



# POLYNESIAN SPA

GEOTHERMAL HOT SPRINGS  
AND THERAPIES



HISTORIC. THERAPEUTIC. WORLD-FAMOUS.

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Polynesian Spa is New Zealand's original and iconic geothermal bathing experience, with exclusive access to both acidic and alkaline natural mineral springs, and unique spa therapies for the ultimate in rest and relaxation.

## HISTORIC SPRINGS

### New Zealand's Original Geothermal Bathing Experience

There are few places in the world where geothermal activity is as wondrous as here in Rotorua. For centuries these natural mineral hot springs, discovered by New Zealand's earliest inhabitants, have been the definitive bathing experience due to its amazing effects. As home to these ancient springs, Polynesian Spa is registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust, carefully retaining elements of early buildings and baths to preserve this natural wonder.

## THERAPEUTIC SPRINGS

### New Zealand's Original Alkaline & Acidic Hot Springs

Polynesian Spa is the only bathing facility with exclusive access to both alkaline and acidic hot springs. Each of the 28 geothermal mineral pools are sourced from two natural springs – the acidic Priest Spring for easing aches and the alkaline Rachel Spring for fresh, rejuvenated skin. Passive and active bathing experiences further enhance the health and wellness experience, helping increase immunity and greater energy levels. Relax the mind, nourish the skin and relieve tired muscles in one place.

## WORLD-FAMOUS SPRINGS

### Soak in the Legend of a Top 10 Spa

Built on the site of historic bath houses for which the city first became world famous in the 1800s, Polynesian Spa has been an icon of the Rotorua tourism industry since it was established in 1972. The legend behind the naming of the Rachel Spring and the Priest Spring coupled with multiple Top 10 Spa awards, have further added to the worldwide acclaim.



## THE POOLS

## THE WATER

The therapeutic waters in the 28 hot pools at Polynesian Spa come from two different natural springs:

- The original Priest Spring is named after Father Mahoney, a Catholic Priest who was 'cured' of his crippling arthritis from bathing in the waters in 1878. The sulphate rich acidic water from the Priest Spring relieves tired muscles, aches and pains. This spring source is heritage protected and can be viewed on site.
- The Rachel Spring is a source of alkaline water, which features the antiseptic action of sodium silicate which nourishes and heals the skin. It was historically said that those who bathe in the waters of the Rachel Spring are blessed with ageless beauty.

The combination of these two types of mineral waters in all pool areas is only found at Polynesian Spa.

## WHY ARE THERE GEOTHERMAL WATERS IN ROTORUA?

Rotorua is part of the Taupo Volcanic Zone, a geothermal field extending from White Island off the Bay of Plenty Coast to Mt Ruapehu far to the south.

Geothermal features in the region include volcanic crater lakes, spouting geysers, bubbling mud pools, hissing fumaroles, colourful sinter terraces, hot waters and much more which has drawn visitors since the 1800s.

## MAORI GEOTHERMAL LEGENDS

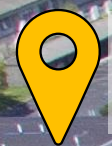
There are few places in the world where geothermal phenomena of such intensity, is as extensive and easily seen as here in Rotorua. To those in the past who had none of the science or technology that we have today, this bounty of nature was regarded as a gift from the gods.

The earliest legends speak of a man named Ngatoroirangi, a tohunga (priest) who guided the Te Arawa canoe to this country. Exploring the area, he climbed one of the central North Island mountains, Tongariro. At its snowy peak, he nearly died – so he called on his sisters far off in Hawaiki who sent the fire demons to go to their brother's aid. In every place the fire demons surfaced on the way, they left a steaming, bubbling trail of thermal activity in their wake, till they reached and revived him. He named the mountain Tongariro to commemorate the cold south wind that almost killed him. And so it is that volcanic and thermal activity came to the region and Rotorua's Te Arawa tribe became its guardian.

