

DRUMBEATS

DRUMBEATS - NEWS FROM THE COOK ISLANDS TOURISM CORPORATION

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Drumbeats is brought to you by the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation
P.O. Box 14
Rarotonga
Cook Islands
Phone: (682) 29-435
Fax: (682) 21-435
www.cook-islands.com

Any comments?
trina@cookislands.gov.ck

Message from the Chief Executive Kia Orana

2004 has certainly been a bag of mixed fortunes for our little industry. The year began with the loss of Royal Tongan Airline services to the Cook Islands following the carrier's collapse and ended with the exit of Aloha Airlines a week ago. Royal Tongan had set the stage for competitive fares to the Cook Islands now entrenched with the advent of Pacific Express Airfares introduced by Air New Zealand. Aloha's exit has removed the only link between the Cook Islands and Hawaii and has temporarily returned us to a single carrier destination status.

The strengthening of the NZ dollar during the course of the year, increased oil prices, airline surcharges, ongoing international crisis, weakened economies in traditional long haul markets and accessibility issues have all impacted on visitor flows to the Cook Islands.

The introduction of Express airfares and increased frequencies ex-Auckland has seen New Zealand visitor numbers enjoy strong growth, further raising issues regarding capacity and bottlenecks with respect to the Australian market.

The planned increase in frequency ex-Auckland in March 2005 holds promise for the destination and the commencement of Pacific Blue services ex-Christchurch will provide additional opportunities for both the South Island and Australian market.

The Corporation has had a busy year with its integrated marketing programme combining trade and consumer marketing initiatives with its media visitation programme and agent

educational. The coming year will see a consolidation of the Corporation's marketing programmes with greater emphasis reaching consumers through co-operative advertising campaigns and greater use of the electronic marketing. The New Year will see destination collateral materials in German, Italian and Spanish distributed in Europe in an effort to stimulate travel from that market and European representatives are set for an active year ahead.

The destination must however, be prepared to review its product offer in the light of changing market conditions and with the advent of low cost carriers such as Pacific Blue. The competitiveness of the Cook Islands as a holiday destination must be addressed in the context of our value proposition against competing destinations. This calls for a better understanding of consumer expectations and delivering quality vacation experiences to all who visit our shores.

The Corporation will strive to strengthen its training programmes through the Hospitality and Tourism Training Centre and revamp its Accreditation Scheme to ensure greater compliance.

As 2004 draws to a close I would like to thank all in this industry for your support to the Corporation and for your own initiatives at promoting our small country. I take this opportunity to extend my very best wishes for a safe and enjoyable festive season and for a prosperous 2005.

Chris Wong – Chief Executive

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Visitor Arrivals on Track for New Record

Visitor arrivals into the Cook Islands for the eleven months ending November provisionally stand at 75,616 up 4,047 on the same period last year, an increase of 5.6% and looks set to surpass the 80,000 mark for the year.

New Zealand arrivals have recorded double-digit growth since March this year with total arrivals to the end of November surpassing the full year's total for 2003 by 4,047 visitors. The impact of Pacific Express and the increased frequencies have provided greater flexibility with itineraries from New Zealand and the welcome addition of the Christchurch/Rarotonga service in December is sure to be reflected in the year end figures.

Cook Islanders resident overseas and returning to visit friends and relatives leaped by 34% to 5,647 for the 11 months compared to 4,200 for the same period in 2003. It is anticipated that Air New Zealand's planned increases in frequencies in the New Year will further facilitate the travel of Cook Islanders for VFR purposes.

9,358 Australians visited the Cook Islands for the 11 months period, down marginally (-2%) against the same period in 2003. (9,358 vs. 9,489)

Long haul markets did not fare too well with US arri-

vals down 24% for the 11 months and European arrivals down 5% (18,800 vs. 19780)

Connectivity, a very strong New Zealand dollar and the economic climate in long haul markets have been major influences on travel to the Cook Islands over the past year.

The market mix for the year has shifted considerably with New Zealanders accounting for 40.7% of total arrivals for the eleven months ending November 2004 compared to 34.9% for the same period in 2003.

Australians accounted for 12.4% of total arrivals for the eleven months, up from 10.4% in 2003 while Europeans accounted for 24.9% of total arrivals down from 27.5% the year before.

