



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

SCORECARD 2017/2018



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INTRODUCTION

The Cook Islands Tourism Corporation is mandated under the Cook Islands Tourism Marketing Corporation Act 1998 & Amendment 2007. The primary objective of the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation is to encourage and promote the development of tourism in the Cook Islands in such a manner which is economically viable, socially acceptable and environmentally sustainable.

The vision for Cook Islands Tourism is: “Tourism advances the well-being of resident Cook Islanders” which is in line with the 2016-2020 National Sustainable Development Plan, Goal 2 which states to, “Expand economic opportunities, improve economic resilience and productive employment to ensure decent work for all.”

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Destination Development Strategy encompasses key areas that will sharpen the unique selling proposition of the Cook Islands and enhance the visitor experience. This strategy is essentially to expand the length of stay for the visitors, incentivise travel in the low & shoulder season and boost the overall economic yield from increased tourism receipts.

Under the Core Sector Support Programme with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade of New Zealand the following program pillars govern Destination Development activities:

- Tourism related infrastructure
- Event development
- Tourism Enterprise Development & Industry Standards
- Strategic Planning

The following showcases the key achievements of Destination Development from 2017/2018 under these same pillars but also including a higher level of community engagement activities like the Kia Orana Values program.



TOURISM RELATED INFRASTRUCTURE

This strategy is designed for visitor convenience and to connect areas of environmental and cultural significance which will improve the economic impact of tourism and enhance visitor experiences



WASTE MANAGEMENT (PUBLIC BINS & RUBBISH COLLECTION) & PUBLIC TOILETS

A joint project was undertaken with ICI through WATSAN to assist with waste management issues.

- Public Bins such as the 'pods' below were purchased to be placed in public areas to reduce litter in these high visibility areas frequented by visitors
- A CCTV camera was purchased to be installed in a particular area to monitor the use of the public bins
- Production and distribution of fridge magnets to encourage the separation of household rubbish and highlight the days of roadside collection

A pilot project was undertaken to fix one of the public toilets in Avarua to gauge the costs of fixing or renovating other public toilets on Rarotonga



MAUKE CAVE INFRASTRUCTURE

Basic infrastructure needs to be developed to meet safety requirements and assist with access to the cave entrances. The three caves on Mauke that will undergo cave infrastructure development will include Vai Tango, Vai Tunamea and Vai Moti. Recommendations by the cave experts include the removal of rubbish within the area and the erection of 'cave diving safety' signs and 'no littering' signs as well as the installation of rubbish bins.



VAI TANGO:

- STAIRS WITH HANDRAIL AND PLATFORM
- CAVE DIVING SAFETY SIGNS
- 'NO LITTERING' SIGNS
- RUBBISH BINS
- RUBBISH STAND

VAI TUNAMEA:

- BUILD STAIRS AND HANDRAIL/INSTALL LADDER AND HANDRAIL

VAI MOTI:

- BUILD STAIRS AND HANDRAIL/INSTALL LADDER AND HANDRAIL
- CAVE DIVING SAFETY SIGNS

JOINT PROJECT WITH MAUKE ISLAND GOVERNMENT AND KOUTU
TUROTO O MAUKE (MAUKE TOURISM COUNCIL)





EVENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Development of a year round programme of special events timed to stimulate the low and shoulder tourist seasons and attract visitors to the Cook Islands with a range of cultural, artistic and sporting activities.



EVENT SUPPORT

Event support was provided to existing local events to encourage an international focus and target the issue of visitor seasonality as well as ensure the successful delivery of signature events. In addition we sponsored love a little paradise T-shirts to a small number groups who represented the Cook Islands internationally.

The following events received support:

CULTURAL/COMMUNITY EVENTS

Te Mire Ura - National Dancer of the Year
International Dancer of the Year (IDOTY)
Vaka Eiva Trade Days
Aitutaki Christmas in the Park
Autism Awareness program
School Cultural Competition - Highland
Paradise
Ui Ariki Day Celebrations

CUISINE EVENTS

Pacific Rim Global Chefs Challenge
NZ Chefs Gala Dinner
Hoi An International Food Festival
38th World Chefs Congress
Takurua O 'Avaiki Raro, 'Avaiki
Vaenga, Manavanui

SPORTS

Cook Islands Rugby League 9's
Cook Islands Cricket Association
Pursuit in Paradise – Aitutaki Marathon
CommonWealth Games
Rising Stars Netball competition
Te Maeva Nui Bowling Festival; Uplift
Tours

**18 EVENTS
RECEIVED SUPPORT**
7 CULTURAL/COMMUNITY
EVENTS, 5 CUISINE EVENTS,
6 SPORTS EVENTS



PURSUIT IN PARADISE – AITUTAKI MARATHON

Pursuit in Paradise – Aitutaki Marathon was held at the beginning of May 2018 with the aim of making it an annual or biennial event. The week-long itinerary consisted of an optional lagoon cruise including a Fun Run and Hash House Harriers.