*Source: Te Whakarewarewa by Don Stafford.*



**Millennium Hotel**



**Sudima Hotel**



**Polynesian Spa**



**POLYNESIAN SPA**

GEOTHERMAL HOT SPRINGS  
AND THERAPIES

# Our Timeline

Discover why people have flocked to these waters since the 1800's

**1878:** Irish Catholic priest Father James Mahoney is carried from Tauranga to Rotorua to soak his rheumatism-racked body in Te Pupūnitanga thermal spring. After three months, he claims to be cured and walks home. As the news spreads, the floodgates open and people flock to the medicinal springs seeking cures for a variety of ailments. The spring becomes known as the Priest's Bath.



**1881:** The Crown begins buying land and planning a new township around the area's geothermal springs.



**1882:** The first government-run bath house opens. Built on the site of the Priest's Bath, the Pavilion Bath is promoted as a health resort by local government.

**1887:** The Pavilion Bath building falls down due to the highly sulphurous environment corroding the nails. New town engineer Camille Malfroy designs and supervises the construction of a new nail-less structure.

**1888:** A new building opens housing both the Priest Bath (the former Pavilion Bath renamed in Father Jim's honour) and the new Madame Rachel Bath.

**1901:** The opening of the Duchess Bath coincides with a visit to the town's new upscale bath house by the Duchess of Cornwall and York visiting New Zealand with her husband on a royal tour from England.



**1930:** The Pavilion and Duchess Baths become so rundown in the late 1920s that they are finally closed and demolished to make way for the new Ward Baths.

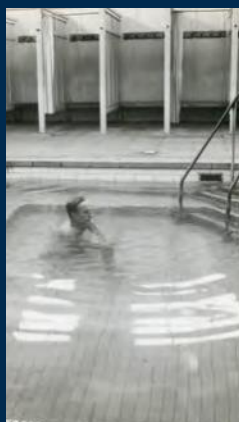


**1931:** Named in honour of Sir Joseph Ward, the Ward Baths open. Sir Joseph opted to become the first Minister of Tourist and Health Resorts when he became Prime Minister in 1906. The Priest and Duchess Baths remain part of the complex and are complemented by a new Aix wing that boasts warm-air rooms, Scotch and Vichy douches, and massages under sprays of thermal water from the Rachel Spring.



**1968:** A proposal to take over the running of the Ward Baths is presented to the Tourist and Publicity Department by Neville Lobb. The concept outlines a complete renovation encompassing 20 private pools, a new era of mixed bathing, a coffee lounge, souvenir shop, and facilities for coach parties.

**1971:** The Ward Baths close, bringing 90 years of government involvement to a close. Polynesian Pools Ltd become a registered company founded by Neville and Margaret Lobb. Neville Lobb steps down from his role as chief executive for the New Zealand National Travel Association (NTA), a role he had held for 19 years.



**1972:** The Lobb family, together with their investment partners Rangatira Ltd., take over converting the rundown facility into a world-class amenity boasting 13 pools that would later expand to 28. The new complex is officially opened on Easter weekend by the general manager of the Tourist and Publicity Department, John Hartstonge.



**1996:** The complex rebrands as Polynesian Spa to coincide with the opening of a luxurious Lake Spa Retreat featuring 10 therapy rooms, offering a variety of mineral water and mud therapies, massage, and beauty treatments. The peaceful sanctuary features five open-air shallow thermal pools nestled amongst lush greenery, stonework, mini waterfalls, and an inventive outdoor shower all overlooking Sulphur Bay.

The Lake Spa is officially opened by the Minister of Tourism John Banks on February 22.

**1999:** The Family Pools area has a major upgrade with the addition of two new geothermal pools and hydro-slide for children to enjoy.

**2003:** The famed Priest and Radium pools close for bathing and secured for viewing. Due to their significance in the development of New Zealand's thermal spa industry, they are still in place and registered by Historic Places Trust.