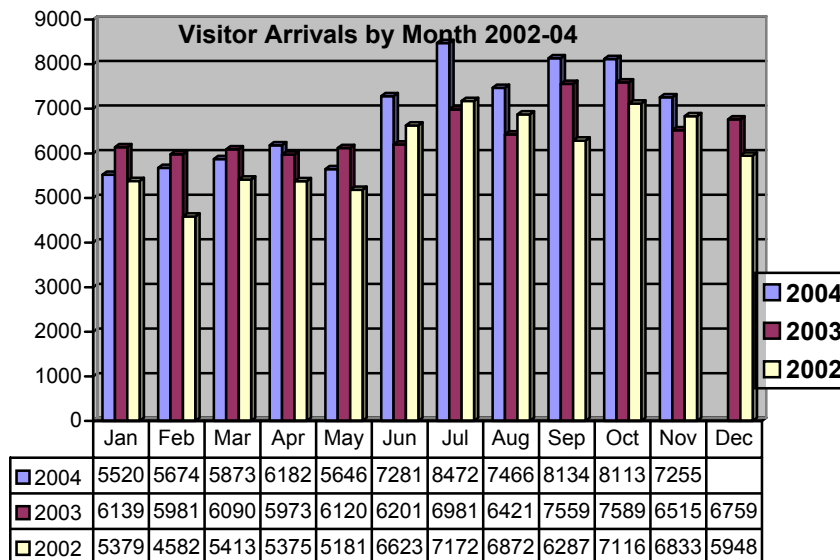
Canadian numbers have dwindled further to 2.9% of total arrivals down from 4.7% in 2003. Visiting Cook Islanders resident overseas made up 7.4% of total arrivals for the 11 months up from 5.8% the year before. Other markets remained static.

Total arrivals for the year ending November 2004 were 82,375 up 6.2% from 77,517 for the previous twelve months.

Country of Residence	Nov - 04			December - November (YTD)		
	2003	2004	% Change	2003	2004	% Change
New Zealand	1,906	2094	10.0	25,010	30,783	23.0
Australia	679	833	23.0	9,489	9,358	-2.0
Europe/UK	2,107	2,004	-5.0	19,730	18,800	- 5.0
USA	567	648	14.0	7,099	5,447	-24.0
Canada	379	282	-26.0	3,405	2,224	-23.0
French Polynesia	60	181	202.0	899	1,235	37.0
Other Pacific Islands	82	260	217.0	947	1,194	26.0
Asia	86	48	-44.0	546	519	-5.0
Cook Islanders living overseas	629	869	38.0	4,200	5,647	34.0
Other Countries	20	36	1.8	329	409	24.0
TOTAL	6,515	7,255	11.0	71,569	75,616	5.6%

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Visitor Arrivals on Track for New Record_{cont}



Tourism Masterplan Nearing Completion

The revised tourism Masterplan is set for completion in mid January. Following consultations with all sectors of the economy and communities throughout the Cook Islands, the plan will focus on providing the future direction for tourism development for the country. Its primary goal is to develop a tourism industry “that sustains and enhances the well-being of resident Cook Islanders and their environment, society, economy and culture”.

The plan will have five underlying purposes geared to achieving the abovementioned overall goal. These are:

1. ensure that resident Cook Islanders benefit from tourism
2. protect and enhance the Cook Islands environment
3. enhance the tourism industry’s economic viability
4. protect and enhance the tangible and intangible indigenous culture
5. Implement national and island tourism plans in an efficient, cost-effective, and sustainable manner.

Dr Peter Phillips has adopted the logical framework (logframe) approach in drafting the plan. This comprises a matrix containing 16 main cells in which information is entered detailing the project. Reading *down* the logframe (the vertical logic) sets out what The project will do in increasing detail from overall goal through to specific activities:

Overall Goal: the broad aim to which the project will

contribute, its importance to society and how it fits into wider policies;

Project Purpose: the specific objectives to be achieved;

Expected Results: the results of the activities undertaken in the project;

Actions: the specific activities to be undertaken to achieve the results.
Reading *across* the logframe (the horizontal logic) spells out how you will know when something has been achieved:

Intervention Logic: the reasons why a project is being carried out;

Objectively Verifiable Indicators: measures of success of the project;

Sources of Verification: the sources of information used to assess the success of the project. The final column, containing the **Assumptions**, sets out the external factors that are crucial for the project’s success but which are outside of the projects’ control. Some assumptions need to be made about things that can have profound effects. One fundamental assumption is that a major cyclone will not hit Rarotonga and disrupt the implementation of the Plan.

The draft plan will be discussed with the Board of the Tourism Corporation prior to being put to the public for further comment in January.

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Aloha to Aloha in December

Aloha airlines has ceased service to Rarotonga, and are using the aircraft to service increased demand to Reno during the northern hemisphere winter.

Aloha airlines began flying into Rarotonga two years ago from Honolulu twice a week with one hour stopovers in American Samoa.



Air NZ Christchurch Inaugural

On Wednesday 1 Dec Air New Zealand launched its inaugural direct service between Christchurch and To mark the event we celebrated Island style with airport staff joining the party. In conjunction with Cook Islands Tourism a group of 32 VIP guests joined us on the inaugural service, greeted by our more colourful than usual airport staff and toasting the new service with pre departure Pacific cocktails.

With a strong wind behind us we arrived in Rarotonga 4 hours later to a welcome that our guests described as overwhelming. From a cool Christchurch afternoon we (and some very surprised English tourists) arrived to a warm Rarotonga evening and an even warmer welcome from Prime Minister Robert Woonton and other Cook Island dignitaries and traditional leaders.

