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For immediate release from Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon, for more visit www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz

AUSSIES LEAD OVERSEAS INVASION AT AIR NZ QUEENSTOWN MARATHON

The Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon is already well established as an iconic event, one renowned globally for its stunning location, scenery and the hospitality offered at New Zealand's largest annual marathon race.*

If further evidence of that popularity was needed, it comes in the form of a growing group of Australians who are taking the chance to trip across the Tasman to sample the off-road trails of the Queenstown Lakes District, and more than likely some of the amazing wine and food and tourism activities that the region is built upon.

With less than five weeks to go until race day, an incredible 1,113 Australians have signed up to take part in the variety of events on offer on November 18, and that number is increasing every day.

Race Director Nicole Fairweather says the internationals are coming not only for the amazing race, but for the added trimmings that Queenstown offers.

"This event does not carry the name *international* by accident, if you were to look up the definition of an international destination event, you might well see an image of the Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon.

"Entrants come for the choice of race distances on offer, all set amidst stunning scenery and on largely hard packed off-road trails for easy running. But once the hard work is done, playtime can begin and there is so much to enjoy, from the amazing wine and food, to the adrenaline-charged tourism activities or a more relaxing taking in of all the Queenstown Lakes District has to offer."

If the Aussie numbers are anything to go by, international entries are expected to rival those of 2016, when 1,594 entries came in from 49 countries, many of whom brought family and friends with them to enjoy the sights.

Typical of the 'Aussie invasion' is the representation of runners from Running Mums Australia (RMA), Nicole Bunyon will lead a group of women from the network that she founded back in 2013 and is typical of many marathon runners today in that they

are as much about the social side of things and travelling the world as they are about the running.

“RMA is an Australian wide running network for women and mums, I founded RMA in 2013 after running my first marathon and we now number 30,000,” said Bunyon. “I wanted a place where I could connect and be inspired by women like me, mums who ran.

“We network in our towns, states and across all running events across Australia. You can basically go anywhere and you will in fact meet another RMA at that race, or always have someone to run with if you are holidaying away from home.

“Throw travel into the mix and a destination race like Queenstown, and you really get the best of both worlds. A lot of RMA will come there with their family and make a holiday of it, and get to race at the same time, so it really is a win-win situation for all. Some will come alone, and knowing that other friendly faces of fellow RMA will be there makes it that much easier to sign up to run.”

Bunyon says Queenstown is a huge attraction for her and others in RMA, with a little wining and dining no doubt on the agenda as well as the running!

“Wherever we go we can discover amazing new places and see the world’s greatest beauty when running, especially at events like Queenstown Marathon. This is what I am looking forward to most; connecting with other likeminded runners in a beautiful location such a Queenstown, with a little running thrown in.”

Air New Zealand Chief Revenue Officer Cam Wallace says it’s great to see interest in the event continuing to soar since the inaugural Queenstown marathon in late 2014, particularly from across the Tasman.

“We’re pleased to be able to operate additional services between Sydney and Queenstown and Melbourne and Queenstown in the days leading up to the marathon, as well as an additional flight to Sydney the day after the event to help accommodate demand.”

The response to this year’s event and innovations such as the NZ Sotheby’s RE First Half marathon (taking in the first half of the full Air NZ Marathon course) and the removal of ‘marathon hill’ has been fantastic, with entries close to 90% sold out. Runners are urged to take up the final entries on offer in all events, from the 10km,

NZ Sotheby's Half, Air NZ Marathon and Kids Run (2.2km). Enter online at www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz

For more on the Air New Zealand Queenstown International marathon, [CLICK HERE](#)

For more on Running Mums Australia, [CLICK HERE](#)

Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon

- November 18, 2017
- Enter online: www.queenstown-marathon.co.nz
- Fourth edition of the event, featuring:
 - Kids Race (2.2km from Queenstown Gardens to the finish line Rec Ground)
 - 10km
 - NZ Sotheby's RE Half Marathon
 - The new NZ Sotheby's RE First Half (for previous runners on a limited capacity)
 - Air New Zealand Marathon.
- Close to 10,000 participants in 2016
- 90% of those entrants from out of Central Otago
- 49 countries represented
- Over 3000 extra seats into Queenstown put on by Air New Zealand

**based on 2016 figures, Air New Zealand Queenstown International Marathon ranks number one in New Zealand for marathon entries*



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About IRONMAN

A Wanda Sports Holdings company, IRONMAN operates a global portfolio of events that includes the IRONMAN® Triathlon Series, the IRONMAN® 70.3® Triathlon Series, 5150™ Triathlon Series, Iron Girl®, IRONKIDS®, six of nine International Triathlon Union World Triathlon Series races, road cycling events including the UCI Velothon Majors Series, mountain bike races, premier marathons and other multisport races. IRONMAN's events, together with all other Wanda Sports Holdings events, provide more than 680,000 participants annually the benefits of endurance sports through the company's vast offerings.

The iconic IRONMAN® Series of events is the largest participation sports platform in the world. Since the inception of the IRONMAN® brand in 1978, athletes have proven that ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE® by crossing finish lines at the world's most challenging endurance races. Beginning as a single race, IRONMAN has grown to become a global sensation with more than 260 events across 44 countries. For more information, visit www.ironman.com.

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