

# Celebrant celebrates win at regional event

By KIRSTY LAWRENCE

HELPING someone on their special day is something one Taupo wedding celebrant feels very passionate about.

This love of helping is just one of the aspects that helped Belinda de Lautour win the Wedding Industry New Zealand Bay of Plenty Outstanding Celebrant of 2014.

She said her nomination took her off guard as she had no idea she had even been entered.

"I got an email from [them] and I thought it was spam until a friend sent me a message from Wanaka saying, 'well done I voted for you, all the best'."

Having moved to Taupo in 2003 de Lautour said she researched the area and decided she wanted to start a wedding planning business.

She said she wanted to further her knowledge for the business so attended a celebrant course in Auckland, and in 2009 created her business of being a wedding planner and celebrant.

After finding out she had been nominated for the award along with 14 others, she said the next step was to get friends and clients behind them on Facebook to vote for her to make it through to the finals.

She then found out she had made the final five, saying she was just happy to have made it that far.

The voting process continued and she said when her name was read out as the winner on the night she was "blown away".

"I took my trophy with me (on holiday after) because I still didn't believe it."

She said her friends had been "fantastic" with their support throughout the voting process.

Having been involved in more than 200 weddings she said she still loved it.

"I have a passion for my work and I enjoy working with each couple to create a ceremony especially for them."

She said she would like to thank the other Taupo nominated business and people for the support they gave her.



**WINNER:** Taupo Wedding Celebrant Belinda de Lautour recently took out the award for the most Outstanding Celebrant in the Bay of Plenty Region at the Wedding Industry New Zealand Bay of Plenty awards.

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