



AUTUMN 2015

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\*Conditions apply. Fly FREE offers are subject to specific fare class availability and apply to limited seats on set departures. Offer is for the entry and exit flights into and out of Australia and does not include internal domestic flights which may also be needed to join the tour. Bookings must be made by Thursday April 30th Australian Eastern Standard Time (AEST). Applies to new bookings only. No other offers apply.



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TO AUSTRALIA!

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Travel from Brisbane to Cairns and visit 3 world renowned tropical islands • spend 2 nights on the stunningly transformed One&Only Hayman Island • overnight on Magnetic Island • 2 nights on Fraser Island with full day 4WD tour • visit historic Paronella Park • Great Barrier Reef Cruise to the Low Isles • Lake McKenzie & Eli Creek • travel along 75 Mile Beach • tour Atherton Tablelands • visit Millaa Millaa Falls • 2 nights Port Douglas • Airlie Beach • cruise the Daintree River • Flames of the Forest' dining experience and more!



**SUPER SALE**  
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An exceptional small group expedition down the longest historic stock route in the world. Travel in comfort and safety aboard our specialised fleet of Mercedes Benz G Wagon safari vehicles. The route traverses dunes, escarpments, salt lakes and oases. View Western Desert rock art and gain a unique insight into local Indigenous culture. Includes 2 nights of accommodation and 13 nights camping with full facilities (hot showers and proper toilets). Also includes QANTAS flight from Newman to Perth. **Hurry! Availability limited to May & September only.**



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Price excludes On Road Costs of up to \$650 which includes registration, WOF and a full tank of fuel. Offer available while stocks last. Available at participating Mitsubishi Motors dealers. See [www.mmnz.co.nz/mirage](http://www.mmnz.co.nz/mirage) for full terms and conditions.



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NEW CAR WARRANTY AND  
CUSTOMER CARE







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FOR OVER 110 YEARS.**  
New Zealand Automobile Association





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*“ We just lock up our home and go without a worry in the world. We just leave the pot plants out for the staff to water, shut the door and that’s pretty much it. ”*

*- Metlifecare Resident*

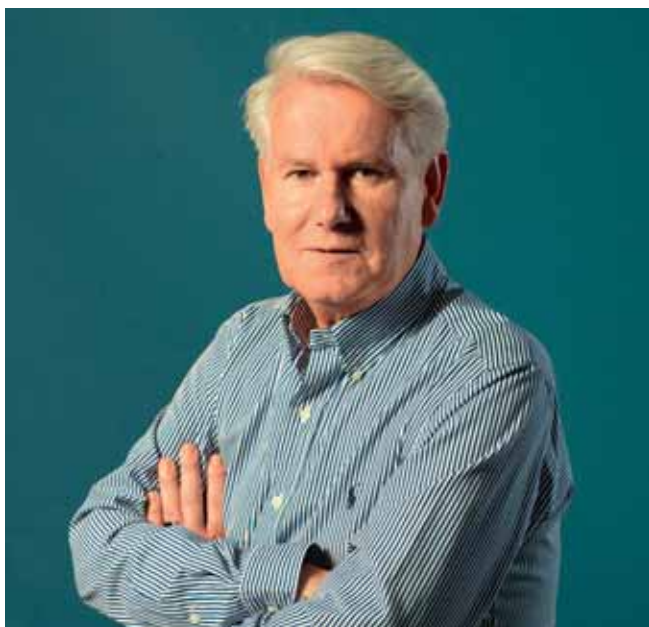


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0800 909 303 | [metlifecare.co.nz](http://metlifecare.co.nz)



# Putting safety first



**D**ESPITE A DISAPPOINTING end to last year's road toll, the overall messaging around road safety alongside efforts to reduce the number of deaths and injuries on our roads is having a positive impact.

The fact is that while road toll statistics fluctuate from one year to another, the long term trend is downward.

Obviously, much of that safety message has been, and should continue to be, around driver behaviour: drive to the conditions, keep within the speed limit and don't drink and drive.

However the time is right, I believe, to augment that safety message with heightened awareness of vehicle safety. Should a crash occur, how safe and protecting your car is will have an impact on the severity of the injury sustained by you and your passengers, or even whether the crash happens at all.

That a vehicle's design can make a difference to occupant safety is why car manufacturers have, particularly over the last decade, invested so heavily in new safety technologies. Already, safety technologies such as side curtain airbags and electronic stability control are

built into most new vehicles where perhaps a decade ago they were only available in the top-of-the-line models.

Such is the confidence around advancements in vehicle safety making a discernible difference that Volvo has set itself a goal to build, within five years, a car that no one will be killed or seriously injured in, in the event of a crash.

The growing importance of a vehicle's safety profile is why your Association, along with New Zealand's Transport Agency, takes part in ANCAP, the Australasian New Car Assessment Programme, which involves crash tests on new vehicles available in the Australasian market, awarding safety ratings from 0-5. We are also involved in the Used Car Safety Rating Programme which ranks used cars according to actual crash data in New Zealand and Australia.

That these programmes determining the safety ratings of cars is having a real impact on death and injury statistics is confirmed with the ACC's adoption of scaled levies, based on those ratings, from July this year\*. For the safest cars on the road the levy will drop by up to \$130 per year.

This move is applauded by your Association but also signals that the time is right to begin a more meaningful education programme about vehicle safety. We note that in parts of Australia and other countries it is mandatory for car dealers to display a car's safety rating at the point of sale. We think it should be compulsory here, too. That's why it was one of the AA's 15 Election Calls circulated to all political parties last year. Car dealers are required to display a vehicle's fuel economy rating and even car radio frequency but not its safety rating.

Your Association wants the Government to make the displaying of safety rating information compulsory at point of sale. Members and all New Zealanders deserve to be able to make a safety choice when buying a car; a choice that quite literally could save their or their families' lives in a crash. 🚗

**Brian Gibbons**  
Chief Executive

**\*see p.18 for more detail on changes to the ACC levy portion of vehicle registration fees.**

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Do you think it should be mandatory for car dealers to display vehicle safety ratings?

➔ **Go to [aadirections.co.nz](http://aadirections.co.nz) to have your say.**

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**ON THE COVER**

Photograph of Richard White atop his horse, Waikupeka, taken by Phillip Simpson in Te Urewera National Park. See p.20 for more stories on New Zealanders getting a thrill out of adrenaline-fuelled work.

# hello



People like cars. As a way of getting around, it's hard to beat the freedom, flexibility and range cars give us. But increasingly, urban living accommodates viable alternatives. In this issue, we look at how New Zealand cities are becoming more modern with their approach to mobility, with plans to improve public transport and develop more support for walkers and cyclists. Horse riding is left off the city planner agendas, but it features in our celebration of extreme work choices. Our cover star, an adventure tourism operator in Te Urewera, is one of seven New Zealanders we spoke to about their 'out-there' jobs. Read on!

Kathryn

KATHRYN WEBSTER  
EDITOR

## CONTRIBUTORS



**SARAH LARNACH**

Artist Sarah Larnach is now happy to be living in Auckland after studying and living overseas for 13 years. She exhibits here and abroad and has enjoyed successful collaborations with musicians in creating album art. Sarah's work on the album *Whispers* for British musician Passenger earned her a 2015 Grammy nomination. She is behind the bright and clever illustrations accompanying this edition's Car Care for Beginners.



**RENE HAUSIN**

Rene was born in Switzerland and came to New Zealand 35 years ago. He joined the AA eight years ago as a motoring advisor. The role sees him offer Members technical and legal advice on vehicles and importing cars into the country. Rene provides the New Car Prices data which he gathers from manufacturers – see p.53-55 for this issue's list. The most rewarding aspect of his work is supporting and helping those in need.



**MONICA TISCHLER**

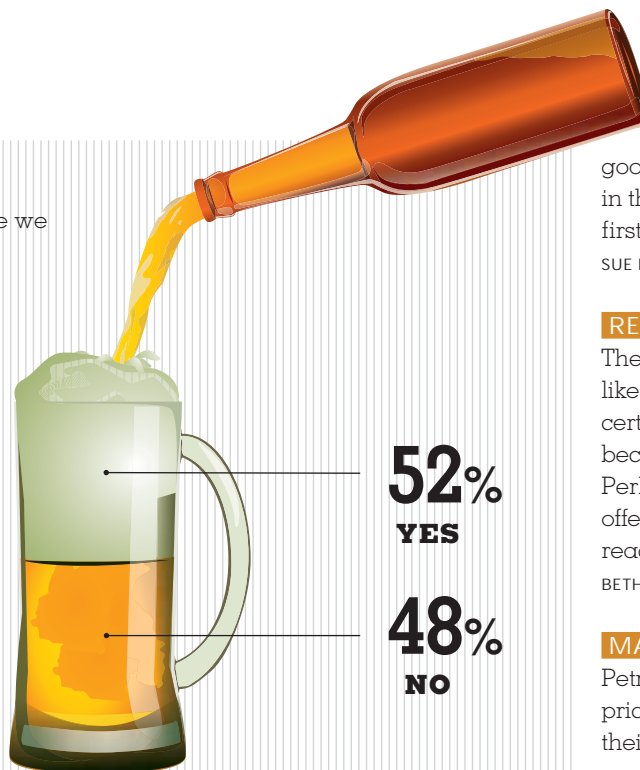
Monica discovered a love of writing while completing a media arts degree at Wintec in Hamilton. She began her journalism career as a reporter for Fairfax Media but always harboured a desire to break into magazines. Needless to say she was thrilled to join the AA Directions team last November. She's written several stories for this issue, including for our Wild Work feature (p.20) and a travel article on Auckland (p.62).



**OPINION POLL**

In the Summer 2014 issue we asked Members:

**Do you think lowering the drink driving limit in December will have a big effect on our road toll?**



This issue's poll question is:

**Do you think it should be mandatory for car dealers to display vehicle safety ratings?** To have your say, go to [aadirections.co.nz](http://aadirections.co.nz)

**LESSONS FOR VISITORS**

I was talking to some young overseas tourists who commented they found New Zealand speed signs very confusing. They said sometimes it was 100 or 90, but then it could change to 85 or 65 and there was no sign to say it had changed back. They were taking the recommended speed signs for corners as permanent changes in road speed. This is another indicator that a short driving course should be mandatory for overseas visitors before they drive our roads.

LYNNE ROBERTS – KATIKATI

**CALL FOR COOPERATION**

We were disappointed to learn that the AA is opposing the lowering of speed limits on rural roads. These changes are being made mainly for safety reasons. Surely it makes sense for the AA to work alongside the Police, NZTA and District Council, rather than oppose these bodies.

CAROLYN AND PAUL YOUNG – HASTINGS

**GIVE US A BREAK**

Many New Zealanders take picnics with them when travelling, but where are the roadside picnic spots? They are very few and far between. We recently travelled about 1000kms around the North Island with picnic gear; all we needed were picnic tables and toilets. We didn't find a single place with both. We did see plenty of signs telling drivers to 'take a break' when there was nowhere suitable for another half hour's driving or more.

JENNY SMITH – WANGANUI

**HISTORY REPEATING**

I enjoyed Andrew Bayliss' article 'Topless Beauties' (AA Directions, Summer 2014). I bought an MGF about a year ago, specifically to join a motoring club. Club members have become good friends. Together we've explored some stunning country roads and driving in convoy requires taking sensible road safety measures, taking care of each other and sharing the

good times. Rather like what was done in the early 1890s when the AA was first established, don't you think?

SUE FORDE – PALMERSTON NORTH

**REFRESHER IDEA**

The AA Ignition programme sounds like a great initiative and should certainly assist young drivers to become more competent drivers. Perhaps the AA should also be offering refresher courses for those reaching the age of 65 or 75 years?

BETH BOAG – NAPIER

**MAKING THE GRADE**

Petrol retailers should advertise the price for all grades of fuel available at their outlets, particularly when prices are volatile.

I recently visited our nearest BP and was pleased to learn that their price for 91 octane petrol was the most competitive in our area, that day. By using my AA card on a 'Thirsty Thursday' I was sure I would get a good deal (with AA Smartfuel).

I have reason to use premium fuel so I opted to fill up with that. I know there is normally quite a price difference between fuel grades, but I was taken aback to discover, too late, that I had paid an extra 37 cents per litre! That's a huge difference and I would like to know how it can be justified.

IAN YOUNG – PAPAMOA

**AA Petrolwatch spokesperson Mark Stockdale responds:**

*Some service stations discount fuel prices by 20 cents a litre or more. Unfortunately, this tends to only apply to 91 octane petrol and diesel which makes the price gap for premium petrol larger.*

*The AA has lobbied the government to make it mandatory to display the price of all fuel grades – this would increase price competition and consumer choice.*

Join the conversation online. Follow AA New Zealand on Facebook or Twitter @NZAA [f](#) [t](#)

We welcome feedback and views on articles in AA Directions, and on any issues affecting motorists. Because of the volume of mail we receive, letters cannot be personally acknowledged. Only a selection can be published and they may be edited or abbreviated for print.

WRITE TO: The Editor, AA Directions, PO Box 5, Auckland, 1140 or email [editor@aa.co.nz](mailto:editor@aa.co.nz)

# You have Holiday Dreams We have Dream Holidays

## Darwin, Katherine, The Kimberley & Broome

**10 Days** departs 11th May, 6th June  
& 20th June 2015

- Flights to Darwin and from Broome ex MELB, SYD & BNE
- 2 nights Darwin, Jumping Croc Cruise, Seafood dinner on Darwin Harbour at sunset
- Litchfield National Park, Katherine Gorge River Cruise
- 1 night Katherine, 2 nights Kununurra
- Bungle Bungle & Lake Argyle scenic flight
- Ord River Cruise, Carr Boyd Ranges
- Argyle Diamond Mine, 1 night Halls Creek
- Fitzroy Crossing, Geikie Gorge Cruise
- 1 night Fitzroy River Lodge
- Derby, Willie Creek Pearl Farm
- 2 nights Broome
- Sunset camel ride at Cable Beach
- Optional Horizontal Falls extension



**\$5345AUD**  
pp twin share

## Monkey Mia, Ningaloo Reef & The Pilbara

**15 Days** departs 18th August 2015

- Flights to Perth ex MELB, SYD & BNE & from Broome
- 2 nights Perth, Cruise on the Swan River, Margaret River Wineries, The Pinnacles
- 1 night Geraldton, HMAS Sydney Memorial
- 1 night Kalbarri Beach Resort
- 2 nights Monkey Mia Dolphin Resort, sunset cruise & 3 hour Dolphin Cruise
- 1 night Carnarvon, 2 nights Coral Bay
- 1 night Karratha Giralia Homestead
- 2 nights Port Hedland
- 2 nights Mangrove Hotel at Broome
- Sunset Camel Ride on Cable Beach



**\$6620AUD**  
pp twin share

## Central Queensland Outback Explorer 'Gold Class' Coach/Rail Combo

**9 Days** departs 9th July, 23rd July  
& 27th August 2015

- Luxury 'Gold Class' coach ex BNE
- 1 night Roma, Roma Cattle Saleyards
- Great Artesian Spa Swim at Mitchell
- 2 nights Charleville
- RFDS Base, Bilby Experience, Working Dog Demonstration, Blackall Woolscour, The Black Stump
- 4 nights Longreach, Australian Stockman's Hall of Fame, Outback Stockman's Show
- Drovers Sunset Cruise with Smithy's Outback Dinner & Show
- Winton, Age of Dinosaurs Exhibit, Waltzing Matilda Centre
- Qantas Founders Museum & Jet Tour
- 1 night rail journey on the 'Spirit of the Outback' in first class sleepers



**\$2925AUD**  
pp twin share

## Grand Splendours of Tasmania

**13 Days** departs 19th October &  
9th November 2015

- Return flights ex BNE, SYD or MELB to HOBART
- 2 nights Port Arthur, tour of the Penal Settlement & Isle of the Dead
- Doo Town, Eagle Hawk Neck, Tasman's Arch & Devil's Kitchen
- Triabunna Seafarers Memorial, East Coast Nature World
- 1 night Bicheno, Wineglass Bay Cruise
- 2 nights Grindelwald Swiss Village, Woolmer's Estate & National Rose Garden, Cataract Gorge Chairlift
- Sea Horse World OR Platypus House
- Sheffield, Railton, Hellyer Whiskey Distillery
- 2 nights Smithton, 'Woolnorth' historic property
- Cape Grim Wind Farm, Stanley Chairlift ride to The Nut
- Burnie Makers Workshop, Cradle Mountain
- 2 nights Queenstown, Gordon River cruise in Premium Seating
- Huon Pine Sawmill, Wall in the Wilderness
- 3 nights Hobart, Tahune Airwalk in the Huon Valley
- Forest & Heritage Centre Geeveston, Salmon Ponds & Museum, Russell Falls, Salamanca Markets



**\$3900AUD**  
pp twin share

\*Terms and conditions apply. Prices are current as at 3rd February 2015. Prices are per person, twin share, and sole use prices are available in our current brochure. Itineraries are subject to alteration without notice. Prices are subject to change. Tour and flight offers are subject to availability. All flights are in Economy class. For further information and conditions, please contact the Fun Over 50 team.

# FUN OVER 50 WINS GOLD AGAIN!!





## Carnarvon Gorge & Heron Island

*Explore Canyons & Coral Cays*

**9 Days** departs 24th June & 15th July 2015

- Luxury 'Gold Class' coach travel ex BNE
- 1 night Roma, Cattle Sales auction
- 3 nights Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge
- Enjoy fine dining in front of the log fire
- Guided Gorge walks with accredited Nature Guide to the Moss Gardens
- Baloon Cave Aboriginal Culture Walk
- Scenic helicopter flight over the escarpment
- 2 nights Gladstone, 2 nights Heron Island Resort with daily Naturalist Eco & Bird Watching tours
- Reef Walks on the Coral Cay at low tide
- Tilt train Gladstone to Brisbane



From **\$2980AUD**  
pp twin share

## Longreach, Winton & Gulf Savannah Safari

**15 Days** departs 31st May & 2nd August 2015

- Luxury 'Gold Class' coach ex BNE
- 1 night Roma, 2 nights Carnarvon Gorge Wilderness Lodge
- Guided naturalist walks
- 20 minute Helicopter Flight, 3 nights Longreach
- Stockman's Hall of Fame & Stockman's Show
- Drivers Sunset Dinner Cruise, Qantas Founders Museum
- 1 night Winton, Waltzing Matilda Centre, Australian Age of Dinosaurs, 1 night Cloncurry, 2 nights Karumba
- Croc & Crab Sunset Boat Tour, The Gulflander Rail Journey
- 2 nights Cobbold Gorge or Finnigan's at Forsyth
- Cruise Cobbold Gorge with Savannah Guide
- The Savannahlander Rail Journey
- 1 night Mt Surprise, Undara Lava Tubes with Savannah Guide
- 1 night 5-star luxury at the Shangri-la in Cairns
- Airport transfers, one way flights ex Cairns to MELB



**\$5220AUD**  
pp twin share

## Victorian Rover Grand Tour

*Great Ocean Road, The Grampians, High Country & Lakes Entrance*

**13 Days** departs 15th October & 19th November 2015

- Luxury 'Gold Class' coach travel
- 2 nights Crowne Plaza Hotel in Melbourne CBD, Yarra River Cruise
- 2 nights at Warrnambool on the Great Ocean Road
- Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum & 'Shipwrecked Show'
- Tower Hill Nature Reserve indigenous guided tour
- Guided tour of Port Fairy, 1 night Halls Gap
- Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Sovereign Hill
- 1 night in Medieval times staying at Kryal Castle, Ballarat
- Daylesford Covent, art gallery & chapel
- Central Deborah Gold Mine & Tram Tour at Bendigo
- 2 nights Echuca, PS Emmylou Paddlesteamer Cruise
- Ned Kelly Museum & Kate's cottage
- "Ned Kelly's Last Stand" light and sound show
- 2 nights Beechworth, Bogong High Country
- Red Stag Deer Farm, 2 nights Lakes Entrance
- Great Lakes Cruise of Eastern Gippsland



From **\$3410AUD**  
pp twin share

## Grand Queensland Coast, The Barrier Reef & Pristine Islands

*'Gold Class' Coach/Rail Combo*

**14 Days** departs 19th May & 2nd June 2015

- Tilt Train rail journey BNE to the Fraser Coast, 3 nights Fraser Island
- 4WD Island Safari Tour, Sandy Straits Adventure Cruise
- Ranger Guided Bird & Eco Tours
- Tilt Train rail journey Maryborough to Rockhampton
- 3 nights Capricorn Coast visiting the Capricorn Caves
- Rockhampton City Gardens & Zoo, Wetlands Eco Tour
- Footlights Theatre Restaurant lunch & show
- 2 nights on Daydream Island, Great Barrier Reef Adventure Cruise to Hardy Reef, Flights from Hamilton Island to Cairns
- 5 nights at the 5 star Shangri-la Hotel, Cairns
- Army Duck Amphibious Tour, Skyrail Rainforest Cableway, Atherton Tablelands, Mossman Gorge Dreamtime Cultural Walk
- Daintree River Cruise, Port Douglas, Paronella Park Spanish Castle in the Rainforest, Mamu Canopy Walkway, Curtin Fig Tree, Lake Barrine Cruise



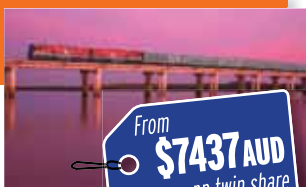
From **\$4150AUD**  
pp twin share

## Three Grand Ladies

*The Ghan, PS Murray Princess & Indian Pacific*

**13 Days** departs 21st September 2015

- Flights to Darwin ex MELB, SYD & BNE
- Darwin city sights tour
- 2 nights Darwin, Jumping Crocodile Cruise on the Adelaide River
- Humpty Doo Hotel, Military Museum, sunset seafood dinner
- 2 nights Gold Service on The Ghan from Darwin to Adelaide
- Katherine, Nitmiluk (Katherine) Gorge Cruise
- Alice Springs, Royal Flying Doctor's Base, National Pioneers Women's Hall of Fame, The Alice Springs Telegraph Station
- 3 night cruise aboard the PS Murray Princess with daily tours
- Captain's Dinner and Dance, Hahndorf, Hans Heyesen Gallery & Gardens, Mt Lofty look-out, 1 night Adelaide
- 1 night in Gold Service on the Indian Pacific from Adelaide to Sydney, Broken Hill whistlestop tour to Pro Hart Gallery, Broken Earth complex, Miners Memorial
- 3 nights Park Royal in Darling Harbour, Riverboat Postman Cruise
- Tobruk Sheep Station lunch and tour, Sunset dinner cruise on Sydney Harbour in guaranteed window seating
- Hyde Park Barracks, flights from Sydney to MELB & BNE



From **\$7437AUD**  
pp twin share

## Coober Pedy, Lake Eyre, Wilpena Pound & Kangaroo Island

**13 Days** departs 23rd August & 6th September 2015

- Return flights ex MELB, SYD & BNE to Adelaide, 1 night Adelaide
- 1 night Port Pirie
- Woomera Heritage Museum
- 2 nights underground or above ground at the 4-star Desert Cave Motel at Coober Pedy
- 1 night William Creek, The Breakaways at sunset, Dingo Barrier Fence, 2 hour scenic flight over Lake Eyre & The Painted Hills
- 1 night Prairie Hotel at Parachilna, Blinman Mine Tour
- 2 nights Wilpena Pound Resort
- 30 minute scenic flight over The Pound
- Guided walking tour to Hills Homestead
- 1 night Victor Harbour, 3 nights Kangaroo Island
- Kangaroo Island Artworks, Emu Ridge Eucalyptus Distillery
- Andermel Marron Farm and Two Wheeler Creek Wines
- Wild Seal Colony at Seal Bay, "Bird of Prey Raptor display"



**\$4977AUD**  
pp twin share

## Q&amp;A

Head of guide dog services at the Royal New Zealand Blind Foundation **Paul Metcalf** shares the process of training puppies to one day be the eyes of blind or visually impaired New Zealanders.

**What does training puppies involve?**

The first step begins long before the puppies are born. We select dogs, look into their history and mate them at the Blind Foundation in Manurewa, Auckland. The puppies stay here for eight weeks before we place them with a volunteer puppy walking family for a year.

A pup becomes part of the household and goes everywhere with the family to get familiar with the sights, sounds and smells it will encounter every day. They'll catch a bus, taxi, train or plane, or go along to a restaurant for a meal. We welcome anyone willing to help, but we do look at their lifestyle and make sure it's a safe environment because having a puppy is a huge responsibility.

**Have you ever had someone refuse to give back a puppy?**

Families find it very difficult, but we're clear about the process from the beginning. We do all we can to maintain the relationship with information on how the puppy is doing.

**What happens once the puppy has completed its time with its volunteer family?**

Pups complete a training programme which moulds them into being a guide dog. We teach them to stop at curbs and walk with a

harness on in the community. It takes about six months and we then match the dog with a blind person. We always have about 35 people on our waiting list. If a puppy doesn't make it through our training programme, we'll give them a career change and place them in therapy programmes in hospitals or prisons.

*"A pup becomes part of the household and goes everywhere with the family to get familiar with the sights, sounds and smells it will encounter every day."*

**Describe the process of matching a dog with a blind person...**

The most important element is getting the bond right. We match the characteristics and personality traits of human and dog. Once the pair is ready to go off on their own, we graduate them and, similar to a Warrant of Fitness, we have an annual 'woof' to provide follow-up care.

**Do the puppies have different personality traits and do you encourage it?**

Absolutely, right from the day they're born. Some traits we need to calm down while others are enhanced. Labradors are traditionally labelled

'hoovers' – if there's food, they'll eat it so we need to restrict that.

**What happens to retiring guide dogs?**

We look to retire them from their ninth birthday and they won't work past 11 years. By that time the dog really is a blind person's life-long partner and it can be really hard saying goodbye. Sometimes the handler keeps the dog, or we find another suitable home for them.

**It must be rewarding knowing that pups in training will one day be eyes for blind or visually impaired Kiwis?**

Striving to increase the independence of New Zealanders is the motto behind everything we do. Guide dogs really open the doors in terms of giving people opportunities. They can assist in helping a parent walk the kids to school, go to work or to a shopping mall. It really is a partnership between human and dog. A hundred per cent of what we do is funded by the charitable dollar. Our annual appeal is soon; our street collection takes place on March 27 and 28.

➡ Go to [blindfoundation.org.nz](http://blindfoundation.org.nz) for more information or to donate.

**RIGHT:** Head of guide dog services at the Royal New Zealand Blind Foundation Paul Metcalf with puppies Sage, left, and Sid, pictured at 12 weeks.



