, Maori culture and exclusive mud bath and spa offerings, this experience is a must-do for visitors to Rotorua.

The trip begins with a white water rafting experience on the Kaituna River. An action-packed grade five trip, this river features 14 drops including the seven-metre Tutea Falls, the world's highest commercially rafted waterfall.

Kaitiaki staff give clients an introduction to the area's Maori history through karakia (prayer), kupu hou (new Maori words) and myths and legends.



Hell's Gate and Wai Ora Spa is the only active geothermal park in Rotorua where customers can utilise the healing sulphuric waters and mud baths. The mud bath and spa experience is unique to Hell's Gate, and is completely safe; local Maori people have used the healing waters and mud of Hell's Gate for more than 700 years.

As Kaitiaki Adventures is based at Hell's Gate visitors don't lose time travelling between the

attractions. Transport can also be provided to and from the city centre.

**CONTACT** Jason Wright  
**TEL** +64 7 357 2236 **FAX** +64 27 537 1469  
**EMAIL** jason@kaitiaki.co.nz **WWW** kaitiaki.co.nz



## COTTAGE CAN INCLUDE TROUT EXCURSION

**BANKSIA COTTAGE** is one of Rotorua's newest accommodation providers.

Opened in November 2009, the two-bedroom cottage is nestled in farmland just a few minutes' drive from Rotorua Airport. It's an ideal home-stay accommodation option close to the city centre, a range of attractions and Rotorua's stunning lakes.

The Whakarewarewa Forest, home to some of the world's best mountain bike tracks, is just 10 minutes' drive from the cottage. Two quality mountain bikes are available for hire, as is a rack that can be easily fitted to any vehicle.



Co-owner Paddy O'Brien has many years' experience fishing on Rotorua's lakes and offers guided trout fishing tours on request.

Paddy and partner Jan are Rotorua locals who pride themselves on their friendly humour. They will happily go the extra mile to ensure guests have an enjoyable stay. Pets are welcome.

Airport pick-up is available by arrangement.

**CONTACT** Paddy O'Brien  
**TEL** +64 7 362 4490  
**EMAIL** paddyo@banksiacottage.co.nz  
**WWW** banksiacottage.co.nz

## DESIGN OWN STAY PLUS PLAY



**DESIGNER HOLIDAYS**, one of the new Rotorua accommodation options, offers guests stress-free holidays designed just for them.

Situated in Oturoa Road, Ngongotaha, the modern brick home is surrounded by four acres of farmland. It caters to up to four people and meals can be included.

Hosts Lenva and Robert Clark are more than happy to show guests around Rotorua, as well as offering day trips to Waitomo (including the caves and several other attractions), Taupo, Whakatane and Mt Maunganui.

Alternatively, guests can simply relax on the property, interacting with farm animals such as goats and sheep, and enjoying the stunning lake and city views.

Designer Holidays also has a two-bedroom apartment at Mt Maunganui offering similar meal and tour options.

**CONTACT** Lenva or Robert Clark  
**TEL** +64 7 332 2332  
**FAX** +64 7 332 2332  
**EMAIL** info@designerholidays.co.nz  
**WWW** designerholidays.co.nz

## ACCESS TO REMOTE WILDERNESS PLAYGROUND



A twice-weekly shuttle service between Rotorua and Waikaremoana was launched in November 2009.

Owned and operated by Joe and Jo Doherty and Richard and Meriann White, **TE UREWERA SHUTTLE** provides regular access to Whirinaki Forest Park, Te Urewera National Park and Lake Waikaremoana.

Joe says the shuttle service is being operated by locals who know the road and everything the region can offer.

"As operators of Te Urewera Treks, we have been getting

regular feedback that the region needed a scheduled transport service - and knew the area had lost potential visitors through lack of transport.

"Te Urewera has a fantastic network of walking tracks, fishing and hunting spots, mountain bike trails, rivers, lakes, campsites and huts. By taking the shuttle, visitors can sit back and enjoy the view. As a bonus, the local drivers will provide information on the region's history, sites of significance, and the best places to go."

The shuttle can carry mountain bikes, so riders can access Whirinaki Forest trails including the newly revamped Moerangi Track.

The shuttle runs on Thursday and Sunday between October and April. It leaves from the Rotorua i-SITE at 8.30am and returns around 7.20pm, (leaving Lake Waikaremoana at 3pm). Bookings are essential.

