

SUMMER 2015



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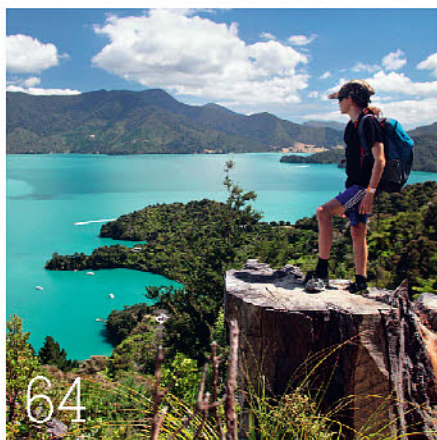
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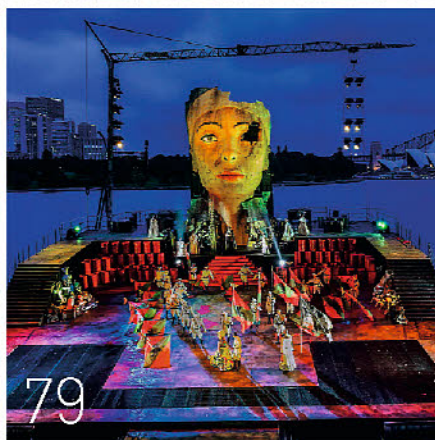
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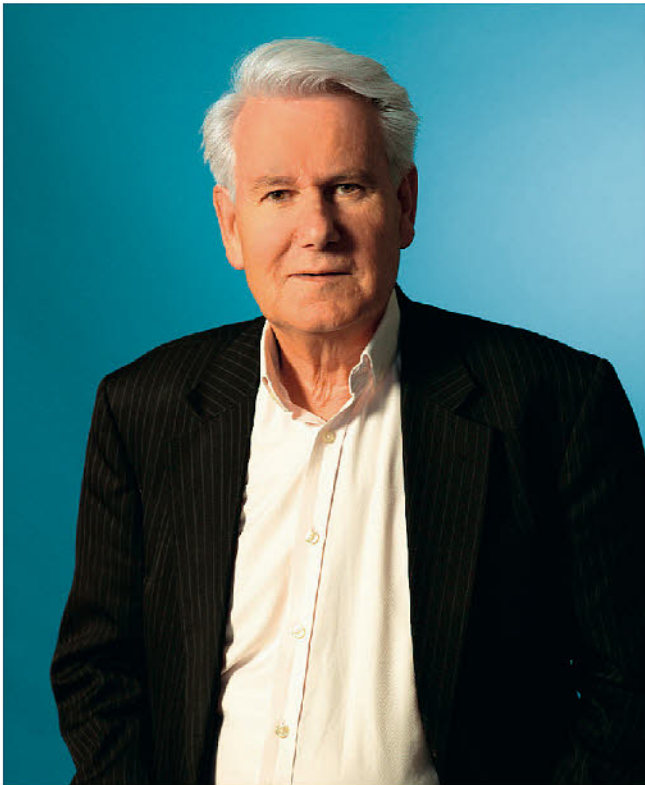
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Making summer safer



LIKE MOST KIWIS I look forward to the summer holidays as a time to enjoy the benefits of our relaxed New Zealand lifestyle. Your Association has been helping New Zealanders enjoy our country for over 100 years and I like to think the AA is as much a part of our Kiwi summer holiday traditions as sausages and sunscreen.

But over the years more and more people from overseas have also been coming to enjoy our country. On the one hand we want that. Tourism is set to become our nation's biggest foreign exchange earner with three million visitors coming to our shores in the past 12 months alone. On the other hand, as more tourists want to drive here, there is concern about the impact on road safety. I think we all agree we need to do everything we can to keep our roads safe.

Now don't get me wrong. Most overseas visitors who drive in New Zealand are not involved in accidents. Most come to our country and have the good time we want them to have. But unfortunately some do have accidents and last year there was a lot of news about tourists, unaware of our rules and conditions, crashing. The actual extent of the problem is reported on page 38.

Last summer's experience, and knowing that visitor numbers are only going to increase, has meant a lot of people have had their thinking caps on over winter working on what we can do to make this summer safer. The Government has been busy with a visiting drivers project in those parts of the country where tourists feature in a disproportionate number of crashes. Work has been done to add 'keep left' arrows, rumble strips, 'no passing' markings and better signage to our most famous and most travelled routes. Tourism organisations and businesses have also been working to prepare guides and information to help visiting drivers understand our road rules and some of our unique driving challenges.

Ideally, though, visitors would understand our driving conditions before they even got here. This is what your Association has been working on and we have come up with a solution which I think is rather clever. We will soon be launching a free web-based driving simulator that uses video of real New Zealand roads and traffic. Visitors will be able to experience our roads and test their skills and knowledge of our road rules before they even leave for the airport. Anyone in the world with an internet connection will be able to practise driving here in the comfort of their own home.

Working with Government, businesses and other organisations has been how your Association has played a role in making summer holidays in New Zealand safer and happier for over 100 years. But let's not forget most of the accidents that happen over summer don't involve tourists, they involve New Zealanders like you and me. We all have a vital role to play in road safety and making sure this summer's holiday season is both fun and safe. 🚗

Brian Gibbons
Chief Executive

HAVE YOUR SAY

Have you ever driven overseas?

➡ Go to aadirections.co.nz to have your say.

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ON THE COVER

Photography: Darryl Torckler's marine photography involves the use of specialised underwater camera housing. The cover image was taken on Great Barrier Island.

hello



Spending summer with water comes naturally to the majority of New Zealanders, I suspect. If it's not camping at the beach, it's fishing, surfing or sailing and, in the height of summer, finding somewhere cool to swim. We celebrate the Kiwi love of water in this issue of *AA Directions* (see p.21). I hope it inspires readers to make the most of summer. We also catch up with how Christchurch is getting on (p.32), and report on various initiatives being taken to address road safety challenges involving overseas drivers (p.38). Read on!

Kathryn

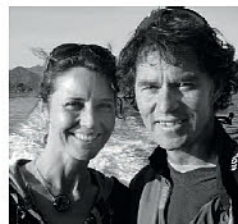
KATHRYN WEBSTER
EDITOR

CONTRIBUTORS



BECK ELEVEN

Beck is a freelance writer and columnist based in Christchurch, specialising mainly in human interest stories. She owned her first house for a whole four months before losing it in the earthquakes. However, that administrative mess is behind her and she now lives happily in a character home where she sits on the veranda and plots how to make money from her cat, PussPuss. Last year she was a finalist for Canon Feature Writer of the Year.



FIONA TERRY AND TIM CUFF

Writer Fiona and photographer Tim have produced travel features together for over 20 years. Along with their two children, Jasmine and Charlie, they've explored the wonders of New Zealand's varied and enticing landscape. Before setting off, the Nelson-based duo had wondered if hiking the Queen Charlotte Track would be too challenging for the kids, but the four-day adventure proved a perfect and memorable way to explore the Marlborough Sounds.



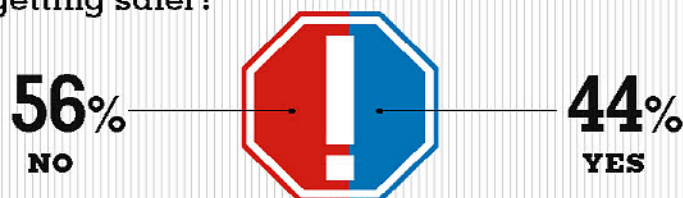
DARRYL TORCKLER

Darryl is mostly known for his underwater photography, but he prefers to think of himself as an explorer with a camera. His childhood fascination with sea creatures and teenage obsession with snorkelling developed into a career in underwater photography. Over the years Darryl has learnt how to approach sea animals, the best lighting and sea conditions for photography, and developed his own range of underwater camera housings, including the custom-built housing used for our beautiful cover shot.

OPINION POLL

In the Winter 2015 issue of *AA Directions* we asked Members:

Do you think New Zealand roads are getting safer?



This issue's poll question is:
Have you ever driven overseas?
Go to aadirections.co.nz to have your say.

UNFAIR ON RIDERS

While I agree that a motorcycle rider, if involved in a serious accident, will have a substantial claim on ACC, I feel the ACC levy on motorcycles is unfair.

I ride a 1100 cc bike and pay \$530 a year for registration, \$400 of which is for ACC. A rider's history should be taken into consideration; also the fact I have undertaken two weeks of advanced rider training should have some bearing on the levy charged.

Nothing is taken into account for years of experience or any advanced training.

GRAEME ROSS - MANGERE BRIDGE

SEEING WELL

There is an assumption that because a driver has passed the test to obtain a licence, they can actually read the instruments on a car's display panel. The tests show the ability to see in the distance and peripherally, but does not test their ability to read the instruments. There must be a percentage of drivers who just drive by the feeling of speed, together with the flow of traffic.

In addition, the use of Polaroid glasses can block the light to see some instruments.

Perhaps the speed of vehicles should be displayed on windscreens, in front of drivers' eyes.

SELWYN STANTON - WHANGAPARADA

SOUTHERN ROADS

Having driven in Europe I have to say the speed limit in New Zealand should never go over 100 km/h.

Down here in the Main Land I cannot think of any road that would be safe with a limit over 100 km/h. Visitors to Dunedin will be puzzled about State Highway One from Blueskin Bay over the top to Dunedin being called that, especially if they are used to real motorways.

Thank you for all the services you provide so efficiently; I am glad to be a Member.

CLIVE BLUNDEN - DUNEDIN

KEEPING LEFT

Every day I follow vehicles which gravitate toward the centre of the road's white line, then swerve back to the middle of the carriageway. We were taught, in the UK, to keep left unless overtaking. I certainly follow that defensive driving rule because of the large number of middle-of-the-road drivers coming the other way!

The reason? The state of many roads with narrow edges and large ditch drop-offs means that, subconsciously, drivers veer away from perceived danger, into greater danger.

Thank you for your excellent magazine and for advocating on behalf of New Zealand motorists.

JOHN AND EVE ISSOTT - HELENSVILLE

REAL DANGER

Through observation during my 30 years in New Zealand, I can only conclude that it is the many drivers who cannot, or will not, drive to the conditions who are the real danger.

Authorities spend millions of dollars preventing idiots from overtaking on double yellow lines, cutting blind corners, travelling at speeds that compromise safe handling, overtaking when there just isn't a safe opportunity, racing to beat traffic lights, ignoring or not understanding the two-second rule, showing no courtesy, failing to signal intentions early enough, or not at all, to name a few bad practices.

Those millions of dollars would be better spent on more rigorous training and re-examining for the benefit of all of us safer drivers.

GEOFF SCRASE - LOWER HUTT

VISITING DRIVERS

For visitors from some other countries it must be very confusing trying to understand our language, when English has so many words where spelling, pronunciation and meaning are inconsistent.

How can they understand that for driving in New Zealand, left is right and right is wrong?

It annoys me every time I watch a TV ad for certain brands of cars to see them speeding along on the right (wrong) side of the road. If some overseas visitors see these adverts here, they may assume that is what you do in New Zealand.

Also, I believe rental car companies should either insist on visitors having a driving test before using a rental car, or be made to watch a short video and be given a leaflet showing vehicles on the left side of the road.

DOREEN HOLDING - DUNEDIN

See p.38 for our article on measures being taken to address concerns with overseas drivers.

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



Q&A

Curators of the At the Beach exhibition **Doris de Pont** and **Dianne Ludwig** discuss the history of Kiwi beachwear and explain the practicality of woollen bathers.

What can visitors expect from the exhibition?

DIANNE: To be wowed by fabulous beach fashions from Edwardian bathing costumes with bloomers through to this season's latest looks. It shows how and why swimwear shrank, the influence of fashion, fabrics and tanning on our beachwear and stories about our love of the beach. With more than 120 garments, this is the New Zealand Fashion Museum's largest exhibition.

Who are some of our most iconic beachwear designers?

DIANNE: Without a doubt Expozay which had huge international success in the 1980s and Moontide which continues to be successful. A local brand to watch is Lonely which features in the exhibition. Its swimwear combines the fit and features of lingerie and has caught the eye of *American Vogue*. It has an

impressive international celebrity client base and our own Kiwi musician, Lorde, has been spotted in the label.

DORIS: We always liked to look as fashionable as the rest of the world and took our lead from Hollywood film and California beach culture. It wasn't until the 1960s that we started doing our own thing; designing fabric prints and swimwear for the local market.

How much does the Kiwi lifestyle affect New Zealand-designed swimwear?

DORIS: Kiwis have a unique relationship with the beach. With 15,000km of coastline we are never far from it. Unlike our European counterparts who might go to the Mediterranean for a week or two in the summer, we can go all year round and swim, boogie board, play cricket, beachcomb and fish. We are active at

the beach and our swimwear design reflects our lifestyle. We want a suit that is not only gorgeous but practical.

What's your favourite era of beachwear?

DORIS: I love today's swimwear. No matter what your age, activity or body shape there are beautiful suits that make you look and feel good.

DIANNE: I love all eras but if I had to choose, it would be the mid-70s. Bikinis were tiny and one-pieces were lean, simple with ultra-thin straps. The stripped-back minimalistic style represents what the beach means to me.

Have you experimented with trends?

DORIS: I've made my own swimsuits, from the 1970s when it took only four triangles of fabric through to my time as a fashion designer with the DNA label. We often included swimwear pieces in our summer collections.

DIANNE: For me there's a certain anonymity that goes with being on holiday so I take more fashion risks at the beach. From 1970s string knitted bikinis and the high-cut thigh and plunging necklines of the 80s »

PHOTOGRAPHY: PHILLIP SIMPSON

» through to the sporty and retro boy-leg styles of the 90s; I've worn it all. More recently, I've been unable to resist the light-weight mini springsuits which merge wetsuits with swimwear.

What was the reasoning behind woollen bathers? They can't have been practical...

DORIS: It was an enormous improvement on the heavy cotton bathing costumes made up of a sailor-style shirt and bloomers with an overskirt for modesty. It weighed as much as a bucket of sand when wet. While initially the woollen suits were loose-fitted and became baggy when wet, the introduction of rib knitting allowed them to be more fitted and fashionable.

What's the most controversial era of Kiwi beachwear?

DIANNE: The shrinking of the swimsuit has been the longest running controversy. First it was voluminous suits and then figure-hugging woollen suits came in in the 1920s. Legs and backs went on show in the 1930s and it took until the 1960s before navels were exposed. Then there was no turning back. By the 1970s it was pretty much all on show with the skimpiest of bikinis.

What future swimwear trends are in the pipeline?

DIANNE: An interesting trend is the merging of swimwear, sportswear and lingerie. Vogue has termed it 'Swimintimates.' Rather than only wearing an item of swimwear at the beach, it can form part lingerie and sportswear. If the trend takes off we may see more New Zealand and international designers extending their ranges into swimwear which would be exciting.

■ At the Beach: Celebrating 100 years of Summer Fashion in New Zealand is an exhibition by the New Zealand Fashion Museum and hosted by the New Zealand Maritime Museum. It runs until February 8, 2016 at the Maritime Museum on Auckland's Viaduct Harbour. See maritimemuseum.co.nz for more.



Christchurch celebrates spring each year with the New Zealand Cup and Show Week, presenting a mix of racing carnival, food and wine events, music and theatre, and the family-friendly A&P show. The festival kicks off on Saturday, November 7 at the Riccarton Park Racecourse; the following few days will be a riot of fashion, creativity, sport and socialising.

New this year is Le Noir, a circus theatre extravaganza at Isaac Theatre Royal and a golf tournament being held at Pegasus Golf and Sports Club and Clearwater Golf Club. Two top New Zealand bands are booked to entertain during the week: Salmonella Dub at Addington Racecourse on November 10, during NZ Trotting Cup Day, and The Feelers at the Canterbury A&P Show, on November 13.

■ For more details and tickets, see nzcupandshow.co.nz

Kiwi Tractors: The humble icon

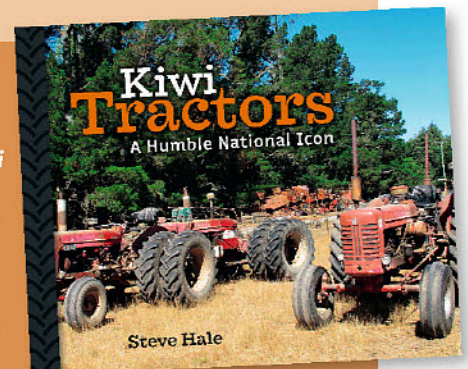
From lifestyle blocks to vineyards, high country stations to boat ramps, the tractor is a much-used, much-loved and instantly recognisable feature on the New Zealand landscape.

Kiwi Tractors A Humble National Icon by Steve Hale tells the stories of people and their machines, from couples who had their wedding photos taken on the bucket of a John Deere to blokes who hid new purchases down the back of their farms, away from disapproving wives.

Whether the tractors have been meticulously restored or are well-worn and weather-beaten, every owner is proud of their iconic piece of New Zealand machinery.

WIN!

AA Directions has five copies of *Kiwi Tractors* (Bateman, RRP \$39.99) to give away. To enter, send your name and address to: *Kiwi Tractors*, AA Directions, PO Box 5, Auckland 1140 or enter online at aadirections.co.nz by November 30, 2015.



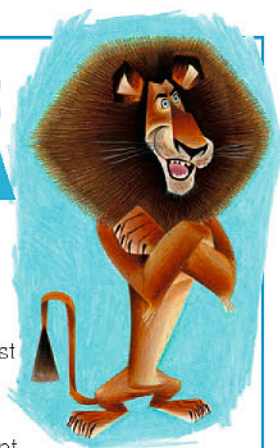
Toon in at TE PAPA

Who doesn't love Shrek? The cantankerous ogre was the first big cartoon hit for Dreamworks Animation, but he wasn't their first main character. That honour goes to Woody Allen's neurotic Z, a worker ant from their excellent debut feature *Antz* back in 1998.

Dreamworks Animation: The Exhibition promises to be full of interesting tidbits and trivia like this as it delves behind the scenes of the studio's 31 films, which include modern favourites like *Kung Fu Panda*, *Madagascar* and *The Croods*.

The exhibition, which covers the studio's entire 20-year history, will show the secrets of how they bring their beloved characters to life, showing what's involved in going from concept sketch to the cinema screen.

➤ The exhibition runs exclusively at Te Papa in Wellington from December 12, 2015 to March 28, 2016.



FISH TALES

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WIN!

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- Free maps and guides.
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- 10% discount on AA Travel Insurance.
- Free motoring and technical advice.
- Up to 40% off movie tickets from EVENT and Rialto cinemas when you book online at aa.co.nz/eventcinemas

- 20% off Teleflora flowers.

Look for the AA Member Benefit logo to see where you can access more Member-only discounts. See aa.co.nz/benefits for details.



Christchurch classic

Big puddles, bollards, bends and bumps: all conspire to make life difficult for Christchurch car owners post-earthquake and even more so for those with classic cars. But neither are owners of special cars inclined to keep their cars hidden in garages.

The Twin Rivers Motoring Extravaganza, run by Avonhead Rotary, aids and encourages with an event late summer, providing classic car owners the opportunity to show off their machines.

This year's event was a static one rather than a road rally, but featured 325 cars including three

Lamborghinis, several micro-cars, various MX-5s, an old Bradford, huge 'yank tanks', Holdens, highly modified street hot rods, and cars fastidiously restored to every nut and rubber: and everything in between.

Around 1500 members of the public turned up to ogle and photograph entries before the judge delivered his opinion as to Best of British, Best of the US, Best of Europe, best of Japan and best of show.

