

**Qualmark 100% Pure New Zealand Experience Awards 2021**

**2021 Winner Profiles**

[**GCH Aviation**](https://gchaviation.com/)**, Canterbury**

* GCH Aviation found a special place in the hearts and minds of the Canterbury, West Coast and Nelson communities through their helicopter air rescues and NZ Flying doctors’ service during COVID-19 lockdowns.
* Since mid-2020 GCH Aviation have partnered with Uplift in Kind to provide aviation experiences for disadvantaged children in the community. Beneficiary charities include Canteen, Child Cancer Foundation, Heart Kids, Make a Wish Foundation and Pillars.
* In 2020 as part of the Conversation with Business GCH Aviation partnered with the Department of Conservation in Christchurch, via their Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) division using heat mapping technology to undertake a feral cat survey of the Kaitorete Spit.

[**Carino Wildlife Tours**](https://wildlifecruises.co.nz/)**, Paihia**

* Carino Wildlife Cruises used the downturn in visitors over the past year to focus on their local community. They hosted children who lived close to the ocean, but had not had the privilege to explore or experience what it was like to be on the water nor did they have a relationship with the animals in their shared environment.
* They want to inspire, inform and educate future generations of scientists and sailors.
* In 2020 they created a regional partnership with the Department of Conservation, eight hapu and marine researchers to create a marine mammal project with the goal to teach a Bay of Islands based marine wildlife skills, transferable to the marine sector and creating jobs that enables a community approach to protecting precious taonga o te pewhairangi.

[**Nightsky Cottage**](https://www.nightskycottage.co.nz/)**, Ruapehu Region**

* Located on the edge of a dual World Heritage status Tongariro National Park, the Nightsky Cottage is a luxury eco retreat that encourages their guests to fully immerse themselves in zero-waste living and nature.
* The aim of the experience is to showcase how a 5-star product, in a unique, protected, isolated, location, can exist in harmony with its surroundings through a zero-waste approach.
* Nightsky Cottage offered a 50% discount to essential healthcare workers needing an escape.

[**EcoZip Adventures**](https://www.ecozipadventures.co.nz/)**, Waiheke Island, Auckland**

* EcoZip Adventures is an eco-tourism & adventure company, offering a premium zipline and native forest experience on Auckland’s Waiheke Island.
* EcoZip Adventures’ goal over the past year was to adapt to unprecedented change by taking care of staff, as well as ensuring the impact of COVID-19 didn’t undo their environmental regeneration and conservation efforts.
* EcoZip Adventures have taken on mentoring and leadership roles, actively funded projects that support New Zealand children, and ramped-up their activity with and for the community including providing employment opportunities and enhancing local causes.
* “Today we are a different business, but with no lesser commitment to our people, our customers and our communities. For our team, who’ve demonstrated commitment, resilience and aroha, a Qualmark 100% Pure New Zealand Experience award is a beacon at the end of 15 months of uncertainty,” Managing Director, Gavin Oliver

**[Kaitiaki Adventures](https://www.kaitiaki.co.nz/), Rotorua**

* Kaitiaki Adventures is a globally recognised adventure tourism company specialising in white-water rafting and sledging experiences on the Okere section of the historic Kaituna river
* COVID-19 cemented their goals and priorities to create sustainable tourism, a resilient organisation, Māori prosperity and environmental wellbeing, and enabling their operation to thrive into the future.
* Projects included the Rangatahi Tourism Training Program, and Project Whakahaumanu, Kaitiaki Adventures-led restoration and community projects

[**MDA Experiences**](https://www.mdanz.com/)**, Rotorua**

* MDA Experiences is luxury and premium tour guiding company, offering amazing excursions including mountain biking, rafting, rock climbing and more.
* MDA Experiences have delivered a number of community and environmental projects including ‘Share the Ride with Whanau’ where 10 disadvantaged families were given the opportunity to learn to ride a bike in the Whakarewarewa Forest, and ‘Share the Ride in Schools’ where each year, a local Rotorua school is chosen to take the whole school on a mountain bike tour free of charge.

