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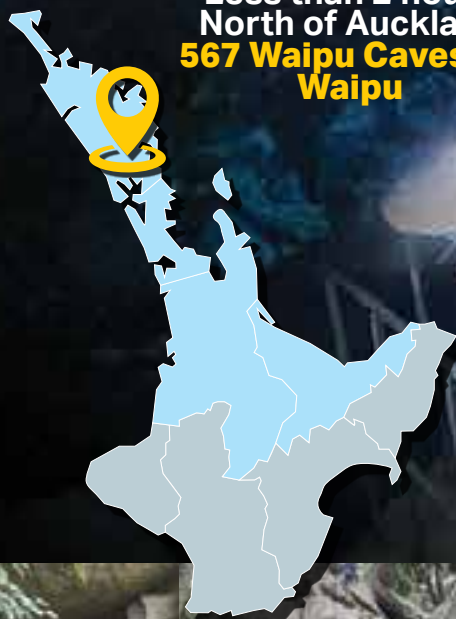
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Freyberg Beach, Oriental Bay.
Photo by Phoebe Mackenzie. Courtesy of WellingtonNZ.

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Welcome to Destinationz

Welcome to Destinationz

Spring’s storms have settled and summer’s set to sizzle. We couldn’t be more excited to soak up the sun in Aotearoa, one of the most beautiful places in the world that we’re lucky to call home.

We launched *Destinationz* 10 years ago in 2015 to encourage New Zealanders to see more of their country and take their holidays here. For this edition, our editor Maddi visited Great Barrier Island and encountered a running theme when she told her friends and family about her travel plans. Many of them responded, “I’ve never been, but I’ve always wanted to go.” She could relate!

There are so many places in our own backyard we’d love to explore, and we’ve put this travel magazine together to help you do just that. Walk the 100 beaches of Whangārei or galivant through Gisborne; freefall through adrenaline-fuelled Rotorua or sip and savour your way across Hawke’s Bay. Experience creativity unbound in Whanganui, wine and dine in Wairarapa, then play and stay in the capital. Have a whale of a time in Kaikōura, a Middle Earth experience in Nelson, or wonderfully wild encounters in the Clutha District. Cycle Central Otago before resetting your mind, body, and soul in one of our many island paradises. Follow our travel journalist Alessia’s path through the West Coast, a magic corner of the country saturated in stories and storms, myths and mayhem, making a million memories along the way.

Wherever you go, whatever you do, you’ll find other worlds waiting to welcome you with open arms.

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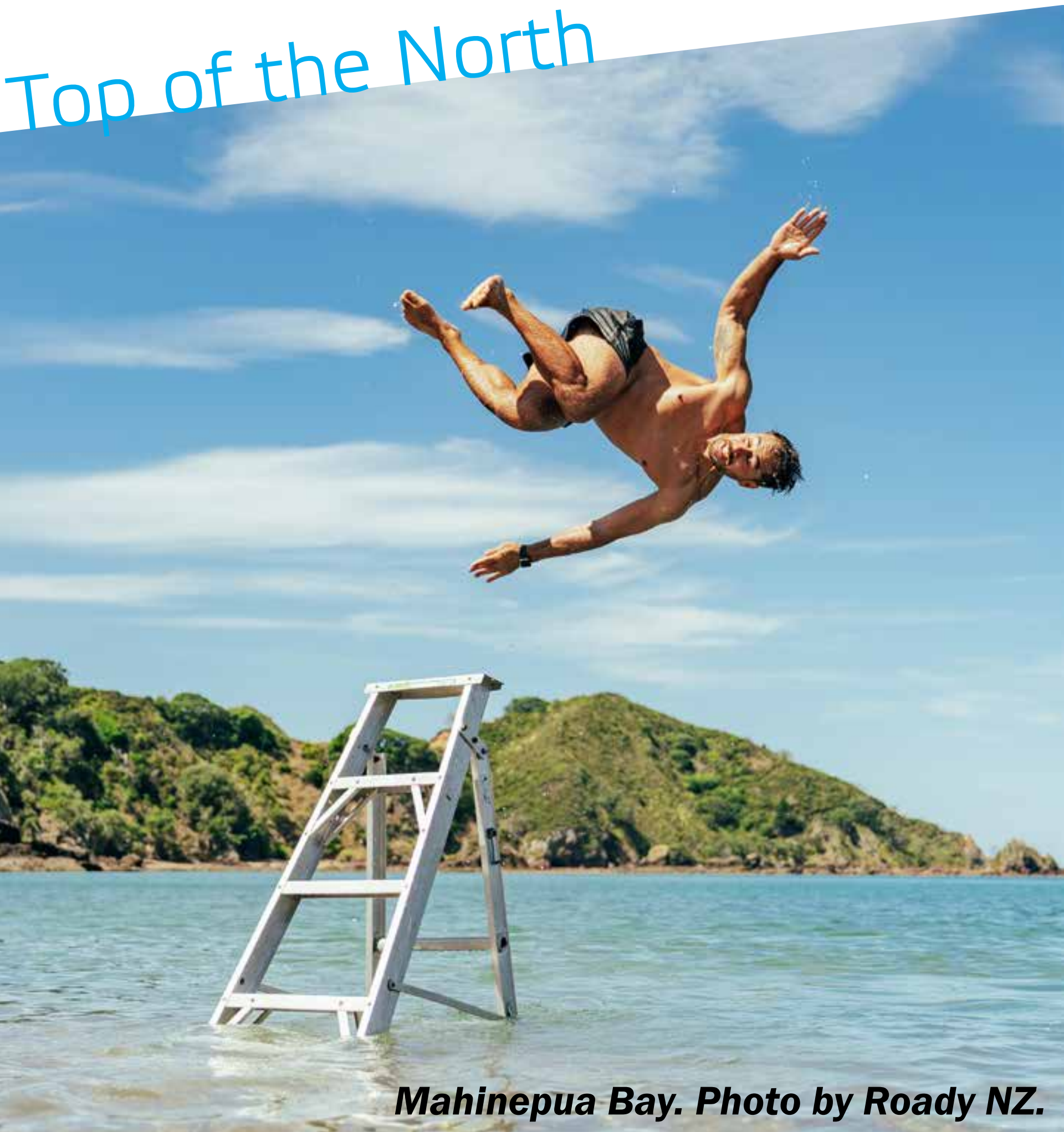
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Top of the North



Mahinepua Bay. Photo by Rody NZ.

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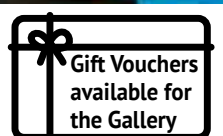
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Food for Body and Soul



Top of the North

A Kiwi classic



Whangārei Town Basin.



Ruakākā Beach.

Are you planning your great New Zealand adventure? Here are six reasons why you should come on up to Whangārei this summer!

Our landscapes will capture your imagination. From the moment you cross the Brynderwyns and catch a glimpse of the iconic coastline, you'll know you're somewhere special. With over 100 beaches and coves, six waterfalls, 40-plus bush walks, and more than 100 kilometres of cycle trails, travellers wanting to immerse themselves in natural beauty will be spoilt for choice.

There are plenty of opportunities to tick items off your travel bucket list. Dream of galloping a horse along a beach? Maybe you've always wanted to dive around Poor Knights Islands or paddleboard in a sea cave. Is learning to surf more your style? How about gazing up at a night sky filled with glow-worms? Whangārei is packed with must-do activities, as well as adventures you haven't even imagined yet.

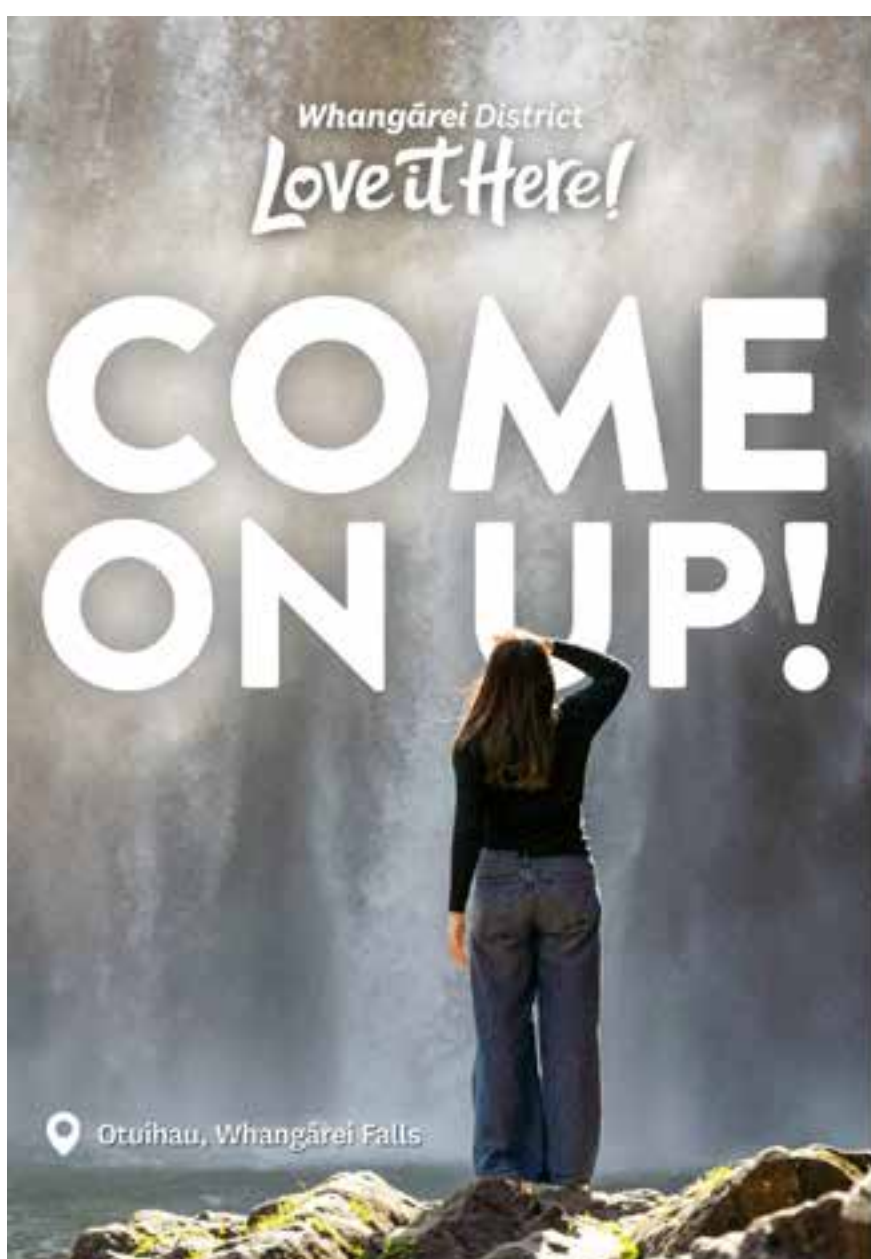
Whangārei is perfect for tamariki too. Epic playgrounds? Tick! Trampoline park? Tick! Waterfront ice cream shops? Tick! Whether you're here for a family holiday or a road-trip stopover, there are plenty of ways to keep the kids entertained.

As a creative hub, take some time to discover art trails, galleries, and exhibitions featuring unique works of art and craft, many inspired by Whangārei's cultural, physical, and spiritual environment. Explore the iconic Hundertwasser Art Centre and Wairau Māori Art Gallery – an authentic Hundertwasser-designed building and the last of its kind to be built in the world.

With 150 cafés and restaurants to choose from, Whangārei knows good kai. Whether you're craving Asian fusion, a sweet treat, a classy waterfront cocktail, or a steaming hāngī, Whangārei's food scene will delight. We love our kai, and we know you will too!

As Northland's getaway destination, Whangārei is more accessible than ever. If you're leaving Tāmaki Makaurau by car, you'll reach Bream Bay in just 90 minutes and be in Whangārei in two hours. From here, you can explore the Kaipara District, Kerikeri, Paihia and the Bay of Islands, and Cape Reinga, which is just three hours and 30 minutes away. Short on time? Air New Zealand offers daily 20-minute flights from Auckland.

Ready to pack your bags? For exclusive Whangārei itineraries, in-depth local guides, and fun must-do tips, head to www.whangareinz.com



Top of the North

Pockets of paradise



There is a good reason that most overseas visitors include the Bay of Islands on their itineraries. With hot, breezy summer days, water so blue it looks dyed, white-sand coves hidden behind fern-clad hills, and islands dotted along the coastline like a string of pearls, this pocket feels and looks like paradise.

