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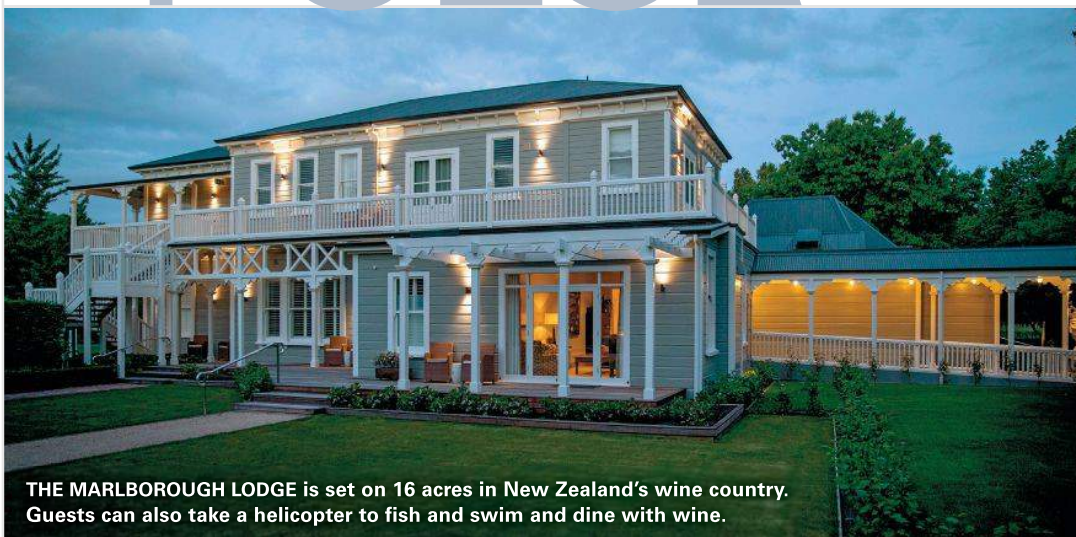
VOYAGES

3 Hot Ports for
River Cruising



THE PULSE

HOT LEADS



THE MARLBOROUGH LODGE is set on 16 acres in New Zealand's wine country. Guests can also take a helicopter to fish and swim and dine with wine.

The Marlborough Lodge

New Zealand is one of 2018's hottest destinations. If you're looking to visit Down Under, consider **The Marlborough Lodge**. Located in the north of South Island, The Marlborough Lodge makes for a top base for exploring New Zealand's largest wine-growing region and its 110 wineries. Love Sauvignon Blanc? This is the region to visit.

The hotel opened in November and we hear it's adding a standalone spa, a guest entertainment area and new suites. At the spa, guests can expect organic, New Zealand-made products and house-made blends for the massage oils. The new entertainment area will have large chairs, coffee tables, books, board games, a bar and a retail area. It will open out onto a deck with additional chairs and a lawn with a large outdoor fire place.

Wine and cuisine are definitely at the forefront of the lodge. Head Chef Sam Webb leads the lodge's Harvest Restaurant. Cuisine focuses on local seafood (like Chinook salmon, greenshell mussels and Cloudy Bay clams). Guests can dine at the Chef's Bench, take a tour with the chef through the lodge's vegetable and fruit garden, take cooking demonstrations and more. To learn more about the property, guests can tour the gardens and vineyards with the lodge's head gardener.

The Marlborough Lodge is offering two new

foodie experiences. One takes guests to see how Cloudy Bay clams are processed and cleaned before returning to the lodge where Chef Webb conducts an interactive cooking demonstration, followed by a lunch with wine pairings. For the more adventurous, the lodge will take guests by helicopter to fish off of a reef for blue cod; it is followed by a beach lunch with blue cod sashimi, grilled blue cod, fresh salads and baked bread — all paired with local white wines or craft beer.

The lodge has bicycles and maps to explore the area, a freshwater pool and grass tennis courts. It can organize private wine tastings and tours with the winemaker; museum tours, such as the Omaka Aviation Heritage Centre; helicopter tours; kayaking, hiking or biking in Marlborough Sounds; fly-fishing tours on the Wairau River; whale watching and dolphin tours; cruises and boat tours and more.

There are 10 unique guestrooms and suites set on the 16-acre property. (There are over 200 types of trees and vineyards with four varieties of grape.) Tip: The Kingfisher Suite was originally a nun's chapel and the lodge retained its original arched windows, vaulted ceiling and stained-glass windows.

The Marlborough Lodge can be accessed by Blenheim, Nelson or Christchurch Airports. Contact Angela Dillon (reservations@themarlboroughlodge.co.nz), managing director and owner.

—Matt Turner

Patrick Fragale joined **Valerie Wilson Travel** as senior vice president, where he will work with co-president **Jennifer Wilson-Buttigieg** on business development. The appointment of Fragale, who served as the head of Protravel and Direct Travel (from 1993 – 2013), is part of VWT's 2020 strategic plan, which includes adding a new VP technology and a controller. VWT just moved to its new headquarters on Third Avenue in Manhattan (see pages 102-103).

Conrad Bora Bora Nui has named **Sebastien Pisano** (Sebastien.Pisano@conradhotels.com) general manager. Pisano was director of operations at Conrad Bangkok.

Todd Temperly (Todd.Temperly@ConradHotels.com) is the new GM of both the **Waldorf Astoria Chicago** and the **Conrad Chicago**. He most recently served as the hotel manager for the Grand Wailea, a Waldorf Astoria Resort.

Joanna McCreary (GMWaustin@whotels.com) has been named GM of **W Austin**, where she opened the hotel as director of rooms in 2010. In her 16 years with W, McCreary has re-opened W New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina, opened W Atlanta Midtown and W Austin, to name but a few of her accomplishments.