



Media Release
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Christchurch & Canterbury top quality region

TRENZ host region, Christchurch & Canterbury, is leading the way in the adoption of the Qualmark™, boasting more independently quality assured tourism businesses than any other region in the country.

In total, 181 tourism businesses in Christchurch & Canterbury are licensed to carry the Qualmark – New Zealand tourism's official mark of quality. That means they have been independently assessed as professional and trustworthy operators and can be relied upon by visitors to provide a quality experience that will meet or exceed their expectations.

"The significant uptake of the Qualmark™ supports our commitment to quality and to establishing Christchurch and the region as New Zealand's leading destination," says Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing chief executive, Ian Bougen.

With 4.5 million bed-nights in 2003, an increase of 8.8 per cent from the previous year, the region's tourism is attracting much investment, particularly in the up market lodge and small hotel sector.

"We have great confidence in the products and services that have passed rigorous assessments of their facilities and service. With such an encouraging number of Qualmark™ licensed operators we have something for everyone, no matter what type of accommodation, activity or transport visitors are looking for," Mr Bougen says.

In 2002, Christchurch & Canterbury hosted the launch of the new Qualmark™, which was repositioned as New Zealand tourism's official quality mark and re-branded to incorporate the brand of New Zealand – the silver fern.

"Christchurch & Canterbury has always been a very quality-conscious region," says Qualmark chief executive Fiona Luhrs. "It lead the way from the very early days when Qualmark™ began star grading motels and holiday parks.

"The encouraging rate of uptake of the Qualmark™ indicates the desire by local operators to ensure they meet the quality standards that international visitors expect – and their aspirations to make continual improvements to their business."

Christchurch & Canterbury well established in accommodation sector

More than 140 accommodation properties in the region are Qualmark™ star graded, positioning the region well ahead of all other areas.

"Since we launched the Guest & Hosted accommodation category in 2002 to cater for bed and breakfast style accommodation, the response from this type of property in

Christchurch & Canterbury has been extremely positive. The region has by far the most Guest & Hosted star graded properties on board than any other,” says Ms Luhrs.

Along with 40 Guest & Hosted accommodation establishments, the region also has 13 star graded Backpackers, 10 Holiday Parks, 12 Hotels and 70 Self Contained & Serviced properties (includes motels, serviced apartments and serviced holiday cottages).

Region also leads the way in uptake of Qualmark™ endorsement system

Along with Auckland, Queenstown and Rotorua, Christchurch & Canterbury have had one of the highest uptakes of the Qualmark™ endorsement system – a quality assurance system for activities, attractions and transport. There are currently 28 endorsed Visitor Activity operators and eight endorsed Visitor Transport operators in Christchurch & Canterbury.

“These tourism businesses range from the larger icon brands like Black Cat Cruises, Whale Watch Kaikoura, Mt Hutt Ski Field, Canterbury Museum, Hanmer Springs Thermal Reserve and Christchurch Tramway, through to the smaller operations like the Mountain Bike Adventure Company, Wisteria Cottage Day Spa, Alpine Horse Safaris and Rangitata Rafts. There is something for everyone,” says Ms Luhrs.

**A full list of Qualmark™ licence holders can be found at the back of this pack or visit www.qualmark.co.nz or www.christchurchnz.net

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For further information please contact:

Rory Christie
PR & Media Executive
Christchurch & Canterbury Marketing
Phone: (03) 353 1188
Mobile: 021 356 936
Email: rory.christie@christchurchnz.net

Fiona Luhrs
Chief Executive
Qualmark New Zealand Ltd
Mobile: 0274 937 835
Email: fiona@qualmark.co.nz
Website: www.qualmark.co.nz