The following day an Island tour courtesy of Nii from Raro Tours showed off the Island's highlights including a cleansing shot of Noni juice to revitalise the group. All of the group agreed on the beauty of the island, the relaxing atmosphere, the friendly people, but opinion on Noni stayed divided.

Lunch at Pacific Resort with our toes in the white sands of Muri Beach was a highlight for our Travel industry and media guests who enjoyed delicious fresh seafood as they looked out on idyllic blue waters.

The fine fare didn't stop there. After free time to explore the Island in the afternoon we regrouped that evening at Sails Restaurant where our guests yet again raved about a stylish and delicious evening. A great opportunity for us to mix with local operators it was also a chance for me and Cook Island representatives to express the importance of our relationship and of course our mutual determina-

tions to make this new service a success.

Feedback from the trip has been very positive with all participants keen to sell and promote the Cook Islands and, after this initial short visit, to get back themselves in 2005 to enjoy a longer stay. To quote one of our guests, journalist Chris Whitburn, from his article in the Christchurch Press, "The days there pass too soon, but the friendliness and warmth linger" Special thanks to Albert Nungama and the team at Cook Islands Tourism for making this first arrival such a success, and here's looking forward to many more happy Cook Island guests in 2005.



Air NZ staff flying Island Style

Air New Zealand forward loadings for Chc Rar is looking healthier for the next couple of months thanks in part to the absolute inclement weather ravaging New Zealand where temperatures have dropped to 'snow' levels in parts of the country and cities like Auckland have experienced rain hail and strong winds and predictions for Xmas day remains dismal.

NZ42 Christchurch to Rarotonga Depart

1600 Arrive 2200 -1

NZ43 Rarotonga to Christchurch Depart

0030 Arrive 0500 +1

The non stop service will operate a 146 seat Airbus A320 aircraft. Air NZ says this will provide good connection with Australian flights and allow Melbourne and Sydney travellers thru the South Island. Flight time Chc/Akl is 5 hours and return flight will take 5 and a half hours.



Members of the Welcome Party

Pacific Express fares for this new service will start at NZD\$339 one way plus applicable taxes

MARKETING UPDATE

Hosted Fams

Hot Raro Winter Famil

26-30 Aug x16pax

Cook Islands Tourism in conjunction with Air New Zealand coordinated three agent familiarisations to the Cook Islands in August with Air New Zealand providing 15FOC tickets for each famil. Unfortunately the first and second groups for these famils were cancelled by Air New Zealand due to high consumer demand for travel to the Cook Islands. Air New Zealand had to take back the FOC allocation given to these educationals and instead gave them to paying travellers.

In the past we have received feedback from the smaller properties in the industry expressing their interest in offering rooms for future famils that Cook Islands Tourism organises. Therefore the third and only group were divided up and stayed at different properties in the village of Arorangi. Due to the logistics of pickups for site inspections, transfers to activities and dinners Cook Islands Tourism decided to seek assistance from properties that were in relatively close proximity to one another. The agents were given complimentary accommodation at Crown Beach Resort, Seashells Apartments, Manuia Beach Boutique Hotel and Aroa Beachside Inn. Thankyou to hosted meals from Edgewater Resort, Pacific Resort Rarotonga, Manuia Beach and Castaway Beach Villas. Air Rarotonga for discounted domestic travel to Aitutaki and all the properties that were inspected. Meitaki Maata!

NZ Bride & Groom Show prizewinners

Luke Robinson & Marika Korpi 23-29 August

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation has secured a major door prize with the New Zealand Bride & Groom Magazine Show this year at the Ellerslie Show Grounds on Sunday 16 May 2004. This show is New Zealand's largest wedding event and attracts well over 10,000 people. With over 160 exhibitors and informative seminars, the show provides the opportunity for couples to step inside the magazine's pages, meet advertisers and achieve much of their planning all on one day.

The prize featured a return trip for 2 to the Cook Islands (ex Auckland) including airport transfers, accommodation for 7 nights and some meals. Pacific Resort Rarotonga sponsored the major door prize with a fantastic 7 night accommodation programme for the winners valued at over NZ\$5000

Prize-winners were Luke Robinson and Marika Korpi and they were joined on their trip to the Cook Islands by Luke's parents.

New Idea Magazine-Australia

Tracy Schavarien

30 August-6 September

Tracy is the sub editor for New Idea Magazine and vis-

ited the Cook Islands recently on a famil. New Idea has confirmed to publish two Cook Islands stories. The Rarotonga story will go on sale November 13th and the Aitutaki story is due out February 26th 2005.

Thankyou to Air New Zealand, Pacific Resort Hotels, Air Rarotonga, Raro Safari Tours for hosting Ms Schavarien FOC. Meitaki atupaka to Paradise Island Lagoon Cruises for providing a discounted lagoon cruise for Tracy.

Travelplan Famil

12-16 August x12pax

Travelplan Holidays, one of our major New Zealand Wholesalers, organised a famil to the Cook Islands mid August. The group was accompanied by Product Manager Lynda Cairns.