Next year's event, at the Canterbury A&P Showground on March 20, will reinstate the rally element to the day.

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works of A. A. Milne and E. H. Shepherd
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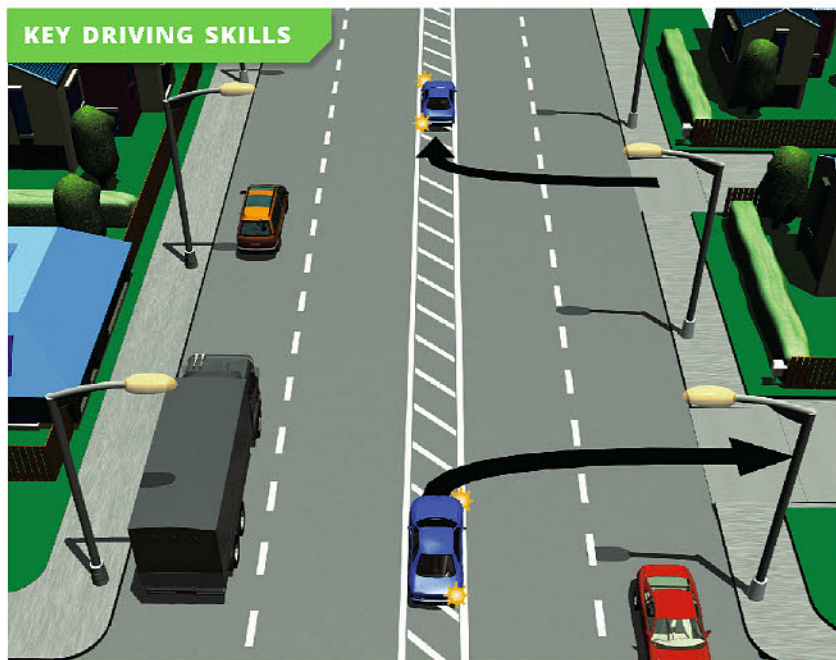
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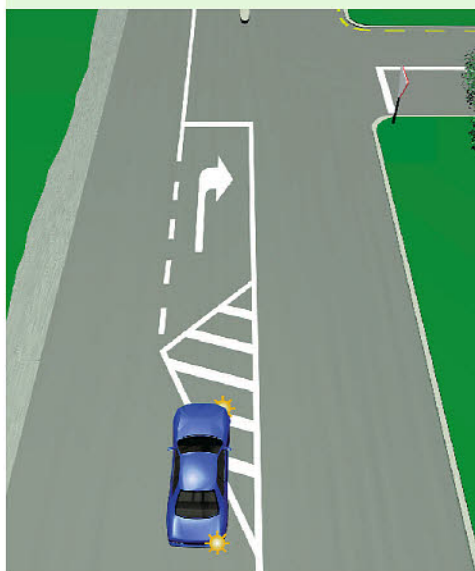
How to use a flush median

A flush median is a strip in the centre of the road marked with white diagonal lines. You may only drive onto a flush median to turn right, or to wait for a gap in traffic after turning right onto the road from a side road or driveway (see illustration above).

For vehicles wanting to turn right, a flush median provides a place to get out of the traffic flow and wait until it is safe to cross oncoming traffic (see above).

For vehicles wanting to enter a busy road from the right, a flush median means drivers need only focus on finding a gap in the traffic coming from their right, then have a safe refuge to wait until they can join the traffic flow from the other direction.

Some roads have a triangular painted section with diagonal lines inside it, leading up to a bay with a right-turn arrow (see below). Like a flush median, you are allowed to drive over it if you are turning right.



What if there is no flush median?

On narrow roads or roads with fast-moving traffic it may not be safe to stop in the middle of the road to turn right. You might hold up following traffic, or worse, risk them not realising you are stopping to turn. Instead, the road code recommends pulling over to the left-hand side of the road until it is safe to turn right.

➡ www.nzta.govt.nz/roadcode

RULES FOR THE BEACH

Beaches are legal roads, so all road rules apply. This includes speed limits, licensing of drivers, vehicle registrations and warrants of fitness, alcohol and drug use, seatbelts, helmets and driving behaviour. To ensure your safety and that of other beach users, and to minimise your environmental impact:

- Take safety equipment, including a spade and a rope.
- Use established vehicle access routes on to the beach.
- Stick to the hard part of the beach below the high tide line.
- Check tide times before you go out.
- Always slow down when there are people around; be aware that they may not hear you approach.
- Always drive with headlights on.
- Park away from traffic areas and at an angle to the water so you can be seen by other drivers.
- Avoid making sharp turns at speed – front wheels can dig into the sand and cause your vehicle to flip.
- Look out for partially submerged objects; also watch for dogs, horses and fishing lines.
- Avoid driving close to marine mammals such as seals.
- Stay off the dunes – fragile dune systems are damaged by vehicle use. Dune planting is used to bind the sand and reduce erosion but vehicles, including bikes, undo this work.
- Be aware of shorebirds nesting at high tide.
- Respect archaeological sites; many beaches carry evidence of centuries-old Māori occupation.
- Some beaches, including Auckland's Muriwai and Karioitahi beaches, require permits to drive on.



NZ'S NEWEST HIGHWAY

Drivers to the Bay of Plenty can now travel on New Zealand's newest stretch of world-class highway.

The Tauranga Eastern Link (TEL) opened in August and is 21km of modern, multi-lane, divided highway between Tauranga and Paengaroa. It includes seven bridges, the country's biggest roundabout and a 6.8km cycleway.

The new road makes travel safer, replacing a segment of SH2 that had the fourth highest collective crash risk in New Zealand.

It is a toll road (the third in the country) with charges of \$2.00 for cars, motorcycles and light commercial vehicles, while heavy vehicles over 3.5 tonnes are charged \$5.00. Cameras on the road recognise vehicles' licence plates and charge the toll which drivers must pay within five days. Motorists can set up an account or pay tolls electronically via nzta.govt.nz or pay at some BP and Caltex service stations.

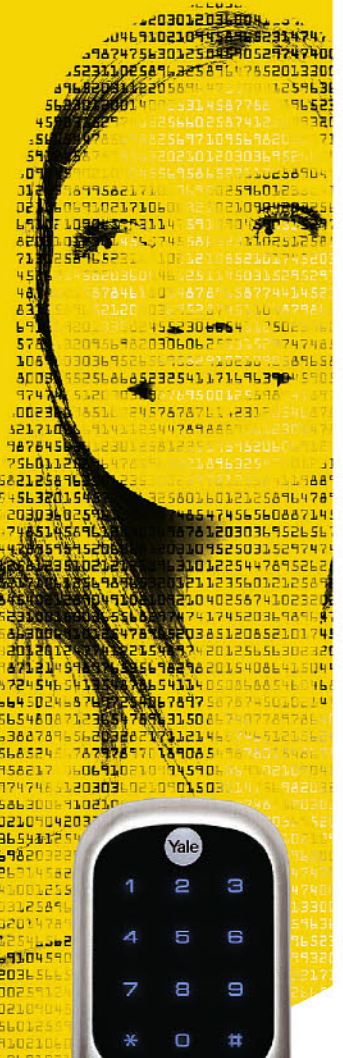
A free alternative route remains via the Te Puke Highway, which was SH2 until the TEL opened.

The new highway is said to reduce travel times by 12 minutes from the old route.

The \$455million project was the second of the Government's Roads of National Significance to be completed and opened ahead of schedule after four and a half years of construction.

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ARTS IN AUCKLAND

Theatre, music, cabaret, dance and the visual arts get a special focus during the Auckland Arts Festival in March. For 18 days, in dozens of venues across the city, more than 100 shows, exhibitions and performances – both local and international – will entertain arts fans.

Highlights include The James Plays, a theatrical event presented for the first time in New Zealand by three major UK theatres; American singer-songwriter John Grant; and Nixon in China, an opera telling the story of the Richard Nixon meeting Mao Zedong, co-produced by the Auckland Philharmonia Orchestra and NZ Opera.

➡ Auckland Arts Festival is from March 2–20, 2016.

Top acts to top towns

For the past 30 years, Arts on Tour NZ has been taking music and theatre to small, out-of-the-way places around the country. Bands, solo musicians, poets, theatre troupes, string quartets and trios have played in small town halls, galleries, cafés and theatres to audiences of 35 (full house in Okarito) to over 100 in Kerikeri and Hokitika.

General Manager Steve Thomas, a performance poet himself, was inspired to set up the scheme to introduce city-based performers to a wider audience and provide a chance for those living outside the main centres to experience high-calibre arts.

“Artists enjoy honing their acts on a different stage every night in front of appreciative audiences and audiences enjoy top quality performances without needing to drive to the city.”

Over early summer Miho's Jazz Orchestra (pictured right) will tour, featuring happy groovy music from flute player Miho with her pocket-sized jazz orchestra. They play Waimamaku in Northland on October 29 and finish in Balcairn, in Canterbury, a month later – via 23 other communities.

➡ See aotnz.co.nz for details



Behind the wheel with Liam McEwan

Bunny-hops, tricky hill starts and gear changes are daunting obstacles for anyone learning to drive a manual vehicle. But 19-year-old Liam McEwan's journey of getting behind the wheel with assistance from AA Driving School is being broadcast to an audience of thousands.

Liam is a guest presenter on TV2's The 4.30 Show; his driving lessons will air on the programme every Wednesday until November 11.

The Auckland resident boasts more than 200,000 followers on social networking site Twitter and wants to help teenagers and young adults understand the importance of having a driver's licence and that it shouldn't be a scary process.

"I was put off getting my licence for so long. I kept thinking 'what if I fail?'" he says.

"But driving with the AA has given me confidence and my instructor Bruce has been so good at guiding me. He's made me feel really safe."

Liam's no stranger to the spotlight. After leaving high school to pursue a career in radio, he's since taken on the role of celebrity correspondent for US magazines *J-14*, *Twist* and *M*.

It's taken him to exciting places

including Los Angeles and Las Vegas where he's interviewed celebrities like Miley Cyrus and Britney Spears, but when it comes to getting around in his hometown, Liam's parents have been his means of transport.

AA Chief Driving Instructor Bruce Fox says Liam displays good spatial awareness when driving and has "aced hill starts."

Liam passed his learner licence in July and can sit his Restricted licence in January. He'll receive three AA driving lessons and will complete a Defensive Driving

Course which means he can receive his full licence six months sooner.

He hopes to one day purchase a smart car and is looking forward to being able to catch up with his mates whenever he can.

"At the end of the road it will give me so much freedom," Liam says.

See aa.co.nz/driving-lessons for more information.



AA Motoring

Driving School

FUNDING RETIREMENT CAN BE TOUGH

Over 80% of New Zealanders aged 65+ own their own home, most of them mortgage-free. However, their median income is just \$20,200, with many depending entirely or largely on New Zealand Superannuation.

While this can be enough to get by, for many it doesn't cover unexpected expenses like house maintenance, car repairs, or taking a trip to visit family. And it certainly doesn't allow for any luxuries.

Kiwis' expectations of retirement have changed over the years. We're living longer, healthier lives and we're looking for an active, but independent retirement.

Attitudes to inter-generational wealth have also taken a new course. These days children are likely to be close to retirement themselves by the time they'd receive any inheritance, meaning leaving a legacy is becoming less relevant. Looking after yourself first can make more sense – and many children would rather see their parents, who have worked hard all their lives, enjoying their retirement rather than struggling to get by.

Home equity release can be a viable option to help bridge this gap between expectation and income in retirement. It's a category that has evolved considerably over recent years, largely in response to New Zealand's ageing population that has directed much of its savings into the family home.

A Home Equity Loan is similar to a regular mortgage, but it's specifically designed for retirees and you don't need to make

regular repayments. You continue to own and live in your home as long as you wish, and you never owe more than your house is worth. That is guaranteed.

Heartland Bank's National Retail Manager, Andrew Ford, says home improvements or repairs are a common use of Heartland's Home Equity Loans, allowing retirees to remain living in their homes more comfortably.

"They can also add to the home's value. Some use the funds to upgrade their car to something more reliable. Others for travel, often to see family overseas before long-distance journeys become too difficult."

The money released can in many cases be quite small, but it can really improve your day-to-day living experience. While many scrape by on government super, council rates, insurance bills and any unexpected expenses can create significant stress.

Whether it's having a home that's warm and secure, greater and safer mobility with an upgraded car, or the memories and satisfaction that come from visiting family, a Home Equity Loan can transform your life.

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New Zealand summer is all about enjoying the water: swimming in the surf, snorkelling in the shallows, fishing, diving, sailing, kayaking, camping beside a river or lake. We celebrate the simple pleasure of being with water...

Water access only

Camping on a remote New Zealand beach takes on a whole new meaning when getting to that beach requires a boat

Several Department of Conservation (DOC) campsites around the country can only be reached by water. It takes extra organising to holiday at these spots, but the rewards are extra good.

DOC ranger David Beamish's favourite is Motuihe Island Te Motu-a-Ihenga.

"It takes 45 minutes by ferry from Auckland – a bit longer if you kayak – and it's one of the most beautiful camping spots in the Hauraki Gulf," he says. "Crystal clear water, sandy beaches and stunning outlooks wherever you turn, Motuihe is a camper's dream and all for just six bucks a night!"

With a history that includes early Maori settlement, a quarantine station built in 1873, a WWII internment camp and a WWII naval training base, there's much to explore. There are walks of varying lengths and an abundance of birdlife, including kiwi.

"Motuihe's pest-free island status

enables native flora and fauna to flourish," David says. "Campers are asked to do their bit: check your gear for pests, take your rubbish away and of course, no fires or dogs are permitted."

The campsite has tap water which must be boiled or treated, and toilets. Access is by private boat, (there's good anchorage adjacent to the campsite), water taxi, ferry or kayak; it's a two and a half hour trip from the city for experienced kayakers.

Other beauties:

Urupukapuka Bay, Urupukapuka Island, Northland

The largest of three campsites on pest-free Urupukapuka Island, this is a fantastic place to snorkel, fish, kayak, swim and relax.

Home Bay, Motutapu Island, Hauraki Gulf

Beachside camping, on an island

shared with precious takahe and WWII military remains, just 30 minutes from Auckland.

Hot Water Beach, Lake Tarawera, Bay of Plenty

This popular lakeside campsite (also accessible by foot) offers walks, water sports and a soak in natural hot springs.

Poukaria, Whanganui Journey

This scenic campsite is only accessible by river. Keep an ear open for brown kiwi at night.

Matiu/Somes Island, Wellington

Set in the heart of Wellington Harbour, Matiu/Somes Island offers the capital's residents a peaceful, local getaway in an historic setting.

Observation Beach, Abel Tasman National Park

An idyllic little campsite set beside the golden sands of Observation Beach in the Abel Tasman.



Blumine Island/Oruawairua, Marlborough Sounds

Oruawairua is a sanctuary for an incredible array of our rare species, including mohua and rowi kiwi. Take a walk to the WWII ruins hidden deep in regenerating bush.

Hall Arm, Doubtful Sound, Fiordland

This beautifully isolated campsite is nestled away in the first arm of Doubtful Sound. Hall Arm provides those adventurous enough to find themselves

there a taste of pre-human New Zealand.

Note: bookings are essential for many of these campsites especially over the busy summer season.

Check before you go!

Almost all of the islands listed are now pest-free havens for native wildlife. Please do your bit. Before you leave the mainland check all your gear for stowaway pests (mice, argentine ants and rats in particular).

Honouring our seafarers

Time spent in a maritime museum reveals how challenging and tough the ocean can be

I am no sailor. The only boat I own gathers dust on a bookcase. Yet I am fascinated by maritime museums. Auckland's Voyager New Zealand Maritime Museum has become like an old friend to be called upon whenever I visit the City of Sails.

Established 22 years ago on a former shipping wharf, Voyager takes me on a journey through Polynesian voyaging, European discovery and migration, to coastal shipping of a century ago. I ponder the dreamers, innovators and pioneers of the ocean including Sir Peter Blake, the boy who messed about in boats.

Over several visits, favourite items draw me back. They begin with rigged Polynesian craft and their association with arriving in New Zealand, the last habitable islands on the planet.

I am awed by the immigration galleries depicting the adventurous spirits that saw New Zealand as a place for discovery or offering a better lifestyle. Many boarded creaking departing ships with little more than their courage, hopes and dreams.

Immigration is highlighted further on by displays of fine model ships that were once regular visitors: *Dominion Monarch*, *Rangitata*, *Awatea* and others. Reproductions of once famous shipping line posters remind of a time when as a young New Zealander I dreamed of escape.

The coastal trading cutter, *Rewa*, is highly anticipated



when I know

it is just a few steps further on.

This pleasing-on-the-eye craft with sun-faded, gaff-rigged sails was built on a Coromandel beach during the 1880s. Such vessels offered the only transportation between Auckland and nearby farming regions, their topography as rugged as they were isolated. *Rewa's* decks would have been piled high with wool clips and produce in one direction and machinery and supplies in another.

Maritime art work is impressive. Not to be passed by is the dramatic representation by R B Beechy of *HMS Orpheus* wrecked on Manakau Bar in 1863. Ferocious waves are pounding the ship apart; 193 lives were lost in the worst shipwreck in New Zealand waters.

A happier work is the Roger Morris *Dominion Monarch* on the Waitemata. The sun is shining and >>

FEATURE

people wave from a healing yacht.

An exhibit discovered on my most recent visit was the Greyhound Trophy awarded to the Union Company Awatea for the fastest Tasman crossing in 1937. Awatea was sunk by German bombers in 1942 while on troop ship duties in Europe.

The museum boasts its working marina from which visitors can sail aboard replica historic scows. A gem is the diminutive steam launch *Puke*, built during the 1880s, which rides the swells close to the marina. I recall boarding *Puke* years ago, wondering if its tall funnel made her top heavy. We cruised beneath the towering bows and sterns of nearby ships.

Yachting on the Waitemata is an integral component of the Blue Water Black Magic gallery, a tribute to key players in New Zealand's yachting history culminating in skipper Sir Peter Blake and his Team New Zealand winning the America's Cup at San Diego in 1995.

I pause on a gantry, my gaze across the deck of NZL 32, better known as *Black Magic*, and recall the frenzied sailors who occupied it and celebrated two decades ago. Designed by New Zealander Laurie Davidson, NZL 32 won five straight races to win the world's oldest sporting trophy at San Diego. **ROY SINCLAIR**

also see

Torpedo Bay Navy Museum, Devonport, Auckland

The official museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy has changing exhibitions, children's activities, guided tours and a café.

Bluff Maritime Museum

A collection of boats, models and photographs telling the story of Bluff and Foulweather Strait's maritime history.

Edwin Fox Maritime Centre, Picton

This museum, on the town's foreshore, focuses on the history of one of the world's oldest ships.

Dargaville Museum

Not purely a maritime museum but with plenty of sea-based history, including shipwreck relics and a 16m pre-European waka.

Wellington Museum

Located on Queens Wharf, exhibits include a memorial to the *Wahine* ferry disaster.

Port Chalmers Museum, Otago

This impressive collection reflects the port town's history and industries, with memorabilia, models and artefacts from the sail and steam eras.

H

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Ocean ties

Setting sail and travelling the world in a yacht for five years isn't an easy feat. **Monica Tischler** spoke to a Kiwi family who made it their mission

Pirates of the Red Sea, dangerous weapons, gale force winds and nasty illnesses are among threats sailors Deb and Simon Meech faced when circumnavigating the globe.

Along with their young children, Sam and Molly, then six and four years old, and with navigational courses under their belts, the couple made the decision to leave the comforts of land and set sail in their yacht, *Tradition*.