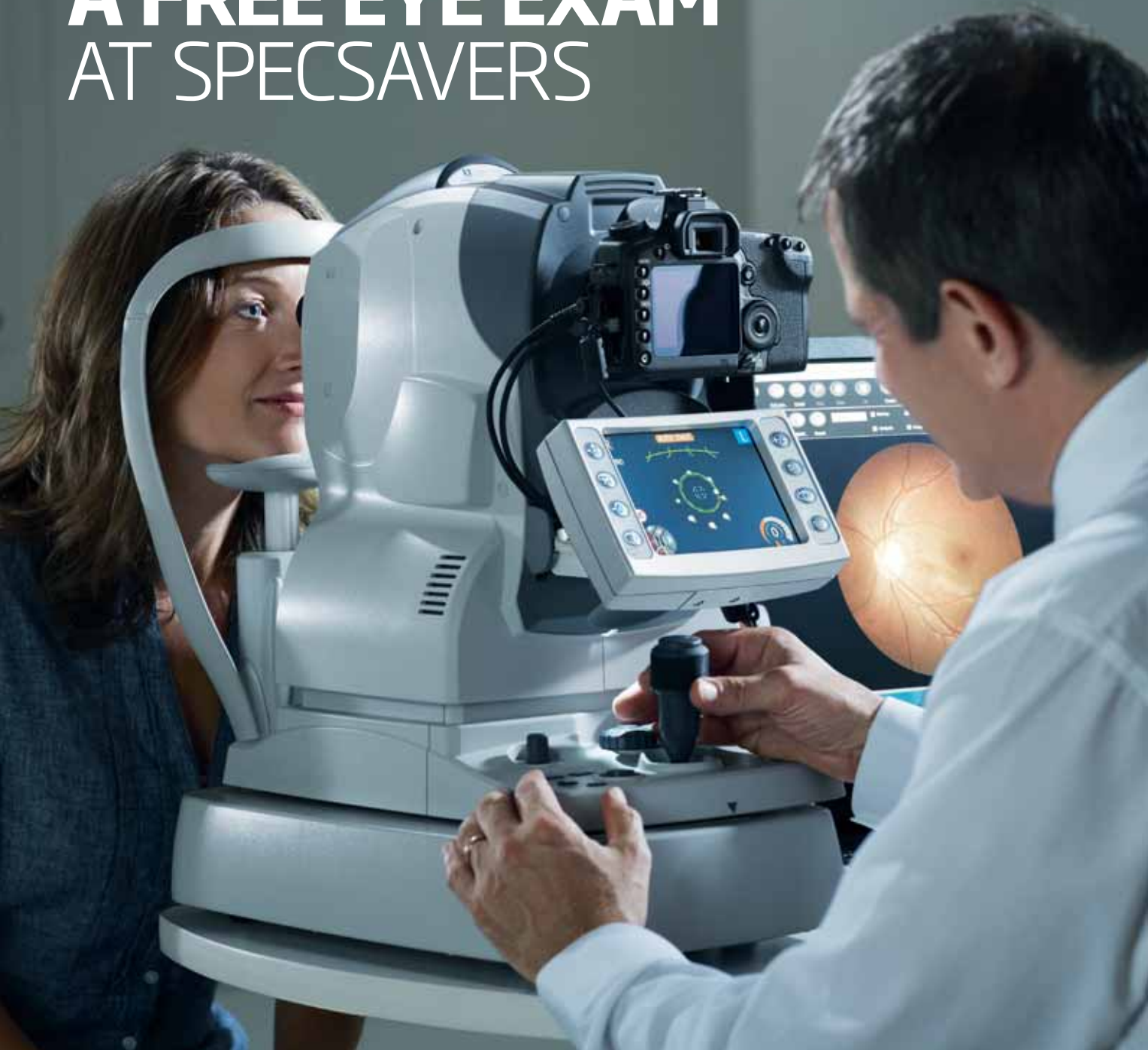




# AA MEMBERS GET A FREE EYE EXAM AT SPECSAVERS



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\*Free exam applies to standard eye examinations only, normally valued at \$60. Limited to one per AA Member every two years. Available to current AA Members upon presentation of AA Membership card, subject to appointment availability. © 2014 Specsavers Optical Group.





## TO THE OPERA

Opera fans will go to some lengths to get their fix. They travel specifically to see a performance and, with that approach, they are in for a brilliant upcoming season.

New Zealand Opera presents the Cinderella story, *La Cenerentola*, in Wellington in May and in Auckland in June. And Puccini's *Madama Butterfly* takes to the freshly restored Isaac Theatre Royal in Christchurch in July.

All performances include established and rising opera stars, including Kristin Darragh (singing the maid Suzuki, in *Madama Butterfly*) and Rachelle Pike and Amelia Berry, who star in *La Cenerentola*. All three young women are considered formidably talented.

## WIN!

We have 2 x A-reserve seats to *La Cenerentola* in either Wellington (9 – 16 May) or Auckland (30 May – 7 June).

**PLUS** 2 x A-reserve seats to *Madama Butterfly* at the Isaac Theatre Royal in Christchurch (23 July – 1 August).

To enter, send your name and address to Opera Prize, AA Directions PO Box 5, Auckland 1140 or enter online at [aadirections.co.nz](http://aadirections.co.nz) by April 30. Please state which city you would attend a performance in.



## GIVING BACK

Two hundred disadvantaged young people will soon have gained their restricted driver's licence through the AA and NZ Transport Agency's Community Driver Mentor Programme.

The programmes will soon be running in six parts of the country: Porirua, Te Kuiti, Gisborne, Christchurch, South Auckland and Northland. They help young learner drivers who would otherwise find it difficult to gain their restricted licence due to not having access to a car to practice in or people to supervise their practice.

Caltex provides free fuel for the young drivers' practice sessions and Hyundai has now also become a sponsor, providing vehicles for the programmes to use.

"We're really proud to contribute to an initiative which will help keep more young New Zealanders safe on the roads through driver education and experience," Hyundai New Zealand General Manager, Andy Sinclair says. "All our passenger vehicles hold a 5-star safety rating and we are confident that they will provide the best learning experience for young drivers in the programme."

The programmes partner young learner drivers with volunteer mentors in their community who take them out for supervised driving practice. The AA also gives a number of free professional driving lessons to the learners.

→ Pictured above: learner driver Manutala'aho Havili and her mentor Daniel Winterstein.

A century has passed since thousands of New Zealand and Australian men left their families and the comforts of home to fight in World War 1. Many events and activities are taking place across the country to mark Anzac Day and to pay tribute to them.

# Lest we forget



## CAMP GALLIPOLI

A night sleeping under a sky full of stars is a moving way to remember those who fought in battle.

Presented by the Camp Gallipoli Foundation and the Returned Services' Association, this will be held at Auckland's Ellerslie Racecourse on April 24. Gates open 3pm and the afternoon will be filled with activities, video documentaries, interviews, live performances by Evermore and 1814, as well as a feature movie. Come evening, campers can snuggle up and spend the night under the stars before waking to a Dawn Service at 5.30am.

Profits from Camp Gallipoli will be donated to the RSA to support veterans, former service personnel and their families.

➤ Visit [ticketek.co.nz](http://ticketek.co.nz) or call 0800 842 538 for tickets.

## ANZAC 100 YEARS 100 HORSES RIDE

A hundred horses and their riders will embark on a 20km journey to commemorate both the men and horses that went to war.

Riders will gather at the Peaks Hall, near Hawarden in North Canterbury, to attend the dawn service at 6am and will then progress to Waikari for the 10.30am service.

Fifty-two riders will be dressed in full military uniform, representing the soldiers from the area who didn't return home.

## THE ANZAC EXPRESS

The historic train, Passchendaele, built in 1915 will open its doors for passengers to experience a journey through history on heritage carriages, most with open-end balconies.

The Anzac excursion from Manawatu to Wellington coincides with the official opening of Wellington's National War Memorial Park.

Most of the train's carriages were built over 100 years ago and were in service during WWI.

The train will depart from the Palmerston North Railway Station on April 25 at 6.30am and arrive back that evening.

➤ Visit [steaminc.org.nz](http://steaminc.org.nz) or call 0800 783 264 for tickets.

## FOR US THEY FELL

The names of young Waikato men who fought in the war are displayed on war memorials in their local towns but very little is known about their interests and personalities.

The interactive exhibition For Us They Fell will put faces and stories to the names of Waikato men and women who served and died during the war.

Much of the exhibition will be created from information sourced through an easy-to-use website allowing contributors to gather information about soldiers from their region – either family members or those named on war memorials.

The exhibition is at the Waikato Museum from April 25 to November 11.

➤ Visit [forustheyfell.org.nz](http://forustheyfell.org.nz) for more.

## WAR STORIES FROM THE OLVESTON LIBRARY

Every family touched by war has personal stories that live on through generations.

Dunedin's Olveston Historic Home, complete with authentic fine art, furniture and artefacts from around the world, is the perfect spot to share war stories. Every Saturday at 12.30pm for the rest of the year, stories based on the correspondence between Dunedin families and their sons serving overseas will be shared. They will be broadcast on Otago Access Radio (105.4FM and 1575AM) at the same time.

➤ See [ww100.govt.nz](http://ww100.govt.nz) for more events.

## WWI IN WATERCOLOURS

An exhibition of 60 watercolour paintings, prints, and pen and ink sketches produced by creative New Zealand WWI servicemen will feature in Wellington's Cathedral of St Paul from April 18 to May 3.

Alongside them, more than 200 contemporary works by Watercolour New Zealand members will be for sale.

➤ Visit [watercolournewzealand.co.nz](http://watercolournewzealand.co.nz) for more.



## SALUTE

The Royal New Zealand Ballet and the New Zealand Army Band together present Salute.

The first day of the Battle of Passchendaele, 12 October 1917, was New Zealand's greatest single loss of life during WWI. New Zealand composer Neil Ieremia will showcase new work inspired by Warrant Officer Dwayne Bloomfield's tone poem *Passchendaele*.

**Wellington:** May 22 to 24, St James Theatre.

**Christchurch:** May 28 to 30, Isaac Theatre Royal.

**Dunedin:** June 3, Regent Theatre.

**Hamilton:** June 10, Founders Theatre.

**Auckland:** June 13 to 14, Bruce Mason Theatre, June 17 to 20, ASB Theatre.

**Napier:** June 24 to 25, Napier Municipal Theatre.

➡ Visit [rnzb.org.nz](http://rnzb.org.nz) for more.

## Focus on the big things

Picton's new National Whale Centre is proving a hit, attracting many more visitors from around New Zealand and internationally than expected.

"Our visitor numbers are higher than we predicted, which is great. Plus, more importantly, the feedback we're getting is that the centre is hitting the right buttons with visitors," NWC Trust chair Nick Gerritsen says.

Two years ago the NWC Trust launched a 'virtual museum' to connect international institutions, the New Zealand public, interested travellers, cetacean experts, museums and environmental organisations and to encourage the sharing of information.

Late last year a temporary display and development hub opened on Picton's waterfront. The trust aims to eventually build an iconic, interactive space on the site to highlight issues of whale and dolphin conservation efforts and the local area's whaling history through exhibitions and events.

➡ [aworldwithwhales.com](http://aworldwithwhales.com)



Cozy winter evening.  
Nana's turn. Triple word score.

## The great indoors by Weathermaster

For your windows, letting the Whisper shades down is the equivalent of pulling on a cosy jersey. Whisper's cellular honeycomb design traps a layer of air that prevents heat loss, keeping your home cosier and your power bills smaller. Choices include blackout, translucent or textured fabric and two cell sizes – 10mm and 20mm.

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There's more than one way to warm up your winter. Other Weathermaster options include rollershades, roman blinds, venetians and pleated blinds.



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*Weathermaster*

## AN EYE ON SAFETY

As a child, when my mother couldn't find her reading glasses, she'd ask me to thread her sewing needle – telling me her arms weren't long enough. And now it's my turn.

On the phone to Specsavers, I was asked when I'd last had an eye test, what my current concerns were and what my age was. And although it's primarily the pesky business of threading needles that's inspired this appointment, being confident of my eyesight as a driver is also motivation. As an AA Member, Specsavers will check my eyes for free every two years. It's a no-brainer.

Down the hill from work to the main street branch – past racks of beguiling frames – I venture to the welcome desk where my contact details are collected and my AA Membership checked; then to business. Machinery that

might be capable of landing robots on distant planets reads the front, back and sides of my eyes. My focus is measured, my lens scrutinised. Tiny puffs of air determine the state of my optical nerves and muscles.

On to the next professional who asks general health questions, studies the digital imagery of my retina delivered from the high-tech machine and then peers into my eyes with an extreme sort of torch to confirm the overall health of my eyes. I study dots and lines of letters and numbers, confirm the position of shapes in relation to each other, compare degrees of blurriness and finally agree that everything is indeed sharper with an apparatus of metal and glass perched on my face. This means I need glasses for reading.

Which means I get to play with



the frames.

There are so many options – including basic low-cost affairs, designer frames and a range of two for the price of one – that I'm overwhelmed and can't decide. I will have to return with more time but meanwhile, I know my long-distance sight is good and as a regular driver, that's the most important thing.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSIE CASSON



## Incredible nature

If you ever doubt Mother Nature's ability to boggle, check out the Natural History Museum of London's annual Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition. Now in its 50th year, the competition attracts entries from all over the world and provides a platform to showcase truly astonishing images.

Tauranga Art Gallery is hosting 100 of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year entries until June 7.

PHOTOGRAPHY: FRANCISCO NEGRONI

## Big cuts on the way

From July, there will be a reduction in the cost of the annual motor vehicle licence ('rego'), with the ACC levy portion falling by an average of 41%, depending on vehicle type. For cars under 40 years of age, the reduction will vary according to safety ratings because ACC is introducing risk-rated levies. This means the owners of the safest cars will pay the least.

All cars will get a reduction: the annual savings will range from \$40-\$130 for petrol-powered vehicles, and \$80-\$170 for diesels. Other vehicles such as utes, vans and vintage cars, will get a flat reduction, although there is no change in licence fees for motorcycles, mopeds, trailers or caravans.

If a vehicle licence expires before July 1, owners will be charged the old rate for the full duration. To avoid paying too much, owners may want to relicence the vehicle for a shorter period so that the licence expires in early July, and then renew for a longer period at the lower rate. A vehicle can be relicensed for any length of time at AA Centres or online at: [www.nzta.govt.nz/transact](http://www.nzta.govt.nz/transact).



## HOPEFUL FUTURE

Franklin Zoo could once again be buzzing with animals playing in treetops or basking in the sun's warmth.

Michele Harrod has a plan to save the old zoo which closed in 2012 after a keeper was killed by an elephant, causing all 430 animals to be rehomed.

The Auckland woman is the brains behind The Animal Connection – an initiative to transform the zoo back into an animal sanctuary and a place where young and old can interact and learn about the animals.

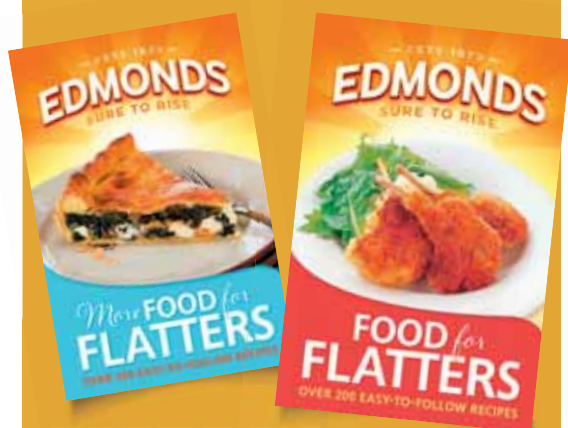
Michele hopes kindhearted supporters can get behind the project by donating to help make her vision a reality.

➡ Visit [theanimalconnection.org.nz](http://theanimalconnection.org.nz) for more information or to donate.

## Flatten Your Hunger

Leaving the nest for the first time is an exciting adventure. One filled with freedom, parties, and a diet consisting largely of takeaways, toast and two minute noodles.

It's a great way to live, but it's no way to eat.



# WIN!

AA Directions has five packs containing both cook books (RRP \$24.99 each) to give away. To enter, send your name and address to Food for Flatters, AA Directions PO Box 5, Auckland 1140 or enter online at [aadirections.co.nz](http://aadirections.co.nz) by April 30.

# Tonga.

*Live it, Love it*



## Unlock Your Adventurous Side

When it comes to exploring nature and cultures, the Kingdom of Tonga offers visitors a unique opportunity to safely see nature's bounty.

Less than 3 hours flight time from Auckland, this magical nation is made up of 175 islands that include pristine coral reefs, unspoilt beaches, active volcanoes, forests and picturesque villages where the locals are friendly. Not only does this allow the active adventurer to tailor a great holiday experience around their interests and fitness levels but it is a safe place to learn to snorkel, dive or sail in sheltered bays with the experience of local operators.

A firm favourite with visitors is to swim with humpback whales that return to Tonga to breed and give birth between July and October - a truly memorable experience.

A trip to the Kingdom of Tonga will provide a real experience of the True South Pacific.



KINGDOM OF  
**TONGA**  
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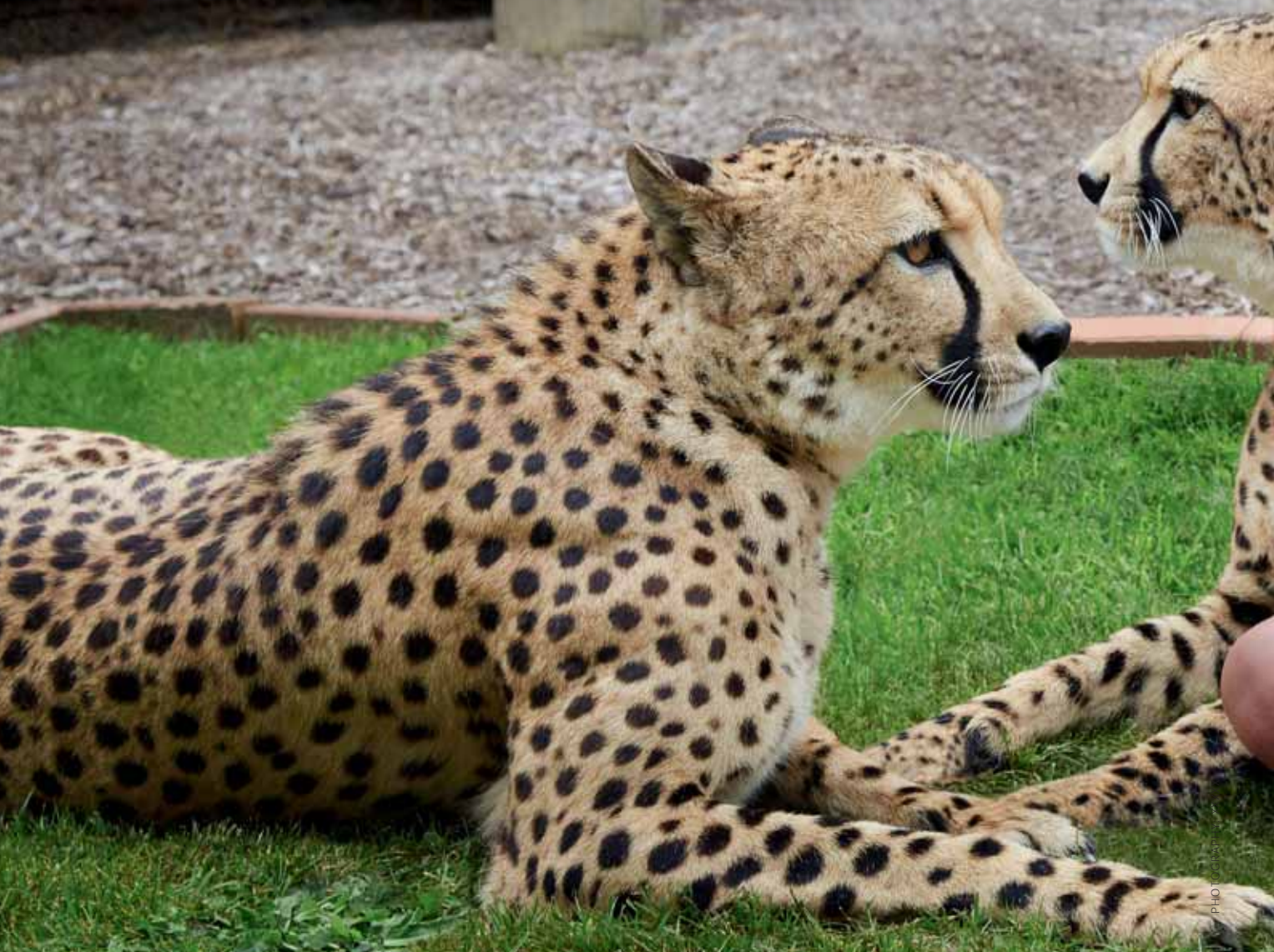
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[www.facebook.com/tonga](https://www.facebook.com/tonga)



# GOING TO EXTREMES

What do New Zealanders in need of adrenaline-fuelled lives do for work? **Karl Puschmann** and **Monica Tischler** meet some locals who know no fear...

Photography: **Phillip Simpson**





## WILD THINGS

### Getting up close

**A**MANDA TIFFIN IS Wellington Zoo's life science manager and one of eight cheetah keepers who interacts and cares for three male cats, Charlie, ten, and five-year-old brothers Canjo and Kunjuka.

Their happy hum takes her back to the first time she set eyes on a cat of such power, in Cape Town's Cheetah Outreach wildlife park in South Africa, where she emigrated from in 1994.

"They have an amazing purr and it's the most soothing sound to hear a content cheetah," she says. "When you put your hand on their chest you can feel them vibrating."

Putting complete trust in an animal of such size and strength isn't for everyone. Amanda is aware natural instincts could kick in if they become frightened and she's trained to read their behaviour.

"When keepers enter the enclosure they'll come over for attention and a head rub," she says. "But we still have a very high level of respect for the animals because they are wild. They're going to respond to things in a natural way and you must never get complacent."

It took time to bond with the animals. Interactions between Amanda and the cheetahs initially took place in a controlled environment with someone the cats knew and trusted well before they could spend one-on-one time together – a process Amanda is proud to have accomplished.

"Animals understand body language and what you present to them is what they'll read," she says.

"Just like any other cat, cheetahs respond to how you act around them. It's the best feeling once you're accepted by a cat."

Amanda takes small groups of enthusiasts on close encounters, allowing visitors to connect with the animals up close. A portion of funds generated by Wellington Zoo's Cheetah Encounters is contributed to the Anatolian Guard Dog project which gives African farmers trained shepherd dogs to chase away cheetahs and other predators before they attack stock. >>







## DOWN UNDER

### Manning Alice

**M**ORE THAN 40M underneath Auckland, Peter Lilley is in a control cab, manning the tunnel boring machine nicknamed 'Alice'. He's working on New Zealand's largest roading project, the Waterview Connection. Peter's one of four drivers of the 2400 ton and 12m machine which pushes about 5cm of dirt a minute and reports continuously on speed, earth pressure and the amount of dirt extracted. While it's all highly automated, being in charge of a huge machine is serious work.

"I've been doing it for so many years it's like second nature now, but when I first started out it was overwhelming. I was terrified."

Peter's first underground job was on the South Island's Manapouri tunnel in 1998. He moved into operating the machines two years later and has since worked in Brisbane, the United Kingdom, Hong Kong and Singapore.

Tunnelling's a potentially dangerous job and Peter had a close call in Brisbane.

"A ten ton concrete ring segment fell from the roof of the tunnel right next to a ring builder," he says. "It was human error. It shut the job down for three days and the worker at fault lost his job. Out of the near misses you learn from your mistakes and you have to remind the guys that these things can happen."

But safety practice on the Waterview tunnel is a priority and the team has it down-pat, he says, with good communication and safety buttons to stop the machine at any time.

Peter is contracted by McConnell Dowell, one of seven organisations in the Well Connected alliance formed to construct the New Zealand Transport Agency project. The development involves construction of a six lane motorway stretching 5km between Owairaka and Waterview, connecting the Southwestern and Northwestern motorways and completing Auckland's 47km Western Ring Route.



# OVER THE TOP

## Improving the view

EVERY HIGH-RISE OFFICE worker will recognise these guys. You're sitting working quietly at your desk when suddenly a guy drops down right in front of you, giving you a heck of a fright, and then a laugh, as they squeegee the separating glass before dropping off and away down to the next level.

It looks a scary business, but Peter Howcroft, founder of Off the Ledge, insists it is safe.

"Although abseiling is perceived to be incredibly dangerous, the gear is so good and the systems and methodology so well thought out that there is actually no risk. It's all perceived risk really. Back in the day, there was actual risk. You could actually die very easily."

He lets this hang in the air for a second before laughing and telling me how he got his start back in the early 1980s. After making the decision to move on from cleaning house windows and into the more lucrative high-rise market, he found himself staring up at his first contract.

"My first job was a five storey building in Wellington. It had a ledge about half a metre wide that sloped down. I climbed out of a window, no ropes or anything, and just started walking along with my little bucket. I quickly realised I'd underestimated how scary the whole thing could be. It had looked good from the ground!"

While safety was always a concern, it simply wasn't a criteria back then. "Most buildings were built with little ledges and you'd walk around the outside of the building. If there was no ledge, then you'd open a window, stand in the window sill, lean out across the glass and hold on."

The industry has definitely moved on from those hairy days. The abseiling revolution ushered in a new generation of safety. Now, it's the number one method for high rise window cleaning.

**Pictured:** Off the Ledge window washer Dan Rust. >>





# ON THE EDGE

## Keeping it unreal

IN THE JAMES Bond spoof *Mad Mission 4: You Never Die Twice* the hero escapes the baddies by jumping his car off the roof of a six storey building and landing on the roof of a building on the other side of the street.

The close-up was of actor Samuel Hui; behind the wheel was New Zealand stuntman Peter Charles Bell.

"With those Hong Kong movies they tended to think up a big stunt and then make the movie around it," he says. "The difficult thing about that jump was there was only a 75m run up to the ramp. I had to hit at the exact speed because the building I was leaving was 2.5m lower than the one I was landing on. Once I started the run there was no going back."

The resulting jump is spectacular and epitomises the ethos of Hong Kong action productions. But this is just one jump in Peter's 40 year career as a stuntman. His filmography spans over 200 movies, has seen him working with stars like Tommy Lee Jones and Lucy Lawless and has had him dangling underneath an aeroplane flying at an altitude of 4000ft.

He says the stunt is actually the easiest part of the job. "In stunt work every single thing you do is all about the preparation. Setting it up, planning it out, calculating everything, but making sure you still keep the danger and visual element to it, and making it as safe as possible. And that's all done in the prep."

Peter started his career working as a travelling stunt driver in carnivals and fairs in the United States and Canada, returning to New Zealand in the early 1980s as the local film industry began to take off. "Back then every movie had a car chase," he says. "I actually retired around 2002 but found myself getting bored so I started Drive Rush."

Drive Rush is his stunt driving school based in Auckland's North Shore, born out of a simple idea. "I've been in the game a long time and still get a thrill out of it," he says. "Why not let the general public get the same thrill?"

Learning how to power slide, drive on two wheels and even jumping the car from ramp to ramp are all taught to anyone who fancies having a crack at being a stuntman for a day.

"It's the 'wow factor' of stunt driving. It looks cool and gets the adrenaline pumping. But it's not rocket science when taught correctly. It's the real deal, but we've made it safe for people." >>









## AT WORLD'S END

### Finding answers

**A** THICK FILM of below-freezing air nips at Regina Eisert's face as she steps off a helicopter onto frozen planes stretching hundreds of kilometres around her. As the chopper lifts off, an eerie silence envelops her; nothing can be heard except for the crack of ice and the beating of a scientist's heart.