This event contributed a direct boost to the economy in Aitutaki, as well as providing a platform for promotion and marketing for Aitutaki and the Cook Islands.

A portion of the profits from the proceeds will go into a youth trust fund for athletics or educational purposes on Aitutaki. Nine countries were represented from Austria, Australia, Cook Islands, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Scotland, and the USA.



PURSUIT IN
PARADISE
AITUTAKI
MARATHON

- 44 COMPETITORS

- VISITORS STAYED IN NINE DIFFERENT AITUTAKI ACCOMMODATIONS



CULTURE EVENTS

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation partnered with the Ministry of Cultural Development to support the International Dancer of the Year and the National Dancer of the Year competitions.

The international dancer of the year was held in November, 2017 and the National Dancer of the year competition was held in May, 2018. The financial assistance provided by Tourism went towards the prizes for the winning individuals for both competitions as well as the Tiare week events.

IDOTY
TE MIRE ÛRA
& TIARE WEEK
CULTURAL
COMPETITIONS



CUISINE STRATEGY – TAKURUA

The Takurua O 'Avaiki Raro, 'Avaiki Vaenga, Manavanui programme was designed to research, develop and showcase Cook Islands cuisine through a series of workshops, site visits and food events.

Takurua was held over the course of one week from the 26th of June to the 2nd of July starting with a taste of traditional Maori dishes at Highland Paradise, for the team of visiting international chefs and various stakeholders.

Following this event was a series of visits to plantations, vegetable gardens and a fishing

excursion to showcase foodstuff on offer. Workshops were held with students, chefs and cuisine stakeholders.

A panel discussion followed the site visits focusing on the topics of supply and demand (food security), healthy foods, and culture & foods with experts in these fields discussing the cuisine challenges faced in the Cook Islands.

This all helped to set the scene for the team of international chefs with a team of local chefs to develop a menu for a gala dinner.

The Takurua programme ended in spectacular style with a special dinner prepared for invited guests at Te Vara Nui Village on the 2nd of July, as well as a full dinner service at Sails Restaurant on the 3rd and 4th of July.

By infusing the past and present through 'Takurua' a new branding of Cook Islands Cuisine, Cook Islands Tourism and partners plan to develop Cook Islands Cuisine as a way to improve visitor yield and encourage food tourism as a niche.




TAKURUA
O 'AVAIIKI-RARO, 'AVAIIKI VAENGA, MANAVANUI



**LOCAL
INGREDIENTS
WERE SOURCED FROM THE
OUTER ISLANDS:
WILD BOAR - ATIU
KORORI - MANIHIKI
GOAT - MANGAIA**

NZ CHEF'S GALA DINNER

The Cook Islands Chefs Association accepted an opportunity from the New Zealand Chefs Association to send through 5 of their Top Chefs to upskill Cook Islands Chefs and support the Fundraising Gala Dinner. The New Zealand Team consisted of: Graham Hawke, Darren Wright, Greg Piner, Mark Sycamore and Ganesh Khedekar. All Chefs brought to Rarotonga their knowledge and skill sets, which was showcased on the Gala Dinner.

PACIFIC RIM GLOBAL CHEFS CHALLENGE

The Cook Islands were invited to compete against other countries in the Pacific Region to finalise the Pacific representatives to the World finals which would be held in Kuala Lumpur 2018 and Lyon and Paris 2019. This was an opportunity to compete and showcase our people and skills on the international stage from 10 – 13 October 2017 at the Global Chef & Young Chef Semi-Finals in Guam.

THE HOI AN INTERNATIONAL FOOD FESTIVAL

The Cook Islands was invited as 1 of 12 countries in the world to showcase their traditional foods at the 3rd Annual Hoi An International Food Festival. Following the success of the first two years' events, the third Hoi An International Food Festival – “Taste the World,” took place from 13 – 17th March 2018, organised by Hoi An Culinary Events and Hoi An People's Committee.