The Bay of Islands is rich in history, culture, and natural beauty with over 140 islands to explore. The best way to see the sights is by strapping on a mask and flippers to paddle through underwater islands, reefs, and wrecks. Whether you hire a charter boat, hop on a ferry, settle into a kayak, or park up at any of the amazing beaches, you'll be met with crystal-clear, warm water.

As the first place in New Zealand to have permanent European settlement, with missionaries arriving in 1814, Pēwhairangi, or the Bay of Islands has an interesting albeit fraught history. Visit the towns of Kororāreka Russell, Paihia, Kerikeri, and Waitangi, where the Treaty Grounds stand. Within the heritage buildings wait boutiques, eateries, and accommodation options to suit all types of travellers.

Don't forget to venture into the emerald hills! The Bay of Islands is a source of endless wonder.

Get curious at Kiwi North



Inspire your curiosity about our evolving world and create memorable moments at Kiwi North.

Just two hours from Auckland, see native species in their natural habitats, and Northland's only nocturnal kiwi house. Get close to kiwi, wētā, geckos, and invertebrates in natural environments that promote conservation.

At Kiwi North, you can also take a look into the region's history and culture. Discover past and present stories of people, places, and treasures at the newly refurbished Whangārei Museum.

The Heritage Park features beautiful Victorian buildings nestled into 25 hectares of lush native bush and park-like grounds. The best way to glimpse these historic buildings dating back to the mid-19th century is by taking a stroll. Along the way, you'll come across striking panoramas too, perfect for magical photo opportunities! Then pick up an ice cream or gift and take away a memory from the museum shop.

On the third Sunday of every month, visitors can ride the miniature railway, steam train, tram, and tractor. With plenty of onsite parking, it's easy to while away a whole day at Kiwi North! Find out more at www.kiwinorth.co.nz



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Don't miss out – book your summer holiday at Mangawhai Heads Holiday Park now and experience the best of coastal New Zealand!

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POU HERENGA TAI

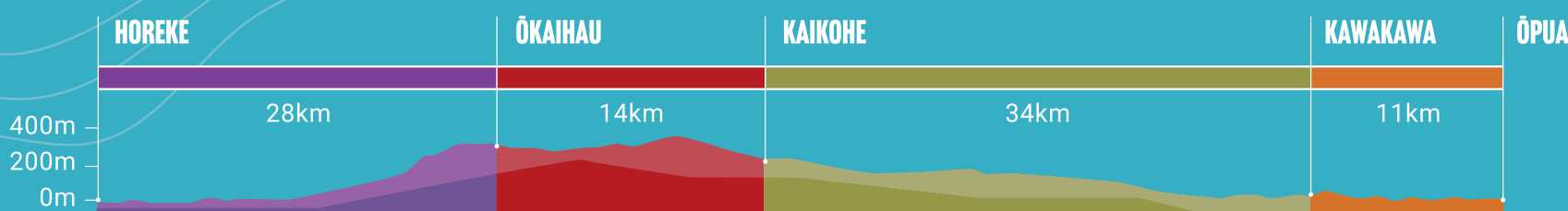
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Great Barrier Island is a hidden gem located off the northeastern coast of New Zealand. Known for its rugged beauty and untouched landscapes, it offers a serene escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. With stunning beaches, lush native forests and crystal-clear waters, the island is a paradise for nature lovers and adventurers alike.

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Experience Great Barrier Island

Diamonds in the sea

by **Madelaine Empson** – travel writer



**In flight with
Island Aviation.**



**Maddi and Andi at
Island Gin.**



Currach Irish Pub.

Just 90 kilometres from the humming city of Auckland and yet entirely off grid, Aotea – Great Barrier Island has been described as one of the last true wilderness frontiers in Aotearoa.

With no mains power or streetlights, highways or traffic, you might close your eyes and imagine a natural wonderland – rugged, untamed, untouched by people or time. And you'd be right, at least in part. By the numbers, Great Barrier Island has more than 60 percent native forest coverage, with over 100 kilometres of walking tracks and 20-plus beaches. The birdsong deafens, the stars blind. By all definitions, it's a solar-powered paradise.

But 1200 people call it home. There are schools and stations spanning radio to radar, and many residents run businesses on the island, sometimes banding together to do so. The brewery uses coffee grinds from the roastery next door, the plant nursery uses water recycled from the brewery, and the cycle continues. These aren't random analogies, but more on that later! In everything everyone on The Barrier does, there's a focus on sustainability and a deep, inherent respect for the land. You can feel it when you arrive as the pace of life slows, your heartbeat eases into a regular rhythm, your nervous system regulates.

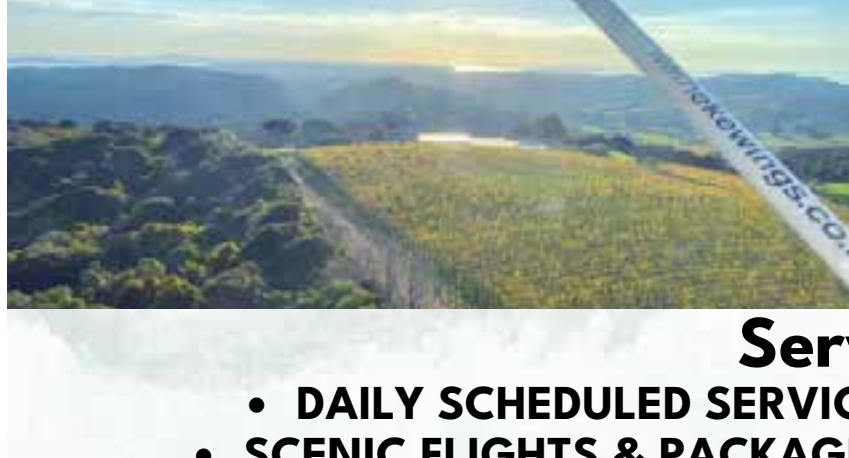
I've been so excited to write about my trip to Great Barrier Island with my partner Dan that I've jumped the gun a bit – we've got to get there first! After making our way from Wellington to Auckland and then into Auckland CBD, we met Chris, CEO of Island Aviation, to start the next leg of our journey across the Hauraki Gulf to Great Barrier. Our time with Chris was filled with easy conversation and laughs, and we arrived at North Shore Airport bright-eyed and bushy-tailed. Dan called shotgun immediately and got to sit at the front of the plane with Hobby, a pilot he had a great time chatting with for the 30-minute smooth and scenic flight. I watched out the window, gobsmacked the whole time. Hobby referred to the island as Jurassic Park, emerging from the mist as if by magic. Couldn't agree more: the sight was breathtaking.

And so we had arrived on Great Barrier Island.

We were met at Claris Airport by Aotea Car Rentals, who handed us the keys to a trusty Toyota RAV4, perfect for handling some of the roads on the island. Then it was time to unpack and unwind at XSPOT Medlands Beach House – and holy smokes! Architecturally and artfully designed, this luxe little accommodation was built brand new in 2024 to overlook Oruawharo Medlands Bay, offering ocean views from both bedrooms and the open-plan kitchen, dining, and living room. Elevated to float into the sky for supreme sunrises, sunsets, and stargazing, we settled in for a cosy one cuddled up, watching the clouds drift by as the day slowly folded into the dappled tapestry of night.

Out of the dead quiet of the wee hours came a dawn chorus from the local avian residents – I'll take all my coffees with this soundtrack please! Although I don't know if I can get away with adding a dash of gin to the ritual every morning... Our first stop was the multi-award-winning Island Gin, where we met owner and distiller Andi for a tasting and tour of her boutique Tryphena distillery and its star inhabitant, Frank, the copper pot still. Island Gin features a special signature ingredient: mānuka bush honey from just down the road for a rounded mouth feel. As well as the original (simply a perfect gin), we sampled a limited-edition feijoa liqueur – delectably sweet but with that sharp feijoa twang – and the navy strength, which, despite being 57 percent, was dangerously smooth and easy drinking! A great touch of the tasting tour was learning about Island Gin's bottles, designed to reflect the kīna shell and made by Auckland's Visy Glass with 70 percent recycled glass. Every design detail of these reusable beauties is carefully considered – even the way the lid pops is artful.

From gin to coffee and beer, our next stop was a hub featuring a craft brewery called Aotea Brewing Co., a coffee roastery called Aotea Roast Co., a food truck called Good Neighbours Food – talk about the tastebud trifecta – and a native plant nursery called Motu Community Nursery. We started by meeting Chris and his 23-year-old Turkish gas-fired coffee roaster. Ryan made us cups of a 50/50 Colombian and Mexican medium-dark roast – a nutty brew with a hint of caramel – before bringing us through for a peek into the brewery. Spring, the wee dog pictured here with Ryan, was an excellent tour guide and showed off her sniffing skills. We heard about the challenges of solar distilling and temperature control (from Ryan, not Spring), and then sat down at the sunny bar to try some drops. The Solar Charged APA, a robust, amber-hued number with spice and stonefruit tingling on the tongue, was a highlight.



Services

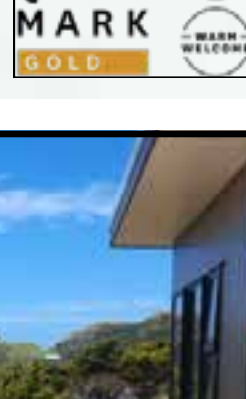
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Experience Great Barrier Island



**Ryan and Spring from
Aotea Brewing Co.**



**Willie from Hooked On
Barrier.**



**Us at Sunset Rock,
Glenfern Sanctuary.**

Dan enjoyed the Eagle Eggs Hazy Pale Ale, named after *that* scene in *Nacho Libre* when Jack Black eats eagle eggs for strength. Who needs spinach? Like an angel from carb heaven, Lucia appeared and offered us sandwiches from Good Neighbours, the food truck with an Argentinian flair. Dan and I gratefully demolished the Moroccan chicken and the vegetarian creations, nestled in pillowy yet perfectly crisp homemade focaccia. Lucia came to join us for chats with Bree at the retail nursery site amongst the eco-sourced natives, where we learned all about Motu's sustainability efforts and projects. The whole village has a great atmosphere, with community spirit growing in the vines, sprinkled in the flour, fizzing in the pints, and steaming from the cups of Joe.

Dinner was at a local institution, Currach Irish Pub. Here, we met Orla, ordered a pint from none other than Aotea Brewing, poured a glass of water out from Island Gin's bottles, and sat down in the lively outdoor area to tuck into fish and chips followed by the highly addictive, made-to-order almond ricotta doughnuts. On the way back to the car, we unlocked a new walking style: the waddle.

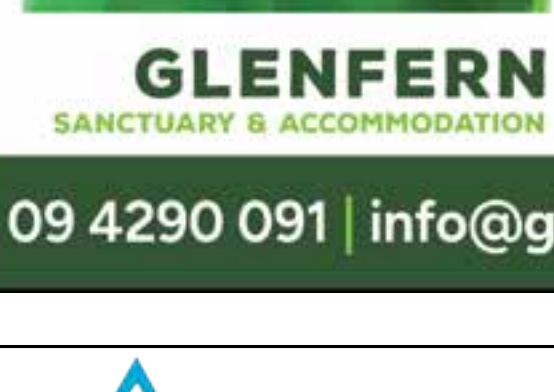
A couple of hours later, we pioneered a fashion statement called the half-waddle – when half of your food has gone down – on our way to Medlands Beach to meet Hilde of Good Heavens Stargazing. What a treat! Hilde had set up chairs and cosy blankets around a beautiful beast of a telescope, which she paired with a laser pointer to talk us through the night sky in the first certified Dark Sky Sanctuary island in the world. Hilde interspersed pūrākau (Māori legends) with facts about the stars overhead, which we then spied in the telescope.

Alpha Centauri A and B, the two stars that point to the Southern Cross, looked like golden nuggets! And then, Hilde caught a glimpse of the stars below and led us to the shore, where Dan and I saw a once-in-a-lifetime display of bioluminescence. Like diamonds in the sea, this phenomenon – caused in the Hauraki Gulf by microscopic, light-emitting plankton – was nothing short of magic. When we got back to our cosy spot on the beach, we wrapped up with a chocolate brownie treat and a cup of tea (what a lovely touch from Hilde) and marvelled about one of the coolest sights we'd ever seen.

