

Love quest leads to Northland

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Some of Northland's finest locations will be on show tomorrow night as the 2009 season finale of US reality show *The Bachelor* airs on TV2.

The show focuses on one man's quest for love – the bachelor gets to know the bachelorettes through a series of romantic escapades and has to choose one woman from 25 over several weeks.

The final episode, filmed on location in Northland, shows bachelor Jason Mesnick wooing his final two bachelorettes. The group spent time at Russell's luxury retreat, Eagles Nest.

Mr Mesnick and one partner were filmed swimming in one of the resort's private lap pools; another scene shows him in a massage room with his date.

For one of Mr Mesnick's final dates, the show's organisers arranged a tropical island rendezvous by catamaran.

Marilyn Logan, owner of Cool Change Catamarans in the Bay of Islands, said foul weather meant a change in plans.

"It turned into how Jason and his date got to know each other in adverse conditions. We picked them up at Waitangi and headed towards the Kent passage. While we sailed backwards and forwards around the Te Pahi islands, Jason and his date made out together in their bathing suits."

Ms Logan said Mr Mesnick asked his date whether she was keen to jump off the top of the boat for a swim, and she replied "Sure, I'm up for anything."

They dived into the choppy water and then showered together at the back of the boat, Ms Logan said.

Destination Northland marketing executive Cheryl Jensen said this third season of the series achieved its highest rating, with audience numbers up 30 per cent. In the US, the Northland finale topped 15.4 million viewers.

Ms Jensen said the invaluable exposure would usually be beyond Northland's promotional budgets.

– NORTHERN ADVOCATE

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