TOURISM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT & INDUSTRY STANDARDS

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMUNITY

This strategy includes providing tourism enterprise programs to meet the needs of the industry. Community engagement includes projects designed to positively engage communities and government agencies to address issues impacting tourism.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

This strategy is to increase hospitality industry education opportunities available to the Cook Islands. This will encourage youth to stay in the country to train and work rather than emigrate and improving standards of service and experience delivery.



VAKA PRIDE COMPETITION

Three years have passed for the Vaka Pride competition with eight rounds in total since its launch and a combined prize pool of \$80,000 over the span of three years. The funding won by the community over the years has gone into some amazing community projects.

Community projects such as:

Vaka Dog control programme, Tidying beaches, Beautification of Blackrock, support police volunteer programs, Upkeep of burial grounds, renovation of bus shelters, purchase of ride on lawn mower, clearing of Raemaru trek and clearing of the stream.



TE VAKA O RU COMPETITION

Te Vaka O Ru (TVOR) competition is a sister initiative of Vaka Pride on Rarotonga and is now in its second year cycle on the island of Aitutaki. TVOR serves as Aitutaki's opportunity to win funding towards a community project of their choice. With a total prize pool of \$5,000 for each round and a total prize amount of \$20,000 for the full year cycle, TVOR has gained much momentum from the people of Aitutaki. Whilst TVOR has the same judging categories as Vaka Pride, some elements have been adjusted to better suit the island of Aitutaki. Judging is conducted by the TVOR committee, made up of representatives from Ministry of Health, National Environment Services, Cook Islands Police, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Aitutaki Conservation Trust and Cook Islands Tourism.

JUDGING BY VILLAGES:
AMURI, UREIA, ARUTANGA,
REUREU, NIKAUPARA, TAUTU,
VAIPAE & VAIPEKA



TOURISM WEEK

The United Nations declared 2017 the Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development and in keeping with this theme Cook Islands Tourism and partners organised activities for visitors to participate in during Epetoma o te Turoto or Tourism Week. Tourism week was from Monday 25th to Friday 29th September.

Daily activities were scheduled from 11.30am to 1pm each day at the Maire Nui Park, as part of Tourism Week. The purpose of Tourism Week was to celebrate all things relating to Tourism, and the activities at the Maire Nui Park highlighted Cook Islands culture and heritage as a key part of the Tourism industry.

"TOURISM WEEK HIGHLIGHTED
COOK ISLANDS CULTURE &
HERITAGE"

KIA ORANA WEEK

Following on from the successful Tourism Week in September 2017, Cook Islands Tourism will now hold visitor activities at the end of every quarter. The Kia Orana week was held from the 19th to the 23rd of March at the Maire Nui Park. It was a successful week showcasing different elements of Cook Islands culture and heritage to visitors on the island. Visitors and passing locals have been provided a week of entertainment, fun and authentic activities with Meitaki hospitality right through Kia Orana Week.

40 + VISITORS A DAY TO
VARIOUS ACTIVITIES ON SHOW

NEXT STEP: THE NEXT MEITAKI
WEEK WILL COINCIDE WITH WORLD
TOURISM DAY IN
SEPTEMBER

A1 MEITAKI AWARDS

The A1 Meitaki Award nomination is an avenue for visitors to give credit to individuals or businesses who have contributed to ensuring that they have had an enriching experience in our little paradise. Aitutaki started their tourism week by hosting their first ever A1 Meitaki awards ceremony on Monday the 25th of September.

Then on Wednesday, September the 27th in commemoration of 'World Tourism Day' Cook Islands Tourism publicly acknowledged the 'Top 30' A1 Meitaki Award nominees of the A1 Meitaki Awards programme in Rarotonga for the period Jan – July 2017.



KIA ORANA VALUES MEDIA BUY & SUPPORT

This funding was used to produce materials and support the work that the Kia Orana Ambassadors carry out in the community, government and industry. It allowed for

Kia Orana Values (KOV) collateral such as flash drives, KOV booklets, KOV pull up banners and Love a little paradise bags. In addition bulk media was purchased in tele-

vision, print and radio advertising to share the Kia Orana message



**MEDIA BUY
2017/18**
84 KIA ORANA TELEVISION
COMMERCIAL RUNS, 336 RADIO
ADVERTISEMENTS, 48 HERALD MEAN
MORE WHEN YOU SAY MEITAKI PAGE
ADVERTISEMENTS



PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOPS

Cook Islands Tourism conducted two Photography Workshops in the lead up to the Takurua Cuisine Event with the purpose of engaging with local photographers with a focus on event and food photography styles and building their capacity. Other objectives included collating a range of event and food images for promotional use and to engage with non-accredited photographers and encourage buy in.