Regina is in Antarctica, on her sixth mission to research the impacts fisheries and climate change is having on seals, killer whales, penguins and toothfish.

Spending between three weeks to five months away at a time, Regina says an inquisitive mind has taken her to the edge of the ice and beyond the edge of her comfort zone.

"It's about the spirit of enquiry. I get to see more than most people and work on compelling science questions that provide important

information to New Zealand as a nation," she says.

Regina works as a research scientist at Christchurch's Canterbury University when she's not on the ice. Her time in Antarctica is made up of on-site research at Scott Base and fieldwork out on wild and icy terrain.

The ever-changing face of the landscape can be frightening. As soon as the sun slips behind a cloud, it can be like a blank white field, easily disorientating those who step onto it.

"This place can kill you. We always have to be with someone, even if we just want to go out on the ice to take photos. If we're around Scott Base we need to take a radio with us to let others know where we are at all times," Regina says.

Working in temperatures reaching below 20° is gruelling and the sheer chill of the atmosphere is enough to make ice particles form on tiny hairs

all over Regina's body – even in her nostrils.

"If you pour water out of a bottle, it will freeze mid-air before it touches the ground and packing necessities like toothpaste or baby wipes is tricky because contents will freeze so you can't use it," she says.

It can also make work complicated.

"I was taking samples from seals one day and the blood was frozen by the time it reached the syringe."

Regina is clearly curious about the lifestyle and future of Antarctic wildlife, but the animals are as interested in her. Penguins cock their heads as she takes photos and seals bob like corks in the waters below where she drills holes, their eyes tracing her every move.

"Emperor penguins are very stately, while the black and white Adelie are hypo and will come right over to you, flapping their flippers. It's pretty damn awesome," she says. >>



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# TO THE RESCUE

## Helping out



**A**S A PARAMEDIC working on the Westpac Rescue Helicopter, Stefan Gabor has some cracking tales of daring rescues undertaken in perilous conditions.

One summer's afternoon, a distress call came in from the middle of Auckland's mighty Waitakere Ranges. The chopper took to the sky and within minutes Stefan was stepping off the helicopter's safety skids and winching himself 45m into the heart of a deep valley to get to the patient.

"Right after I left the helicopter I got a spin going," Stefan says. "I was spinning most of the way down. I started to get worried, but then the spinning stopped... because I'd hit a ponga tree.

"So I'm a bit bruised up but I land myself on the rock, which is in the middle of a creek, relatively unharmed. The first thing you do when you land is unhook from the cable because it's very unsafe to stay connected to the chopper. But I was so dizzy I knew that as soon as I stood up I would fall off the rock and straight into the water. Then I'd need to be rescued! So I grabbed the rock, took a minute to compose myself and then tried not to fall over while I got unhooked."

We're told that after the dramatic rescue, the hiker made a full recovery from her broken ankle.

Stefan is fond of this story. Not only because it's funny but because it also demonstrates how it's not always the most dramatic injuries that make for the best tales.

"It's not always the adrenaline-filled jobs that are the most satisfying. It's any job where we've made a difference," he says. "When people are in trouble and we've brought them back to their families, that makes it all worthwhile. That's an awesome feeling."

He says that summer is the busiest time for the rescue team. "People are out there enjoying our playground. They're sailing and getting into trouble; they're hiking and falling over. They're having fun, but they're also, unfortunately, hurting themselves or getting lost. It's one of those things. And that's why we're here." >>



# INTO THE WILD

## Sharing adventures

**H**E AND HIS horses have traversed every crevasse of Te Urewera ranges over the years. But Richard White still admits to a pang of nerves setting off on each trek. The responsibility of being in charge in such wild territory weighs on his mind.

Richard, an adventure tourism guide, takes groups of riders into extremely rugged bush for up to five days. "It can be dangerous," he concedes. "People need to be skilled and have experience with horses to control and navigate them through bush."

Richard only takes experienced riders through on horseback, but can take groups of school children and those less experienced on walking treks, with pack horses adorned with pots, pans and other overnight necessities in tow.

"If it's raining, water levels can rise, making river crossings difficult. Horses can't touch the bottom in some places and have to swim. It's just their heads sticking out of the water and it can be frightening," Richard says.

"We have to scramble up steep tracks. Sometimes I'll hop off and lead the horses up."

Richard owns 20 horses, eight of which are broken in and are ridden by others on the treks.

He grew up in Ruatahuna, in the heart of Te Urewera National Park. His father Ivan bred horses during the early 1970s. Richard rode a horse to school and shadowed his dad through the bush on hunting trips – man and boy sometimes spending up to two weeks away at a time.

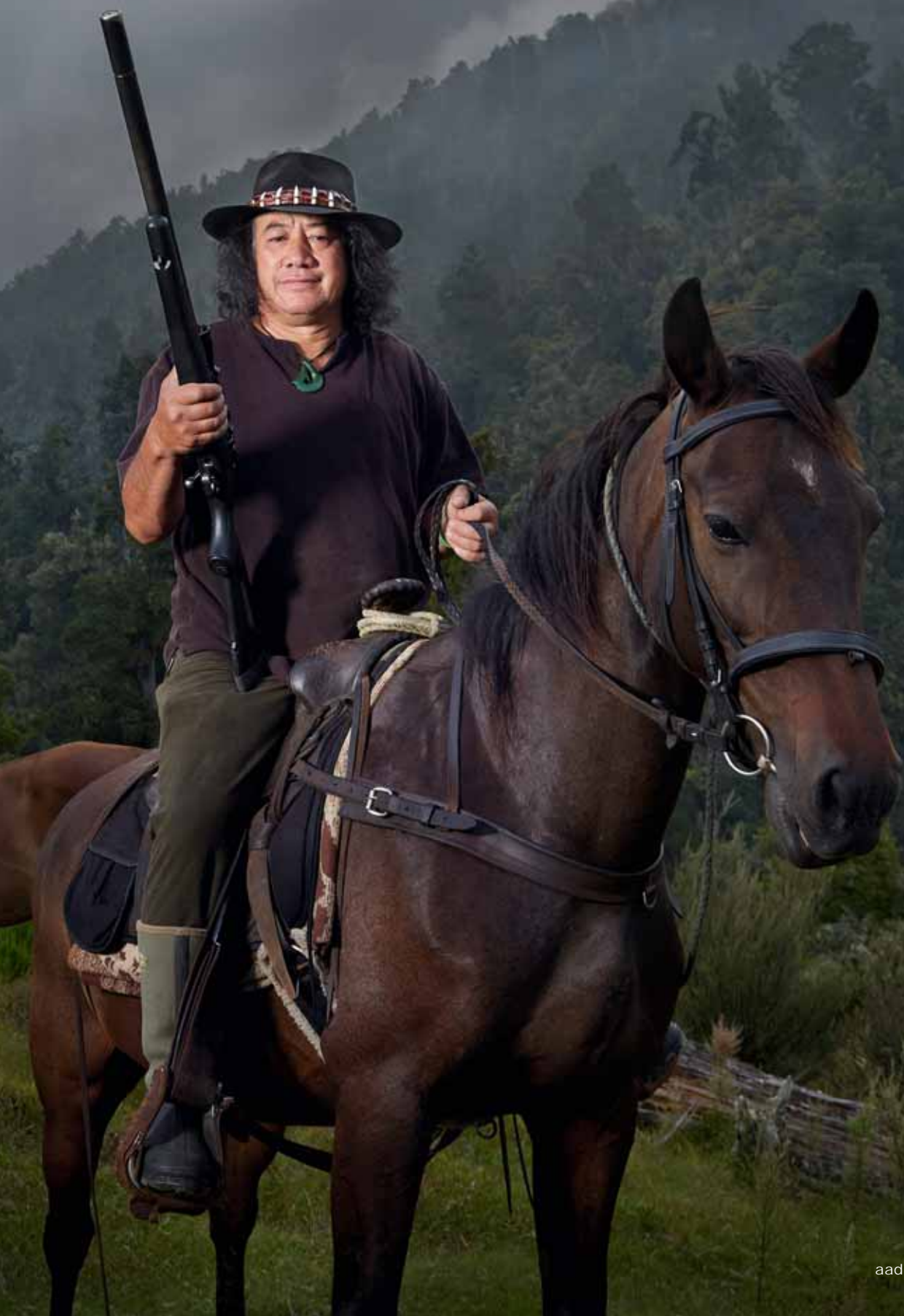
"I could spend six hours a day on a horse and by hooking my foot into the stirrups to secure myself, would lie down and sleep while Dad hunted," Richard recalls. "If Dad moved on to another spot, my horse would follow while I was still sleeping."

When Ivan escorted fishermen in and out of the Ureweras on horseback, his young son followed, sowing the seed for Ahurei Adventures, the trekking business Richard launched in 2004.

"The bush is a pretty awesome place to work. We watch wild deer come out and graze in the evenings. I love being here." 📷









# Modern Life Mobility

Transport affects how society works, how communities grow and how people connect. **Chris van Ryn** and **Peter King** look at the past, present and future of mobility and provide an update on New Zealand's situation.

**W**HERE IS HE?"  
"In the garden," I inform my wife. My son's very first steps introduce him to a world of new sensory experiences. His newfound ability to transport himself initiates another phase of lifelong growth and development – until he lands face-down in the flower bed.

Walking was our first form of transportation. How fast and how far we walked determined our lifestyle: where we foraged and found shelter, what language we spoke and which customs we followed. The tribesmen who walked the furthest found the most exotic wives; a bride from another village had to learn the language and customs of her husband's village. Venturing further broadened horizons.

Tracks formed by many feet wove

naturally around landforms. When horses were used for transport, first on their own, then pulling a cart, tracks widened. Many wheel rotations later, trains surpassed horses and carts. Trains went in straight lines – more or less – and so began a reshaping of the earth's landforms through dynamite and toil and, later, industrialised machinery. Railways grew above ground, over rivers and under seas while cities were criss-crossed underground by tunnels.

As factories emerged on the outskirts of industrialised cities, bicycles allowed workers to commute previously impossible distances.

And, of course, private motor vehicles increased mobility. Cars represented freedom, independence and economic empowerment. Advertising linked cars with fashion, status and lifestyle and defined the people who drove them.

## PEOPLE POWER WHAT DO YOU THINK GOOD MOBILITY MEANS?



**Richard Leggat, BikeNZ chairman**

Good mobility to me is being able to choose between

different methods

of transport and get from A to B safely, comfortably, and in a predictable time. If I'm driving or using public transport, I want to know that I won't face unexpected delays. If I'm cycling or walking, I want to know there's a route that's relatively risk-free and pleasant to take.



The car became culture – and cities car-centric.

Roads and motorways were developed, then expanded. Cars made supermarkets and shopping malls possible. Groceries could arrive home by the boot-load and last a week, rather than smaller, more frequent handheld loads from local stores.

The car allowed dwellings to spread to rural areas – the start of urban sprawl – and, in our country,

searching for this elusive rectangle of tarmac burns a third of the petrol used for the journey.

Carbon emissions are resulting in climate change effects and big money is being spent to find fuel alternatives. Biofuel researchers are confident they will produce a clean energy liquid as efficient as petroleum, something electric vehicles are currently unable to deliver.

Yet the future of the car remains

health are exercise and fresh air – and meeting people. ‘Active transport’ is an important antidote to the trio of epidemics.

Cities across the world are addressing these health issues, as well as traffic congestion, by engineering plans around walkers and cyclists. In Seoul, Korea, a four-lane motorway built in 1969, flanked by high-rise and used by 600,000 cars daily, was demolished in 2005 and replaced with gardens, a stream, walkways and cycleways. Outside the city of Chengdu, China, a prototype development known as the Great City is being built, capable of housing 80,000. It is a modern pedestrian-only city. Planned around a central transit-way with underground rail connections, most amenities are accessible within a 15-minute walk.

Walking and cycling cities require density. Residences are on ‘vertical streets’. Public spaces are gathering areas for spontaneous face-to-face interaction. Cafes, bars and restaurants with easy chairs and coffee tables and open street frontages become ‘living room’ extensions. Bike-friendly public transport is usually close by: no more than a 15-minute walk. >>

## “Between us, the seven billion people on the planet today own one billion cars – all looking for a parking space.”

enabling the ‘quarter-acre block’ lifestyle. Houses gained first single, then double garages.

In many cities, the popularity of the cars slowed traffic to a frustrating crawl. Planners countered with more roads: wider, straighter, faster. The continuing inefficiency caused by congestion, both financial and personal, is enormous.

Between us, the seven billion people on the planet today own one billion cars – all looking for a parking space. In some cities,

promising. Greater automation will boost safety and ease congestion. Motorists can look forward to advanced GPS with 3D maps and live data about road conditions, the most energy efficient route to a destination and where to find that parking space.

At the same time, there is growing awareness of the need for humans to be more active. Mental illness, obesity and diabetes are epidemics sweeping the world; the foundations of physical and mental

ILLUSTRATIONS: PAUL PACHTER

### Leah Gates, GM Employment, Auckland Chamber of Commerce

For us, a big part of mobility is the driver’s licence, and the

access this provides to employment. An alarming number of young people are unlicensed or stalling on their learner’s and restricted licences. Our message is that job seekers need a full licence, not only as a skill requirement, but to demonstrate they’re able to get to work every day. Often, there’s no realistic public transport alternative.



### Patrick Reynolds, transport commentator

Better mobility, especially in urban areas, comes through

greater choice. Different journeys, at different times, and for different people are optimised by having a range of good available options. When more people have the choice to ride quality transit or separated bike lanes for more trips, then our cities function more efficiently for everyone, especially drivers.



### Stephen Selwood, CEO, NZ Council for Infrastructure Development

Ultra-fast broadband will change how and

where we work. Distributed work places and all-day mobility will replace the city-centre commute. There are already as many Aucklanders working from home as there are taking public transport. Imagine if we were able to double that number. Transport policy makers need to wake up and smell the coffee!

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"The **EasyPhone** should be awarded Gadget of the Year for the over 50s. It's so simple to use. I normally need my son to show me what to do but not with this phone. The SOS is so handy - I've never had to use it in an emergency but I call my son every day so it's easy to just press the button and talk" **Mrs Emily Jones**

"...great phone, no nonsense, fantastic battery life, easy to press buttons, easy to see screen and I even listen to my favourite talk show or the cricket when I'm on the bus or out and about" **Graham Burgess**



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As it always has, mobility adapts to changing lifestyles.

Twelve years ago I lived in an eastern suburb of Auckland. From the time I left my street for work, I entered a stop-start traffic queue, arriving at work more than an hour later. We decided to move into a central-city apartment, sold one car, and now use the other to visit family and friends in the suburbs and for trips out of Auckland. I purchased an electric bike. Now Auckland's hills are managed with a grin. In the evenings we stroll through the nearby park on our way to a café. I walk to work: ten minutes each way. With extra time to enjoy, I meet neighbours, walk to the library, art gallery or movies, or chat with friends at inner-city bars.

I can write for offshore magazines from a small desk in my bedroom. I can study at the world's best universities without leaving home. Yes, the vast majority of Aucklanders (87%) don't work in the centre of the city and their mobility solutions are

## "Modern transportation lets us enter into the life, language and thoughts of others..."

very different to mine. But mobile technology invites us to live more flexible lifestyles, to work and learn in a variety of locations, to restructure school systems, while taking advantage of the global information network. We can connect without the commute.

We have gone far beyond the limitations of our feet. Modern transportation lets us enter into the life, language and thoughts of others, sowing seeds for greater unity. Transport allows us to experience, first hand, architectural masterpieces and great works of art and to listen to every kind of music. Transport affects our health, economy, the natural environment and how we plan our cities. Without access to transport that shifts us out of familiar surroundings, we would never reach the flower bed.

## A PLAN FOR Auckland

Auckland Council has presented an ultimatum to Aucklanders: get a hot new transport system for an additional \$12 billion (\$300 million every year for the next 30 years) or expect traffic congestion for a long, long time.

In reality, the situation is a lot less simple than that. Congestion is going to get worse even if Auckland does opt to pay more and the new ways of paying for infrastructure being proposed by the Council (like motorway tolls or tax fuels) would need support from a sceptical central Government. So finalising a programme to fix Auckland's transport is still some way off. Meanwhile, Aucklanders can look forward to a number of projects that will reshape the mobility landscape.

According to Auckland Transport's plan for the city, new train stations



every 15 minutes. But the network won't cover the same amount of geography. You may end up walking or cycling 20 minutes to get to your closest stop. There will be fewer stops in a journey, so you'll get to your destination quicker. And if you transfer from bus to train to ferry, it all comes under the one ticket and fare.

The Auckland Cycle Network is part of an ambitious plan to get more Aucklanders using active modes of transport, and \$15 million per year for the next 15 years will be needed to complete it.

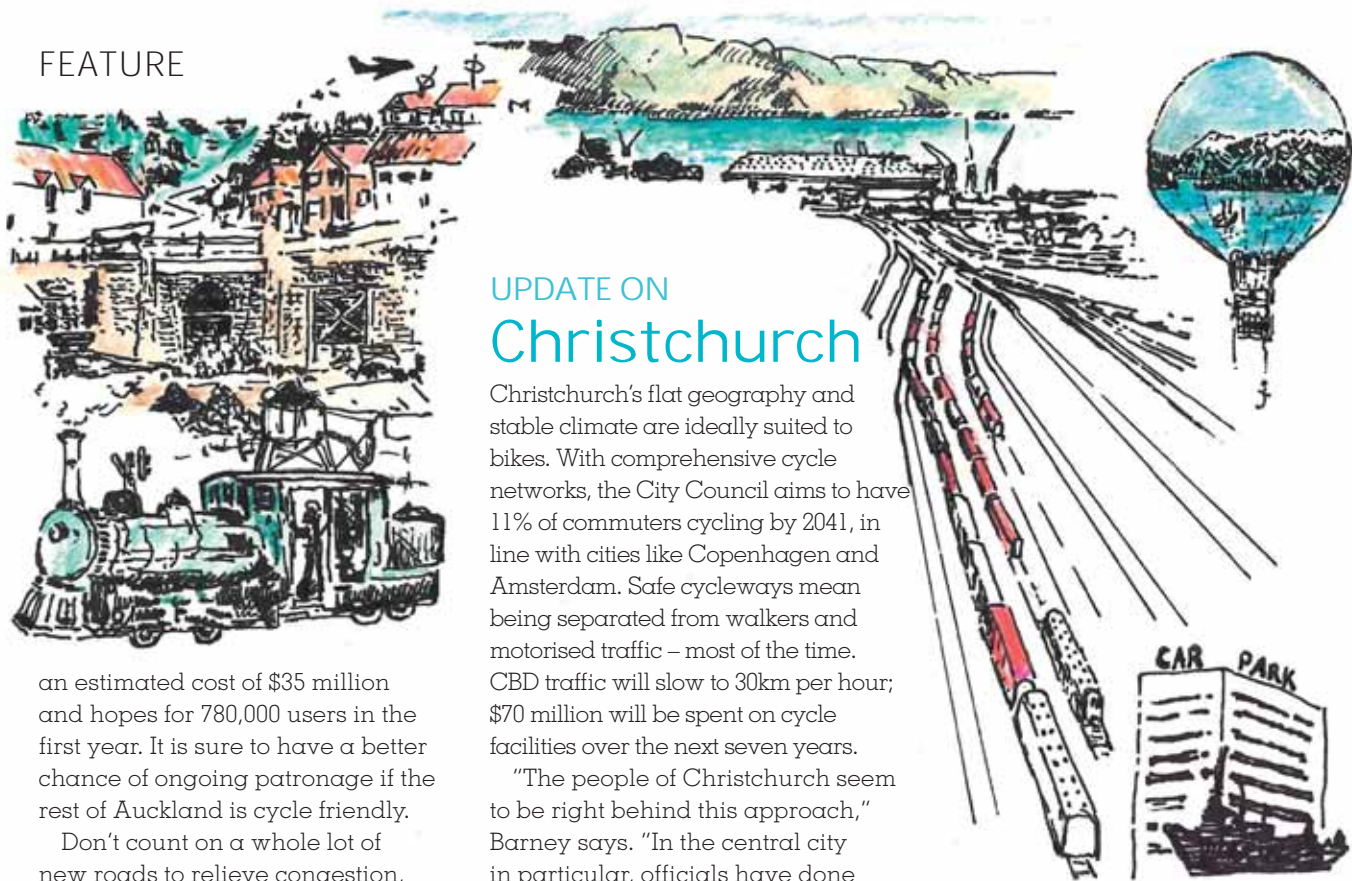
Seventy-five percent of trips to work in Auckland are made by car (about one per cent of people currently use bicycles to commute), so getting Aucklanders spinning pedals might be a bit of a challenge. Ensuring cycleways are separated and safe rather than sharing an already busy roadway will go some way to encouraging this. With Auckland's challenging geography, electric bikes seem destined to become a vehicle of choice for the new, slimmer, fitter Auckland. (See p.39)

SkyPath takes cycling to a new level – over the Auckland Harbour Bridge, in fact. Conceived as a privately funded initiative, SkyPath is a partially covered clip-on with >>

will be the 'queen bees' in the hive: centred in areas that are growing as residential hot spots, into which other transport options will feed. The City Rail Link will extend from Britomart and include two additional stations: Aotea and Karangahape, and an upgraded Mt Eden Station.

Making Britomart a through-station means rail capacity will double, reducing travel times. It's expected that the share of CBD commuters travelling by rail will increase from around eight percent to 20%. The project will take five and a half years to build and cost \$2.4 billion. The possibility of a light rail system has also been mooted.

The bus network is changing from a 'coverage model' to a 'frequency model'. What does this mean? You can expect a bus to arrive at your stop more frequently – at least one



## UPDATE ON Christchurch

Christchurch's flat geography and stable climate are ideally suited to bikes. With comprehensive cycle networks, the City Council aims to have 11% of commuters cycling by 2041, in line with cities like Copenhagen and Amsterdam. Safe cycleways mean being separated from walkers and motorised traffic – most of the time. CBD traffic will slow to 30km per hour; \$70 million will be spent on cycle facilities over the next seven years.

"The people of Christchurch seem to be right behind this approach," Barney says. "In the central city in particular, officials have done a really good job of responding to the needs of the different transport modes. When the group that wants more public transport and the group wanting more parking are both happy, you know you've got the balance right."

This balance is essential when it comes to getting growth and investment back into the CBD. Research identified that pre-quake, inner-city Christchurch had lost much of its vitality, with offices achieving low rental and shoppers frequenting suburban malls.

A focus of the city's rebuild is to return the beating heart to Christchurch CBD. There will be an increase in inner-city density (a model which supports active transport modes) with additional residential dwellings – 150% more than pre-quake. Where there are people there is action: more vibrant retail, higher demand for office spaces, bustling public plazas and dynamic hospitality.

The CBD bus interchange is another strong statement about where Christchurch sees its transport future. By 2041 Christchurch will have gathered an additional 130,000 residents, and 40% of the population

an estimated cost of \$35 million and hopes for 780,000 users in the first year. It is sure to have a better chance of ongoing patronage if the rest of Auckland is cycle friendly.

Don't count on a whole lot of new roads to relieve congestion, aside from the Western Ring Route and Waterview tunnel, currently underway. Auckland is spread out over a narrow isthmus and we're running out of space.

AA's Principal Advisor, Infrastructure Barney Irvine says: "The reality is we are not going to build many more of those projects. At some stage we will get another harbour crossing and the East-West connections in Onehunga... but it's not like we are going to continue to find new corridors. There just isn't the space. It's about better management of the roads we have got already."

Another harbour crossing? Serious planning for a tunnel under the Waitemata will start in the next few years, though construction probably won't begin before 2025.

The Auckland Plan's vision is for 45% of Aucklanders to be cycling, walking and using public transport by 2040. This would help to ease congestion and have other side benefits, health in particular.

Transport changes are desperately needed but the strategy has to be right. Until there's a consensus view about what exactly to build and how to pay for it, freeing up the snail trail commute is not going to end.

will be over 60. Giving people access to effective public transport is vital in off-setting congestion.

The bus interchange will operate on a 'hub and spoke' model, with the interchange as the central hub and buses approaching from the suburbs along the 'wheel spokes' of a frequency network: more buses, more direct, quicker journeys. The interchange will be shrouded in an aesthetically dynamic statement of modern architecture and echo a bustling airport lounge, feeding buses, people and finance into the city's new pulsing heart.

When it comes to roads, the big story in Christchurch is the construction of the new motorways, with the aim of improving access to the CBD, the airport and Lyttelton Port.

In the CBD, traffic flows will be enhanced by better management of the four avenues (Bealey, Fitzgerald, Moorhouse and Deans) with the widening of roads and some one-way routes.

Christchurch has embarked on ambitious transport concepts. Cycling and walking, along with public transport are given greater status, practically and philosophically. >>



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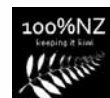
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## CYCLING IN Hastings

Hastings is on a mission: to have 20% of the city pushing pedals and pounding pavements five years from now. And it's well on the way to achieving this. With cycleways that link into the wider cycle routes that surround the Hawkes Bay region – a drawcard for already successful cycle tourism – eight per cent of the community has already got onto the saddle (Auckland is just on one per cent, Amsterdam is on 12%).

The initiative was kicked off five years ago after Hastings District Council applied to the New Zealand Transport Agency for funds to set themselves up as a 'model community'. NZTA describes such communities as 'urban environments which offer cycling and walking as the easiest transport choice'. Hastings was awarded \$4 million. Council

reached into its own pocket for an extra \$2 million, and, armed with a good deal of political fortitude, embarked on turning Hastings into a pedal-powered/pedestrian town.

'iWays' was the brand they gave the new cycleways, which now run 120km through the town.

"We set ourselves three goals," Hawkes Bay Deputy Mayor Cynthia Bowers says. "The first was to have 20% of short trips (five to seven kilometres) undertaken by cycling or walking by 2020. The other two goals were to increase the perception that cycling was safe and to reduce the crash rate for cyclists."

To create cycleways required the removal of inner-city carparks and this met with resistance. Council worked through the issues and stuck to its guns.

"There has been an attitude by

motorists that they own the road and there has been a reluctance to share. But I think we are over that now," Cynthia says.

Changes in awareness and attitudes of motorists, and separated cycleways have reduced crash rates between bikes and cars by a whopping 50% and with education, this is likely to improve.

The Bikes in Schools programme, a project of Bike On NZ, which aims to provide all primary school children with the opportunity to cycle regularly, has its origins in Hastings. With additional leisure cycle routes being constructed around the Hawkes Bay area, including the proposal to create a cycleway from Gisborne to Napier along the old railway, cycle tourism is growing – which adds support to cycle commuting.

**CHRIS VAN RYN**





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## CASE STUDY: Mangere

If you change the way streets and paths are laid out, can you improve the health and wellbeing of the people who live on them? That's the question behind 'Future Streets', a transport research project funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, and being rolled out soon in Mangere, South Auckland.

The research team is led by Dr Hamish Mackie, a transport researcher who was inspired by work carried out at Point England in Auckland to make suburban streets more of a public place and less of a race track. He says while transport professionals often focus on road safety they sometimes overlook (and may even create) other health costs. He wondered if the problems of obesity and type 2 diabetes could be tackled by changing the way streets and paths are structured, to encourage less reliance on cars and enable a more active lifestyle.

