

From the Founder

Julia Charity

Summer

With BBQs and bubbles too, and tui's chortled chase, flowers' full bloom and beaming moon, pohutukawa haze. ..

The promise of sun-drenched days, the richness of quality friendships and a glass of quality NZ wine does much to lighten the mood. No doubt many of you have faced some kind of challenge this year, or just plain worked hard - so whether you're putting it all behind you with travel plans or hunkering down at home, please accept our warmest wishes for this special holiday season.

Look After Me has been focusing on attracting mature hosts who take pride in their homes all around the country.

A very warm welcome to all of our new hosts. We now have properties in Auckland, Hamilton, Rotorua, Taupo, Gisborne, Napier, Wellington and Christchurch. We will be working hard to attract guests to your properties, particularly for the boon expected in February and March 2012.

Julia



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Charity begins at home

“Charity really does begin at home,” says Look After Me Founder Julia Charity, “because some of our hosts, myself included, have opted to donate a percentage of their profits to charity or service organisations such as Zonta, Rotary, Lions and the Red Hat Society, which in turn help local community-based projects.

Look After Me recently sponsored National Conferences for Zonta New Zealand in Auckland and the Red Hat Society in Taupo. We also supported the opening of a new Dress for Success shop in Rotorua and South Auckland's Her Business Network. Some of the Look After Me hosts who have members in these organisations are donating a percentage of their profits to worthwhile causes.

Look After Me would be happy to work with any service organisations, for example as a guest speaker, or talking to directly to members about nationwide opportunities to raise funds for their charities of their choice.



Elaine McFarlane (left), President of Dress for Success is the winner of the Look After Me gift basket, containing two nights accommodation, and hand-made toiletries and chocolates. Pictured with Julia Charity (right) at 'Handbag Heaven' to raise funds for Dress for Success.



Do I need to cook?

As a Look After Me host, there is no obligation to provide meals. However most include a light breakfast. Our guests do rely on your local knowledge of quality restaurants. Lucky guests of 'Geraldine's' hosted by Auckland's Carol Falconer receive a special continental breakfast with fresh fruit and freshly baked pastries!



What do others say...

Testimonials from travellers, hosts and the business sector have been added to our website.

Here is a selection of what they are saying:

"It sounds funny, but the hardest bit for me about signing up, was the thought of accepting money from people. It's not in my nature. But then I thought, well if I offer good value for money and better service than what's already on offer, travellers are quite expecting to pay for it."

"I was keen to become a Look After Me host because Tom and I like meeting people. We see it as a way of passing a little bit of old-fashioned hospitality and local knowledge to travellers. This extends our 'international' family and it's about connecting with others."

"I see it as a way of offering something we love and hope that others feel the same way".

My experience staying with Lynn was absolutely second to none. The accommodation was exactly what we were looking for. ...Lynn was amazing, she couldn't possibly have made us feel more at home. I would certainly stay there again and would have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending Lynn's home as a place to stay. Thanks a mill. "

"Well I'm hosting people anyway....and I usually do it for free. It's good to have a chance to earn a bit of money."

"I was initially worried about safety but when I thought about it all our travellers are women or couples over forty. They've got more to lose than we have. They turn up on our doorstep with passports, money, their whole world in their back pocket. Of course it's a matter of trust"

"It's just so nice to be appreciated for something we're doing anyway...I really love this home and I'm thrilled to be able to offer it to you too."

"Well it's good to know there's now a network of homes around the country where we can travel, feel safe and have some 'real' conversation. After all, life's for living! This is a wonderful initiative for women everywhere." Merepeka Raukawa Tait, Rotorua District Councillor.

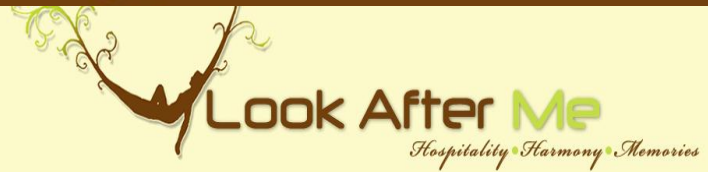
"I've had a B&B before, but this is just easier. No pressure of advertising, I can block out my calendar when I've got family coming, I just get to do the 'nice' bits of hosting, without the fuss of running a business. I offer a lovely room very close to Auckland city with a beautiful breakfast, so it's great value".

"NZ used to suffer from Tall Poppy Syndrome. Now I reckon we just suffer from lethargy. That was until I met Julia Charity. Look at her – she's a pocket rocket with as much passion and power as I've ever seen. She'll go places that one." Te Radar.

"I'm not that great a cook actually. But I do make a decent lasagne and salad. I just stick to that, then I'm not under pressure – and guests seem to really like the simplicity of it."

"Look After Me is a fantastic concept for the host as well as the traveller. As an entrepreneur and world traveller the idea of being able to stay in high quality homes with quality local people who can give you invaluable knowledge to the area and the culture is far more an attractive proposition, than a personality-less hotel where the only people you meet are other tourists."

From the hosts point of view - what a wonderful way to be an ambassador for your region while also generating some additional revenue. That's why I've signed and opened up my home. Women helping women – you've just got to love it!"
Angela Beer, Hello Dolly.



Good for a laugh

For the ladies: Men are like fine wine. They all start out like grapes, and it's our job to stomp on them and keep them in the dark until they mature into something with which you'd like to have dinner with.

For the gents: Women are like fine wine. They all start out fresh, fruity and intoxicating to the mind and then turn full-bodied with age until they go all sour and vinegary and give you a headache.



Hosts Chris and Margaret (Taupo) and Trish (Rotorua)

Signing up is easy

Look After Me is constantly updating our website and we listen to what our customers are saying.

We've made signing up your property easier and cheaper.

- (1) Click the 'Sign up now' button on our website
- (2) Chose a username and password
- (3) If you are confident, login using your new username and password and follow our prompts to load up your property.
- (4) Or call us, we'll talk you through what information we need and do it for you!

Hosting tips:

- Do you have family coming? Blocking out your calendar is easy. Login, click 'manage property', and highlight unsuitable dates.
- Referral fee: Know someone who might be a suitable Look After Me Host? We offer \$25 per sign-up.

www.lookafterme.co.nz
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