They now call Whangaparaoa home but from 1997 to 2002, life consisted of travelling from one exotic location to the next.

It was incredibly rewarding, Deb remembers, and gave her and Simon a close bond with the children, now 24 and 22 years old.

But it did come with challenges.

"There was the stress of the Red Sea, concerns about pirates and lots of guns around," she recalls. "We were worried about the safety of the kids. We had one birthday party in Egypt in the middle of nowhere. The army troops stationed there came on to the boat to join in and we had to give them a Mars bar to go away."

"But the children had great parties where all the boat families came and we played games, listened to music together and shared all the food we had."

Throughout their time on water, the family travelled to the Pacific Islands and across the Indian Ocean from Australia to Indonesia. They sailed the Red Sea to Europe and back across the Atlantic Ocean through the Panama Canal.

Deb and Simon took turns with three-hour watches day and night. When Simon contracted dengue fever in Trinidad, Deb and the children sailed while he slept.

Sam and Molly's ocean ties still run strong. After returning to New Zealand, they both took up sailing as a sport and are now professionals, travelling across the world to compete.

Sam races in the laser class, a solo category, while Molly paired up with Alex Maloney in 2011 in a women's double-handed skiff, or 49erFX.

Winning the first women's 49erFX regatta in Melbourne in 2012 and being ranked number one in the world in 2013 are career highlights for Molly.

Sam lists winning the ISAF Youth Worlds in 2009 as his proudest moment on the water and says it's nice having a sister who shares the sport.

"It was fantastic until Molly started getting better results than me! It's always nice to have family close,

especially when we are away from home," he says.

He treasures memories on the water as a youngster, in particular sailing through the French canals.

"It probably wasn't my parent's favourite memory as taking the mast down and navigating the shallow waters would've been stressful."

Molly says life on the water as a child enabled her to see the world in a way most people would never experience.

"When we were doing an ocean crossing we would try and get as much correspondence school work done as possible so that when we finally got to land we could explore," she says. "I remember swimming, snorkelling and a lot of walking. It was great to grow up with such a tight family."

The siblings are both training hard to place in the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro and Molly hopes to complete her degree in environmental studies while Sam finished a business degree in 2013.

Deb and Simon sold *Tradition* upon returning to New Zealand and have purchased a new boat which they both hope to sail off in soon.

The ocean is calling once again.

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Looking for the lake

Liz Light takes a family excursion to a lake with an island with a lake. It's a big mission involving long walks, row boats, special access and picnic baskets, but it's a memorable day

Deep in Tuhoe territory there is a lake, in that lake there is an island and on the island there is another lake. This geographical phenomena has the allure of legends and that it is in the middle of Te Urewera National Park, and not easy to get too, adds to its appeal.

Te Urewera National Park is rugged, remote and enormous (2,127 square kilometres); it's the largest tract of native bush in the North Island.

Lake Waikaremoana is the national park's biggest and better-known lake. Highway 38 winds around its northern edges, there are many camping spots and a general store at Aniwhaniwa. The mystical lake, Waikareiti, the one with the island and the lake on the island, is two kilometres from, and 300 metres higher than Waikaremoana, its famous big sister. And the walk to it, from the road, is an up-hill hour.

Early in the morning, when it's still chilly, we – a family group of five – puff up the path. The forest is breathing too; exhaling mist that changes shape. This rain forest is dominated by red and silver beech trees with giant rimu thrusting their crowns through the canopy. Fern

fronds have drips on their points and skeins of pale hanging moss are woven with diamond drops.

Lake Waikareiti is fully surrounded by pure native forest. Its silver-blue fingers penetrate valleys and islands protrude from its body. This lake's beauty is not overt, it's secretive and mysterious.

We have already arranged to hire a DOC dinghy at the Aniwhaniwa Visitor Centre, and have picked up the life jackets and the key needed to access the oars. The aluminium dinghies are a decent size and have two pairs of rowlock holes, so Sam and Rod can row in unison, galleon-style.

Brax, 18 months old, toddling and cute in his little blue life jacket is wide-eyed-delighted as the men move the dinghy across the rippling water of Waikareiti. Waikareiti means small rippling water, in deference to Waikaremoana, 'sea of rippling water' and the lake on Rahui Island, to which we are heading at an impressive speed, is called Tamaiti, child.

It's a little child; bigger than a pond but only just a lake. It's totally in shade, fully surrounded and overhung by forest and it's spooky.

We don't linger long. Back on the sparkling mother-lake our gallant rowers up the pace and point the nose of the dinghy south west to a sandy beach basking in the sun.

The water is as pure as all New Zealand's water should be. There are no introduced weeds, algae or other aquatic plants and it's so clear that we can see dark patterns of decaying leaves on the bottom many metres below. There are introduced trout, brown and rainbow, and in the distance a father and son, in another DOC dinghy, row sedately and fly-fish.

Picnics have never been lovelier than this. The sun has banished the morning chill, the beach is warm and windless, a smoothly weathered log is seat height and Brax finds a small stream joining the bay and is soon gleefully getting wet and dirty.

We grown-ups make sandwiches, doze, swim and bask in the pristine beauty of this place. The lake on the island in the lake is the hook that pulled us here. But, as with most dreams and destinations, it's the journey and what happens along the way that has the tangible, memorable magic.





Into the void

He's a world champion at holding his breath. William Trubridge talks to **Monica Tischler** about the joys and challenges of freediving

In a single breath, William Trubridge enters a world where external worries and pressures of everyday life are washed away.

Beneath the water's surface is where the Kiwi freediver finds peace and tranquillity and learns the true limits of his body.

"The sensation of freediving and what it has to offer is unique. It teaches me so many lessons and qualities about myself," he says.

"You need patience and discipline and to be able to push yourself to overcome that suffocating feeling of wanting to breathe. You need to crack the whip on your own back.

"But it's a beautiful way of integrating in the underwater world and with all its creatures."

Freediving is when divers hold their breath under water,

submerging as deep as possible without breathing apparatus.

William, 35, is a world champion having set many records; in 2010 in constant weight without fins he submerged 101 metres down Dean's Blue Hole, in his current hometown, the Bahamas. A year later he set another world record for a free immersion dive, pulling down on a line, to 121 metres down the same blue hole.

A deep connection with water runs strong in William's family. When he was 18 months old his parents sold the family home in the United Kingdom and sailed to New Zealand through the Caribbean and across the Pacific Ocean. Over eight years the boat, *Hornpipe*, was home. He was home-schooled in the mornings; afternoons were spent diving with his brother to find rare

shells, snorkelling, spear fishing with his father and exploring exotic jungles.

In 2003 William tried freediving after learning it was a sport. He was "immediately hooked," he says. "Underwater you're weightless; there's no gravity. There are few sounds, smells and tastes. You're stripped of external stimuli and it's easier to listen to your thoughts."

William's training regime is made up of dives in Dean's Blue Hole, lengths in a pool with limited breathing and yoga to enhance lung volume.

He admits physical and mental training come hand in hand.

"The worst moment is just before the dive starts, that's when the doubting voices are heard the loudest" he says. "But the water helps wash them away."



Martin Moore learns why this New Zealand marine reserve is considered one of the world's best dive spots

The Poor Knights is a small island chain off the coast of Tutukaka, near Whangarei. It's been a marine reserve since 1981 with no fishing of any kind allowed since 1998, making it New Zealand's second oldest marine reserve and an incomparable diving spot.

I took owner of Dive! Tutukaka Kate Malcolm's advice and caught a ride with their Perfect Day tour on a sunny day in January when the water is said to be clearest.

Heading out we passed huge swarms of Buller's Shearwaters bobbing on the water. As the water shallowed, we passengers rushed to the side of the boat to marvel at the clarity of the water, seeing kelp-cloaked rocks and the silvery forms of fish.

It was only after donning a mask and snorkel and getting underwater that I could really appreciate the abundance and quality of marine life there. The water crackled with the sound of snapping shrimp; translucent strands of fish eggs drifted with the current, spiky kina dotted the rocks and fish of every size and shape swam around, completely unconcerned by the presence of divers around them.

Snapper the length of my arm drifted amid clouds of smaller fish, like lords trailing a mass of fussy attendants, while trevally floated lazily along the surface hoovering up tiny shrimp.

Looking out into deeper waters, I saw the dim outline of fish as long as I am tall cruising languidly through the water: kingfish.

I could see why diving pioneer Jacques Cousteau ranked the Poor Knights as one of his favourite diving spots in the world. There's both a density and diversity of life here that is quite special.

That diversity is largely thanks to the islands lying in the path of the East Auckland Current which brings warm water and a myriad of fish eggs down from the tropics each year.

"There are species here that you don't get anywhere else in New Zealand," Kate told me. "And each year we see two to three species that we haven't seen in New Zealand before."

There's also an amazing array of environments within just a few minutes' swim of where our boat was anchored; underwater rock spires, deep drop-offs and sea caves stretching back into the cliff-face of the island. One of those sea caves, Rikoriko, was easily big enough to drive the tour boat into. Overhead, ferns grow from the ceiling down towards the light reflected by the water and fed by fresh water dripping through the porous rock of the island. The islands are the weathered remains of a volcano that erupted 10 million years ago and are riddled with caves and archways.

When the ship's horn blew to signal the end of the day, I was reluctant to leave. I had thought that five hours would be enough time there but it went by in a flash and I'd only begun to scratch the surface of a single dive site. The Poor Knights has over 100 of them.

FEATURE

10 Great Swimming Holes

Jumping into pool of natural water on a hot day is one of summer's simple joys. Here are some of the best:

Karekare Falls, Waitakere, Auckland

Get to this spot with a 30-minute climb up the Taraire track to the top of the falls.

Bulli Point, Lake Taupo

Located on the main road to Turangi, there are ledges of varying heights to leap into the lake from.

Blue Spring, Putaruru, Waikato

Te Waihou walkway follows a river with calm, clear pools great for swimming.

Kerosene Creek, Rotorua

This natural hot spring in a river between Rotorua and Taupo is a popular gem.

Rainbow Falls, Kerikeri

An easy walk through native bush leads to these falls and swimming hole.

Mermaid Pool, Matapouri, Northland

Around the rocks from the beach, this rock pool is easiest to access at low tide.

Mosquito Point, Whanganui

What makes this spot special is a sturdy rope swing to leap into the river from.

Pelorus Bridge Scenic Reserve, Marlborough

Several great swimming spots are dotted along this river bank.

Cleopatra's Pool, Abel Tasman National Park

Complete with a natural waterslide.

Lake Rotoiti, Nelson Lakes, South Island

Leaping off the long wooden jetty into this cold lake is the best way to get in!

Running away

Jumping on board a cruise for an overnight excursion on the Hauraki Gulf is an easy and fun mission for Aucklanders who will also appreciate a different view of their city

The city slides away, its reflections breaking and shimmering in the boat's wake. Slowly through the marina, past the wharves where ferries swap positions and container ships rock, and out to the Waitemata Harbour where yachts zig and zag, we head out.

Devonport and North Head stand guard, so does Bastion Point on the other side. We lean out, catch the wind in our faces, enjoying the thrill of such effortless escape.

We've joined an overnight Hauraki Blue Cruise; ten minutes in, we're sold. It's a big boat, with layers of space and wide, generous decks so that even with many other people on board, there would be room to be alone. Cupping hot mugs of tea, we set up camp on the upper deck to watch the shifts in the sky, seabirds swooping and diving.

Past intriguing Bean Rock lighthouse, it seems we are being guided out by Rangitoto. *Hauraki Blue* anchors at neighbouring Motutapu Island and her passengers board the tender. If the weather was warmer, this is when we'd be ready to swim or snorkel, or be taking up the paddles of a kayak. Such clear water, so

close to the country's biggest city, impresses the overseas visitors on board. They walk the beach, take in the peace; we opt for a walk to the brow of the island's hill for views of the gulf.

Back on board, dinner is being readied for guests. We join a honeymooning couple from China and an older couple from Australia for a comfortable social evening. Other New Zealanders on board seem to enjoy connecting with tourists, too. I can't help but feel proud to be an Aucklanders, showing off one of its greatest assets, the Hauraki Gulf.

After some time marvelling at how many more stars there are in the darker night sky, we head for bed in a massive cabin and sleep the sleep of people with no responsibility on a calm, benign sea. Breakfast is served as we edge along the coastline with views of Auckland's eastern beaches. Commuters are heading for the centre of town and so are we – although our mode of transport, our views, our pace – oh, everything about how we are going about it, is better. Way better. We land back at Viaduct Harbour in a fine mood.

KATHRYN WEBSTER

Win!

Fancy a look at Auckland from the sea? AA Directions and Hauraki Blue Cruises

have double tickets for FOUR overnight cruises to give away. Mid-afternoon, board *Hauraki Blue* from downtown Auckland and enjoy an afternoon cruising the Hauraki Gulf with island stops for a spot of swimming, snorkelling or kayaking.

After a three-course meal, settle into an ocean-view cabin for the night; in the morning enjoy a cooked breakfast before heading back to port. Worth \$299 per person. (For more details, see haurakibluecruises.co.nz).

To win a double room on one of four cruises, send your name and address to:

Hauraki Blue,
AA Directions, PO Box 5,
Auckland 1040 or enter online
at aadirections.co.nz by
November 30, 2015.



* winners need to get themselves to and from Auckland.

Mighty river

A totally refurbished paddle steamer on the Whanganui River takes guests on a romantic journey rich in history and culture

Steam and black smoke ooze from PS *Waimarie*. The veteran paddle steamer strains at her bollards. Eager day trippers filing onto the decks are greeted by an assortment of crew, including skipper Trevor Gibson in his stand-out attire.

Striding through the throng is another conspicuous character. Wearing top hat, black bow tie and waist-coated suit, he positions himself on the upper deck. He is Peter Hardy, the Whanganui Riverboat Centre manager. His dress is to emulate the exuberant riverboat pioneer, Alexander Hattrick.

Ropes are cast off. Churning paddle wheels send a powerful wash against the quay. A steam whistle announces departure. A pleasant chug-chug-chug fills the air.

Peter Hardy's wife, Doreen, runs the licenced café in one of the saloons. Up on deck, Peter chats about the boon time of riverboats when, with few roads and incomplete railways, riverboats were the prime means of transportation to the North Island interior.

Waimarie, having sunk at her moorings, was re-floated in January 1993. The refurbished boat steamed away from a lit-up jetty on the stroke of midnight on the last day of 1999. Much of *Waimarie* is original – even the two single-cylinder steam engines had been repaired.

"*Waimarie* has been going ever since. Our job is to

keep her steaming for future generations," Peter says.

Most days *Waimarie* departs on a two-hour return cruise to Upokongaro about 14km upstream.

During the heyday of riverboats, a popular destination was the Mangapurua landing providing access to a post WW1 soldiers' farming settlement which subsequently soured. These days all that remains is the curious Bridge to Nowhere. Another highlight is Jerusalem, once the site of a commune and home for celebrated poet James K. Baxter.

These days mountain bikers explore the Whanganui, pedalling the 208 km Mountains to Sea trail.

John Tate, engineer, and Dick Motram, stoker, sweat it out in the heart of *Waimarie*. Every few minutes, a steam gauge indicates stoking is required.

Passengers are welcome to try their hand tossing a few shovels of coal. I slide the shovel under the shiny black fuel and spread it across the fiery grate. And I wish *Waimarie* happy voyaging for many more decades.

ROY SINCLAIR



Walks to waterfalls

Waterfalls are a mesmerising force of nature.

We're lucky to have some true beauties nestled among boulders, snow-capped peaks and luscious bush easily accessible by foot. Some favourites are:

North Island

Whangarei Falls,
Whangarei: 26m high;
easy 10min return walk.

Taranaki Falls,
Tongariro National Park:
20m; 2hr return track.

Rere Falls,
East Coast: 25m; seen
from the carpark at
Wharekopae Rd.

Bridal Veil Falls,
near Raglan, Waikato:
55m; easy 20min
return walk.

South Island

McLean Falls,
Southland: 22m; 40min
return track.

Ohau Falls,
Canterbury: 15m; easy
20min return walk.

Thundercreek Falls,
Haast, West Coast: 96m;
10min easy return walk.

**Devil Punchbowl
Falls,** Arthur's
Pass National Park,
Canterbury: 112m; 1hr
moderate return track.



ON THE RISE

Five years ago Christchurch was broken by a series of earthquakes and aftershocks. The city is recuperating, reports **Beck Eleven**



IN MANY WAYS, living in Christchurch is as easy as it's always been. You're never really more than 30 minutes from where you need to go and parts of it, like the Botanic Gardens and waterside suburbs of Sumner and Lyttelton, are fresh and pretty. But try driving the same route to those places; the bumpy roads, orange cones and constantly changing detours serve as reminders that there is still plenty of work to be done.

But what has been done? How is Christchurch recovering, five years on?

Well, bars and eateries are generally more exciting with proprietors importing the best of overseas examples and treating them to a down-home spin.

The city is littered with pop-up shops and cafes in shipping containers and food trucks have taken off in an unforeseeable way. It's not just the hotdog and chip variety of food either but good, cheap street food with cuisine from Cuba, Mexico and Japan. On Fridays, in summer, the food trucks gather in Cathedral Square. It's nothing fancy, no wait staff or folded cloth napkins but it's a chance for friends and family to hang out in the same spaces they used to, just with shabbier surroundings.

ChristChurch Cathedral remains the focal point. Post-quake it was a symbol of horror, now it's a crumbling source of tension. It's still a good 'Christchurch Quake' photo but it remains a legal and emotional

battle between those who long for it to be restored and the Anglican Church whose engineers' reports say it is fit only for demolition. Then the dinner table is divided over what the new church should look like. To developers, its stasis is an eyesore and an example of why no one wants to get serious rebuilding around it.

Drive along Victoria and Durham Streets and you're more likely to be filled with hope for the future. Victoria St has the restored Knox Church, an eclectic mix of hospitality spots; office buildings are shiny and new and look fully tenanted.

Durham Street North, which flows into Cambridge Terrace, is a hive of hi-vis and hard hats. Nowhere else

PHOTOGRAPHY: DENNIS RADERWACHER



Three years ago we spoke to **Ginnie Warren**, principal of Christchurch's St Albans School, about the impact of the earthquakes on the children of her school. We chatted with her again to see how they are getting on.

"WHAT HAS CHANGED?" Not a lot. We are still seeing the same sorts of learning behaviour and concerns. The children coming in as 5-year-olds, all they've known is post-earthquake life. We still see post-earthquake anxiety and we still have challenges around learning and language development. We're also seeing lots of anxiety within families because, all these years on, many are still battling to get things fixed or battling to make sense of what they've been left with.

"Post-earthquake we tended to stay on site. We're still really careful about where we go, but we've taken the brakes off a little bit because most of the demolition has finished. So it's okay for kids to be on buses and driven down streets; we're not concerned in the same ways we were.

"But I've seen so many incidents of little things sending kids into a state. We don't have bells in the school, we use music instead. As soon as we run an earthquake drill, or a fire drill, or any of the many things we have to do, the kids get anxious. It makes it rise up and we have to remind them: 'we're just practising'.

"I had an incident last week, a wee girl couldn't get a door open and she absolutely panicked. Instead of being able to stop and think, 'I'll turn the handle or push it instead of pulling it', she just dissolved.

"As adults we're a little bit resigned. The rebuild is so slow. You drive home and there's a detour that wasn't there that morning. It's progress, so you put that in your head and make sense of it and think, 'that's great, they're fixing another road or demolishing another building or building another building'. But day after day, depending on where we go and what we see, we're not seeing huge progress yet. But it's almost there, you can reach for it.