The resulting project is a massive joint venture including numerous transport researchers, health researchers, Police, Auckland Transport and the NZTA.

But the project has already demonstrated a new way of planning for transport. Instead of the top-down, command approach, where projects are based solely on professional judgement Future Streets has had to make much more use of a customer-led approach, actually asking people what the key issues are and what they want.

"We've been at a stand in the Mangere Mall at every Saturday market for four months just talking to people about what they think. We've been to schools and meetings and this told us a huge amount about the realities of travel in the area," Hamish says.

The main discovery has been the importance of personal security.

"There have been incidents of violence around the area, but you still see people using walkways and routes that have a poor reputation.

We need to acknowledge the issues but also understand what can be done to make people feel safe on these routes," he says.

Making cycling and walking acceptable forms of transport for adults and particularly children means tackling the security issue first. It means opening up places to public view and making active modes seem more attractive rather than dangerous. It also means creating crossings where the flow of traffic doesn't seem like an impossible barrier.

While the four-year project won't transform Mangere (it isn't that big), it is hoped that it will have an effect on how people travel around Mangere. Its findings will provide both data for evaluating the effects, and learnings about how to implement a scheme that is very different to roading business-as-usual. If indeed it does find benefits, Hamish says the idea is to make it possible to transplant the techniques to other parts of the city and country.

**PETER KING**



## eBIKES

Whether it's Portland, Melbourne or London, one of the biggest growth areas in alternative urban transport is cycling. There are good reasons for this. For every three cars on New Zealand roads, two have only a driver in them. For every bus, the average number of passengers is around eight. Average trip length is less than ten kilometres and average trip duration is less than half an hour. So there are an awful lot of largely empty vehicle shells taking up road and parking space which cities would prefer not to accommodate.

Tests have found that in most urban areas, over distances of less than 10kms, bikes are faster than cars, simply because they don't take up space. London even has cycle ambulances, for that reason. The trouble is, bikes are human-powered and humans aren't so keen on getting sweaty and don't like hills or wind much – things that New Zealand, unlike Denmark or the Netherlands, has a lot of. Enter the eBike: battery-

electric powered bicycles that can match traffic speeds regardless of grade or wind. eBikes are one of the fastest growing cycling segments in Europe, the US and China.

It's much like a bicycle to ride but with a mild slope or wind behind you wherever you go. It's easy to maintain speeds equal to average traffic speeds (30km), and to ride up hills with considerably less effort than without assistance.

eBikes are still pretty expensive (around \$2,500) but prices are dropping. The main advantage over a car is better traffic speeds and zero parking costs. Some can be folded to use with cars or public transport. But AA Membership surveys have found that the main concerns about eBikes are much the same as they are about bicycles: people want safe, separated cycle paths and lanes to be comfortable using them.

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Solo 15 TV sound system pictured above.

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# Motoring



## Wheel love

### Jooles Clements and his 1991 BMW 8 Series

"The 8 Series is a beautiful design. Timeless. You don't see many of them around, so when I drive it people aren't sure what it is. They think it's a new car.

I try to do as much of the work on it myself as I possibly can. I belong to the BMW Car Club

and participate in the online community Bimmer Sport. The people there have a wealth of knowledge to tap into. With an older car that's hugely important because it'd be very expensive to keep on the road otherwise.

This model came out when

I was about 16. When I first saw one I was completely blown away. It didn't look like anything else. I thought it would be really cool to own one, but they were a huge amount of money. Now they don't cost that much, so I can." 📺



# Car care for beginners

Andrew Bayliss runs through some basic car care tips to keep your motor running



## Tyre pressure

**What:** Car tyres have a recommended pressure they should be inflated to.

**Why:** Incorrect pressure compromises the handling and safety of your car. It'll also hit you in the pocket. Over- or under-inflated tyres wear rapidly and need to be replaced more often.

**How:** Check your tyre pressure once a month. Most gas stations have tyre pumps with a pressure gauge. If you're unsure what to set it to, look for a plate or sticker inside the driver's door pillar, in the glovebox or in the owner's handbook. Failing that, you can enter your registration number at [energywise.govt.nz/tools/tyre-pressure](http://energywise.govt.nz/tools/tyre-pressure) to obtain the correct tyre pressure for your car. Don't forget to check your spare.



## Tyre tread depth

**What:** The grooves on your tyres are its tread. By law there must be 1.5mm of tread around the circumference and across three quarters of the width. For safety we recommend replacing tyres before they reach the legal minimum.

**Why:** A tyre with low tread depth equates to a dangerous car. A bald tyre has little grip making it easy to slide out of control when cornering. You'll also skid further when braking. In an emergency this could be the difference between stopping safely and having an accident. This goes double in wet weather.

**How:** Tyres have 1.5mm wear indicator bars moulded into the tread. Once the wear indicators are level with the tyre surface, your tyres are worn to the minimum legal limit.

To check, insert a 20c coin into the tread with the number facing in towards the tyre. If the entire number is visible the tyres only have 2mm of tread left and you should consider replacing them.

## Engine oil

**What:** Oil is the lifeblood that lubricates all the fast moving and rotating parts of your engine.

**Why:** If the oil level is too low, or the oil is dirty, your engine life can be severely reduced. If the oil's black, it's contaminated with tiny carbon or grit particles which act like sandpaper, wearing the moving parts.

**How:** With the car parked on a flat level surface, remove the dipstick and wipe it clean with a cloth. Re-insert the dipstick and ensure the level is between the high and low level marks. If the level is low, top up with the recommended grade of oil for your car. If the oil is black, it's time for an oil change. You can buy oil at service stations.





## Lights

**What:** Your headlights, park lights, number plate lights, indicators, brake lights, reverse lights, fog lights, hazard lights, and any other ancillary lights must all function.

**Why:** The lights aren't just there for you to see at night or in poor light, they're also there so other road users can see you and understand what your intentions are, such as turning or braking.

**How:** This one's simple. Turn on the lights, walk around your car and make sure they're all working. You will need someone to help you check the brake lights. Also check all the lenses for discoloration or cracks. Water ingress can damage the electrics or reduce light intensity.



## Brake fluid

**What:** Modern braking systems are filled with a hydraulic fluid that applies pressure to components on each wheel when the brakes are applied.

**Why:** As the brakes gradually wear, the fluid level drops. Brake fluid is hygroscopic, meaning it retains moisture. It should be changed at the manufacturer's recommended interval to ensure the moisture doesn't corrode the internal parts of the system or boil under hard braking, causing complete brake fade.

**How:** Most hydraulic brake systems have a small plastic reservoir under the bonnet with high and low level marks, between which the level should be maintained. If the level is low, unscrew the cap and top up with the recommended fluid for your car. Paintwork can be damaged by brake fluid so be careful not to spill any.

## Windscreen, wipers and washer fluid

**What:** Wipers and washer fluid ensure good visibility while driving.

**Why:** It is vital to have a clear view of the road. Dirty windscreens and wiper blades that smear across the screen can compromise vision.

**How:** While you're under the bonnet, check the washer fluid. It's good practice to use a washer additive as this cuts through dirt and grime on the windscreen. Check the washer jets are not clogged and are aiming correctly in the middle of the wiper swept area. If they need adjustment, use a sharp pin in the nozzle and raise or lower as required.

Run your fingers along the edge of the wiper rubbers. If they're brittle, grooved or damaged, replace them.

Finally, look for chips or cracks on your windscreen. Get any repaired urgently as they can creep, meaning the whole screen will need replacing. >>




## Coolant

**What:** Coolant in your radiator stops your engine overheating. The fluid also has an additive that prevents freezing in sub-zero temperatures.

**Why:** Blown head gaskets, cracked cylinder heads and engine seizing are all very expensive results of an overheated engine. If your car uses coolant, or if the coolant looks rusty, get it changed.

**How:** Many modern engines have a plastic overflow tank with high and low level marks. The ideal level is midway between the marks when the engine is cold. Never remove the radiator cap from a hot engine as the system is under pressure and boiling water can spurt out causing serious burns.

When you remove the radiator cap the fluid level should be near the top. Coolant is either green or pink coloured. The two should never be mixed, but both can be topped up with plain water. 

### FURTHER INFORMATION

You can also keep your vehicle maintained at an AA Auto Centre or an AA Auto Service and Repair centre. See [aa.co.nz/cars](http://aa.co.nz/cars) for more information or to find one near you.

Call AA Roadservice on 0800 500 222 if something happens to your vehicle while driving.



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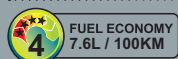
*Jrene van Nyk*

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# New to Market

## Honda Odyssey



## Mazda 2



## Subaru Outback



### HONDA ODYSSEY

Honda is betting the high specification and refinement of its fifth-gen Odyssey will lure buyers away from large SUVs. Both the entry-level 8-seat S and luxury 7-seat L models are powered by a 2.4 litre 129kW/225Nm four cylinder i-VTEC Honda 'Earth Dreams' engine and a CVT automatic transmission. Claimed fuel economy is 7.6L/100km for the S, 7.8L/100km for the L. Both ANCAP 5-star safety rated people movers include power rear-sliding doors, reversing cameras and touch-screen audio systems. The Odyssey S is \$45,900, and the L is \$52,500.

**Good:** Quiet, practical and a high level of specification.

**Bad:** What will the market make of a people mover at this price?

### MAZDA2

Seems Mazda can't put a foot wrong. The new Mazda2 is more spacious, its ride quality is much improved, and all models are treated to keyless push-button start, hill launch assist and a vast array of safety features. Offered in 6 speed manual or auto transmissions, there are three grades to choose from: GLX, GSX and Limited. The same 1.5 litre 81kW/141Nm Skyactiv G powerplant drives all three. Starting at \$21,745 for the entry-level GLX Manual through to \$28,595 for the Limited Automatic, this is another Mazda winner.

**Good:** A little car that's more refined than many big ones.

**Bad:** It's a shame a reversing camera wasn't included in the price, as it is with Honda's new Jazz.

### SUBARU OUTBACK

Subaru's Legacy and Outback are Kiwi favourite AWD vehicles. As the Legacy is off the list this year, the Outback is Subaru's only wagon on offer. It's a high-riding AWD with decent off-road capability and, this year, it's gone up-market with more refinement, quality soft-touch materials, larger cargo space, more safety features and a great infotainment system. Three engine choices are offered: a 2.5 litre 129kW/235Nm four cylinder petrol, a 3.6 litre 191kW/350Nm six pot and a 110kW/350Nm four cylinder diesel.

**Good:** A good, comfortable all-rounder with go-anywhere AWD off-road capability.

**Bad:** Styling still ordinary, despite the acres of chrome grille.



### AUDI A3 E-TRON

With the A3 e-tron Audi joins the Electric Vehicle (EV) brigade. This plug-in hybrid is equipped with a 75kW/330 Nm electric engine that works in conjunction with a 1.4 litre TFSI petrol engine, delivering 110kW of power and 250Nm of torque. Range is claimed at 50km without burning a drop of fossil fuel or emitting any CO<sub>2</sub>, although in real world conditions 30km-35km is nearer the mark. The electric motor is no slouch, hitting 0-100km/h in 7.6 seconds. A full charge should cost around \$1.00-\$1.40. It goes on sale soon with an estimated retail sticker of \$74,990.

**Good:** Drive as a city commuter in EV mode. Travel further with the aid of petrol power.

**Bad:** Battery technology still wanting, so EV range still low.

### MINI FIVE-DOOR HATCH

This will appeal to those who love MINI styling but found the two-door cramped. There's more space, a decent boot and reasonable backseat leg room. Available in Cooper or Cooper S variants, the 3-cylinder 1.5 litre produces 100kW/220Nm of power on the former, while the 4-cylinder 2.0 litre on the latter produces 141kW/280Nm. Both offer 6-speed manual or auto. Fuel economy of the auto Cooper is claimed at 4.9L/100km, the Cooper S at 5.5L/100km. It's larger, but MINI's smile factor and go-kart-like handling are retained. Pricing starts from \$37,200 for the Cooper through to \$48,200 for the Cooper S.

**Good:** Proof that a car can be practical, safe and lots of fun.

**Bad:** Not quite as pretty as the shorter 3-door MINI.

### BMW i8

BMW's new exotic sports car busts the myth that electric is boring. The i8 is one of the most head-turning vehicles on the planet and is almost as quick as BMW's powerhouse M3. Driven by a 96kW/250Nm eDrive (electric motor) and a 170kW/320Nm 3 cylinder 1.5 litre TwinPower turbo-charged petrol engine, it's capable of reaching 100km/h in 4.4 seconds. Fuel use is a claimed 2.1l/100km. You'll get 37kms out of the lithium-ion battery, but this extends to 500km on combined electric/petrol power. Plugged into the wall an 80% charge takes 2.5 hours, but using BMW's dedicated iWallbox it charges faster. It retails at \$278,000.

**Good:** Blistering performance, frugal fuel economy and extremely stylish.

**Bad:** At \$278k no one is purchasing an i8 for reasons of economy.



Audi **A3 E-Tron**



BMW **i8**



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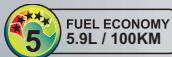
#### Buying a new car?

► Get advice from the experts. The AA Motoring Services team regularly test-drive new models and makes of car. Their detailed, impartial reports are available on [aa.co.nz](http://aa.co.nz) in the motoring section, along with ANCAP safety ratings. See our [New Car Prices listing](#) online and on p.53-55 of this issue.

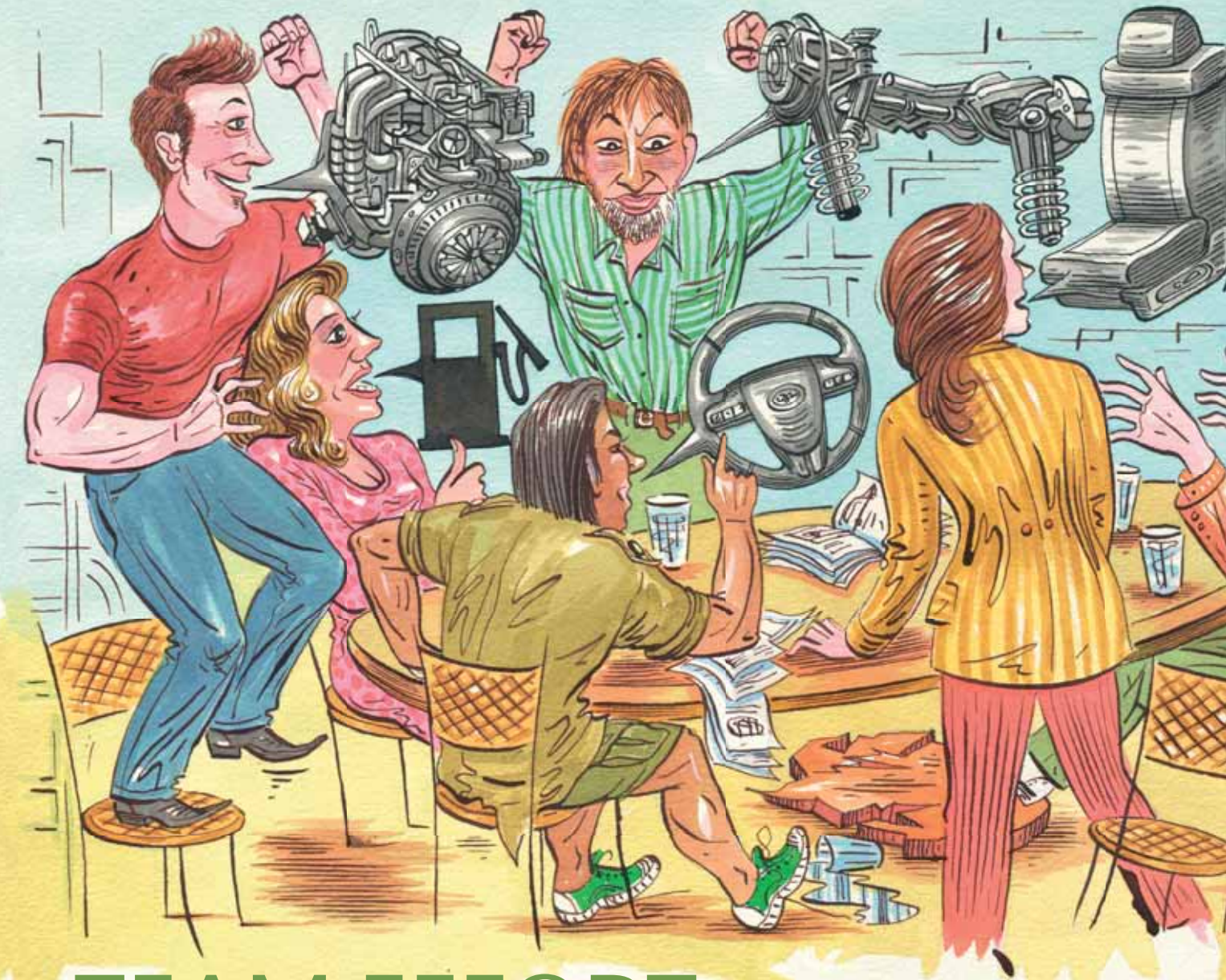


► Fuel economy ratings apply to models illustrated. For ratings on all cars reviewed, plus many others, see [energywise.govt.nz/tools/fuel-economy](http://energywise.govt.nz/tools/fuel-economy)

Mini **Cooper S**







# TEAM EFFORT

Andrew Bayliss explains how the Car of the Year is decided

**E**ACH OCTOBER A quorum made up of seven members of the New Zealand Motoring Writers' Guild (NZMWG) and the AA's motoring team meet. They discuss. They debate. They argue. Eventually they emerge. In hand: a list of ten cars.

This is the shortlist. These ten cars are the nominees for the Car of the Year (COTY) and one of them will be awarded the prestigious title. It is not an award handed out lightly.

In any given year a multitude of excellent new models are introduced into the marketplace, so narrowing down the top ten is not easy – though there is stringent entry criteria.

To be eligible for COTY selection, vehicles must have been launched in New Zealand during the 12 months from October 1 the previous year until September 30 of the current year. Only completely new models are eligible, not facelifts or minor derivatives of an existing model.

That said, major technical upgrades or changes to running gear can be considered, as was the case in 2014 with the Mitsubishi Outlander PHEV. This model was already on the market but made the top ten thanks to the addition of new plug-in hybrid technology.

To get the process rolling, each of the seven selection judges arrives

with a personal top ten. This is based on evaluations made throughout the year from driving vehicles loaned to the press by car manufacturers. Factors such as styling, comfort, handling, performance, efficiency, practicality, technology, value for money and, of course, safety are taken into account. Less easy to categorise is the elusive 'X' factor that makes a good car great.

Some cars are on everyone's list and automatically make the cut. After that, the real debate starts. These days there are very few, if any, bad cars, so judges can usually see the merits in each other's selections – even when they believe there are





**“Less easy to categorise is the elusive ‘X’ factor that makes a good car great.”**

better cars (i.e., those on their own list) to consider. Of course, some people will never agree; in a stalemate situation a vote is taken and majority rules.

After several hours of scribbling on whiteboards, shouting down colleagues, shaking heads, thumping tables, navel gazing and coffee consumption, the group leaves the room satisfied that the ten very best cars of the year have been decided.

This shortlist is then distributed

to every member of the NZMWG throughout the country and to the AA's motoring experts. They're given time to deliberate before they cast their votes and the vehicle that garners the most is crowned the AA/NZMWG's Car of the Year.

In addition to the overall COTY winner, Best in Class vehicles are also decided.

For this, the selection criteria is less restrictive. Every current model available in New Zealand showrooms, regardless of when they were launched, is eligible. Thus, the Mazda CX-5 (small/medium SUV) and Ford Ranger (ute) were both class winners in 2014 for the third year running.

The Safest Car award is the only category not determined by vote. Instead its winner is determined by the Australasian New Car Assessment Programme (ANCAP) crash test results. The occupant and pedestrian safety scores from all crash tests in the 12-month period are tallied and the highest scoring car is awarded the safety title.

Once all the votes have been counted it's time for the glamour with awards presented at a motor industry bash.

It's a more robust selection and voting process than some other motoring awards, and it's worth noting that the AA has no allegiance to any car company, nor does it rely on advertising revenue or have other commercial conflicts that could potentially colour the outcome.

The AA/NZMWG Car Of The Year offers unbiased guidance to the New Zealand car buying public and is held in high regard throughout the local motor industry. If a car wins this prestigious award, you can be sure it did so on its own merits. 🚗



#### FURTHER INFORMATION

For car reviews from the AA motoring team, go to [aa.co.nz/car](http://aa.co.nz/car)

See p.86 for how the AA's Facebook page determined the People's Choice Award.



## 2014 WINNERS

### COTY Winner

Mazda3

### Safest Car

Mercedes-Benz C-Class

### Small Car

Honda Jazz

### Compact Car

Mazda3

### Medium/Large Car

Mercedes-Benz C-Class

### Luxury Car

Mercedes-Benz S-Class

### Small/Medium SUV

Mazda CX-5

### Large SUV

Hyundai Santa Fé

### Sports/Performance Car

BMW M3/M4

### Luxury SUV

BMW X5

### Utility

Ford Ranger



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## BEAUTIFUL BIKES

Fiona Terry takes her kids on a ride through history

RACING ACE BURT Munro would be proud. His photographs have a prime spot overlooking the awe-inspiring Indian collection at Nelson's latest gem, New Zealand Classic Motorcycles.

The impeccably maintained vehicles are among 290 classic and vintage bikes displayed as stylishly as works of art at this new world-class attraction.

Fabulous lighting and towering three-tier purpose-built stands showcase the motorcycles. There are rhinestones, gleaming chrome, intricately woven wicker sidecars, flawless fringed leather seats, and exhausts as magnificent as polished organ pipes.

"The collection covers the evolution of bikes," facility manager John Shand tells us, pointing out one of the earliest models on display: a 1902 Peugeot, little different in looks to a bicycle. And enthusiast John knows his stuff; he's even raced against the legend that is Munro himself.

He points out the Peugeot's belt-driven technology that at the time was highly advanced.

"Chains came later," he says. "Then proper brakes."

Entrepreneur and motorcycle enthusiast Tom Sturgess owns the entire collection, which also includes machines from Triumph, BMW, Vincent, Velocette, Norton, Matchless, Morgan and Harley Davidson.

Sturgess' fascination with bikes began while growing up in California. His first purchase, thanks to saving hard while still at school, was a Hodaka Ace 90 dirt bike.

Years later, having become a successful businessman, he spotted a beautifully restored 1965



ABOVE: A 1926 racing Harley Davidson





ABOVE: Charlie and Jasmine survey a line of BSAs. RIGHT: Several Indian motorbikes are on display.

**"There are rhinestones, gleaming chrome, intricately woven wicker sidecars..."**

200cc Triumph Tiger Cub at a vintage motorbike show and bought it.

His purchase reignited a passion which led to him acquiring the rest of the two, three and four-wheeled (yes, four wheeled!) 'motorcycle' treasures, all of which, he enthuses, have stories of their own to tell. We used the QR codes attached to some of them to learn about these histories.

With all the neck craning involved in appreciating the array of colourful vehicles, some of which are suspended from the ceiling, it could be easy to miss the other treasures artfully displayed around this stylishly converted former paint store.

The framed vintage motorcycle posters – some priceless originals worth more than a number of the

vehicles – evoke romantic images of life on the road over the decades. The most valuable, a pre-WWI advertisement for Swiss motorcycle brand Motosacoche, depicts a gathering of military personnel who seem to be bowing to the bike; a reminder of the reverence with which these groundbreaking vehicles were regarded.

Nearby, we stop to admire the most valuable vehicle (worth more than a small house) a shining example of a 1937 Brough Superior SS 100, every detail immaculate, including the leather toolbox and polished fishtail exhaust. It was so named because it was guaranteed to reach a speed of 100mph. Brough enthusiasts have included Lawrence of Arabia, who





# A CLIMATE TO THRIVE



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 or villa, please call Rosemary Brader at  
 First National Wanaka on 03 443 0177.



ABOVE: Jasmine photographs stacked Indian and British scooters and motorcycles.

died from injuries sustained after crashing one, and George Bernard Shaw.

Steve McQueen preferred Triumphs, John tells me, and in the upper gallery is a 1965 model with a shimmering gold tank. It's an identical model to the one on which the fleeing McQueen famously leapt the fence in the movie *The Great Escape*, although at the time it was disguised as a wartime BMW.

Most of the exhibits are pre-1970, but there is also a generous nod to the modern, including three 'superbikes', of which the gleaming red MV Augusta F4 with a top speed of 280kph was a favourite of our children, eight-year-old Charlie and 11-year-old Jasmine.

Through the giant glass screens that separate the viewing galleries from the spacious, immaculate workshop we could see one of the latest acquisitions: a rare 1931 600cc four cylinder Matchless Silverhawk. It is to be the facility's first total in-house restoration project.

Once resident specialist mechanic Steven Scullion and his team have finished, it will look like it's straight out of the catalogue, he tells us.