The next day, it was time to get on the water that had sparkled so the night before on a private charter with Hooked On Barrier. Friendly and knowledgeable, skipper Willie skimmed the *Sundancer* over the gentle turquoise waves and told us about the many bays and hideaways of the west coast, plus the flora and fauna, fowl and fishes that call its shores, seas, and skies home. On our way to and from Whangaparapara Wharf, we wandered two wonderful walks: Iona Mine and Windy Canyon, quickly learning why the latter, with its spectacular views, is one of the most popular short walks on the island. And on our drive from the wharf where we'd met Willie to the other end of Aotea, we confirmed our suspicions of the existence of 'The Barrier Wave', where drivers hover a couple of fingers off the wheel to simply say hello to each other. Of course, we quickly adopted this tradition ourselves!

Our final evening was spent at Glenfern Sanctuary, an 83-hectare regional park and the gateway to the predator-fenced 240-hectare Kotuku Peninsula on the north-west coastline of Aotea. We were keen to yap for yonks with Christine and Steve about everything they do at this haven for native bush, birds, and biodiversity. We heard about Tony Bouzaid, who bought Glenfern in 1990 and poured his heart into creating the sanctuary, before visiting the most stunning tribute to him up at Sunset Rock. I could write for days about everything we learned and loved about this place, where we ventured over a swing bridge and into the heart of a 600-year-old kauri tree. Sleeping in a sanctuary is an otherworldly experience (the dawn chorus was fortissimo) and we were lucky enough to be put up in the historic Fitzroy House. We had the run of the place, built in 1901 and gorgeously cosy, with five bedrooms, a full kitchen (which begged to be cooked in), and lots of lovely little touches like a library nook and a clawfoot bath. We made ourselves a roast and wished we could stay longer at this special, must-visit eco destination. The next morning, Island Aviation had kindly arranged to pick us up from Okiwi Airfield, just a 10-minute drive from Glenfern. Kaleb met us here in a four-seater Cessna plane and took us back to Auckland on an easy 30-minute flight filled with stunning panoramas and smiles.

Only when we landed in Wellington did my sadness set in. Despite my best efforts, The Barrier Wave isn't catching on here, so I can but dream about this diamond in the sea.



Experience some of Aotea's most endangered species on our 2km loop track through pristine native bush. We welcome guests to stay in our historic Fitzroy House and Glenfern Cottage, unique holiday accommodation on Aotea.

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Auckland

To infinity and beyond



Needing to feel a sense of wonder again? Reconnect with the cosmos at Stardome, Auckland's very own planetarium located in the central One Tree Hill Domain!

Be wowed by the vastness of the universe in Stardome's immersive, presenter-led, full-dome planetarium shows, where expert astronomers zoom you through the solar system to the stars or any point in the known universe! After dark, head outdoors to gaze through courtyard telescopes (weather permitting), learn about seasonal Māori astronomy, or experience the magic of the powerful Zeiss telescope with its roof that opens to reveal the dazzling night sky.

Let your imagination soar with epic planetarium music events featuring Pink Floyd's *The Dark Side of the Moon* paired with mind-bending visuals for an out-of-this-world experience.

With an exciting mix of hands-on exhibits and shows for all ages – including special astronomy shows for kids – there's something for dreamers of every age.

See www.stardome.org.nz for show times and holiday opening hours.

Where to start?



SkyCity Precinct. Photo by David St George.

Nearly two million people can't be wrong, so spend summer up north in Auckland. As New Zealand's big smoke, there is plenty of fun to be had in the city and its surrounds, plus it's the best time to enjoy the beautiful beaches.

With pōhutukawa-lined streets and days spent boating, evenings in the city that seem to stretch on forever and more eateries than you could ever sample in one trip much less a whole lifetime, Tāmaki Makaurau is simply stunning in summer.

Chocka with activities and with a popping event calendar, it's no wonder Auckland never sleeps. Wander through galleries, explore endless museums, romp through theme parks, be entertained by world-class and grassroots theatre shows, boogie to international and up-and-coming music artists, and so much more.

If you're itching to get outside, there are plenty of parks throughout the city. Discover reserves, rainforests, walking trails, and beaches that look like classic Kiwi postcards around every corner.

Auckland is great for families thanks to its museums and activities aplenty and a blast for groups of friends, lovebirds, and solo flyers too. Whoever your crew, Auckland has something for you.

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TE WHATU



STARDOME

Auckland

Let curiosity take flight at MOTAT this summer



This summer, the Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) is celebrating the kind of play that sparks imagination, movement, and discovery. It's the hands-on, hearts-in kind of fun that connects families and inspires young minds to explore the world around them.

Spread across two sites in Western Springs – the Aviation Hall and the Great North Road location – MOTAT brings together history, imagination, and innovation. The Aviation Hall celebrates the story of flight through an impressive collection of aircraft and immersive experiences, while the Great North Road site, built around the historic pumphouse, showcases everything from communication technology to classic cars.

Throughout summer, MOTAT is buzzing with opportunities to play, create, and connect. In the science and technology centre, Te Puawānanga, families can join in science demonstrations, creative workshops, and collection displays that bring technology and innovation to life. The centre also provides a natural play space for under-fives to climb, crawl, and learn through movement.

Hop aboard a heritage tram for a scenic ride between the two museum sites – a free tram service beloved by all ages.

In the Aviation Hall, the excitement soars higher. Here, New Zealand's aviation history unfolds through a spectacular collection of aircraft and immersive digital experiences. Visitors can even step into the cockpit of a real New Zealand Police helicopter.

There's even more to look forward to with Forces of Flight, opening at the end of December. This brand-new exhibition explores the principles that make flight possible and celebrates the innovation that helped push Aotearoa skyward.

MOTAT firmly believes that play is for everyone. It fuels curiosity, joy, and connection – no matter your age. So whether you've got the whole family in tow or you're hopping about town with your other half, you're with your best friends in the world or exploring the City of Sails solo, New Zealand's largest transport and technology museum is the place to be for every curious mind. Between tram rides, picnics in the historic village, and the award-winning Te Kōtiu digital experience, it has something for you.

Open daily from 10am to 4pm, MOTAT is the perfect summer destination to reconnect, recharge, and rediscover the joy of play. Plan your visit today at www.motat.nz



Discover Autopilot.

Image credit: Wisk Generation 5 Corp, Wisk Aero LLC.


VISIT TODAY

Tech that takes off!

Uncover the exciting and innovative world of autonomous technology with our Hautū Aunoa Autopilot exhibition. Come and explore how drone, autonomous, and monitoring technology is across land, sea and sky – and see what's possible when no one is flying the plane!

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Axe-citing activities



If you're looking for a gripping experience, try your hand at axe throwing: an epic, razor-sharp, fun-flinging activity perfect for anyone.

Sweet Axe Throwing Co in Auckland and Wellington offer a range of hands-on experiences that are exhilarating for all ages and abilities. Providing a safe and supportive space, the axe-perts will teach you the correct technique in a guided two-hour coaching session, plus bring the fun with loads of hype and games.

Axe throwing is an activity that rewards form over force, making it incredibly accessible. The crew take an individualised approach to training, working with you to make sure the movement works for your body. With wheelchair access and a variety of axes of different weights and sizes, anyone can partake.

Beyond axe throwing, the Auckland location also features a Smash Room where those 16 and up can go to town with a baseball bat on a crate of smashables such as bottles, dinnerware, TVs, toilets, and mirrors. Go buck wild and unleash your inner beast!

With plenty of packages available, loads of games, a drinks licence, and tailored experiences everyone can enjoy, slice through summer at Sweet Axe Throwing Co.

Set sail



Ahoy! The New Zealand Maritime Museum Hui Te Ananui a Tangaroa is where the stories of the sea wash ashore.

Aotearoa is one of the most maritime nations in the world and its history is closely tied to the sea – through immigration, trade, design, innovation, and leisure, we're a country of hydrophilic folks. The museum houses important heritage collections, which cover the breadth of our relationship with the sea: from the Great Pacific Migration a thousand years ago to the cutting edge of modern technology and design used in America's Cup and modern yachting.

Aside from swimming hither and thither in the museum, visitors can embark on hands-on voyages at the Maritime Museum. Climb aboard the ketch-rigged scow *Ted Ashby* for a one-hour sail. Take a leisurely cruise on the 110-year-old motor launch *Nautilus*. Sail the seas on the *Breeze*, a traditional wooden sailing ship similar to vessels used for New Zealand coastal and inter-Dominion trades in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

Located in Waitematā Harbour in Auckland and open every day of the year bar Christmas, dive beneath the waves at New Zealand Maritime Museum this summer.



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Gisborne



Rere Rockslide. Photo by Roady NZ.



Discover the children of Tangaroa at Dive Tatapouri. Soak up the marine surroundings and local culture. Bookings essential and all activities weather dependent. A unique experience for Making Memories Out East.

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532 Whangara Road, SH35, Gisborne | Tatapouri Beach | Ph: (06) 868 5153 | Book at www.divetatapouri.com

Gisborne

Storybook summer



Courtesy of BackpackerGuide.NZ.

If it's sand, sun, and surf you want, then look no further than Gisborne – you'll be able to enjoy grapes, gastronomic pursuits, and grand adventures along the way too.

Start your Gizzy vacation by the beach. Whether you're keen to sign up for surf school or you'd rather loll about on the warm sand with a good book, dive beneath the waves to encounter the creatures of the deep or spend the day above water on a chartered fishing boat, saunter down the beach on horseback or take the little ones rock pooling, the activities are endless.

Gisborne played a crucial role in Aotearoa's early history. The Māori migratory waka *Horouta* first landed in Gisborne, and it is also where Captain James Cook made his first New Zealand landfall in 1769. Uncover the rich history at iconic locations, local museums, and galleries. And don't forget to stop for a treat in one of the amazing local eateries along the way.

The first of mainland New Zealand's cities to see the sun each morning and with average summer temperatures soaring well above 20 degrees, Gisborne days will be fun-filled and sun-soaked from dawn till dusk and beyond into the starry night.

Galivanting through Gisborne



New Old exhibition. Photo by Dudley L. Meadows.

While basking in the sun of Tairāwhiti Gisborne this summer, make sure you take some time between ice creams and ocean dips to get to know the arts, history, and culture of this beautiful region by going on epic adventures through time and space at Tairāwhiti Museum and Art Gallery.

For almost 70 years, Tairāwhiti Museum has been committed to developing Gisborne's identity and community wellbeing by bringing art exhibitions, education programmes, and events to Gisborne year-round. The museum houses large collections of fine art, photography, and Māori taonga, displayed in semi-permanent and short-term exhibitions.

With a regularly changing programme across nine galleries, a special focus on Māori arts and culture, plus the wheelhouse and captain's cabin of the *Star of Canada* and Wyllie Cottage – the oldest European-style house in Gisborne – Tairāwhiti Museum offers a snapshot of the region to visitors and new exhibits to locals.

Tairāwhiti Museum's activities extend beyond the walls of the museum. Find your next summer experience at www.tairawhitimuseum.org.nz

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Ōpōtiki

Cycling Gisborne to Ōpōtiki



Dunes Trail. Photo by Neil Robert Hutton.

Stretching between Gisborne and Ōpōtiki, Motu Trails offers diverse cycling and walking opportunities – escape for a couple of hours, a day, or several days.

Close to Gisborne, the Coastal Waipaoa River Trail is an easy nine-kilometre journey, which forms one section of the Rere Falls Trail. To go further, ride inland and experience the magnificent Eastwoodhill Arboretum. At Mātāwai, the Rere Falls Trail connects with Motu Road for 48km of epic gravel path that is an adventure but not too gnarly.

From high on Motu Road, Pakihi Track cuts off towards Ōpōtiki. The 20km of singletrack (grade 4/advanced) has been an iconic mountain bike ride for over 30 years.

Hugging the coastline in Ōpōtiki, the popular Dunes Trail stretches nine kilometres with shelters, seats, pou whenua, and many interpretation boards giving reason for pause. The Dunes Trail connects with the Waiotahe Trail, heading out 10km to Te Ahiaua (Pipi Beds). For a neat side trip, head to the seawall of Ōpōtiki's Pakihikura Harbour.

For trail brochures, information on bike hire and shuttles, and tours and trips options with Cycle Gisborne, visit the Gisborne or Ōpōtiki isites, go online to www.motutrails.co.nz, or email Motu Trails Charitable Trust.

