

# talking tourism

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## a word from jim...

Where did the year go? It seems no time since doing our TRENZ application in November to being there in June, then doing the follow ups and then it's time to do it all again, plus all that's gone on in between!

Sorry that you haven't seen much of us this year. Given the recession and our status as an incorporated society we were forced to address our cash flow issue that has dogged us since Tourism Coromandel's inception.

The only fat in our budget is either in marketing or staff so when Carl and Kate left this year they weren't replaced.

This has meant that two of us have had to cover the workload of four. It's meant we've had to prioritise and cut back on activities but the good news is in the annual result and in the fact that we now can look to replace one of those staff. Normal services will resume as soon as possible.

This year has finally seen the yearly disaster soothsayers having a field day...forget Y2K forget Bird Flu, forget SARS, we've got Recession and oh joy, Swineflu all at the same time!

The aspect we need to take out of the disaster scenario is that it demonstrates just how vulnerable this little country at the edge of the earth is to the bad news machine. New Zealand gets a share of the world travel market of less than 1% and Coromandel just a little less. It doesn't take much of a sneeze for us to catch that cold.

There are however good things happening, the Governments decision to pump over \$2 million in extra funding into the Australian market has worked spectacularly and has finally proved the point that if you spend the marketing dollars, you'll get the results. (Councillors please note). We, along with other regions have sought to capitalize on this effort by Tourism New Zealand by switching more of our resources into Australia. We are about to visit Australia for the third time since March to attend the Kirra Tours Roadshow which is following hard on from a similar exercise by Newmans Tours.

With Newmans the opportunity to undertake a programme that included 3 cities in 3 days and sit down sessions with around 400 agents was too good to be missed.

The Kirra Show promises more.

Our experience over the summer has been interesting in that it has been the International market that has held up our numbers and anecdotal evidence has indicated that Australians have made up a good proportion of those numbers.

It's not all doom and gloom out there.

September sees our AGM and the election of a new Board for Tourism Coromandel. If you feel you have something to contribute and would like to have a say in how the region is marketed, put your hand up, we'd like to have you along.

Cheers

Jim

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## visitor numbers...

	Nov 08	Dec 09	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Apr 09	May 09
Total Guest Arrivals (excl Day trips)	29,861	38,836	60,448	44,741	39,041	33,871	18,481
Percentage change from same month last year	4.%	-13%	-6.7%	0.6%	-13.8%	24.1%	10.1%
Total Guest Nights	48,253	93,099	152,136	85,141	68,636	63,530	29,916
Percentage change from same month last year	4.5%	5.7%	-1.5%	1.5%	-13.6%	37.4%	6.9%
National statistics arrivals							
Percentage change from same month last year	-5%	-4.2%	-7.0%	-9.6%	-10.4%	0.5%	-1.4%
Average length of stay (nights)	1.6	2.4	2.5	1.9	1.8	1.9	1.6
<b>Guest nights per market</b>							
Total Domestic	22,660	55,310	114,140	45,970	37,280	41,300	19,120
Percentage change from same month last year	-1.8%	3.2%	-5.3%	3.7%	-14%	47.9%	3.1%
Total International	25,590	37,790	37,990	39,180	31,360	22,230	10,790
Percentage change from same month last year	10.8%	9.6%	11.8%	-0.9%	-13.1	21.4%	14.3%

**Note:** These are visitors staying in one of the registered commercial accommodation providers in the TCDC and Hauraki Districts. The Commercial Accommodation Monitor (CAM) monitors trends in New Zealand's commercial accommodation sector, which includes GST registered commercial accommodation providers with \$30,000+ annual turnover. Sourced from TRCNZ Commercial Accommodation Monitor.

**Guest Arrivals (Guest First Nights):** This is the total number of guests who have arrived during the month. If a guest books out and returns for another stay, they are counted as a guest arrival for a second time.

**Guest Night:** A guest night is equivalent to one guest spending one night at an establishment. For example, a motel with 15 guests spending two nights would report provision of 30 guest nights of accommodation.