We conclude that despite its high-octane subjects, this facility's not one to be raced through. 🏁

## VISITOR INFORMATION

See [nzclassicmotorcycles.co.nz](http://nzclassicmotorcycles.co.nz)

See [aadirections.co.nz](http://aadirections.co.nz) for car collection stories



# NEW CAR PRICES



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MIto Progression Multiair •	5.5	1.4	99	32,990	35,990
MIto QV Multiair •	6.0	1.4	125	42,990	-
Giulietta Distinctive Multiair 6.0	1.4	125	-	43,990	-
Giulietta QV Multiair	7.6	1.8	173	54,990	-

<b>Audi</b> <a href="http://audi.co.nz">audi.co.nz</a>					
A1 1.4 TFSI S Tronic •	5.3	1.4	90	-	40,800
A1 1.4 TFSI Sport S Tronic •	5.3	1.4	90	-	43,300
A3 1.4 Sportback TFSI •	5.8	1.4	92	-	48,900
A4 Sedan 2.0 TDI •	5.5	2.0	103	-	75,400
A4 2.0 TFSI Quattro S Tron Sed •	7.1	2.0	132	-	79,900
A4 3.0 TDI Quattro Tip Sed •	7.0	3	176	-	104,500
A4 2.0 TDI Avant	6.0	2.0	103	-	79,400
A4 2.0 TFSI Quattro Avant	7.1	2.0	132	-	83,900
S4 3.0 TDI Quattro S-Tronic	9.4	3.0	245	-	117,900
RS4 4.2 FSI Quattro S-Tr Avant 10.7	4.2	331	-	156,000	-
A4 Allroad 2.0 TDI	6.0	2.0	130	-	83,900
A5 2.0 Sportback TFSI Quattro	7.0	2.0	155	-	86,300
A5 3.0 TDI Quattro	7.2	3.0	176	-	109,500
S5 3.0 Sportback TFSI Quattro	9.4	3.0	245	-	118,900
RS5 4.2 FSI Quattro S-Tr Cabrio	10.8	4.2	331	-	178,000
A6 3.0 TDI Quattro Sedan	8.3	3.0	150	-	119,900
A6 3.0 BiTDI Quattro Avant	6.0	3.0	230	-	139,900
A6 Allroad 3.0 TDI	6.1	3.0	150	-	128,800
A7 Sportback 3.0 TDI Quattro	5.9	3.0	180	-	151,700
S7 Sportback 4.0 TFSI Quattro	9.6	4.0	309	-	169,900
Q3 2.0 TDI Quattro •	5.9	2.0	130	-	72,500
Q5 2.0 TDI Quattro •	6.7	2.0	125	-	89,900
Q5 3.0 TDI Quattro	7.5	3.0	176	-	108,900
Q7 4.2 TDI Quattro S Line	13.6	4.2	240	-	143,900
AB 4.2 TDI Quattro	9.4	4.2	240	-	225,000
TT Coupe 2.0 TFSI S Line	7.7	2.0	147	-	90,900

<b>BMW</b> <a href="http://bmw.co.nz">bmw.co.nz</a>					
118i •	7.3	1.6	100	-	56,600
118d Hatch	4.5	2.0	105	-	57,800
125i Hatch	-	2.0	-	-	65,700
220i Coupe	6.3	2.0	135	-	71,700
320i	7.9	2.0	115	-	74,700
320d •	5.6	2.0	130	-	75,300
335i	9.6	3.0	225	-	107,400
320i Touring xDrive	6.5	2.0	135	-	84,200
320d Touring xDrive	4.5	2.0	120	-	84,800
435i	7.4	3.0	225	-	126,900
428i Convertible	6.6	2.0	180	-	120,600
535i	8.4	3.0	225	-	132,000
530d •	5.1	3.0	190	-	132,600
M5 7-speed M dual-clutch	9.9	4.4	423	-	210,900
650i Coupe	10.6	4.4	300	-	219,000
M6 7-speed M dual-clutch	9.9	4.4	412	-	267,600
750i	11.0	4.8	270	-	235,700
X1 sDrive 20d •	5.8	2.0	130	-	72,400
X3 xDrive 20d SE •	7.0	2.0	130	-	94,400
X4 xDrive 20d SE	5.2	2.0	140	-	99,500
X5 xDrive 30d SE	8.7	3.0	173	-	129,500
X6 xDrive 40d SE	7.5	3.0	225	-	152,500
Z4 sDrive 20i Roadster	6.8	2.0	135	-	87,750

<b>Chery</b> <a href="http://cheryauto.co.nz">cheryauto.co.nz</a>					
J3	8.9	1.6	87	14,990	16,990
J11 •	8.9	2.0	102	18,990	20,990

<b>Chrysler</b> <a href="http://chrysler.co.nz">chrysler.co.nz</a>					
300S	9.7	3.6	210	-	62,990
300 SRT8	13.0	6.4	347	-	87,990
Grand Voyager Limited	8.4	2.8	120	-	84,990

<b>Citroen</b> <a href="http://citroen.co.nz">citroen.co.nz</a>					
CS 1.6 VTI Seduction •	6.9	1.6	88	-	26,490
DS3 DSTYLE •	6.9	1.6	88	-	36,990
DS3 DSPORT turbo •	6.7	1.6	115	38,990	-
C4 Exclusive VTI	7.0	1.6	88	-	31,490
C4 Grand Picasso 2.0 BlueHDI •	-	2.0	110	-	42,990
C4 Aircross 2WD	7.9	2.0	110	-	36,990
C4 Aircross 4WD	8.1	2.0	110	-	43,990
DS4 Auto •	6.4	1.6	120	-	44,990
DS4 Sport •	6.4	1.6	147	48,990	-
DS5 Sport •	7.3	1.6	115	-	59,990
CS 2.0 HDI Exclusive	6.0	2.0	120	-	54,990
CS 2.0 HDI Tourer Exclusive	6.0	2.0	120	-	57,990

<b>Dodge</b> <a href="http://dodge.co.nz">dodge.co.nz</a>					
Journey SXT	10.4	3.6	206	-	41,990
Journey R/T	10.4	3.6	206	-	51,990

<b>Fiat</b> <a href="http://fiat.co.nz">fiat.co.nz</a>					
500 Hatch Sport •	6.3	1.4	74	24,990	26,990
500 Cabriolet Sport	6.3	1.4	74	-	29,990
500 Hatch Abarth •	6.5	1.4	118	42,990	-
Panda Easy Turbo	4.2	0.9	63	23,990	25,990
Punto Pop	5.4	1.4	57	-	17,490
Punto Lounge	5.4	1.4	57	-	22,990

<b>Ford</b> <a href="http://ford.co.nz">ford.co.nz</a>					
New Fiesta Trend Hatch •	6.1	1.5	89	23,990	25,490
New Fiesta ST EcoBoost Hatch •	5.9	1.6	134	34,990	-
Focus Ambient Petr.Wagon •	6.4	1.6	92	-	34,840

	L/100km*	Engine	kW	Manual	Auto
<b>Focus Trend Diesel Wagon •</b>					
Focus Trend Diesel •	5.4	2	120	-	40,840
Focus Trend Petrol •	6.6	2	125	-	36,340
Focus Sport Petrol •	6.7	2	125	-	42,340
Focus Titanium Petrol •	6.6	2	125	-	47,340
Focus ST EcoBoost Hatch •	7.2	2	184	52,840	-
Mondeo Hatch LX Diesel •	7.1	2	103	-	46,340
Mondeo Zetec Diesel Hatch •	7.1	2	103	-	50,340
Mondeo Zetec EcoBoost •	8.0	2	149	-	48,340
New Kuga Ambient Petrol •	7.7	1.6	134	-	39,990
New Kuga Trend Diesel •	6.2	2	120	-	45,990
New Kuga Titanium EcoBoost •	7.7	1.6	134	-	52,990
Territory TX RWD Petro •	10.8	4	195	-	49,990
Territory TS Diesel AWD •	8.8	2.7	140	-	64,990
Territory Titanium AWD Diesel •	8.8	2.7	140	-	69,990
Falcon MkII XT Sedan EcoBoost •	8.1	2.0	179	-	48,490
Falcon MkII XR6 •	9.9	4.0	195	-	54,340
Falcon MkII G6E •	9.9	4.0	195	-	59,340
EcoSport Trend •	6.5	1.5	82	-	29,990
EcoSport Titanium •	6.5	1.5	82	-	32,990

<b>Great Wall</b> <a href="http://greatwall.co.nz">greatwall.co.nz</a>					
X-240 4WD •	10.3	2.4	100	24,990	-
X-200 AWD	7.6	2.0	105	27,990	29,990

<b>Holden</b> <a href="http://holden.co.nz">holden.co.nz</a>					
Barina CD Hatch 5dr •	7.0	1.6	77	22,490	23,990
Barina Turbo RS Hatch •	6.5	1.4	103	26,490	27,990
Barina Spark Hatch CD •	5.6	1.2	59	16,990	18,490
Trax LS •	7.6	1.8	103	-	32,990
Trax LTZ •	7.6	1.8	103	-	35,490
Cruze Equipe Hatch / Sedan •	7.0	1.8	104	-	30,990
Cruze Equipe 2.0 Sedan Diesel •	5.7	2.0	120	-	35,990
Cruze SRI-V Turbo 1.6 •	7.9	1.6	132	-	39,490
Cruze CD Sportwagon Diesel •	5.7	2.0	120	-	37,490
Malibu CD Petrol •	8.0	2.4	123	-	42,900
Malibu CD Diesel •	6.4	2.0	117	-	45,400
Malibu CDX Petrol •	8.0	2.4	123	-	45,900
VF Commodore Evoke Sedan •	8.3	3.0	185	-	49,990
VF Commodore SV6 •	9.0	3.6	210	-	55,490
VF Commodore SS V8 •	11.5	6.0	260	-	61,490
VF Calais-V6 •	9.0	3.6	210	-	66,490
VF Calais-V8 •	11.7	6.0	260	-	72,490
VF Caprice V8 •	11.7	6.0	260	-	79,990
VE Ute SV6 •	11.6	3.6	195	-	48,990
VE Ute SS •	14.5	6.0	270	-	54,990
VF Sportwagon Evoke •	8.6	3.0	190	-	52,490
VF Sportwagon SV6 •	9.3	3.6	210	-	57,990
VF Sportwagon SS-V8 •	11.8	6.0	260	-	71,490
VF Sportwagon Calais-V8 •	11.7	6.0	260	-	74,990
Captiva 5 LT 2WD •	9.1	2.4	123	36,990	38,490
Captiva 5 LT Diesel 4WD LT	8.1	2.2	135	-	43,490
Captiva 7 LTZ 2WD •	9.1	2.4	123	-	40,490
Captiva 7 LX V6 AWD	11.3	3.0	190	-	54,490
Captiva 7 LS Diesel 2WD •	8.1	2.2	135	-	44,490
Captiva 7 LTZ Diesel AWD	8.3	2.2	135	-	56,490

<b>Honda</b> <a href="http://honda.co.nz">honda.co.nz</a>					
Jazz S •	5.1	1.3	73	-	23,700
Jazz RS •	5.3	1.5	97	25,500	26,900
Civic S •	6.7	1.8	104	-	33,900
Civic LN •	7.5	2.0	114	-	39,990
Euro Civic S	6.4	1.8	104	29,900	34,900
Euro Civic L	6.6	1.8	104	-	38,900
Insight SN Hybrid •	4.6	1.3	72	-	36,900
CRZ LN •	5.0	5/4.7	100	42,000	42,000
Accord Euro SN •	8.5	2.4	148	43,700	47,200
Accord Euro Tourer LN	8.5	2.4	148	-	53,200
Accord S •	7.9	2.4	129	-	45,900
Accord NT •	8.1	2.4	129	-	55,000
Accord V6 NT •	9.2	3.5	206	-	60,000
Odyssey S •	7.6	2.4	129	-	45,900
CRV S 2WD •	6.9	2.0	114	-	39,900
CRV 4WD N •	8.7	2.4	140	-	42,900
CRV 4WD Sport NT •	8.7	2.4	140	-	54,900

<b>Hyundai</b> <a href="http://hyundai.co.nz">hyundai.co.nz</a>					
i20 GL •	6.0/6.4	1.4	73	24,990	25,990
i20 GLS •	6.0/6.4	1.4	73	25,990	26,990
Accent Hatch 1.6 •	6.4	1.6	91	28,990	31,990
Accent 1.6 Elite •	6.4	1.6	91	-	35,990
i30 1.8 •	6.5	1.8	110	31,990	35,990
i30 1.6 CRDI Elite •	4.5	1.6	94	-	43,990
i30 Wagon 1.6 •	6.7/6.9	1.6	88	36,490	37,990
i30 Wagon 1.6 CRDI •	4.5/5.6	1.6	94	40,490	41,990
Elantra Series II •	7.1	1.8	110	-	35,990
Elantra Elite Series II •	7.1	1.8	110	-	39,990
Veloster Elite 1.6 GDI •	6.5	1.6	103	-	44,990
Veloster GDI Turbo •	6.8/7.6	1.6	150	49,990	49,990
New Sonata •	8.3	2.4	138	-	45,990
New Sonata Elite •	8.3	2.4	138	-	49,990
New Sonata 2.0 Turbo Elite Ltd •	9.2	2.0	180	-	55,990
i40 Sedan 1.7 CRDI •	5.6	1.7	100	-	46,990
i40 Wagon 2.0 Elite •	7.5	2.0	130	-	49,990
i40 Wagon 1.7 CRDI •	5.6	1.7	100	-	48,990
i40 Wagon 1.7 CRDI Elite Ltd •	5.6	1.7	100	-	59,990
ix35 2.0 2WD •	8.5	2.0	122	-	39,990

	L/100km*	Engine	kW	Manual	Auto
ix35 2.4 •	9.0	2.4	130	-	44,990
ix35 2.0R CRDI •	7.5	2.0	135	-	50,990
ix35 2.0R CRDI Elite •	7.5	2.0	135	-	54,990
Santa Fe 2.4 7Seat •	9.0	2.4	141	-	59,990
Santa Fe 2.2R CRDI 7S •	7.3	2.2	145	-	65,990
Santa Fe 3.3 V6 7S 2WD	9.6	3.3	199	-	67,990
Santa Fe 2.2R Elite Ltd •	7.3	2.2	145	-	79,990
H1 iMax Van Elite 8 Seat	8.5	2.4	128	-	54,990
H1 iMax CRDI Elite 8 Seat	8.5	2.5	125	56,990	58,990

// Advanced safety assist technologies like AEB could be as effective as seatbelts in saving lives. //

ANCAP Chief Executive Officer



## Autonomous Emergency Braking.

In order to avoid, or minimise the impact of, a crash, **Autonomous Emergency Braking (AEB)** systems use sensors to detect obstructions in a vehicle's path and automatically apply the brakes if the driver does not respond.

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ANCAP recommends 5 star rated vehicles.

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# ➔ For a full, up-to-date list of new car prices, see [aa.co.nz](http://aa.co.nz)

	L/100km*	Engine	kW	Manual	Auto
2 Hatch Limited	5.2	1.5	81	-	28,595
3 GLX Hatch	5.7	2.0	114	-	32,795
3 GSX Hatch/Sedan	5.7	2.0	114	-	35,595
3 SP25 Hatch/Sedan	6	2.5	138	39,895	39,895
3 SP25 Hatch Limited	6	2.5	138	-	47,495
3 SP22 Limited Diesel	5	2.2	129	49,195	50,695
6 GLX Sedan/Wagon Diesel	5.4	2.2	129	-	49,095
6 GSX Sedan/Wagon	6.6	2.5	138	-	49,795
6 2.5 Limited Sedan/Wagon	6.6	2.5	138	-	58,595
6 2.2 Limited Sedan/Wagon Diesel	5.4	2.2	129	-	60,795
6 Wagon 2.0 GLX	6.0	2.0	114	-	45,495
MX-5 Roadster Leather	8.5	2.0	118	51,100	-
MX-5 Coupe Leather	8.5	2.0	118	55,190	57,240
CX-5 GLX FWD	6.4	2.0	114	-	39,695
CX-5 GSX AWD	7.4	2.5	138	-	44,945
CX-5 GSX Diesel AWD	5.7	2.2	129	-	47,095
CX-5 Limited Diesel AWD	5.7	2.2	129	-	56,495
CX-9 Limited AWD	11.3	3.7	204	-	58,490
CX-9 Limited+	11.3	3.7	204	-	65,490

Mercedes-Benz		mercedes-benz.co.nz			
A180	5.8	1.6	90	-	46,900
A200	6.1	1.6	115	-	54,900
A250 Sport	6.6	2.0	155	-	64,900
A45 AMG	6.9	2.0	265	-	94,900
B180	6.1	1.6	90	-	51,900
B200	6.1	1.6	115	-	59,900
B250	6.5	2.0	155	-	66,900
CLA200	5.7	1.6	115	-	65,900
CLA250 Sport	6.9	2.0	155	-	77,900
CLA 45 AMG	7.0	2.0	265	-	107,900
C200 CGI	6.0	2.0	135	-	71,900
C200 BlueTEC	-	1.6	100	-	73,400
C250 CGI	6.0	2.0	155	-	86,900
E250	6.4	2.0	155	-	114,000
E400	7.6	3.0	245	-	131,000
E63 AMG S	10.0	5.4	430	-	215,000
GLA200 CDI	4.6	2.2	100	-	64,900
GLA250	7.0	2.0	155	-	76,900
ML250 BlueTEC	6.4	2.14	150	-	99,900
ML350 BlueTEC	6.4	2.14	150	-	121,900
ML63 AMG	11.8	5.4	380	-	197,900
GL350 BlueTEC	7.7	3.0	190	-	153,900

Mini		mini.co.nz			
Mini Hatch Cooper	5.4	1.6	100	36,200	-
Mini Hatch Cooper S	5.8	1.6	141	44,200	-
Mini Cooper Countryman	6.0	1.6	90	44,500	-
Mini Countryman Cooper S	6.1	1.6	140	52,500	-
Cooper Countryman S All4WD	7.3	1.6	140	55,500	-
Mini Cabrio Cooper	5.7	1.6	90	46,200	-
Mini Cabrio Cooper S	6.0	1.6	135	54,200	-
Mini Coupe JCW	7.1	1.6	155	62,200	-
Mini Roadster Cooper S	6.4	1.6	135	55,800	-
Mini Paceman Cooper S	7.6	1.6	135	52,500	-

Mitsubishi		mitsubishi-motors.co.nz			
Mirage LS	4.6	1.2	58	-	18,990
Mirage GLS	4.6	1.2	58	-	21,990
Lancer LS Hatch/Sedan	7.6	2.0	115	-	30,690
Lancer GSR Hatch/Sedan	7.6	2.0	115	-	32,990
Lancer SEI Hatch/Sedan	7.6	2.0	115	-	36,990
ASX XLS 2WD	8.1	2.0	112	-	36,690
ASX XLS 4WD Diesel A/T	5.8	2.2	112	-	41,990
Outlander LS 4WD CVT	7.5	2.4	126	-	43,990
Outlander VRX 2.4 CVT	7.5	2.4	126	-	54,490
Outlander VRX 2.2D 4WD	5.8	2.2	112	-	56,990
Outlander XLS Plug in Hybrid	1.9	2.0	88	-	59,990
Outlander VRX Plug in Hybrid	1.9	2.0	88	-	66,990
Challenger Exceed 4WD 7seat	9.8	2.5	133	-	63,990
Pajero LWB 3.2 DIDC GLS	9.2	3.2	150	-	77,090
Pajero LWB 3.2 DIDC Exceed	9.2	3.2	150	-	87,590

Nissan		nissan.co.nz			
Micra ST	6.5	1.2	56	-	22,800
Pulsar ST Sedan	6.7	1.8	96	-	29,990
Pulsar TI Sedan	6.7	1.8	96	-	33,490
Pulsar 1.6 Turbo SSS Hatch	7.8	1.6	140	-	39,990
Juke	6.3	1.6	86	-	34,990
Juke Turbo	6.3	1.6	86	-	39,990
Qashqai ST Hatch	6.9	2.0	106	-	35,990
Qashqai TS Diesel	4.9	1.6	96	-	42,990
Qashqai TI Hatch	6.9	2.0	106	-	43,990
Altima ST Sedan	7.5	2.5	127	-	43,990
Altima TI Sedan	7.5	2.5	127	-	53,290
Leaf 0 Emissions 100% electric	0	electric	90	-	39,990
370Z Coupe	10.4	3.7	245	59,995	63,495
GT-R	12.0	3.8	352	-	191,000
New X-Trail ST 2WD Pet 7Seats	8.1	2.5	126	-	39,990
New X-Trail ST 4WD Pet 5Seats	8.3	2.5	126	-	42,490
New X-Trail TI 4WD Pet 5Seats	8.3	2.5	126	-	53,290
Murano	10.9	3.5	191	-	66,390
Pathfinder Petrol ST 2WD	9.9	3.5	190	-	54,990

	L/100km*	Engine	kW	Manual	Auto
Pathfinder Petrol Ti 4WD	10.2	3.5	190	-	65,990
Patrol	14.5	5.6	198	-	115,000

Peugeot		peugeot.co.nz			
208 Active	4.5	1.2	60	21,990	-
208 Allure 5dr	6.7	1.6	88	-	28,990
208 GTi	5.9	1.6	147	38,990	-
2008 Active	6.5	1.6	88	-	31,990
308 Access	4.6	1.2	96	30,990	32,990
308 Allure	6.5	1.6	110	-	38,990
308 Allure Diesel	4.1	2.0	110	-	42,990
3008 Active	7.6	1.6	115	-	37,990
3008 Allure Hdi	5.5	2.0	120	-	45,990
3008 Hybrid Diesel 4WD	4.2	2.0	120	-	59,990
4008 Active 2WD CVT	7.9	2.0	110	-	37,990
4008 Feline 4WD CVT	8.1	2.0	110	-	45,990
508 HDi Allure	5.7	2.0	120	-	54,990
508 SW HDi GT	5.9	2.2	150	-	68,990
508 RXH Hybrid Diesel SW 4WD	4.1	2.0	120	-	74,990
Partner HDi	5.5	1.6	66	29,990	-
RCZ	7.3	1.6	115	-	59,990

Porsche		porsche.co.nz			
Boxster	8.2	2.7	195	116,200	121,500
Cayman S	8.2	2.7	202	146,500	151,800
911 Carrera	9.0	3.4	257	199,500	205,500
911 Carrera 4S	9.5	3.4	257	241,300	247,300
Macan S	8.7	3.0	250	-	121,000
Macane S Diesel	6.1	3.0	190	-	118,000
Panamera S	8.7	3.0	309	-	262,100
Panamera Diesel (300HP)	6.4	3.0	221	-	203,800
Panamera S E-Hybrid	3.1	3.0	245	-	264,300
Panamera Turbo	10.2	4.8	368	-	351,400

Renault		renault.co.nz			
Megane Hatch	8.2	2.0	102	31,990	34,990
Megane Coupe - Cabriolet	7.9	2.0	103	-	54,990
Megane Renault Sport RS265 Cup	8.7	2.0	184	53,990	-
Megane RD265 Cup Trophée	8.7	2.0	184	59,990	-
Koleos 2.0 DCI 4x4	8.3	2.0	110	-	49,990
Koleos 2.5 4x2	9.3	2.5	126	-	37,990
Fluence	7.8	2.0	103	-	34,990

Skoda		skoda.co.nz			
Citigo MPI 55	4.7	1.0	55	18,990	19,990
Fabia Hatch TSI 77	7.5	1.6	77	-	23,900
Rapid TSI 90 Liftback	5.4	1.4	90	-	29,900
Rapid TSI 90 Spaceback	4.5	-	66	-	31,300
Yeti 2.0 TDI 4X4	6.5	2.0	103	41,400	42,900
Octavia Liftback TSI 103	5.4	2.0	103	-	34,900
Octavia Liftback TDI 77	3.9	1.6	77	-	36,500
Octavia Liftback TSI 132	5.7	1.8	132	-	39,900
Octavia Wagon TDI 110	4.5	2.0	110	-	40,100
Octavia Wagon TSI 132 4X4	6.7	1.4	132	-	43,600
Superb Sedan TSI 118	7.1	1.8	118	-	43,900
Superb Sedan TDI 125 Elegance	5.3	2.0	125	-	53,900
Superb Wagon TDI 103	5.2	2.0	103	-	48,900
Superb Wagon TDI 125 Elegance	6.1	2.0	125	-	56,900
Superb Wagon V6 4X4 Elegance	9.3	3.6	191	-	62,900

SsangYong		ssangyong.co.nz			
Korando Sport 4X2	7.3	2.0	110	27,990	29,990
Korando SPR 4X4 TDI	7.5	2.0	129	-	41,990
Rexton Teammate 4X4 Tdi	9.0/9.2	2.7	121	39,990	42,990
Rexton W Sport 4X4	9.2	2.7	137	-	47,990
Actyon Workmate 2WD Tdi	7.6/8.1	2.0	114	29,990	31,990
Actyon Workmate 4X4 TDI	7.3	2.0	114	32,990	35,990
Actyon Sports 4X4 Tdi	7.6/8.1	2.0	114	39,990	41,990
Stavic 2WD Tdi	7.8	2.0	114	-	39,990
Stavic 4WD Tdi	8.1	2.0	114	-	44,990

Subaru		subaru.co.nz			
Impreza 2.0i-X	6.8	2.0	110	-	31,990
WRX	8.6	2.0	197	48,990	49,990
WRX Premium	8.6	2.0	197	53,990	54,990
WRX STi Premium with spoiler	10.4	2.5	221	64,900	-
XV	7.0/7.3	2.0	110	38,990	40,990
XV 2.0i-L	7.0	2.0	110	44,990	44,990
XV 2.0i-S	7.0	2.0	110	48,990	48,990
Forester 2.0 Diesel	5.7	2.0	110	49,990	-
Forester 2.0i	8.1	2.5	126	-	39,990
Forester Sport	9.6	2.5	126	-	47,990
Legacy 2.5i Sport Sed/Wagon	8.9	2.5	123	-	44,990
Legacy 2.5 Premium Sed/Wagon	8.9	2.5	123	-	49,990
Legacy GT 2.5i B Spec Prem	8.9	2.5	123	-	59,990
Outback 2.0 Diesel	5.8	2.0	110	54,990	54,990
Outback 2.5i Sport	8.9	2.5	123	-	49,990
Outback 2.5i Premium	8.9	2.5	123	-	54,990
Outback 3.6R Premium	10.3	3.6	191	-	64,990

Suzuki		suzuki.co.nz			
Alto GLX	4.8	1.0	50	14,990	16,990
Swift GL	5.5	1.4	70	19,990	21,990
Swift GLX	5.5	1.4	70	22,500	23,990

	L/100km*	Engine	kW	Manual	Auto
Swift Ltd	6.2	1.4	70	23,500	24,990
Swift RS	6.2	1.4	-	-	26,500
Swift Sport	6.5	1.6	100	27,500	28,990
SK4 2WD Ltd	-	2.0	-	-	28,990
S-Cross GLX 2WD	5.8	1.6	86	27,990	29,990
S-Cross Ltd	5.8	1.6	86	-	32,990
S-Cross GLX AWD	5.8	1.6	86	-	35,990
S-Cross Ltd AWD	6.2	1.6	86	-	35,990
Kizashi GLX Sport	7.9	2.4	131	-	39,990
Kizashi Ltd Sport	7.9	2.4	131	-	44,990
Jimny JX	7.2	1.3	63	19,990	-
Jimny Sierra	7.2	1.3	63	22,990	24,500
Grand Vitara J1X 3dr 4WD	8.8	2.4	122	31,690	33,190
Grand Vitara J1X 5dr 4WD	9.9	2.4	122	37,500	38,990
Grand Vitara Ltd 5dr 4WD	-	2.4	122	-	39,990
Grand Vitara 2WD 5dr	-	2.4	122	-	29,990

Toyota	toyota.co.nz				
Yaris GX 1.3 3dr Hatch •	6.5	1.3	64	22,990	24,990
Yaris SX 1.5 5dr Hatch •	6.7	1.5	80	-	26,990
Yaris ZR 1.5 5dr Hatch •	6.7	1.5	80	-	28,990
Corolla GLX Hatch •	7.1/6.6	1.8	103	33,490	34,990
Corolla GLX Hatch •	6.6	1.8	103	-	37,490
Corolla Levin ZR •	6.6	1.8	103	-	43,690
Corolla GX Wagon	5.8	1.5	80	29,580	31,580
Corolla GLX Sedan •	6.6	1.8	103	-	37,490
86 Sports Coupe •	7.8/7.1	2.0	147	42,586	43,586
GT86 •	7.8/7.1	2.0	147	47,486	48,486
Prius C •	3.9	1.573.6(54)		-	30,830
Prius C S-Tech •	3.9	1.573.6(54)		-	34,830
Prius Hybrid •	3.9	1.873/100		-	46,630
Prius v	4.1	1.873/100		-	47,640
Prius v s-Tech	4.1	1.873/100		-	53,140
Avenis Tourer	8.0	2.0	110	-	47,990
Camry GL •	7.8	2.5	133	-	44,990
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RAV4 AWD Ltd •	8.5	2.5	132	-	58,640
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Highlander V6 7S 2WD •	1.01	3.5	201	-	61,990
Highlander V6 7S 4WD GX •	11.6	3.5	201	-	59,990
Highlander V6 LTD 7S 4WD •	11.6	3.5	201	-	76,490
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Prado 3.0 GX Diesel •	8.5	3.0	127	-	79,545
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Land Cruiser 200 Wagon VX 4.5 •	10.3	4.5	195	-	118,540



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# Traveller

## Stephanie Johnson

Award-winning author and founder of the Auckland Writers Festival

TAIHARURU IS MIND-bogglingly beautiful with pohutukawa-fringed bays that is still mostly farmland.