A glimpse of our past



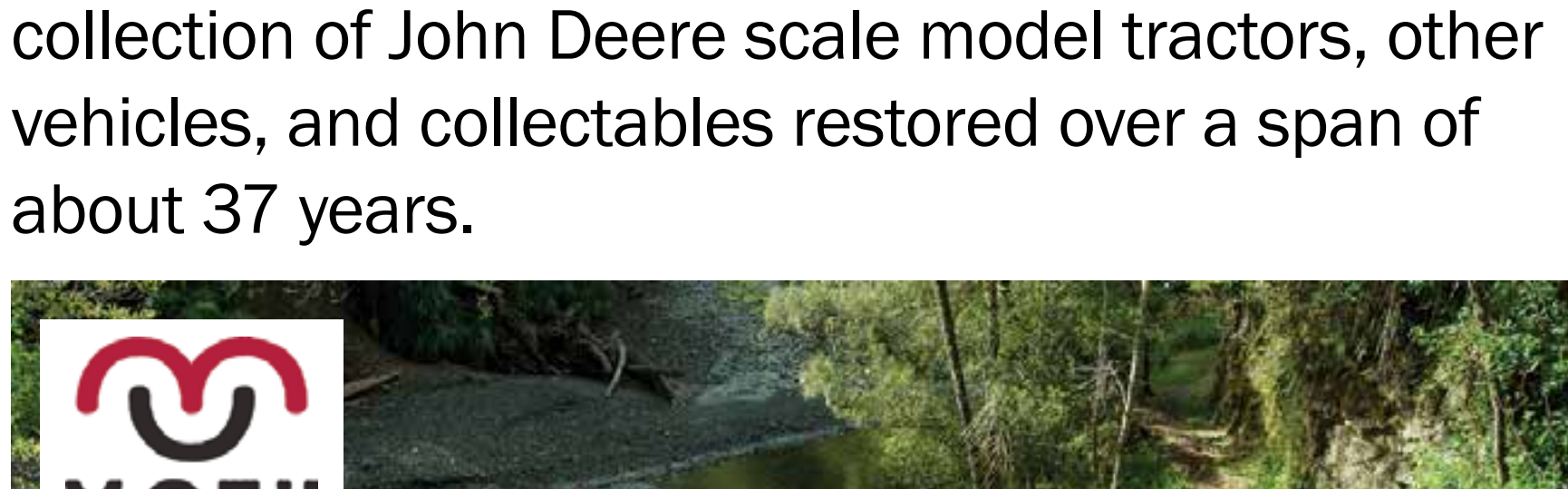
Ōpōtiki Museum on Church Street, the historic precinct of Ōpōtiki, showcases three extensive floors of the town's whole history to date. On the ground Alan Rowe floor you will find displays from saddlery to all manner of Ōpōtiki industries: hospital, farming, and engineering.

To the mezzanine, the David White floor, you browse extensive early Ōpōtiki photographs, shipping, geology, and the courthouse corner.

Further upstairs to the Elvira Sundell floor, Elvira's own personal room begins the showcase of 12 historic rooms displaying life from pioneer to mid-century. Walk into the extensive war & Whakatohea Taonga room, where we remember our men who went to war.

Step down the street to the renowned Shalfoon & Francis Store (part of our museum) to find Ōpōtiki's great general store through several departments. The floors, counters, shelving, stock, offices, and storage areas seen today are just as they were in 1900.

Within our museum family, we care for the Guy Nicol Museum just out of town. Book private visits through us. This museum houses New Zealand's biggest collection of John Deere scale model tractors, other vehicles, and collectables restored over a span of about 37 years.



Spectacular cycling & walking trails

Explore your own way on Motu Trails or make the most of guided ride options with Cycle Gisborne. Hire bikes also available from Ōpōtiki isite. Get free trail brochures from Ōpōtiki and Gisborne isites or email info@motutrails.co.nz and have them emailed (PDF) or mailed (print) free. Start your planning now!

www.motutrails.co.nz Motu Trails Cycleway



Opotiki Museum

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Sat 10.00am-2.00pm

Shalfoon and Francis

Trading Store Museum

Mon-Sat 10.00am – 1.00pm



We are located on the banks of the Waioeka River adjacent to the town wharf and boat ramp. The nearby Waiotahi and Hukawai beaches are popular for fishing, swimming and surfing. Relax in a rural setting, only 200m from the Ōpōtiki town centre with a range of cafes, restaurants and shops. Enjoy a dip in our swimming pool, kayak along the river, fish from the wharf or enjoy a native bush walk. Our accommodation ranges from park motel to cabins to suit every budget, along with plenty of spacious power and tent sites.

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and collection of items from yesteryear

Over decades Guy and Isobel Nicol have collected and lovingly restored an impressive collection of vintage farm machinery displayed in a private museum on the family home.

To arrange a private viewing contact the Opotiki Museum 10am—4pm weekly 07-3155193 or ohas@xtra.co.nz



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Rotorua



***Frying Pan Lake, Waimangu Volcanic Valley.
Photo by Graeme Murray.***



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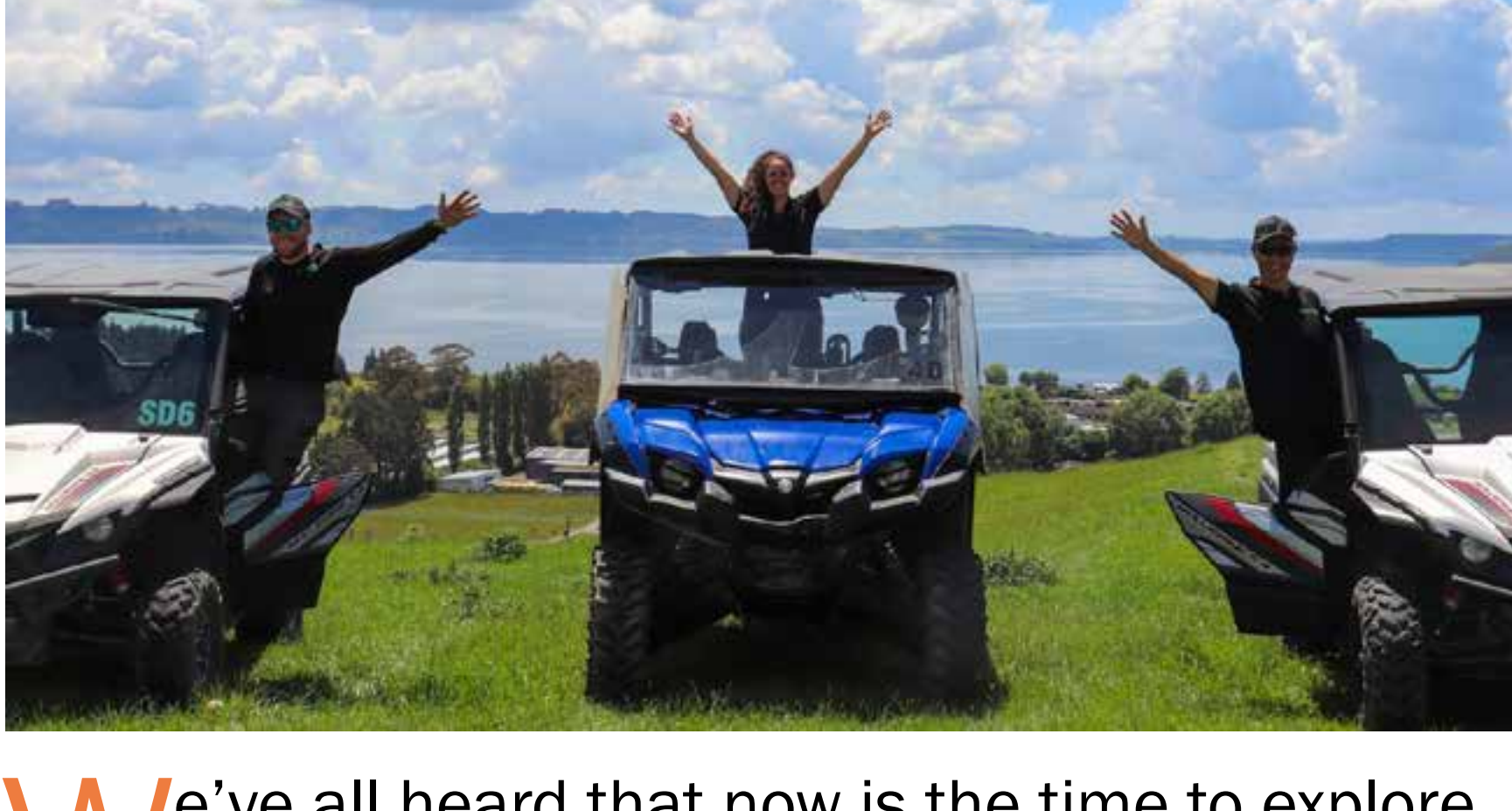


Meet

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Rotorua

Fun is guaranteed



We've all heard that now is the time to explore our own backyard – well, where better to do that than a 750-acre forest-turned-playground? Whether you prefer a relaxed 4WD cruise, an adrenaline-fuelled off-road experience, or even a scenic horse trek, Adventure Playground in Rotorua is a magical place where fun is guaranteed.

Adventure Playground transforms old forest tracks that date back to the 1930s into grounds for fun and frivolity. Weave through totara, rewarewa, and tawa trees as you captain your own 4x4 self-drive buggy on an off-road tour. Jump aboard one of their new Yamaha 4WD buggies and learn some of the history of Mount Ngongotahā. Take in spectacular views of Lake Rotorua and the city below from the side of the mountain on a horse trek. Challenge your eye with a clay bird shooting experience. Whatever you choose, there's an adventure for everyone.

The team at Adventure Playground pride themselves on putting safety first always. Many of their activities are family friendly, all safety equipment is provided, and their guides are knowledgeable and cautious. Priority number two is fun, and the team here are experts on that too!

A feast for the senses



Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel was born where the romance of Victorian gardens, the serenity of the lake, and the art of design come together. Nestled on the shores of Lake Rotorua, just seven minutes from the city centre, Black Swan blends timeless elegance with modern sophistication.

Set within a one-acre landscaped estate, the hotel features rose gardens, a wisteria-covered walkway, expansive lawns, a lakeview swimming pool, hidden grotto, sandy beach, and private jetty as well as a day spa and nine beautifully designed guest rooms, each thoughtfully curated to ensure the utmost comfort and refinement. Every suite and room is spacious, inviting, and fully equipped with modern amenities, offering guests a sense of relaxation and tranquillity.

Recent renovations have brought new creative energy while preserving the hotel's classic charm. A fountain sculpture inspired by the ballet *Black Swan* now graces the gardens, while artist-designed wallpapers and carpets bring the shimmering spirit of the lake into the interiors.

At Black Swan Restaurant, guests can enjoy food and panoramic views of Lake Rotorua – a feast for both the senses and the soul.

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2020
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Rotorua

A new frontier



Step into a world of magic and illusion at Rotorua's 3D Trick Art Gallery. Enhancing your holiday with unparalleled thrills and excitement, this immersive experience is designed to captivate visitors of all ages.

Nestled within the picturesque grounds of Rotorua Heritage Farm, the 3D Trick Art Gallery stands as the sole establishment of its kind in New Zealand. Boasting over 50 larger-than-life, hyper-realistic 2D paintings, this gallery transcends conventional art forms, transforming static images into dynamic, three-dimensional masterpieces through the lens of your camera.

Jump in and become part of the illusions. Evade the clutches of a colossal crocodile, outmaneuver a great white shark, or navigate the tentacles of a goliath octopus. Traverse towering mountains, plunge beneath thundering waterfalls, or embark on a lunar expedition. From the serene canals of Venice to the icy expanses of a glacier, the possibilities for adventure are endless.

Unleash your creativity and capture unforgettable moments. With each pose, you'll snap memories that will last a lifetime. So, grab your camera, assemble your crew, and prepare for a journey into the extraordinary.

A taste of Kiwi heritage



Much of New Zealand's history is tied to farming and agriculture. These industries were instrumental in the early years of our nation and remain a huge part of Kiwi life to this day. If you'd like to experience life on the farm, see what many Kiwis do on a day-to-day basis, and learn about where our food comes from, hop on The Farm Tour in Rotorua.