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP | MONDAY 25TH JUNE

With local photographer Melanie Cooper

EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP | WEDNESDAY 27TH JUNE

With Cannon Food photographer Derek Smith (based in Auckland)



"FEEDBACK

FROM THE PARTICIPANTS THEMSELVES
 WAS REALLY POSITIVE, WITH EACH
 TAKING AWAY SOMETHING DIFFERENT
 FROM THE WORKSHOPS. EVEN THE MOST
 'PROFESSIONAL' OF THE PARTICIPANTS
 WAS VERY IMPRESSED WITH THE WORK-
 SHOPS AND REALLY GOT ENGAGED"

Instagram post by Derek Smith (Food Photographer) after the session, comment by 'donjulios' (Jullian Zeman, Turama Photography) highlighted in pink.



donjulios Awesome experience, thank you @chefphotography and @cookislands for the opportunity

chefphotography Thanks for the comment glad you had a great day!

bite_me_food @donjulios

OPERATION ARDERN

Earlier this year the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Jacinda Ardern visited Rarotonga. The Kia Orana Ambassadors were fortunate enough to present the Kia Orana values to the New Zealand delegation. The presentation was held on Motu Kōromiri and was a huge success with the NZ delegation. During her opening speech at the state dinner, Jacinda Ardern mentioned the Kia Orana Values and its similarities to the NZ Maori values including its significance and value to the Cook Islands. This prominent visit to the Cook Islands from Jacinda Ardern and her delegation will be one to treasure for a long time.

TOURISM AWARDS

Cook Islands top tourism industry members were celebrated on Friday 20 April at the Air New Zealand Cook Islands Tourism Awards 2018 held at Te Are Karioi Nui National Auditorium in Avarua.

The 2018 Tourism Awards recognised those in the tourism industry that have shown business initiative, excellence, and dedication to quality.

Organised by the Cook Islands Tourism Industry Council, the awards are given in three sections: the Special Awards, the Business Category Awards, and the Special Individual Awards.

With almost eighty entrants, the two independent New Zealand-based judges, both industry professionals, visited the Cook Islands in February to interview the 27 finalists in the Business Category Awards.



WORLD MARITIME DAY

World Maritime Day was celebrated on the 29th of September 2017. Cook Islands Tourism joined forces with Maritime Cook Islands to celebrate World Maritime Day with a maritime expo offered to the primary students on Rarotonga. The Cook Islands Tourism staff set up a booth where they demonstrated knot techniques with ropes such as the bowline knot.



MARITIME CAREERS EXPO

The Maritime Careers Expo was held on the 25th of June and was an educational initiative supported by Cook Islands Tourism Corporation. The careers expo held at the Ports was attended by students from Araura College, Tereora College, Titikaveka College, Nukutere College and Imanuela Akatemia with the invitation extended to the general public as well. It was an opportunity to explore job opportunities and identify career pathways.

21 EXHIBITORS ON THE DAY MADE UP OF BUSINESSES, NGO'S AND GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS.



MANGAIA TOUR GUIDE TRAINING AND MENTORING

The Mangaia Tour Guide Training and Mentoring commenced in August 2017. After a gruelling four month training and mentoring course fifteen students proudly celebrated their graduation on Friday the 24th of November in Oneroa, Mangaia. The course encourages utilising resources and human-power, and the traditional knowledge of the local people, to share their own hidden treasures through quality eco-tours. The training is set up into three main modules: History, Culture, and Environment. A fourth module encompasses an exchange to Aitutaki where selected students experienced some of the tours and underwent post tour-experience lessons.

3 MAIN MODULES: HISTORY, CULTURE, ENVIRONMENT AND AN EXCURSION TO AITUTAKI



TWO
NEW TOURS HAVE
EMERGED FROM THIS
RECENT TRAINING WITH
MORE EXPECTED

KIA ORANA CUSTOMER SERVICE COURSE

The FREE 1 day Kia Orana Customer Service Course offered by Cook Islands Tertiary Institute has made a huge difference since its launch in 2015. It is evident that the Kia Orana Spirit has grown tremendously within the tourism industry, government and community.