It's a headland north of Auckland, just past Whangarei Heads. I've been visiting since I was ten years old.

My father bought a section there in 1972 and built a bach over the years for the family to stay. He and mum now live there full-time.

There are no pubs or shops and it's still pretty much how it was when I was a kid. There's not even cell phone reception – you're offline which in today's world is a blessing. Life slows right down to how it used to be.

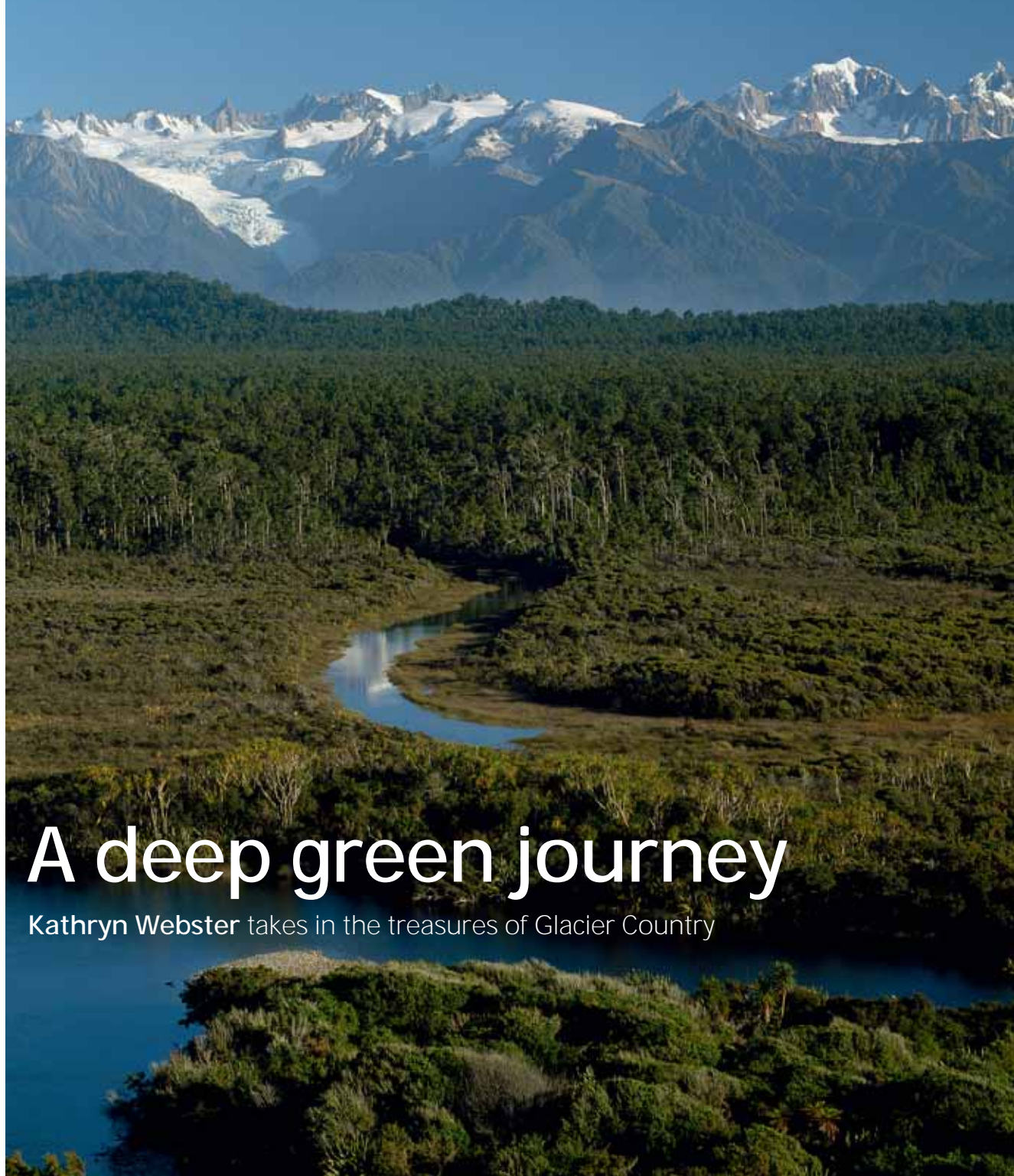
My favourite thing to do there is go fishing with my brother. We tow the tin dinghy along the beach behind a three-wheel bike and sit out on the water for hours. It's bliss. He's a gun fisherman, but I'm hopeless.

We all feel incredibly lucky to have this place in our family. We guard it dearly because there are so few places like it around.

➔ The Auckland Writers Festival runs May 13–17 at Auckland's Aotea Centre. Stephanie will speak on the craft of writing and her latest novel, *The Writers' Festival*, will be for sale.

See [writersfestival.co.nz](http://writersfestival.co.nz) for tickets.





# A deep green journey

Kathryn Webster takes in the treasures of Glacier Country

**M**OODY IS A good word for this part of the country. Low-slung clouds obscure the landscape and, as we drive closer it turns to rain, veiling the steeply rising hills. The slopes are blanketed in thick bush; the cuttings we move through are mossy, hanging gardens.

Now and then the road narrows to a one-lane bridge leading over

stony river beds to broad vistas and intriguing valleys.

We're down south. Having flown from Christchurch over the Southern Alps, we've collected a rental car, snatched coffee in Hokitika and made it to Whataroa in time to join a tour to the White Heron Sanctuary. A small group of us are escorted from Whataroa to a nearby river bank where we kit up in wet weather gear and board a jet boat

for a blast toward the coast, to a mysterious little wharf. After a short walk through kahikatea forest, we come to a hide from which we can spy, across the river, nesting kotuku. It's a surreal sight. Elegant, other-worldly creatures litter the dark bush, their bright white bodies stark, their lacy wings and s-necks tucked in until their mates return and they stretch out and dance in romantic greeting. As the birds shuffle about



in their unlikely, shabby nests, chicks are revealed. Some are urgent tiny bald things, others are fluffy and take up most of the nest space – all are ravenous. Royal spoonbills and cormorants nest in branches around the heron nests, also busy with the never-ending business of feeding their young. It's a riot of activity. They're oblivious to us watching entranced through binoculars, our cameras busy, reluctant to leave.

## "It is a beautiful forest trail and good to be in the thick of it. And bush in these parts is thick."

But we need to get back on the road, as we're booked for a night in Franz Josef at Te Waonui Forest Retreat, a calm, chic hotel with window views filled with bush and, from the dining room, the glacier.

We meet the hotel manager for an exceptionally nice meal. Because overseas visitors tend to visit in summer, his hotel closes in winter which is a shame, he says, because the weather is often calmer in winter. Glacier country gets bright clear days and being so close to the coast, it's not too cold. He suggests New Zealanders visit in winter to truly appreciate the peace and solitude the area does so well. They need to stay a couple of nights, at least, he says – and I agree. There is a lot to do here: seeing kiwi in the West Coast Wildlife Centre and, behind the scenes, gaining an understanding of efforts being made to rescue the local kiwi. Then there are outdoor hot pools, right next to Te Waonui. And I spend time at Te Koha Gallery, where people can carve personal mementos from greenstone. The gallery is busy with young tourists with foreign accents on the afternoon I spend grinding a nub of stone into something rounder and smaller. Other artists opt to use templates of Maori-inspired design, with some really impressive results.

And, of course, there are the star attractions: the glaciers.

The best way to visit the glaciers

is by helicopter, because the ice has receded to the stage that it's quite a slog up and, as it's dangerous, must be with a guide. Plus, flying up is excellent fun. As the chopper swoops and dips to reveal more and more of the spectacular Fox Glacier and its surrounding theatrical mountains, I grin like a mad woman. Once on the ice, fitted with wet weather gear, boots and crampons provided by the HeliHike operator, a guide leads the

way over knobbly, pocked terrain, into icy caves and small, blue-lit crevasses.

Back in Fox the bush beckons; we ride mountain bikes from the township up to a high-walled valley cut by the glacier for another view of the terminal face. It is a beautiful forest trail and good to be in the thick of it. And bush in these parts is thick; thick and green and very wet. As several locals point

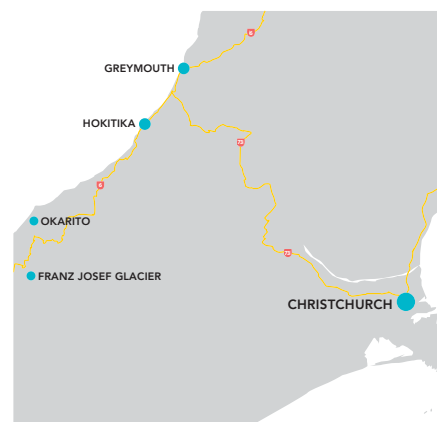
out, you can't have rainforest without rain and we see a lot of rainforest on this road trip.

Rain meant that another highlight of the area – Lake Matheson – will need to be experienced another day. The mountains that famously reflect in the lake hide behind an unshifting veil. Some stalwart tourists walk the lake loop in the rain; we settle in to the right-there, top-notch Matheson Café for a meal.

The next morning, Okarito. Here are a handful of homes, a camping ground and historic buildings including the Donovan's Store built 150 years ago and now a social centre with a tiny library. Another oldie, on Okarito wharf, is a cute, gappy shed with history hanging in stories and photos on its walls.

From nearby we launch hired kayaks and paddle out onto the quiet lagoon. >>

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: From the West Coast to Franz Glacier, by local photographer Andris Apse; the kotuku nesting site; tourists on Fox Glacier; kotuku in love.





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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Dwarfed trampers on the glacier; Treetops near Hokitika; on Okarito lagoon; a jetboat drops bird watchers to near the heron nesting site; on Fox Glacier.

When the tide's low, kayakers have to make an effort to follow the deepest channels, keeping markers to port, that sort of thing, but at high tide we meander without a care. We float close to low-lying islands with red-hued reeds, waving grasses and flaxes, birds making quiet noises

**"It is a meditative experience, floating about on that moody estuary, wrapped in serenity."**

but staying out of sight. Black swans dot about calligraphically – many of them, whole paragraphs of them – and sometimes a gang takes off with a scribbly effect, their wings edged with white flashing against the silver page.


Kotuku feed in this lagoon; we see several in flight. We cruise past numbered signs referring to

a nature trail guide provided by DOC to identify birds, reveal the intricacies of New Zealand's largest, untouched wetland and to better understand what a treasure the lagoon is in the grand scheme of ecological things. On the inland side, kahikatea and rimu grow. We paddle down a narrow waterway to where a tumbling waterfall streaks pale against the darkly forested bank. The slight rain doesn't matter; all the gear that comes with the kayaks keeps

us warm and dry. It is a meditative experience, floating about on that moody estuary, wrapped in serenity.

We head back to Franz Josef for another night, this time at the Scenic Hotel, and spend time by the fire pre-dinner counting the exclamations of joy and surprise as guests discover the jar of marshmallows parked on the hearth. It is raining heavily now

and it is delicious to be cosy, indoors, amongst the buzz of the hotel.

North of Franz the next morning, Andris Apse's photography gallery beckons. His images of the area capture dramatically the extremes of the local land, sea and sky. Further north, at Ross, another gallery – this one featuring ceramic craft and paintings – provides a stimulating break. I buy a pottery mug. Just south of Hokitika we turn inland for a walk on boardwalks in the sky at Treetops. Among the crowns of the forest giants I soak in the expansive, peaceful moodiness of the coast and prepare, reluctantly, for the journey home. 

#### VISITOR INFORMATION

Kotuku nest from September to March; other nature tours from Whataroa are available year-round.

See [glaciercountry.co.nz](http://glaciercountry.co.nz) for local tours. See [aa.co.nz/travel](http://aa.co.nz/travel) for accommodation bookings.

Thrifty Car Rental operates from Hokitika airport. See [aa.co.nz/carrental](http://aa.co.nz/carrental) for AA Member rates.



# City of adventure

Monica Tischler plays host in Auckland City

**I** SUBCONSCIOUSLY FASTEN the strap of my helmet as we ascend over a striking Waitemata Harbour. The sun's rays catch the water, creating a blanket of glistening ocean around us.

The harbour's name translates to 'sparkling water' and I can see why.

Soon after embarking on Auckland's Harbour Bridge climb, my fear of heights melts away with the heat of the day, and I begin to enjoy myself.

I grew up in Hamilton and any excuse to jaunt up to Auckland's hustle and bustle was always welcome. On the rare, but treasured, road trips up to visit my aunty, I'd press my nose against the window of the family van as we wound our way through tight suburban streets,

weaving in and out of shadows cast by high rise buildings. I was captivated by the working women in skirts and stilettos on route to their next meeting or coffee catch-up.

Despite now living in Auckland for more than two years, I'm still getting to know my new city. Today, my friend Jess and I have come to experience its sights, sounds, smells and flavours.

We make our way to Al Brown's Depot Eatery and Oyster Bar in Federal Street to fuel our bodies. We're greeted by heat expelled from an open cooker in the kitchen and the aromas of roasted coffee beans mixed with the spicy and smoked scents of breakfast. We take a seat among clusters of colleagues sprawled around sheets of paper and place our order.

Waiting for our meals, we chat excitedly about the day ahead. We've planned to climb the Harbour Bridge, mosey through the Auckland Art Gallery and later, head to Katy Perry's *Prismatic* concert.

Climbing the Harbour Bridge is like opening a story book and delving into different tales that make up the city's history. As we descend

**"Three, two, one," they chant. My stomach drops as she does.**

into one of the bridge piers, our guide tells us that three engineers, James, James and John, didn't make it to see completion of their handiwork. The two Jameses plummeted into the harbour while John fell to his death into concrete under the pier. His bones still lie there – fusing into the cement and becoming one with the bridge structure. The group falls





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: A glowing Viaduct Harbour; the author at work; brave sightseers tower above the Waitemata Harbour; admiring artwork in the Auckland Art Gallery; installations at the Auckland Art Gallery; Depot Eatery and Oyster Bar.



silent as we stand directly above where he's preserved.

"It's not too late to change your mind and do a bungy jump," yells our guide. 'Don't push it,' I think, surprised at how well I'm doing considering I prefer my feet on solid ground.

This preference is reinforced when we watch a poor girl tremor over the bungy's platform: the only object separating her from an empty 40m void. I can smell her fear as instructors talk hard to calm her nerves and count down. "Three, two, and one," they chant. My stomach drops as she does.

The bridge was used a million times in the month following its 1959 completion. Japanese clip-on extensions were added to either side ten years later to cope with heavy usage, our guide explains. I had never imagined I'd find myself attached to one – the roar of passing vehicles shuddering the concrete only a mere few metres above my head. The clip-ons are designed to move up

and down to accommodate movement from heavy traffic or earthquakes.

We're instructed to rest our elbows on a concrete ledge of the clip-on to feel just how much it moves. Within seconds, my arm travels up above my head and back down below my waist. It's an eerie feeling and with the heavy grind of traffic above me, the most uncomfortable I feel on the bridge.

The heat of the day pricks at my cheeks as we descend towards ground level. Our next stop's the Auckland Art Gallery and its thick concrete walls provide just the shelter I need.

Walking through the open space, we take in an impressive range of art that preserves in time a century or more of thoughts, emotions and scenes – inspiring viewers to reminisce or form their own tale or interpretation. German print making reflects the bloody and graphic events of World War II while my favourite pieces, Charles Goldie portraits, show the emotion and character of nineteenth

century Maori men and women in photograph-like resemblance.

After dinner at another of Al Brown's top spots, Federal Street Delicatessen, feasting on scrumptious tapas, we're ready to take on an evening full of singing and dancing.

Goose bumps form as we jump off our seats and welcome Katy Perry to the stage at Vector Arena, the uproar of chanting and screaming enthusiasts rising with us. How exciting it is to experience a live show and see the energy and passion the pop star exudes for both her music and fans.

Jess, who lives in Wellington, turns to me and cups her hands over her mouth in an attempt to be heard over the heavy bass. "You've definitely convinced me to move to Auckland," she yells.



#### VISITOR INFORMATION

See [aucklandnz.com](http://aucklandnz.com) or [aa.co.nz/travel](http://aa.co.nz/travel) for more Auckland activities

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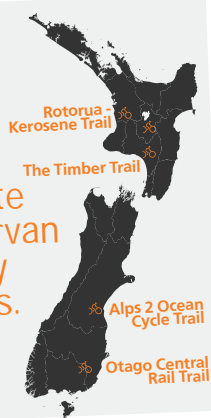


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CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Our campsite at Glinks Gully; two fishermen try their luck; a seal takes a dip; crashing West Coast breakers; Kiwi country.



# To the end of the road

**Liz Light** trundles from Dargaville to Pouto in a big motorhome

IT'S AN IMPRESSIVE surprise. The Dargaville Museum has a collection of 120 piano accordions. This is because a local, Kevin Friedrich, became an internationally-renowned accordion player and, though he now lives in New York, he buys accordions from all over the world for this collection.

Besides accordions, the museum specialises in kauri gum. Dargaville's first fortunes were built on the finding and trading of it.

But kumara is now the gold of the northern Kaipara and Ernie and Mavis Suckling are the biggest producers in New Zealand, growing 300 tonnes a year. That's enough to

fill a shed 53m long and 10m wide, stacked to the roof. Ernie, lovingly stroking a dusky red four-kilogram monster, says, "Man can live on kumara alone. It's a full food, healthy and mineral-rich."

His love for this sweet tuber is such that Ernie has built The Kumara Box at one end of the shed, where visitors can learn about the crop before taking a tour of the farm on Ernie's kumara train: two-seater trailers hooked together and pulled along by a tractor.

No other place on earth grows kumara as well as this; that's because of mild winters and the moist, rich, alluvial soil from Big Muddy – an

affectionate name for the Wairoa River, the northern arm of the Kaipara Harbour.

Some of Big Muddy's greatest admirers live in Te Kopuru, a pretty town straggling along its edge. It's impossible to miss the fabulous flotsam and jetsam garden created by Leon and Lorraine Searle who have been walking the beaches for 45 years collecting trash and treasure. Treasure includes whale bones, fishing nets, fishing floats galore and, once, a Met Service weather buoy still beeping. Most of their gatherings are trash, which is recycled or sent to the tip, but the best bits decorate their garden.

## TRAVELLER

At Te Kopuru we turn west and leave the quiet Kaipara for the west coast. Glinks Gully is only a few kilometres away but is a different world where the northwest wind is raging and layers of huge waves roll into the beach in an endless, mesmerising sequence.

We reverse our big motorhome into a sheltered corner of the campground to escape the wind.

The beach, from Maunganui Bluff around the Kaipara Heads to Pouto Point, is New Zealand's longest beach road and its 100kms can be driven. It has road signs, indicating speed restrictions. It's tempting but absolutely not in our hired Britz; insurance does not stretch to beach roads.

I learnt, in Dargaville museum, that 157 sailing ships were wrecked on this coast and their skeletons lie under the sand. Often, after a storm, when masses of sand is moved, wrecks reappear and folk sometimes find real treasure, such as a 200-year-old anchor or a fat brass cannon.

By morning the wind has gone, the



day is blue and the giant waves are more orderly. We trundle south on sealed road through green farmland and past occasional pine forests. There are glimpses of Big Muddy from hilltops and little country hamlets with a church, school and a couple of houses.

The campervan handles the gravel road of the last 19kms well. At Pouto campground we park near where the hill drops away to the Kaipara Harbour so we can sit in our roaming home and have dinner enjoying vast views of water and sky. The river has






dropped its silt and is now blue.

The beach road, the one we didn't go on, ends here and at the entrance to it a silver Mercedes is stuck in sand. There is enormous drama with ropes and tows and a 4X4, revving and wheel spinning, and the Merc' is ignobly pulled out backwards.

We want, we really want, to visit Pouto lighthouse but are too lazy to walk the seven kilometres there and back and dare not take the Britz along the sand. Jock Wills, of Pouto Sand Safaris, solves the problem. Jock, 76-going-on-16, has a special sand-friendly dune buggy and he zooms down the beach, stopping periodically to tell us stories, look at a car that got stuck five days ago and now has sand up to the windows, to admire a seal and to thrillingly zip up and down a

few rollercoaster-style sand tracks.

The lighthouse was built in 1842 to guide sailing ships across the Kaipara's treacherous bar. Now there is no gum or kauri logs to trade and kumara goes south by truck. The few boats that enter the harbour do so with the help of GPS and echo-sounders, so the lighthouse is a historic place and the light is in Dargaville Museum.

It's still a thing of beauty: tall and elegant, bright white with a cute porch and a red dome. It's a memorial to a more adventurous past and an exclamation mark at the end of an interesting, but seldom travelled, peninsula. 

FROM THE TOP: Pouto lighthouse keeps watch over the bar; an unlucky outing; the Searl's garden; a quaint place for reflection.

#### VISITOR INFORMATION

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## BACK IN THE SADDLE

Jill Herron rides high in Wanaka

**A**LITTLE SHOVE here, a tiny tap there and hooves lazily lift for picking out, mouths open to accept clinking bits and big rumps shuffle over for brushing.

It's a regular routine for the horses and for Carol Armstrong and her daughter, Hannah, as they prepare

for a ride around Rippon Vineyard.

Dusty, leathery, horsey smells waft about as the rugged outline of Mt Roy looms large on one side and the as-yet hidden waters of Lake Wanaka beckon on the other.

Oh, that horsey smell... something riders know and love. For many, the sport was something done in

youth before the responsibilities of adulthood took over. But a love of horses never really goes away and a visit to Rippon must be one of the best ways to get back in the saddle.

Rippon was a pioneering vineyard in Central Otago; the late Rolfe Mills planting his first commercial vines here more than 25 years ago. It's marginal territory for grapes due to the challenging climate but, as the Mills family have shown, it can be done and done well.

The organic and biodynamic operation has an international reputation for the quality of its wines. This former sheep farm has a family tradition spanning four generations and today there are no less than five Mills family members hands-on involved in running the place.

**"Riders meander around the vines, taking time to absorb the atmosphere."**

Carol has known the family for many years and is into her seventh summer guiding people around the property. She first gained her instructor's certificate at the age of 16 and in the 40 years since has taught hundreds of riders.

At Rippon she gives everyone, from the advanced to the seriously equinely-challenged, her well-honed instructional run-down. It is simple but effective and somehow just riding alongside someone like her seems to be good for the posture.

In addition, the horses are well schooled, so respond easily to instructions. Carol owns a riding school near Wanaka and has between 15 to 20 horses and ponies in her care. She rotates them between the treks and the school to keep them interested; it's often a surprise for visitors to learn that their kind trekking mount might be a competitive show jumper or eventer.

The two hour excursion sets out through willow-lined sheep paddocks



then climbs a bridle path through a pretty larch forest. Shaggy Highland cows greet riders at the top as broad views over Lake Wanaka open out.

The story of Rippon is told giving visitors a real appreciation of what goes into producing a world-class vintage. At Rippon Hall, sparkling wine glasses receive a splash of the lovely liquid that results from all the hard work, with accompanying tasting notes helping people get the most from subtle flavours.

Winemaker, Nick Mills, says the 14ha of vines produce around 5000 cases of wine annually. Of this about 45% is exported, with the Pinot Noir enjoying the most acclaim.

Working in close harmony with the land and nurturing the schist under-laden soils is critical to the operation. Animal manure, prunings, pulp – all that is organic – is recycled. For Carol it means careful management. If antibiotics, drenches or anything chemical goes into a horse, it is returned to the riding school for a



LEFT: The vineyard sits on the edge of Lake Wanaka. ABOVE: Carol's daughter Hannah on hoof-picking detail.

stand-down period. This ensures that what is being re-deposited does not fall upon Rippon soil.

Onwards from the great rammed-earth Hall, riders meander around the vines, taking time to absorb the atmosphere. It's a labour-intensive business; there is a constant cycle of activity, be it pruning, weeding, tying up vines or picking.

Nick welcomes the sight of the horses passing by, saying it fits with the place and the family's attitude toward it.

"It's about sharing this piece of land," he says. "I like to see people enjoying it."

Back at the yard saddles come off, coats are brushed then horses trot freely into the paddock, straight to their favourite spot for a roll. It's almost as satisfying to watch as it is for the horse.



#### VISITOR INFORMATION

Waterfall Equestrian Centre is on Facebook. See [aa.co.nz/travel](http://aa.co.nz/travel) for more travel ideas and accommodation options in Wanaka.

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Pictured in Titanium Silver

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# SIMPLY GORGE

Yvonne van Dongen takes a ride through history

**T**HE RAIN SETS in on the day we decide to cycle the Hauraki Rail Trail. My friend, who grew up around here, says the hills in this region hold the rain the way the cells in your thighs hold fat. Since duff weather is a given, we must not be put off by it.

At any rate we're only cycling a small section of the 82km trail, the 28km Paeroa to Waikino return part. Why this section? Because it's flat, has great scenery and ends at a sweet-as-a-cupcake café. Also the website claims the Hauraki Rail Trail is the easiest riding trail in New Zealand which makes it a good starter trip for novices and, best of all, we can do this trip in a day from Auckland.

First, we must find the Paeroa i-Site for that's where our hire bikes are. We discover it in a building painted yellow and brown in homage to L&P. The bikes are nice: they have good suspension, squishy seats and carrier bags. And the rail trail is just across the road.

The trail follows the path of two historic railway lines running from Thames to Paeroa and Waikino to Te Aroha, while a new path will link Waikino to Waihi. For more than 70 years and until it closed in 1978, the Paeroa to Waihi line was the main link between Waikato and the Bay of Plenty. The engineering feat

which consisted of three bridges and a tunnel constructed in steep, rigid rock cliffs and bluffs was used mainly by gold companies shifting coal and other mining materials.

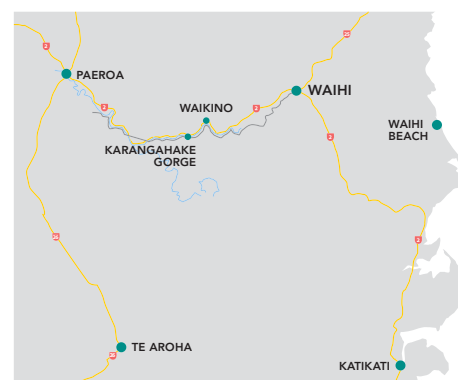
Being a former railway line means that much of the trail goes around the back of things: behind houses, playgrounds and industry. The gravelly track crunches under our tyres. It's great to be underway.

It's not long before we reach farmland with grass so green and shiny it makes our eyeballs ache and clusters of cows which must be among the best fed in the country.

On and on, flecks of rain, a louring sky but we're warm, with the blood pumping to all our extremities as we pump the pedals. The Ohinemuri River follows us all the way until we cross a bridge and enter a long tunnel. Inside orange globes light the way but torches are needed all the same. Who doesn't love a tunnel? And who doesn't begin to hoot like an owl or howl like a wolf just to hear the echoes bounce off the walls?