Rotorua Heritage Farm is located just outside the town centre alongside the famous 3D Trick Art Gallery. The working farm first started hosting tours in the 1930s to show visitors what life in Aotearoa was like and has recently started them up again, using the iconic red covered trailer towed by a tractor to guide people all the way around the farm.

During the one-hour guided experience, visitors will hear stories about life on the farm and be introduced to all kinds of farm animals, including sheep, cattle, deer, ostrich, and alpaca. Not only will you be allowed to get up close to all the creatures, but you'll get to pat and feed them too!

As a working farm, Rotorua Heritage Farm is open regardless of weather – so pull on your gumboots and roll up your sleeves to get stuck in on The Farm Tour.



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Rotorua

Heart-racing fun



New Zealand is known for its adrenaline inducing activities, with adventure seekers coming to our shores from across the globe. At Velocity Valley in Rotorua, you can sample six different experiences in one spot.

Offering world-exclusive rides that you won't find anywhere else, Velocity Valley is the result of real Kiwi innovation.

When you give Vertigo a go, you'll experience the longest four seconds of your life. From a platform raised 43 metres above the ground, you'll be dropped into a safety net below. Swoop is a giant swing where you'll be strapped into a body bag to swoop headfirst from zero to 130kmph in one second.

The Shweeb Racer is a pedal-powered monorail, while in the Agrojet you'll hit 100 kilometres an hour, feel the same G-force as in a Ferrari, and twist through high-speed 360-degree turns on wild waters.

Freefall Xtreme is a gravity-defying ride that lets you experience what it really feels like to fly, and Freestyle Airbag lets you descend a hill and hit ramps on a bike before landing on a giant airbag.

Enter the home of adrenaline at Velocity Valley.

Artful accommodation



Hana Lodge is a one-of-a-kind Tudor-style luxury retreat located in Rotorua that reopened in 2023 after years of meticulous restoration and a complete redesign of its rooms and gardens.

Just a 15-minute drive from the city centre, the 50-acre estate blends art and nature. The grounds feature art sculptures by renowned artists, creating a dreamlike landscape surrounded by bamboo forests and tranquil ponds.

Stepping inside the main building, guests are welcomed by an art gallery-like interior. Exhibitions feature throughout the year, allowing guests to enjoy both accommodation and artistic beauty.

The main lodge houses 12 elegantly decorated rooms, all accessible by elevator. Each room is furnished with bespoke luxury furniture inspired by Tudor architecture and adorned with original artworks. In addition, a separate four-bedroom residence offers a fully equipped kitchen, spa, and barbecue facilities.

Guests can enjoy fine dining, afternoon tea, or a drink in the lakeview restaurant. The estate also features a swimming pool, spa pools, a sauna, tennis court, and billiard room.

At Hana Lodge, every detail embodies luxury and elegance.

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Rotorua

Te Puia – a place that changes you



For generations, Te Puia has welcomed visitors from across the world to discover the secrets concealed within Te Whakarewarewa Geothermal Valley. From cultural performances to hāngi dinners, walking tours to geothermal experiences, Te Puia provides endless fun for the whole whānau both day and night.

The newest nighttime experience Mārama: Geyser Light Trail lets visitors see the valley like never before, with paths, geysers, and landscapes illuminated. Journey from the depths of darkness into the world of light as Mārama (the moon) amplifies the beauty of this geothermal wonderland.

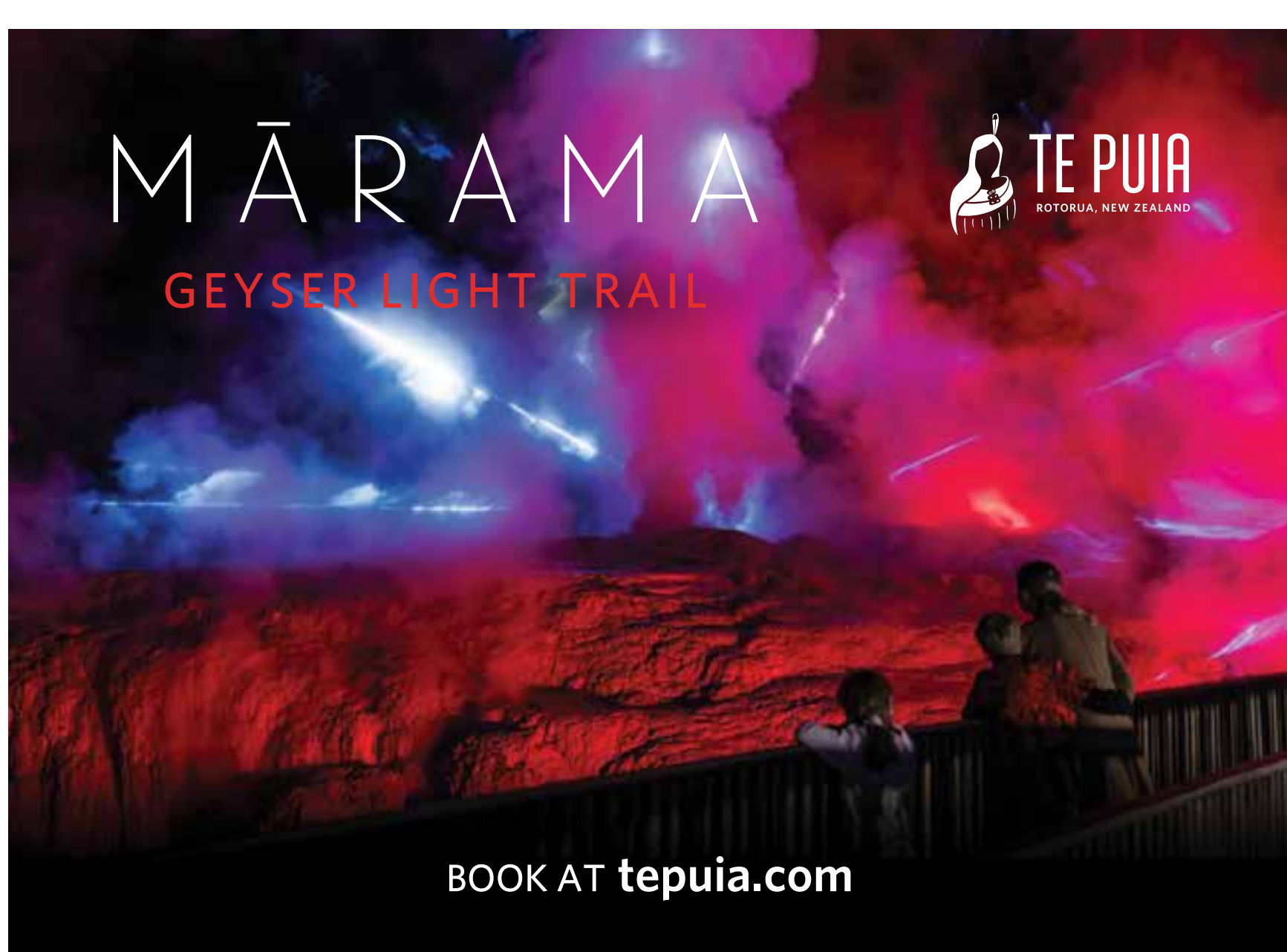
Let the ambient soundscapes of Maisey Rika move you from the festival-like entrance, past glowing artworks, and down the valley through light, sound, and shadow. The carefully curated walking tour blends storytelling with high-calibre visual and sound design in 10 unique scenes to create an immersive experience.

Follow the luminous forest trail echoing with waiata of the valley, past bubbling mud pools, billowing steam, and the flowing waters of Puarenga Stream, all while dynamic laser projections transform the darkness into a whole new landscape. Pause to take in the magnificent Pōhutu Geyser while warming up on the geothermal hot rock terrace. The trail concludes at Pikirangi Village lookout, where guests can gaze at enchanting views across the valley in a starry night immersion experience and bid farewell to the moon.

It takes about 60 minutes to wander the 1.5-kilometre track at a leisurely pace. The gentle track is suitable for all ages, though with unpaved sections is not accessible for wheelchairs and prams. Mārama: Geyser Light Trail offers a moment of stillness, wonder, and connection to the whenua, to te ao Māori, and to each other.

Other activities at Te Puia are just as exciting. Using culture and kai to foster connection, the Māori-owned and operated business spans 70 hectares within the historic Te Whakarewarewa Geothermal Valley and is home to the world-famous Pōhutu Geyser, plus mud pools, hot springs, and silica formations. The whānau have been sharing these taonga for over 170 years and proudly continue to nurture a kaupapa grounded in manaakitanga (hospitality) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) to this day.

To find out more and book an experience, visit www.tepuia.com



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Hawke's Bay



MTG Hawke's Bay.



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Top 8 family attractions in Hawke's Bay



Par2 Minigolf

panoramic views of the coast of Hawke's Bay while you compete on one of two courses: Pacific Pro-Am or Deco Drive. The former is a quintessential minigolf course, full of wacky angles, tricky water hazards, and tree obstacles. Deco Drive is a complex course with organic curves and harsh slopes.



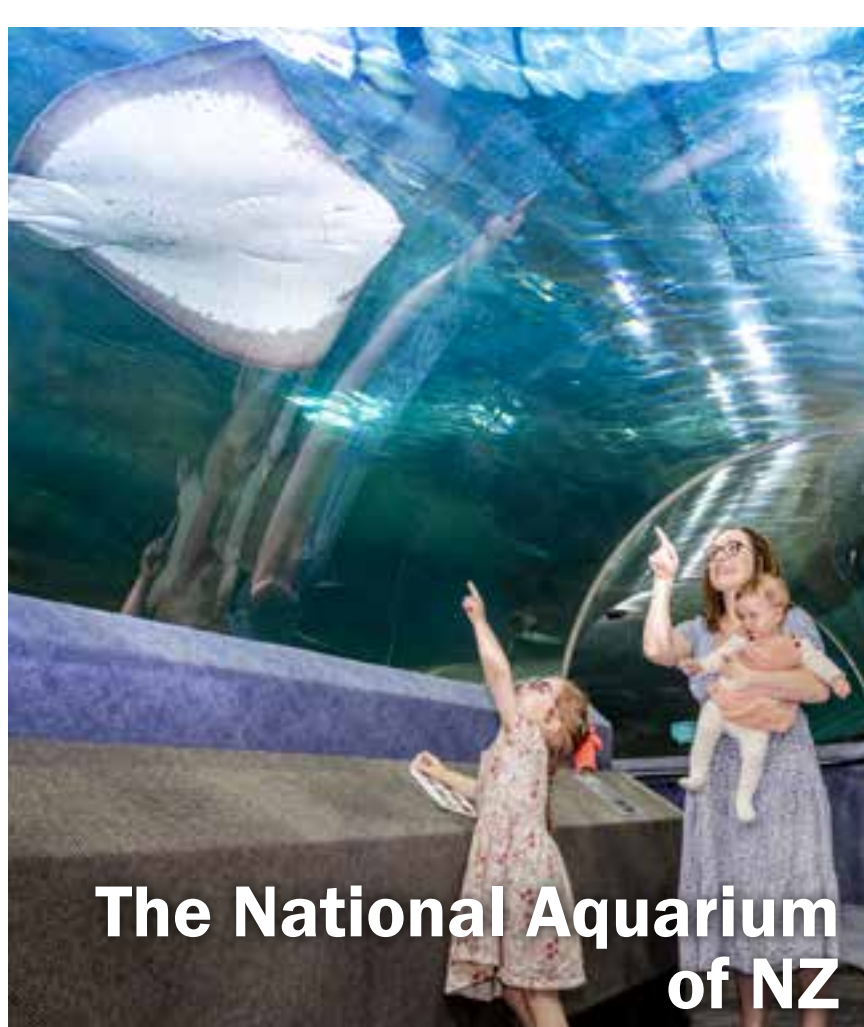
MTG Hawke's Bay

There is always something new and exciting to discover at the MTG Hawke's Bay. This award-winning museum is made up of three distinct buildings – an art deco masterpiece, a modernist gem, and a light-filled gallery that looks out across the Pacific Ocean. The museum's collections tell historic stories of the region and beyond, including the 1931 earthquake that devastated the region and the legacy of art deco architecture that is still celebrated today. Their fabulous shop also sells a range of beautiful cards, gifts, books, and mementos.



