

Media Release

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QUALMARK NEW ZEALAND SHOOTS FOR THE STARS

New Zealand's official tourism quality agency, Qualmark New Zealand today announced that the organisation has awarded its 1000th accommodation licence.

'The Lake' motel in Taupo is the 1000th property to apply for their Qualmark® star grading and this was recognised by the Minister of Tourism, the Honourable Mark Burton, at a ceremony in Taupo today.

The event was commemorated by Qualmark Chief Executive, Geoff Penrose and Manish Vara, owner of The Lake, 'shooting for the stars' as they experience a tandem skydive with Taupo Tandem Skydive. A small ceremony followed with guests including management from Destination Lake Taupo, the Mayor of Taupo, principals of The Lake & Taupo Tandem Skydive and the media.

In total, Qualmark has awarded 3615.5 stars throughout the accommodation sector since it was re-launched in 2002. Properties have various star ratings, from one to five.

"Reaching the 1000th accommodation licence is a real accolade for the organisation and we congratulate Manish Vara from The Lake for his commitment to strive for quality in his business", comments CEO, Geoff Penrose.

The Lake motel was taken over by Manish Vara two years ago and he set about to completely refurbish the property. "We have designed each of our five rooms individually in a retro style", he comments. "The motel is quite distinctive for this reason and we have sought the Qualmark system to assess the property from an external perspective. We see it as our safety stamp", adds Manish.

It was double celebration as Taupo Tandem Skydiving also received their Qualmark® endorsement. Endorsement is the award for the non-accommodation sector and Taupo Tandem Skydiving is one of the first to be assessed using the new skydiving criteria. Criteria

for specific sectors of the tourism industry are developed in consultation with the appropriate sector. "Fritz and the team at Taupo Tandem Skydiving were very instrument in the establishment of the new skydiving criteria and Qualmark appreciates their contribution," adds Geoff.

"The 1000th licence is a significant milestone for Qualmark and follows shortly after the launch of the new 'exclusive' accommodation category and enhanced presence on www.newzealand.com, Tourism New Zealand's official consumer web site", adds Geoff.

Domestic and international visitors can easily identify Qualmark businesses and this assists in their selection process for quality accommodation and sightseeing.

Qualmark New Zealand is a joint venture of the Automobile Association and Tourism New Zealand. Since its re launch in 2002, Qualmark has licenced over 1300 quality assured operators throughout New Zealand. All tourism businesses are eligible to apply.

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