**2007:** Major site works with total rebuilds of the private and cascade pools, tour entrance and new main entrance.



**2010:** Dual Therapy Suites are added to the Retreat Day Spa.

**2013:** A reflexology walkway was added to the Pavilion Pools area.

**2014:** A new Priest Spring pool was added to complement the four existing Rachel Spring pools in the Lake Spa area. Hydrotherapy benefits for visitors were further enhanced with the addition of a cold plunge pool.

**2016:** A new Lakeside Rachel Pool was added to the Pavilion Pools area to maximise absolute lakeside views for guests.

**2017:** The on-site café and spa entrance undergoes a major architectural remodelling. The contemporary space that greets you on entry is now known as 88Ra Café. The café's new name is derived from the scientific symbol for Radium – Ra and its atomic number – 88, inspired by the historic Priest and Radium pools.



**2018:** The second set of geothermal recliners were added to the Deluxe Lake Spa area.

**2022:** Rangatira Ltd have remained the principal investment partners since inception. Their continued support alongside the Lobb Family, has enabled Polynesian Spa to develop into one of Rotorua's premier tourist attractions.

Polynesian Spa has been voted seven times as one of the world's top ten geothermal spas by Condé Nast Traveller magazine in their Readers Choice Spa Awards – the only spa to achieve this accolade outside of Europe.





CLICK THE ARROW TO SEE MORE DETAILS

Sulphur Bay Wildlife Reserve



DELUXE LAKE SPA



PAVILION POOLS

Sulphur Bay Wildlife Reserve

LAKE VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

Heated Recliners

Heated Recliners

Changing Rooms

Lake Spa Lounge

Historic Pools

Private Pool Reception

Relaxation Lounge

Therapy Rooms

AIX Therapy Rooms

RETREAT DAY SPA

FAMILY POOLS

Retreat Reception

Dual Therapy Rooms

SKY VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

Water Type  
GEOTHERMAL

Acidic  
POOL

Alkaline  
POOL

Changing Rooms

Pools Reception

Changing Rooms

88Ra Cafe

Gift Shop

Main Entrance

Wellness & Events Room

Rachel Spring  
ALKALINE

Reflexology Walk

Cold Plunge Pool

Priest Spring  
ACIDIC

36°

38°

40°

41°

40°

40°

18°

41°

39°

38°

39°

40°

38.5°

38.5°

37°

40°

DEPTH 0.6m

FRESH WATER 33°

DEPTH 1.2m

38°

DEPTH 1.3m

38.5°

### DELUXE LAKE SPA

A premium bathing experience with five mineral pools overlooking Lake Rotorua, heated recliners, cold plunge pool, lockers, towels & hairdryers included in entry.



### LAKE VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

The Lake View Deluxe Private Pool (38.5°C) offers panoramic views over Lake Rotorua to enjoy in peace. (Max 30min hire, with minimum 2 adults)



### PAVILION POOLS

Relax and rejuvenate in this area reserved for adults with calming hot pools, a beautiful reflexology walk and a deep exercise pool to allow for a swim. 12 years and older. Towels & lockers are additional.



### SKY VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

The Sky View Private Pool (38.5°C) is a cubicle-style suite, and has an open roof for spectacular sky views. (Max 30min hire, with minimum 2 adults)



### THE RETREAT DAY SPA

Make time for yourself at the Retreat to stop, breathe, relax and reset with an indulgent range of treatments. Deluxe Lake Spa pool included with therapies. Talk to us about spa therapy and wellness packages.



### SPA ESSENTIALS STORE

The Spa Essentials Store stocks a range of luxury spa and skincare products, as well as swim wear and towels.



### 88RA CAFÉ

Polynesian Spa has a large on-site café that has a full kitchen that can cater to large groups.



### FAMILY POOLS

Sliding and splashing, the kids will love the supervised large pool and the family can also enjoy two Rachel Spring alkaline mineral hot pools.

