

Venture[®]

BY TRAVELERS: FOR TRAVELERS

EXPLORING LIKE A LOCAL

48 HOURS IN SINGAPORE
WAEREBO CLOUD VILLAGE
TEMPLE-HOPPING IN MYANMAR
BIG-SCREEN MAGIC AT HOBBITON
TRIBAL FLAIR AT THE GOROKA SHOW

Hawaii
Myanmar
Indonesia
Singapore
New Zealand
Papua New Guinea



OCT | NOV 2013
Vol. 4 | No. 5
IDR 45.000 | S\$7.00

SUBSCRIBE NOW TO WIN A 2-NIGHT STAY AT THE AMAZING UMANG ISLAND RESORT ON JAVA



10

WILD ABOUT TRAVEL

Your travel photos

14

AUCKLAND'S GOT ZEST

Taking a gourmet walking tour with a local gives Melanie Whitmarsh a fresh, decadent, and personal introduction to **Auckland**, New Zealand's largest city



20

HOBBITS & ALE

A tour of Peter Jackson's *The Hobbit* movie set Hobbiton, in Matamata, **New Zealand**, feels like a countryside amble through a real, living hamlet

24

THE GOROKA SHOW

Lauren Hill gets up close and personal with scores of tribes at the annual Eastern Highlands Cultural Show in Papua New Guinea



32

48 HOURS IN SINGAPORE

Going to Singapore? Guidebook writer Esther van Veen has created this must-see must-do two-day tour for you



28

INTO KONG LOR CAVE

Popular Indonesian travel blogger Susan Natalia Poskitt cuts straight through the middle of a mountain in **Laos** by canoe



LAND OF GOLDEN TEMPLES

Myanmar is one of Asia's most mysterious destinations. Tony Sugjarta explores the temples of Bagan

38



GORGEOUS GORGES

The canyons and footpaths of the Taroko National Park in **Taiwan** weave a spell over Rich Blando

66



70

DEEPER THAN LAKE TOBA

Hanging out with the locals proves the greater triumph for adventurer Judi Zienchuk in **Sumatra**, Indonesia

44

CAN A MUM BE A TRAVEL WRITER?

When Shweta Ganesh Kumar gave birth to a baby girl, she wondered if it would be the end of her travel writing career



50

CLOUD VILLAGE

Set like an eyrie at the top of a mountain is the village of Waerebo in Flores, **Indonesia**. Rich Blando is one of the hamlet's few visitors



58

ALOHA HAWAII

Lydia Tomkiw explores the island of Kauai, **Hawaii** by road, foot, and kayak



78

564 STEPS TO PARADISE

After hours of hunting, Deanira Bong's got the lowdown on how to access the secret stairs to Bali's Nyang Nyang beach, Indonesia



Auckland's Got Zest

BY MELANIE WHITMARSH
PHOTOGRAPHS BY MELANIE WHITMARSH

It was midwinter in Auckland, New Zealand. Gulls wheeled and pecked and stared this way and that, perhaps eying the cherry-cheeked pedestrians in cozy scarves. A chalkboard sign read: “Brrrrr... It’s bloody cold! Come in for a HOT chocolate or lemon HOT toddy.” Taking a gourmet tour, I was about to experience Auckland through its food.





PHOTOGRAPH BY pickv / SHUTTERSTOCK



“ Discovering a new place and its culture through its food. ”

“**PEOPLE SAY** Aucklanders are snobby about coffee,” said Kerry Swan as we hugged mugs of flat white (one part espresso, two parts steamed milk) in the Imperial Lane coffee shop on Fort Lane, the first stop on the Zest *Auckland City Tastes* tour – a gourmet walk with a local guide. “The name flat white was coined in New Zealand,” Kerry added.

Imperial Lane was a moody, modern café and patisserie by day, and bar by night. Its muted tones and exposed brick wall gave it an industrial, street-side feel. Against a wall of orange heat lamps, suited men met over newspapers, and a woman in knee-high boots worked on a Mac. The floor was steeply sloped. “Back in the 1930s, this was a cinema,” said Kerry.