"But when you look at the majority of students there's incredible hope. If you come down at morning tea or lunch and see the kids, it is amazing to watch them play and laugh and get involved in things. So there's hope and joy there as well."



in the city is the boom in commercial construction more noticeable. Buildings appear to be jostling for space, sitting just outside the CBD, which is a much smaller area than it used to be after being redefined by the Government's blueprint for the rebuild. Here is where stunning steel buildings are rising at the rate of knots.

As a holiday destination, Christchurch should be marketed at a sort of Bob the Builder theme park. It is ideal for parents of children who are partial to a bit of bulldozer action. Take almost any route around

FROM TOP: The ReStart mall, between Cashel and Lichfield Streets, has proved a big hit; another view of the ReStart mall, with hard-to-miss bike sharing project, Spark Bikes.



the city and they can be entertained by the point of a finger followed by the words, "look, digger". Another big thing for families and children is the hectare-sized Margaret Mahy Family Playground, on target for a Christmas holidays opening. It will have a 10m-high climbing tower, double flying fox, 4m-wide slide, in-built trampolines and a café. The playground is at the eastern end of the Avon River precinct that snakes its way through the city. The park honours local heroines Mahy and author, feminist and activist Elsie Locke, with nods to Ngai Tahu.

Christchurch's cultural cohort has done its best to keep the city ticking. The grand opening for Christchurch Art Gallery is December 19. Meanwhile, the gallery team's response to lengthy closure has been

the Outer Spaces project which has delivered large-scale art around the city. It's had such a good response that they plan to continue putting art in unusual places even after the gallery has reopened.

If it is vast, open spaces you long for, the residential red zone is a good place to explore. It still feels eerie to drive around empty streets that were once busy, populated suburbs, but are now 630 hectares of mature trees and the occasional shed.

I should warn you, talking with locals can be a prickly path. I mean, it's great that we've got a stunning central bus exchange but it is unlike many of the Government's anchor projects that have been subject to years of delay, such as the Metro sports facility now pushed out to 2020. So, my advice: talk to the nuggety



On the home front

AA DIRECTIONS SPOKE to Richard and Sandy Lockhart in 2012, a few months after their Papanui home was badly damaged in the February aftershock. Although they were still living in the house, the concrete slabs under it had tilted and the house had to be pulled down and rebuilt.

They moved into the neighbouring retirement village for 18 months while the project was underway and late last year moved back to their old address, under a new roof. "It's the same place, but different. It's brand new and we were able to pay extra for more room so we ended up with an upgraded version of the house we had before."

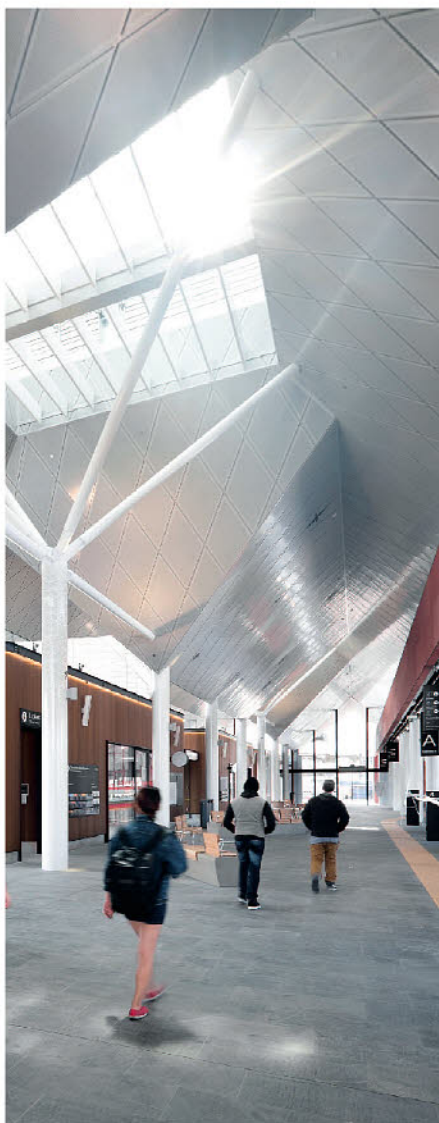
Richard's furniture renovation



workshop is back in business; plans are drawn up for a large deck with an outdoor kitchen out the back, and a low-maintenance garden is being designed.

The couple describe the project as stressful, mostly because it took a long time to complete. "The thing is that there is a lot of pressure on contractors and builders down here," Richard says. "But it's all good now. The house looks great and it's a bit of a social hub again, with family and friends visiting. So it was a long story but with a happy ending."

The Lockharts' home was insured with AA Insurance. For an update on progress the insurance company has made in Canterbury, see p.94.



FROM FAR LEFT: Dance-o-Mat, one of the city's gap filler projects, is popular with local children; interior of the new city bus exchange; in Cathedral Square with what's left of ChristChurch Cathedral in the background; food trucks are popping up around town, this one is in the food court of the ReStart Mall.

Cantabs about 'quakes and recovery but don't call us stoic or resilient...

And if we sometimes seem a little prone to eye-rolling, it might be all the bureaucracy we are subjected to: it is at an all-time high. We're drowning in acronyms: we've always had the CCC (Christchurch City Council) but now we speak of CERA (Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority), CCDU (Christchurch Central Development Unit) and SCIRT (Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team). And government missives come with phrases such as 'modal shift' and 'pedestrian amenity' when all we're really talking about is good stuff like making Christchurch a better city for cyclists and people taking public transport.

Both cycling and public transport

are getting a big push and to that end a local entrepreneur has fundraised for a bike share scheme. Spark Bikes are at half a dozen points around the city, providing bikes free for the first 30 minutes then \$4 an hour (\$20 for 24 hours) which is a great option for visitors. Another zippy way to see the city is by Segway on a guided tour.

Come and see for yourselves. Christchurch still has the lion's share of New Zealand's road cones and no contest shall be entered into on this point but getting around the city is definitely becoming easier. 📍

AA

FURTHER INFORMATION

Updated maps and guides of Christchurch are available at AA Centres. To keep up with traffic diversions and road changes, see maps.aa.co.nz/traffic

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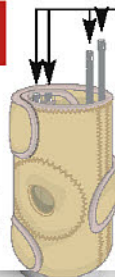
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"The JS Knee Support provides unbelievable support and relief, I can now walk for hours"

MR PETERSON, WEYBRIDGE

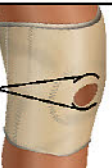
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JOHN SINCLAIR, Football Coach

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AA Motoring



Wheel love

Peter Baillie, his dog Etta and his 300-watt electric bike

I've been riding electric bikes for eight years and bought this one two years ago. It's a SmartMotion eUrban bike and a great solution for commuting; I use it every day to get to work. I live on Auckland's North Shore and ride two kilometres along

Bayswater peninsula, take it onto the ferry and peddle into the city. I clip my border terrier Etta into a harness in the basket and take her for rides with me sometimes. It's convenient and enjoyable; I really look forward to getting on my bike. ■

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK SMITH

VISITING DRIVERS ON OUR ROADS

Dylan Thomsen looks into the issues of sharing the road with overseas tourists

THE NEWS ABOUT road crashes made sad reading last summer. Eighty-two people lost their lives between December and February and a number of crashes involving tourists put the spotlight on the issue of overseas drivers.

Ideas to make the roads safer were debated thick and fast in the media and there were instances of vigilante action when people took drivers' keys. Many AA Members visited AA Centres, phoned in or emailed their thoughts on what needed to be done and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), as part of the Visiting Drivers project, recorded more than 200 ideas put forward by the public. People and communities – especially those in popular tourist areas – were deeply concerned about the risks on their roads, and at the heart of it all were families who lost loved ones and people seriously hurt in road accidents.

"It actually doesn't matter what I

say, how I say it, what the numbers and statistics are. If a loved one is a victim, that's all that counts for that person," Associate Minister of Transport Craig Foss says.

As the minister responsible for road safety and overseeing the Visiting Drivers project, his focus is on making sure the groups connected to the issue are doing as much as they can, as fast as they can, and are working together.

"Everyone is searching for a solution because no one wants to see that smashed-up car. It doesn't matter who's driving, no one wants to see someone hurt and so we all reach for solutions."

The Government's job, he explains, is to test ideas, check the practicalities of them, consider their viability and ask if they will actually solve the problem.

One idea, to test overseas drivers before letting them drive here, was put forward by Sean and Cody Roberts, whose father died in a crash with an overseas driver. They took a

petition to Parliament last year and the idea was supported by a large number of people. Mr Foss says officials considered it, but it was not a workable solution because of the near-impossible logistics of trying to have a testing regime for millions of visitors each year. There was also a question of the potential impact it could have on New Zealanders' entitlements to drive abroad and, perhaps most importantly, whether it would make a significant difference to the number of crashes.

"We really needed to concentrate our resources on where the problems are," Mr Foss says. "Many drivers drove quite happily from say Auckland to down south, then the accidents were happening down there."

Westland, Mackenzie, Queenstown Lakes and Southland have the highest rates of crashes involving overseas drivers in the country.

"What we know from the crash statistics is that when there are more

THE FACTS

Last year 2.8 million international tourists visited our shores – the bulk of them between November and March. While here, about 68% drove a car and 18% a campervan (some both).

In 2014 there were 268 fatal crashes and 8614 injury crashes on our roads; overseas drivers were involved in 16 fatal crashes and 536 injury crashes.

Over the past five years there have been on average 13.6 fatal crashes a year when an overseas licence holder was at fault. Over the same period, the average number of fatal crashes in total on our roads a year was 274.

The numbers of crashes involving overseas licence holders has stayed relatively constant or decreased over the past decade. At the same time, the number of international visitors coming to New Zealand has increased by about 25%.

In 2014 the six countries that had the most visitors involved in crashes were (from 1-6): Australia, Germany, the UK, China, India and the USA.

vehicles around and other people to follow, people tend to make fewer mistakes," says Jim Harland, the NZTA chair of the Visiting Drivers project. The project is initially focused on some of the southern areas that have higher proportions of visiting driver accidents, with a view to rolling measures out to other parts of the country.

The programme, involving central and local government, Police, the AA, the tourism sector and rental vehicle companies, is delivering a range of initiatives including:

- Improvements to the roads, with 50km of centreline rumble-strip and 140km of 'no passing' lines being added, as well as more directional arrows on 950km of key tourist routes.
- Increased tourist-focused safety signage on the roads and at popular visitor destinations.
- Increased Police presence on high-risk routes.
- In-vehicle reminders of key safety rules for rental vehicles.
- A driving in New Zealand brochure for every Chinese visitor with their visa approval.
- Information on safe driving for travel agents to pass on to clients.
- Online sources of safe driving information including drivesafe.org.nz.
- Locating rest stops where tourists might want to take photos to try to prevent them stopping at unsafe places for snapshots.

Rental vehicle firms are also taking action. An information-sharing scheme between firms is being trialed; if a customer has their contract cancelled, other rental firms will be alerted. And a code of conduct has been developed, requiring rental firms to provide information on driving in multiple languages, and to encourage visitors off long-haul flights to stay overnight before driving. Visitors picking up »

About a third of at-fault overseas licence holders in crashes failed to adapt to New Zealand conditions or rules. Crashes will often involve multiple factors; the four other most common factors for accidents involving overseas licence holders are losing control and running off the road (35%), failing to give way or stop (29%), not seeing another party (19%), and inattention or distraction (17%). Failing to keep left was a factor in 5% of crashes involving an overseas licence holder.

Crashes involving local drivers have the same four most common factors as above.

Over the past 10 years, either Australian or UK visitors have been the groups involved in the greatest number of crashes annually.

53% of the overseas licence holders at fault in fatal crashes over the past five years came from countries that drive on the right; 47% from countries that drive on the left.

About 22% of the overseas licence holders involved in a crash are immigrants or students still legally using a licence from their home country. Drivers from many other nations can drive in New Zealand for up to a year before needing to convert to a New Zealand licence.

vehicles will also be asked a series of questions to assess how prepared they are for driving here.

What action is taken if these questions raise concerns will be up to individual rental firms, but Tourism Industry Association Chief Executive Chris Roberts says some companies will refuse to hand over the keys if the process raises warning signs.

Although these measures are not mandatory for rental firms, Mr Roberts explains that the voluntary code could be implemented faster and more easily, and was able to get more buy-in from the sector. Most of the major rental firms have been involved in developing the code and there will be an audit process to check that it is being followed. Also, introducing regulations to replace the voluntary code can be considered in the future, if necessary.

The private sector has also been stepping up, with Air New Zealand introducing in-flight safety videos, several mobile apps released and some unrealistic travel times on Google maps adjusted to better reflect the real driving environment.

The hope is that all the different measures being taken will mean fewer crashes involving overseas drivers and Queenstown Lakes District Mayor Vanessa van Uden wants that as much as everyone else. While the issue was talked about all over the country last summer, the concern is understandably much greater in communities where in peak season every third or fourth vehicle is driven by a visitor.

"There's never anything we can do that will make driving 100% safe, but I think we've made good inroads and there is a lot of information out there now," Mrs van Uden says.

She believes one of the keys is ensuring visitors understand the driving conditions before they make a decision on how they will travel here.

"State Highway One is not what they might expect from the main highway in their own country."

Mrs van Uden also wants people to remember that a lot of the issues involving overseas drivers apply to local drivers and visitors from other parts of New Zealand as well.

"We all see things on the roads sometimes that make us shake our head, but yelling and abusing people is never the solution. The way I see it is we're producing things that will make the roads safer for everyone, not just visitors."

The AA Takes Action

Overseas drivers will be able to test their readiness for New Zealand roads online with the launch of the AA's Visiting Drivers Training Programme.

The programme will be freely available through the AA website from the end of the year and will allow people overseas to simulate real-life driving situations filmed on New Zealand roads before they get behind the wheel here.

The site puts users into the driver's seat for a variety of different situations and asks them questions



ABOVE: The AA's online driving simulator will show examples of what not to do on our roads.

to check their understanding of our road rules. It also will allow visitors to familiarise themselves with the different types of environments and hazards they could experience here, with filming featuring some key southern tourist routes.

"This will be a really good tool for overseas drivers to show that they have taken steps to prepare themselves for driving in New Zealand," says AA General Manager Development Nigel Clark.

The AA will be promoting the site through its tourism division and hopes that the tourism sector and rental vehicle firms will also recommend it to visitors.

"The AA is all about keeping drivers safe on the roads and providing this for overseas drivers will hopefully help keep them safer, which keeps local drivers safer as well," says Mr Clark.

"There is no magic bullet, but all the different things being done to improve visiting driver safety add up, and the AA wanted to take its own action to make a difference."

Alongside the development of the online training programme, safe driving messages are included in almost 3 million AA Traveller maps and guides distributed through AA Centres each year. AA Traveller is also producing a specific guide for Chinese visitors this year which will highlight the road rules and safe driving information. ■



FURTHER INFORMATION

If you are concerned about another vehicle on the road call *555; if it's an emergency situation, call 111. A full list of the Visiting Driver Project initiatives can be found at saferjourneys.govt.nz under Signature Programme.

Some areas have greater proportions of crashes involving overseas licence holders, generally regions with high tourist numbers and smaller local populations. Auckland has by far the highest number of crashes involving overseas licence holders but they only make up 5% of the crashes in the region overall. In contrast, between 21-38% of all crashes in the Westland, Mackenzie, Queenstown Lakes, Southland and Kaikoura regions involve an overseas licence holder.

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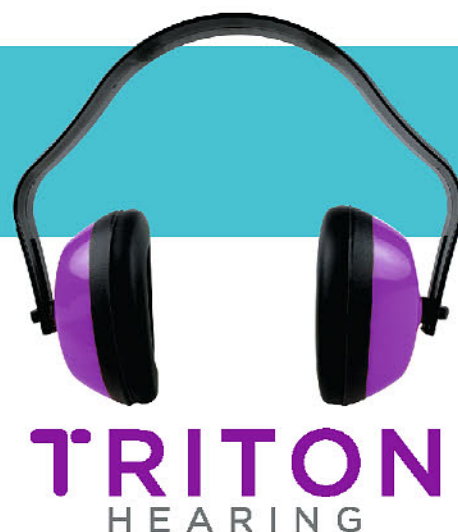
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Happy hitching

Andrew Bayliss provides tips on towing

CARAVANS, BOATS AND camping trailers will soon be dragged out of hibernation, destined for idyllic holiday spots. Before hitting the road, it's important to put some care into the trailer for the sake of safety and reliability – just as you ought to for the family car.

Firstly, are the Warrant of Fitness (WoF) and registration current? If not, get that sorted – and don't leave it until the last minute. In the case of a caravan, check the electrical WoF, too. While that's not a road-going requirement, if it's expired you won't be allowed to plug in when you get to the campsite.

Even if the WoF is current, if your trailer has been sitting unused for a while, make sure the basic safety items are up to scratch. It doesn't take much of a bump from the lawn mower or kid's bike to crack a trailer lamp while the trailer's been sitting. Take a few minutes to walk around, casting a critical eye over everything, checking for anything that has been damaged or has

deteriorated since it was last used.

Plug in the electrical connector to the tow vehicle to ensure the lights, indicators and brake lights are operating as they should. Pay particular attention to the tyres, checking not only the tread depth, but also for damage, cracking and deterioration. Generally speaking, trailers don't travel high mileages so, unlike car tyres which are more likely to wear the tread out due to the distance travelled, trailer tyres tend to crack and perish with age before the tread wears out.

A perished tyre poses a high risk of blowing out, and a blowout on a trailer tyre is not only dangerous, but can cause considerable inconvenience, given that most trailers don't carry a spare wheel. If you don't have a spare, it's worth considering getting one, especially if you're planning a trip of any distance.

Corrosion can also be a problem, particularly on boat trailers; if anything looks rusty, have it inspected by a professional. Suspension, tow couplings and brake components

can be particularly vulnerable to corrosion, so look closely at the leaf springs and, in the case of a braked trailer, make sure the park brake lever moves freely and that the tow coupling still slides freely into the master cylinder. Check the safety chain too, and make sure the shackle thread isn't seized.

Again, if you're unsure; get it checked by a professional.

Some simple preventative maintenance in these areas before parking a trailer up for the winter can save time and money later. Every boatie knows to wash down the boat and motor after they've been used, but the trailer also needs attention. Every metal and moving part should be thoroughly hosed down with fresh water and, once dried off, lubricating the moving parts will pay dividends.

With the trailer hooked up to the tow vehicle, check the coupling is secure on the tow ball. Make sure the ball and couplings are the same size. In New Zealand, we have two sizes in use: an imperial 1 7/8 inch

ILLUSTRATION: DAVID FOLLETT

hitch and a 50mm metric coupling, and they must always be matched together. The 50mm coupling is slightly bigger, so will fit over a 1 7/8 inch ball, but it will be loose and can dislodge itself. Particularly if you have replaced your tow vehicle recently, make certain the two are the same size. Some couplings are designed to be interchangeable, so if you have one of these, make sure it is set to the correct size for the tow ball.

With everything in order and tyre pressures checked, it's time to load the trailer, boat or caravan. The law states that you must be able to stop from 30km/h within seven metres, but for practical purposes, adhering to the manufacturer's rating for your vehicle should keep you safe and on the right side of the law. Manufacturers usually quote both a braked and unbraked tow rating;

it pays to know what they are and never to exceed them.

The load should always be spread evenly over the trailer's axle. Too far forward and there will be excessive downforce on the tow bar, too far back and there's a risk of the trailer fish-tailing or jack-knifing.

