

Media release
25 May 2004



New Zealand's finest accommodation gets an Exclusive quality status

Next summer international visitors seeking top of the range accommodation will be able to look for a new Exclusive accommodation category from Qualmark - New Zealand tourism's official quality assurance system.

Announced today by the Minister of Tourism, the Hon Mark Burton, the Qualmark™ Exclusive status has been developed with the tourism industry so that New Zealand's up-market accommodation is easily identified by international visitors by the Qualmark™ - New Zealand tourism's official mark of quality.

As the name suggests, the Qualmark™ Exclusive status is for establishments that are truly at the top of New Zealand's accommodation market.

"Exclusive includes intimate, exclusive and highly individual establishments which offer the finest of locations, facilities, activities and service," says Fiona Luhrs, Qualmark Chief Executive.

"They range from destination retreats offering golf, fishing, food and wine or wilderness adventures, to stylish urban and design hotels and secluded beach or lake front villas.

"They are escapes from the norm, with incomparable locations, admirably discreet staff, faultless service and outstanding activities and excursions. Most provide dinner which is usually included in the tariff along with other meals. However, some are bed and breakfast only, while others are self catering or available with chef and service staff."

The term 'Exclusive' was chosen after careful investigation into what international visitors expect when they hear terms such as 'luxury' and 'exclusive'.

"Research showed that 'luxury' conjures up images of types of accommodation that is not available in New Zealand," says Ms Luhrs.

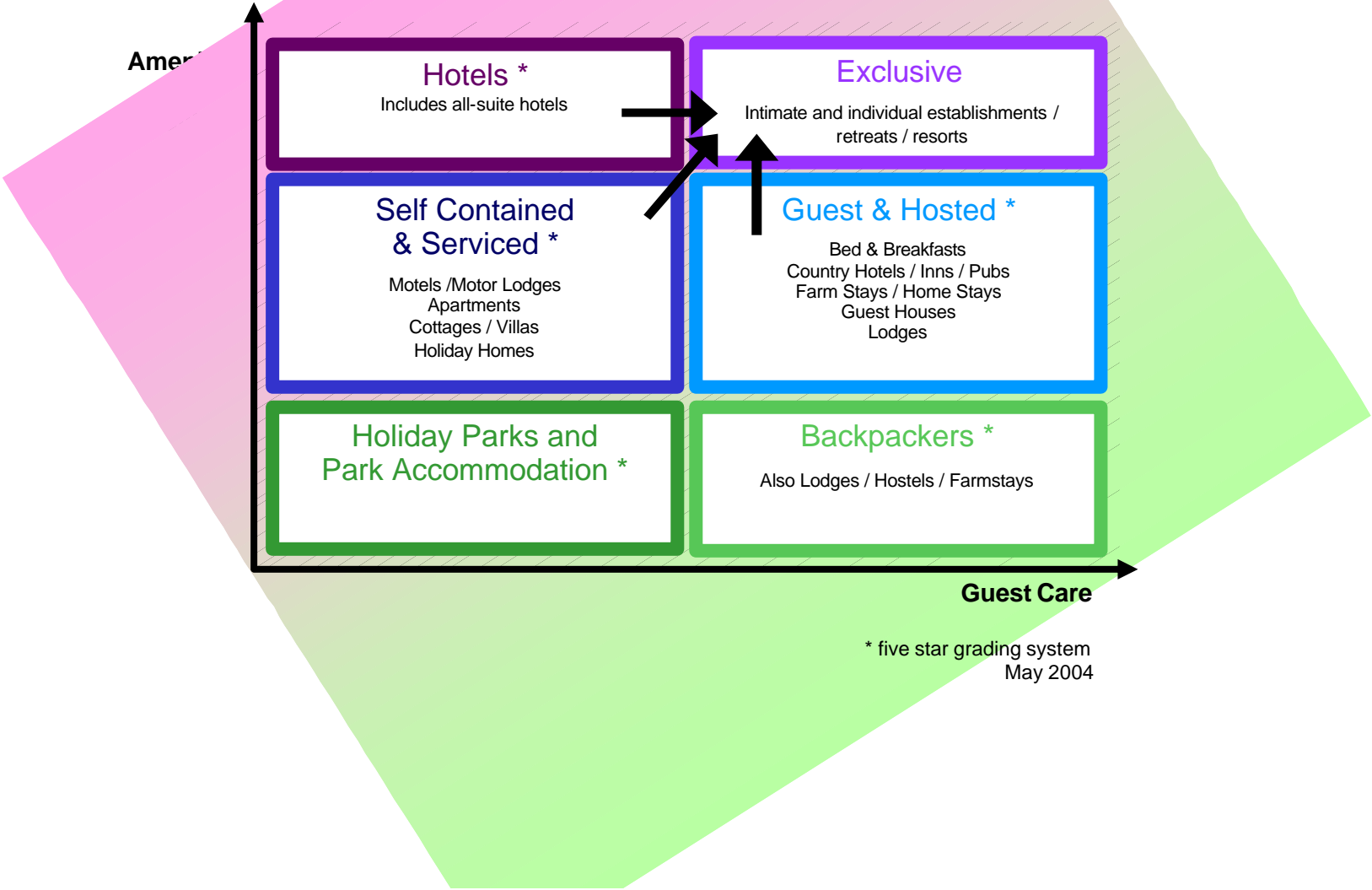
"'Exclusive' was chosen after research showed that it's the term that best matched the top of the range accommodation available in New Zealand. That is, small, intimate, elegant, sophisticated, private and aimed at up-scale individuals."