**CONTACT** Jo Doherty

**TEL** +64 7 366 3484 **FAX** +64 7 366 3483

**EMAIL** joanna@teureweratreks.co.nz

**WWW** teureweratreks.co.nz

## CONTENDER FOR ADDITION TO NZ'S GREAT WALKS

The **DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION** (DOC) is aiming to make walking in Rotorua better than ever, with several projects.

First on the agenda is the Tarawera Trails project. This initiative involves creating new trails to link with existing ones, to form a complete network of trails between Rotorua city and the lakes.

"The development of this trail network will enable visitors to Rotorua to experience walks that will rival many of the 'Great Walks' of New Zealand, within easy access of town," says DOC's Rotorua Lakes area manager Nicki Douglas.

Featuring volcanic zones, mountain views, hot pools, amazing waterfalls, secluded beaches and pristine native bush, the tracks will be suitable for all age groups and levels of fitness.

Stage I of the project, which will begin in January, is due for completion by the end 2010. Beginning near The Landing, Lake Tarawera, the first 11km section of the new walk will take in Hot Water Beach (site of natural thermal bathing pools and a DOC campsite) and end at Te Arika's Isthmus Track, which links Lake Tarawera to Lake Rotomahana.

Stage II of the trail, the 14km Te Arika - Tarawera Outlet section, will be completed in 2011. This will provide walking access to another DOC campsite (at the Outlet) and the spectacular Tarawera Falls, via a side track. The Outlet already links to neighbouring Lake Okataina (and the Eastern Okataina Walkway) via Humphries Bay.

Rotorua Lakes community relations ranger Rob Griffiths sees real potential for local tourism operators. He says there will be



PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

opportunities for picks up/drop offs via shuttle bus and water taxi across the lakes area plus 'add on' options to walk through to the Waimangu Valley via the Isthmus Track.

Other projects recently completed include improvements at Hamurana, new trails near Tikitapu and maintenance at Rainbow Mountain. "The really exciting part is that most of these projects are either initiated by the community or have huge community support," says Rob.

**CONTACT** Rob Griffiths

**TEL** +64 7 349 8226 **FAX** +64 7 349 7401

**EMAIL** rigriffiths@doc.govt.nz

**WWW** doc.govt.nz



PHOTO: DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION



## LUXURY PRODUCT

### ADRENALIN PLUS SAIL, GREAT COMBO



Luxury yacht charter company **PURE CRUISE** has partnered with two other Rotorua operators to offer fantastic combination products for its exclusive charter clients.

In conjunction with Kawarau Jet, Pure Cruise now offers a memorable half-day on the water. The trip begins with an exhilarating jet boat trip across Lake Rotorua and through the scenic Ohau Channel. Clients will then board Pure Cruise's 53-foot luxury catamaran Tiua for an unforgettable sail on Lake Rotoiti.

Pure Cruise also now offers a discovery combo with Volcanic Air Safaris. Fly over Rotorua's crater lakes, Mt Tarawera and geothermal icons in a floatplane or helicopter before transferring to Pure Cruise.

Both new products were launched in October 2009.

"We are offering those who want to sail with us the opportunity to do so in combination with other activities they also want to do," Pure Cruise co-director Tina Masters says.

The company's summer sailing schedule, launched in October 2009, includes an early morning sail on Lake Rotoiti that includes a soak at the Manupirua Hot Springs as well as a spectacular sunset cruise.

All cruises have minimal environmental impact, and offer guests the chance to sail the catamaran.

**CONTACT** Matt Horder or Tina Masters  
**TEL** 0800 272 456 **FAX** +64 7 362 8602  
**EMAIL** matt@purecruise.co.nz or tina@purecruise.co.nz  
**WWW** .purecruise.co.nz

### TOUR GUIDE OFFERS LUXURY EXPERIENCE

A Rotorua tourism expert is now offering private guided tours around the region.

**ANDREW MARTIN** was born and raised in Rotorua so has extensive local knowledge. He also has plenty of tourism experience, having spent several years running a lodge in Rotorua before setting up the tour company. He has travelled extensively, so is skilled at dealing with people from any culture.

The exclusive tours will be aimed at high-end travellers and are half- and full-day as required. Clients will travel in luxury in a late-model 4WD and attractions will be included according to their preferences.

