



SCOTTSDALE TOURS

TAUPO FOR CHRISTMAS TOUR 2011

The bus and shuttle vans met up in Tirau where we had a cuppa and a bit of a look around the shops before we all boarded the bus and headed south to our destination. We changed our planned trip to Orakei Korako to day two so we decided to go to Taupo via Rotorua just for a change of scenery and a lunch stop. We did a ticki tour around Taupo when we arrived so everyone could get their bearings then we checked into our lovely Lakeland motel for the next four nights.

Day two we went to Wairakei Thermal area to have a look around and then out to Craters of the Moon where some of us did the board walk around the steam vents and mud pools. Sadly with the expansion of the Wairakei Thermal area the Craters of the Moon are not as good as they used to be. We also walked around the privately operated Wairekei thermal area through steam vents and farmland.

We stopped at the stunning Huka Falls for morning tea, continued our touring around then headed back to Taupo for lunch. Then it was off to Orakei Korako for a lovely scenic trip up the river on the old historic MV Waireka steam boat. We had a delicious Christmas dinner at the Wairakei Hotel that night. On the way back to the resort our local guide Molly took us all over Taupo to see the Christmas light displays, one in particular was very impressive.

Christmas day dawned and after a cooked breakfast it was off to Church for some and parasailing for Ross and Jeanne while the rest of us stayed nice and dry onshore and watched and shouted encouragement. We had a fun scrumptious Christmas lunch at Lakeland Resort complete with crackers, pressies and party hats. Betty and Fae were presented with a photo montage poster celebrating their 40th and 39th trips respectively. We took a leisurely drive around Acacia Bay and Taupo environs then managed to get the bus through the botanical gardens, realizing part way through that the road is really not designed for buses.

On Boxing Day we ventured out to Kinloch where we had morning tea beside the lake before heading around the western side of the lake to Turangi where we had lunch. Completing the trek around the eastern side of the lake we arrived back in time to take a leisurely cruise on the lovely old MV Ernest Kemp which included a fascinating trip out to see the Maori rock carvings. We dined at Lakeland Resort again with our friendly and very obliging hosts.



Wairakei Thermal area



Huka Falls



Aboard the MV Waireka



Christmas lights, Taupo

Our final day didn't exactly turn out how we planned so we were pretty disappointed about that. We packed up and had our last lovely cooked breakfast and headed off to a secret mystery location which was meant to be Waimiha and Endene's Mill just out of Bennydale. Unfortunately China Doll decided to have clutch issues and we ended up on the side of the road at Bennydale. The good news was that it wasn't raining, there were toilets there and despite there being no cellphone coverage we were able to use the telephone at the dairy. We set up and had morning tea while Ross checked out what seemed to be troubling China Doll. When it was discovered that she would not be taking us any further we called for back up and waited. We contacted the people who were doing lunch for us at Black Fern Lodge and they very kindly brought lunch out to us so we had a picnic lunch on the roadside until a replacement bus arrived to take us all home. Pity it was not the ending we had in mind but a great trip despite that. A fabulous group of familiar faces on board and lots of fun. Thanks everyone for sharing your Christmas with us.

Kind regards, Ross & Susy



Morning tea at Kinloch



MV Ernest Kemp



Alfresco Dining at the Resort



The intrepid parasailors



Lovely Kinloch