On an open trailer, ensure the load is secure and can't fly off, but even in a closed trailer, boat or caravan, pack the gear so it can't move around, even if that means tying it down. Any load that extends more than one metre behind the trailer must have a white or fluorescent flag attached.

The maximum speed for a light vehicle towing a trailer in New Zealand is 90km/h, so be mindful that your top speed is 10km/h slower than most other traffic and be courteous. It is an offence to impede traffic flow, so if traffic is building up behind you

and it is safe to do so, you may need to pull over to let other motorists pass.

Planning is everything. Ideally, travel at times when traffic volumes are lighter so that you don't hold up other motorists. And never be in a hurry. While this applies to any trip in any vehicle, always allow extra time if you're towing. Take the corners gently and look ahead. It will take longer to stop when you're towing, so leave plenty of space between you and the vehicle in front.

In summary: keep the trailer well maintained, plan to take plenty of stops and use some common sense. It's a simple recipe for a safe and happy holiday. ■

AA

FURTHER INFORMATION

See aa.co.nz/cars for more on towing with a trailer, braking weights and reviews of towing vehicles.



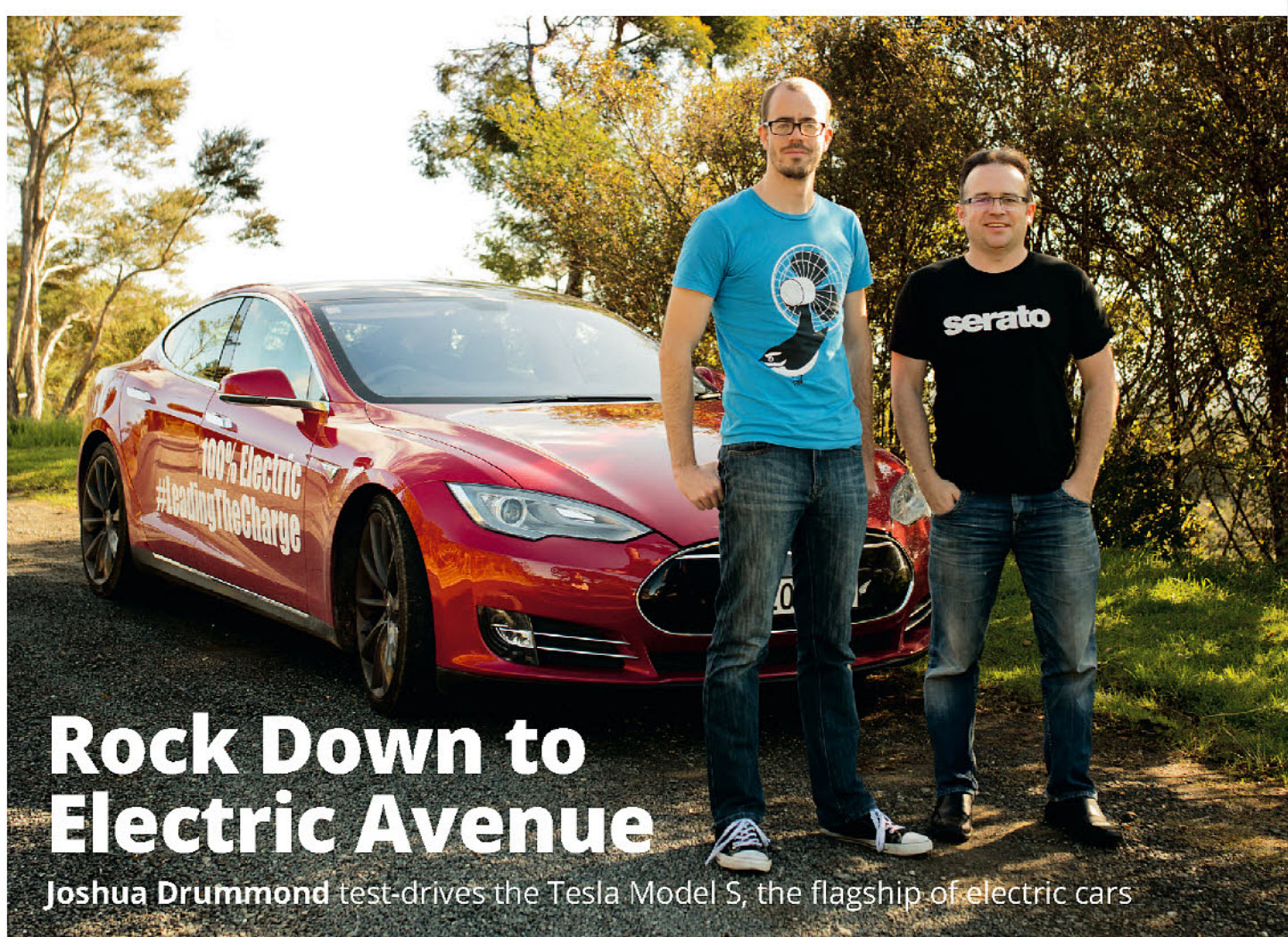
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Rock Down to Electric Avenue

Joshua Drummond test-drives the Tesla Model S, the flagship of electric cars

WHAT WOULD YOU say if offered the chance to drive a supercar that goes from zero to 100km/h in around four seconds, seats seven, and costs almost nothing to run? Yep, same here.

I jumped at the opportunity to test-drive one of New Zealand's only Tesla Model S electric cars.

Electric vehicles (EVs) are finally starting to gain popularity and US auto maker Tesla can take a lot of the credit for this change. Its cars are solving all the problems traditionally associated with EVs (speed, power and range) and doing so in an incredibly stylish fashion.

EVs have a couple of big advantages over the traditional internal-combustion-engine-powered cars that most of us drive today. Electric engines are inherently efficient and powerful, with few moving parts and incredible torque. Compared to gas guzzlers they are economical and, most importantly, they produce no carbon emissions.

For the longest time the biggest

problem they had was range. EVs were crippled by huge, heavy batteries that took an age to charge and couldn't take the car very far or drive for very long.

Tesla, led by its visionary CEO Elon Musk, appears to have cracked these issues. A fully-charged Model S will get you around 420 kms – the equivalent of driving from Auckland to Napier – without costing a penny

"I put my foot down and instantly yell out an inappropriate statement"

in petrol. Consequently, the Model S is in huge demand in all the countries it is sold, with customers ordering cars faster than the company can create them.

That hasn't stopped Dianna 'Dee' West and her husband Steve from snapping up around half of New Zealand's Tesla fleet. It's their Model S I'll be driving today.

It's fair to describe the pair as EV evangelists: they own a Tesla Model

S P85, a Tesla Roadster, and a Nissan Leaf – with two more Teslas ordered and on the way. They believe EVs like these are the future of motoring. Which is all well and good but I want to know how it drives.

At first it feels very different as we pull out of an industrial estate on Auckland's North Shore and head off to do some country driving.

The Model S is a big car: easily seating myself, Steve, my wife Louise who is along for the trip, and the AA *Directions* photographer.

There's a lot of spare space because the engine is the size of a large watermelon – instead of the size of a normal engine – and the batteries, which would normally take up a chunk of real estate, instead line the floor of the car. This has the dual advantage of freeing up space and keeping the centre of gravity low, improving driving performance.

The Model S is also uncannily silent, but within a few kilometres I adapt to the lack of noise. It's very responsive on the gas, despite there not being any actual gas; I have to

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSIE CASSON

For car reviews, including of other electric cars, see aa.co.nz/cars.

22/09/15 5:25 pm

New to Market

Ford Mondeo



Subaru Legacy



Mercedes S63



FORD MONDEO 2015

The key word to describe Ford's new Mondeo is safety. All models are packed with advanced protective features, including collision- and pedestrian-detection and inflatable rear seatbelts. Among other things, Ford's MyKey technology restricts maximum speed and prevents the vehicle from being driven if seatbelts are not buckled. The Mondeo range, which replaces the outgoing Aussie Falcon, comes in petrol and diesel versions. The Trend EcoBoost hatch starts at \$43,990 while the top-spec Titanium EcoBoost wagon comes in at \$54,890.

Good: Advanced and class-leading safety package.

Bad: A maximum towing weight of 1,200kg is lower than expected.

MERCEDES S63 AMG COUPE

Striking looks, superior performance, and technologically advanced. Mercedes has set the new standard for modern luxury, with plush interior leather, mood lighting options and large display screens. The Bi-Turbo 5.5ltr V8 engine produces an easy 430kW/900Nm allowing the AMG 7-speed sport transmission to power from 0-100km in 4.2 seconds.

With Magic Body Control and curve tilting suspension the car has superb handling, ensuring comfort levels match its style. A barebones model – without a fridge in the boot – is \$350,000, with costs escalating according to opulence required.

Good: Supreme comfort, power, technology.

Bad: A deceptively large car.

2015 SUBARU LEGACY

With increased vision, space and technology Subaru has created a worthy candidate to fill the large-medium car market. Boasting a first-time use of the Lineartronic CVT Transmission with the 3.6 ltr boxer engine, the RS is a perfect combination of power and smoothness. Also new is the shift of the 'A' pillar forward, front quarter windows added and side mirrors relocated to the doors. This improves safety by opening up a previously large blind-spot, and creates a light, spacious cabin. Priced at \$49,990 for the 3.6 RS Sedan, and \$39,990 for the slightly less spec 2.5i Sport.

Good: Excellent value, functionality, safe and easy to drive.

Bad: No navigation for the 2.5i.

2015 VW POLO GTI

This hot hatch has been popular for three decades and now VW has unleashed the upgraded 2015 Polo mk VI in GTI form. There's been a number of cosmetic refinements but the big news is its heart transplant with the turbocharged engine beefing up from a 1.4 to a 1.8 litre. This has cranked the power output up to 141kW and reduced the time spent travelling from 0-100kms to just 6.7 seconds. With super quick gear selection and sport suspension for superior handling, the new Polo is a lively fun-to-drive car that packs a punch, while still being fairly roomy inside. Prices start from \$35,990.

Good: Zippy, great handling.

Bad: Little visual difference from the previous model.

VOLVO XC90

It's taken 12 years but the new XC90 has arrived. Volvo has crammed in features, including a 12" tablet-style touch screen for many of its controls. Comfort and driveability is exceptional; the wobbly sensation of piloting a large 7-seat SUV has disappeared. In lesser hands the complete change to two litre four-cylinder engines across the range could have spelled disaster, but not for Volvo. The twin-charged petrol and twin-turbo diesel supply more than enough usable horsepower. The D5 Momentum starts at \$97,900; the upcoming T6 R-Design, a twin-engine hybrid, will cost \$112,900.

Good: The drive is sensational.

Bad: Functions controlled by the tablet-style screen can be hard to access while driving.

2015 MAZDA 6

Mazda nails it with the new Mazda 6. The 2015 model is smoother, smarter, and ultimately safer. With a revised interior and a more comprehensive use of i-Activsense technologies, the Mazda 6 is one of the safest cars on the road. All grades are now equipped with an electric parking brake, while petrol models get the addition of a new 'sport' drive mode that really livens up the gear selection. With three Skyactive engine options, 2.0, 2.5ltr petrol and a 2.2 diesel, there's a Mazda 6 to suit every requirement. Priced from \$46,745 for 2.5 GSX sedan and going up to \$58,245 for 2.2 Diesel Limited Wagon.

Good: Fine interior layout, excellent media control via commander dial.

Bad: Head-up display screen looks a little primitive.



VW Polo GTI



Volvo XC90



Mazda 6



www.ancap.com.au

Buying a new car?

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The AA Motoring Services team regularly test-drives new models and makes of car. Their detailed, impartial reports are available on aa.co.nz in the motoring section, along with ANCAP safety ratings. A list of new car prices can be found at aa.co.nz/cars



» Fuel economy ratings apply to models illustrated. For ratings on all cars reviewed, plus many others, see energywise.govt.nz/tools/fuel-economy



FUEL ECONOMY
9.9L / 100KM

Annual fuel cost of \$2,770



FUEL ECONOMY
8.2L / 100KM

Annual fuel cost of \$2,300



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7.4L / 100KM

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5.8L / 100KM

Annual fuel cost of \$1,620

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Something in the Water

Andrew Bayliss dives into the world of amphibious vehicles

ONE OF THE highlights of any James Bond movie is seeing the extravagant and far-fetched gadgets that the super-spy's cars get equipped with.

The most well-known of all the Bond cars is, of course, the mid-60s Aston Martin DB5 with retractable machine guns, tyre slashers and a passenger ejector seat. The Aston had all the offensive and defensive bells and whistles demanded by a playboy spy.

One of my favourite 007 vehicles appeared in the 1976 movie *The Spy Who Loved Me*. To escape the villains on land and in water, Bond got behind the wheel of a Lotus Esprit. But this was no ordinary Esprit...

Yes, it was equipped with the mandatory guns and rockets, but what separated it from all the others was its amphibious ability. It could travel both on and under the water. At the flick of a switch the Esprit

essentially turned into a submarine. Fantastic!

Sadly this was a 'made for the movies' fictional creation which didn't actually have any amphibious qualities at all. To shoot the water scenes a specially designed submarine was built in the shape of a Lotus Esprit. Being a 'wet-sub' it required the occupants to wear SCUBA gear.

But water-going cars are not the sole domain of fictional spies. There have been many real amphibious vehicles built over the years.

The earliest claimed example was a steam-powered dredge, commissioned in 1804 by the Philadelphia City Council for deepening the Delaware River Dock. It was known as the Orukter Amphibolos (Amphibious Digger), but despite the amphibious claims, in truth, it was a 17 ton barge which had wheels fitted to get it to the river. It only ran on land that one time, so

calling it an amphibious vehicle is drawing a rather long bow.

Various steam-powered logging barges with limited on-land capability followed. With the advent of the internal combustion engine, determined home-builders also had the odd crack at it in the early part of the 20th century.

It wasn't until the outbreak of World War II that any successful mass-produced amphibian vehicles came about. The German army had their Landwasserschlepper (Land-Water-Tractor), a massive machine powered by a 12 cylinder, 300hp Maybach engine, capable of 35km/h on land and 12km/h in water.

The Americans, with a need to unload cargo, ammunition and supplies from ship to shore, adapted a two-and-a-half ton GM truck into an amphibious landing craft known as the DUKW – which became known by the troops as the 'Duck'.

The US army Jeep (dubbed the



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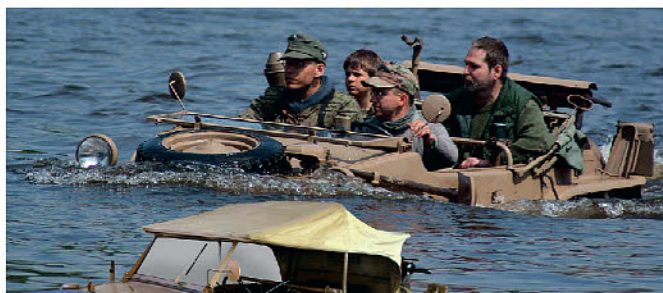
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'Seep') was also adapted for marine use. However, they were too light and unstable and so they capsized easily in the waves.

The Type 166 Schwimmwagen was used extensively by German ground forces and remains the most numerous amphibious vehicle produced. Using running gear from the 4WD Volkswagen Kubelwagen, a total of 15,584 Schwimmwagens were produced; 14,276 by the Volkswagen factory at Wolfsburg and 1,308 by Porsche in Stuttgart.

Only 163 are known to remain today, with one example residing in New Zealand, displayed at the Southward Car Museum at Paraparaumu.

During peace time it's the Amphicar Model 770, designed by Hanns Trippel and manufactured in Germany, that has found the greatest success.

Just under 4,000 Amphicars were built between 1961 and 1965, with the majority being sold in America. The renowned joker President Lyndon Johnson was an early adopter and

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: The American DUKW, known as 'Duck'; the New Zealand-connected Gibbs Aquada; the Amphicar in the water and on the dry; the German Schwimmwagen.

was known to play pranks on his passengers by driving his Amphicar into a lake on his estate after pretending the brakes had failed.

Powered by a 1,147cc engine from the British Triumph Herald, the Amphicar was capable of seven knots in the water and 70mph on land, hence the designation 770. Twin propellers mounted under the rear bumper were engaged by a separate gear lever and the front wheels doubled as rudders, so manoeuvrability was compromised.

Time magazine called it a "vehicle that revolutionised drowning," but it still had its fans who claimed it to be as watertight as any boat, if kept properly maintained. Proof of this is the fact that a pair of Amphicars crossed the English Channel in 1968, conquering 6.1m seas and gale force winds in an epic six-hour journey.

Like the Schwimmwagen, New Zealand is also home to an Amphicar. A nice example is on

display at Hamilton's Classic Car Museum.

But New Zealand isn't home to only foreign amphibious cars. The most famous amphibian on the global stage in the 21st century is the Gibbs Aquada, the brainchild of Kiwi entrepreneur, Alan Gibbs.

The Aquada is arguably the most advanced of all amphibious vehicles, being purpose-built for the task. It's powered by a Rover V6 engine and can reach speeds of over 160km/h on land and 50km/h in water.

In 2004, the wealthy English businessman Sir Richard Branson set a new cross-channel record in an amphibious vehicle in his Gibbs Aquada. He managed to cut four hours and 20 minutes off the previous record, completing the crossing from England to France in just one hour and 40 minutes.

Just like electric and self-driving cars, amphibious vehicles are not just futuristic fantasies. Now when will we see a flying car? ■



Seeing stars? ... How many?



ANCAP
Safety ★★★★★

The Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) is Australia & New Zealand's leading vehicle safety organisation.

ANCAP provides Australian and New Zealand consumers with independent vehicle safety information through the conduct of crash tests, assessment of safety assist technologies and publication of ANCAP safety ratings.

To find out how your car rates, visit
ancap.com.au



Safety first

We've all seen the star safety ratings given to new cars. Have you wondered about who issues those and where they come from?

THE AUSTRALASIAN NEW Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) in Sydney is home to the vehicle safety experts. Since 1993, ANCAP has published crash test results for over 500 passenger and light commercial vehicles sold in Australia and New Zealand.

The aim of the safety ratings is to take the guesswork out of buying safe vehicles. The rating handed out is determined by a series of internationally recognised crash tests and technology assessments.

Vehicles are awarded an ANCAP safety rating of between one and five stars indicating the level of safety they provide for occupants and pedestrians in the event of a crash as well as their ability, through technology, to avoid a crash. For a vehicle to reach five stars, it must achieve the highest standards in all test categories and feature advanced safety-assist technologies.

As Australasia's leading independent vehicle safety advocate ANCAP is committed to:

- Crash testing new motor vehicles and publishing the results.
- Informing and educating consumers on vehicle safety features and safer vehicle choices.
- Educating and influencing decision makers to effectively legislate and advocate for improved vehicle safety.
- Working with manufacturers and importers to raise the bar on safety improvements.
- Cooperating with international advocates to lift and align safety standards around the world.
- Contributing to the safe systems approach to improving road safety, i.e., Safer Drivers in Safer Cars on Safer Roads. 

FURTHER INFORMATION

Checking a vehicle's star rating is easy, visit ancap.com.au or rightcar.govt.nz.



SIMPLY THE BEST

The top selling cars and their ANCAP safety ratings in New Zealand for the first half of this year are:

Ford Ranger	★★★★★
Toyota HiLux	★★★★★
Toyota Corolla	★★★★★
Holden Colorado	★★★★★
Toyota RAV4	★★★★★



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We go there once a year for family holidays. It's cool, man. My daughter Minka (8) absolutely loves it. It's a happy place. It's a good vibe. It's New Zealand's cheerful place.