Andrew will share Rotorua's history, culture and legends with clients. He believes visitors will be blown away by volcanic landscapes and powerful natural forces, appreciate the warm and proud spirit of the Maori culture, and absorb the beauty of the region's lakes and forests.

**CONTACT** Andrew Martin  
**TEL** + 64 7 929 9520  
**FAX** + 64 929 9518  
**EMAIL** andrew@redcarpetrotorua.co.nz  
**WWW** .redcarpetrotorua.co.nz/privateguiding



## NOISE-SENSITIVE APPROACH WILL WIN FRIENDS

**HELIPRO** introduced a new whisper-quiet EC120 helicopter to its fleet in October 2009. The new technology helicopter incorporates a



Fenestron tail rotor, which significantly reduces noise emissions.

The EC120 is a four-passenger helicopter designed for the corporate and tourism market. It is the quietest aircraft in its class and boasts unparalleled passenger comfort and viewing.

The new addition runs alongside HELIPRO's existing fleet, which includes the twin-engine Squirrel that is also sought after by the corporate and luxury markets.

HELIPRO director Tim Barrow says that operating in noise-sensitive areas such as national parks and sensitive urban dwellings will require a 'fly neighbourly' approach in future. "This means employing flying methods that minimise noise, such as pointing helicopters away from houses and using terrain to block sound. Combined with new technology like the Fenestron tail rotor, this should allow the world of tourism to flourish while meeting the requirements of the general public."

**CONTACT** Tim Barrow

**TEL:**+64 7 357 2512 **FAX** +64 7 357 2502

**EMAIL** tim@helipro.co.nz **WWW**.helipro.co.nz



## RETREATS FOR MIND, BODY AND SOUL

Lake Okareka-based **CAREEM WELLNESS SPA** has come up with an answer to stress – unique luxury four-day health and wellness spa retreats set in the beauty and tranquility of Rotorua's lakes.

The retreats were introduced in November 2009 and give guests three options: slow down and be pampered with the Beautiful You Retreat, cleanse and detox with the Wellbeing Retreat or focus on wellness and healthy food habits with the Real Food Retreat.

Treatments are provided by Carol Bannister, a degree-qualified and experienced naturopath, medical herbalist, aromatherapist and spa therapist.



This is the first time Careem has offered a package combining day spa retreats with local lakes, accommodation providers and tourism operators. It is targeting trans-Tasman tourists, but Carol says it is also appropriate for NZ independent travellers as well as visitors from the UK and US markets.

The package also includes time for local sightseeing.

**CONTACT** Carol Bannister

**TEL** +64 7 362 8878

**FAX** +64 7 362 8828

**EMAIL** carol@careem.co.nz

**WWW**.careem.co.nz



## EXCLUSIVE OFFERINGS FOR ALL BOOKINGS



**LAKE OKAREKA LODGE BY LEBUA** is offering two complimentary private excursions for all bookings till March 31, allowing guests to experience some of Rotorua's most sought-after activities in style.

The lodge is offering guests a half-day trout fishing adventure with a personal guide (with locations dependent on where the fish are biting),

as well as a four-hour exclusive lake cruise on Tarawera or Rotoiti. Any trout caught can be cooked according to guests' preference by the lodge's top chef.

lebua Hotels & Resorts country manager Diana Moore says these excursions were selected because Rotorua is renowned for its trout fishing and lake activities.

Lake Okareka Lodge comprises three suites and takes only one party booking at any time, providing guests with exclusive use of the entire gated lakeside complex and its facilities.

Guests also have their own personal chef to cater to individual dining preferences, and a 24-hour butler service.

The lodge was named 'New Zealand's Leading Luxury lodge' in the 2009 World Travel Awards, and has recently been accorded a Qualmark Exclusive rating.

Lake Okareka Lodge's rates also include all meals, pre-dinner drinks and some complimentary beverages.

**CONTACT** Diana Moore

**TEL** +64 7 362 8026 **FAX** +64 7 362 8023

**EMAIL** diana@lebua.com **WWW**.okareka.co.nz



## LUXURY PRODUCT

### ROMANCE SOARS TO NEW HEIGHTS

Rotorua's **SOLITAIRE LODGE** has introduced a new package combining romance and adventure.

The Volcanic Twilight Experience, introduced in October 2009, is an



overnight package that will run for 12 months. Guests will experience a private helicopter tour to nearby dormant volcano Mt Tarawera at twilight. Some of New Zealand's most spectacular scenery - and majestic sunsets - can be viewed from the 1111m summit.