Zest started in Auckland in 2011. “I watched tourists get off the ferry and walk up Queen Street, and thought: they aren’t ever going to see the places the locals go to. Yet that what’s people want to do when they visit somewhere new,” said Kerry.

Kerry contacted Catherine Cordwell who founded Zest Food Tours in Wellington in 2003. Together they established two Auckland gourmet walks: a tour through the historic Britomart quarter and harbor front, and a walk through the village suburb of Ponsonby. The idea behind both was to experience the city as a local would: taste the best local produce, meet the people behind the products, and gain insights into local culture in a conversational way – as you would with a friend.

After the caffeine slug, we resumed our walk through Auckland’s neat streets hungry for local chocolate, award-winning cheese and gelato, and seafood. “All Kiwi things. The best of the best,” said Kerry, chipper and bohemian-tough in an army jacket and striped scarf knotted around her head.

The narrow Kapiti Store (Shortland Street) smelled of grilled cheese sandwiches. On the left were jars of jellies. Along the right was a long bright

cheese counter, and acting store manager Rachel Callister, expecting us, stood with a knife and a cheeseboard containing the mellow double cream Kapiti Aorangi Brie, a hunk of Kapiti Ramara – a washed-rind cheese, my personal favorite of the day the Kapiti Tuteremoana – a rich full-bodied cheddar, and the strong Kapiti Kikorangi Blue. “When tasting cheeses, always start with the mild cheeses first,” Rachel advised. “Start with the brie.”

These were no ordinary cheeses. In the 2013 New Zealand Champions of Cheese Awards, Kapiti brought home the champion’s prize in four categories – including the Favorite Cheese Award for the Kikorangi on our cheeseboard.

Outside in the winter sun, I eyed the window display of Kapiti ice creams. “Double Cream & Cookies is our most popular flavor,” said Rachel, but I opted for the excellent Black Doris Plum & Crème Fraîche.

Window cleaners worked up long ladders on Queen Street, Auckland’s

Zest – Food Tours of New Zealand
Zest run four gourmet walks in Wellington, two in Auckland, and a food and wine tour in Martinborough.
www.zestfoodtours.co.nz
Do not eat a big breakfast before these tours!

PREVIOUS PAGE
Auckland’s Viaduct Harbour; the Sky Tower is to the right

FAR LEFT
Steamed milk being poured to make a flat white

LEFT
Healthy chips made from agria potatoes: steamed, roasted, and drizzled with lemon at The Food Truck Garage

TOP RIGHT
A Chickette: a chicken and courgette burger topped with lemon hummus in a wholemeal spelt bun at The Food Truck Garage