Cook Islands Tourism assisted by coordinating site inspections for the duration of their stay based on properties that they had requested.

Buccaneer Boats Promotion prize-winners

Last year Cook Islands Tourism ran a competition in conjunction with Air New Zealand, New Zealand Boating Magazines and Buccaneer Boats for a trip for 2 to the Cook Islands, the majority of the prize is based in Aitutaki. The prize-winners were escorted by representatives from Buccaneer Boats and NZ Boating Magazine to the islands of Rarotonga and Aitutaki. The prize package included a Return trip for two flying Air New Zealand, 5 nights accommodation at Rino's Beach Bungalows in Aitutaki, Domestic travel compliments of Air Rarotonga, Lagoon Cruise for 2 with Bishops Cruises and a 2 day fishing excursion with Baxter's Fishing. Thankyou to Club Raro Resort for offering a discounted rate for the groups stay briefly on Rarotonga. Meitaki maata to all that sponsored prizes!

Product Managers Famil- NZ & Australia Wholesalers

2-6 September x15pax

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation invited Wholesaler Product Managers from New Zealand & Australia to visit the Cook Islands for a destination product update for the weekend of 3-6 September 2004. Their activities whilst on Rarotonga and Aitutaki included some property inspections and a meeting with the industry. Each country presented their views on what they believe the Cook Islands has to offer to their clients and suggestions based on customer feedback. This meeting was held in order for everyone to get an idea on how to refine their marketing strategies for these short-haul markets over the next three years.

MARKETING UPDATE

Hosted Fams

Jenny Farrell, Air New Zealand Magazine 4-9 September

Jenny is the Editor for Air New Zealand Magazine, Panorama and visited the Cook Islands to do a feature on Rarotonga and Aitutaki for their December issue. The magazine is distributed in-flight to all Air New Zealand Passengers. CITC assisted in sourcing 1 nights accommodation on Rarotonga compliments of Crown Beach RESort, provided her with the use of a rental car and sourced an Island Night buffet in Aitutaki compliments of Samade Restaurant & Bar.

Maryanne Nixon, NZ Runner Magazine 28 September-9 October

Her itinerary was organised by Island Hopper Vacations to coincide with the Edgewater Round Rarotonga Road Race. CITC assisted in providing her with a rental car for the duration of her stay.

Roadshow Prize-winners

Cook Islands Tourism coordinated their Annual Roadshows throughout New Zealand & Australia and with the assistance of participants provided prize packages for the following prize-winners:

- § Rob Johnson, New Zealand Roadshow Prizewinner Wellington
3-9 September
- § Jonathan Larkin, Australia Roadshow Prize-winner Sydney
25 September-4 October
- § Tracy Pereira, Brisbane 2003 Winner 25 September-3 October
- § Karen Waples, Brisbane 2004 Winner 21-29 October

Boomerang Reisen Agents 7 October x13pax

On Thursday 7th October, Cook Islands Tourism hosted a group of visiting travel agents to dinner at Sails Restaurant. The Boomerang Reisen group of 13 agents from various offices throughout Germany were on a South Pacific trip which also included a visit to Tahiti, Fiji and New Zealand.

Glenn Conway, Otago Daily Times 11/16 October

As part of our ongoing media programme Cook Islands Tourism in conjunction with Air New Zealand organised for Glenn Conway from the Otago Daily Times to visit the Cook Islands in October to produce an article on the Destination. The Otago Daily Times is just the first of such media famils from the South Island that we have planned over the coming months. Glenn's focus will be to generate interest, give exposure to the Cook Islands and familiarise the South Island Market with what we have to offer as a destination in the lead up to the Inaugural Air New Zealand CHC/RAR flight.

New Zealand Weddings Magazine Photoshoot 31 October-5 November x6pax

NZ Weddings Magazine is the second largest bridal magazine in New Zealand. As part of our ongoing media programme Cook Islands Tourism organised for Shelley Hill, Editor for NZ Weddings and a photographer to visit the Cook Islands earlier this year (they stayed one night at Crown Beach) for a 5 page editorial and scout for a photoshoot planned for November. The article will feature Rarotonga and Aitutaki as wedding or honeymoon destinations with a focus on the beautiful photography from both islands.

Albert Numanga, our New Zealand Manager, escorted a group of 5pax to the Cook Islands in the second part of our media programme with NZ Weddings Magazine. The group travelled to the Cook Islands to do a fashion editorial shoot on both Rarotonga and Aitutaki for publication in their Feb/Mar 2005 issue. They plan to do 2x 8 full-page fashion shoots, 1x 5 page lingerie shoot and possibly shots of beauty and wedding accessories.

Thankyou maata to Crown Beach Resort, Pacific Resort Aitutaki, Air Rarotonga and Teking Lagoon Tours.

Go Holidays In-House Famil 15-19 October x4pax

Go Holidays in New Zealand sent 4 consultant staff to the Cook Islands for an in-house educational. CITC hosted the group to lunch, organized their transport and site inspections on Rarotonga and Aitutaki.