Faraday Museum of Technology

Ignite your imagination at the Faraday Museum of Technology, where hands-on adventures await visitors of all ages! Discover interactive exhibits where you can touch, play, and explore the wonders of science, technology, and history in exciting ways. From historic appliances and engines to energy sources and games, there's so much to see and uncover. A magical place where history comes to life anew, the Faraday Museum of Technology offers an experience you won't forget that's perfect for families and anyone with a curious mind!



The National Aquarium of NZ

The National Aquarium of New Zealand is home to saltwater, freshwater, and land animal exhibits from New Zealand and around the world. The 1.5-million-litre Oceanarium, which you can experience with a walk through an underwater viewing tunnel, showcases the variety of aquatic species that exist in Hawke's Bay, including stingrays, kingfish, hāpuku, snapper, and more. Watch the famous little penguins feed and play in the Penguin Cove, and connect with native wildlife like tuatara and kiwi.

Photo by Molly Rose Nilsson.



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i site

Visitor Information

NAPIER

Top 8 family attractions in Hawke's Bay



Kennedy Park

Located near the heart of Napier, Kennedy Park is an accommodation option that's fun for the whole whānau. There is so much to do onsite that you'll be tempted to spend entire days on the premises. Kids and adults will love the heated swimming complex, basketball half court, and giant outdoor chess board. Stroll the gardens or relax at the café while the tamariki let loose at the adventure playground and on the colourful jumping pillow. Spend time in the games room playing pool, table-top games, or air hockey together as a family.



Hawke's Bay Farmyard Zoo

Known for its unique atmosphere, Hawke's Bay Farmyard Zoo provides a safe, clean environment with informative signage, limestone walkways, and a picnic area to accommodate large groups such as birthday parties and work functions. The animals at the zoo include pigs, sheep and calves, ostriches, alpacas, turtles, peacocks, and many more, and kids will have the opportunity to get up close and feed some of them. With a playground, train rides, and pony rides available, the hardest part will be getting the family back into the car.



Napier Aquatic Centre

You don't have to wait for hot summer days to enjoy a day in the water. Napier Aquatic Centre is open year-round for water-based exercise and fun. Three pools means everyone can jump in – choose from the five-lane 25-metre lap pool for walking and lane swimming, the disability-friendly six-lane Ivan Wilson Pool, or the learners' pool complete with toddler pool and mini waterfall. The complex also features waterslides, a spray park open from October to March, a beautiful outdoor area, and relaxing spas. Jump in and have fun!



Ocean Spa

Ocean Spa is Napier's premier heated pool and fitness complex located on Marine Parade. Boasting open-air, heated, and chlorinated pools and spas with panoramic ocean views, visitors can enjoy a range of options from the toddler pool to therapeutic pools with water fountains and pool jets. Visitors can unwind in spacious outdoor spa pools and refuel with a coffee or bite to eat at Bach Café. Centrally located, Ocean Spa is the perfect spot to relax and re-energise, rain or shine.



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Hawke's Bay

Savour your time



Te Mata Peak. Photo by Brian Curly.

One of the sunniest regions in the country is blessed with exquisite landscapes, eclectic cities, endless activities, and everything else essential for enjoying the season. With sun, sea, and syrah on your doorstep, a Hawke's Bay summer is always one for the books.

Spend time enjoying the region's great outdoors. Climb Te Mata Peak to take in 360-degree views of the whole region, where you'll see big skies that meet wide horizons and gentle landscapes.

Pekapeka Wetlands and Ahuriri Estuary are beautiful spots for a leisurely stroll amongst wildlife, while Ōtātara Pā Historic Reserve offers a 45-minute archaeological walk around an ancient pā site. As for beaches, simply take your pick!

The Hawke's Bay Farmers' Market in Hastings is the longest-running in the country and oodles of fun. If you don't like waking up early, that's not a problem! The night market is just as great. Napier is the region's largest city and is known for its Art Deco architecture, artist galleries, museums, and excellent eateries.

Don't forget to savour the vino of Hawke's Bay! Cellar doors abound or you can tour a winery privately or by bike – what beats a sip and a cycle beneath the sun?

A hole in one



Doug Wright.

Just a hop, skip, and a jump from Hastings, Hawke's Bay Golf Club stretches out across 142 acres of undulating pumice land. It may be the youngest of the four major golf courses in the region, but it already boasts two hole-in-ones from its newer members.

Hitting the pin twice in just over a month's time this winter, retiree Doug Wright began golfing not long ago when an injury meant he could no longer play squash. Zipping around the course on his e-bike, he says the best thing about his home turf is its very, very friendly members.

When visiting Hawke's Bay this summer, pop by with friends and family to spend a day in the sun and on the green. The 18-hole course has 37 bunkers and several water hazards, making it challenging and fun for amateurs and aficionados alike, plus gear and cart rental, changing rooms, a café and bar, and a practice area. Local wildlife often joins golfers during their games, with tūī flitting between trees and doves gathering along the sidelines.

Framed by magnificent views of Te Mata Peak and the Ruahine Range, Hawke's Bay Golf Club is a summer paradise.

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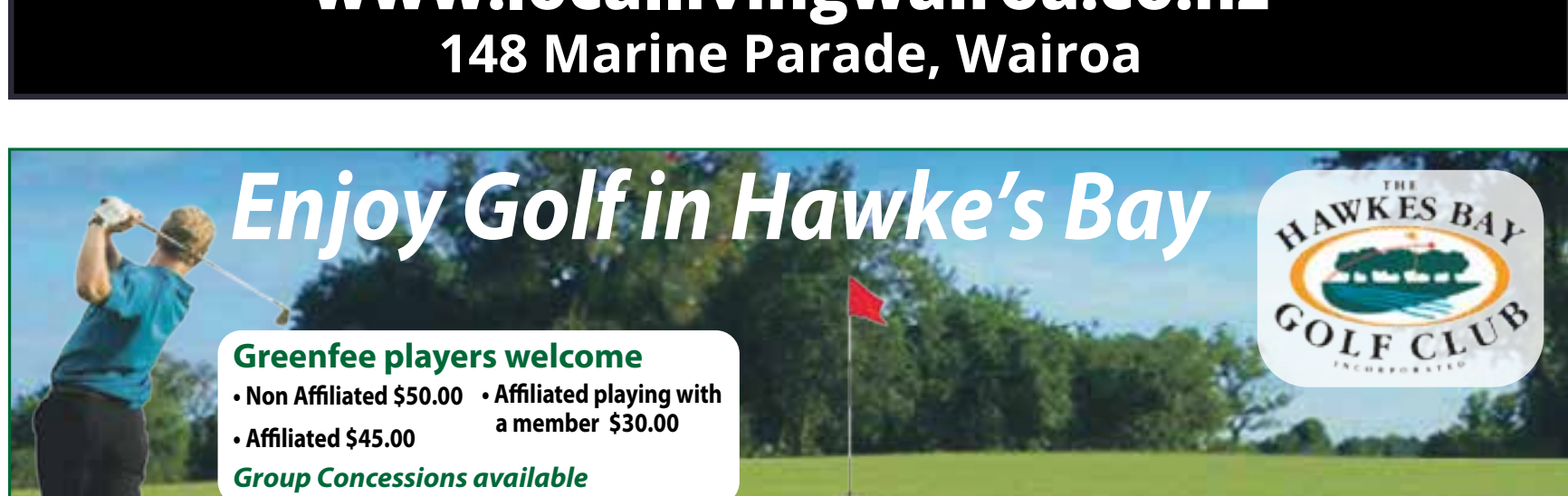


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Wairarapa – wineries

Masterton




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Martinborough



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With a cellar door open every day, platters to make your mouth water, and a selection of wines that would make any vino lover swoon, Haythornthwaite Wines gives visitors a taste of heaven.

Established by the husband-and-wife team of Mark Haythornthwaite and Susan Andrews, the first plantings were sown in 1992. Over the years, they have produced bronze, silver, and gold-winning wines here in New Zealand and collected awards internationally. Today, their portfolio includes seven different vinos.

Family-owned and operated by a small team of passionate individuals, all the pruning, bud rubbing, fruit thinning, leaf plucking, and harvesting is done by hand to ensure the grapes are handled sustainably and with care. The results are some of the highest quality wines in Wairarapa.

Martinborough



NGA WAKA



MARTINBOROUGH



Please visit our Cellar Door to taste our award-winning wines and experience the delicious Roving Pizzas

Nga Waka Cellar Door
66 Kitchener St
Martinborough

Open
Wed to Sun 10am till 4pm
Bookings recommended
www.ngawaka.co.nz

Nga Waka is one of the pioneering wineries in Martinborough, planting their first vineyards in 1988.

They have seven small vineyards scattered around the township of Martinborough and produce predominantly pinot noir and chardonnay and small amounts of riesling, sauvignon blanc, chenin, and gamay.

Despite making wine for over 30 years, Nga Waka did not open a cellar door until 2022. This architecturally award-winning cellar door is a must-do when visiting Martinborough. Book in for an in-

depth 45-minute tutored tasting of current and library stock wines. For a more casual tasting, you can choose the wines you wish to taste together with possibly the best pizza this side of the Mediterranean. Bookings are highly recommended, especially at peak times.

Martinborough



POPPIES

MARTINBOROUGH




Experience our wines and platters in the place we call home.

A beautifully simple space, inspired by the artistry and respect for the old world.

Open 11 – 4pm daily
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 06 306 8473
poppiesmartinborough.co.nz

Poppy and Shayne Hammond, together with a small group of like-minded individuals, set out to forge their own direction in winemaking — a love affair with the old world, where tradition flows through every glass.

The intention at Poppies Martinborough has always been to preserve character, celebrate varietal expression, and craft wines people love to drink.

The Poppies cellar door is a haven for connection and lingering afternoons and home to platters considered a must-have in Martinborough. A deeply personal occasion, guests will savour wines they’re certain to love, many of which are only available at the cellar door or online.

More often than not, you may find Poppy and Shayne sharing the stories behind each vintage.

Wairarapa – wineries

A grape choice



Martinborough is world renowned as an indulgent weekend destination for sipping wine, sampling delectable delicacies, and relaxing in pure bliss. Located in South Wairarapa, the idyllic country town enjoys everything from vineyards and olive groves, cafés and restaurants, beauty therapy and retail shopping.

One of New Zealand's most accessible vino hotspots, Martinborough has 20-odd vineyards that produce a range of phenomenal varietals – including the famous pinot noir the region is famous for. Embark on a tasting spree with Martinborough Wine Tours! Owned and operated by locals since 2006, Martinborough Wine Tours offer a relaxed, luxury experience of this sun-drenched region, helping you make the most of the wineries and unique features of the area. Featuring everything from tasting tours to behind-the-scenes excursions, you'll sample wine and see some beautiful scenery.

Tours can be customised to cater to you, so whether you're keen for an entire day dedicated to cheese and grapes or you'd rather skip along the rugged coast to the most picturesque picnic spot, Martinborough Wine Tours do it all.

Wine and dine in the vineyard



Moy Hall Vineyard is located on Martins Road in Martinborough, also known as the wine capital of Wairarapa.

Relax at Moy Hall while you enjoy share plates featuring the season's freshest local produce, matched with a selection of wines grown on-site. The lunch menu changes throughout the year depending on the creative whim of the chefs.

At Moy Hall, the quality starts with healthy and sustainably farmed soils and vines. You can hear all about what makes them stand out by visiting their Scottish-inspired long house for a wine tasting. The winemaker is often there to greet you, or one of the friendly team will talk you through the range of wines. Moy Hall produces single-estate vineyard wines that capture the unique character of the vineyard block and the seasonality of each vintage. Their sauvignon blanc, riesling, pinot gris, viognier, rosé, pinot noir, and syrah are available from their cellar door, online, or through the wine club.

Moy Hall Vineyard is open six days from Tuesday to Sunday, with extended hours on Saturdays. Drop in for a tasting or an al fresco lunch in the fresh country air. Book online at www.moyhall.nz



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Wairarapa

Gourmet Greytown



Elegant, sophisticated, and architecturally crafted with care, Greytown is one of New Zealand's most exquisite towns. Nestled into one of the heritage buildings is Schoc Chocolates, where Greytown goes gourmet.

With over 50 types in the chocolate tablet range alone, Schoc Chocolates has favourite and fresh flavours to tantalise tastebuds. From classic strawberry or heavenly caramel to the more challenging and hugely popular lime and chilli, sea salt, and pink peppercorn, enter a world of flavour from Wairarapa.