Businesses that participated were;

RAROTONGA

- On the rocks
- Reefsides Café
- On the Beach
- Dei-licious café
- Little Polynesian Resort
- Bamboo Jacks
- Muri Beach Club Hotel
- Pacific Resort
- CITTI student
- Cook Islands Police
- Fave Design
- University of the South Pacific
- Cook Islands Family Welfare Association
- Cook Islands Tours
- The Islander Hotel

AITUTAKI

- Tamanu Beach
- Etu Moana
- Aitutaki Village
- Pacific Resort
- Araura College
- Air Rarotonga-Te Vaka Cruise
- Neibaa
- Aitutaki Island Administration
- Aquilas Rentals
- Tupunas Restaurant
- Ministry of Health

JANUARY - JULY 2018
RAROTONGA :
34 ORGANISATIONS,
180 PARTICIPANTS SUCCESSFULLY
GRADUATED




JULY - DECEMBER 2017
RAROTONGA: 15 ORGANISATIONS,
66 PARTICIPANTS SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATED
AITUTAKI: 11 ORGANISATIONS,
68 PARTICIPANTS SUCCESSFULLY GRADUATED





STRATEGIC PLANNING

This section provides an overview of scoping reports commissioned by Cook Islands Tourism outlining recommended long term infrastructure upgrades and investments into the destination. These scoping reports have recently included the upgrades and investments needed for Pa Enea tourism development. Funding in this pillar has also been used to support regional marketing efforts, and extra statistics and research programmes required for international marketing.



DESTINATION AUDITS

The development of tourism in the Pa Eヌua is important to create economic and social activities for these remote communities, and to encourage the dispersal of tourism benefits beyond Rarotonga. From a destination marketing perspective, the Pa Eヌua provide a distinctive experience of the Cook Islands that is truly authentic and off the beaten track. On this basis, the destination audits were initiated.

The purpose of the destination reports on all of the Pa Eヌua are:

- To audit the key offerings of the respective island as a holiday destination within the greater brand of the Cook Islands.
- To engage with the Island community (Government, businesses and community) to facilitate its tourism needs and implement destination development projects that will benefit the respective island.
- To identify and recommend key improvements to enhance the visitor experience, strengthen the destination marketing of the respective island and the Pa Eヌua and increase synergies with key stakeholders.

From these destination audits a number of small projects for both Destination Marketing and Destination Development have been undertaken on these islands e.g. Lake Tiriara lookout shelter in Mangaia, Mauke and Mangaia social media videos.



CRUISE INDUSTRY SUPPORT

CEO of Cook Islands Tourism Corporation, Halatoa Fua attended the Seatrade expo in Fort Lauderdale in March 2018 to represent the Cook Islands with the South Pacific Cruise Alliance. Held from Tue 14th to Thu 16th March, the expo and conference presented unique opportunities for the alliance members to meet with key executives in the cruise industry in efforts to promote the region as a cruise destination of distinction.

Members of the Cruise Alliance include, American Samoa, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kingdom of Tonga, New Caledonia, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, and the Islands of Tahiti. Representatives met with the alliance secretariat Tahiti Cruise Club, the Ministers of Tourism for French Polynesia and the Kingdom of Tonga, the CEO of the South Pacific Tourism Organisation for the annual congress of the alliance.

Representatives from all the major cruise lines were present at the Seatrade expo and conference along with all the major cruise destinations, ports, ship building and manufacturing, and all sorts of goods and

service providers to the industry. The annual event is the largest cruise expo in the world and the South Pacific Cruise Alliance has been attending as a group for the last ten years.



RESEARCH DATA

Cook Islands Tourism Corporation has partnered with the New Zealand Tourism Research Institute (NZTRI) based at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) to collect and analyse data related to the tourism industry. The ongoing online International Visitors Survey makes up the major part of this research. There is also the bi-annual Business Confidence Index which collects data from the business community. Soon to be added is the Tourism Community Attitudes and Awareness Survey which will provide an insight into community support for and engagement with Tourism. This year funding was provided for Data Mining from the AUT Survey for 5 years with extra focus on Weddings and Honeymoons Market, and Black Pearls..