Meitaki Maata to the following:

a Hosted dinner by Management at Pacific Resort Aitutaki & Hosted lunch at Pacific Resort Rarotonga, a Hosted Lunch at the Aitutaki Lagoon Resort & Spa and a Hosted dinner by Management of Crown Beach Resort at Windjammer.

Happy Vacations Wholesale Reservation Famil 24-28 October x4pax

The group conducted property inspections around the island to update themselves with new and existing properties. A daytrip was also included to Aitutaki to conduct property inspections and take in a lagoon cruise.

Pacific Specialists Holidays Famil 16-20 November x8pax

Pacific Specialists Holidays organised their first ever famil to the Cook Islands. They are one of our wholesalers that actively sell the Cook Islands out of Australia. The group was led by Product Manager Lynda Schulte hosted to dinner by Cook Islands Tourism. Meitaki Maata to the following people for their generous assistance with either complimentary accommodation, hosting meals or discounted airfares: The Rarotongan Beach Resort & Spa, Edgewater Resort, Aitutaki Lagoon Resort & Spa, Pacific Resort Rarotonga, Air Rarotonga and Teking Lagoon Cruises.

MARKETING UPDATE

Hosted Fams

Sara Wheeler—11-16 November

Sara Wheeler, is a freelance journalist from the Mail on Sunday, the biggest selling Sunday national, circulation 2,330,949. The angle of her piece was focused on relaxation and 'getting away from it all' and she explored the back roads of Titikaveka and Ngatangiaa by bicycle. Her itinerary included amongst various other activities, a Circle Island and Raro Safari tour on Rarotonga and a lagoon cruise on Aitutaki. Cook Islands Tourism would like to thank Air Rarotonga, Reflections on Rarotonga, Sea Change Villas and Pacific Resort Aitutaki for their assistance in ensuring Sara had an enjoyable and informative visit to our shores.

Rebecca Corbally—22-27 November

Rebecca Corbally of the SportDiver Magazine in the UK visited the Cook Islands before going on to Fiji, from the 22nd-27th November. With a feature very much focused on diving excursions to be experienced in the South Pacific.

Australia Wholesalers Famil

25-30 November x6pax

Mereana Taruia, Manager for Cook Islands Tourism in Sydney escorted Product Managers from wholesalers that actively sell the Cook Islands in Australia. These were Adventure World, Coral Seas, Air New Zealand Holidays, Orient Pacific and Talpacific Holidays

United Travel Getaway Show- Charlotte Dawson 14-23 December x3pax

A film crew is currently on the island shooting an episode of a Cook Islands Holiday for Prime TV Channel in New Zealand. The Getaway Show (similar to its Australian counterpart with Catriona Rountree) is the longest running in the Southern Hemisphere and is produced in conjunction with United Travel. The show features holiday hot spots all over the world with information on how to get the best deals and travellers tips. The show highlights well known places as well as helps to increase awareness of destinations that are

still relatively unknown to the kiwi traveller.

The shows presenter Charlotte Dawson, is a well known New Zealand celebrity and she is regularly featured in popular women's magazines and at functions throughout the nation. They will be featuring four stories on the Cook Islands and have visited both Rarotonga and Aitutaki. The film crew visited the Cook Islands earlier in September where they covered one story. In a recent article in Woman's Day Magazine, Charlotte is quoted as saying that "of all the destinations I have featured on the show, the Cook Islands is my favourite". She attributes this to the friendliness of the people and the laid-back island lifestyle. Meitaki maata to Sails Restaurant, Tamarind Restaurant and Trader Jacks for hosting the crew for meals.

Air New Zealand South Island Travel Agents 07/11 December 2004.

A 17 member team of Agents from the South Island of New Zealand visited the destination for the first time and have thoroughly shown great interest to all what a visitor can expect. The team also had the opportunity to experience Aitutaki on a day tour excursion. Meitaki Maata to Air New Zealand, Edgewater Resort and Air Rarotonga for providing complimentary services to this famil as well as our Tourism Industry partners involved for your continued support.

Sinead Desmond & Oliver Swift—January 2005

Coming up in January 2005 we have two journalists from the UK scheduled to visit our shores. Sinead Desmond writes for The Sun, UK's biggest selling National newspaper with a circulation of 3,360,662. She will be looking at the Cooks as a little known romantic getaway for couples (be it for honeymoons or weddings) and will be aiming to get her article out to coincide with Valentine's day in February. She will also be exploring it from a 'family angle' as the paper is very much family targeted. Oliver Swift writes for the Observer, an up-market Sunday newspaper so he will be looking at Cook Islands from a more luxurious angle

Upcoming Activities in Australia

January 2005

Wednesday 12 th	Travelworld Expo Newcastle	
Saturday 15 th	Manly Travel Expo	Sat/
Sun 29 th /30 th	Australia Bridal Show Sydney	

February 2005

Fri/Sun 4 th /6 th	Australian Bridal Show Melbourne
Fri/Sun 4 th /6 th	Adelaide Afta Travel Expo
Saturday 19 th	Coffs Harbour Travel Show
Sunday 20 th	Wollongong Travel Expo

Tue/Wed 22nd/23rd AIME

Melbourne
Mon/Thu 28th/3rd Mar
Geelong, Ballaratt, Bendigo,
Shepparton, Albury, Wodonga
seminars/sales calls

March 2005

Sat/Sun 12 th /13 th	Sydney Hol & Tvl Show Sydney
Sat/Sun 19 th /20 th	Gold Coast Bulletin Hol & Tvl Show Gold Coast.