An expert local guide will explain the history of the 1886 volcanic eruption and the area's colourful Maori legends.

After the 45-minute adventure, guests return to the luxury of Solitaire Lodge to find a 'Romance Me' gift pack, complete with tea-light candles, massage oils and bath salts, waiting for them in their waterfront suite.

Pre-dinner drinks, canapés, a four-course dinner, full gourmet breakfast and a complimentary mini bar are also included in this indulgent package. Guests may choose to dine in the privacy of their suite, on the terrace overlooking the lake or in the lodge's lively dining room.

The package is available until October 30, 2010, and subject to conditions.

**CONTACT** Wayne Tomlinson  
**TEL** +64 7 362 8208 **FAX** +64 7 362 8445  
**EMAIL** [solitaire@solitairelodge.co.nz](mailto:solitaire@solitairelodge.co.nz)  
**WWW** [solitairelodge.co.nz](http://solitairelodge.co.nz)



### AERIAL OPTION PROVIDES LINK TO PAST



**VOLCANIC AIR SAFARIS** has introduced a new combination flight attraction to its standard tour product.

For some time Volcanic Air Safaris and The Buried Village have been trialing a Mt Tarawera helicopter or floatplane flight combined with a Buried Village entry and guided tour. They have now brochured the product as part of their standard tours.

The Mt Tarawera – Buried Village combo (tour six) comprises a floatplane or helicopter flight from the Rotorua city lakefront over the crater lakes' district and the Waimangu Volcanic Valley to volcanic Mt Tarawera, to view the crater rifts caused by the mountain's eruption in 1886.

Passengers will land on Lake Tarawera (in the floatplane) or fly into the Buried Village (via helicopter) for a guided tour. Return to Rotorua is via shuttle on the scenic route to the city lakefront.

"The two elements of this combination package provide the perfect complement to each other" says Volcanic Air Safaris' sales and marketing manager Ann Parker. "The visitor is able to see from above the magnitude of the damage caused by the 1886 eruption then walk through the village, where many lives were lost as a result."

Other flights to Mt Tarawera, White Island and Orakei Korako can be booked directly at the Buried Village.

**CONTACT** Ann Parker **TEL** +64 7 348 9984  
**FAX** +64 7 348 4069 **EMAIL** [ann@volcanicair.co.nz](mailto:ann@volcanicair.co.nz)  
**WWW** [volcanicair.co.nz](http://volcanicair.co.nz)



## ONWARDS AND UPWARDS FOR ADVENTURE PARK



**AGROVENTURES** has been busy over winter with developments to further enhance its customers' experiences.

Shweeb generation two will be released this summer at Agroventures. To celebrate its second year of operation at the site, Shweeb has taken note of customer and staff feedback and re-designed the Shweeb pods accordingly. The pods are now waterproof, lighter, faster and better looking. The staff expects to see a few world records broken over the coming months as a result.

Agrojet has re-branded, creating a sleeker logo that works well with the overall look of the boats, which now sport 'red hot' livery.

Customers can now read about Agrojet's development and the history and development of jet sprinting in New Zealand, and check out famous visitors to the park on new interpretation panels.

Agrojet remains the only place in the world where visitors can

experience the professional sport of jet sprinting.

The gardens surrounding Freefall Xtreme were revamped in November, with landscaping students from Waiariki Institute of Technology competing to win the best design. The new gardens aesthetically enhance the area and reduce the amount of noise from the Freefall wind tunnel that offers body flying.

In November 2009 Agroventures was named the winner of a hospitality and tourism award in the 2009 Westpac Rotorua Business Excellence Awards.

**CONTACT** Melissa Mills

**TE:** + 64 7 357 4747

**FAX** +64 7 357 4259

**EMAIL** marketing@agroventures.co.nz

**WWW** agroventures.co.nz



## RIDE TOMORROW'S TRANSPORT TODAY



Rotorua's **PUTT PUTT AND GRAND PRIX RACEWAY** has launched guided Segway tours that take in some of the city's most renowned landmarks.

The Segway Experience offers 90-minute tours that include the Rotorua Museum, Blue Baths, city lakefront and Kuirau Park. Tours start with a 15-minute interactive training session on how to operate a Segway.

An eco-friendly personal transporter, the Segway is an amazing self-balancing vehicle, according to owner-operator Mike McVicker. He describes the Segway Experience as "very liberating".

