

MEDIA RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MĀORI OPERATORS RESPONSIVE TO ECONOMIC TIMES

Māori Tourism is not immune from the current economic situation affecting tourism. However, there are some great opportunities for operators wanting to position themselves and make the most of their cultural assets. Most recently, two Māori tourism operators have announced new product experiences that make the most of their cultural offering.

pureORAwalks has been granted a Department of Conservation guiding concession for the Tongariro Alpine Crossing. pureORAwalks are currently the only fully guided tour operating in this area and offer their clients an insight into Māori culture and education linked through story-telling, experiential learning and environmental sensitivity under the scenic splendor of Mount Tongariro.

The WaiOra Group in Rotorua operate the Wai Ora Spa / Hells Gate, Wai Ora Resort and Mokoia Island/Wai Ora Experiences. They have developed a new luxury experience to Mokoia Island that involves a helicopter flight to New Zealand's only inland bird sanctuary on the island and includes a guided walk complete with the island's unique Māori history finishing with an outdoor massage by Hinemoa's Pool.

"These operators combine quality tourism experiences and are adding value through the telling of their stories and the sharing of our culture", says John Barrett, Chairman New Zealand Māori Tourism Council (NZMTC). He added, "Despite the lower numbers of visitors to New Zealand, there are still over two million international visitors coming. The opportunity for our Māori operators is to ensure they stand out against their competition and maximise their unique cultural point of difference that allows their visitors gain a deeper perspective of New Zealand. These operators are making the most of that, and we think that's great".

The New Zealand Māori Tourism Council is working with its member MRTOs and operators on an initiative as part of its Living Landscapes© promotional framework, to produce a series of regional brochures. These will promote local Māori tourism experiences around their chosen regional stories, and include some local itinerary suggestions for visitors.

This activity builds on the work already underway with Living Landscapes© with the development of the first Māori Tourism Trade Manual released last year, and offers our tourism partners and visitors to better understand this country by presenting the deeper cultural stories that make up the diversity of the Māori world.

These brochures will begin appearing in targeted tourism websites and i-SITEs as they are developed over the coming months.

Websites relevant to this media release:

- pureORAwalks <http://www.pureorawalks.com/>
- Wai Ora Group <http://www.mokoiaisland.com/>
- Living Landscapes website www.livinglandscapes.co.nz
- NZMTC website www.maoritourism.co.nz

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