MARKETING UPDATE

Australia Office Report

Distribution

Majority of Cook Islands collateral enquiries from September to November was from NSW 49%, followed by Victoria 25%, Queensland 14%, South Australia 10% then Tasmania and Western Australia each with 1%. General destination enquiries accounted for 62%, honeymoon enquiries 32% and Wedding 6% received by email, from websites, telephone, mail and fax.

Media Exposure

Cook Islands received media exposure in September 5th, 8th, 11th, 12, 19th and 26th from advertisements in the Sun Herald, Parramatta Sun, Sydney Morning Herald and the Sunday Telegraph. Great Outdoors featured the Cook Islands in the New Idea September 2004 issue.

October exposures - 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st in the Sunday Telegraph, the Sun Herald and November exposures - 7th, 13th, 20th, 28th in the Sunday Telegraph, Sydney Morning Herald.

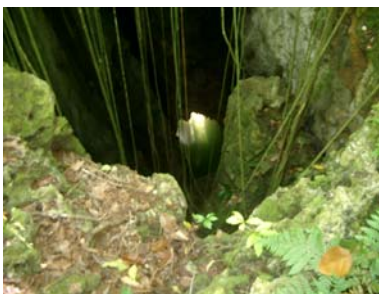
Cook Islands Tourism Corporation advertised ¼ page in the September Issue of Zest Magazine, 14/ page in Travel Week. Spring issue of Modern Weddings and Spring issue of Bride to Be. October Advertising in The Masters for Brides Magazine-2 full pages, half page in Holidays for Couples and ¼ page in House & Garden magazine

Activities

ABC Gardening Show 2-5 September 2004
Cook Islands Tourism attend the ABC Gardening show at the Olympic Park, Sydney from September 2nd to September 5th 2004. The show attracted a large number of visitors and Cook Islands enquiries were steady throughout the show. The only other holiday destination at the show was Norfolk Islands. The next show will be in August 2005.

Wholesale Managers famil 3- 6 September 2004

University of Sydney – 10th September 2004
Presented the Cook Islands to students at the University of Sydney.



One of the 4 caves that Mereana visited whilst in Mangaia.



Magnificent rock formations at the entrance of a Cave.



Raro Eco Cycle and Kayak Tour. Mereana on the far right.

Britain & Europe Consumer seminar
Cook Islands Tourism Corporation was invited by Europe and Britain Travel in Canberra to present the Cook Islands to its clients – participants to the Masters Athletics Festival-October 2004.

Trade Seminar – 14th September 2004
Presented the Cook Islands at the Treasures of the South Pacific Trade seminar, St Leonards to travel consultants in Metropolitan Sydney North.

North Coast Roadshow
Cook Islands Tourism participated in the Treasures of the South Pacific, North Coast Roadshow with seminars in Port Macquarie, 11th October, Coffs Harbour, 12th October and Newcastle 13th October 2004. Total of 120 consultants attend the Treasures of the South Pacific seminar.

Mereana's Cook Islands Visit
Mereana, Manager, Cook Islands Tourism Australia enjoyed her visit to the Highlander Paradise in Aorangi, Raro Eco Island Tour and Raro Eco Cycle and Kayak tour of Ngatangia. Mereana was also able to visit the island of Mangaia and hoping to be able to visit Aitu Island.



Paul Lynch –Raro Eco Tour Guide/owner, holding the bowl of refreshing fruits of the Cook Islands. Left of Paul is Mary from Melbourne Victoria and on the right a visitor from England.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The International Food Festival

The International Food Festival 2004 was a huge success with visitors and locals alike crowding out the Punanga Nui, eating, drinking and enjoying the festive evening. The food festival 2004 was staged earlier than usual to coincide with the International Vaka Eiva., on Wednesday 24 November, from 5pm at the Punanga Nui Market Place.

Organised by the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation, the International Food Festival is a popular event providing both locals and visitors an opportunity to show off their culinary skills and explore a variety of taste sensations. It is an occasion to mix & mingle while enjoying the Cook Islands style festivity.



Tourism staff hard at work

This year the International Food Festival featured "Sweet Sensations" - a special focus on the children and the sweet tooth in most of us. Sweet Sensations include a Cake competition for 18 years and over, as well as a 'Favourite Desserts' competition - for children and teens.