## web stats...

	Dec 08	(Dec 07)	Jan 09	(Jan 08)	Feb 09	(Feb 08)	Mar 09	(Mar 08)
Unique Visitors	<b>11,081</b>	10,844	<b>13,085</b>	12,090	<b>8,665</b>	10,248	<b>9,295</b>	10,872
Total Visitors	<b>13,859</b>	13,756	<b>16,362</b>	15,622	<b>10,835</b>	13,527	<b>11,569</b>	14,602
Total Hits	<b>1,348,225</b>	1,483,581	<b>1,625,288</b>	1,714,744	<b>956,702</b>	1,317,360	<b>1,013,437</b>	1,394,115
	Apr 09	(Apr 08)	May 09	(May 08)	Jun 09	(Jun 08)		
Unique Visitors	<b>9,811</b>	9,630	<b>8,270</b>	8,204	<b>6,602</b>	5,728		
Total Visitors	<b>12,462</b>	12,736	<b>10,477</b>	10,891	<b>8,172</b>	6,867		
Total Hits	<b>1,082,889</b>	1,095,649	<b>767,282</b>	762,852	<b>590,476</b>	461,198		

**Unique Visitors:** refers to the different number of physical persons who reached the website [www.thecoromandel.com](http://www.thecoromandel.com).

**Total Visitors:** is defined as each new incoming visitor to the website (not including visitors who are returning to the website within an hour).

**Total Hits:** is the number of times a page or image file is viewed or downloaded by someone.

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## staff movements...

At the end of 2008 we lost our Marketing Manger Carl Muir, who went out on his own to focus full time on his fishing charter business. Carl is doing extremely well and will feature on the ITM Fishing show on the next three episodes (15 Aug, 29 Aug and 5 Sep)

We were fortunate enough to have Kate fill in as our Marketing Coordinator, after Kate Perkins left us to travel the world. Kate has also now left us and is working in France selling NZ in a Travel Agent focusing on New Zealand travel. All part of our cunning plan to take over the world travel distribution network.

So after losing two of our marketing staff, and with a lack of funding it was decided to hold off filling these positions until our new financial year. This has meant there has been extra pressure on the four existing staff and unfortunately some things have had to take a back seat i.e. these newsletters. We apologise to anyone this has adversely effected but do remind you that we are always happy to take any calls you may have regarding what we are up to, who's been where and what's new in our region.

We are pleased to have Belinda Muir contracting to us on the STARS program, which you can find further information on in this newsletter, and Dave Sparks has also joined us as the Events Coordinator, and is hard at work on Scallop Festival – Welcome to you both.

## publications...

**Visitor Guide** – The 2009 / 2010 Coromandel Visitor Guide is due to be reprinted over the next few months, with its launch planned for late October. Last years publication took on a new look and feel, which was very well receive. Therefore we plan to continue with the current design. Members can expect to hear from us over the next few months in regards to their listings, so if you can start to have a bit of a think about what you might like to do this year, it will save a bit of time later down the track.

**Events Calendar** – We will be commencing the republication of the 2009 / 2010 Coromandel Events calendar within the next month. 10,000 copies of this publication will be printed and distributed around the country. Events are also posted on our website and a selection are placed in the back of the Visitor Guide. To help us keep the events database full and up-to-date, we ask that you please forward your event details to [events@thecoromandel.com](mailto:events@thecoromandel.com)

**Great New Zealand Touring Route Product Manual** – The 2009 / 2010 GNZTR Product manual is now out and has been distributed widely at TRENZ by the participating RTOs. It will now be distributed offshore to wholesale agents in targeted markets and used as collateral distributed at the offshore KiwiLink trade shows.

**Homegrown Food Trail** – We will also commence the 2009/2010 edition of the HOMEGROWN Food Trail in the next few months. The last edition was widely distributed and well used, as a result this has now run out. We will keep you posted as to when the new edition is out. In the meantime should you wish a copy, please download it from our website. If anyone is interested in being a part of the HOMEGROWN Food Trail, we'd love to hear from you.

## media and trade visits...

Since our last newsletter in December you will see we have had numerous media and agents visit the Coromandel. Most have been in the later months, which is the typical time of year for agents to get out and

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familiarize themselves with countries. Remember the Coromandel is only a small region within New Zealand and New Zealand is even smaller when compared on the world scale, so it is pleasing to see agents and media keen to come and discover our piece of paradise. We have been off shore doing agents visits and also plan to attend a number of trade shows coming up in the next couple of months.

## visiting media...

Sheriden Rhodes	Sun Herald, Sydney - travel Section	Visited May 2008
Jobi Chan, Lai Ling Chan, Wan Yee Wg	Weekend Weekly, Hong Kong	Visited March 2009

## trade visits...

UK Frontline Famil	2 days on the Coromandel	14 UK Agents	April 2009
Dutch Product Mangers Famil	2 days on the Coromandel	9 Dutch Agents	April 2009
Pacific Destinations – Italian Agent Famil	1 day on the Coromandel	10 Italian Agents	March 2009

## off shore trade training...

Newmans	Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney	July 2009
Kirra Tours	Melbourne, Brisbane, Sydney, Perth & Adelaide	August 2009
Agents Visit	Brisbane	May 2009

## International trade shows... (Joint venture with Pacific Coast Highway)

Kiwi link UK		July 2009
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## domestic trade shows...