You can experience huge pleasure and great delights just walking around a very small radius downtown. There are hot pools, the lake, you can get a good feed and there are very good op shops.

Or you can get in the car and explore the district. There are a couple of hot pools on the outskirts of town that are difficult to find at night but they're world class. They're magic.

Then there's the whole smell of the place. The smell is awesome. People talk about rotten eggs. They're wrong. It's a fantastic perfume.

→ Steve's new book *Scene of the Crime*, a collection of his writing covering New Zealand's famous murder trials, is out on November 1.

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSIE CASSON

A photograph of a man with a beard and sunglasses, looking at a baby who is swinging happily on a swing set. The baby is wearing a striped beanie and a dark vest over a light-colored shirt. They are outdoors on a grassy area with a beach and a body of water in the background.

A FIRST TIME FOR EVERYTHING

Karl Puschmann, partner Hayley and baby Poppy embark on their first family holiday with a trip to Waiheke Island

OUR WAIHEKE GETAWAY would be a weekend of firsts. Firstly, it would be the first family holiday we, as first time parents, would take with our first born. Poppy had just turned seven months old and, having spent seven full months running around after her, you better believe we needed a break.

It would also be the first time her bedraggled father would learn that babies don't realise that they are on holiday. Instead of relaxing, chilling out and cooling it with the crying and the endless waking up throughout the night, Poppy just carried on as if it was business as usual. Even after

having the concept of a holiday patiently explained to her a number of times.

But first things first. Most folks heading off on an island getaway to Waiheke simply leave the car behind and breeze easily across the harbour on Auckland's downtown ferry service.

For us, that wasn't an option. The amount of baby guff we have to lug around is, if not mind-boggling, certainly back-breaking. We loaded up our SUV and then we loaded our SUV onto the car ferry at the Auckland seaside suburb of Half Moon Bay.

It was the first time I'd ever driven onto a boat. It felt weird and was

accompanied by a pang of worry at the sight of a large, weighty truck following us on. Could our vessel carry the load, I quite foolishly and needlessly fretted.

Yes, it could. We left both the port and Auckland behind with no problems, our bulky transport chugging effortlessly up past the coast of Bucklands Beach before cutting across the harbour and into the Hauraki Gulf.

A short 45 minutes later we berthed at Putiki Bay. This caused confusion when the shopping/dining precinct

ABOVE: Poppy soaring happily through the air for the first time on the swings at the Oneroa Beach playground.

PHOTOGRAPHY: HAYLEY BARNETT

of Oneroa didn't appear as expected at the top of the hill. I refrained from voicing my concern, choosing just to roll with it while figuring, quite wrongly, that some major construction and renovation work must have taken place since my last visit two years previous. Later I would discover that my bearings were completely off and that the passenger ferry terminal is located around the corner at Matiatia Bay.

Not that wonky bearings pose a problem in this place. It's said that all roads lead to Rome, but on Waiheke Island all roads lead to where you need to be, eventually, anyway. The streets are basically circuitous, splintering off a main road that pierces the island, before twisting back around on themselves and either finally joining up or coming to an abrupt halt.

This means you'd be hard-pressed to get hopelessly lost. The

island is only 20kms wide after all. It is, however, incredibly easy to get disappointed. Over two days we drove down or along nearly every single one of Waiheke's tight, wriggly roads, having a nosy while partaking in the time-honoured technique of lulling your baby to sleep by taking them on a long drive.

Whenever we saw turn-offs or side streets we ducked down them. We criss-crossed the mainland many times, jaunting down to various bays and beaches as opportunities arose. Or getting as close as we could. Waiheke's ongoing development and soaring popularity with wealthy types means many roads lead us to nothing more than closed gates plastered with 'No Entry' signs instead of the expected beach.

Often there would be a signposted public-access dirt track nearby, leading past foreboding gates and disappearing down into bush



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Setting sail on a fully loaded car ferry; Poppy feeling a little apprehensive about this car ferry malarkey.

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towards the coast and the promise of a secluded bay at the bottom. But with a baby sleeping soundly in her car seat, making those treks was not an option.

But no matter. As Waiheke is made of hills, we spent most of our drive time gawping at the sensational vistas and views its high vantage points afford. Not just of the island itself, but also of Auckland, the Coromandel coast and the Hauraki Gulf. We were never short of a photo opportunity.

Our first stop was to drop the bags at our accommodation which, you guessed it, marked another first. Instead of going the usual route of

**“
Wonky bearings
pose no problem
here... all roads
lead to where
you need to be.
”**

booking a motel room for a few days, we turned to bookabach.co.nz to, er, book a bach. We'd found a great place in popular Onetangi, just up the hill from the golden sands of the beach. Grasshopper was a characterful two bedroom house with lovely bush views, a roomy lounge, a widescreen TV and a healthy DVD collection.

Getting excited about those last two things may sound very unadventurous and unholiday-like. And normally I'd agree. Holidays are not for early nights on the couch. Unless you are on holiday with a baby. As we were, this gave us a very limited window each day in which to holiday. After 6pm? Forget about it. That's when things wind down, not wine up.

This meant lunch reservations at Waiheke's famous, fancy wineries and dinner wrapped in newspaper from the takeaways. Foodwise, it offered the best of both worlds, really, and it's

hard to say which I enjoyed more.

Strolling our stroller into flash food joints proved to be a nerve-wracking experience, despite the hosts always being more than accommodating. But it's hard to sit back, relax and properly enjoy, say, a plate of delicious twice cooked duck served with dates, heirloom carrots and shiitake mushrooms that's perfectly matched with a scrumptious clifftop view at the renowned Te Whau Vineyard when you're bouncing your daughter on your knee and praying to the baby gods that she refrains from crying.

As babies need regular naps throughout the day we spent a lot of time in the car. Our very first exploration took us to the far eastern side of the island. The main road narrowed considerably and we found ourselves driving up and down windy, hilly roads. We drove past what looked like hilly farmlands and through what definitely was dark bush. It did not feel like we were on

Waiheke, it felt and looked like rural New Zealand.

Dirt roads occasionally jutted off, allowing access to remote houses and little else. We stayed on track, until we hit a sharp u-turn which led down a super slim, steep stretch of road and ended at Orapiu's wharf.

As Poppy had woken, we left the car and walked to its end. The water, deep and green, lapped at the wooden structure encroaching bluntly into its turf. The wharf, freshly constructed in 2007, was almost as wide as the road that led to it. Usually it acts as a connection hub for the Coromandel to Auckland ferry, but this windy afternoon it was eerily deserted.

We briefly debated taking the walking track that begins at the pebbly beachfront and curves up and over to Otakawhe Bay, part of the Te »



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: I do like to be beside the seaside; a frazzled father attempts fine dining with a cheeky cherub at Te Whau Vineyard; strolling to the beach.

ROAD TRIP

Matuku Marine Reserve. But as Poppy was beginning to get her grizzle on, we thought it wise to head back.

The next day we got breakfast, freshly pressed olive oil and organic produce at the Ostend Market. A good mix of stalls spilled out of the community hall and onto the pavement. Poppy got a new handknitted merino jumper and I got annoyed when the barista at the only coffee stall shouted to the growing queue that she was out of coffee.

This unfortunate turn of events cut short our market visit and I trundled the family out past the stalls selling

crystals, handmade leather goods, second hand books and plain old-fashioned junk.

Once properly caffeinated we took Poppy for a walk along Oneroa's beach. It was a lovely day and there were plenty of folk out. We stopped at the shore side playground and Poppy had her first ever go on a swing. After easing her into it with a few cautious, gentle pushes I judged her look of confusion as a sign she wanted to go faster and higher. Carefully nurturing my rep as the cool parent, I obliged. As the velocity of the swing picked up so did her smile and soon enough she was giggling like a, well, like a baby.

Later that afternoon I drove us back onto the car ferry for the return trip home.

There's 'holiday time' and there's 'baby time' and the combination of the two gave our getaway an odd rhythm. As I took a quick snap of Poppy laughing her way through her second-ever ferry ride I think how it's true that you're never that good at anything on your first attempt.

So if our first family holiday could be classed as an exhausting success, which I think it could, then our second family trip could come close to resembling an actual relaxing holiday.

Turning to Hayley I say, "I hear the Bay of Islands is nice this time of year..." 

FROM TOP: Hagglng at the Ostend Market; peering down the Orapiu pier; a local rides her pony in the tide.



3

THREE CHEAP EATS

You can blow a lot of cash feeding your face on Waiheke. Here's some tasty options that won't eat all your money.

1

French Hot, Surfdale.
A French bakery that serves strong coffee, scrummy French pastries and fab filled croissants. Très bon!

2

Wai Kitchen, Oneroa.
Enjoy a pork belly omelette on the deck and some of the best views Waiheke has to offer.

3

Charley Farleys. Their delicious quesadillas won't break the bank. You can dine in but we took away.

i

MORE INFO

Accommodation at Grasshopper was found on bookabach.co.nz. AA Members may qualify for an AA Smartfuel discount when booking accommodation through the site. (Terms and conditions apply.)

🚢

GETTING THERE

The Sealink car ferry service has two terminals, one in Half Moon Bay and another in downtown Auckland, and sails regularly throughout the day.

AA Traveller

Read more about Waiheke travel at aa.co.nz/traveller

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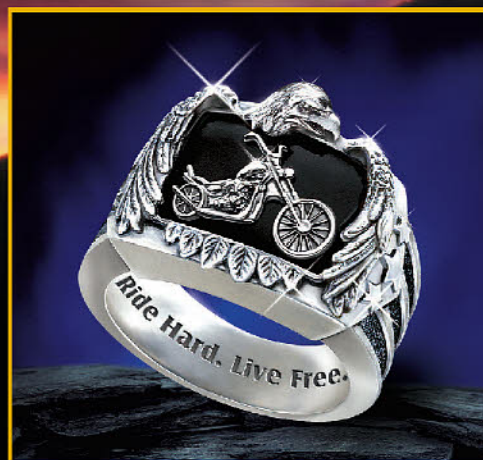
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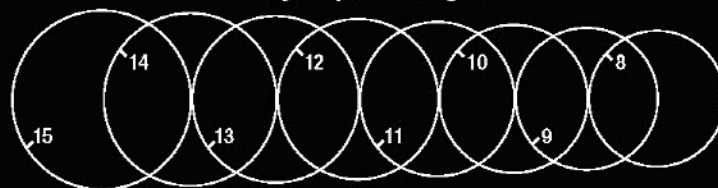
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MAKING MEMORIES

Fiona Terry and her family trek Queen Charlotte Track

I'D BEGUN TO wonder whether we'd bitten off more than we could chew: 70km in four consecutive days with an 8-year-old and 11-year-old.

The days would be long, some of the climbs steep, but the scenery promised to be stunning and it would surely make for a memorable trip.

"It's the diversity that sets the Queen Charlotte Track aside from many of the Great Walks," our guide Sean said as the launch sped us across the Sound from Picton to the start of our trail. He would set us on our way

accompanying us for the first day then we'd explore the rest of the trail independently.

"The quality and level of the track is great, which helps to make it special," he added. "And there are superb lodges and accommodation with restaurant-standard food."

I liked the sound of this.

We disembarked at Ship Cove, the start of our trail, just in time for lunch. In 1770 James Cook based himself here and raised a flag on nearby Motuara Island to claim sovereignty

over the surrounding area. Local Maori had known the Sound as Totaranui (nui meaning big, totara the tree) due to the tree-like shape made by the 'branch' inlets, Sean told us. Cook named the inlet Queen Charlotte Sound in honour of King George III's consort.

We examined the monument that marks the cove's historic importance before setting off for our five-hour

ABOVE: Jasmine takes a break on the track to admire views of Kenepuru Sound.

hike. It was 27°C, encouraging a glorious chorus from the cicadas. We wound past giant black tree ferns, silver ferns, supplejack, beech, kamahi and a rimu thought to be 700 years old.

Our daysacks each displayed special passes: passports to complete the trail, which as well as land managed by the Department of Conservation, also crosses privately owned areas.

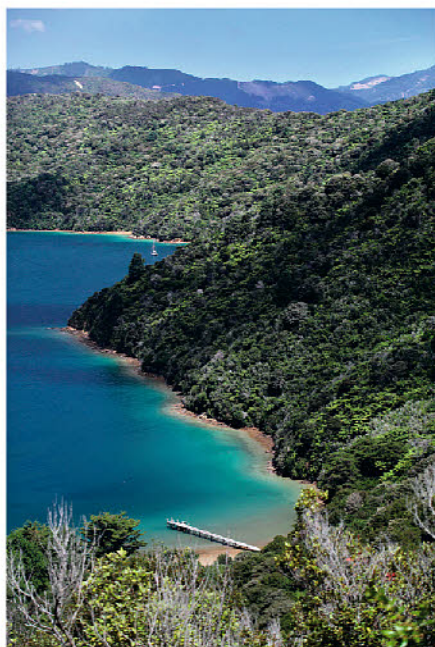
As we traipsed into historic Furneaux Lodge, 14km under our belts, we were relieved to see our overnight bags at our chalet, having been transferred by boat courtesy of our trek planners, Wilderness Guides. After a hearty dinner, the children even mustered the energy for a game of tag in the gardens before a solid night's sleep.

The next day we set off to cover just 12km, packed lunches stashed in our day packs, the wrapping decorated with cheerful messages of goodwill penned by the chef. The path was clear and we didn't get far before pausing at the head of Endeavour Inlet to learn about the antimony mining industry that had thrived here in the late 1800s.

There were always great distractions for the children, like sighting a pod of dolphins swimming in the bay later that day or, on a much smaller scale, watching a parasitic wasp drag a spider twice its size across the path. Since generally walkers tackle the trail in the same direction, we rarely saw other people, but every five kilometres a wooden marker highlighted the distance remaining.

Large chunks of the path wound beneath cooling tree canopies with frequent, tantalising glimpses of the inviting shoreline beneath. Later that afternoon through a veil of ferns, we caught sight of beautiful Punga Cove Resort, where we'd be spending the night.

Its jetty was to be the entertainment on our arrival as the children leapt from its sun-baked boards into the refreshingly clear waters of Queen



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Resolution Bay; Furneaux Lodge; Monument to Captain Cook at Ship's Cove; signpost on day three; jumping for a better view; Charlie flies at Lochmara Lodge; Furneaux's lunch note.



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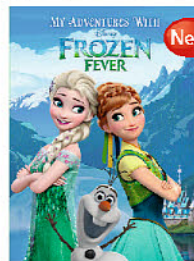
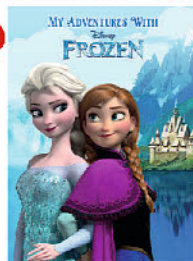
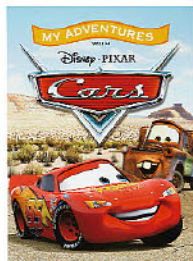
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Charlotte Sound. Their squeals echoed across the bay. It was the pool and hot tub to which I retreated and later the hammocks, hung in shady spots, before heading to the hillside restaurant with its stunning bay views.

Despite a peaceful sleep, on day three our youngest, Charlie, needed a rest. The team at Wilderness Guides had wisely built in a contingency plan. We were due to cover 25km that day but for those too tired, boat transfer was available to our next port of call, Lochmara Lodge. One parent could complete the trail while the other could accompany tired children to spend the day at the lodge instead.

Jasmine was determined to walk the entire route with me. We set off straight from breakfast to rejoin the official path for our sternest test.

There were steep climbs but we'd stop regularly to admire the view. We were grateful for the cloud today – it promised to keep temperatures reasonable as we tramped through forests of pine, thick carpets of needles covering the path. Every now and again the carpet would switch: beech leaves, or back to pine needles, and we'd realise we'd been so focussed on our feet we'd not noticed the change in forest through which we were winding.

At times my energy would wane but I was spurred on by Jasmine striding ahead, arms swinging.

Apparently while I'd be thinking how steep some sections were to climb, she'd be assessing how great they'd be to mountain bike down (mountain biking is allowed on the track except during the busy summer season between December 1 and February 28 when Ship Cove to Kenepuru Saddle is closed to hikes). Some ridges gave views of both sounds either side and, on occasion,

Cook Strait ferries would emerge from between headlands.

Our eight-hour tramp ended at Torea Bay, where Wilderness Guides had scheduled a water taxi to take us to Lochmara Lodge to meet our boys.

We arrived exhausted to find a very excited Charlie brimming to tell us about his own adventures, which had included helping the beekeepers collect honey from the lodge's hives. He and Tim had also been kayaking, ridden the giant flying fox, helped feed eels, got to know the resident kakariki and explored the artworks dotted around the lodge grounds.

We should all have gone straight to bed after our evening meal in the art gallery restaurant but the lodge's owner Shane told us of phosphorescence in the waters here. We stayed up until dark to witness its magical lightshow.

Waking the next morning to the sound of tui and the hotel's free-range chickens, I wondered if Jasmine's legs could possibly carry her any further. But as we walked up through the lodge's grounds, past sculptures and tempting hammocks slung

from giant ponga ferns, she and Charlie showed no signs of tiring.

Having enjoyed Lochmara too much, we'd left later than recommended and despite some speedy footwork, ended up running much of the last six kilometres to catch the boat. It was with regret that we didn't have time to linger and enjoy the views through the giant beech trees, as the path hugged the emerald coastline.

We must have looked a funny bunch as we hurtled through peaceful Davies Bay campsite and then into Anakiwa full throttle, beaming smiles, just in time for the boat to Picton.

The children's sense of achievement was immense – as was our own. 📌

“
We were due to cover 25km that day but a boat transfer was available.
”



TIPS FOR TREKING WITH KIDS

5

1. Make regular stops.
2. Take plenty of water and snacks to keep energy levels topped up.
3. The less they have to carry the better; keep their day packs light.
4. Give them a camera to record the adventure.
5. If they start to grow weary of walking, make up games to distract them from the business of going uphill.



PLACES TO STAY



Furneaux Lodge
furneaux.co.nz



Punga Cove Lodge
pungacove.co.nz



Lochmara Lodge
lochmara.co.nz



VISITOR INFO

Wilderness Guides:
wildernessguidesnz.com

Marlborough Tourism:
marlboroughnz.com

Official Queen Charlotte
Track website: qctrack.co.nz

AA

Traveller

Book accommodation and find out about other walking and cycling trails at aa.co.nz/traveller; visit an AA Centre for maps and guides.



MUSICAL MORNING

Mark Meredith spends time with the birds

ON A MOONLIT quay we were split into groups of six to eight and led up a narrow path into a regenerated forest.

Around 5.45am we reached a dark, wooded area. I could make out benches and chairs that had been laid out on one side of the track where we were invited to sit and wait. As people took their positions I was reminded of being in church: absolute silence and a reverential expectancy among a congregation dressed for the cold, carrying rucksacks and water bottles and lined up along makeshift pews under the night sky.

I was part of the inaugural Lost World Dawn Chorus tour to Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf. This was a chance to hear the result of the repopulation by birds of a reforested island that only 30 years

ago resembled a dry, oversized paddock. A young forest now flourishes on the island and it rings, loudly, bursting with songs – hinting at how New Zealand once sounded.

A familiar call rang out: the crazy, melodious sing-song gurgling and squawking of a tui, followed by others from different directions somewhere in the darkness. New voices began to chime in the background, the North Island robin made itself known. Streaks of grey appeared in the sky and I was able to make out the other members of the expedition, intent, concentrating on the extravaganza taking place around us.

The volume increased dramatically with the arrival of two new players into the avian orchestra: the clear chiming call of bellbirds rising like a brass section, tempered by the beautiful, flute-like notes of

kokako directly overhead, providing soft woodwind to a symphony the like of which I had never heard before.