Established in a tiny, turn-of-the century cottage in 2002 by chocolatier Murray Langham, the Schoc Chocolates baton has recently been passed to Chelsea who will continue the establishment's legacy of excellence and indulgence.

Schoc Chocolates is a unique blend of gourmet chocolate and self-exploration. Consuming quality chocolate actually has numerous health benefits, and Schoc serves up nothing but the best, fair-trade, ethically sourced beans. The flavourings are organic, where possible, and sourced locally, with no extra sugar or preservatives added.

Give into gourmet at Greytown's Schoc Chocolates.

Brew-tiful legacy



The team behind Masterton hotspot The Farriers Bar & Eatery have recently reopened the doors to the adjoining Horseshoe Taproom, which serves up a curated selection of 12 revolving locally made craft brews, plus wine, gin, and food that showcase unique Wairarapa flavours and high-quality ingredients.

An institution since it first opened its doors in 1951 – just four years after Masterton disbanded its prohibition laws – Horseshoe Taproom has been closed for the last decade, but Trust House CEO John Prendergast saw a gap in the market for a dedicated Wairarapa brewery and knew it was time to reopen the famous local haunt.

At Beervana in August of 2025, Horseshoe Taproom's very own Wairarapa IPA, made in collaboration with Dale Cooper of Fortune Favours Brewery, took home the People's Choice Award in every session – coming out on top of over 350 other beers! With Dale at the helm of the brewing and having proven themselves as a number one at New Zealand's biggest beer showcase, it's safe to assume Horseshoe Taproom will be carrying on the property's 70-odd-year legacy as one of Masterton's most beloved hangouts for decades to come.

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Wairarapa

Wairarapa your way



There are plenty of ways to explore the picturesque Wairarapa but cycling over hill and dale while traversing the bucolic countryside, stopping to take in vistas and sip from a cellar door, is perhaps the most enchanting.

Green Jersey offers bike hire and cycle tours of all kinds. Expert local guides know every trail and hidden gem and can craft tailored itineraries designed to match your skill level with your preferences.

If you opt for the leisurely pedal around Martinborough with your crew, you can choose between regular and e-bikes, a two to six-seater croc, a rickshaw, or a seven-seater conference bike. While wending your way from one winery to the next, you'll be able to enjoy the ride without worrying about logistics thanks to Green Jersey's dependable roadside assistance, complimentary wine collection, and, of course, pre-planned itineraries.

For the more adventurous spirits, choose a Green Jersey Explorer Tour. Discover some of New Zealand's most stunning landscapes with a guided or self-guided tour along scenic coastlines, backcountry trails, or former railway lines.

Whether you opt for one day or several, a Green Jersey adventure is always one for the books.

On your doorstep



Mawley Holiday Park is a home away from home in Wairarapa. A perfect base from which to explore everything the region has to offer, the beautiful grounds feature a range of accommodation options to suit every traveller.

Nestled in a sheltered, peaceful setting on the banks of the Waipoua River, Mawley Holiday Park is punctuated by specimen trees and wide-open spaces. Guests can enjoy the BBQ area, which sits alongside a communal kitchen featuring ranges, gas hobs, a microwave, fridge/freezer, and power points. There are also plenty of bathrooms and a lounge area offering access to TVs, a library, and dining spaces. The onsite playground provides hours of entertainment for little ones, while the Trust House Recreation Centre just down the road has heated pools, spas, and a hydroslide.

There is room for campervans and tents on both powered and unpowered campsites. Cabins and self-contained units are also available – simply choose how many beds and what facilities you'd like. Enjoy views of the Tararua Ranges and early-morning birdsong throughout.

With heaps to see and do on your doorstep, you'll never want to leave.

August & Vine



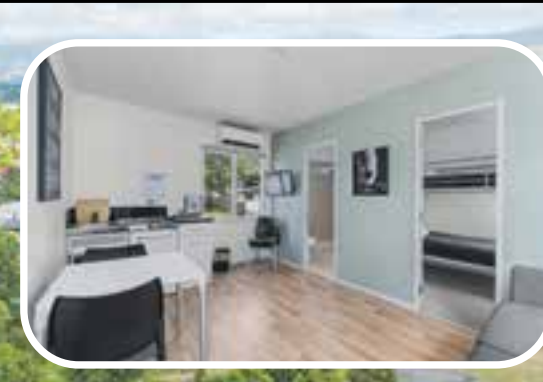
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Manawatū



Lido Aquatic Centre. Courtesy of ManawatuNZ.co.nz.



Tōtara Reserve Regional Park

Tōtara Reserve Regional Park is one of the best and most accessible examples of the diverse lowland forest that was once widespread in the Horizons Region. Nestled in the Pohangina Valley, just a 40-minute drive from Palmerston North, it's the perfect destination for a relaxing day trip, or a camping escape for a longer stay.

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Manawatū

Bee happy



Whether you're travelling up the country to explore the wild heart of Te Ika-a-Māui or you're making the trek south to Wellington or across the Cook Strait to Te Waipounamu, odds are you'll be driving through Sanson and past Himatangi Beach. Not to mention swathes of bush, stretches of rolling hills, and over hill and dale.

Along the way is Waireka Honey, a bright yellow bungalow dedicated to all things bee. The shop stocks a huge range of native New Zealand honey products, including skincare, sweets, wellness supplies, novelty items, beekeeping equipment, and, of course, honey.

Waireka Honey also has a massive selection of meads, an alcoholic beverage made from fermented honey. Whether you want to sample it yourself or give it as a gift, the unique flavour is delicate and syrupy. Be sure to check out the range of liquors and fruit wines available as well.

Tamariki will love peering into the live observation hive. Chocka with busy bees, it's easy to become transfixed by the goings on within the hive – especially if you have one of the legendary honey or fruit-based ice creams in hand!

A summer of discoveries



Detail of Dead Set II by Warwick Freeman.

From intricate curios to spine-tingling fashions, Palmerston North's Te Manawa museum offers a summer of surprises.

The exhibition *Whiria Ngā Wawata* honours the deep whakapapa of weaving and contributes to the living art of raranga as a contemporary expression until the 22nd of February.

He momo nā te whānau – it's a family trait sees artists from across Aotearoa explore jewellery as a vessel for intangible inheritance – qualities, stories, and cultural rituals passed down through generations – and is on until the 1st of March.

Sunlight – Ihi Kōmaru runs until the 29th of March. From the origins of light in the Sun's heart to its effects on Earth's life and cultures, this science exhibition will help the whole family understand the forces that sustain life on Earth.

Every day, *Feather, Fur and Bone* explores the complex relationship in which humans have relied on animals for essentials like food, shelter, and clothing – urging us to consider how we continue to use animal materials in the 21st century. Meanwhile, *Call Me, Maybe* explores how telephones have changed since they were first introduced to Manawatū, and how our lives have changed with them.






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Wellington



Photo by Celeste Fontein. Courtesy of WellingtonNZ.

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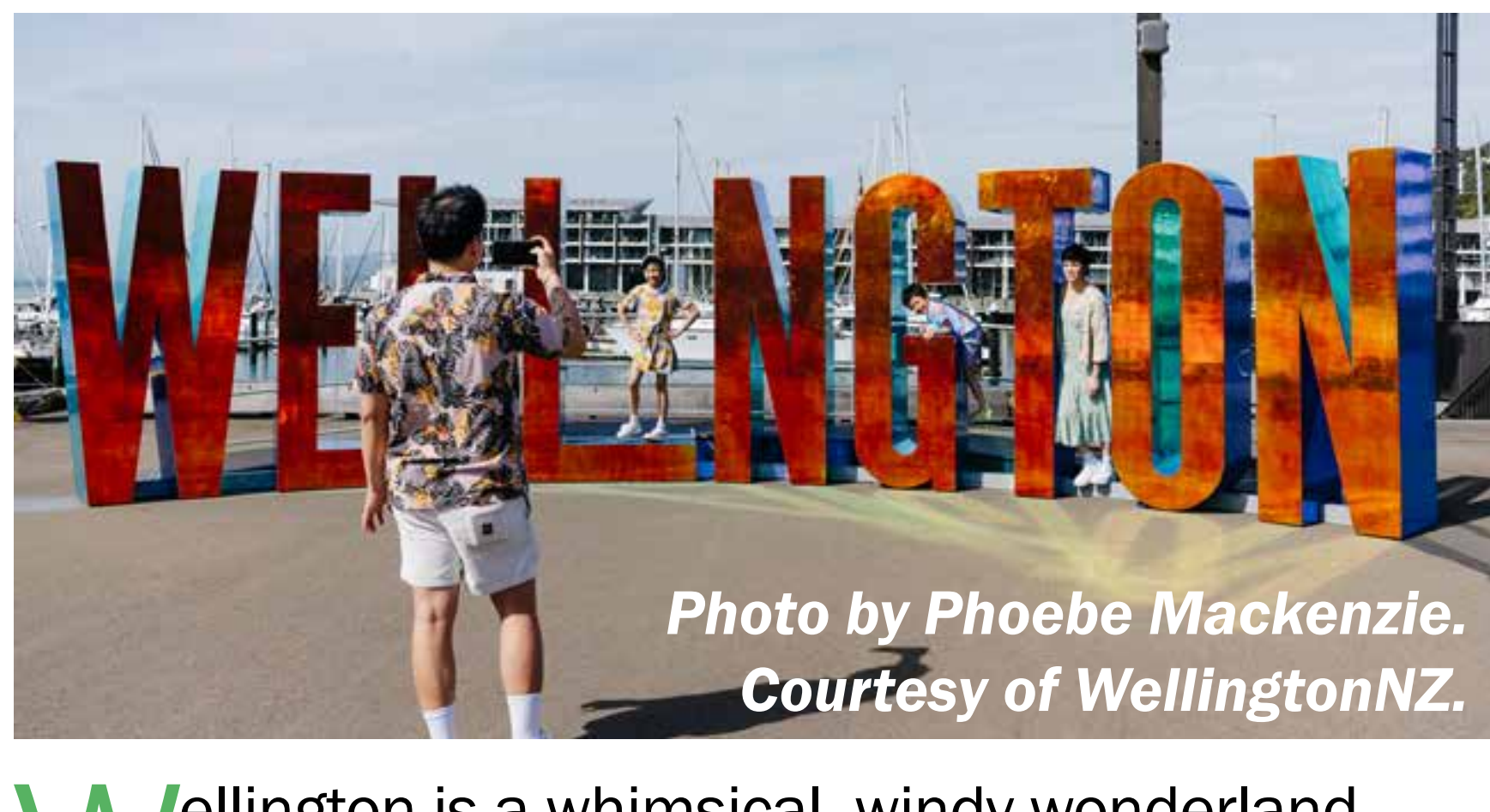
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Wellington

The coolest capital



*Photo by Phoebe Mackenzie.
Courtesy of WellingtonNZ.*

Wellington is a whimsical, windy wonderland thanks to its incredible cultural, artistic, and gastronomic scenes. Dubbed the coolest little capital, there is so much to see and do in Te Whanganui-a-Tara that visitors will almost certainly feel compelled to extend their stay.

Start your visit simply cruising through town. As a walkable city with beautiful old and new architecture nestled side by side, a stroll through the downtown or heritage suburbs is simply stunning and usually punctuated by breathtaking views thanks to the many hills. Add the swathes of bush dotted throughout the metropolitan area called the town belt, and the Kiwi capital becomes one of the only places in the world where nature and native species live in such close proximity to the spoils of the city.

Wellington may be a city, but there are plenty of beautiful beaches and nature reserves to enjoy too.

From shopping and snacking to art and amusement, every night is like a weekend in Wellington. Whether you're keen for live music or ambling through galleries or museums, tasting treats from around the globe or going to see a world-class show, peruse our What's On to plan your schedule to the fullest.

Get to know Katherine Mansfield



Born at 25 Tinakori Road in Thorndon, Katherine Mansfield would become one of Aotearoa's most internationally renowned writers and a major figure in Modernist literature. Explore her life and legacy and experience the home of a fashionable colonial family at Katherine Mansfield House & Garden. Book in advance for a 45-minute guided tour or visit the house at your own pace.

The carefully restored 1888 heritage home is classified as a Category I Historic Place on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero. Visitors can learn all about Mansfield's life, loves, and literature in the historically recreated rooms, many with richly patterned wallpaper and beautiful furniture. An extensive timeline is located in the Laurel Harris Room alongside photographs, quotes, and a cosy reading corner, while the Exhibition Room hosts regularly changing exhibitions.