Inbound Tour Operators Day	Auckland	14 Inbound Operators	May 2009
TRENZ	Auckland – (3 days)	56 Agents	June 2009

## print media...

Kurashi-no-techo.	Japanese publication. 100,000 copies nationwide	Publication: May 2009
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## tv media...

Polaris TV,	The Discovery of Travel	Korean TV, 226,780 audience	Broadcast: 9-20 Feb 09
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## Coming UP:

Kiwi link India	Sep 2009
NZ Week Tahiti	Sep 2009
Kangaroo Tours, South America	Oct 2009

## marketing

We attended the Stella Tours Australian Trade and Frontliner training Road Show. The mission was held under the Newmans Tours Brand as Stella are seeking to rebuild Newmans as the definitive NZ FIT programme ex Australia.

Around Four hundred Frontliners attended in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane over three days.

The Coromandel features strongly in the Newmans Brochure and we were one of a handful of other regions invited. The invite arose as a consequence of our visit to Stella in March.

Although the Trade staff had a generally good working knowledge of the Coromandel, frontliner awareness was low and this is an area we need to concentrate on.

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## tourism new zealand press releases...

### **One in a Million Found** -23 July 2009

The winner of Tourism New Zealand's 'Thanks a Million Oz!' competition is walking away with a millionaire's holiday to New Zealand.

### **Swine Flu Dents Asian Arrivals** - 21 July 2009

June visitor arrival statistics have provided the first clear picture of the effect of Swine Flu on Asian visitors' confidence to travel.

### **Tourism New Zealand Chief Executive Stands Down** - 26 June 2009

George Hickton, CEO of Tourism New Zealand who has led the marketing organisation for more than a decade is to stand down at the end of this year.

### **Revamped Website Helps Trade Sell New Zealand** - 08 June 2009

A revamped website with new cutting-edge features is making selling New Zealand easier for the international travel trade.

## STARS program...

### **Sustainable Tourism Opportunity available to Tourism Coromandel members OR Launching 'The Coromandel Sustainable Tourism Group' (or whatever else you think might get their attention!!!)**

If you've picked up and read the June/July issue of Tourism Business you'll have read the update in relation to the 100% Pure New Zealand brand and that it *"has become a challenge, an aspiration and motivation to New Zealand tourism operators and to New Zealand as a whole to clean up our act, and commit to brand integrity"*.

Tourism Coromandel are demonstrating their commitment to the integrity of the brand by securing the support of the Ministry of Tourism and both local councils to provide you, the tourism operators, with access to a Sustainable tourism programme and a local Sustainable Tourism Advisor.

The STAR (Sustainable Tourism Advisor in Region) Programme which was launched to our IMG members in January is growing into *The Coromandel Sustainable Tourism Group* which will be formally launched at Information sessions open to all Tourism Coromandel members on August 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>.

The programme involves tourism operators completing a quick and simple self-assessment prior to a site visit being done by your local Sustainable Tourism Advisor, Belinda Muir. A report is then provided to you highlighting good practices already in place and opportunities for improvement. The advisor then works on an action plan with you to identify what opportunities you'd like to pursue in line with what your business can afford and deems to be a priority. The action plan is then reviewed on a regular basis and tourism operators can call on assistance from the advisor at any time.

This is also about supporting Tourism Coromandel members to be sustainable tourism operators while recognising that often time and money is the reason for not taking any formal action in this area. The Sustainability Advisor is also familiar with the Qualmark Responsible Tourism programme and Enviro ratings, so Qualmark operators may find it especially beneficial to participate in the programme and utilise the expertise of the advisor to gain a Qualmark Enviro accreditation.

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Participation in the programme will at the very least provide you with a greater understanding of what Sustainable Tourism involves and how you are performing as well as possibly identifying potential cost saving opportunities. Operators who participate in this formal sustainable tourism programme will have access to a sustainable tourism advisor to work with them, a Coromandel Sustainable Tourism newsletter every two months and invitations to future information sessions and workshops focusing on areas of sustainability. In addition, you will have access to the Coromandel Sustainable Tourism logo (to be launched at the August Information Sessions) to use on your own websites as well as exposure via new web pages on Tourism Coromandel's website which will provide tourists with information about Sustainable Tourism on the Coromandel and what participating operators are doing to ensure the Coromandel is *100% Pure New Zealand*. It is getting increasingly important that tourism operators are prepared for "*When international tourists arrive, having stomped a large carbon footprint to get here . . . [and] want to have their carbon guilt assuaged by seeing obvious signs of sustainability in their accommodation, meals, beverages and activities*" (p.27, Tourism Business, June/July issue).