Properties that have achieved a five star grade with a 90% or better score can apply for the Qualmark™ Exclusive status. They then have to meet additional requirements including stability of management, established track record, undertaking international marketing, appropriately qualified staff and reference checks.

Once these criteria are met, the receipt of an Exclusive status is based around the experience of an unannounced overnight assessor.

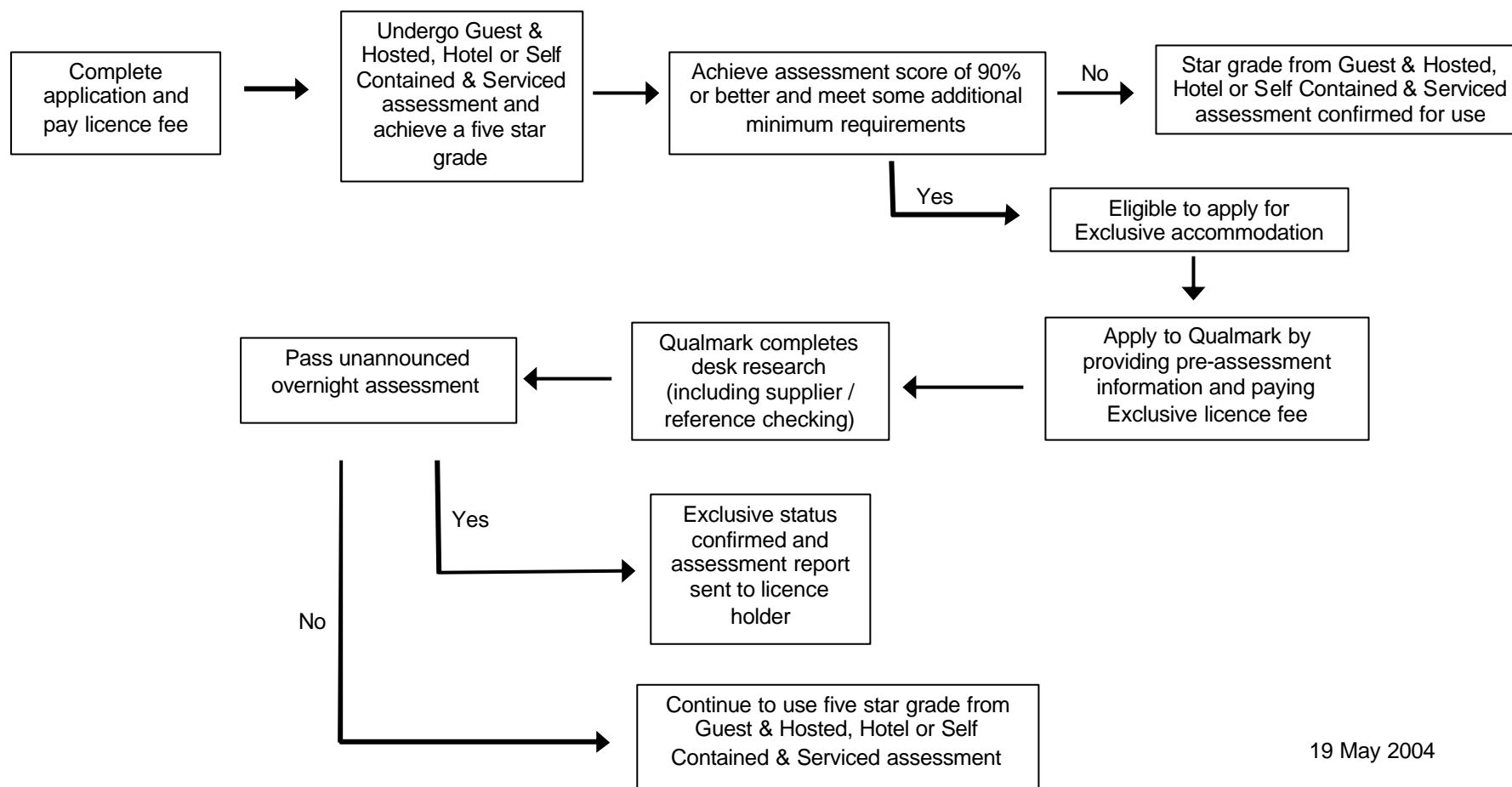
ENDS

Qualmark's six accommodation categories



* five star grading system
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Exclusive Accommodation Assessment Process



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