Chirping sounds emerged: the whitehead and then the stitchbird, the saddleback and finally the kakariki. I

was entranced, forgetting how cold I had become, sitting still waiting for daylight to break. And the lighter it became, the more intense the layers of sound: waves of warbling and chiming, squawks, chirrups and tweets washing around

“
A young forest
now flourishes
on the island and
it rings, bursting
with song
”

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK MEREDITH

us unseen in the canopy. People were holding out smartphones to record what was by now an unbroken wall of noise.

After about an hour the dawn chorus began to wind down as the sky turned light blue, the volume lowering as players flew off to do what birds do on Tiri which, as far as I could ascertain, was live an active, productive, exuberant life unconcerned by humans or pests.

I broke away from the expedition and headed down a track that led me over the spine of the island to its east coast. I had the island pathways to myself, just me and the birds. And they were everywhere at this early hour: tuis diving and swooping, chasing each other through the branches of the juvenile forest; saddlebacks, their russet colours glowing in the low sunshine as they hopped from branch to branch.

At the visitor centre I sat down to talk to Mary-Ann Rowland, Tiritiri Matangi's guiding manager responsible for organising the Lost World Tour, and asked her why she had put on this special expedition.

"I thought there are not enough people who get a chance to see what this country could be like and what it

used to be like."

I told her it made me sad that this was the stage the country had found itself at: where we had to go to an offshore island to see what life should be like on the mainland.

"Absolutely, and this is partly why I wanted to do it, so that people can recognise that. One school that came out, the teachers had taken all the children into the bush beside their school and they'd sat there for 10 minutes in silence listening and they hadn't heard a thing.

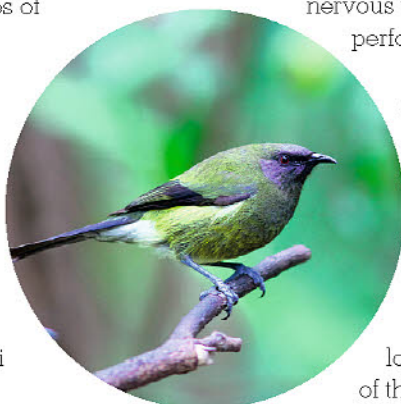
And then she brought them all out here and she made them do the same thing and asked the children to describe it. They called it happy bush and sad bush. That's what it's all about. People don't know what they've lost."

I asked if she had been nervous that the birds wouldn't perform that morning.

"Of course I was!" she laughed.

On my early-morning exploration in some semi-open countryside I had found a takahe plodding through the long grass by the edge of the forest. I was face-to-face, almost, with a bird

thought to have been extinct until 1948 when a colony was discovered in the Murchison Mountains in Fiordland. It was a thrilling moment that summed up the magic of what has been achieved on what is now a beautiful island: no more a dry, weed-filled, pest-ridden paddock, but a living, breathing, thriving ark cradling New Zealand's lost world. ☐



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A tui on Tiritiri Matangi is one of the early risers; the island's main wharf; a stitchbird (hihi), mid-song; a watchful bellbird (korimako).



4 IN THE GULF

1. Tiritiri Matangi is a 75-minute ferry ride from downtown Auckland. Lost World Tours, to experience the dawn chorus, are scheduled in early spring by 360 Discovery Cruises.
2. Rotorua Island features beaches, walking tracks and heritage buildings and is an ideal day trip destination, accessible by ferry from downtown Auckland.
3. Kawau has bush, beaches, baches and history; regular ferries operate from Sandspit, near Warkworth.
4. Rangitoto and Motutapu are linked by a natural causeway. Climb the volcano for views of the city and the gulf; explore Motutapu's walking tracks and WWII bunkers and tunnels.

KEEPING BIRDS SAFE

- Orokonui Eco-Sanctuary, near Dunedin
- Mountain Maungatautari, in the Waikato
- Cape Sanctuary in Hawke's Bay
- Rotorua's Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park
- Ulva Island, near Stewart Island
- Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, Wairarapa
- Kapiti Island Nature Reserve
- Zealandia: Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, Wellington

AA Traveller

For itineraries and travel inspiration around New Zealand see aa.co.nz/traveller or call into an AA Centre for regional guides and maps.



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Pack a picnic and we'll see you on the day. Or if you want to get organised, book your spot, space or catering in advance – it's your holiday, you make the rules.





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"Interislander Summer Festival is so much fun for families and is great value!"

The kids had a great time and I know they can go and play safely while we stay under the shade watching the races and chatting with friends."

— Kelly Brabyn, attended Awapuni, Jan 2015

Find our full list of events
theraces.co.nz





CELEBRATING SPRING

Chris van Ryn enjoys a garden festival

THIS IS A NICE place to meditate." A sliver of sunlight has found passage through low-hanging branches.

"Yes, it is." He looks up at me fleetingly, then leans forward on the weathered wooden seat. His thin frame sways, emulating the gentle ballet of the flowers in the vista before us; tall elegant stems with their burgeoning heads of coloured petals, dancing to unseen currents. Loose threads of his silver hair twist in the breeze.

A bee helicopters nearby. Tui compete for the loudest and most melodious aria. The air is redolent with perfume.

How to describe the catharsis of nature? There is the moment when you reach for a dewy pink rose, cradling in the palm of your hand the silky petals.

You inhale the subtle fragrance of a forgotten feeling. Or the moment you view an impossibly thin-stemmed poppy with its brightly crumpled paper top caught in the turbulence of wind, petals fluttering like wings in flight, bending but not breaking.

My feet crunch upon the pathway as I weave through Taranaki's Hollard Gardens, which are resplendent in spring bloom. The foliage has a green that is fresh and hopeful and which heralds rebirth. The rhododendron is in full blush, the gardens abundant with fluttering pearl-white petals, each busy head revealing

a curvaceous yellow stamen. The sun shines through the delicate calligraphy of the Japanese maple leaves, edging each leaf in a startling rim of silver. The November sky is blue and cloudless and, despite the warming sun, the breeze is cool,

freshened by the snow on Mt Taranaki. All this, while a concerto of birdsong sweeps overhead.

The Hollard Gardens is just one of more than 40 gardens on display throughout the district as part of the Taranaki Garden Spectacular. The festival capitalises on spring.

Admirers converge from around the country to view labours of love:

“
The foliage has
a green that
is fresh and
hopeful and
heralds rebirth.
”



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Irises in the garden of Kairau Lodge and Vineyard in Waitara; sunny detail at Tupare, New Plymouth; walkers in Tupare; touches of colour in Holland Gardens; Tupare is a popular public garden.

an exquisite lime green lawn to sit under a shade-giving tree. After a minute or two, as the mind settles, I become aware of it: the sound of a strategically-placed trickling stream surrounded by nectar-giving flowers that attract buzzing bumble bees. Above, flitting through the branches, I hear the excited warble of a thrush.

There are small, carefully orchestrated, inner-city gardens with tropical plants that derive from Russian emperors. Then there are large evolving gardens, untended but for the occasional gently guiding hand, left to take a natural course.

"I've lived in Stratford for 49 years," Maureen Ostler tells me. "We started the garden 45 years ago from an open paddock. It just kind of grew. We let it happen; it wasn't planned."

Now in its 27th year, the garden festival acts as a fulcrum, drawing attention to the growing cultural vibrancy emerging in the Taranaki District, at the heart of which is New Plymouth. In the centre of New Plymouth is Pukekura, the large community park. Here visitors are embraced in greenery and water and, in addition to the wonder of the gardens, there is the life-giving affirmation of a community in the process of recreating. Children play by waterfalls or kick balls or chase ducks, while parents watch and sip coffee and eat scones. The elderly sit on garden benches, watching the younger ones and perhaps reflecting on life in these surroundings of beauty and tranquillity.

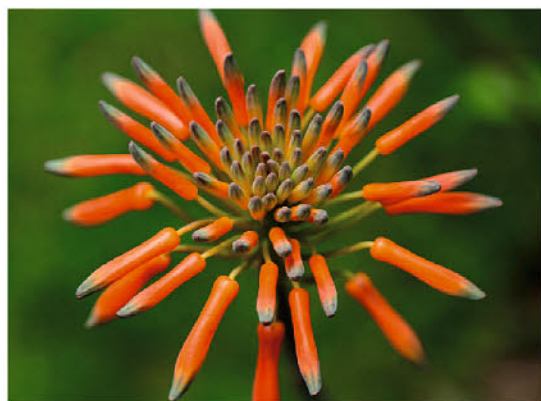
"Is it done now? Are you finished?" I ask Sharyn King, of the award-winning King Garden.

"Did you see the sign on the gate?" Sharyn responds. No, I did not. When I find out what it says, I wonder if we might all take a lesson from it, in whatever passion we pursue. "A garden is never finished, a true gardener never satisfied." ■

displays of imagination, passion and obsession with beauty. Some gardens have their origin more than four decades ago while others span more than eight. Their creations adorn the plains that glide out from the base of the 'Sliding Mountain'.

I discover gardens designed to embrace more than just the sense of sight and smell. The path I follow moves into the shade of a fernery, then – a surprise – it dips below the earth where I enter a tunnel: cool, dim, narrow, before exiting to sunlight and a wisteria that has shaken off its fragrant blossom as if it were confetti. This same path guides me to a warming spot and it is here that the vegetables and apple trees and grapes flourish in the absence of wind and damp.

In another garden I meander across



10

10 DAYS

This year's Taranaki Garden Spectacular runs October 30 to November 8 featuring 47 open gardens, including seven new to the festival. See gardenfestnz.co.nz for ticket details.

Guided walks will feature free at public gardens, including Pukekura Park, Pukeiti, Tupare and Holland Gardens.

Oakura artists are opening their studios over both weekends of the garden festival: oakuraarts.co.nz



TARANAKI HIGHLIGHTS

1. The Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and neighbouring Len Lye Centre.
2. Puke Ariki – the city's museum and info centre.
3. Tawhiti Museum in Hawera, one of the best private museums in the country.
4. New Plymouth Coastal Walkway, a 10km path along the sea edge, designed for ambling, cycling, running and skating.
5. Surf Highway 45 follows the spectacular coastline south of New Plymouth.
6. Mt Taranaki, for day walks, multi-day hikes, climbing or just admiring from a distance.

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PHOTOGRAPHY: LIZ LIGHT

ABOVE: Relaxing in the sun at WOMAD; flags in New Plymouth's Brooklands Park add colour to the festival site.

A WOMAN DANCES in the shade of an umbrella held by her partner. It's a blazing hot afternoon; on stage is a high-energy band from Niger, their rhythms bewitching and positivity infectious. There's a hint of a breeze but not enough to cool us, though the pond between us and the stage holds the suggestion of sweet relief.

In front of the arena, pockets of people have set up day-camps, a scattering of lawn chairs and picnic rugs, chilly bins and cooler bags spilling out over the grass. Some have erected bright flags to signal friends or to mark their temporary territory. Everyone has their own systems; children wander off for hours at a time, they need to be able to find their way back to base when hunger demands or the light fades.

WOMAD is a festival for families – it's easy and friendly and informal and not too wild for even very young

children, many of whom have phone numbers written on their limbs. At the other end of the scale, there are elevated seating areas at the three main stages reserved for people aged 65-plus. Wheelchair access is considered too, with platforms providing good sight-lines. Lots of people roam on their own. Grey-haired women in twos or threes, small gangs of friends, younger couples in groups, families with grandparents – it's an inclusive affair. The music is the draw card; the setting creates a relaxed, positive mood.

We meet people we've not seen in years and others we collide with back home on a regular basis. We hear music we already have recordings of; other stuff we've never heard of. Sometimes it is tantalising, refreshing, energising. Sometimes we'd dance in the heat of the early afternoon or find some shade and let the music waft our way without straining to see the action on stage.



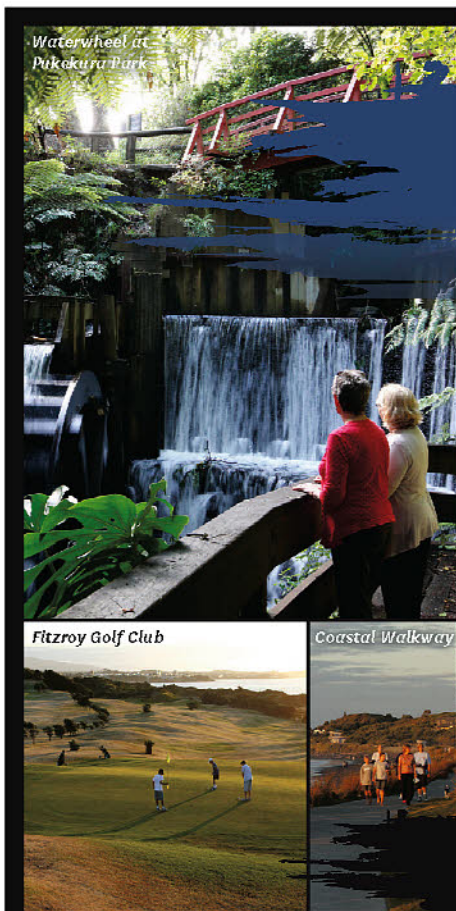
CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: A big screen at the back of the TSB Bowl Stage extends the view for the audience; performers from around globe are a feature of the annual festival; a good-natured crowd settles in for an afternoon of entertainment.

Other times, we'd wander off. Not for us. We'd find some other stimulation for our senses; other music, other sights – art, craft, food, discussion. Maybe buy a cool drink and take it to a spot on the slope above the Bowl Stage and just watch people go by.

Late afternoon, we'd wander back up the bush track, across the tracks, past other campers to our campsite. If the others had beaten us, they'd have made a start on dinner. Making a meal was much easier in the campervan kitchen than if we'd been depending on the tent set-up and having a fridge, albeit a very small one, was a real asset. After eating, we'd change to warmer clothes and head back to the festival.

Past the other campers, across the tracks, through the bush.

We had joined the throngs of campers on the racecourse the day before. Apparently there were 5000 of us but it didn't feel crowded; we'd



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TARANAKI
like no other

Photos: Rob Tucker & Patrick Reynolds
Govett-Brewster Art Gallery/Len Lye Centre

found a grassy spot on a slight rise with extra space for our friends' tent, and a view of the mountain.

Camping right by the festival was super convenient and good fun; having a campervan to do it in was brilliant. We had borrowed it from Auckland's RV Super Centre, who let people considering buying a campervan try them out before committing. Ours was small, compared to other options on the lot, but perfect for this excursion. By the time we'd arrived in New Plymouth, we were hooked.

Would we buy this one? There were several brands at the RV Super Centre; they sell new and reconditioned ones and also build campervans on site. Plus they have all the gadgets and accessories known to the camping kind. There was much to consider simply because of the many options available, but there was a lot to like about this

two-berth. We started to toss names around and imagine how we might customise the interior...

Past the other campers, across the tracks, through the bush and into the thick of it – maybe ten minutes' walk. As we neared the stage-right side of the Bowl, excitement built. The evening throng was heavy and charged; the top acts tend to be on later in the day and the buzz grew as the day lengthened. This was it: the highlight of the weekend! 📺



SUMMER FESTIVALS

Rhythm & Vines, Gisborne,
December 29 – January 1

Rhythm & Alps, Cardrona,
December 30 – 31

Soundspash, Raglan,
January 8 – 10

Splore, Tapapakanga Park,
Auckland, February 19 – 21

WOMAD, New Plymouth,
March 18 – 20.



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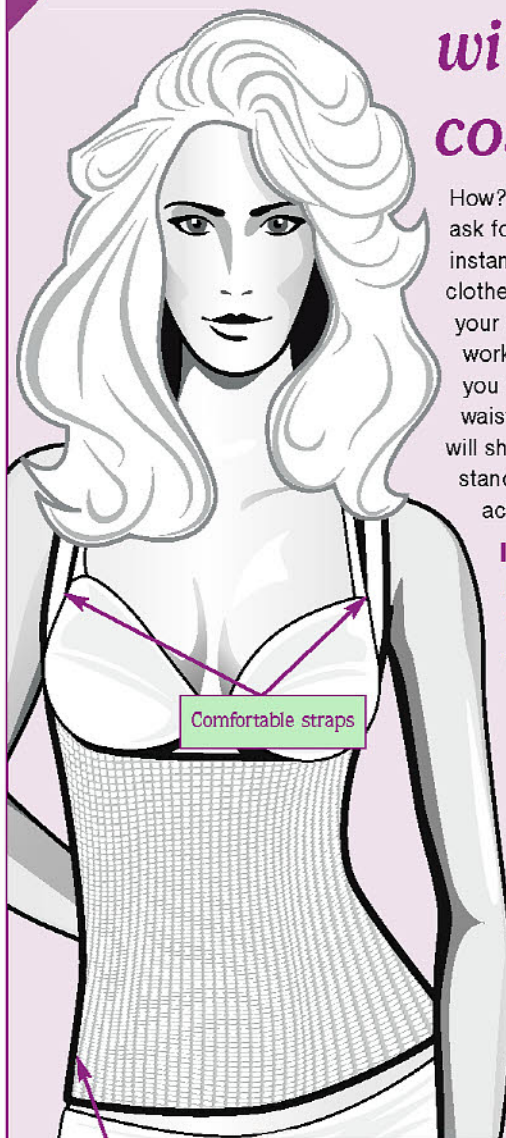
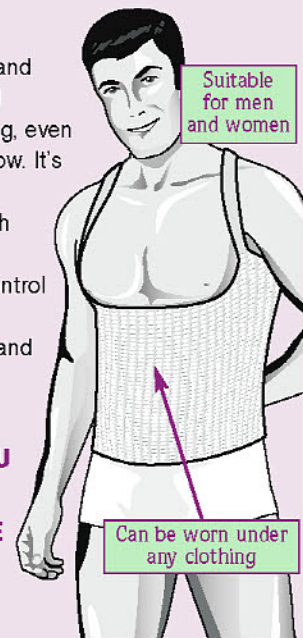
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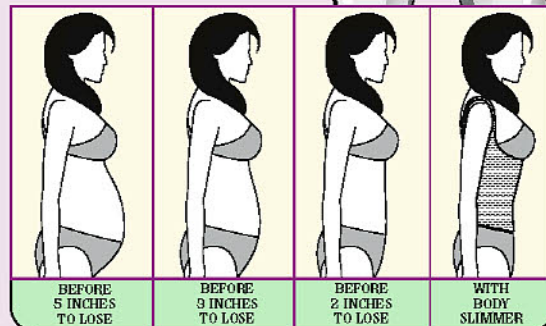
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SHORT & SWEET

Kathryn Webster joins a tour of treats

WAS GREETED at the airport with my name on a sign, escorted to a car with dark-tinted windows and driven to an inner city hotel, right by Sydney's Circular Quay.

It started how it went on: special treatment every step of the way, with everything taken care of. Once settled in to a large room with harbour views, I met up with others on the tour and we walked to nearby Café Sydney, upstairs across from the lit-up bridge.

Between mouthfuls of excellent food I had easy conversation with several women who were travelling solo as they're widowed or had husbands who didn't want to travel. There were also couples who had joined up because they like to be looked after well and appreciate not having to bother with details.

This is what Bill Peach Journeys is particularly good at. The Australian company is known for its private aircraft tours in Australia and New Zealand but they've expanded into Short Break Sojourns, like the one I was on. These are based around a special event, usually a concert or an event, and the itinerary is

woven around that with high-end accommodation, meals and all the fine points travel entails. A short break might be for the Melbourne Cup, Australian Wildflowers or the Australian Open Tennis. I was in town for the opera.