Any member of Tourism Coromandel can take up the opportunity to be part of this programme for an annual fee of \$150.00 plus GST. At this stage there is no limit to the number of hours you can use an advisor's assistance for. Compare this with a *daily* cost of \$500 - \$1,000 you may be looking to pay a Sustainability Consultant if you decide to take formal action through another channel.

Invitations to the upcoming information sessions about sustainable tourism and the Coromandel Sustainable Tourism programme will be out shortly. If you would like more information about any of the above feel free to contact your Sustainable Tourism Advisor, Belinda Muir on 864 8193 or [Belinda.muir@xtra.co.nz](mailto:Belinda.muir@xtra.co.nz). Alexia Smits-Sandano has recently joined Belinda in ensuring Coromandel Tourism Operators get the assistance and support they require and you can meet her at the August information sessions.

## pohutukawa festival...

As most of you are well aware, we are in the process of putting together this year's Pohutukawa Festival Program. We are very pleased to have Power Co on board this year as our main sponsor, and United Water are back again, after many years of valued support. This year's festival will run from the 20<sup>th</sup> November through to the 6 December.

We have had a number of community groups, businesses and individuals who have already submitted their event registration and although time is almost running out, we do just want to send out one last reminder – please get your event details to Megan as soon as possible.

## homegrown festival...

Overall the 2009 HOMEGROWN Festival was again a great success. The month long festival incorporated just under 60 key events which were positioned throughout the Coromandel. The number of community organizations and businesses who adopted the concept and hosted an array of activities was extremely pleasing, and proves to us that with a positive opportunity our local communities are prepared to engage in new initiatives and get directly involved in these festivals by organizing and hosting events".

During the month of May visitors and locals were given the opportunity to participate in many activities from cooking schools and demonstrations, orchard tours, poetry evenings, art workshops, HOMEGROWN Menus,

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music concerts and a drive around the HOMETOWN Food Trail. A highlight was the inaugural Hahei Tractor Bash with over 50 tractors entered.

We were delighted to see the visitor numbers for May 2009 increased a whopping 10.1% on May 2008, bringing the visitor arrivals to the Coromandel in May to 18,481. "Viewed alongside the national arrivals, which declined by 1.4% over May 2008, it would seem we are reaching our objective of growing visitor numbers in the off season. Over the last three years the Coromandel has seen an increase of just over 5,000 visitor arrivals for the month of May, which we hope will continue to increase as a direct result of the HOMETOWN Festival". With international arrivals up 14% it shows that with the right mix of reasons to travel it is possible even in difficult times to show growth.

## tangiario kiwi retreat...

Planning is in the making for two new festivals due to be held at Tangiario Kiwi Retreat, Port Charles later this year. Billy TK Jnr and his team are planning the inaugural Paua Festival due to be held on the 24<sup>th</sup> October 2009 (Labour weekend) and then on the 31 December the International Jazz and Blues Festival will be a perfect way to launch 2010.

Details for both of these events can be obtained from Tangiario Kiwi Retreat on **0800 TANGIARIO**

## coromandel discovery – yet another award...

On 5 August Jocelyn Strongman of Coromandel Discovery opened an email titled Rankers regarding "Rankers Traveler Voted Awards 2009. On going into the Rankers Website [www.rankers.co.nz](http://www.rankers.co.nz) Jocelyn discovered Coromandel Discovery had been voted 5th in the list of tourism businesses from throughout New Zealand.

A Traveler Voted Award is quite different to any other. Over 5,000 votes were cast by the most important critic of all, the Independent Traveler. Coromandel Discovery have shown they look after their customers by going the extra mile. It's about people looking after people. These Awards are the voice of the people and showcase the good folk in NZ who look after other people best. This year, 65 awards were given in 36 categories, based on 5000+ reviews over a 12 month period. Travelers rated their experiences from 1 to 10, with comment added.

## national cycleway...

The Prime Minister's announcement recently that the Hauraki Plains Trail is one of the 7 quick starts for the National Cycleway project is excellent news and some of the more positive for the Hauraki District in recent times.

The Hauraki District has been blessed with some of the most stunning scenery and historic heritage features in New Zealand and these have progressively been opened up for the public and tourists alike by the work of the Council and the Department of Conservation. "It is my opinion that the Karangahake Gorge area, which was voted one of the 7 wonders in the Waikato Region in 2008, is a "national treasure" and the opening up of access by the Hauraki Plains Trail will result in a significant boost to local and national tourism" stated Deputy Mayor Mary Carmine.

