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Media release

Summer bookings bring glimmer of hope to tourism

The tourism industry is feeling hopeful as the country enters the next phase of its border reopening plan—with many operators excited to report forward bookings, says Tourism Industry Aotearoa.

While the industry is not expecting an immediate influx of visitors, forward bookings are giving operators some certainty in their future planning. "Forward bookings from **visa-waiver countries** are looking optimistic, with visitors planning to arrive in late spring and early summer," says TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram.

Vanessa McKay, Managing Director of Carino Wildlife Cruises in Paihia, is looking forward to having more certainty. "We are super excited the borders have reopened," she says. "Although it will still be quiet here in Northland through winter, it means we can start to make some real plans regarding employing staff, scheduling cruises and capital investment."

Ms McKay says forward bookings for the upcoming summer season are looking great and the demand from international wholesalers is strong.

"It is looking like it will be a busy summer for us. We can't wait to welcome back our international guests, to take them cruising again, share stories with them and inspire them with our passion for the ocean."

Ngāi Tahu Tourism General Manager Jolanda Cave says their tourism attractions are also starting to see an increase in the number of international manuhiri (visitors) making bookings for the summer season.

Cave says during the quieter period, Ngāi Tahu Tourism has focused on its cultural storytelling, ensuring it has on offer the best product possible.

"We can't wait to showcase our products to our international friends again. We know there will be a few extra hurdles for visitors who come from overseas and so we want to make sure that their experience with Ngāi Tahu Tourism is worth the wait."

David Gatward-Fergusson from Nomad Safaris in Queenstown says: "All of us in the industry are thankful and delighted that we have progress and that at some point in the future a new normal will emerge."

The tourism industry wants to make an active and positive contribution to New Zealand's recovery from COVID, says TIA, and the first step is supporting our tourism businesses to step back on the front foot so they can deliver the manaakitanga that makes us world famous.

TOURISM INDUSTRY AOTEAROA

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KEY FACTS

- TIA is New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of New Zealand's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1300 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA is deeply involved in discussions on recovery and what the future of tourism in New Zealand will look like.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment** which aims to see every New Zealand tourism business contributing positively to our people and cultures, our environment and our economy
- TIA delivers a comprehensive and diverse range of industry events including TRENZ, New Zealand Tourism Awards, Discussing Tourism regional events and the Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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