

Note: This report comes from William Owens. It was the third trip to New Zealand for William and Laura. The trip was a family event as they were joined by their daughters, Leanne and Michelle, and the itinerary did not have a strong fly fishing emphasis. The timing was the very busy travel time in NZ – during the Christmas and New Years holidays.

Don:

Overall I can honestly say our trip could have not been any better. The itinerary was spot on and all the places were fantastic. Just a little feedback to help you with future trips.

Dairy Private Luxury Hotel was fantastic. I highly recommend this place to all future clients that visit Queenstown. The location cannot be any better. It is just down the hill a bit from the sky park above Queenstown that has paragliding, luge rides, mountain biking, bungee jumping, etc. It is about two short blocks (very easy walk) from the main downtown area. The food in the morning could not have been any better. It is spotless clean, well equipped, and extremely well run. I will not consider anywhere else in Queenstown for future trips.

Blanket Bay is fantastic as always. Very accommodating. Expensive as you know but at least you feel you get what you pay for. Being run now by Brent Hyde who used to run Rotorua Lodge with Scotty Murray when it was at its best. Continuing to do a great job.

Distinction Hotels Fox Glacier-- we opted to not copter there because we had previously done a very similar glacier/copter trip in Alaska so thought it would be a bit repetitious. We ended up coptering at Blanket Bay over to Millford Sound on Christmas eve instead. Hotel is nothing special but served the purpose. Clean and convenient.

River Haven Lodge--Scotty and Leyah have done a great job providing a very comfortable setting. The cabins are great, well thought out and have everything you could possibly need. We loved meeting and getting to know both Scotty and Leyah. They could not have been any better hosts. The girls both loved their day out fishing with Scotty and he was very patient with them when they did try their hand at fishing. I can see why you like and recommend Scotty so highly. He is definitely on my list of guides to use for future trips.

Cape Kidnappers-- I don't know if you have ever stayed there before. It is top shelf. Blanket Bay offers luxury but Cape Kidnappers offers it in a different way. We had a great time, they wait on you hand and foot. The golf course is world class. Many amenities are available for things to do. You obviously pay dearly for all of this but once you put that behind you then just sit back and enjoy. Probably at one time experience for us because of the price but if money is no object then there is no way they would not like what is there.

Poronui--Very well run as before. Laura and girls got lined up with a kayak trip on Lake Taupo that they really enjoyed. I coptered out and fished by myself. Had a great day

fishing. Report below. Laura enjoyed it better this time so definitely would consider staying there again in the future. Definitely a fishing centered stay.

Fishing report::

Day one with Scotty-- Michelle and I fished with Scotty on the Mangles River (which runs behind his house). We fished to 19 fish, hooked 14 and landed 9, all browns. They ranged in size from 2 to 5 lbs. All on nymphs (maybe one on dry-can't remember for sure). Can't complain about that.

Day two with Scotty—Heavy rain at night. Woke up to the Mangles being 5 feet higher and muddy. Leanne and I were taken to Lake Rototini to the headwaters (had to go by hired boat). Forget the name of the river that feeds the lake. Scotty hoped the waters would be a bit dingy so trout would come up out of the lake but the water was still clear. Regardless we had a decent day. Not exactly sure of the numbers but caught somewhere in the range of 5 to 8 fish, one nice 6 lb on dry fly, and lost one in the 8 to 10 lb range (fought for a long time only to come unbuttoned right before getting to the net). All browns. Totally different terrain and river from the day before.

Poronui-- Coptered out and fished with a guide named Craig. Craig is a brother to one of the other guides there (I think Derek). He did a good job. Don't remember the name of the river. Other fisherman had an okay day but we probably caught between 30 and 40 rainbows in the 2 to 4 lb range. All on dry flies. I guess we just got lucky. Can't complain about those numbers. This would also be a place to consider bringing the girls or nubbies because the casting is usually short and the rainbows are not as particular as the browns.

Once again the trip turned out great. Thanks for all your help on this. I will be following up with some photos hopefully sometime over the weekend.