Cook Islands Tourism would like to congratulate the following:

Ultimate Cake Competition

Winner Pam Jance: Chocolate Raspberry Layer Cake

Runner up Lily Henderson: German Chocolate Cake
Cake of the Year Award

Winner Pacific Resort: Sacher Torte

Runner up Portofino Restaurant: Coconut Cream Dream Cake

Sensational Desserts Competition

Primary School Category

Winner: Anne, Elizabeth & Jessica: Chocolate Strawberry Layer

Runner up: Anne, Elizabeth & Jessica: Chocolate Surprise

Secondary School Category

Winner Kalim & Phillip: Chocolate Cake

Runner up Kalim & Phillip: Cake, Icecream & Fruit Salad

Best International Food

Winner Fiji Community

Runner up Hopsings

Best Local Food

Winner Mama's Cafe

Runner up Tarani's

Best Decorated stall

Winner Mama's Café



Mama's Café Stand

Special Awards

Best Dressed to Country Theme: Fiji Community

Fiji Community

Best Xmas Spirit: Mama's Cafe

Best Team Work: Hopsings

Thank you Vendors and competitors for your effort and a Special Acknowledgement to our judges:

Miss Cook Islands: Noovai Tyler, Miss Tiare: Joyanna Meyer, Thomas Koteka, Tina Iro, Teriu Woonton, and Taimata Allsworth

Statistics

Country of Residence	Oct			Nov - Oct (Year to Date)		
	2003	2004	% Change	2003	2004	% Change
New Zealand	3,088	3,693	20%	25,695	31,671	23%
Australia	1,190	1,242	4%	10,082	9,799	-3%
Europe/UK	1,768	1,633	-8%	21,731	20,732	-5%
USA	618	500	-19%	7,905	5,897	-25%
Canada	207	162	-22%	3,998	2,676	-33%
French Polynesia	125	106	-15%	1,000	1,304	30%
Other Pacific Islands	94	86	-9%	898	1,101	23%
Asia	51	69	35%	523	592	13%
Cook Islanders living overseas	411	580	41%	5,610	7,428	32%
Other Countries	37	42	14%	393	435	11%
TOTAL	7,589	8,113	7%	77,835	81,635	5%

Source: Statistics Department

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Tiare Week



The staff at Cook Islands Tourism Corporation really got into the spirit of Tiare Week this year with some outstanding flower creations.

Staff effort was rewarded with first prize in the Tiare Week Government Decorated properties category.

Elmah McBirney and Papatua Papatua flower ar-



rangement extraordinaires masterminded the winning display with staff providing input, flowers and labour where required.

We're looking forward to another fantastic Tiare Week in the New Year and encourage other Tourism operators to join in the competition and festivities.

Information Office Update

More visitors wanting to experience our sister islands

A large number of visitors that come to the Cook Islands Tourism Information Office are interested in the tranquillity and peacefulness of the sister islands.

Atiu based in the Southern group islands is a forty-five minute flight away from Rarotonga (like many islands) and offers a unique landscape that is fluttered with native birds and rich, green vegetation. During the last two months, queries on how to get to Atiu have been increasing with visitors asking about flights and prices, as well as availability of accommodation and activities. Activities such as George's Nature Tours are popular making it possible for visitors to explore the different avenues of the makatea and interior of the island. There has also been some increased interest in Mangaia as a tourist destination. It is encouraging to see more locals in Mangaia are setting up little tourism businesses with fishing charters, caving tours and island walks/treks.

The general flow of information out of the Visitors Centre has been speedy in the last couple of months. There have been many travellers coming through the information office; many from New Zealand and the UK.

The supply of brochures has been good this month except for a couple of companies who are waiting on reprints. Many of the brochures leave the info centre daily; therefore it is essential that companies keep sending in their brochures. And for some, stocking up daily is necessary.

Cook Islands Sun Newspaper has proven to be very informative for many visitors who seek general information on restaurants and eating out places. The new Escape Magazine – Issue 3 – is in circulation and con-

firms to be a perfect souvenir. There is a shortage of Jason's 'What's on' booklet on the island, which is significantly useful to visitors and many students who browse through for helpful ideas on coursework. In terms of assignments for students, the numbers that visit the information centre for learning material have increased over the last 2 months. Many students seek information on visitor statistics, the sister islands, history of tourism in the Cook Islands and basic info related to Cook Islands Tourism.

The Northern Group Islands finally have a section in the Information Centre, as a location to travel to, now that the Manihiki Lagoon Villas are accredited.

The Cultural Village, Raro Mountain Safari, Island Nights and Lagoon Cruises still stand as the top activities here on Rarotonga. Trekking has become increasingly popular with a lot of the young travellers, but find walking up the peaks difficult with no sense of direction, as there are no signs to follow. Many have attempted 'Te Manga' trek but only a few manage to get to the top.

Industry members are reminded that the Cook Islands Sun (both maps & newspaper) can be collected from the Arorangi Snowbird Laundry; Escape Magazines are distributed by Diane Scott in Muri; and all Jason's publications are delivered by the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation.

