

Media Release  
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## **First Five for Qualmark's New Exclusive Accommodation Status**

Qualmark New Zealand has just announced that five of New Zealand's finest accommodation properties are now licence holders in the new Exclusive accommodation category.

The first properties in New Zealand to carry the Exclusive accommodation status are; **Blanket Bay in Glenorchy, Huka Lodge in Taupo, Treetops Lodge & Estate and Okareka Lake House both near Rotorua and Wharekauhau Country Estate in Wairarapa.**

"The new Exclusive accommodation category recognises accommodation experiences that are the best that New Zealand has to offer", says Qualmark New Zealand Chief Executive, Geoff Penrose.

The term 'Exclusive' has been developed to encapsulate accommodation establishments that are highly individual and intimate. It includes those which offer the finest of locations, facilities, activities and service in New Zealand. Exclusive accommodation experiences offer escapes from the norm, with incomparable locations, admirably discreet staff, faultless service and outstanding activities and excursions. They deliver an unparalleled experience for the most discerning visitor.

The Exclusive assessment process concentrates on the actual guest experience. "Each property is evaluated across 14 areas during an unannounced overnight visit. Our assessor is looking to identify aspects of the experience that distinguish the accommodation as truly outstanding", adds Geoff. Maintaining anonymity throughout the overnight stay is an integral requirement of the assessment.

Wharekauhau Country Estate is delighted with their new Exclusive accommodation status. According to General Manager, Bruce Garrett, "It is a credit to the efforts of my whole team and their commitment to excellence in all areas. The new category will enable guests who have very high expectations to correctly identify the accommodation levels they seek." (cont)

The Exclusive accommodation category has been created with full consultation from the industry. A number of properties have been actively involved in the initial assessment process, providing valuable feedback throughout. “The Exclusive Qualmark® has truly created a distinction in the high-end accommodation sector giving the customer a better understanding of what really is available in New Zealand. I’m very pleased that Qualmark has created this new category and I’ve certainly taken the ample opportunities to provide feedback during the pilot phase”, says Philip Jenkins from Blanket Bay.

“We’re very proud of our new status”, comments Huka Lodge General Manager, Co Engels. “The process was very professionally done”, he concluded.

There are two properties near Rotorua that now hold the new Exclusive accommodation status. John Sax, owner of Treetops Lodge and Estate is passionate about the importance of striving for and achieving excellence in the international market place. “The Exclusive accommodation status will provide the industry with a key tool to achieve excellence and it is only through this excellence that we will grow our discerning visitor market”.

Barbara Cook from Okareka Lake House is equally delighted at the accolade. “We’re positive that the Exclusive accommodation status will significantly assist our marketing efforts to our potential customer seeking the ‘X’ factor”.

The ‘Exclusive’ accommodation category was announced by the Minister of Tourism, the Hon Mark Burton, at TRENZ in May 2004.

Exclusive accommodation applications are open for properties that have achieved excellent 5 Star Qualmark® ratings in Guest & Hosted, Hotel, or Self-Contained & Serviced categories. Each property must meet additional quality scores, to a very high level. Supplementary information is also required on application and this forms the basis of desk research on the property, prior to the on-site assessment.

**ENDS**

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**For further details on the new Exclusive accommodation category properties, please contact:-**

Blanket Bay

[www.blanketbay.com](http://www.blanketbay.com)

Contact: Philip Jenkins

Ph: 03 442 9442

Huka Lodge

[www.hukalodge.com](http://www.hukalodge.com)

Contact: Co Engels

Ph: 07 378 5791

Treetops Lodge

[www.treetops.co.nz](http://www.treetops.co.nz)

Contact: John Sax

Ph 0274 748 452

Wharekauhau Country Estate

[www.wharekauhau.co.nz](http://www.wharekauhau.co.nz)

Contact: Bruce Garrett

Ph 06 307 7581

Okareka Lake House

[www.okareka.co.nz](http://www.okareka.co.nz)

Contact: Barbara Cook

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