We leave farmland behind us, at first trading it for some scruffy bush which gets better and better until it morphs completely into a gorgeous gorge. The Karangahake Gorge is nothing less than full-blown mature glorious native New Zealand. The uplift in scenery results in an uplift of spirits.

On past the Waikino Memorial bridge built to commemorate the



terrible floods of 1981 and another reward: the Victoria Battery, an historic gold processing site. Here are massive gloomy concrete arches, stories about an extractive process we inventive Kiwis exported around the world, and tales of the terrible treatment of workers by mining companies. What is most astonishing however, is the photo of the site in its heyday. This really was a massive factory in a beautiful landscape.

The rewards keep coming. In no time at all we are at the Waikino Railway station, a train has pulled in, it's lunchtime and the fire in the cosiest café in the country is roaring. 📍

AA

## VISITOR INFORMATION

Find a guide to the national cycle trail at [aatravel.co.nz/cycletrail](http://aatravel.co.nz/cycletrail)

Bikes, booked in advance, can be hired from Paeroa i-site.

The writer drove Auckland-Paeroa in a BMW X1 sdrive 18d courtesy BMW.



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# Kia Orana

**Kate Forrest** spends time in the Cook Islands, where the going is easy

**L**EAVING RAROTONGA WAS sad. Partly because the day had dawned clear and hot and I wanted to be swimming, not boarding a plane back to cold old Auckland; partly because there was a man at the airport playing sad farewell songs on his ukulele.

Music had greeted us, too. Cheery, light-hearted tunes: the perfect soundtrack for the scene we were stepping into, with its wall of warm, frangipani-scented night air, its bustle of taxis and transfer vans, and a frisson in the crowd of arrivals knowing they'd successfully escaped to another season.

Soon we were ensconced in a holiday home just above high tide at Titikaveka, with a lagoon sparkling in the moonlight and the sound of surf on the distant reef lulling our dreams.

We were sleeping on the southeast coast of Rarotonga, half way around the island from the airport, near a good snorkelling spot and a short drive from Muri with its restaurants and cafés. Everywhere is fairly close in Rarotonga, though. A circuit in the rental car, with plenty of stops and distractions, took an hour and a bit. That was driving slowly, as everyone does.

One diversion we took, and then decided to come back to later in the day, was to Highland Paradise, a mountain-high piece of land with glorious views that's been restored and maintained by a local tribe.

## "Intricate, complicated drumming created a high-energy shimmer in the room."

We were welcomed with ceremony onto a rocky marae tucked under a canopy of big, old trees and told the site's stories and of the significance of the sacred mountain watching over us. Then we filed into an airy hall for a feast and a show. Intricate, complicated drumming created a high-energy shimmer in the room.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Rarotonga's interior is swathed in bush; end of day at Manuia Beach Resort; a local beauty.

Dancers, dressed in bright, multi-coloured costumes, their movements exaggerated with strategically attached feathery extensions to hips and calves and heads, exuded vitality. Singers and story-tellers

revealed layers of history and pulled threads of mystery, insight and humour into the room. It was a generous experience. We drove down the dark, narrow mountain road to the coast at the end of the night with a better understanding of the land we were on.

Keen for more stories, we signed

up for a few hours' biking with Storytellers Eco-Cycle Tours. With Rebecca in the lead and Octavia in the rear, a small band of us pedalled back roads, stopping under a kapok tree for a quick lesson in natural insect repellent, banana growing and pig keeping. Whilst eating slithers of wind-fall mango, we learnt about the navigation trees. We picked our way through rows of baby pineapples to nab some low-hanging oranges; further down the road we pulled sweet berries from a laden tree and stopped again for a deep lung full of gardenia blossom scent. At a taro patch we watched for tiny fish in the wet ditches.

Children's singing rang clear across a school's back field. Hens with flocks of chicks, tethered goats, fat pigs and slobbering dogs braved



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Evening by the resort pool; Highland Paradise drummers warm up; freshwater swimming; gardens at Highland Paradise; Storyteller Eco-Cyclists take a break.

the midday sun. We rode single file past road repair machinery and men placing traffic cones, leaning on shovels, peering into pot holes. One guy, holding a water-divining tool,

cold. Revived, we cycled back to the coast to a piece of shade and a picnic lunch: homemade pies, sweet potato chunky chips and salads made by Rebecca's aunt.

She probably grew the vegetables for our salads, but if she had an excess, chances are Aunty was at the Saturday morning Pananga Nui

**"It was a glorious moment, that plunge out of the hot day into the freshwater cold."**

walked a straight line; he was looking for the pipes, he said.

Hearing what it's like to live here, how families manage, how people relate to the land and to each other, would have been the highlight of this tour, but there was more to come.

Up a rough road, through a patch of bush to a small stream, we followed the leader up a rocky path to a small, deep pool under a waterfall. It was a glorious moment, that plunge out of the hot day into the freshwater

markets, where everyone seems to be, stocking up on fresh food, craft, clothing and souvenirs. It is a hum of colour and noise.

In the afternoon, peace descended. We found our way to the colourful Maire Nui gardens, where tropical plants shone luminous and vivid. It was warm, despite rain, so we headed back to our holiday home and pushed the kayaks out from under the deck into the lagoon. The water was still and coral and fish were clearly







visible. Inspired, we donned snorkels and masks. It was fun, but more satisfying the following day, when we joined Captain Tama's Lagoon Cruise that took us out to a marine reserve. There, fish were unafraid of human intruders. Bright blue, peachy orange, striped, spotted, snouty and frilly, the



fish came in so many shapes and shades that it was almost comical. Funny, too, were the crew who were adept at managing and encouraging swimmers of varying confidence and hosted lunch on an offshore island with lashings of charm.

After a couple of nights at the self-

contained Hawaiki Villas, we switched to a low-key resort for a different experience; settling into Manuia Beach Resort, with its infinity pool, sandy-floored beach-side restaurant and shady gardens, all of which we turned our backs on each evening to watch brilliant sunsets.

Cocktails in hand, of course.

With the honeymooners, the English couple on their way around the world and the Australians away from the kids for the first time, we stood watching the sun go down, marvelling at the riot of colour in the sky. In the low light, the hibiscus flowers glowed. We talked about our days, recommending tours, beaches, coffee options, restaurants. We agreed, it's an extremely easy place to be. **AA**

#### VISITOR INFORMATION

See [rarotonga.travel](http://rarotonga.travel)

For AA Member deals on travel insurance, see [aa.co.nz/travel](http://aa.co.nz/travel)

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# Out in the open

Jo Percival and her sister Anna take an Australian drive

**N**OW, I WANT you to try something before we set off," Gav says, leaning in through the car window, the engine idling. "Put your foot down. Like, right down, for a moment." I oblige, and with a roaring throaty gargle, the Porsche 911 Carrera (red, of course) comes alive. I grin. "Thought you'd like that," Gav chuckles.

I've never been much of a petrol head. Cars, for me, were little more than a convenient mode of transport. Until now. Cruising south along the Grand Pacific Drive from Sydney in a car that feels built specifically for this stretch of road is exhilarating. The quick shifts through gears to match the curvaceous coastal highway; the way it feels velcroed to the tarmac; and that voice! Sadly, this is not my car. The Porsche belongs to Gavin's company, Cliff to Coast Sports Cars, and he's allowing me the all-too-brief pleasure of an afternoon drive.

The famous Seacliff Bridge unfurls in front of us. Smooth concrete pillars support the twist of road that curves around the cliffs and hovers over the crashing surf below. The Porsche seems to purr appreciatively.



**"By 10am, the sun is already ferociously hot in a cloudless sky"**

It's just a shame that my sister, Anna, is growing increasingly pale and quiet beside me. When we arrive in Wollongong she is green with car sickness, and as grateful to get out of the Porsche as I am reluctant.

We get our bearings in Wollongong, meandering along the seafront, breezy, balmy in the early evening. Down at the harbour basin we eat sashimi so fresh it could have been caught with a line cast from our table. Outside, hordes of seagulls and the occasional pelican dive for their own dinner and rowing crews, wearing nothing but slivers of lycra and bushy beards, carve through the choppy waves.

The sea is calmer the next morning and our beachfront breakfast spot is filled with glossy, tanned customers: shirtless surfers and women in fluorescent bikinis.

For contrast, we head to the huge Nan Tien Buddhist temple. Set amidst immaculate, fragrant grounds, the temple is simultaneously bright, cheerful and tranquil. Lunch is at the Dew Drop Inn Tea House where, by Buddhist decree, the food is free from meat, fish, onions and garlic. The sticky vegan dumplings are delicious.



Further south at the Illawarra Fly Tree Top Walk we are grateful for the relative cool of the bush in the thick afternoon heat. Up onto the high metal walkway we go, to the top of the tower 50m above the trees. The view stretching hazily north is magnificent, though with fizzy legs and sweaty palms clutching the railing, I'm not really in a fit state to appreciate it, but Anna ventures to the end of the cantilevered walkway, bouncing nauseatingly above the tree tops.

Bowral, in the Southern Highlands, is a monied town with verdant, manicured gardens that belie the extremes of the weather they're subjected to. By 10am, the sun is already ferociously hot in a cloudless sky, and when we stop for coffee in Bong Bong street, the digital thermometer above the bank reads 31°C.

As we drive north the sky gets bigger, the grass browner. This is the rural Australia of paintings: scorched, rugged, beautiful. The car's chilly air conditioning begins to feel inappropriate, and we pull over – opening the doors to a billowing cloud of dry heat and waft of eucalyptus. Apart from the screech of passing cockatoos, there is nothing but the soft susurrus of long grass in a light breeze.

We stop at the Taralga Hotel, a stone pub built in 1867 and the main feature of the tiny town. We pick a spot at a shady picnic table outside and are startled when two young girls plonk themselves next to us, licking dribbly ice creams. They're locals, sisters, intrigued by our appearance in their town. They chatter happily about their school, their family, and seem delighted when we tell them we, too, are sisters.

The scenery in the Blue Mountains is greener, steeper and even more dramatic than the big, bucolic fields. Outside the small town of Oberon we drive into a capital 'V' of a valley, down a road so increasingly vertiginous we feel like the soaring hills might close over the top of us and we'll be swallowed into limestone landscape.

Beneath us, the Jenolan Caves are as deep as the valley is high. It's a labyrinthine network of slick, cool tunnels, underground rivers and glittering mineral deposits. We snake along dimly lit passageways, bent almost double. Deeper underground, down a narrow staircase, the lights glow green, and Scott, our guide, gets us to watch as he tosses a pebble off the path. The green light plops and ripples in front of us: it is the river, so still



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Seacliffe Bridge; a steep ride in the Blue Mountains; limestone country; Nan Tien Buddhist temple; in Jenolan Caves; Wollongong Harbour Basin.

and clear as to be invisible.

The vastness of everywhere we go is difficult to really comprehend. At Scenic World, a theme park access point to the wilderness, the Blue Mountains stretch from our rocky vantage for hundreds of kilometres. We catch a glass-floored cable car across the valley, watching specks of people standing on the edge of the cliffs below us.

Then we ride the world's steepest funicular railway down into the trees, which at 52°, feels near enough to vertical. Around us, the landscape is extravagant, almost cartoonish: orange wedges of cliff frosted in dense greenery and decorated with the white twinkle of cockatoos.

The mountains grow bluer as they fade to the horizon. And when we leave they seem to tag along, postcard-size in the rear-view mirror and as fluttering glimpses between buildings along the highway, back to the hot bustle of Sydney. 📍

AA

#### VISITOR INFORMATION

See [visitnsw.com.au](http://visitnsw.com.au) for more about New South Wales  
For travel insurance, see [aa.co.nz/traveller](http://aa.co.nz/traveller)



# Cruising the Rivas

**Kathryn Webster** explores the Mediterranean the best possible way

**H**AS ANYONE VISITED Antoni Gaudi's Casa Battlo and not left intending to take up furniture making or mosaic design? The Barcelona apartment was crowded with people the day I visited, photographing its window latches and door handles, studying the wooden ventilation slots, staring intently at the changing colours in rooms teased by tiled light shafts and atriums. I imagined many of them were students of architecture or design, and, if I'm right, there is hope for the world.

Gaudi is why I wanted to spend extra time in Barcelona but, of course, there was a lot more to the city than

this extraordinary artist's legacy. I spent three days getting lost in its back alleys, dumbstruck by its beauty, its gothic, classical and modernist bones. Huge graceful apartment blocks with wrought iron trimmings and stone facades grace tree-lined streets wide enough to accommodate traffic, bicycles, tourists galore, pedestrians with dogs, pram-pushing families.

It's a city to walk and walk and walk in – up the famous La Rambla, down side streets to skinny lanes with boutiques and galleries and shops selling handmade shoes, fans, leather bags, hats and gelato. Butchers, bars and churches cluster around market squares; buskers play to queues waiting to get into museums.

While the Picasso and Miro museums were highlights for me, other visitors happily spent entire afternoons eating tapas in a people-watching spot. For others, the Gothic Quarter, the fascinating history or a football match would have won their vote. There are many reasons to be in this city – and actually, the main point of my visit was to board a cruise ship.

Azamara Quest, no less. For seven nights.

In the ship's Drawing Room, a haven loaded with enough books to last several voyages, I opened a world atlas at pages featuring the Mediterranean, the Italian and French Rivas, to see where I was headed. My finger traced the





CLOCKWISE FROM FAR LEFT: Monte Carlo; inside Gaudí's Casa Battlo; the house from the street; Barcelona street; a market in Aix-en-Provence; our ship in Marseille port.



coastline from Barcelona to Roses to Marseilles, up past Corsica and Portofino to Monte Carlo.

Roses in Spain is a small dot in the atlas. Our full day there was all about food and wine, with a behind-the-scenes experience at a seafood restaurant. Exposure to local culture is one of the specialties of this cruise line, taking passengers to sample local hospitality. It's usually arranged for small groups, although the next night, in Marseille, most of the ship's 600-plus passengers boarded buses for a private opera performance at a country chateau. There, a soprano sang arias from Puccini, Verdi, Catalani; it was very beautiful and made more special with folk dancers welcoming us and fire dancers lighting our departure.

Earlier that day, a small party of us had been to Aix-en-Provence, where Paul Cezanne was born; St Victory Mountain, which he painted many times, rose out of the summer heat. The Cyprus and olive trees, the market squares, terracotta colouring and classic architecture were familiar to me from art. We wandered the

markets with busy cameras and ate a long French lunch.

The ship stayed in Marseille an extra night because the mistral wind had risen, so the next day we went by road to Cassis, a little seaside town bristling with holidaying Europeans, tolerating the wind on a

**"Back on board, the wind snapped the flags and the showers by the ship's pool flew horizontally."**

little beach and spending hours over lunch in one of numerous harbour-side restaurants.

Back on board, the wind snapped the flags and the shower by the ship's pool flew horizontally. We pulled away from the harbour wall and manoeuvred sideways and out past the sheltering sea walls. We'd been moored in the heart of the city because although it's a big ship, it's not too big to get in close. I leaned over as far as I could, watching the

tugs. Edging away from the land I felt I belonged to a club; we were all in it together, leaving for a new port.

The Mediterranean was blue-black with shots of sunset pink falling to the horizon. Dry and chalky landscapes, lit like papery emptiness in loose charcoal drawings, receded as the evening went on. Late at night I stood on the balcony of my cabin watching the solid rush of the ship moving majestic and unstoppable through the night. The sea was midnight ink – the sky full of twinkle.

We rolled into Corsica early in the day, arriving in the flush of blue sky perfection – the sea still, the ship waiting for local ferries to leave before backing in to port. Into the little town of Bastia we went, to walk its steep cobblestone lanes and photograph its ancient terracotta-coloured architecture. Slowly, in intense summer heat, we walked up to the old citadel for the view. Reflected in the harbour were shimmering yacht masts and smudges of colour from the surrounding houses – yellow, rusty reds, old earthy hues, blue.

Best of all, in the evening a group



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: One of the five villages of Cinque Terre; colourful Bastia on Corsica; Tourists in Cinque Terre; on the way to Santa Margarita; a B&B in Cinque Terre; Portofino; heading for Bastia's citadel.

of us went to a family restaurant in the hills above town. It was set in a rustic home that had seen many generations. Old, uneven brick walls sheltered the terrace. Geraniums, olive and lemon trees leant close, an old olive press and ancient farming junk was scattered about and, in the orchard nearby, sheep with bells. Our party of 20 or so sat at a long table for six courses of homemade deliciousness: Corsican soup laden with beans and vegetables, wild boar sausages, pasta, cheeses, gelato and local wine and plum brandy. Locals arrived late for their dinners, a little bemused at the influx of English speakers in their tiny village's restaurant. It was a genuine treat and not the sort of place easily discovered but, happily for us, was part of the Azamara 'eat local' programme.

More people bustled about in Portofino, though it too is small. Our ship moored out and tenders delivered us into the steep horse-shoe harbour surrounded by high-up church towers and shuttered villas with window boxes, terraces and elegant balconies. At the edge

of the port, a handful of extremely impressive private boats moored, cafes spilled out into the view, winding roads disappeared toward homes hidden in old gardens. I heard that the village of Portofino was saved at the end of WW2 by a German countess who begged the departing Germans not to bomb the place. She gave them all her cars, in return.

**"...cafés spilled out into the view, winding roads disappeared toward homes hidden in old gardens."**

We took a ferry from Portofino to a larger town around the coastline – Santa Margarita – then went by road to Cinque Terre, five tiny coastal villages famous for their steep, rugged terracing with medieval stone walls supporting gardens and olive groves and grape vines. The towns are linked by cliff-edge pathways, walked these days more by tourists than farmers, but it's still quaint and pretty and

romantic. We meandered among the throng, past souvenir shops and B&Bs, stopping for pesto pasta lunch at Manarola at a table perched high above the sea; took a boat between towns and a train from the last.

Back in Portofino I looped around the town, dipping into its expensive shops and galleries. This is the territory of very wealthy people; I spotted original art by Marc Chagall and Frank Leger for sale.

Azamara itinerary planners make an effort to depart ports late, giving passengers full days and sometimes evenings on shore. Not being a regular cruiser, I didn't realise the significance of this until taking the last tender back to the ship and overhearing others praise this advantage.


The timetable gave us a full day, the last on the cruise, in Monaco. Bleary-eyed and possibly still dreaming, I stepped out onto my balcony and into the midst of a city bristling with classic fairy-tale architecture and sleek multi-storeyed high-rises in a surreal mix of straight edges and romantic curves. Behind the city a mass of land, the nose of the French Alps, loomed. The harbour was busy with private boats large and small – it was buzzy and surprisingly real.

Walking in the city streets some of that reality dropped away. Monte





Carlo bristles with brands: Ferrari, Maserati and Porsche; Louis Vuitton, YSL, Chanel. A sedate Rolls Royce pulled up to the steps of a grand hotel, depositing an elegant very elderly woman, both arms laden with familiar-logo'd shopping bags.

Late in the day I took to my balcony for the last time; in the morning I had to disembark and make my way back to real life. The harbour was busy and beautiful. Diamonds of light sparked off the chromed points of shiny boats, off the tops of waves, off the edges of white hulls. Drenched with summer heat, the city seared its image on my memory. 



#### VISITOR INFORMATION

The writer travelled as a guest of Azamar Club Cruises, with assistance from Cathay Pacific. See [azamaracruises.com](http://azamaracruises.com) for details of upcoming cruises; [cathaypacific.co.nz](http://cathaypacific.co.nz) for flights to Europe.

To arrange travel insurance, visit an AA Centre or go to [aa.co.nz/traveller](http://aa.co.nz/traveller)



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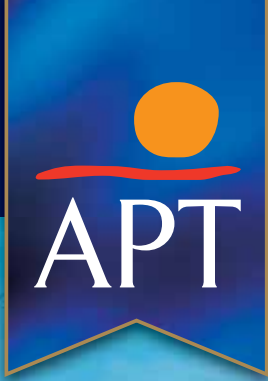
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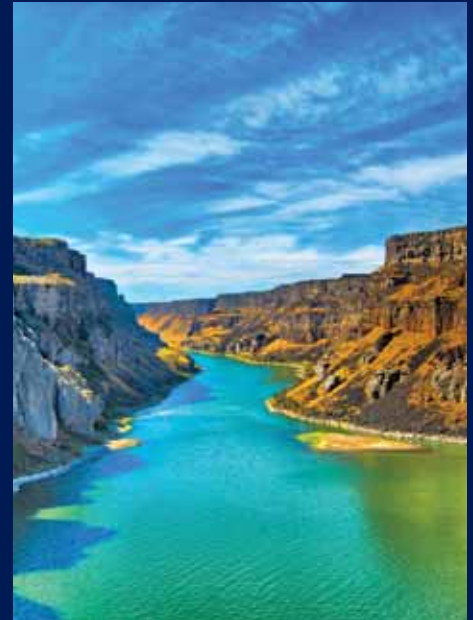
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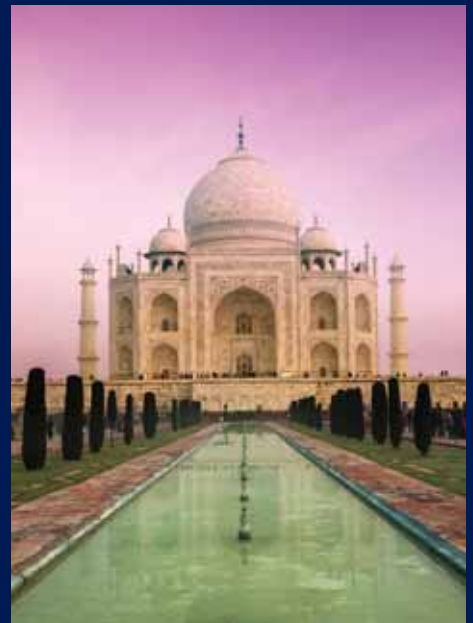


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\* Conditions apply. Prices are per person (pp), twin share and include port charges. Prices are inclusive of savings where applicable. Prices are correct as at 5 February 2015, but may fluctuate due to changes in availability, surcharges, fees, taxes or exchange rates. Prices based on offers are valid until 30 April 2015, unless sold out prior. Subject to availability, not combinable, available on new bookings only and may be withdrawn at any time. A limited number of offers are available on selected itineraries and departures. **AIRFARE OFFERS:** Subject to availability. Non-refundable deposits \$1,000 pp for European River Cruising 2016, \$2,000 pp for China, Vietnam and India and \$3,000 pp for USA River Cruising and Europe cruises in 2015 are due within 7 days of booking. 2016 Europe River Cruising requires a 2nd deposit. Available on all suite categories for departures in March and October-December 2015 and 2016. Combinable with Europe airfare offers. **USA COMPANION FLY FREE INCLUDING TAXES:** Offer includes one person's airfare and includes air taxes from \$110. Valid on UTUWE18 to November 2015. **VIETNAM FLY FREE:** Offers include air taxes to the value of \$100 pp, valid on all tours 12+ days departing in 2015. **FLY BUSINESS CLASS FOR \$3,995 PP:** Includes air taxes to the value of \$100 pp, valid for Cat. A, Sadee, Sadee +, Owner's and transferrable or redeemable for cash. Air credit offer is subject to availability of airline and booking class. Flights must be booked by APT. All air offers are based on wholesale airfares in economy class with Singapore Airlines (or an airline of APT's choosing). Once booking



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on EUMC15: 4 March 2016 (Cat. E), EURC15: 28 October 2016 (Cat. E), UTUWE18: 14 August 2015 (Twin Window Stateroom - Cat. A), CHYC14: 15 October 2015 (Cat. E) VEMR20: 27 November 2015 (Cat. C), INJKV20: 2 September 2015 (Signature Suite) ALL OFFERS: All to availability of airline and booking class. Once booking class sold out surcharges apply. Flights must be booked by APT. All airfare offers excluding specific business class rates, are in economy class with an airfare of APT's choosing. Airfare offers are valid ex. AKL/CHC/WLG. of \$2,000 pp by 31 October 2015. Final payments are due 100 days prior to departure. EUROPE RIVER CRUISING FLY FREE: Offer include air taxes to the value of \$250 pp. Valid on a selection of Europe cruise/tours departing in 2015/16. FREE CABIN UPGRADE: departing 14 August 2015. Must travel on the same flight & tour. Flights are in economy class with Air New Zealand (or an airline of APT's choosing). CHINA COMPANION FLY FREE: Inclusive of air taxes up to \$150 pp. Valid on CHYC13, CHYC14 or CHYC15 departing March Owner's + suites, on selected departures only. Business Class airfare based on D class with Singapore Airlines (or an airline of APT's choosing if unavailable). INDIA AIR CREDIT: Offer is based on two people travelling together on the same APT India tour. Saving is not class sold out surcharges apply. †Complimentary beverages exclude French Champagne, premium spirits and selected wines. Australian Pacific Touring Pty Ltd ABN 44 004 684 619. APT1915

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- ☒ Can be worn by both men and women

## Sore feet?

There's nothing worse than being on your feet all day especially when you have corns, calluses, pain in the balls of your feet, ulceration or just plain sore and aching feet.

If you are like most people, you simply live with it, maybe trying plasters, pads, insoles and other such products from the chemist, including expensive medications, but nothing seems to work – does this sound familiar?

### You're not alone

A staggering 400,000 people in Australia suffer from heel pain alone and it is anticipated that over 80% will experience it at some point of their life, and that figure doesn't include our arches, Achilles, ball of foot, toes, and so on. Imagine if your sore and aching feet actually did become a thing of the past?

Well, now it can be with our best-selling Therapeutic Socks.

### You'll never wear another pair of socks again!

Injuries, overuse, or medical conditions that cause inflammation involving any of the bones, ligaments or tendons in the foot can all contribute to foot pain. Arthritis is also a very common cause and damage to the nerves of feet can result in intense burning discomfort, numbness or tingling (peripheral neuropathy).

### Protect and soothe your feet

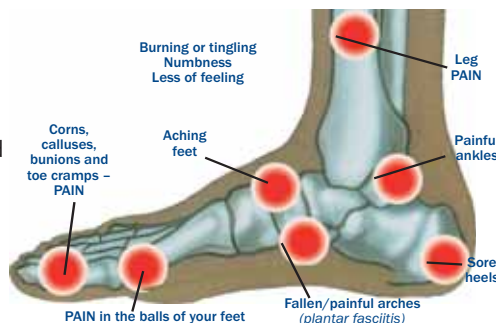
Your feet are the workhorse of your body. No other part takes as much impact and pounding during the course of your life as your feet! So it's time to protect and soothe them with these Therapeutic Socks. The therapeutic gel-padded soles will provide soothing cushioning and comfort as they reduce impact, friction, callus formation and foot ulcerations.

If the protective pads on your feet have worn away due to age, the soothing Gel Pads in these Therapeutic Socks will help.

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So if foot pain is ruining your day then it's time you treated your feet and got back to everyday life. Order a pair of Therapeutic Socks for only \$39.95 today and we will send you another pair FREE!