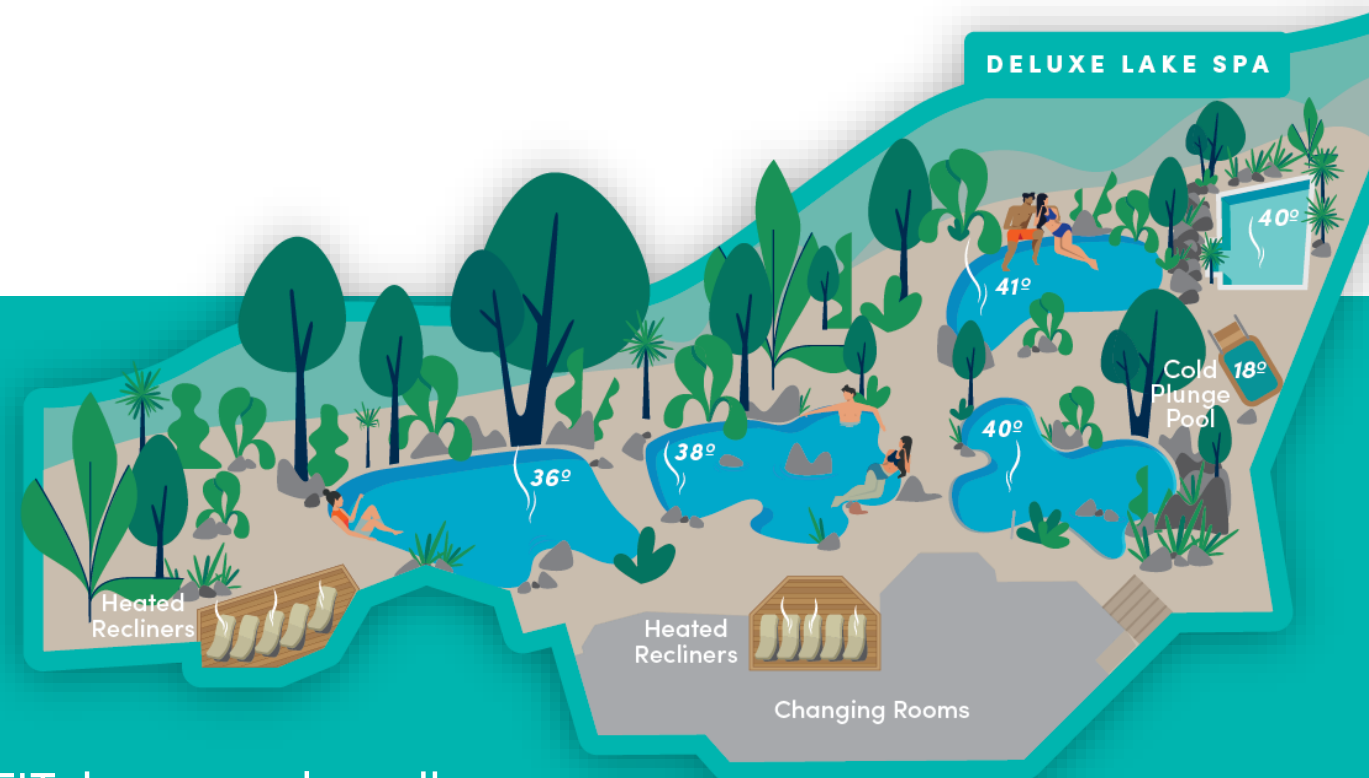


### WELLNESS ROOM

Whether you're a tight-knit business team looking to relieve the stress of your hard work, or a group of friends looking to relax and unwind in a stunning lakeview setting, we have the perfect multi-purpose venue for your next event.