RIGHT
Kerry Swan, Zest guide

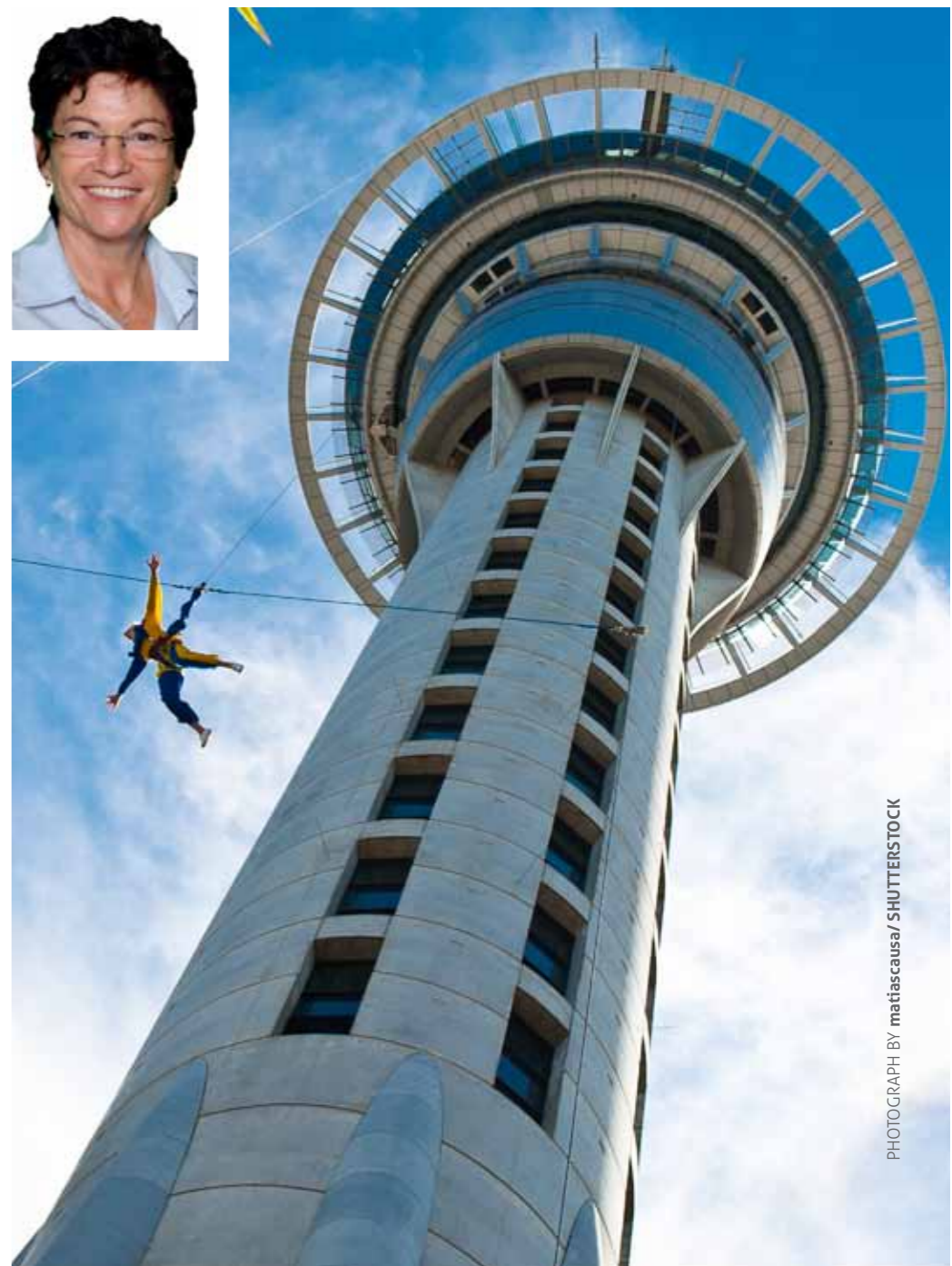
FAR RIGHT
A thrill-seeker falls 192 meters from the Sky Tower, New Zealand’s tallest man-made structure



main shopping street. I passed a dairy van emblazoned with the legend *Great dairy no bull*. Soaring 328 meters over the city was New Zealand’s tallest man-made structure – the slender spindle of the Sky Tower, a great navigational aid for visitors, and a destination in its own right. Opened in 2007, visitors can leap off the tower (New Zealand’s highest SkyJump), walk around an exterior observation deck (SkyWalk), or check out the 360-degree city views from the 51st floor.

We entered Queens Arcade, built in the early 1900s. Among the boutiques was Devonport Chocolates. This little shop was chocolate-box pretty: chocolates filled the window and lined the walls. In the center, a round table towered with chocolate stilettos, tea towels, aprons, and whisks.

Caroline Everitt-Gardiner poured us thimbles of velvety hot chocolate. The Everitt family took over Devonport Chocolates in 2000. “Mum went to chocolate school, we opened a shop



PHOTOGRAPH BY matiascausal / SHUTTERSTOCK

here and another in Ponsonby, and the business took off," summarized Caroline, in the frank, friendly, understated manner of the New Zealander.

Standing beside rows of truffles, Caroline explained that the truffles took three days to hand-make. A day to mix and roll, a day to set, and a day to be hand-dipped. Each truffle can be identified by the chocolatier's signature swirl on top.

