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[Ahipara website](#) > [News](#) > [Tangata at Treetops](#)

Tangata at Treetops



In March we were posed with a challenge. We had clients only in-country for a few days and had to put together a breathtaking encounter with Maori somewhere between Hamilton and Queenstown. The first thing we did was select a place with a strong feeling of wairua. This was the beautiful Bridal Veil waterfall on Treetops estate. A quick call to genial and accommodating manager Heiko Kaiser turned up the answer "of course". Another call to my old friend and ally from the North, Hone Mihaka, led me towards an equally charismatic and professional gentleman from the central North Island, Delanie Brown (pictured here second from the right in the excellent photo I took on the day - yes, this was the event, not a staged photoshoot). A road trip by Hone and myself to Taupo and Rotorua to meet Delanie and our man in Rotorua Ngahi o te ra Bidois resulted in agreement and a plan.

The result was a fantastically memorable day for our clients who received a three-warrior welcome along the path to the waterfall, the third warrior depositing a significant taonga - a named club of wood and greenstone - then some time together before sitting and enjoying a meal of modern Maori cuisine superbly cooked by Treetops' chef Bruce by the waterfall. It was such a good occasion we were all energised and bouncing around. This was true cultural tourism, properly prepared, unique, fresh, significant and not overcooked.

Thank you Delanie and Treetops.

<<[News index](#) <[Wilkin River Magic](#) | [Wild Food - Maori Style](#)>

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