



NGĀTI AWA GROUP HOLDINGS LIMITED

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Draft Media Release

Ngāti Awa to buy White Island Tours

Ngāti Awa Group Holdings Ltd – the commercial arm of Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Awa, has announced that it is buying iconic Whakatāne tour operator White Island Tours.

White Island Tours has been operating out of Whakatāne for more than 25 years showcasing New Zealand’s only active marine volcano, Whakaari-White Island. White Island Tours holds an exclusive licence for marine based tourism on Whakaari-White Island. The high quality tour has earned a Gold Enviro Award from Qualmark.

The exclusive license to land a boat on Whakaari-White Island, will transfer as part of the sale.

The sale also includes White Island Rendezvous, a 38 room motel complex with a villa, bungalow and micro-village, as well as PeeJays Café.

Ngāti Awa Group Holdings Ltd Chief Executive Geoff Hamilton said the business was a strategic acquisition, and was part of a wider plan to develop Ngāti Awa assets in the Ngati Awa rohe.

“The investment is a commercial decision and will benefit Ngāti Awa financially, but comes with wider benefits. We are thinking long term, and see White Island Tours as a key part of the community here in Whakatane.”

“As the local iwi Ngāti Awa will be able to incorporate this unique business into a wider Ngāti Awa tourism experience, in line with increasing tourist demand for authentic cultural experiences.”

“As well, a much-admired business will stay locally owned, and with an organisation that has a long-term commitment to supporting economic growth in our region.

“Peter & Jenny Tait have developed this visitor experience from an idea, into the fantastic operation that it is today. From their first tour, with just six people on board, to over 17,000 visitors in the past year, White Island Tours’ success is testament to the hard work of Peter, Jenny and their team.

“White Island Tours is an outstanding international tourism experience. This is an investment that all Ngāti Awa can be proud of.”

Ngāti Awa settled a Treaty of Waitangi claim with the Crown in 2005, including assets and cash of approximately \$42 million. It currently has interests in agriculture, fisheries, forestry, equities and property totalling \$114 million.

Ends

Further details are available at www.ngatiawa.iwi.nz

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