"When tasting chocolates, taste the white chocolates first," advised Caroline. "Dark chocolates have a stronger palate."

Caroline held a sliver of dark chocolate. "This is for adventurers." It was chili and lime flavored – Kerry's favorite. The chocolate was hard and long-lasting. The lime flavor was immediate, and underneath it, very slowly, the bite of chili built.

We left under the grey clouds of Auckland's fickle weather. Passing heritage buildings from the 1800s and Kerry's favorite restaurant Café Hanoi (Galway Street), we headed for Britomart – a designer shopping, eating, and art space precinct. Karen Walker and Kate Sylvester are two popular local fashion designers with shops here. "Every girl in Auckland has something by Karen Walker," someone commented.

Named after a Royal Navy gunship, Britomart is undergoing rapid renovation. A sleek Maori sculpture



Travel Notes

- For more information on Auckland, see www.newzealand.com
- Jetstar (www.jetstar.com) flies from Jakarta to Auckland 3 days a week

represented a mother, father, and child. "Europeans arrived in the 1800s, but the Maoris have been here since the 1300s," said Kerry. "Tamaki Makaurau is the Maori name for Auckland."

Opposite the sculpture was The Store (Gore Street) – a diner and bakery serving award-winning gelato made by the dessert boutique Milse. The gelatos glistened. There was passion fruit, lemon curd, chocolate honeycomb...

"Salted caramel is popular," waiter Will suggested.

"What's your favorite?"

"Vanilla honeycomb," he replied.

"It's like hokey pokey but on steroids." Hokey pokey is a New Zealand flavor incorporating nuggets of crunchy honeycomb.

Sucking spoons of silky licorice gelato, I followed Kerry through the Britomart Transport Centre. Seagulls stalked. There were vertical bicycle parking racks and giant dimpled pillars representing native kaori trees. We passed yachts, dolphin-explorer boats, and million-dollar-view apartments at the marina on the way to the city's seafood market.

The Auckland Fish Market (Jellicoe Street) was the last port on the Zest walk. Lunchtime neared. The market was bright and immaculate – more like an open-plan supermarket. There were salmon fishcakes two inches thick and vendors selling cheese, meat, vegetables, and wheels of lemon coconut cakes.

"Fish auctions begin at 6am and all the restaurants in town come here to buy," said Kerry. We sat in a low-lit cellar at a table laden with local wine and platters of prawns, squid, fruit, cheese, and chunky ANZAC biscuits. "Put one in your pocket for later," said Kerry. ANZAC biscuits are a favorite from World War I. Made from rolled oats, sugar, and golden syrup, women would send these nourishing, long-lasting biscuits to the war-time troops. I swallowed a prawn into the only space left in my stomach. The delicacies of Auckland had defeated me.

Later, as I walked alone, a tourist stopped me.

"Do you know where the bookshop is?"

"I do," I said, recalling having passed it with Kerry. "Take the second left," I pointed. Having taken my tour with a local, I was now being mistaken for one. I felt rather chuffed in my role as a frank, friendly, understated Kiwi. ■



PHOTOGRAPH BY Shane White/SHUTTERSTOCK



PHOTOGRAPH BY Chris Jenner/SHUTTERSTOCK

FAR LEFT TOP Handmade chocolates and truffles galore in the Devonport Chocolates store

FAR LEFT BOTTOM ANZAC biscuits, still popular today

LEFT The Britomart Transport Centre

BELOW LEFT Licorice gelato from The Store

BELOW Yachts at Auckland's Viaduct Harbour



PHOTOGRAPH BY ChameleonsEye/SHUTTERSTOCK

Local Favorites

- Ebisu (Quay Street) for traditional Japanese food. "They do a good passion fruit mojito too," says Kerry.
- Walk through the latticed tunnel of desserts at Milse (Tyler Street), a dessert grotto.
- The Food Truck Garage (Wellesley Street), packed at lunchtimes, is run by TV chef Michael Van de Elzen. Michael invents healthy versions of fast food.