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The Council, the Hauraki Rail Trust and the Waihi Walkways groups' dream for a nationally significant walking and cycling route through the Hauraki District will now come to fruition in the immediate future and will be a shot in the arm for the tourism sector. It is anticipated that a number of local businesses will be actively involved with the planning and development of the trail.

The timing of the announcement could not have come at a better time with the Major Regional Initiative, the \$20 million dollar Waihi Gold Discover Centre Project about to seek resource consents with initial site works and construction planned to start this coming construction session.

## my house my castle...

Manawa Ridge, a Luxury Eco Lodge located on the outskirts of Waihi, has been placed as one of the eight finalists in this years 'My House My Castle's - Castle of the year competition.

Manawa Ridge is an artistic balance of recycled beams, mud brick and straw bale walls. The creation of owners Willem and Carla van de Veen the eco- retreat resembles a hill fortress, ready for you to escape, relax and rejuvenate.

Manawa Ridge aired on Monday Night (10<sup>th</sup> August) with 1 more castle to feature Monday coming. After the final castle is aired, the voting line opens. This is where we need your help. The winner will be chosen by the My House My Castle viewers, so after the 17th August we appreciate you jumping online at [www.tvnz.co.nz/castle](http://www.tvnz.co.nz/castle) and get a vote in for Manawa Ridge.

This is a huge achievement for Willem and Carla and congratulation must be made for making it this far. Coming out as the winner would be the icing on the cake for what has been years of hands on labour to complete their dream.

Please show your support for one of our own by getting your vote in.

## So, what's coming up for tourism coromandel...

We will be heading off to Tahiti in September for 'New Zealand Week' organised by Air NZ. NZ week is three days of trade training and consumer awareness. Tahiti is the home port for the French military and their families while they are in French Polynesia, a posting usually for 2-3 years. Most of these families, while based in Tahiti, make at least one holiday to New Zealand with their families for usually 2-3 weeks.

The great thing about the Tahitian market is that it generates around 17000 arrivals into NZ virtually all of whom are FIT travellers.

We will also take part in Kiwi link India, five days of trade training with agents in Delhi and Mumbai.

Then we will be off for a ten day trade training trip to South America hosted by Kangaroo Tours, where we will attend scheduled appointments with agents from Brazil, Chile and Argentina.

Wholesalers from these countries are seeing good levels of business and seem less affected by the economic downturn. One of the reasons is that these economies are largely cash based. The locals,(with good reason) don't trust the banking system and prefer to work with cash. One wholesaler of our

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acquaintance had an extensive high- end family reunion group itinerary where the client brought out the proverbial brief case and handed over, over a million dollars in cash!

Three publications, the Visitor Guide, Events Calendar and Homegrown Food Trail brochures will all be published and ready for distribution prior to Christmas.

We have had a couple of enquiries regarding MINI TRENZ and when we expect to be holding this next. We had hoped to be able to host another MINI TENZ around September/October but unfortunately due to limited staff resources and the need to prioritise our activities we will not hold the event until March. March coincides with the lead up to TRENZ and Inbounders are looking at renewing their brochures and programmes.

In our events department we will continue to coordinate the Scallop Festival and the Pohutukawa Festival, while also working on the planning and sponsorship of a new event due to be launched in July 2010. A comprehensive economic impact report on this year's Scallop Festival will be produced to gauge up to date statistical information on the festivals economic contribution to the region.

A comprehensive events planning publication, in conjunction with TCDC, is in the development stage. It is hoped by the end of next year the final document will be available for event organisers on the Coromandel. Further to this publication additional information will be available for event organisers via both the TCDC and Tourism Coromandel websites.

A database of entertainers, stall holders (food and craft) and preferred supplies for use by event organisers is also under development and hoped to be completed by mid 2010.

## agm

This years AGM will be held at Grande Mercure Puka Park Thursday 24 September at 1700 for 1730.

The format will be similar to other years with a business session followed by presentation of the annual plan then dinner and a guest speaker.

Jennifer Harper of Puka Park is getting prices together and we will get these out to you in a special email. The annual accounts will be circulated along with the agenda and any supporting documents closer to the date of the meeting.

## next newsletter...

We aim to continue these newsletters, and get back on track as we have in the past. Newsletters will now be quarterly and will coincide with the seasons (this initial one is just a bit out of sync). In the meantime, until we employ a new marketing coordinator please forward your news items to [megan@thecoromandel.com](mailto:megan@thecoromandel.com)

Next Issue – Summer (due out in December 2009)  
Autumn (due out in March 2010)  
Winter (due out in June 2010)  
Spring (due out in September 2010)