

Lisa Tamati

Awe-inspiring ultramarathon runner

Lisa Tamati is an ultramarathon runner, conqueror of some of the world's toughest ultramarathons, Maori Sportswoman of the Year (2008), an author, jewellery designer and jewellery store owner.

Lisa's story is one of true courage, sheer tenacity, self-sacrifice and grim determination.

Since becoming an ultramarathon runner in 1997, Lisa has run the equivalent of over two-and-a half times around the earth. She has overcome a broken back, asthma and panic attacks, snowstorms, sandstorms, extremely high altitudes, terrifying heat, severe dehydration, kidney damage, depression and much more to achieve incredible success..

Not only is Lisa an amazing athlete but she is also an extraordinary, entertaining and compelling speaker who inspires business, sporting, charity, media and school audiences alike to achieve their own personal dreams.

More about Lisa Tamati:

Lisa has always been very active. As a child she excelled gymnastics, athletics and netball and as a teenager she competed in surfing at a national level. She was also a Taranaki water polo representative and held Taranaki secondary school records in discus and shot put.

After studying social work, psychology then business studies, Lisa travelled overseas in 1994. Over the next several years, she went on many adventure trips biking, trekking and canoeing through more than 25 countries including Sweden, Norway, Tunisia, Morocco, Egypt, Ireland, Scotland, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, Alaska, Canada and the US. She also found the time to complete an apprenticeship as a goldsmith and ran her own business exporting Paua Pearls from NZ to Europe and Japan before running her own wholesale and retail manufacturing jewellery business in Austria.

Lisa has been involved in ultra distance running since 1997 when she was invited to participate in a four-person expedition across the Libyan desert, a 250 km trek across a military-barred zone and carried out without outside help. After 7 long days, they made it through what Lisa describes as the most beautiful, mysterious and untouched desert in the world. They were all severely dehydrated and suffering major injuries. Lisa took two years to recover fully and pulled through her depression by focusing on running and ultramarathon running in particular.



Since then, her incredible achievements have been many.

Her first big international race (the Marathon des Sables, 240 km through the Moroccan Sahara) sealed her love for the extreme and for deserts. She ran the Desert Cup Race in 2001 through the Jordanian desert from Wadi Rum to Petra, 168 km nonstop, placing 11th.

In May 2006 Lisa ran the Isar run in Germany, a 338 km ultramarathon along the river Isar. In November 2006 she ran the Trans 222 km in Niger, while suffering from food poisoning.

In February 2007 Lisa placed second at the 100 km nationals in Taupo, NZ, and repeated this performance at the 2008 Nationals. She was also the only woman in the 158 km race around Mt Taranaki in November 2007.

In 2008 Lisa became the first NZ woman and fastest New Zealander to conquer the infamous Badwater Ultramarathon, a 217 km non-stop marathon through the hottest desert on earth - Death Valley, USA. The race is by invitation only and pits 80 of the world's toughest ultra athletes against each other and the elements. She finished 10th of the women and 24th overall from 82 competitors, a world-class performance. Lisa raised over \$45,000 to get herself and her crew to the race.

In 2011 she returned from the Himalayas where she ran the 222 km La Ultra - 'The High' - the world's highest ultramarathon. Competitors had been warned that the race was extremely dangerous because of altitude sickness. One of just six competitors invited to compete, Lisa finished 4th overall, second woman home in 53 hr 05 min. Previously only one man had completed the event.

Lisa Tamati has appeared many times in NZ and international media. Lisa's autobiography *Running Hot* was published in 2009.

Lisa returned to NZ in 2007 and now runs her own designer jewellery and art shop with her mother in New Plymouth. Her shop is home to one of the largest opal collections in New Zealand.

Client Testimonials



As the final speaker of the National Conference you brought all of the aspects of our conference together, and you were fantastic, your talk is so inspiring. You were the favourite speaker of the day. You combine personal stories, humour and strong principles to deliver a powerful message. I would highly recommend you to any organisation looking for an inspiring speaker to take their team to a whole new level.?

CEO Bartercard NZ



I have had the pleasure of listening to Lisa Tamati on several occasions and in a lot of different forums - from corporate lounges, rugby clubs, changing sheds and speaking to other athletes. Don't be fooled by Lisa's good looks, she's a really tough cookie with a definite message and has had to overcome EXTREME obstacles her whole life. Her story is inspirational and motivating but most of all, it is real.

Director, Livestock New Zealand



Thank you so much for speaking at our conference last week. You were completely and utterly inspiring, humorous, engaging and a massive inspiration to everyone listening. The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive and everyone has been talking about you all week!

Cara Twinch



Lisa was invited to speak at our corporate business breakfast where she spoke to 100+ business managers from the Auckland Business Community. Her attitude to life and passion for success was inspirational. The feedback from our guests was amazing and she left a significant impression on all of us. If I could have a fraction of her mind I'm sure I would have conquered Mt Everest blind with both arms tied behind my back.

Robert Half Technology

Client Testimonials



Lisa is not only an extraordinary athlete with an incredible and unique story to tell but she is also an inspirational speaker who manages not only to be extremely entertaining but who also leaves the audience, motivated, moved (often to the point of tears) and feeling like 'Wow if she can do it then so can I.' ... Her message and the analogies she draws on from her very tough sport, are relevant across the board.

Phil Kingsley Jones, Business Development Manager



Lisa Tamati was inspirational, entertaining, honest and one of the best speakers I have seen at the Sports Awards. I left the event feeling elated and motivated with the many thoughts and feelings she had shared with those lucky enough to have attended.

Sport Manawatu



Lisa Tamati is blessed with the many of the qualities that great leaders, athletes, artists and business leaders (for example) have. While most people question what will happen if they don't succeed Lisa will always think instead, 'what if I do succeed?' Lisa's destiny is to inspire those around her; young and old alike and her journey, I believe, is only just beginning.

HRV Taranaki



Lisa's speech was fascinating in its content and inspirational in its message. Students and parents were captivated by Lisa's experiences as she outlined some of the challenges she has set herself and spoke of what it took to achieve her goals. Hearing how Lisa overcame her own personal challenges helped deliver the message that anything really is possible with determination, application and mental strength – a message that goes far beyond the sports environment

St Cuthbert's College

Client Testimonials



Lisa Tamati has a series of remarkable stories to tell. She does it with her heart on her sleeve and is a compelling speaker. She will inspire and enthrall listeners.

Taranaki Daily News

[VIEW SPEAKER'S BIO ONLINE ▶](#)