

## MICE Agents Say Aloha To Opportunity

A group of Kiwi MICE agents sampled Hawaii's finest on a recent famil, from helicopter tours on Kauai and discovering upcountry Maui to exploring Oahu's Kualoa Ranch and off road Segway tours at Turtle Bach—as Hawaii Tourism reports growing MICE demand from New Zealand

“We have definitely seen a lot of growth in the groups and incentives market in the past couple of years,” says Hawaii Tourism’s Megan Hornblow. “The recent increased air capacity that will continue through into 2015 has opened up opportunities for larger groups travelling to Hawaii.”

Hornblow also notes that the STO is starting to see an increase in repeat groups that are travelling out to the neighbour islands and experiencing Hawaii’s diverse offering.

Agents on the five-day famil, offered in conjunction with Air New Zealand, explored Oahu together taking in the Iolani Palace, USS Missouri and the USS Bowfin (a new event space at Pearl Harbor) as well as Kualoa Ranch, the Polynesian Cultural Center and Turtle Bay Resort.

The group then split into two groups with some discovering the highlights of Maui and Kauai. “The focus of the trip was to showcase the diversity of what the Hawaiian Islands can offer and how well it can cater to the groups market,” says Hornblow.

Highlights for agents visiting Kauai included a scenic helicopter ride over the island and ATV rides at Kipu Ranch. On Maui the agents dine at Mick Fleetwood’s Fleetwoods on Front St and saw the sights of Kaanapali and Upcountry Maui as well as



visiting the Ocean Vodka farm and some private estates.

“Everyone was surprised by how short the flights were between the neighbour islands, until they experienced it they hadn’t realised just how close the islands were to each other,” says Hornblow, adding that the group was impressed with how the Hawaiian tourism plant is ready to ‘step outside the norm and do anything that was asked’ in terms of staging events.

\*The group flew to Hawaii courtesy of Air New Zealand, which operates four-times-weekly to Honolulu.

Hawaii Tourism is at next week’s PAICE event in Auckland, along with Randy Clark from The Kahala Hotel

& Resort, for agents looking for updates on Hawaii’s MICE market offering.

**1** Pictured at Kauai’s Na Aina Kaiis, from left, Chris McLean, Winnie Fong, Helen Cowie, Loren South.

**2** Exploring the organic Ocean Vodka farm is, from left, Vicki Dixon, Kalena Finlayson, Andrea Russell, Megan Hornblow, and Frank Robinson from Island Events.

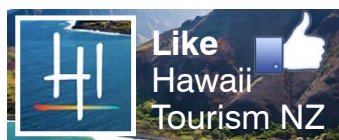
**3** Pictured outside Mick Fleetwood’s restaurant in Lahaina is, from left, Andrea Russell, Megan Hornblow, Veni from Fleetwoods with Kalena Finlayson and Vicki Dixon.

**4** Overlooking Chinaman’s Hat from Kualoa Ranch, is from left Winnie

Fong, GO C&I; Andrea Russell, Orbit Auckland; Chris McLean, Air NZ groups; Helen Cowie, HoT Events; Hawaii Tourism’s Megan Hornblow; Vicki Dixon, Orbit Christchurch; Kalena Finlayson, Orbit Hmailton; and Loren South, Orbit Wellington.

**5** Trying a little off road Segway-ing is, from left, Winnie Fong, Helen Cowie, Loren South, Megan Hornblow and Marie Watanabe.

**6** Pictured in front of Wakiki’s iconic ‘Pink Palace’ is, from left Loren South, Kalena Finlayson, Andrea Russell, Winnie Fong, Chris McLean, Helen Cowie, Rob Riter from Starwood Waikiki; Vicki Dixon, Megan Hornblow, and Marie Watanabe from the Oahu Visitors Bureau.



## Auckland to Honolulu

from **\$1135** Per person, return incl. taxes

Sales to 23 Nov  
Book O class AKL HNL vv  
Refer to your GDS for details.  
T's and C's apply