## DELUXE LAKE SPA



- Absolute lakeside location with views over Sulphur Bay Wildlife Refuge. Native gardens, waterfalls, driftwood and stonework create a natural environment.
- This is a public pool area best for FIT, luxury and smaller groups. Free sell or reservations for exclusivity available.
- 5 Geothermal pools ranging in temperatures from 36°C/96.8°F – 41°C/106°F. 4 Rachel Spring alkaline pools and 1 Priest Spring acidic water pool.
- 1 Cold plunge pool and a cold water outdoor shower.
- 10 Geothermally heated recliners.
- One relaxation lounge available exclusively for Deluxe Lake Spa Pool and Spa Therapy guests.
- Lockers, towels, hairdryers and toiletries are included in this area.
- Capacity – 80 pax



# PAVILION POOLS



- Historic site with the original Priest Acidic geothermal spring source protected in our grounds
- The Pavilion pool area is an adult public pool area and does not require pre-booking for access. It is however
- recommended to book for larger groups. Area capacity is 150 pax.
- 8 Geothermal hot pools consisting of both alkaline and acidic geothermal waters from two springs ranging in temperatures from 38°C /100°F to 41°C / 106°F
- 1 Deep alkaline exercise pool – 1.3m
- 1 Foot reflexology walk
- Lockers, towels and bathing suit hire are additional .
- Capacity - 200 pax. Free sell area. Large groups; bookings preferred





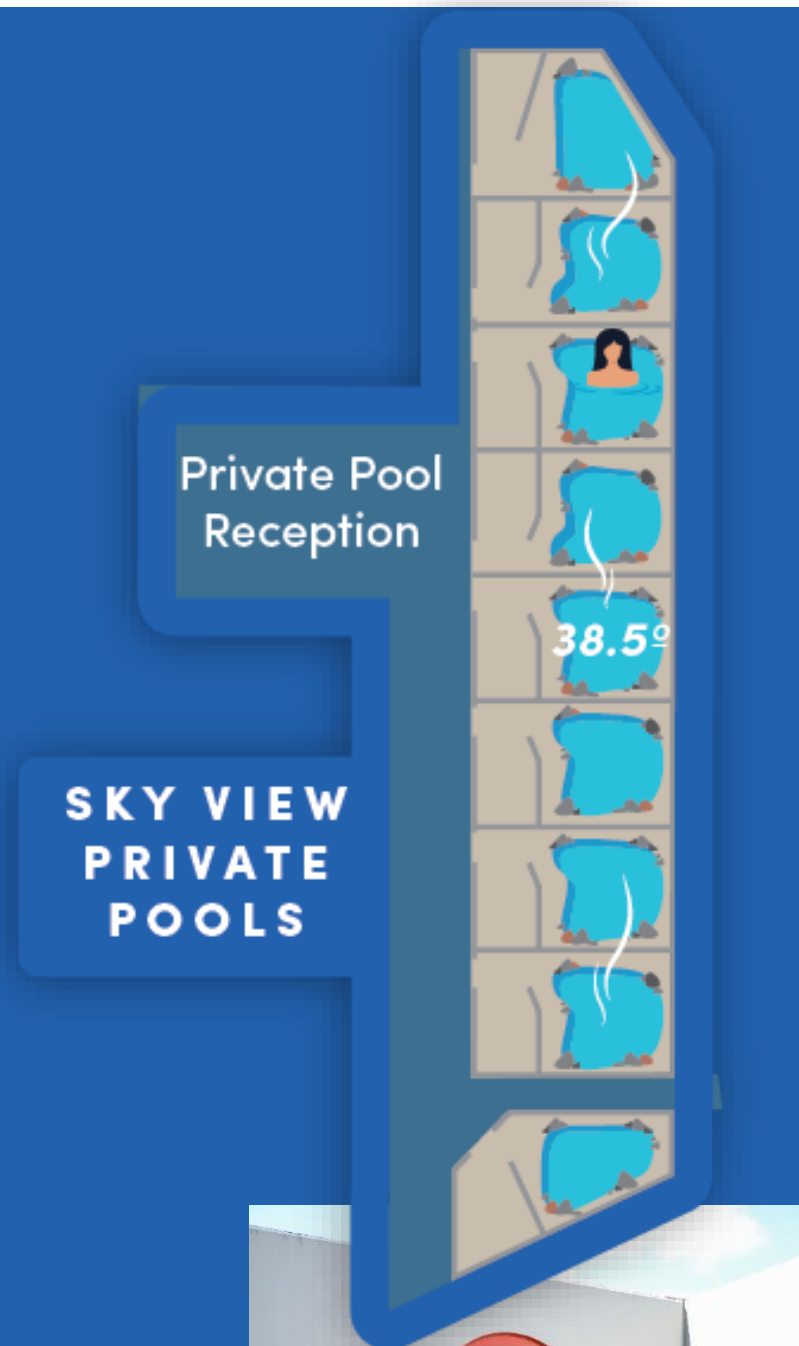
# LAKE VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

