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Media Release

NZ Tourism Awards finalists revealed

Thirty-two leading tourism operators and stakeholders from 26 organisations have been announced today as finalists in the 2018 New Zealand Tourism Awards - the \$36 billion tourism industry's most prestigious awards.

The finalists span the country, from Queenstown to Auckland, including regional communities such as Taumarunui, Gisborne and Owen River.

Hotels, a luxury lodge, adventure activities, transport operators, a music festival and Maori tourism businesses are amongst the finalists.

They will compete for awards in two individual categories and eight business categories, says Chris Roberts, Chief Executive of Tourism Industry Aotearoa which runs the annual awards programme.

"This year's awards attracted a record 109 entries. It's fantastic to see the New Zealand Tourism Awards growing more competitive every year, reflecting the industry's strong growth," Mr Roberts says.

"These prestigious awards celebrate the industry's success and recognise the individuals and businesses doing an outstanding job, providing employment and generating wealth in communities throughout the country. We are also seeing a commendable trend of tourism businesses committing to all aspects of sustainability.

"I'd like to congratulate everyone who took the time to enter the Awards, even if they didn't make it to finalist status. The Awards are a valuable opportunity to benchmark your business against your peers and demonstrate that you are striving to be the best."

The Awards are closely aligned with the industry's Tourism 2025 growth framework.

The winner of the Air New Zealand Supreme Tourism Award will receive a prize valued at over \$20,000, including \$10,000 air travel, to help them grow their tourism business.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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The winners will be announced at a black-tie dinner in Christchurch on Thursday 6 September.

2018 New Zealand Tourism Awards finalists

PATA New Zealand Trust Emerging Tourism Leader Award

- Ian Balme, Forgotten World Adventures, Taumarunui
- Ross Copland, Ruapehu Alpine Lifts
- Travis Donoghue, Tourism Holdings Ltd (*thl*)
- Luke Taylor, Go Orange, Queenstown

JLT & AIG Tourism Industry Champion Award

- Lisa Li, China Travel Service (NZ) Ltd
- Les Morgan, Sudima Hotels and Resorts
- Saskia Verraes - Tourism Holdings Ltd (*thl*)

Westpac Business Excellence Award - Less than \$6M Annual Turnover

- Forgotten World Adventures, Taumarunui
- Kaitiaki Adventures, Rotorua
- Owen River Lodge
- Redwoods Treewalk & Nightlights, Rotorua

Auckland Airport Business Excellence Award - More than \$6M Annual Turnover

- Real Journeys
- Sudima Hotels and Resorts
- Tourism Holdings Ltd (*thl*)

Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment Industry Alignment Award

- AccorHotels
- Hawke's Bay Tourism
- Tourism West Coast

Department of Conservation Environmental Tourism Award

- Kapiti Island Nature Tours
- Oamaru Blue Penguin Colony
- Tourism Holdings Ltd (*thl*)

He Kai Kei Aku Ringa Maori Tourism Award

- Kaitiaki Adventures, Rotorua
- Whale Watch Kaikoura Ltd
- Wharewaka o Poneke Enterprises Ltd, Wellington

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The Great Journeys of New Zealand Tourism 2025 Enabler Award

- Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED)
- Christchurch Airport
- NZ Cycle Trail Incorporated

epay NZ Tourism Marketing Award

- Air New Zealand
- Rhythm and Vines, Gisborne
- SKY Tower, Auckland

ServiceIQ Visitor Experience Award

- Auckland Whale and Dolphin Safari
- GO Rentals
- Otago Museum

About the New Zealand Tourism Awards

The 2018 New Zealand Tourism Awards are run by TIA, with Award Partners Air New Zealand and the Ministry of Business, Innovation & Employment.

The Awards are supported by the Air Force Museum of New Zealand, Auckland Airport, Christchurch Casino, Department of Conservation, epay NZ, Hamish Fletcher Lawyers, He kai kei aku ringa, Horwath HTL, JLT/AIG, Monteiths, Pacific Tourways, PATA New Zealand Trust, ServiceIQ, The Great Journeys of New Zealand, Westpac, media partner NZME and host city ChristchurchNZ.

For more details, visit www.nztourismawards.org.nz

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KEY FACTS

- Tourism in New Zealand is a \$99 million per day industry. Tourism delivers around \$40 million in foreign exchange to the New Zealand economy each day of the year. Domestic tourism contributes another \$59 million in economic activity every day.
- Tourism is New Zealand's biggest export earner, contributing \$14.5 billion or 20.7% of New Zealand's foreign exchange earnings (year ended March 2017).
- 14.5% of the total number of people employed in New Zealand work directly or indirectly in tourism. That means 399,150 people are working in the visitor economy.
- The [Tourism 2025](#) growth framework has a goal of growing total tourism revenue to \$41 billion a year by 2025.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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