A reminder is also that the Calendar of Events for 2005 is currently being compiled. We would appreciate any information on events that may know of to be sent through to Donna Tuara, Information Officer: email: donna@cookislands.gov.ck.

DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Students to spend summer in CI

CIT students Sarah Bosker and Andrew Thorpe have been selected to take part in the Hospitality & Tourism Training Centre (HTTC) Cook Islands/CIT student Exchange scheme.

The exchange is just one initiative resulting from the MOU signed in January in Rarotonga between CIT and the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation

Mrs Theresa Noovao the Training Manager at HTTC was involved in selecting the students for the exchange and interviewed Sarah & Andrew during her visit to Canberra in November.

Sarah & Andrew are both degree students studying Hospitality Operations and will leave for the Cook Islands on Sunday 5 December. Sarah will be attached to Manuia Beach Resort while Andrew will be attached to the Pacific Resort Hotel, both in Rarotonga.

These two up market resort Hotels cater for the high spending tourists market. While in Rarotonga Sarah &

Andrew will be enrolled at the HTTC and will have the opportunity to learn Maori dancing, local customs and culture.

In Canberra Andrew works at the Novotel Hotel and Sarah at Saville Park Suites.

Meanwhile in Canberra, CIT is hosting Ani & Uta, students from the HTTC Cook Islands, Ani works for Manuia Beach Resort, while Uta works for the Pacific Resort. While in Canberra they are working at the Novotel and Olims Hotel. Ani & Uta are enrolled at CIT, attending classes every Tuesday at Reid. Both these students are doing very well both in the Hotels as well as in their studies at CIT. Uta has been elected as the employee of the year at the Olims Hotel. The General Manager and staff are very pleased with his work.

Ani & Uta have expressed a desire to study the Diploma in Hospitality operations at a future date. The MOU has opened many doors for both staff and students from the Cook Islands and CIT.

HTTC Update

Courses completed :

Dates: Nov 30 – Dec 02
Course: Customer Service Skills
Tutor: Theresa Noovao
Attendees: 11

Dates: Dec 13 – 20
Course: Functions Organization & catering
Tutor: Rohan De Silva & Dean Parkes
Attendees: 10

Dates: Dec 13 – 20
Course: Patron Care & Host Responsibility / Bar & Service of Drinks
Tutor: Rohan De Silva
Attendees: 4

HTTC Function

The end of another great year of training saw the culmination of an open-air banquet held at HTTC. The Functions Organization & Bar Service students had the opportunity to showcase their newly acquired skills to a number of invited guests from the industry, family and friends.

“Beautiful food and Great atmosphere”, “ Excellent

Service, keep up the good work” were just some of the comments from the patrons.

Rohan De Silva & Dean Parkes took the students through an intensive 7-day course.

Their international expertise in catering put much emphasis on satisfying customer tastes & trends, which delightfully showed in their workmanship in the kitchen and professional approach of the students in the classroom.

We had achieved all of our objectives and the night was a success!

Happy Holidays

We would like to acknowledge with thanks, those who have tutored at HTTC throughout the year. We also welcome on board our two exchange students from Canberra Institute of Technology Andrew Thorpe and Sarah Bosker, and wish them a happy work experience on our beautiful shores.

On behalf of Management & staff we extend our best wishes to you all during the festival season. Merry Christmas & have a Happy New Year.



Head Office

PO Box 14
Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Phone: (682) 29435
Fax: (682) 21435
headoffice@cook-islands.com

Australia

Mereana Taruia
PO Box 20, Guildford
NSW 2161, Australia
Phone: (02) 9955 0446
Fax: (02) 9955 0447
ausmanager@cook-islands.com

Canada

Rick Buecking
1133-160A Street, White Rock
British Columbia
V4A 7G9, Canada
Phone: (604) 541 9877
Toll Free: 1 888 994 2665
Fax: (604) 541 9812
canadamanager@cook-islands.com

Asia

Eckard Kramer
C/- Pacific Leisure Group
8/F Maneeya Center
518/5 Ploenchit Rd
Bangkok 10330, Thailand
Phone: (66-2) 652 0507
Fax: (66-2) 652 0509
asiamanager@cook-islands.com

New Zealand

Albert Numanga
1/127 Symonds St
PO Box 37391
Auckland, New Zealand
Phone: (09) 366 1106
Fax: (09) 309 1876
nzmanager@cook-islands.com

USA

Mike Smith
17880 Skypark Circle, Suite 250
Irvine, California 92614, USA
Phone: (949) 476 4086
Toll Free: 1 866 280 1739
Fax: (949) 476 4088
usamanager@cook-islands.com

Europe

Karin Zwiers
Peterburger Strasse 94
10247 Berlin, Germany
Phone: (49) 30 4225 6027
Fax: (49) 30 4225 6286
europemanager@cook-islands.com

United Kingdom

Kevin Harris
Nottcut House
36 Southwark Bridge Road
London. SE19EU, England
Phone: (44) 20 7202 6369
Fax: (44) 20 7928 0722
ukmanager@cook-islands.com