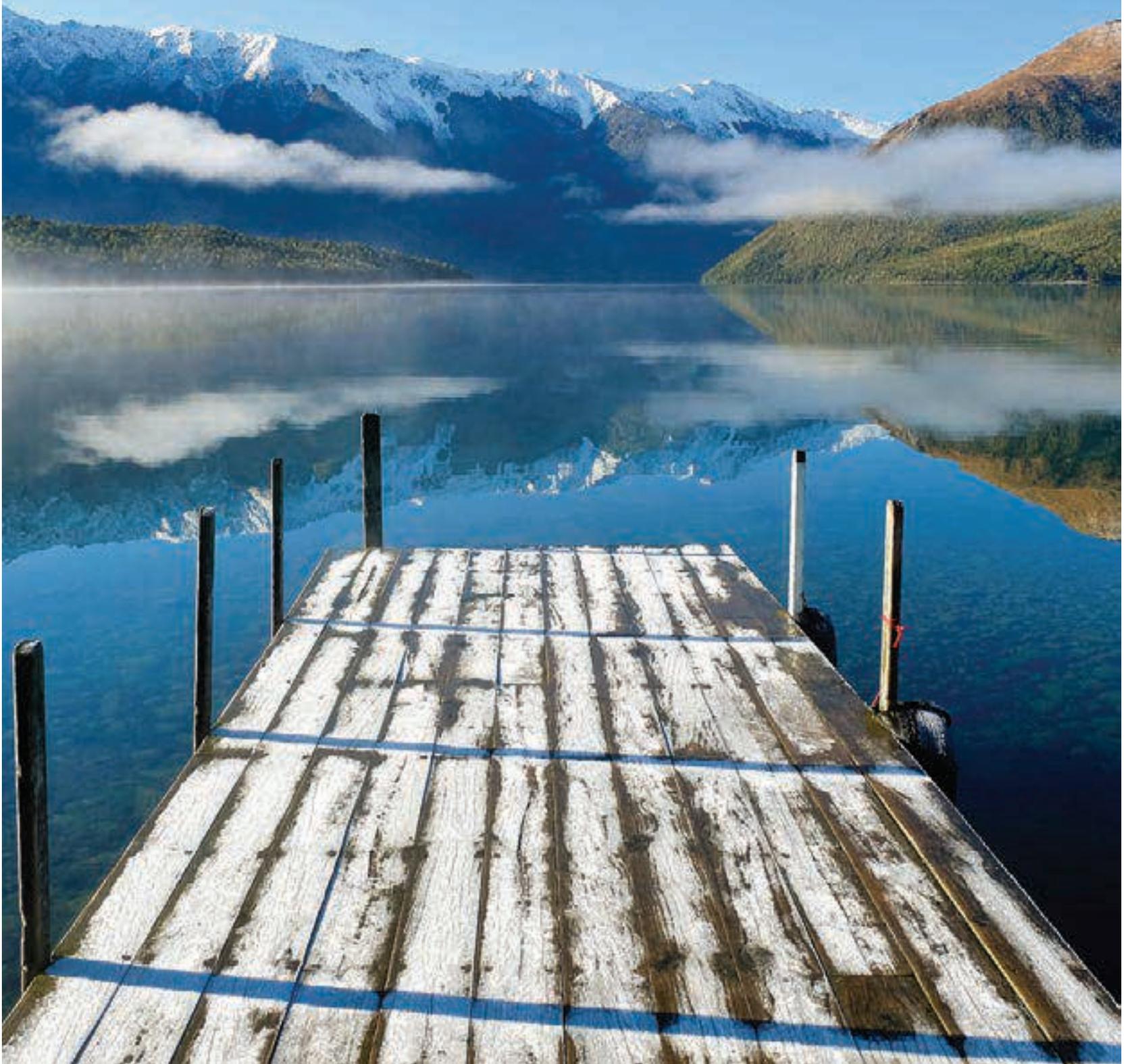


RECENT TRAVELS

Nelson Tasman, New Zealand

At the top of New Zealand's South Island lies Nelson Tasman - a place with a rich concentration of all the little things which make New Zealand great. A&K's New Zealand Country Manager **Chris Hall** recently explored the area and discovered a vibrant local art scene, stunning landscapes, award-winning wines and adventure aplenty.





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My base in sunny Nelson was Te Koi - The Lodge at Bronte, a perfect waterfront location and base for a range of outdoor activities. Starting on a high, I was swept away by helicopter soaring over mountain ranges in the breathtaking Nelson Lakes National Park to the sacred Blue Lake which is claimed to have the clearest fresh water in the world. Landing in the Upper Moutere area, an e-bike, and guide, awaited. Pedalling through the vineyards and

hop gardens of the Great Taste Trail was a chance to sample the local produce (craft beer anyone?) while the many galleries and studios were an opportunity to dip into the local art scene.

More activity beckoned with a day in the Abel Tasman National Park which is a petite coastal paradise full of sandy beaches, native forest and sparkling waters - a mecca for outdoor adventure. Taking to the water, my chosen craft was a kayak

- 1: Nelson Lakes National Park
- 2: Blue Lake, Nelson Lakes National Park
- 3: Te Koi - The Lodge at Bronte
- 4: Cycling the Great Taste Trail



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which allowed a gentle appreciation of the exquisite landscape, discovering hidden coves and inlets and a chance to spot the adorable little blue penguin.

a wild, beautiful place where massive rock formations and sand dunes have been created by the wind and waves.

Next an outing to Golden Bay which is accessed by a spectacular drive over the Takaka Hill past the Te Waikoropupū Springs to the vibrant artistic (read hippy) community of Takaka, which sits at the southeastern end of Golden Bay. If you keep following the road north, you'll reach Farewell Spit, a 34-kilometre-long stretch of sand that curves around the upper reaches of the bay. The spit is an important bird sanctuary and wetland area home to an impressive colony of gannets. Don't miss Wharariki beach,

In Abel Tasman National Park, the spectacularly located Split Apple Retreat was my base. Built high above Tasman Bay and with just three suites, this is a special hideaway tailored to wellness. Run by a Thai yoga teacher and her Kiwi husband, the retreat embraces holistic methods with a variety of wellness activities, including massage, yoga, meditation and spa treatments. The saltwater infinity swimming pool and Japanese onsen are a welcome indulgence after a day of adventure and the menus are designed to promote health and wellness.



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- 5: Split Apple Rock, Abel Tasman National Park
- 6: Te Waikoropupū Springs
- 7: Gannet viewing, Farewell Spit
- 8: Kayaking on Falls River, Abel Tasman National Park
- 9: Wharariki beach
- 10: Split Apple Retreat