Easily mastered in 30 seconds, the Segway Experience is suitable for anyone aged over 14 years. Tours are limited to four people.

**CONTACT** Mike McVicker

**TEL** +64 7 348 6314

**FAX** +64 7 348 6314

**EMAIL** puttputt.rot@paradise.net.nz

**WWW** puttputt.co.nz



# MAKEOVER FOR HOBBITON MOVIE SET

Restoration work has begun at the Hobbiton Movie Set near Matamata in preparation for its use in the upcoming films of The Hobbit. Executive producer Peter Jackson says Hobbiton will be bigger and better this time around.



In an unprecedented move, visitors to the popular film set will be able to undertake tours during the construction phase.

"It is so exciting to offer this new dimension to our product," Hobbiton sales and operations manager Henry Horne says. "The response from our clients has been very positive, and we look forward to showing them the work as it unfolds."

**HOBBITON MOVIE SET & FARM TOURS** run daily transport services between Matamata and Rotorua, and connections are available from Auckland via Intercity.

The attraction also gives visitors an insight into the working of one of the region's largest sheep farms. A highlight at the end of the tour is the opportunity to see sheep being shorn in The Woolshed followed by a chance to bottle-feed pet lambs.

The Shire's Rest Café and Function Centre, next to The Woolshed, is available for private functions and conferences as well as cafe food on a daily basis.

**CONTACT** Henry Horne  
**TEL** +64 7 888 9913 **FAX** +64 7 888 7498  
**EMAIL** henry@hobbitontours.com  
**WWW** .hobbitontours.com



## GOING UNDERGROUND

**THE CROUCHER BREWING COMPANY**, Rotorua's award-winning craft brewery, recently opened its own bar in the central city to showcase New Zealand craft beers and wines.

The Underground Bar, on Hinemoa Street, has become a popular place for both locals and visitors since it opened last winter.

The new bar offers Croucher's three craft beers (Pale Ale, The Hef and Bohemian Pilsner) on tap plus seasonal and experimental beers. A small selection of other New Zealand craft beers and wines will also be served each month.

An intimate wine list is full of Kiwi gems - a mix of high-profile proven winners along with the best from smaller vineyards. The bar's bottled beer and wine lists change each month, so there is always something new and exciting.

The bar is housed in one of Rotorua's oldest character buildings, with an open fire for winter evenings and a courtyard for summer days.

Croucher Brewing was opened in Rotorua five years ago by Paul Croucher (pictured below right) and Nigel Gregory (pictured below left). It won Rotorua's Emerging Business of the Year award in 2007, as well as other awards throughout New Zealand.

The bar is open on Tuesday from 4pm-8pm, Wednesday and Thursday from 4pm-10pm, Friday and Saturday from 4pm-11pm and Sunday from 2pm-6pm.

**CONTACT** Nigel Gregory  
**TEL** +64 7 348 5888 **FAX** +64 7 348 5888  
**EMAIL** nigel@croucherbrewing.co.nz  
**WWW** .croucherbrewing.co.nz



## 'ULTIMATE RIDE' A FULL DAY OF THRILLS

**SKYLINE SKYRIDES** launched a new tourism package in September 2009.

Rotorua's Ultimate Ride targets free independent visitors and is sold as a full day pass. It includes a gondola ride, eight-minute helicopter flight, unlimited luge rides for the day, a Skyswing ride and buffet lunch in Skyline's Cableway Restaurant.

"We saw a gap in the market for a full-day pass to all that Skyline Skyrides has to offer visitors to Rotorua - the Ultimate Ride is the product to fill that gap," Skyline Skyrides' general manager Neville Nicholson says. "We think international and domestic visitors alike will take advantage of the superb value, and we expect to see this package go very well in the coming season and beyond,".

The pass is available from Skyline Skyrides, various outlets including the Rotorua i-SITE and several accommodation providers. It will also be on-sold as a package by inbound operators in the future.

Skyline Skyrides has also upgraded its function venue; renovating the bar and designing new menus. The venue, situated among towering Redwood trees halfway down the scenic luge track, can hold up to 300 guests and can be themed according to event requirements. Visitors can arrive via luge, walking track or vehicle transport.

