

\$4.10 INC. GST December 5, 2011

M *W* Idea



KATE'S TEARS

THEIR FIRST BIG FIGHT



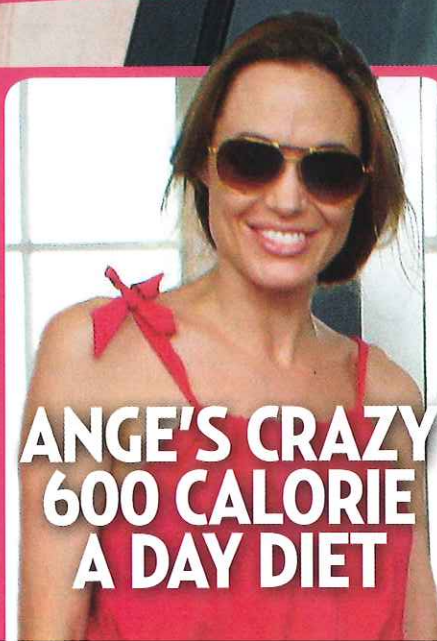
BEHIND PALACE DOORS

- Inside the showdown no one saw coming
- Wills' plea to his wife

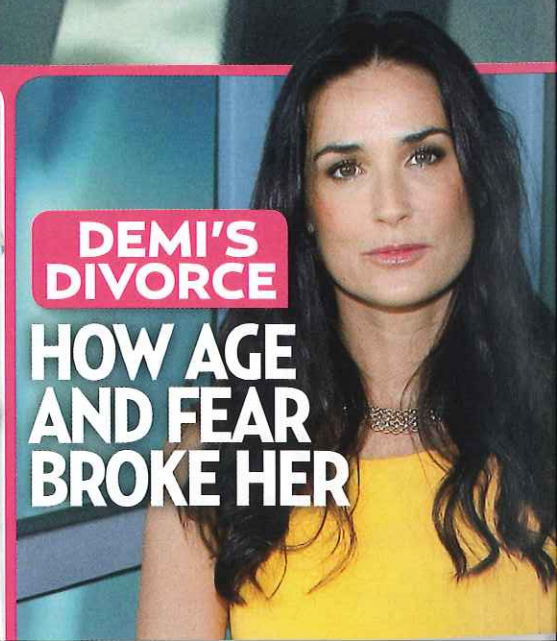


MARC ELLIS

**MY REAL LIFE
DIHA RESCUE**



**ANGE'S CRAZY
600 CALORIE
A DAY DIET**



DEMI'S DIVORCE

**HOW AGE
AND FEAR
BROKE HER**



Travel



Not a thrill-seeker? Spend your days soaking in thermal waters or cooing at cute animals instead.



Sulphur city

Gone is the stereotype that Rotorua is only for thrill seekers or international tourists in search of traditional Kiwi culture. If you can get past the pungent sulphur smell (which really isn't so bad), there is an indulgent and charming side to the thermal town.

Whether it's pampering yourself with mud massages and relaxing in the therapeutic waters of The Polynesian Spa or taking a day trip on a catamaran across lake Rotoiti with Pure Cruises, all you need for that perfect long-weekend getaway is at your fingertips.

High-end bed and breakfast Hamurana Lodge takes service to a whole new level – its motto is, 'There is nothing we can't do'. Before arrival, you complete a questionnaire to ensure your stay is tailored to your tastes, and that includes what music you want loaded on to your room's iPod.

The majority of produce for Hamurana's mouth-watering gourmet dinners is grown organically on the extensive property. Anything that they can't grow or make on sight is sourced locally. The food, staff and estate is absolute perfection.

But those looking for a more affordable stay should try Amora Lake Resort. Located right on the lakefront, most rooms feature a gorgeous separate bath that looks out across the water. A sunset bubble bath – pure bliss.

And, if you fancy something a little more hands-on, a must-see is Rainbow Springs Kiwi Wildlife Park which recently celebrated the hatching of its 1000th kiwi egg. The park, soon to open a scenic water ride that takes you on a journey of Rotorua's history, is a perfect day trip.

By Louise Sangster

RUSSELL WILL SET YOUR HEART RACING



I fell in love with a tree. It is strong and stands proud. It could bear the scars of where musket holes pierced its flesh during the Maori tribal wars of the 1810s and 1820s. If it could whisper, it would tell of Cook discovering the Russell Peninsula in 1769, back when this piece of paradise was nicknamed 'Hellhole of the Pacific'.

The best view of my tree is from the second floor balcony of The Duke of Marlborough Hotel on The Strand. Chatter rises from the pretty deck below. Music and delicious smells waft up, as the sun warms my arms. I am truly in love with the tree and this place.

Behind The Duke – which boasts NZ's oldest pub licence – are two couples with a vision. They have renovated the grand old thing carefully, seamlessly mixing old and new. And with a scrumptious menu and wine

list to match, it's perfect for a romantic getaway or wedding.

Hundreds of thousands of people a year visit the beautiful Bay of Islands because of the variety of activities on offer.

A must-do heart-pumping venture is the exhilarating Excitor Fast Boat Adventure. I felt like an explorer stumbling upon a sacred cave as we zoomed through the famous Hole in the Rock.

Lunch waited at Kamakura, a short stroll from Russell jetty. Since renamed The Wharf, it won Fodors Choice Award for Bay of Islands best restaurant in 2010. When my plate of steamy hot pork with blistered crackling arrived I cried out in delight.

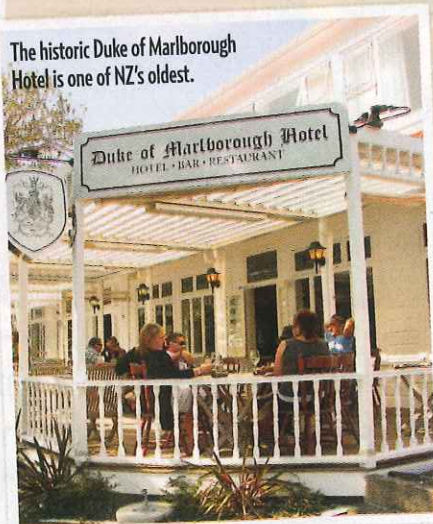
My afternoon adventure, flying high above the sea from a line attached to a speedboat wouldn't be my first choice. But the blokes at Flying Kiwi Parasail

are first-class professionals. Once I the rope was fully extended, I was flying high. I could hear only the steady gush of the wind and started singing to myself to fill the eerie silence.

I have purposely left out a photo of the tree that stole my heart. I challenge you to find it for yourself and let your imagination run wild.

By Rebecca Milne

» Find out more at www.northlandnz.com.



The historic Duke of Marlborough Hotel is one of NZ's oldest.