

# In the spotlight

# MADISON TUMATAROA

The Ngāti Kahungunu/Ngāti Pāhauwera dance artist tours the United States with Atamira Dance Company in the show *Te Wheke*.



**Where did you go and for how long?**

Last year, I made my first big trip overseas to America while on tour with Atamira Dance Company. Over four weeks, we travelled to Kona, Maui, New York, San Diego and Honolulu.

**What was the occasion?**

Touring the company's legacy work *Te Wheke*, performing 11 shows and connecting with other indigenous communities.

**Where did you stay?**

Spring Hill and TownePlace Suites, Flower District (New York); Best Western Hotel, Del Mar (San Diego); Ala Moana Hotel (Honolulu); Maui Coast Hotel (Maui).

**The best thing you did?**

I have a few ... I saw my first Broadway show, meandered around the Metropolitan Museum of Art and saw a turtle swimming off the shore of Hawaii, but my favourite day consisted of best friends, French pastries, cocktails, sunshine, tacos, gelato and spontaneously going to watch dancer Alvin Ailey perform in San Diego on a day off.

**The best thing you ate?**

Kinda silly, but papayas were my absolute favourite thing. I had at least one a day while in Hawaii and it was the best.

**Did you do any shopping/buy any cool souvenirs?**

Yes, I did! I got a bright blue leather jacket

from a New York thrift shop and some pearls from the ABC Store in Hawaii to match my friends'. I also collected stickers from every city and place we performed.

**Any holiday hiccups/did anything go wrong?**

I was lucky enough to be travelling with a big group of people so nothing went super wrong. We did get evacuated from the hotel in New York, about 1am, when the fire alarms went off. The hotel was about 60 storeys so running down the many flights of stairs with so many people was a mission. It ended up being a false alarm, but it really got the adrenaline pumping.

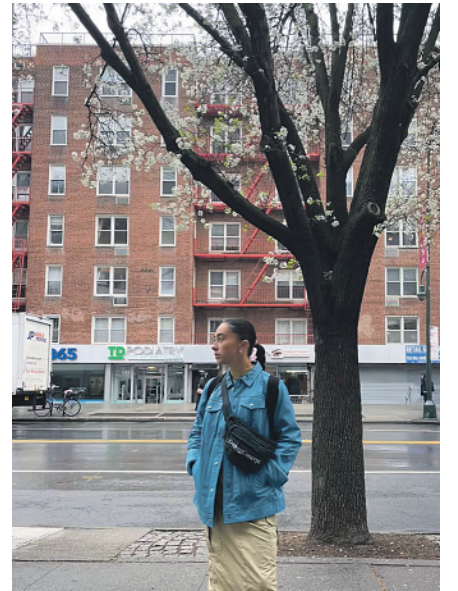
**Share your top travel tip:**

If you are a coffee snob like me, America is not the place for you. It is so hard to find good coffee. I found that the best way to get your caffeine intake was to ask for two shots of espresso in the smallest cup they had and add a dash of milk. Nothing is worse than a bad coffee.

**Where to next?**

I will be going to see my beautiful whānau in Australia before all my baby cousins and nieces get too big.

*See Madison Tumataroa perform with Atamira Dance Company in the show Ka Mua Ka Muri in Auckland (July 25-27), Whangārei (August 22) and Hamilton (August 29).*



**PHOTOGRAPHS LEFT**

On tour in New York City.

**PHOTOGRAPHS FROM TOP**

Walking along Secret Frisbee Beach in San Diego. Strolling through New York's Greenwich Village.

Photographs: Supplied

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