

LISA-ANN GEORGE



ME IN AN INTRICATE ICE-CAVE
OF THE FRANZ JOSEF GLACIER

I would like to share with you some of the highlights from that journey. My first traditional Maori experience started in Rotorua, where I enjoyed a hangi (maori feast). We then travelled down to Taupo, where I can say "the life was scared back in to me" with a bungy jump. In the South Island we travelled by helicopter to the top of the Franz Josef glacier and investigated it's very intricate characteristics. The beauty of this glacier is currently melting and is said it will have melted away within about 10 years, so I cherish my opportunity to be amongst the few to experience this. Still in the South Island, Kaikoura is where I experienced nature in one of it's finest forms, swimming with the majestic dolphins.

I also visited Wellington where I experienced an earthquake. This earth shaking experience was the foundation of my understanding for the Christchurch people when visiting the as part of the "Kiwi Experience". I experienced an earthquake on such a small scale in comparison. I can only imagine what the local residents had to go through, not only with the initial earthquake, but the relentless after shocks also. After already having visited major cities such as Auckland and Wellington, to see this major city shaken to the ground was heart wrenching. I visited about a year after the earthquake and the rebuild had barely begun. It has made me more aware of how we should cherish opportunities and and experiences, and I am forever grateful for being so fortunate to be able to experience this.

The "Kiwi Experience" was such an insight to the NZ culture, both Maori and Pakeha (NZ/European), traditional and modern.



BUNGY JUMPING IN TAUPO



IN THE PLANE!



OUT OF THE PLANE?



The destruction of Christchurch after the 2011 earthquakes



As you aware; my ambition to become a midwife lead me to the wonderful experience of delivering a NZ baby. I still keep in contact with Tara and Hendrix. Hendrix is now a big brother to Koko and I receive regular updates and photos. It's a wonderful experience I will always cherish.

To find stability in NZ I took on working as a Nanny for a lovely family and three wonderful boys, whom I worked with for eleven months. This work lead me to volunteer at the Clevedon Presbyterian Church providing me with connections within the local community. My ability to work naturally with children was recognised by the Church run Daycare, Clevedon Kidz, and eventuated in my current work status as an Early Childhood Educator. I have been in this position since Christmas and thoroughly enjoy my role working with the two year old children.

Clevedon Kidz caters for children ranging from three months to four years. We nurture their growth and development with skills that will allow them to grow as individuals. As NZ is a bi-cultural country our children are educated in both European and Maori cultures. This means I have had to develop and adapt my teaching skills to the Kiwi way of life in embracing multiple cultures.

I am learning from the children as I am teaching the them. This is driving me to further my skills, still in the passion of working with children. The managing team at Clevedon Kidz, and myself, have spoken about working towards official qualifications through a Teaching College. However; being a non-resident proves difficult in gaining funding to support my study to become a qualified Teacher. We are looking at all

avenues to ensure gaining this qualification. If we can overcome these difficulties I intend to enrol at Manukau Institute of Technology (MIT) next year. I have chosen MIT as it is a bi-cultural education setting, supporting Clevedon Kidz bi-cultural education.

On a personal level; I am really enjoying my life here and am in a loving relationship. I have gained a work visa and fully intend to apply for residency when the time arises. I still maintain connections with friends and whanau (family) in the UK. My Dad has visited a few times, via his work, and I have really enjoyed having him here and introducing him to my new way of life. My Dad is planning a visit later this year, as a surprise to my Mum. I am highly excited to be able to introduce my new life to my Mum first hand, rather than just verbally.

I would like to sincerely thank the Bledisloe - New Zealand Memorial Trust for assisting me in my journey to NZ. This experience has helped me to grow as an individual, developing my independence and life skills. In future I will endeavour to supply more regular updates along my journey as they arise.

Kindest regards,

Lisa George

www.clevedonkidz.co.nz



THE PICTURES OF FOOD ARE OF A TRADITIONAL MAORI FEAST, A HANGI.

THE THREE LOVELY BOYS (ABOVE) ARE THE BOYS I LOOKED AFTER AS A NANNY.

THIS AMAZING PHOTO (LEFT) IS OF THE DARLING HENDRIX, THAT I DELIVERED, AND HIS MUM TARA.