Every year, Sydney hosts an outdoor Handa opera production: this year was *Aida*. After a busy day we loaded on to a small bus and headed for the opera site on the harbour edge of the Royal Botanic Gardens. We shared an evening meal while

watching the city light up and a cruise ship depart, before being escorted to good central seats for the main act.

On a floating stage with the Sydney Opera House and the city's high rises in the background, the drama unfolded with

lashings of fabulous music and gorgeous costumes – gold pleated wings, swathes of velvet, bold Ethiopian-inspired prints and contemporary sparkle – on an incredible set. High-energy dancers competed with fireworks, spectacularly dramatic lighting and a real camel train – but the singers,

ABOVE: Scenes from *Aida*, this year's Handa Opera production in Sydney; the famous bridge.

especially the main characters, presented the most impressive moments. They were top performers, as you'd expect.

Of course next year's opera will be different (Puccini's *Turandot*), but the standard is high and it will be, without question, as stunning and as much fun as this production.

Once the clapping had died down, we made our way out of the arena to our waiting coach and passed queues of people waiting for taxis or trekking back to far-flung cars.

The next morning the group travelled north of Sydney to Hawkesbury River to cruise around its fascinating waterways.

At the farewell dinner in the hotel, I exchanged contacts with several of my fellow travellers. They were an interesting and interested crew; seasoned, motivated travellers who enjoy the finer things in life.

I was jealous, hearing their plans to join other Short Break Sojourns but grateful, too, to have had a taste of the good life. ☺

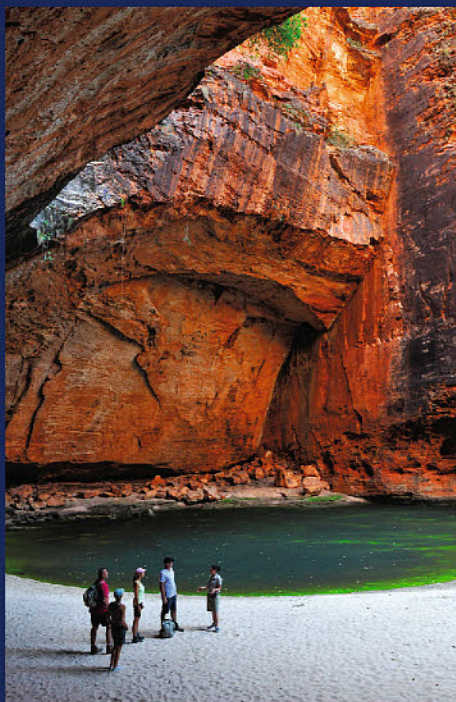
“ They like to be looked after and appreciate not having to bother with details. ”

VISITOR INFORMATION

The writer travelled as a guest of Bill Peach Journeys: billpeachjourneys.com.au



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EIGHT CLICKS

Vienna through a viewfinder, by Sharon Stephenson

WHAT'S THE CORRECT response when confronted by a group of teenagers who has taken an unhealthy interest in your camera?

I'm not sure but, to be honest, I don't blame them.

I'm on a PolaWalk tour through Vienna, the world's first guided walk with vintage Polaroid cameras, and there's something intriguing about the clunky, old-fashioned camera that weighs heavily around my neck.

It's a sunny Monday afternoon when nine of us meet in Spittelberg, once the Austrian capital's red light district. Gentrification has been tugging at the edges of this inner-city suburb for the past few decades and it's now the postcode of choice for the city's beautiful, bearded and excessively tattooed.

And, apparently, pre-pubescent with an excess of time and vanity.

"I'm photogenic, take my picture," four or five of them yell good-naturedly as they follow me up the street.

"People still long for the magic of Polaroid," says Gilbert Lechner, who started PolaWalk with his friend Thomas Preyer last year. "It's like having a darkroom in your hand. Digital hasn't quite found a way to capture or recreate that quality."

While too young to remember analogue technology, the pair is part of a wave of creatives rejecting the five-frame-per-second perfection of digital photography in favour of 70-year-old technology. Most of their cameras were eBay finds and they lucked out when a group of their countrymen decided to rescue Polaroid's bankrupt Dutch plant in 2008.

Gilbert points out that shooting

into sunlight causes an unwanted silhouette effect, and that the strongest colours produce the best results before setting us loose to capture our eight pictures.

Snapping without the aid of a zoom function and being denied the digital safety net of instantly deleting any unpleasant results takes a bit of getting used to. Harder still is choosing what to photograph: Spittelberg is an over-achiever when it comes to visual bling. Situated behind Vienna's Museumsquartier, this pedestrianized patchwork of cobbled streets has been perfecting beauty since Napoleonic days.

Gilbert tells us the suburb was once farmland but became the site of the city's major hospital in 1525.

"But things went downhill in the 18th Century when Spittelberg was a hot-bed of prostitution. It wasn't until



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: There's no shortage of photogenic landmarks in Vienna, including cathedrals and Biedermeier houses; the tour group gets the low-down on Polaroid cameras before venturing out; the writer's eight results.

the '70s that the developers moved in to rescue the charming Biedermeier houses, which no longer have charming price tags!"

Like so much of Vienna, the suburb has one foot rooted firmly in the past. The pretty stone-coloured Amerlinghaus Theatre, for example, pays tribute to artist Friedrich von Amerling, one of Austria's leading 19th Century painters. Today it's a cultural and events centre, a busy sort of place, where flyers announce auditions for Snow White.

Vienna isn't a city to deny yourself the calories you'd normally avoid for health reasons and at Witwe Bolte, Spittelberg's oldest restaurant, I eat a large slab of the traditional Austrian cake, sachertorte, and watch what looks like half the suburb drop in for their caffeine fix. I wonder if anyone actually has a job here, or if they're all too cool and beautiful to work.

"This area is fondly called Boboville, because it's home to so many bobos, or bourgeois bohemians," explains the barista.

It's also a good opportunity to wait for my eight photos to reveal themselves. The new Polaroid films take between 20 and 40 minutes to cough up the results and when I lay out my photos I'm pleasantly surprised. Several may be a bit over exposed, and a couple look as though they were taken by someone with severely compromised eyesight, but on the whole I think I've managed to capture a little of Spittelberg's whimsical character... ☺

44 Traveller

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Sharon Stephenson travelled as a guest of Avalon Waterways (avalonwaterways.co.nz), the Vienna Tourist Board (vienna.info) and Cathay Pacific (cathayairline.com/nz).

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FLAT WHITE, LONG BLACK

Alexia Santamaria goes to the source of fair trade coffee in Costa Rica

THE WORDS FAIR TRADE get bandied about a bit and most people have some vague idea that it's an ethical concept that helps people in far-off countries. But what does it really mean when you sit down to that fair trade latte; who does it really help and more importantly, how? I traced a cup of coffee from bean in Costa Rica to cup in New Zealand to see exactly what fair trade means in real life.

My journey started in Pérez Zeledón on the farm of Adrian Bourbón and his son Ronald, 1700 metres above sea level. For me, a visitor, the vegetation was lush and the views breathtaking, but after spending some time with these coffee farmers

I realised the green backdrop and stunning blue skies hid a life of hard toil and physical labour beyond what most of us can imagine.

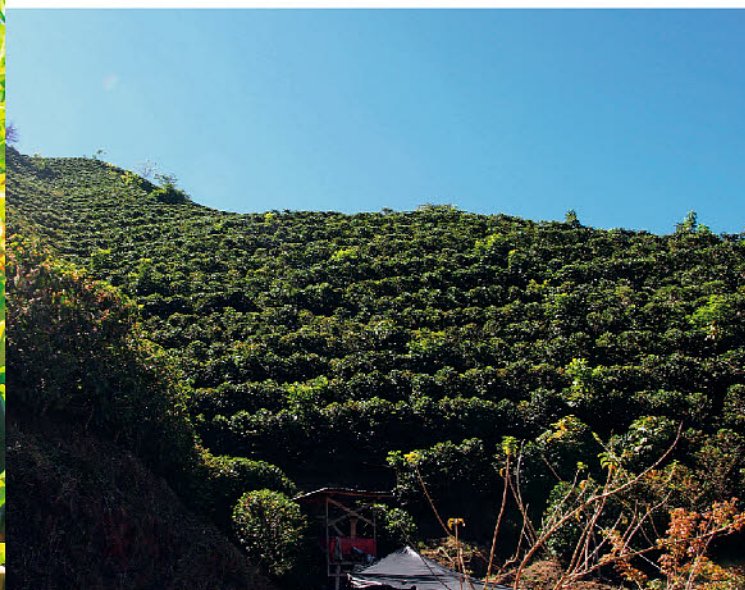
Never again will I complain of a tough day at work after clambering through coffee bushes in temperatures of 30 plus degrees. I had enough trouble navigating the tracks, wide enough for one foot, with just my camera in hand and endured endless scratches and ant bites from fighting my way through the bush. I can't imagine what it's like to do that every day carrying a basket of coffee cherries which gets heavier by the minute.

And that's only picking season. Adrian and his seasonal staff have to maintain bushes by hand, especially in times of outbreaks

of the dreaded coffee leaf rust La Roya (the affected leaves have to be picked off individually). Trees also need severe pruning after they've finished producing to give them time to regenerate. The sun is unrelenting: it's sweaty, hard physical graft.

Adrian's farm is part of the CoopeAgri Cooperative, an amazing collective model that proves small farmers don't need to be victims of the whims and price changes of large multinationals. It was formed in 1962 and now has 12,000 members, reaching 50,000 farmers, workers »

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Developing coffee receivers such as this one has made life easier for coffee farmers; unripe coffee cherries; Adrian and his son, Ronald on the family land; a handful of ripe coffee cherries.



and their family members across 85 communities. They deal both in coffee and sugar cane and plans for cacao are afoot too. The cooperative has been so successful, it has been able to build its own supermarkets, gas stations and other facilities to provide extra jobs and streams of income which go back into building a more prosperous community.

CoopeAgri became a fair trade cooperative in 1994 for sugar and 2004 for coffee. This has given farmers further independence and helped to maintain their stability of income. "Between becoming part of the cooperative and the added bonus of fair trade, life has changed a lot for us. We can actually plan

now as we know our cherries will be sold and we know the price won't be below a certain level," Adrian says. "Before, everything was uncertain, but now we can even look at ways to improve our production. We could never have done that before."

But it's not just the guaranteed minimum price that has helped farmers like Adrian. When you purchase that coffee with beans from CoopeAgri, a percentage goes towards something called a Fair Trade Premium. This

funds additional projects to help productivity and improve community life. Every year representatives from the farms meet at a general assembly to vote on how this

premium will be used.

If it's been a terrible year, like the years when La Roya had done widespread damage and decimated crops, the premium goes directly back to the farmers to help compensate for loss of income. In other more prosperous years it goes to social, economic and environmental projects to benefit CoopeAgri members and their communities.

Sometimes the Fair Trade Premium is used for maintaining the 160 coffee receivers. At first glance I couldn't understand why a basic storage unit was such a big deal, but after talking to the farmers I realised it was game-changing as it means they can pick the coffee cherries and deposit »

“
They deal both
in coffee and
sugar cane and
plans for cacao
are afoot too.
”

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Adrian Bourbon holding coffee cherries; Adrian's coffee farm in Perez Zeledon, from below; his new coffee plants; land that has been stripped ready for the back-breaking work of re-planting.

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ABOVE: Various coffee beans from CoopeAgri farms; mini coffee roasters for sample roasting; paraphernalia for a coffee cupping session includes some beautifully crafted machinery and gadgets.

them there (near their plantation) where they can be picked up, rather than having to make the long journey to the mill every day at significant cost. These are not roads you want to be driving every day; my spinal alignment may never be the same!

The premium is also invested in technical assistance to help farmers with any problems they may have with their crops. It has also been used in the coffee and sugar mills the cooperative owns to install new technology to speed up production processes.

At the coffee mill we had a slightly whiffy journey through the fertiliser area (they use the pulp from the coffee beans and cane bagasse). The final product is then subsidised by the Fair Trade Premium so farmers can buy it at a reasonable cost. All very clever and sustainable.

Sustainability and environmental

protection feature heavily in the equation. We visited a gorgeous river nestled among beautiful rainforest that has been saved as part of a 250 hectare forest conservation project. Adrian gets paid \$100 a year, a significant amount in Costa Rica, not to farm on a part of his property so the wildlife and flora can be protected.

The Fair Trade Premium also frees up capital for the cooperative to embark on other projects. We visited one such project, a clean bright modern-looking medical centre. It has facilities for cervical health, ultrasounds, minor surgeries, orthopaedics, and much more and members only pay 25% of the cost.

"These projects are amazing," says our guide, Enrique Calderon, from the Department of International Operations for CoopeAgri.

"It makes medical care affordable and accessible for families as it's often

out of reach financially for people in this socio-economic bracket."

We could see for ourselves the way people live, and how something like this service would be invaluable.

So after seeing the coffee cherries at source, and the roasting process, it was time to taste the final product. We spent a fascinating afternoon 'coffee cupping' and tasting the difference altitude makes on the flavour of the beans. We also learned how different markets have different requirements. The Germans like acidity but the Middle Eastern markets would send that straight back. There are even considerations on bag size depending on how the coffee is transported at the other end. In the Middle East the »



bags can't be any more than 25kg as they are often moved by camel.

New Zealanders have their own preferences, too. CoopeAgri coffee is used by Robert Harris in their Latin American Fairtrade blend and by Wild Bean Café at all BP stations.

Scott Pepler, master roaster for BP says they use a mix of Brazilian and Costa Rican. "The Brazilian provides a good base but the Costa Rican has those great highlights of dark cocoa and caramel when we roast it medium to dark. It gives it the vibrancy we're looking for."

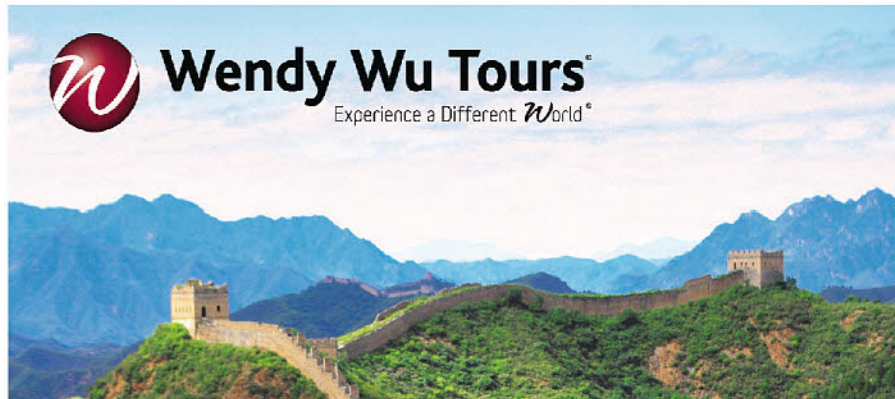
"We had to go with Scott's flavour expertise when we were looking for a good fair trade coffee back in 2008," says Scot Graham, National Food Service manager for Wild Bean. "We were fast becoming the largest retailer for barista-made coffee in New Zealand so we figured going fair trade was an easy way to give

back without customers having to pay more. We've had a great relationship with CoopeAgri over the years and several of our staff have been out and visited. It's so fantastic to see the impact at the end and know that a relatively small change can mean a lot to people far way."

I couldn't agree more. Fair trade is no longer a vague ethical concept to me. It's a really simple process and in many cases it doesn't cost us anything more to buy the coffee, sugar, chocolate, bananas or other products with the blue and green Fairtrade logo. In a world where it's really hard to know where to put your ethical dollar, I now know this is one of the easier decisions. ☑

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Describe a typical day on the job.

I work on an on-call basis from 7am till 11pm. It's busier in the mornings when people get in their vehicles to go to work and realise their battery is flat. I test the battery to make sure it's actually flat and not a car-starter issue. If a battery needs replacing, I can sell it to them then and there so they don't have to go to a store to buy one. Restarting and testing batteries is free for Members and we hire out chargers. A busy day will see me attend up to 20 jobs. »

PHOTOGRAPHY: JESSIE CASSON



»How long have you been in the role?

I started part-time as a Battery Service Technician four and a half years ago. The opportunity to become a contractor came up in 2013 and I took it. You don't need to be a mechanic, but I did a two-month training course. I worked in hospitality for ten years prior to that and I wanted to try something different. I wanted to be out and about on the road.

What do you love most about your job?

Helping Members. The AA is more than 100 years old and Members really trust and believe in the brand. They give me positive feedback all the time and say, "Thank you, what would I do without the AA?" It's really nice to hear.

What's the most challenging aspect?

Dealing with an expensive car like a Maserati or Ferrari. Although the concept is the same, there's more pressure because the car is so expensive.

Do you have any tips for getting the most out of battery life?

Every time your battery goes flat, put it on a charger instead of driving the vehicle. In our parents' generation it was perceived that driving was sufficient, but it will only build up service charge instead of a full charge. Batteries usually last between three to five years.

What's the most humorous call-out you've attended?

Someone thought their car had a flat battery. I got there only to discover the gear was in 'drive' and not 'park'. That's why the engine wouldn't start.

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MEET RAMSEY AND LAMBERT

After an eight-week competition, AA Life's ram and lamb have finally been named: give a big hello to Ramsey and Lambert.

Taranaki's Joyce Lobban came up with the puntastic winning entry, beating out a whopping 7000 entries in the naming competition. But she wasn't alone in suggesting it. The names proved a popular entry so a prize draw was organised and Joyce was the lucky winner.

The prize is a weekend getaway to the Rangitikei Farmstay, a spot in the heart of the Rangitikei that is home to 2,000 sheep and 300 cattle.

"Once I got over the initial

delight of winning a stay at the farmstead myself, I thought how nice it would be for my London family to experience all the animals," Joyce says. "Our son will be having his first Christmas with us for 13 years and I thought it could be their Christmas present."

AA Life received a huge range of fantastic name suggestions and they extend an equally huge "thank you" to all who entered.

Look out for more from Ramsey and Lambert from AA Life soon!



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The AA is using the website to direct Members to their nearest charging station if their vehicle is running low on charge.

➔ See driveelectric.org.nz/chargers-map for your nearest charging station.

A helping hand for Cantabrians



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Simple and easy to follow, "Grandma's 1001 Uses For Baking Soda and Vinegar", gives you step-by-step instructions on how to mix these 2 wonder ingredients together or with other common kitchen items.

You'll discover:

- A helpful and simple remedy on page 139 to fade age spots.
- Do you suffer from leg cramps or want to prevent them? Then try this recipe containing vinegar and two other kitchen staples.
- A wonder elixir to aid with the relief of sore and aching joints.
- That vinegar is claimed to aid with weight loss. Is it true? Turn to page 167 to find out.
- Trying to get rid of the eggs from head lice can be difficult. Try this simple and inexpensive solution on page 154.
- To help soothe bee stings, insect bites and sunburn, make a paste from these ingredients to give you instant pain relief.
- Having trouble with built-up earwax? Baking soda may help, see how on page 11.
- Baking soda and vinegar can clear clogged drains, learn how by going to page 278.
- Clear weeds from your pathway or driveway without using harsh chemicals.
- Cockroaches! Use these two common kitchen items, which are chemical free and safe to have in your home to rid you from these nasty and dirty pests.
- Having trouble with eggs cracking and leaking when you boil them? Then try this to resolve the problem.
- How to kill small tree stumps with these simple ingredients.



- What will help with an upset tummy? Turn to page 27 to find out.
- Learn how to relieve tired puffy eyes with these amazing products.
- Battery corrosion? See what baking soda and vinegar can do to help.
- The perfect foot softener for your tired aching feet!
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