- Alkaline geothermal spring water - 38.5°C / 101 °F. The pools are 0.7m deep.
- Lake View private suites have private changing rooms, outdoor showers with toiletries and towels included with booking fee.
- 30-minute time limit per booking. Back-to-back reservations are not allowed.
- Minimum 2 adults (16 years and older) to book for health and safety reasons.
- Arrival on site is 10 minutes before guest's reservation start. Bathing suits are optional.
- Book a public pool area to enjoy either before or after a private pool soak. Private pool bookings do not provide automatic entry to other pool areas.
- All ages accompanied.
- Capacity - 4 Lake View private suites with capacity for 4 - max 6 per pool.



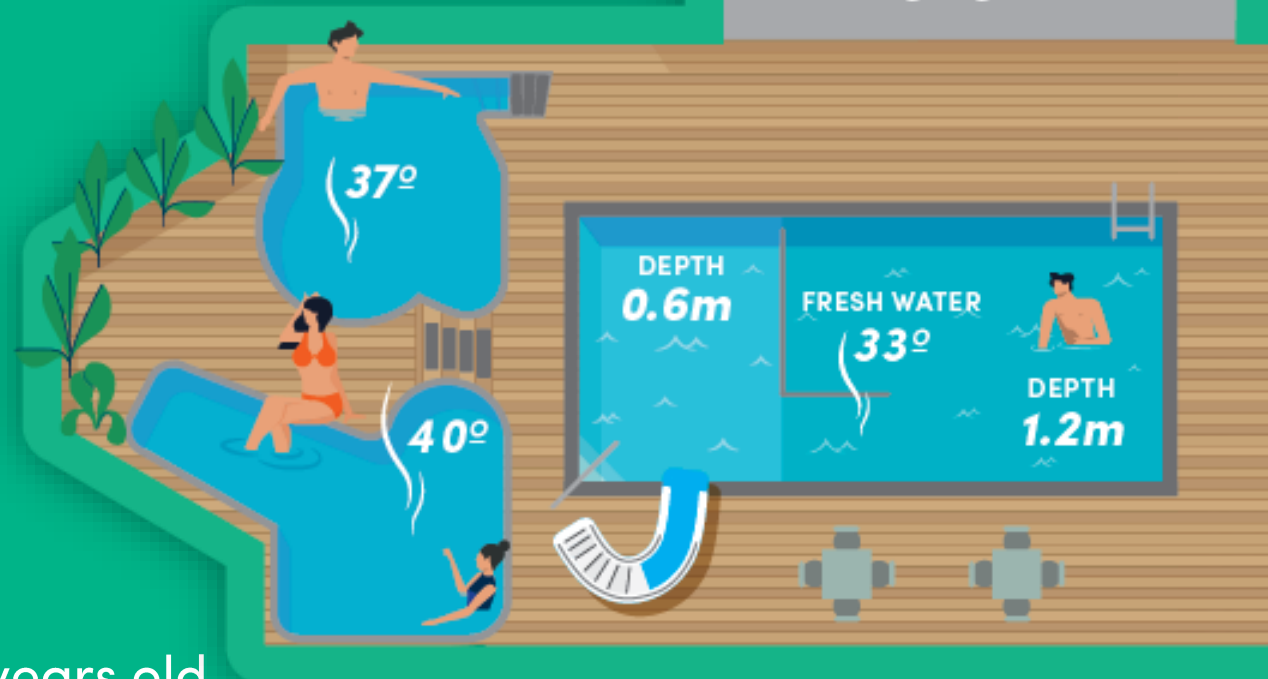
# SKY VIEW PRIVATE POOLS

- Alkaline geothermal spring water 38.5°C / 101 °F. Pools are 0.7m deep.
- Sky View suites have private changing rooms and showers.
- 30-minute time limit per booking. Back to back reservations are not allowed.
- Minimum 2 adults (16 years and older) to book for health and safety reasons.
- Arrival on site is 10 minutes before guest's reservation starts. Bathing suits are optional.
- Towels and toiletries are not included but can be hired from reception.
- All ages accompanied.
- Book a public pool area to enjoy either before or after a private pool soak. Private pool bookings do not provide automatic entry to other pool areas.
- Capacity - 9 Cubicle style pools with capacity of 3 to 4 per pool.



# FAMILY POOLS

- All ages accompanied.
- The Family Pool area can take a maximum of 70 pax. This is a public pool area so does not have to be pre-booked.
- 2 Small alkaline geothermal pools, 37°C /98 °F and 40°C/104°F.
- 1 Large freshwater chlorinated pool with a hydro-slide, gently heated to 33°C /91 °F.
- Infants and children under 5 years old are free of charge.
- Lifeguard on-duty at all times.
- Children under 8 years of age must be actively supervised.
- Lockers, swimsuits and towel hire are available from pools reception.
- The family pool area does not have lake views.



## FAMILY POOLS

Changing Rooms

