MEDIA RELEASE

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Lonely Planet: Auckland best city to travel to in 2022

RELEASE SUMMARY

• Auckland has been named the number one city to visit next year in Lonely Planet's *Best in Travel 2022*.

• The accolade bodes well for future demand for travel to Auckland in 2022 and beyond.

• The news is encouraging for Auckland's tourism industry.

During what is an incredibly challenging time for Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland's visitor economy, today the industry has some positive news to celebrate after being named the number one city to visit next year in **Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022**.

The book, which is on sale now worldwide, is the global travel authority's 17th annual collection of the world's hottest destinations and must-have travel experiences for the year ahead, and features their top 10 countries, cities and regions to visit in 2022. The lists were compiled independently by a panel of *Lonely Planet* contributors across the globe and judged against a criteria addressing topicality, unique experiences, 'wow' factor and sustainability.

On Auckland nabbing first place in the top cities category, *Lonely Planet* Senior Director Trade Sale and Marketing, Chris Zeiher says:

"This is an amazing recognition of Auckland and its surrounding attractions. Within the city's boundaries there are 53 volcanoes, more than 50 islands, three wine regions and numerous beaches that make this a truly exciting and vibrant city".

"There is so much to discover or rediscover in Auckland and this recognition, especially now as people start contemplating travel again, places Auckland as the number one city on the map," Zeiher adds.

Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland previously made an appearance in the prestigious *Lonely Planet* list's top 10 back in 2014, however this is the first time Auckland has taken out the top spot.

While the accolade will no doubt raise Auckland's profile amongst travel-starved global tourists, it's clear that locals will be the first to explore the freshly crowned top travel destination as Auckland transitions to the Government's new COVID-19 Protection Framework once vaccination targets are met across the region.

Auckland Mayor Phil Goff says, "Lonely Planet's promotion of Auckland as the best city in the world to travel to in 2022 is a fantastic acknowledgement of what Tāmaki Makaurau has to offer. It will give a real boost to Auckland's tourism and hospitality sectors as they start to recover from the COVID-19 lockdowns and borders reopen.

"It is also a reminder to Aucklanders and New Zealanders of the treasure trove of places and experiences we have on our doorstep. Seeing Auckland through the eyes of an international traveller is one way to understand how breath-taking, exciting, creative, and full of energy our region is.

"Knowing it is top of the list for travellers around the world, Aucklanders and New Zealanders have the first chance to explore and rediscover everything Tāmaki Makaurau has to offer."

"COVID-19 and lockdowns have been tough for all of us. But now, with vaccination rates tracking well, and the Government's COVID-19 Protection Framework outlining a pathway to reduced restrictions, let's take full advantage of enjoying our region when the opportunity comes," Mayor Goff says.

In the book's opening pages, *Lonely Planet* profoundly state that it's now time for travellers to start contemplating long-postponed travel plans and slowly, but surely, make those dreams a reality, a notion Auckland Unlimited Chief Executive Nick Hill supports:

"All the signs are that as soon as it is safe to do so, countries which have restricted borders will welcome visitors again, albeit tentatively," says Hill.

"Following on from the increased business support announced by the Government last week, this news from *Lonely Planet* is encouraging for the industry – the Auckland visitor economy has fought hard, shown tremendous resilience and is determined to re-emerge as a sustainable, world-class, desirable destination. It has been a hard couple of years, but we are hopeful that 2022 will be the year when we welcome visitors from outside our region to share all the wonderful things that we have to offer with uniquely Auckland manaakitanga," adds Hill.

Speaking specifically to Auckland's offerings in the year ahead, **Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022** fittingly points to some of the outstanding events set to take place in Auckland in 2022, including Rugby World Cup 2021 (postponed from this year), as well as the massive contribution of the region's Pasifika and Māori cultures to Auckland's burgeoning creative energy, and the 'brain gain' created by Kiwis coming home – citing the return of famous restaurateur and celebrity chef Peter Gordon.

About Auckland's flourishing arts and culture offering, **Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022** opines:

> *"[New Zealand's] biggest and most diverse city has always been beautiful, but one unpredicted consequence of COVID-19 has been the blossoming of Auckland's cultural scene, putting a fresh spotlight on exciting local creativity."*

The book goes on to list their top five Auckland highlights, including: West Coast beaches, Hauraki Gulf Islands, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Auckland Art Gallery and volcanic cone climbs.

Close Kiwi neighbours The Cook Islands – proudly independent and one of the world's smallest countries – claim the coveted spot as the number-one country to seek out in 2022.

Also featuring in **Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022** list and another coup for Australasia, the Scenic Rim in Southeast Queensland was named number eight region in the world to visit.

Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022 is available to purchase online and from book retailers from today.

Find out more about what Auckland has to offer here:

Website: aucklandnz.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/VisitAuckland
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Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022
NZ$29.99
| Hardback
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Available where all good books are sold

Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2022 – Destination Top 10s

Top 10 Countries	Top 10 Regions	Top 10 Cities
1. Cook Islands	1. Westfjords, Iceland	1. Auckland, New Zealand
2. Norway	2. West Virginia, USA	2. Taipei, Taiwan
3. Mauritius	3. Xishuangbanna, China	3. Freiburg, Germany
4. Belize	4. Kent's Heritage Coast, UK	4. Atlanta, USA
5. Slovenia	5. Puerto Rico	5. Lagos, Nigeria
6. Anguilla	6. Shikoku, Japan	6. Nicosia/Lefkosia, Cyprus
7. Oman	7. Atacama Desert, Chile	7. Dublin, Ireland
8. Nepal	8. The Scenic Rim, Australia	8. Merida, Mexico
9. Malawi	9. Vancouver Island, Canada	9. Florence, Italy
10. Egypt	10. Burgundy, France	10. Gyeongju, South Korea

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NOTES TO MEDIA:

Imagery and video assets can be downloaded here

ABOUT LONELY PLANET

A trusted voice in travel guidance, Lonely Planet is part of the Red Ventures portfolio. Providing both inspiring and trustworthy information for every kind of traveller since 1973, Lonely Planet reaches hundreds of millions of travellers each year online and via its mobile product helping them unlock amazing experiences. Lonely Planet can be found on lonelyplanet.com, mobile, video and in 14 languages, armchair and lifestyle books, ebook and more. Over the past 48 years Lonely Planet has printed over 145 million guidebooks covering 221 countries as well as countless other titles showcasing the wonders of the world for travellers of all types.

Lonely Planet has been guiding travel for almost 50 years with a core belief that travel is for everyone, with a goal to help more people from more backgrounds to experience the joy of exploration. Because ultimately this helps build a kinder, more inclusive, more open-minded world.

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