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# My AA

## Barney Irvine

### Principal Advisor – Infrastructure

#### What does a Principal Advisor do?

I'm part of the Motoring Affairs team, which advocates on behalf of AA Members on motoring policy. My focus is transport infrastructure – i.e., which transport projects we should build and how we should pay for them. On any given day, I could be dealing with the media, writing submissions to Government, meeting with the AA's District Councils, presenting our views to external stakeholder groups or all of the above!

#### What are you currently working on?

My main project is preparing the AA's response to the 10-year transport budget in Auckland. This is the big show for the Auckland Council this year and will set the tone for a number of issues that will shape Auckland's transport programme in the years to come.

There's a really important role for the AA to play in representing the views of the motorist (the car is used for 75% of journeys to work in Auckland) and making sure that politics don't get in the way of an informed, balanced debate.

**This sounds very Auckland-centric. How does this impact AA Members outside the region?**

Auckland takes up so much of the infrastructure pie that what happens >>



there is felt through the rest of the country. One-third of the population lives there, so it's fair to say that we will struggle to get New Zealand moving if Auckland isn't moving.

While most of the infrastructure activity is taking place in Auckland, it's not just an Auckland story. Whether it's an expressway in Hamilton, a bridge in Ashburton, or a cycleway in Christchurch, infrastructure projects will have an impact on how people get around.

#### How does the AA reach the views it puts forward?

We take a bottom-up approach, starting with surveys of our Members. We survey on all sorts of issues, from speed to parking, to cycling and public transport, and this gives us a powerful window into the public mood.

Of course, when you've got a Membership base of 1.4 million, spread throughout the country and from a range of different backgrounds, there's never a single viewpoint. The challenge for us is to find the common thread: the 'voice of the reasonable motorist'.

To do that, we rely on our 17 AA District Councils, who consider our policy positions against what local AA Members are saying. There's also an amazing depth of knowledge in our policy team, built up over decades.

We get a lot of feedback from Members. Sometimes they agree with the positions we've taken; sometimes they disagree. Either way, it's great to know they care about the work we do on their behalf.

#### What do you enjoy in your leisure time away from infrastructure issues?

I do a lot of judo and play the guitar. As time goes by, my body is finding ways to tell me that the guitar is the better option of the two.

## The winner is...

Not only is the Mazda3 winner of the 2014 Car of the Year, it's also picked up the People's Choice award.

In the lead up to the Car of the Year event last December, the AA took to Facebook to find out which new vehicle the public felt deserved top honours.

More than 20,000 votes were received, with the Mazda3 claiming a quarter of the total – nearly twice that of the nearest rival, the Honda Jazz. The Holden Trax and Ford Ecosport followed close behind.

Voters could choose from a pool of cars released during the year, not just the 10 finalists selected for the ultimate award.

AA Motoring Services General Manager, Stella Stocks, says the People's Choice campaign is a great way for Members and the wider public to share their views and engage with the organisation.

"The campaign provided us with a chance to test the decision making of the experts and the People's Choice vote proved they were on the right track," she says.

"More importantly, it got people thinking about what they value in a new vehicle, which clearly matched what experts think is the best."

➡ See [aa.co.nz/cars](http://aa.co.nz/cars) for car reviews. Turn to p.48 for coverage of the Car of the Year.



**AA** Motoring



## ONLINE BONUS



AA Members can increase their fuel savings with the addition of almost 300 online stores joining the AA Smartfuel programme. Brands include Strawberry.net.com, Marks and Spencer, ASOS, Glassons, Hallensteins, EziBuy and more.

Members save five cents per litre when they spend \$50 or more through [shoponline.aasmartfuel.co.nz](http://shoponline.aasmartfuel.co.nz).

With BP and Caltex offering six cents off per litre with AA Smartfuel, that discount turns into 11 cents off per litre.

➔ See [aa.co.nz/AAsmartfuel](http://aa.co.nz/AAsmartfuel) to access the online sites.

AA CENTRE COUPON

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Offer only available on presentation of this coupon at your nearest AA Centre before 30 April 2015.

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\*Only applicable when a battery is purchased via AA Mobile Battery Service.

**Battery Service**

## Meet our movie reviewer

In the summer 2014 issue, we put the word out there for a movie enthusiast to be our official reviewer for 2015.

Johanna Douglas impressed us with her entry review of *Interstellar* and every month will bring you a run-down on the latest rom-com, Disney adventure or action-packed thriller.

Johanna is an AA Member from Auckland and studies at AUT.

She's a tough but honest critic and can't wait to share her thoughts with Members.

➡ Visit [aa.co.nz/moviereviews](http://aa.co.nz/moviereviews) to check out Johanna's reviews.



## Love movies?

AA Members can receive up to 40%\* off movie tickets when pre-purchasing online at [aa.co.nz/eventcinemas](http://aa.co.nz/eventcinemas).

Adult tickets are priced from \$11 and Members can save on child, senior and family tickets any day of the week.

For those stuck for a present idea, movie vouchers can be sent as gifts. Vouchers can be redeemed within six months of purchase at all EVENT Cinemas New Zealand as well as The Embassy in Wellington and Rialto Cinemas in Newmarket and Dunedin.

\* Saving of 40% is based on the maximum standard adult price and applies to adult eSaver tickets. Terms and conditions apply. See [aa.co.nz/eventcinemas](http://aa.co.nz/eventcinemas) for full terms and conditions.



## COVERED ON THE ROAD

It's good to know how car insurance works before getting behind the wheel. Here are a few common questions to help you decide whether you have the right cover.

### Does car insurance cover personal injury?

New Zealand car insurance only covers damage to property. Injury is covered by ACC. This is one reason why New Zealand vehicle insurance is less expensive than in places such as the UK where personal injury is covered. Another reason for the lower cost is the number of vehicles on New Zealand roads.

### Do I need to list the vehicle owner or driver when taking out insurance?

You can only insure a vehicle that belongs to you but owning four cars may not mean you're the main driver of each and you'll need to list who is. In some cases there may be more than one main driver such as your spouse, so he or she should be listed on your insurance policy as well as the insured driver or owner of the vehicle.

If the main driver is under 25 years, this may increase your premium as well as your excess, should you need to make a claim. This is because data shows younger drivers with less experience are more likely to make a claim. It may be tempting to not list them in order to save money, but not being honest with your insurer is in breach of your contract. If it's discovered a younger driver was the main driver, your claim may be declined and your policy cancelled.

### I want to lend my car to a friend. If they have an accident does their insurance pay, or mine?

In most circumstances your comprehensive insurance will cover your own car, despite your friend being the driver. The main exemptions would be if your friend was driving recklessly or was deliberately trying to cause damage. Other reasons could be if they weren't legally licensed, didn't comply with the conditions of their licence or weren't driving to the terms of your policy, for instance driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol. While each claim is considered on its own merits, it's best to check the terms of your policy first, before handing the keys to a friend.

➡ See [aainsurance.co.nz/insurance-tips](http://aainsurance.co.nz/insurance-tips) for more information.





## HEADING OVERSEAS?

As the colder months approach, now is a good time for AA Members to start planning a holiday to somewhere warm. Deciding where and when to go is part of the thrill of overseas travel, as is getting all the details sorted, including travel insurance. Because it's a fact of travel that, sometimes, the unexpected happens.

With AA Travel Insurance cover, help is a phone call away. If something goes wrong, travellers can quickly get on with making the most of their winter holiday – or at least travel home safely.

And to ensure this getting sorted business keeps travellers happy, AA Members will save 10% off their policy\* when buying AA Travel Insurance.

Members can purchase AA Travel Insurance online, over the phone or from their local AA Centre. There are no forms to fill out or visits to the doctor for approval and we've got one of the broadest covers for pre-existing medical conditions in New Zealand.



➔ Head to [aa.co.nz/travelinsurance](http://aa.co.nz/travelinsurance), call us on 0800 500 444 or visit an AA Centre for more information.

\*AA Members get 10% off standard policy pricing. Terms and conditions apply. See [aa.co.nz/travelinsurance](http://aa.co.nz/travelinsurance) for full terms and conditions.



## STRESS-FREE ADVENTURES

Hitting the road on a getaway has never been easier for AA Members thanks to Thrifty Car Rentals.

Members can save up to 50% when purchasing Thrifty's exclusive new bundled packages, which start at \$64 a day.

Other benefits include no airport fees, \$0 excess damage liability, under-age driver waiver and no GST or credit card fees.

The late model vehicles are available at 28 pick-up locations nationwide and have 4 to 5 star ANCAP safety ratings.

➔ See [aa.co.nz/carrental](http://aa.co.nz/carrental), call 0508 73 70 70 or visit your local AA Centre for more information.



## RENEW & WIN

When you renew your AA Membership by the due date you could win a \$2000 Harvey World Travel gift card or \$2000 free fuel. These lucky Members have done just that:

December – LJ Meleisea, Auckland  
 November – J Ballantyne, Auckland  
 October – KM Williams, Christchurch  
 September – M Hansen, Auckland  
 August – JW Fairey, Palmerston North

# INSPIRING TRAVEL

The team at AA Traveller is always looking for fresh ideas to encourage Kiwis to see more of New Zealand.

"It doesn't need to be summer in New Zealand to be able to enjoy it," AA Traveller General Manager

Moira Penman says. "Now is a good time to plan a mid-year holiday or even programme in a few long weekends to poke around parts of the country that haven't been fully explored."

AA Traveller takes some of the legwork out of researching new places to go as the team comes up with new travel ideas to match the seasons and shares those ideas by email and on the website [aatraveller.co.nz](http://aatraveller.co.nz).

*The New Zealand Cycle Trail Guide 2015*, a new publication featuring travel information and maps of the 23 Great Routes that form Nga Haerenga, the New Zealand Cycle Trail, is also likely to inspire travellers.

"We're hoping to encourage more people to have a go, especially those who haven't tried a cycle

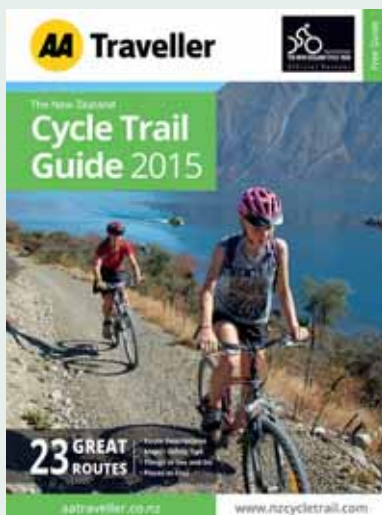
trail before. They can access parts of New Zealand not so well-known and they may find themselves in regions they've not explored before," Moira says.

Information on the 23 cycle trails can also be found online at [aatravel.co.nz/cycletrail](http://aatravel.co.nz/cycletrail).

And to help people navigate to these new adventures, the AA has published some new, more detailed road maps. Auckland has been divided into four – north, south, east and west – and new maps have also been produced for the Coromandel Peninsula, Kapiti Coast and Horowhenua, Wairarapa and the West Coast.

Sorting somewhere to stay is also easy on the AA Traveller's website or at any AA Centre.

➔ Visit [aatraveller.co.nz](http://aatraveller.co.nz) for ideas or to sign up for the AA Traveller e-newsletter.



## YOUR BATTERY – OUR SPECIALTY

Do you have a vehicle that requires a specialty battery? Or maybe just a workhorse that needs a reliable all-rounder that won't let you down? From high-end cars with the latest battery technology through to 4WDs and boats, there's no battery too specialised for the AA Battery Services team.

### For cars

We have the specialised equipment required to replace modern batteries in newer cars without any risk to electronics. All our batteries meet or exceed your car's manufacturer specifications and our work and parts are guaranteed. We'll even take batteries away for safe recycling.

### For 4WDs

AA Battery Service supplies a range of heavy duty 4WD batteries

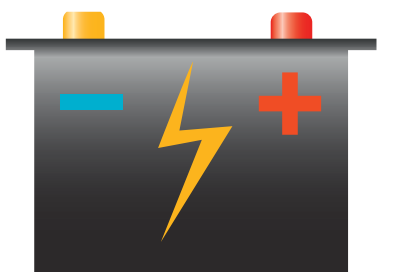
with higher cold-cranking amps for greater starting power, hot-melt glue over the plates to prevent vibration damage, fully sealed cases to eliminate acid leakage and increased electrolyte volume to prevent overheating.

### For boats

We have a range of high quality, reliable marine batteries for jet skis, recreational, and commercial boats. Our marine batteries are specifically built for rough sea conditions with high cold-cranking amp ratings and a high reserve capacity. Batteries have built-in carry handles to ease battery installation and removal, sealed cases to reduce the risk of acid leaks and come with a two-year warranty.

### We can do it for you

Many Kiwis have been tempted



to source and replace their own batteries, but these days DIY is more likely to result in a hefty repair bill as battery and vehicle technology becomes more advanced and complex.

Fortunately, there is no need to DIY as AA Battery Service can do it for you, in most areas. Our battery specialists will provide advice on the right battery for your vehicle and replace it on the spot. We also offer discounted prices for AA Members and all installations come with a nationwide warranty.

➔ Call AA Battery Service on 0800 500 222





# NZAA Annual Report 2013 – 2014

## Investing in our future

A summary of the AA's recent performance

**T**HE TWELVE MONTHS to June 2014 were exceptional for the AA on many levels. Here, we share highlights and also provide an update on areas of particular focus during the nine months since.

While there has been strong performance in all the AA's divisions and departments, we've put particular emphasis on two areas which have strengthened the AA's position and, more importantly, enhanced our relevance to our growing Membership base.

The AA Driving School and our tourism operations have enjoyed significant re-energising, with focus and investment resulting in operations that better serve our Members' needs and provide added value.

### AA DRIVING SCHOOL

Improving roads and developing safer cars are important but we also need better drivers. We've made it our goal to help improve road safety

by ensuring new drivers are well prepared. The AA believes that professional driver training for learners is the key to making motorists safer.

In July 2013, the AA launched an offer of one free driving lesson to AA Members and children of AA Members who had held their learner licence for two months or less. The initiative led to the delivery of over 5000 free lessons to learner drivers.

The success and positive response to that programme reinforced our determination to provide New Zealand's learner drivers access to professional instruction. In October 2014, with an investment of more than \$2 million, we launched a new programme called Learn to Drive the AA Way. New content on the AA website, offering learner drivers and their parents or supervisors all the information and support they need to become safe, confident and fully-licensed drivers, was developed and we also delivered a significant new offer for new drivers: AA Ignition.

AA Ignition is an extension of the initial free driving lesson, increasing the offer to three free professional driving lessons, valued at about \$200. Since its launch, 3600 students have signed up.

And this is just the beginning. AA Ignition has been very successful with sign-ups beyond our projections and plans are now underway to add to the programme with more access to free driving lessons and to related courses.

### AA TRAVELLER

Tourism and the AA have been intrinsically bound for decades, particularly for travel within New Zealand.

Providing free printed maps to our Members has been at the heart of our tourism activity. Alongside that, our accommodation guides and other publications have provided overseas visitors and New Zealand tourists with thousands of options to rest their well-travelled heads and more fully experience the country. In the past few



AA  
Membership  
grew 46,283  
to a total  
Membership  
1,426,895

NZ  
Motorists  
earned  
\$65 million  
in AA  
Smartfuel

months, our maps have been made available free of charge to nearly 500,000 AA Smartfuel cardholders in addition to AA Members.

We've focused on becoming a strong champion for tourism businesses, working closely with Regional Tourism Organisations across the country, promoting travel with targeted campaigns and highlighting to AA Members the attractions and Member benefits available in different regions. Our aim has been to support and encourage those Members who want to get out and about to explore our beautiful country.

The AA also does a lot of valuable work behind the scenes, conducting research on travel preference and behaviour, for example. And we were heavily involved in the development of Tourism 2025, the Tourism Industry Association's strategy to increase the value of tourism over the next decade.

Since the end of the 2013/14 financial year, our AA Traveller team has been looking at new ways of working with tourism operators to grow the sector in collaborative ways. With that in mind, the AA has created a new role: General Manager Travel and Tourism. Industry stalwart Grant Lilly, who has extensive experience in the sector and holds a number of board roles in aviation and tourism, including the Tourism Industry Association, was appointed at the end of 2014 to lead developments for the AA in this area.

He will spearhead the AA's investment in the tourism and travel sector and build greater bonds with the industry, which will enable us to expand on the work we've already done. Given that most local travel and tourism is undertaken by road, this is an area that interests and impacts on many AA Members.

## HIGHLIGHTS OF THE AA'S 2013/2014 YEAR:

### MEMBERSHIP

- AA Membership grew by 46,283 taking total Membership to 1,426,895.
- A record 112,276 new Members joined during the year pushing Personal Membership to 924,908.
- Vehicle-based Membership grew by 23,781 to stand at 501,987, passing the half million mark.
- New Member benefits were introduced including a free eye examination at Specsavers once every two years, free driving lessons for novice drivers, discounted movie tickets at EVENT Cinemas and free vehicle safety checks.
- In the year to 30 June 2014, New Zealand motorists earned \$65 million in AA Smartfuel.
- Our MyAA Membership pricing scheme continued, giving Members increasing subscription discounts in conjunction with their Membership tenure.
- Membership retention was

very high, with many Members receiving significantly more value in Member discounts and benefits than the cost of subscription.

- We held our Membership subscription fees, offsetting the rising costs with the commercial returns from our associated businesses.
- The AA refreshed its brand and introduced a new round AA logo.

### MOTORING SUPPORT

- Our Service Officers, AA Battery Service team and contractors attended more than 472,000 roadside assistance jobs over the year.
- Roadservice attended 88% of our Member calls within 60 minutes and were able to mobilise 91% of those breakdowns.
- We implemented technology-based 'customer access channels of choice' including the AA Roadservice smartphone app and call centre self-service speech recognition.
- Areas of job dispatch and workflow processes were automated, enabling us to improve the ability to inform Members of any delays to attending their breakdown.
- Motoring Services prepared for the changes to the Warrant of Fitness regime that came into play on January 1, 2014.
- To ensure vehicles are safe between annual WoF checks, an





**AA  
Service Officers,  
AA Battery Service  
team and contractors  
attended  
472,000+  
roadside  
assistance jobs**

**SADD  
programmes  
are now  
active in 74%  
of secondary  
schools**

AA Safety Check was introduced free to Members. Non-members can access the service for a small charge.

- Three new AA Auto Centres were opened during the year: in Hornby, central Christchurch and Levin.
- Driver licensing processed 19% more driver licences than the year prior.

## **DRIVER EDUCATION**

- AA Driving School rolled out one free driving lesson for AA Members and children of AA Members.
- The offer was expanded to AA Ignition, providing three free driving lessons and making more students eligible by linking Membership through aunt, uncle or grandparents.
- 'Learn to drive the AA way' was launched on the AA's website, providing information and support for new drivers and their supervisors.

## **ADVOCACY**

- The AA was a key voice in the debate to change the adult drink driving limit.
- As well as supporting lowering the adult limit, the AA pushed for several other measures to reduce crashes by repeat and extreme drunk drivers, including more use of alcohol interlocks and better rehabilitation.

- The AA was engaged with the Government's safer speeds project and, to represent the views of Members, conducted surveys on speeds, risk perceptions and driving behaviour.
- The AA was also part of the Government's expert panel looking at ways to improve cycle safety.
- SADD, which the AA Driving School sponsors, extended its focus beyond drink driving to become Students Against Dangerous Driving. SADD programmes are now active in 74% of secondary schools.
- The AA also helped disadvantaged young learner drivers by partnering with the NZ Transport Agency and Caltex in community driver mentor programmes.
- We increased focus on Auckland transport funding, congestion, public transport and active transport modes and surveyed Members to represent their views to the city's transport authorities.

## **TOURISM**

- AA Traveller ran the 'Good Old Kiwi Holiday' campaign, reminding Members of New Zealand's many and iconic holiday spots.
- New Zealand's Most Loved Beaches campaign, encouraging Facebook fans to vote on a list of about 200 beaches, attracted over 600,000 votes. The winner was Ohope Beach in the Bay of Plenty.

- Nearly three million guides and maps were distributed.
- More than 67,000 accommodation and activities reservations were processed by the AA.

## **INSURANCE AND FINANCE**

- The number of AA car loans increased by 27% on the previous year.
- AA Insurance celebrated another year of record growth.
- Settlement of claims for earthquake damaged homes in Canterbury progressed with more than 80% of customers having had their home repaired, rebuilt or settled with cash.
- The introduction of a claims switchboard team was so well-received by customers that it was extended to all facets of AA Insurance's business.
- AA Insurance was independently recognised for service, culture, brand and position in the insurance industry.
- AA Life was named New Zealand's Most Trusted Life Insurance Brand at the Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands Awards.
- At the end of the 2013/14 financial year, the AA reported a consolidated result of \$18.3 million.

## **MORE INFORMATION**

For a more detailed annual report, go to [aa.co.nz/publications](http://aa.co.nz/publications)

# Summarised Financial Statements

## THE NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$000	2013 \$000
<b>INCOME WAS RECEIVED FROM:</b>		
Revenue	110,287	104,560
Share of profit or loss in joint ventures	9,122	6,771
Other gains/(losses)	8,618	4,196
<b>INCOME FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>128,027</b>	<b>115,527</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE WAS INCURRED BY:</b>		
Employee entitlements	59,838	57,350
Delivery and distribution	23,463	21,298
Plant, office and property overheads	8,384	8,336
Advertising and promotion	3,266	3,578
IT and telecommunications	6,193	6,388
Motor vehicle expenses	3,215	3,259
Goodwill impairment expense	365	2,314
Other expenses	5,496	4,973
<b>EXPENSES FROM CONTINUING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>110,220</b>	<b>107,496</b>
<b>Operating surplus from continuing activities before tax and grants</b>	<b>17,807</b>	<b>8,031</b>
Grant to NZAA Research Foundation	(305)	(209)
Taxation benefit/(expense)	–	(738)
<b>NET PROFIT FOR THE PERIOD ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE ASSOCIATION ACTING IN THE INTERESTS OF MEMBERS</b>	<b>17,502</b>	<b>7,084</b>
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME NET OF TAX:</b>		
Revaluation of properties	545	589
Gain/(loss) arising on translation of foreign joint venture	298	53
Share of other comprehensive income/(loss) of joint ventures	(21)	265
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD, NET OF TAX</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>907</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE PERIOD ATTRIBUTABLE TO THE ASSOCIATION ACTING IN THE INTERESTS OF MEMBERS, NET OF TAX</b>	<b>18,324</b>	<b>7,991</b>

## THE NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$000	2013 \$000
<b>ASSOCIATION FUNDS AT BEGINNING OF PERIOD</b>	<b>117,494</b>	<b>109,503</b>
Net profit for the period attributable to the Association acting in the interests of Members	17,502	7,084
<b>OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME:</b>		
Gain/(loss) on revaluation of properties	545	589
Gain/(loss) arising on translation of foreign joint venture	259	53
Transfer to profit and loss on disposal of foreign operation	39	–
Share of other comprehensive income/(loss) of joint ventures	(21)	265
<b>TOTAL OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>907</b>
<b>TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME, NET OF TAX</b>	<b>18,324</b>	<b>7,991</b>
<b>ASSOCIATION FUNDS AT END OF PERIOD</b>	<b>135,818</b>	<b>117,494</b>

## THE NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$000	2013 \$000
Net cash from operating activities	15,580	11,388
Net cash used in investing activities	(10,310)	(14,476)
Net cash used in financing activities	–	–
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	5,270	(3,088)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of period	25,629	28,717
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS AT THE END OF PERIOD</b>	<b>30,899</b>	<b>25,629</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>30,899</b>	<b>25,629</b>

## NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED NOTES TO THE SUMMARISED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2014

### MEASUREMENT BASE

The financial statements are presented in New Zealand Dollars (NZD).  
The functional currency is New Zealand Dollars (NZD).

### ACCOUNTING POLICIES

There have been no material changes in accounting policies covered by these financial statements.

### EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

The Group received the following dividends post balance date from joint ventures; \$8.0 million on 10 September 2014 being their share of a dividend declared on 31 July 2014 and \$400,000 on 31 October 2014 being their share of a dividend declared on 28 October 2014.

### RECONCILIATION OF OPERATING SURPLUS TO NET CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES

	2014 \$000	2013 \$000
Operating Surplus after taxation	17,502	7,084
Movement in non cash items	(8,331)	(3,243)
Movement in assets and liabilities	3,936	2,277
Movement in financing/investing activities	2,473	5,270
<b>NET CASH INFLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>15,580</b>	<b>11,388</b>

### FULL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AVAILABLE

These summarised financial statements are unaudited and have been extracted from the full financial statements for the Association for the year ended 30 June 2014. The full financial statements have been prepared in accordance with New Zealand Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (NZ GAAP). They comply with New Zealand equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards ("NZ IFRS"), International Financial Reporting Standards ("IFRS"), and other applicable financial reporting standards, as appropriate for public benefit entities, except for NZ IAS 16 whereby the Association has accounted for revaluations on an asset by asset basis rather than by class of asset. NZ IFRS requires all entities to determine whether they are a public benefit entity or a profit oriented entity for reporting purposes. The Board considers that the Association is more closely aligned with the characteristics of a public benefit entity than a profit oriented entity. The full financial statements were issued by the Board, and approved for distribution by the National Council on the 12th of December 2014.

The summarised financial report may not contain sufficient information for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Group but copies of the full financial statements and the unqualified auditors' opinion, dated 12 December 2014, can be obtained by members from: The Secretary, The New Zealand Automobile Association Incorporated, P.O. Box 5, Auckland 1140.

## THE NEW ZEALAND AUTOMOBILE ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED CONSOLIDATED BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 2014

	2014 \$000	2013 \$000
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	30,899	25,629
Other financial assets	50,244	36,315
Sundry receivables and prepaid expenses	10,416	6,357
Dividend receivable	–	500
Related party receivable	60	530
Assets classified as held for sale	–	1,096
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>91,619</b>	<b>70,427</b>
Property, plant and equipment	29,563	32,986
Investments	46,316	44,417
Related party receivable	3,304	3,201
Capitalised lease	50	11
Goodwill	8,232	3,776
Other intangible assets	2,369	1,855
<b>TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>89,834</b>	<b>86,246</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>181,453</b>	<b>156,673</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
CURRENT LIABILITIES	22,687	17,186
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,248	2,227
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>24,935</b>	<b>19,413</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	<b>156,518</b>	<b>137,260</b>
<b>ASSOCIATION FUNDS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS IN ADVANCE</b>		
Accumulated funds	126,908	107,967
Asset revaluation reserve	8,528	9,443
Foreign currency translation reserve	382	84
<b>TOTAL ASSOCIATION FUNDS</b>	<b>135,818</b>	<b>117,494</b>
Subscriptions in advance	20,700	19,766
<b>TOTAL ASSOCIATION FUNDS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS IN ADVANCE</b>	<b>156,518</b>	<b>137,260</b>

For and on behalf of the Board, T G Follows, President,  
M R Winger, Board Member  
12 December 2014



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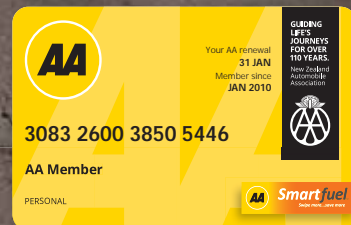


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