[RETURN TO MENU](#)



# RETREAT DAY SPA – 12 Therapy beds

- 2 Dual treatment rooms with dual showers and a private relaxation lounge, ideal for couples or friends and family.
- 8 Single treatment rooms, consisting of 3 Wet (AIX) treatment rooms where therapy is delivered under jets of water, and 5 dry rooms.
- Post therapy relaxation lounge overlooking Sulphur Bay Wildlife Reserve with complimentary herbal teas for guests.
- Treatments include a freshly squeezed juice from the on-site café.
- 12 Yrs+ must be accompanied by a parent or guardian in a dual room facility.
- 16 Yrs+ may be unaccompanied.

## SERVICES

- AIX (water jet therapy).
- Signature Geothermal Mud Massages & Treatments.
- Rejuvenating Facial Treatments.
- Body Brushing and Stress Therapy Massages.
- Sensory Aromatherapy Oil Massages.
- Body Polishes & Mud Wrap Treatments.
- Restorative Swedish Full Body Massage.
- Packages available with private pools, lunches, spa gifts and/or wellness room activities.



# 88RA CAFÉ & SPA ESSENTIALS SHOP



- The Spa Essentials Shop stocks a wide range of skincare products, swimwear, towels, home ware, linen and baby items.
- Exclusive salon quality products are available as used in spa therapy treatments.
- Many products are New Zealand made and include natural ingredients such as Rotorua thermal mud, manuka honey and native botanical extracts.
- Gift wrapping is complementary for all products and gifts can be posted if requested.



- The Cafe draws its name from the geothermal 'Priest and Radium Spring' located on-site in the Pavilion Adult Pools area. This historic nod back to the early 1900s was derived from the original bath house on site.
- 88 Being the Periodic Table number for Radium and Ra being the symbol.
- 88Ra Café serves delicious healthy food for visitors, with a-la carte and cabinet food available.
- Freshly squeezed juices, smoothies, herbal teas, barista coffees and gelato remain crowd favourites.
- **GROUP BOOKINGS** - Catered lunches and platters are great options for leisure and corporate group bookings. The Café is licensed.



