

**For immediate release
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base Backpackers to join Qualmark

base Backpackers (incorporating Beyond Backpackers) has joined the Qualmark programme – New Zealand tourism’s official quality assurance agency.

Qualmark CEO Geoff Penrose says base Backpackers has led the way in innovative backpacker accommodation and is now committed to assessing all of its accommodation offerings against Qualmark’s fully integrated star grading system.

“We are delighted that this excellent network of backpacker accommodation has made the decision to join our licence holder family. The positive feedback that visitors share about their experiences at base reinforces that it is a welcome addition to the ranks of the quality assured,” says Mr Penrose.

base Backpackers is now the leading privately-owned operator of quality backpacker accommodation with Accor Asia Pacific, Ivany Investment and Ironbridge Capital as major investors.

The organisation operates in major gateway sites including Auckland, Christchurch, Sydney and Melbourne, with a total of eight backpacker hostels in New Zealand and three in Australia offering more than 3000 beds, 10 bars and 33 travel outlets.

base Backpackers’ Deborah Waugh says base and Beyond Backpackers pioneered the development of quality budget accommodation for discerning backpackers who travel the world in search of new experiences, friends, fun and adventure.

“It is with great anticipation that we now seek the confirmed credibility, visibility and opportunities that the Qualmark symbol of quality will bring to our business within the domestic and international markets.

“We recognise the benefits of the Qualmark endorsement and that the rigorous assessment process will assist us in achieving the high standards that we have set for ourselves, whilst also acting as a minimum benchmarking tool in continuing to maintain these standards,” says Ms Waugh.

“The Qualmark seal of approval means that we can market our hostels not only as fun, vibrant places to stay but also as part of a professional, quality controlled business network committed to ongoing excellence and enhancing consumer confidence and the experience for all of our visitors,” she adds.

base Backpackers group CEO Campbell Shepherd says the accommodation network is looking forward to the large number of partner benefits of working with Qualmark and Tourism New Zealand.

“The ability to engage in international marketing efforts with Tourism New Zealand via the website and trade training, and domestically through agent familiarisation

trips, is a welcome opportunity to further spread the knowledge of the backpacking sector in New Zealand,” says Mr Shepherd.

“Also to show off the backpacking accommodation sector’s true underlying quality and delivery of a great experience to our customers will be a good outcome of this partnership.”

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