**CONTACT** David Blackmore  
**TEL** +64 7 347 0027  
**FAX** +64 7 348 2163  
**EMAIL** david@skylineskyrides.co.nz  
**WWW** .skylineskyrides.co.nz



## C & I PRODUCT

### ANNIVERSARY SHOWS REASON TO CELEBRATE

Rotorua's much-loved **BLUE BATHS** is marking its 75 years of existence – and 10 years under the guardianship of Jo Romanes - in fine style.

Seeing both anniversaries as the ideal time to launch “something stunning to showcase a wonderful building with an interesting history”, Jo put together a dinner cabaret show, entitled *Fashions, Fads and Famous*, which launched in October 2009.

Running as part of a summer season of cabaret evenings, the show recalls key events that have been part of the Blue Baths history. Describing it as “sophisticated and classy with a strong fun element via interaction with the audience”, Jo says people are swept along on a wave of nostalgia as they relive the glory days of the famed Blue Baths.

The success of the new cabaret dinner prompted the launch of two further themed cabaret shows – *Pirates of the Blue Pearl* and *Roto-Vegas Casino*. Based around a 6m pirate ship, *Pirates of the Blue Pearl* includes a wonderful mix of wenches and grog, pirates and rollicking music while the casino night is all about fun gambling backed by showgirls and Sinatra tunes.

While all three options are suitable for the conference market as is, they can also be adapted to suit corporate clients who may want a private show or possibly only parts of a show to ensure there is



enough time for speeches, prize-giving or other business needs. Jo says since they already have all the components in place – the venues (including the Redwoods), the catering team, the sound and lighting resources and a troupe of entertainers (14 singers, character actors, dancers and synchronised swimmers) - it's merely a matter of building them into a package tailored to the needs of the client.

The cabaret dinner shows generally run Thursday to Saturday but can be staged any night for the C & I market.

**CONTACT** Jo Romanes

**TEL** +64 7 350 2119 **FAX** +64 7 350 2118

**EMAIL** jo@historic-venues.co.nz **WWW** bluebaths.co.nz

### ARTIST WITH 'COOL' TALENT



Renowned Rotorua artist Logan Shipgood has teamed up with cultural leader Wetini Mitai-Ngatai in a new artistic venture.

The pair have set up **SABER TOOTH ICE** in Rotorua, offering ice sculptures for corporate events and product launches. Logan creates ice sculptures using 'crystal ice' technology, which prevents the ice developing frosty blemishes.

Sculptures can be drawn and created for any corporate event or product launch according to client needs, and are only limited by the imagination.

Aside from pure aesthetics, the ice sculptures can serve as an integral part of the event, for instance a three-tiered ice tray, an ice bar or ice shot glasses.

A purpose-designed container, which allows sculptures to arrive in premium condition, means the finished products are transportable anywhere in the North Island.

The pair's new venture was launched at the Rotorua Wearable Creations 'n Colour Awards in August 2009.

**CONTACT** Logan Shipgood

**TEL** +64 7 343 9132 **FAX** +64 7 343 9133

**EMAIL** ice@icesculptures.co.nz

**WWW** icesculptures.co.nz



### TRIO ON A ROLL



**RED CARPET ROTORUA** is ready to roll out the royal treatment for visitors to the city.

The company launched its product in market in November 2009 and is Rotorua's only destination management company. It is positioned to provide professional ground arrangements to

corporate clients, many of whom are likely to come to Rotorua via the trans-Tasman flights that started in December 2009.

Well-known and respected tourism industry professionals Kim and Andrew Martin and Guy Irwin are the company's directors. They are proud Rotorua locals with a passion for the region and combined skills in corporate hospitality, entertainment and project management.

Red Carpet Rotorua specialises in supporting professional conference organisers, incentive houses and corporate event managers in bringing conference groups and incentive travel programmes to Rotorua. It provides Rotorua-based design and implementation and co-ordinates Rotorua partners, making planning and logistics simple for clients.

The company aims to provide unique customised programmes to meet each corporate client's strategic objectives.

**CONTACT** Kim Martin

**TEL** +64 7 929 9520 **FAX** + 64 929 9518

**EMAIL** kim@redcarpetrotorua.co.nz

**WWW**.redcarpetrotorua.co.nz

### MIX OF BUSINESS AND GLAMOUR



If all goes to plan, **THE REGENT OF ROTORUA** will have opened its new reception, bar and restaurant building by the end of January 2010.

