

Writer extols the virtues of area

by Lisa Mills

GISBORNE will be promoted to the people of India as an "idyllic place, with unspoiled beaches and warm, friendly people" after a visit from the latest in a long line of international travel journalists.

Bombay-based freelance writer Fareeda Kanga has spent four days soaking up the sights and sounds of the Gisborne district and was impressed with what she saw.

Ms Kanga was in New Zealand to attend the Air New Zealand Fashion Week in Auckland and was glad to have some time for rest and relaxation before her trip home.

Gisborne was chosen as her destination by the promotion team at Tourism New Zealand.

While here she visited significant historic sites, spent a day in Tolaga Bay, and was able to stroll along the city's beaches and enjoy some of Gisborne's finest cuisine.

Ms Kanga was hosted at Seaview Bed and Breakfast before moving out to Opu — A Country House.

She also had time for an injection of Gisborne culture in the form of a visit to Tairawhiti Museum and Toihoukura.

Ms Kanga, who writes for several publications including Sunday Times of India, said it had been suggested she visit Wellington or Christchurch while

she was in New Zealand.

But many other Indian travel writers had already visited the larger cities.

"I wanted something off the beaten track," she said.

Describing Gisborne as "quieter than Auckland and a perfect antidote to the hustle and bustle of Fashion Week", Ms Kanga said she had shivers up her spine when she saw the city's Captain Cook monument.

She was under the impression that not as many tourists came to Gisborne as opposed to the bigger centres but it was a "great place to come and get the true flavour of life as it is".

"This is what it is all about if you want to sample the true essence of New Zealand," she said.

The mother of a one-year-old daughter has been a journalist

for about nine years and is no stranger to travel writing.

Most recently she visited London and Malaysia.

Ms Kanga said the pace of life in India was a lot faster because it was overpopulated and "everything is a struggle".

"Where it would take you five minutes to get somewhere here, it would take 45 minutes in Bombay.

"New Zealand is so laid-back and peaceful."

But there were some similarities with India too.

"The warm and friendly people."



Bombay travel writer Fareeda Kanga . . . Gisborne is the place to come to "sample the true essence of New Zealand".