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Media release

Te Puia named Supreme Winner of the 2025 New Zealand Tourism Awards

Iconic Iwi owned Rotorua tourism attraction, Te Puia | New Zealand Māori Arts and Craft Institute (NZMACI), has tonight taken out the industry's highest accolade, being named the supreme winner of the New Zealand Tourism Awards.

The awards were hosted by Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) at Tākina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre in Wellington this evening, recognising the quality and variety of tourism experiences on offer throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Te Puia NZMACI was the winner across multiple categories, including the NZME Visitor Experience Award, Sudima Hotel Tourism Excellence Award (Large Business) and was a finalist in the Toroa ā-uta, Toroa ā-tai Māori Tourism Award category.

Commenting on the award, Te Puia NZMACI Chief Executive Tim Cossar said, "Winning this award fills me with such a huge sense of achievement for our team and our community.

"Our business is one of duality, we are not only a tourism business but also a cultural training institution 100 years young. When we were faced with turning our business around in 2019, we were faced with not only delivering great tourism experiences for Kiwis and international guests, but also great outcomes for our community – they are our backbone, who have had our back and taken us to places we couldn't go alone."

"Me mihi ki ngā mairi tū wao, o Tūhourangi Ngāti Wāhiao, o Ngāti Whakaue i tū rangatira rā hei tāwharautanga ki a mātou e tū nei i tōna whakaruruhautanga. Ngā potiriao I kite ai mātou i te pae tawhiti, e mihi kau ana." (We must acknowledge the advocates of Tūhourangi, Ngāti Wāhiao, o Ngāti Whakaue who forged the pathway for us to follow. The trailblazers who allowed us to see the distant horizons, we must extend our endless gratitude.)

Judges praised Te Puia NZMACI for its bold transformation over the past five years, highlighting its focus on long-term sustainability and moving from volume to a guided high-quality visitor experience for both New Zealanders and international visitors alike. They noted the positive impact of this shift on the business, its community, and the wider tourism industry, reshaping Te Puia into a truly iconic experience that will stand the test of time.

The annual New Zealand Tourism Awards provide an opportunity for tourism businesses, both large and small, to showcase achievements across 12 categories, with the finalists providing a benchmark of excellence and inspiration to the wider tourism industry. This year saw a record 150 entries received.

The 35 judges were impressed by the exceptional quality of entries, with many commenting on the breadth of innovation, dedication, and excellence demonstrated by tourism operators across Aotearoa New Zealand.

TIA Chief Executive Rebecca Ingram, said, "Tonight has highlighted the incredible passion driving Aotearoa New Zealand's tourism industry. The diversity and quality of entries reflect an industry that continues to find new ways to deliver outstanding visitor experiences, grounded in manaakitanga.

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“It’s inspiring to celebrate the people and businesses who make our industry so special. Warm congratulations to all of tonight’s winners and this year’s finalists.”

About the New Zealand Tourism Awards

The New Zealand Tourism Awards recognise businesses, organisations and individuals who are demonstrating business success, living the values of the New Zealand Tourism Sustainability Commitment and embracing kaitiakitanga (guardianship).

They are hosted by TIA with Award Partner Air New Zealand, and sponsored by: Auckland Airport, Avis Budget Group, GO Rentals, KiwiRail Tourism, New Zealand Māori Tourism, New Zealand Media and Entertainment (NZME), ServiceIQ, Sudima Hotels, Tourism Talent, The Tourism Industry New Zealand Trust (TINZT) and Westpac. TIA thanks our valued partners and sponsors for their support.

New Zealand Tourism Awards 2025 - winners

Air New Zealand Supreme Tourism Award

- Te Puia NZMACI Limited Partnership

Tourism Talent Employer of Choice Award

- Hind Management

NZME Visitor Experience Award

- Te Puia NZMACI Limited Partnership

Avis Budget Group Community Engagement Award

- Auckland Sea Kayaks

Tourism Industry New Zealand Trust Tourism Collaboration Award

- Development West Coast

KiwiRail Tourism Environment Award

- Blue Duck Station

GO Rentals Innovation Award

- Christchurch Adventure Park

Toroa ā-uta, Toroa ā-tai Māori Tourism Award

- Kapiti Island Nature Tours

Westpac Tourism Excellence Award (Micro Business)

- Tongariro River Rafting

ServiceIQ Tourism Excellence Award (Small-Medium Business)

- Willowbank Wildlife Reserve

Sudima Hotels Tourism Excellence Award (Large Business)

- Te Puia NZMACI Limited Partnership

Individual Awards

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Sir Jack Newman Outstanding Industry Leader Award

- Scott Callaway

Tourism Industry Aotearoa Emerging Tourism Leader Award

- Zac Watson – Maverick Tourism Marketing

Auckland Airport Tourism Industry Champion Award

- Nadine ToeToe - Kohutapu Lodge & Tribal Tours Ltd

For more information, please contact TIA Communications Advisor Leah McNeil – leah.mcneil@tia.org.nz or (021) 045 1143.

KEY FACTS

- Tourism Industry Aotearoa (TIA) is Aotearoa New Zealand tourism's peak industry body. We are the only independent association that represents all sectors of the country's large and diverse tourism industry.
- TIA has about 1,200 member businesses from across the industry, ranging from small owner/operators to large publicly listed tourism corporates and international hotel chains.
- TIA leads implementation of the industry's **Tourism Sustainability Commitment**, which aims to see every tourism business in Aotearoa New Zealand 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 and Tourism Summit Aotearoa.

Visit www.tia.org.nz for more information

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