
Te Pā Tū
Summer Season
WORLD LUXURY TRAVEL AWARDS
2025 WINNER
Best Cultural Destination
AUSTRALASIA
NZME
Visitor Experience Award
WINNER
NEW ZEALAND TOURISM AWARDS 2024
Tourism Industry Aotearoa
Tourism Excellence Award
WINNER
NEW ZEALAND TOURISM AWARDS 2024
Westpac
Resilience and Innovation Award
WINNER
NEW ZEALAND TOURISM AWARDS 2023
Toitū ā-ufe, Toitū ā-iwi
Māori Tourism Award
WINNER
NEW ZEALAND TOURISM AWARDS 2023
TŪ TE RĀ

Te Ara
The Journey

✦ Haka Pōhiri (Welcome Ceremony)

Opening with the wero (ritual challenge), warriors with taiaha (wooden staffs or weapons) cross the marae ātea (village entrance space), realm of Tūmatauenga (deity of war), to honour manuhiri (visitors). A fern's acceptance signals peace before the karanga (welcome call) draws you beneath the Tawa (native tree) canopy.

✦ Kapa Haka (Māori Performing Arts)

Arriving at the forest formed amphitheatre (inside in bad weather), final speeches complete the welcome, supported by cultural performance including haka, poi, stick games, and songs.

✦ Tawa Forest Village

Guided through the forest pā (inside in bad weather), warriors are immersed in physical, mental, and spiritual challenges; games; and wānanga (training in lore).

A refreshing elixir of Kānuka, Tātāramoa iced tea is shared here alongside kai horotai (canapés).

✦ Hāngī Lifting & Papahū (Fire Grill)

See the in-ground hāngī lifted from the earthen oven and experience Papahū, where fire comes alive and kai is cooked over the open flame.

✦ Whare Kai (Dining Space)

Grand Hākari (feast) Tū Te Rā (summer feast) served family-share style. Hosts will circulate throughout dinner so each may learn a little more of the other's culture and ways.

✦ Poroporoaki (Farewell Ceremonies)

Initiating farewell, kapa haka perform several items and then move on to final words, closing the evening.

✦ Tū Te Rā aligns with a phase in the maramataka (lunar calendar), where sunlight lengthens the days and nourishes the natural world.

✦ This is a time when iwi (tribes) focus on physical, mental, and spiritual balance, restoring the world around them and strengthening their closest relationships. It is also a time for redress, righting wrongs, and settling scores.

✦ Kai (food) and the process of eating together symbolise this rebalancing, and are critical aspects in the binding of peace.

✦ You are our honoured guest.
Nau mai, welcome.



Ngā Kaihaka
The Performers



Tukiri
Tainui, Te Arawa, Ngāi Tahu

I particularly enjoy sharing the wero, haka pōhiri, and kai. These are sacred practices in our culture. Kai is especially important as it marks the transition from a tapu (restricted) state to noa (unrestricted). I am a trained kaiwhakairo (wood carver). I love to travel to experience everything the world has to offer and to spend time with whānau and friends. From our manuhiri (visitors), I've learned about many cultures and customs that inspire me to learn and explore the world.

Rangimaewa
Te Arawa, Ngāi Tūhoe,
Te Whānau-a-Apanui,
Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Porou

My favourite space is the poroporoaki (farewell), where we acknowledge the cultures of our manuhiri (visitors) by performing a song or dance in their language. It's a special moment of reciprocity. I am studying Theatre Studies, Māori, and Indigenous Studies. I love diving for kaimoana (seafood). I am very competitive and play many sports, including netball and basketball. My favourite thing of all is spending heaps of time with my family – I love spoiling all my little baby cousins.





Waitangi
Te Arawa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāpuhi,
Te Whānau-a-Apanui

I was raised in a little town called Ngongotahā, surrounded by whānau (family). I've always loved swimming and exploring around my hometown. Outside of Te Pā Tū, I'm studying a Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts and kapa haka is a huge part of my life. One of my proudest moments, aside from kapa haka, was achieving Excellence in Level 1 at high school. I'm someone who loves to laugh, values my friends and family, and just enjoys good vibes. Kia ora!



Kaiaua
Te Arawa, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Rangiwewehi,
Kuki Airani hapū

I really enjoy activities centred around combat training, as I am passionate about these traditions. We practice blocking and striking with the rākau (stick), and I share learnings from the taiaha wānanga (warrior art workshops). Sharing our culture daily keeps me grounded, builds my confidence, and encourages me to step out of my shell and engage with people from all over the world. I also learn about other indigenous cultures and see the values we share.

Mahururangi
Ngāi Tūhoe, Tainui

I love teaching the haka to our whānau (families). The best moment is when they finish their very first haka together – it's such a cool feeling. Being here alongside my siblings feels true to who I am; everything just feels right. Helping on my koro's (grandfather's) farm has deepened my connection to the land and taught me the importance of hard work. I've learned from our manuhiri (visiting families) how much we have in common with other cultures, especially indigenous people.





