

Travel



Having a **BLAST** for free

IT IS hard not to have fun on Rarotonga, but most things will cost you a reasonable (or unreasonable) amount of cash from your wallet, or bucks on to your credit card.

Here is a little tip that will give you an absolute buzz — and you do not have to reach into your back pocket at all.

Don't tell anyone I told you this, but it is the Jetblast and is found at each end of the international airport in Rarotonga.

Because space is fairly limited on the island roads are very close to the tarmac.

The most popular vantage point is on the coast at the seawall. There you can wait as large airliners head in over the ocean and land, or take off, closer than any other international airport in the world.

When the big jets come in to land directly over your head you swear you could reach up and touch them.

If the airliner is taking off from the seawall-end the Jetblast is powerful, but because you are



JETBLAST: An absolute buzz and absolutely free.

sunk down from the level of the tarmac the buzz is not the full-on experience.

If you want a really amazing “OMG I wanna do that again now” thrill, head down to the inland road end of the runway.

All that sits between you and the massive engines of modern airliners is a wire fence and — unsurprisingly — that doesn't afford much protection.

To get the best adrenalin rush you need to be directly in line

with the engines.

The close-up sight of a big airliner turning is amazing and as the air starts to heat up around you and the throttle is pushed forward you begin to wonder if this really is the place to be.

But, trust me, by that stage it is too late for flight, so to speak, and so you just have to hang on to the fence as the jet gushes out hot air at a phenomenal rate. You can lessen the impact of the force — all you need to do is duck down to

ground level.

Just as you think your Jetblast experience can't get any noisier or windier — it does. That's when you wonder “have I made a very big mistake?”

But, before you can silently answer that, it's all over and the plane has rumbled down the tarmac and into the air.

One Kiwi woman who was scared of trying the Jetblast was absolutely thrilled that she did try it in the end. The look on her face

was one of both surprise and elation. And above all, it is free.

Here are some words of warning though.

Take off expensive glasses and don't wear a hat — as they will end up 60 metres away in grass so long it will take you a week to find them. That is if you are really lucky. And gals, it's best not to wear short skirts or flimsy tops — unless you are an exhibitionist. They will fly up.

— Richard Moore



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