

For immediate release

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Walking backwards into the future on the Tarawera Experience

A colourful scarred ravine streaks 17 kilometres across the peak of Mt Tarawera, a stark reminder of the 1886 eruption and the starting point for the TRENZ 2019 Tarawera tour.

"Ka mua, ka muri" is a whakatauki (Maori proverb) which means "walking backwards into the future" - the idea we should look to the past to inform the future.

Destination Rotorua chief executive Michelle Templer says the TRENZ 2019 Tarawera Experience encompasses this, taking visitors to the beginning of tourism in New Zealand, recreating the original round trip of the 1900s.

"Flying over the site of the devastating Mt Tarawera eruption and walking through the valley left in its wake, is the starting point to walking in the footsteps of Rotorua's history."

Originally the famous Māori Guide, Sophia Hinerangi, led visitors from Tarawera to the Pink and White Terraces.

140 years on, Sophia's Tūhourangi iwi (tribe) descendents have restored her guiding legacy with Totally Tarawera, who will guide TRENZ visitors from Lake Tarawera, over the Isthmus Track to Lake Rotomahana, the youngest naturally formed lake in New Zealand.

The mana whenua (people of this land) Ngāti Rangitihi have a unique partnership with Tūhourangi and representing this, the visitors will be greeted at the lake shores by Ken Raureti of iwi (tribe) Ngāti Rangitihi to board the Waimangu Volcanic Valley boat *Ariki Moana*. Crossing the lake formed by the eruption, visitors can literally ka mua, ka muri (walk backwards into the future) using Waimangu's new augmented reality (AR) app.

It resurrects the eighth wonder of the world - the Pink and White Terrace silica hot springs, buried under the lake by the Mt Tarawera eruption. It also brings to life the now extinct Waimangu Geyser, which was known to erupt up to 450 metres high, roughly the same size as the Empire State Building. This gives a first-hand experience of the natural wonders of the 1900s which drew people to New Zealand.

Waimangu Volcanic Valley general manager, David Blackmore says the AR experience was developed using work from early explorers Ferdinand von Hochstetter and Charles Spencer, GNS Science insights and the latest locational research by NIWA, as well as old reference photos and paintings.

The experience of standing in the world's youngest geothermal system, while immersed in the stories recounted by Tūhourangi descendants, will provide TRENZ delegates with a memorable connection between past and present.

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Media contact:

Jo Holmes

Destination Rotorua

Communications manager

P: +64 7 351 7623

M: +64 (0) 272 320 848

E: jo@rotoruanz.com

www.rotoruanz.com

More information:

MOUNT TARAWERA ERUPTION:

In the early hours of 10 June, 1886, people awoke to the Mt Tarawera eruption with earthquakes, lightning, fountains of molten rock, and columns of smoke and ash up to 10 km high.

The eruption lasted six hours and caused massive destruction. It destroyed several villages, along with the famous silica hot springs known as the Pink and White Terraces. Approximately 120 people, nearly all Māori, lost their lives.

A 17-km-long rift split Mt Tarawera and extended as far south as Waimangu. The eruption covered land with millions of tonnes of ash and debris, transformed lakes, and flattened bush. SOURCE: nzhistory.govt.nz

PINK AND WHITE TERRACES:

Considered the 8th Wonder of the World, the Pink and White Terraces were the original New Zealand tourism destination, until they were buried in the 1886 eruption of Mt Tarawera.

The terraces formed over thousands of years as silica-rich water emerging from springs and boiling geysers crystallised into giant tiered staircases. The White Terrace covered more than three hectares while the smaller Pink Terrace was used for bathing on the lower levels. There was also a smaller, lesser known feature called Tuhi's Spring, or the Black Terrace.

In late 2018, a 19th century diary and hand-drawn maps led Niwa scientists to confirm the location of the Pink and White Terraces – see more in this news story [here](#).

WAIMANGU GEOTHERMAL SYSTEM:

Waimangu is home to the World's youngest geothermal system formed as the result of the Mt Tarawera eruption on 10 June 1886. It is the only geothermal system in the World created within written history.

It has been monitored and recorded since it was formed, providing a unique record of the evolution of a new eco system. The Waimangu geothermal system is powered by a large magma dome (molten lava) that is only about 2 km below the Earth's surface and situated in the south west corner of Lake Rotomahana.

The surface features of the geothermal system include:

- 200 large hot springs in the bottom of Lake Rotomahana.
- Frying Pan Lake, one of the World's largest hot water springs.
- Inferno Crater, the World's largest Crypto Geyser (geyser-like feature)
- Rare geothermal silica terraces
- Myriad hot springs and steaming vents throughout Waimangu Valley.
- Lake Rotomahana is the deepest of the Rotorua lakes and is said to contain the purest strain of rainbow trout in the world. Lake Rotomahana is 900 Ha in size and its total catchment area is 8370 Ha. The average depth of this lake is 60m and at its deepest point it is 125 m.

See: <https://www.waimangu.co.nz/history>

Read more about the augmented reality app [here](#).

VOLCANIC AIR

Media will depart from Volcanic Air's Rotorua city lakefront pier, experiencing the thrill of a floatplane take off, before climbing above Mokoia Island on track to the hidden lakes district and the volcanic peaks of Mount Tarawera. At 3,680 feet in elevation this majestic volcano dominates the surrounding landscape and plays centre piece to the stunning lakes that surround it. Above Tarawera views

of cavernous craters reveal the power of what was the largest eruption in New Zealand's living memory. <https://volcanicair.co.nz/>

TOTALLY TARAWERA

Totally Tarawera is a whānau (family) owned and operated business at Lake Tarawera in Rotorua.

The business takes great pride in warmly welcoming manuhiri (visitors) to the region. Manaakitanga (hospitality) is one of the core values that drives the way Rotorua does business especially on our own tribal lands at Tarawera. As hosts, we care for customers and our team as our own whānau (family).

Totally Tarawera's tourism roots extend back to when our ancestors were the guides for many of the first Europeans coming to visit New Zealand's first tourism attraction, the "Pink and White Terraces," then considered the eighth Wonder of the World. Karen, our head guide, is a granddaughter of Sofia – one of Rotorua's most famous local tourism guides. Tourism allows us to host manuhiri (visitors), reconnect with our roto (lakes), ngāmaunga (mountain) and provide lasting memories for our customers.

Through our storytelling based experiences we are also able to share one of our tribe's most precious treasures –the stories of our traditions.

*Mō tātou, ā, mō kā uri, ā muri ake nei
For us and our children after us*

<https://www.totallytarawera.com>