[**Owen River Lodge**](https://www.owenriverlodge.co.nz/)**, Nelson**

* Owen River Lodge is a boutique, luxury South Island fishing lodge near Murchison.
* They support the community by not only employing locals and showcasing premium New Zealand brands, but also by staying committed to activities and initiatives.
* As part of a small, rural community with limited employment opportunities, they enabled their people to stay within their district instead of having to move further afield for work.
* They are fully committed to operating sustainably and caring for the 6.5 hectares of gardens and farmland on the property.

[**Rotorua Canopy Tours**](https://www.canopytours.co.nz/)**, Rotorua**

* Rotorua Canopy Tours put regenerative tourism at the heart of their business. They lead a restoration project on 250 hectares of native forest that predates human existence. From 100% pest saturation in 2012, the possum count is now down to 8% and rats as low at 9% at times.
* They also focus on providing an exceptional visitor experience, it is their why and driver for every visitor who visits Rotorua Canopy Tours.
* Since COVID-19, as well as creating a new tour option aimed at low decile schools, they asked New Zealanders what family options they wanted - the replies were so deep and emotional, and they were able to offer 15 flexible family options. The public is still supportive and families went from 24%, to 40% of total business.

[**Skydive Franz Josef and Fox Glacier**](https://www.skydivefranz.co.nz/)**, West Coast**

* Based in Glacier Country, Skydive Franz Joseph is the pioneer in high altitude skydiving in New Zealand and was the first operator in New Zealand to be certified by CAA to conduct skydives from 20,000ft.
* The tourism industry in the West Coast has been heavily impacted by COVID-19, but Skydive Franz and Fox Glacier knew if they had to close it would have significant implications for the community and hospitality industry.
* Their partnership with the Department of Conservartion has been a lifeline for the operation and its staff. Through the partnership they were able to offer staff the opportunity to earn a living wage, remain engaged in meaningful employment, learn new skills and contribute to the community by creating a safe but challenging working environment working on the Alex Knob track.

[**Waiheke Dive and Snorkel**](https://www.waihekedive.com/)**, Waiheke Island**

* Waiheke Dive & Snorkel is Aotearoa New Zealand’s first and only 100% conservation focused ‘full service’ dive shop, providing experiences and products in a way that genuinely contributes to the regeneration of Tikapa Moana/the Hauraki Gulf.
* They share their love of the unique marine environment with island visitors, sharing her beauty and encouraging guests to actively regenerate and protect – led by their ‘no take’ policy.

[**Wildwire Wanaka**](https://www.wildwire.co.nz/)**, Wanaka**

* Wildwire Wanaka is the highest waterfall cable climb in the world, featuring the world-famous Lord of the Rungs. Their purpose is to make a positive difference - to people through adventure, to the environment through conservation and to their whanau through ‘self-development’
* Seeing the sense of achievement and reward that visitors experience with Wildwire Wanaka is what inspires them and their staff.
* They have taken the last 15 months as an opportunity to make their business better and stronger for the future.

[**Ziptrek Ecotours**](https://www.ziptrek.co.nz/)**, Queenstown**

* Ziptrek Ecotours have a variety of spectacular and fun zipline adventures through the forest canopy high above Queenstown, on Bob’s Peak.
* The past 15 months have enabled them to develop new business opportunities including weddings and elopements, eco-education tours, the world’s first augmented reality ziplining and a 6-line tour stand-alone product.
* The introduction of Treehouse Sessions turned the Ziptrek Ecotourstree houses into a new style of outdoor, socially-separated live performance locations.
* For NZ Music Month Ziptrek Ecotours gathered a range of local musicians and placed them in their treehouse network, so that guests zipped around the forest to the tunes of our community – the event was a sell out!