# WELLNESS ROOM

Our wellness retreat offers a transformative experience that seamlessly integrates the renowned healing powers of our geothermal springs, spa therapies, and an array of nurturing activities.

Designed to enhance overall wellbeing, our exclusive lakeside location sets the stage for a rejuvenating escape. The therapeutic benefits of our geothermal springs are complemented by the serene lakeside surroundings, creating an ideal atmosphere for relaxation and introspection.

We can assist with customising a wellness program that caters to individual needs and invites guests to embark on a journey of self-discovery. Whether hosting partner programs, incentives, special interest groups, or corporate and leisure events, our retreat promises an exclusive and unique experience. From personalized spa treatments to yoga sessions and nature excursions, each element is carefully curated to contribute to the overall vitality and harmony of our guests. Our multi-purpose events space is also great for private group lunches, grazing tables and hot pool combinations.



# RESET DAY ITINERARIES



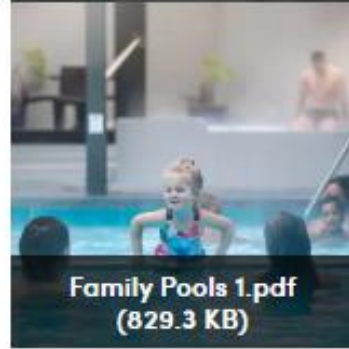
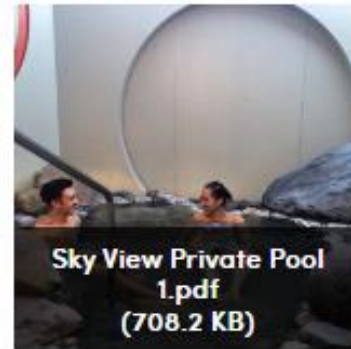
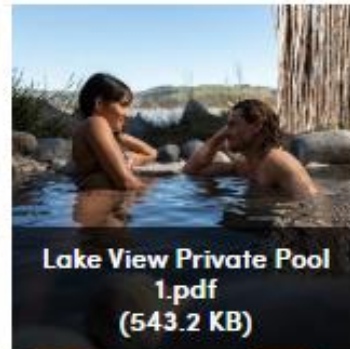
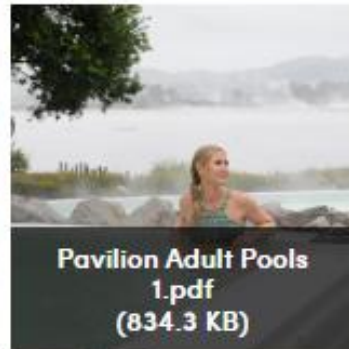
**POLYNESIAN SPA**  
GEOHERMAL HOT SPRINGS AND THERAPIES

Itinerary	Vibrational Sound Healing	Meditation & Mindfulness	Yoga	Kawakawa Balm/ Tincture Making	Food & Wellness Workshop	Health & Wellbeing Talk	Redwoods Guided Walk	Creative Arts Therapy	Spa Treatment	Therapeutic Soak in Pavilion	Therapeutic Soak in Deluxe Lake Spa
Blissful Journey (3 hours) 20 pax	✓	✓	✓							✓	
Serenity Fusion (3 hours) 20 pax	✓		✓		✓					✓	
Revitalise & Enlighten (3 hours) 20 pax			✓		✓					✓	
Refresh & Rebalance (4.5 hours) 20 pax						✓		✓		✓	
Harmony Retreat (6.5 hours) 20 pax (in 2 groups of 10)		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓
Soothe & Soak (3 hours) 20 pax (in 2 groups of 10)		✓	✓			✓			✓		✓

# TRADE & MEDIA

[www.polynesianspa.co.nz/trade-media](http://www.polynesianspa.co.nz/trade-media)

## MEDIA FILES



## MEDIA IMAGES



# AWARDS



OPEN 7 DAYS. 9AM – 11PM