The boutique hotel is also opening new rooms catering to executives that feature the Regent's trademark touches of glamour. Bureau desks are supplied with

office stationery and all rooms have a scanner, fax machine and high-speed internet connection.

A dedicated club lounge complements the new executive rooms. This haven for busy corporate guests offers breakfast, nibbles during the day and drinks and canapés in the evening. The lounge overlooks the new pool and is ideal for intimate meetings.

A new conference room suitable for larger groups is also part of new developments.

Owner Darryn Whitehead says the new facilities make the Regent of Rotorua an ideal place for small conferences and off-site meetings.

**CONTACT** Darryn Whitehead

**TEL** +64 7 348 4079 **FAX** +64 7 348 4032

**EMAIL** regentrotorua@xtra.co.nz

**WWW**.regentrotorua.co.nz



#### TREETOPS LODGE & WILDERNESS ESTATE

was a recipient of a responsible tourism award (Australasia) in the 2009 World Travel Awards announced from the UK in November. The

Rotorua eco-lodge was also named New Zealand's leading luxury lodge. The awards aim to encourage world-class competition, stimulate innovation and creativity, and ensure travellers receive exceptional value for money.

**WWW**.treetops.co.nz



#### NZ RIVERJET'S

new tour has an 11am departure to coincide with visitors wishing to see the eruption of the Lady Knox geyser at Wai-o-Tapu Thermal Wonderland. The new trip is called the Geothermal

Overload and has three options: Geo 1: Wai-o-Tapu and NZ Riverjet. Geo 2: Wai-o-Tapu, NZ Riverjet and Orakei Korako. Geo 3: Wai-o-Tapu, NZ Riverjet and The Squeeze. The package is sold through NZ Riverjet and visitors can be booked in at Wai-o-Tapu.

**WWW**.riverjet.co.nz



#### SKYLINE SKYRIDES ROTORUA

was awarded a

Qualmark Enviro Bronze status in October 2009.

"The Enviro logo offers us the opportunity to promote ourselves as a responsible tourism business working towards more sustainable practices, as well as to support New Zealand's 100% Pure positioning," says Skyline Skyrides' general manager Neville Nicholson. The logo recognises businesses for initiatives in energy, waste, water, conservation and community involvement.

**WWW**.skylineskyrides.co.nz



#### NICARA LAKESIDE LODGE

now has a Club Pass package for guests. The discounted bed and breakfast package includes extras such as pre-dinner drinks and canapés, and is offered in

conjunction with five other Qualmark five-star guest and hosted accredited lodges in the central North Island. All Club Pass participants are members of [www.5staraccommodation.co.nz](http://www.5staraccommodation.co.nz), a group of 30 similarly graded lodges throughout New Zealand.

**WWW**.nicaralodge.co.nz



#### THE HERITAGE ROTORUA

has been awarded Qualmark Enviro Gold. "This Enviro Gold award allows us the opportunity to continue promoting ourselves as a responsible tourism business, that continually works towards further sustainable

practices," hotel general manager Marcus Keenan says. "Achieving Enviro Gold further underpins Heritage Rotorua's commitment to being a responsible tourism business. Heritage Rotorua is already a member of the Rotorua Sustainable Tourism Charter and is Green Globe benchmarked (bronze).

**WWW**.heritagerotorua.nz-hotels.com



#### HAMURANA LODGE

has developed an organic vegetable and herb garden in response to guest requests. Opened in October 2009, the garden features a range of produce. It has received positive feedback from guests, who are enjoying traditional

fare made from local produce. The lodge's restaurant, Le Manoir, also opened in October.

**WWW**.hamuranalodge.com



#### SEISMIC GASTROBAR

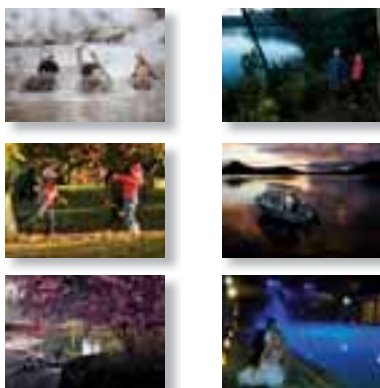
introduced a new summer menu in November 2009. The Maori-infused menu features plenty of local produce. With a picturesque location opposite the Village Green, Seismic offers the best of New Zealand cuisine. It also caters for

tour groups, private functions and conference dinners.

