

INTERNATIONAL FOCUS

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New Facilities in New Zealand

SHARE



by Sarah J.F. Braley | February 01, 2016



A gorgeous, largely untouched place, New Zealand offers breathtaking vistas, untold opportunities for outdoor activities, and fresh food and wine to delight the palate. There's also plenty of action taking place in the country's meetings industry.

ISLAND TIME

- Take a bracing boat ride east of Auckland to Waiheke Island, home to more than 20 wineries, including the Mudbrick and Stonyridge vineyards. Both host tastings for small groups. Mudbrick is adding a three-guest-room house and two cottages to its offerings, to open later this year.

- The ultimate incentive spot on Waiheke Island is Delamore Lodge, which has six guest rooms, including four stunning suites and a two-bedroom apartment; a resident chef; an infinity pool, and a small meetings pavilion.

MOVIE SET

Hobbiton and its Green Dragon Inn, in Waikato near Rotorua, welcome events of all sizes.

AUCKLAND

The design for the **New Zealand International Convention Centre** was finalized last May. A solid timeline for the project, which will include a new 300-room hotel, has yet to be set. The building's design has a distinctively native flavor, according to Sue Sullivan, chief executive of Conventions and Incentives New Zealand. "It won't be a closed box; the transparency of the design also allows Aucklanders to look inside," she noted. The facility will be six times larger than Auckland's current center and will accommodate nearly 3,000 people.

WELLINGTON

A combination **convention center and movie museum** has gotten the go-ahead from the capital city's officials. The facility will be near the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa. The convention center will have 18,000 square feet of exhibit space; three ballrooms of 19,400, 14,600 and 10,000 square feet, respectively; and two 1,300-square-foot meeting rooms.

Memorabilia from Peter Jackson and Richard Taylor, the two Kiwis responsible for the *Lord of the Rings* and *Hobbit* trilogies, will populate the new museum.

CHRISTCHURCH

A **new convention center** was scheduled to open in 2017, but construction has yet to begin. The facility - which initially would host events for up to 1,500 and could grow to fit 2,000 -- is part of a planned district on the banks of the Te Papa Otakaro/Avon River, along with new hotels, riverside dining and retail space. Details are still being negotiated, per news reports.

AIRLIFT

Air New Zealand now flies to Auckland from Houston, with five nonstop roundtrip flights each week.

FAM HIGHLIGHTS

To view a video of *M&C*'s recent visit to the beautiful country the Maoris called *Aotearoa* ("land of the long white cloud"), go to mcmag.com/newzealand.

T A G S **New Zealand, Convention Center, Wellington, Exhibit Floor, Houston, Riverside**