Ngareta
Te Arawa, Ngāti Whakaue

I am in my last year of Rotorua Girls High School, and want to be a pilot. There aren't many female Māori pilots, so it's about breaking barriers. At the Walsh Memorial Flying School, I took my first solo flight in a PA-38 – a moment I'll never forget. The next step is lessons at the Rotorua Aero Club to work towards my Private Pilot Licence, with my ultimate goal to join the Air Force. I have been in Rotorua my whole life. My Cook Island and Māori heritages keep me grounded. I love kapa haka for its strength and unity, and Cook Island dance for the energy and joy.

Ngā Kaihaka
The Performers



Arahia
Te Arawa, Tauranga Moana

My favourite space in Tū Te Rā is the village. I feel proud seeing people connect with our heritage as they take part in different interactive activities. Manuhiri often share their cultures with us, and we appreciate their diverse perspectives. In my spare time, I enjoy performing kapa haka, competing in kapa haka competitions, and performing at my own tribal festivals. It helps me express myself and do what I love.

Maia
Tūhourangi Ngāti-Wāhiao, Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki, Ngāti Tamaterā, Ngāi Tūhoe

I'm passionate about sharing our culture, especially the practice of poi. Poi is an extension of the body, used to mimic the environment, particularly the movements of birds. I love watching our manuhiri engage with this art form and giving it a go. From our manuhiri (visitors), I've learned that there are so many similarities between us and how easy it can be to connect with each other. Outside of Te Pā Tū, I enjoy spending time with my Nan – I'm her favourite grandchild.





Whakaaio
Te Arawa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāpuhi, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui

I'm a huge family-oriented person. I love to sing, play the guitar and share anything about our culture – but also love to learn about different cultures traditions, languages, and customs. I am studying towards a Bachelor of Māori Performing Arts. I also help tutor Rotorua Intermediate and Rotorua Boys High School kapa haka groups for regional and national kapa haka competitions.



Te Rauna
Te Arawa, Ngāi Tūhoe, Ngāpuhi, Te Whānau-ā-Apanui, Ngāti Raukawa

My favourite moments are learning Māori martial arts and the different weapons my tūpuna used to defend their mana (honour), whenua (land), and whānau (family). It's something I belong to, handed down through generations. It's humbling and heartwarming to learn about our manuhiri – their cultures, languages, and stories.
Outside of Te Pā Tū, I enjoy kapa haka, playing rugby, a bit of golf, and going to the gym. But what I cherish most is spending time with my whānau and friends.

Taruke
Tainui, Ngāi Tūhoe

I grew up in a small rural Māori community east of Rotorua, where your neighbours are all cousins and we're surrounded by Māori language and ways. I love being out on the farm with my koro (grandfather), riding motorbikes and swimming in the river with my cousins; I feel so free. I spend as much time with my baby as I can – any time I get with her is my favourite part of the day, whether that be in the morning before she goes to kōhanga (kindergarten) or when I get back from mahi late at night. Sharing our Māori culture alongside a young talented crew every day is what I'm most proud of.





Himiona
Ngāti Rongomai, Ngāti Pikiao

I am balancing performing, study, rugby, and being a pāpā (father), prioritising what matters, and setting aside space for each role. I chose to study Māori Performing Arts because it connects me to my culture and helps preserve our traditions, which strengthens the work I do at Te Pā Tū. Knowing all my older brothers have worked here gives me pride and motivation — their experiences push me to do my best.
I want my tamariki to see me as dedicated and passionate about my mahi, committed to our culture and our whānau. That's the example I aim to set on stage, in the classroom, and on the field.



Joshua Willis
Te Whānau-a-Apanui, Te Whakatōhea, Ngāti Awa

Nā te Kaitaka Matua
From our Executive Chef

✦ Kai (food) provenance is important to us, as is supporting Māori producers and creators. Our seasonal menus prioritise ingredients from our whānau and neighbouring iwi (tribes). For example, our truffle oil is from Ngāti Whakaue (north of us), our honey is from Tūhoe (east of us), and our wine list is almost entirely Māori winemakers.

✦ Our grand hākari (feast) honours this seasonal abundance, weaving ancient hāngī and firepit traditions with modern culinary artistry. Every dish and beverage is curated with love, sourced directly from our closest indigenous and artisanal producers.

✦ Pārera (duck) is a treasured delicacy of our Tauhara and Ngāti Tahu-Ngāti Whaoa people. This is presented in two ways — as a canape and tender confit main.

✦ Please enjoy our hākari (feast) as much as we loved preparing it.

Rārangi Kai
About the Menu

✦ Our hākari (feast) shares the plenty of summer. From coastland kina (sea urchin), kawakawa-wrapped prawn, taro, and rīwai (Māori potato), to tuangi (cockles) steamed over fire, wagyu short rib, and fire-charred seasonal vegetables. Our techniques, both ancient and new, include traditional hāngī (earthen oven), firepit, confit, roasting, raw, drying and pickling.

✦ Wine pairing and non-alcoholic beverage matches are available. Please ask our kaimahi (waitstaff) for details.









KO TE PĀ TŪ, HE TOHU NŌ TE ORA
AN ELEVATED SANCTUARY, A SYMBOL OF WELLBEING

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