**WWW**.seismicgastrobar.co.nz

# trade resources

For free copies of printed material, please indicate publications and quantities required and email (with your postal address) to [marketing@rotoruaNZ.com](mailto:marketing@rotoruaNZ.com). Alternatively go to [www.rotoruaNZ.com/trade](http://www.rotoruaNZ.com/trade) to download.



## ROTORUA IMAGES

A range of 172 royalty-free high and low resolution Rotorua images including C&I, luxury and events. Go to the trade section of [rotoruaNZ.com](http://rotoruaNZ.com) click on image gallery and select a category. Click on the BrandFM icon to apply for password and access.



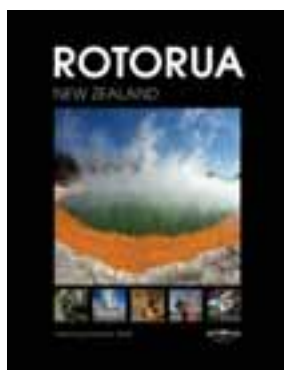
## TRAVEL TRADE WEBSITE

An expanded specialist trade section (launched in June 2009) has printable itineraries and maps, famils, story angles, product updates, export-ready local products and services, trade events, media releases, media kit and imagery. Go to [rotoruaNZ.com/trade](http://rotoruaNZ.com/trade).



## ROTORUA LUXURY BROCHURE

Showcasing some of Rotorua's high-end accommodation and activities.



## ROTORUA CONFERENCE AND INCENTIVE PLANNER

Comprehensive guide to planning meetings in Rotorua.



## DESTINATIONAL DVD

Copies of Rotorua's promotional DVD are available from our office. New foreign language versions are available in German and Korean as well as Japanese, Chinese, Spanish and French. All versions are available on [rotoruaNZ.com](http://rotoruaNZ.com).



## ROTORUA WHAT'S ON

A comprehensive guide to Rotorua attractions and events, as well as general information about the region.



## ROTORUA VISITOR MAP

A3 map features a CDB map, a wider city map and a lakes map. Shows key locations, travelling times and distances to other centres.



## ROTORUA MOUNTAIN BIKING

Aimed at first-time mountain bikers as well as families keen to give Rotorua's famed forest MTB tracks a go.

# all you need to know about Rotorua



## HOW TO GET HERE

Located in the central North Island, Rotorua is well connected to the rest of New Zealand and the world through a network of air and road links. The Rotorua International Airport is one of the busiest terminals in the country, offering services to Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, Queenstown and, as of December, to Sydney. The Trans-Tasman flights started in December 2009, with Air New Zealand running twice-weekly services between Sydney and Rotorua. Initially flights run on Saturdays and Mondays, changing to Saturdays and Tuesdays from February. The city is a leisurely three-hour drive from Auckland (234km), and a 5 to 6-hour drive from the capital city of Wellington (457km).

## WHAT'S THE WEATHER LIKE?

Rotorua enjoys a pleasant climate. With plenty of sun in summer and crisp clear days in winter, Rotorua averages more than 2000 hours of sunshine, and just over 140cm of rain each year.

Average temperatures:

Summer: (Dec – Feb)	Daytime 21–29°C
Autumn: (Mar – May)	Daytime 15–22°C
Winter: (Jun – Aug)	Daytime 9–16°C
Spring: (Sep – Nov)	Daytime 13–20°C

## HOW TO GET AROUND

Rotorua's well developed infrastructure and excellent public transport system means minimal travelling time within the city and environs.

## SHOPPING

Rotorua city centre has more than 300 shops to choose from. Generally city trading hours are Monday to Friday 9am until 5pm and Saturday open from 9am. NB: Closing varies from noon through to 4pm. Many of the chain stores and some speciality shops are also open 10am until 4pm on Sunday.

## DINING

With more than 90 eating places to choose from, Rotorua offers a wide range of casual cafe and restaurant options.



# IN ESSENCE WINTER 2010

Available May 2010



**ROTORUA**  
*feel the spirit*  
*Manaakitanga*

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**ADDRESS** 1106 Arawa Street, Private Bag 3007, Rotorua 3046, New Zealand  
**PHONE** +64 7 348 4133 **FAX** +64 7 349 4133  
**EMAIL** [marketing@rotoruaNZ.com](mailto:marketing@rotoruaNZ.com)  
**WWW** [rotoruaNZ.com](http://www.rotoruaNZ.com)

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