



AIR NEW ZEALAND  
COOK ISLANDS  
TOURISM AWARDS  
2016



**Cook Islands NEWS**  
AS SOLID AS THE ISLANDS WE STAND FOR



SINCE 1891

## Tourism Awards Finalists Announced Thursday 31 March, 2016

The Cook Islands Tourism Industry Council has announced the finalists for this year's Air New Zealand Tourism Awards. The list is made up of the 33 businesses who achieved merit or better in 5 out of 7 criteria within their category.

The judges for the 2015/2016 Air New Zealand Cook Islands Tourism Business Awards were selected by Project Manager for the Judging of the Awards, Elizabeth Latham. Elizabeth designed the application and the judging criteria to ensure a fair and transparent process for all who entered the awards.

The judges Phillip Reay and Lucy Hodgson live and work in New Zealand and are new to the Cook Islands. They were selected for their complimentary skills within the fields of Tourism and Hospitality. Both of the judges are industry professionals and bring skills in assessment and evaluation as well as current industry practical knowledge within successful tourism operations.

The judges have completed their evaluations of the Cook Islands Tourism Businesses and have selected an overall winner that stood out for its sound business practices, innovation and continuous improvement.

Category winners and special awards winners have also been selected for their excellence within a specific area of business activity.

On announcing the list Tourism Industry President John Webb said "the very fact that 33 of our tourism businesses have come through shows great health amongst the tourism industry here in the Cooks".

"We, as in the Tourism Industry Council have known for a long time we have quality products and experiences on offer, but it's great to get that opinion backed up by external professionals".

Whilst the Judges may have made their choices the public has until the end of today to nominate individuals they think have made an outstanding or lifetime contribution to the industry in this country.

People are being asked to look back over the history of tourism in these islands and to think of individuals worthy of two special awards; one for most outstanding contribution to tourism and the second for a lifetime achievement in tourism.

Nominations for these special awards will be the people's choice and need to be in by the end of today (31 March). People wishing to nominate should consult the Tourism Industry Council website at [www.tourismindustry.co.ck](http://www.tourismindustry.co.ck).

All the Awards will be presented at what will be a glittering gala event with dinner, entertainment, guest speakers Sir Michael Hill and Air New Zealand's Chief Sales and Commercial Officer Cam Wallace and some special elements of surprise and glamour at the National Auditorium Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April. Tickets which are expected to sell out can be purchased from Turama House or phone 23-026.

The finalists are:

Ariki Adventures, Captain Tama's. Castaway Resort, Destination Management CI, Edgewater Resort, Highland Paradise, Ikurangi Eco Resort, Island Discovery Tour, Kaireva Beach House, Koka Lagoon Cruises, Makalya Palms, Moorings Café, Motu2Motu, Muri Beach Club Hotel, Pa's Treks, Pacific Resort Aitutaki, Pacific Resort Rarotonga, Palm Grove, Sands Villas, Sails Restaurant, Sea Change Villas, South Pacific Publishing, Storytellers Eco Cycle Tour, Sunset Resort, Raro Tours, Rumours Villas, Taakoka Muri Beach Villas, Tamarind House, Tikitour, Tuoro Café, Te Manava, Te Vara Nui and Wedded Bliss.

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For further information on the awards go to [www.tourismindustry.co.ck](http://www.tourismindustry.co.ck) or email [ci.tourism.awards@gmail.com](mailto:ci.tourism.awards@gmail.com)