Make sure to spend some time in the garden during your visit. Mansfield adored flowers, often mentioning them in her writing. Prepare a picnic or grab some treats from the nearby Le Marché Français or Mojo cafés and bask in the sun and the legacy of one of the 20th century's most celebrated literary figures.



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Wellington

Creativity unleashed



Creativity and culture collide in the coolest capital's colossal 2026 street celebration. The colourful kaleidoscope that is CubaDupa will fill the streets, stages, and spaces of the Cuba Quarter with kai, concerts, and chaotic carry-on over the 28th and 29th of March.

The festival's signature blend of boundary-pushing artistry is reflected in the musical lineup, with RIKI REID, MOKOMOKAI, Dick Move, Lou'ana, Aro, Jeff Parsnips, and Tom Knowles, plus Naarm/Melbourne's Gut Health bringing big-stage energy alongside vast and varied local acts. Meanwhile, the theatre programme will see performances such as *Dad Brigade*, *Clown Pope*, and *Hausdown* – which began life at New Zealand Fringe Festival or the 2025 Cuba Street Summer Series – burst to life in the streets.

Returning to CubaDupa to take festivalgoers on culinary adventures is Street Feast. In a new offering, Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington will transform its Te Aro campus into an immersive visual arts sanctuary filled with exhibitions, installations, and activations.

Bringing the arts to life in all forms for free and for all ages, CubaDupa 2026 promises unforgettable moments of discovery and connection in the heart of Pōneke.

Activities for everyone



Photo by Hugo Strang.

Known for being funky, quirky, and eclectic, Wellington is chocka with activities of all kinds that you can get stuck into come rain or shine. The coolest little capital is like a playground in itself, whether you're keen to try something new or frequent old haunts. There is something for every visitor or local - no matter how niche their interests!

Ye Olde Pinball Shoppe is where amateurs and aficionados can come together to play games at a retro arcade fitted with modern details and a full bar. Featuring a comfortable lounge environment complete with couches and large screens with live cameras for you to watch your friends play their games and share in their excitement, Ye Olde Pinball Shoppe is a spot where all ages can hone their skills and connect with likeminded individuals.

Get sucked into classics like *The Twilight Zone*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Medieval Madness*, as well as modern favourites like *Godzilla*, *Labyrinth*, *Jurassic Park*, and so many more.

A harlequin neon dreamscape, a starting point for epic adventures, and the home of endless fun, give in to nostalgia and relive your memories while in Te Whanganui-a-Tara at Ye Olde Pinball Shoppe.



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Tuatara kaitiaki: Ngāti Koata | Photo credit: Janice McKenna

Wellington

Enter a magic world



Misty Valley. Photo by Brendon Doran.



Kākāriki. Photo by Ian Thomas.

Only minutes from the centre of Wellington, a lush native forest sits waiting for you to explore. Zealandia Te Māra a Tāne is a 225-hectare ecosanctuary located in a hidden valley surrounded by the world's first predator exclusion fence. This special fence keeps mammalian predators out, providing rare and threatened native species with a safe place to call home.

These species have been reintroduced as part of Zealandia's 500-year vision to restore the valley. Some species have even begun spreading out into Wellington, creating one of the only cities in the world where bird biodiversity is increasing. The award-winning sanctuary provides the opportunity to get up close with these rare and endangered species living wild just two kilometres from downtown Wellington.

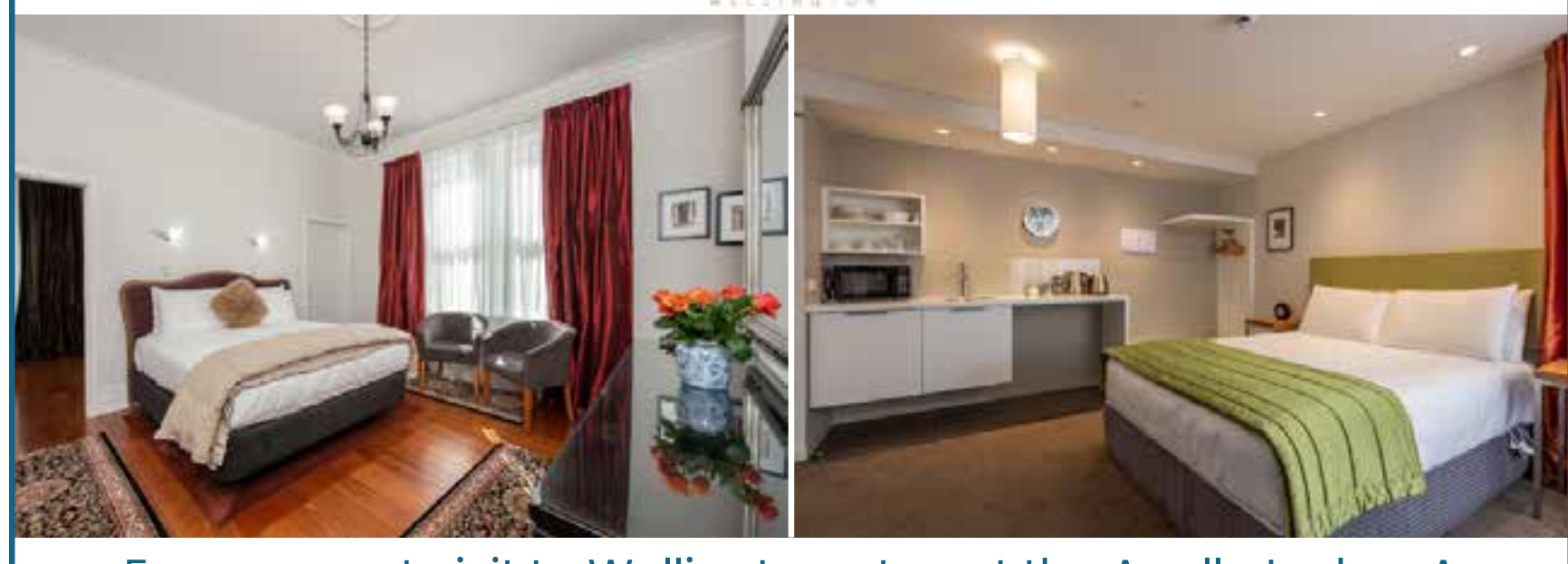
The 8.6km fence surrounding the sanctuary creates a feeling of stepping back in time as you enter through the protective gates. The innovative design prevents all kinds of non-native species entering and stops any climbing, digging, and jumping animals from getting inside.

The safe sanctuary inside the fence is full of treasures to discover. Curious kākā fill the air with their whistling sounds, takahē roam the valley hills, and rare hihi/stitchbird flit among tree branches with a flash of yellow. A day tour with our experienced guides is the best way to take in the sights and sounds of this regenerating native forest. They'll teach you how to spot even the rarest of species so you can share your discoveries with others next time you visit.

At night, get close to the iconic species of Aotearoa. Kiwi are heard and seen rustling through the undergrowth, ancient tuatara venture out of their burrows, and glow worms put on a majestic light display. Explore the sanctuary by torchlight on a night tour to see these creatures that only come out at night.

If you'd rather explore at your own pace, you can roam freely along the winding trails. Whether you're exploring with friends or family, Zealandia is a magical experience for all ages and abilities.

With 32km of trails, an onsite café, day tours, night tours, and amazing wildlife, there's plenty to see. Don't sit on the fence – plan your visit today by heading over to www.visitzealandia.com



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Treasure awaits the curious.

Step through the rafters of time in one of Wellington's most historic buildings and discover the curiosities of the city's history. Open daily 10am–5pm. wellingtonmuseum.nz

Wellington Museum

Part of Wheako Pōneke Experience Wellington.
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All aboard for a trip through time!

Explore the historic journey of Wellington's iconic rail system at the Cable Car Museum. Free entry 10am–5pm daily. cablecarmuseum.nz

Cable Car Museum

Part of Wheako Pōneke Experience Wellington.
Principal Funder Wellington City Council.



These walls have stories.

Step back in time and gain a fresh perspective of history in one of Wellington's oldest homes. Visit nairnstcottage.nz for opening hours and tour times.

Nairn Street Cottage

Part of Wheako Pōneke Experience Wellington.
Principal Funder Wellington City Council.

Wellington

Wandering Eye for Wellington



New exhibition *Fat Freddy's Drop | Based On A True Story: The 20th Anniversary Exhibition* is on now at Te Waka Huia Wellington Museum for a limited time. Learn about the making and international success of the Wellington band's first studio album.

Situated on the waterfront, the award-winning museum has four floors of local taonga (treasures) and stories. Get up close to the main ship wheel of TEV *Wahine*, the ship at the centre of the 1968 disaster. Watch Māori legends come to life, compare your shoe size with Steven Adams' basketball boots, and listen to local UFO reports.

Make the most of your visit with a Cup of Curiosity Tour, where Wellington Museum spills the tea on the history and quirks of the capital. For international visitors, guided tours cost very little extra with museum admission. See even more with the Wellington Walking Tour which takes you from Wellington Museum to Cable Car Museum and Space Place.

Wellington Museum is open daily from 10am to 5pm, with free entry for New Zealand residents. Learn more or book a tour at wellingtonmuseum.nz

Explore the stars



The stars are closer than you think at Space Place, Wellington's space science museum.

The multimedia exhibits are a fantastic introduction to mātauranga Māori, the indigenous knowledge and worldview. Discover how stars were used to navigate oceans, the significance of Matariki, and the Māori creation story.

There's plenty for tamariki to see and do too. Feel the rumble of a rocket launch, touch a moon rock, and help Māui slow down te Rā (the Sun).

Your visit to Space Place includes the planetarium, an immersive dome-shaped theatre. Choose from a range of films including Pink Floyd's 50th anniversary planetarium show for *Dark Side of the Moon*. Your show might also include a live star talk, featuring stories and star maps of our southern skies.

Exit through the gift shop featuring a range of space oddities like tamariki science experiments, puzzles, and dad-joke t-shirts. You can even adopt a star for the ones who brighten your life.

Visit on a clear night and explore the stars up close with telescope viewings. Plan your visit at spaceplace.nz

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04 817 9503 | tour.desk@parliament.govt.nz

Book online: parliament.nz/visit

Wellington

Authentic Vietnamese fare



Here at *Destinationz*, we love to sample tastes from around the world. We've spent many a staff celebration at Le Saigon, an elegant Vietnamese restaurant on Featherston Street. Between us, we've sampled most – if not all – of the menu!

Le Saigon has a couple of signature dishes you simply must try, like their happy pancake (banh xeo) and char-grilled pork sirloin (suon cha). But first, I'd recommend you start with the Saigon rolls combination, which includes summer rolls and a beef pho noodle roll with stir-fried beef and pho noodles. These are unique and will whet your appetite well for the Southern Vietnamese pho!

To finish, you can't go past the Vietnamese cr me caramel (banh flan), a steamed cr me flan with crunchy caramel drizzle on top. It's knock-your-socks-off sweet and will serve as the perfect cap to a lunch or dinner filled with attentive service, great vibes, and, of course, exceptional food.

If I had to choose one cuisine to eat for the rest of my life, it'd have to be Vietnamese. I think you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone who does it better than Le Saigon.

A downtown haven



In the heart of Wellington's central business district is a welcoming space for people seeking relaxation, realignment, and a re-energising atmosphere. The Capricorn Spirit is a haven away from the hustle and bustle of city life where visitors can find crystals, holistic healing services, jewellery, and more.

Crystals can be used for healing and manifesting and can also support spiritual growth and transformation. Owner Susan Cameron sources high-quality products that have been mined through natural and sustainable practices and that bring the right energy into the store.

More than just a retail store, The Capricorn Spirit offers holistic healing services, including chakra realignment, crystal healing, oracle and tarot card consultations, crystal grid consultation, and in-home or in-store crystal consultations.

The Capricorn Spirit hosts regular events and ceremonies and offers classes and workshops where you can learn more about using crystals and their properties. Pendulum workshops, introduction to chakras, crystal grid, and sacred geometry are some of the available options.

With a huge range of crystals, tumblers, and more, The Capricorn Spirit can connect visitors to whatever they may need or desire.



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Kapiti-Horowhenua



Waikanae Pool. Courtesy of Kāpiti Coast District Council.



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Kapiti-Horowhenua

Versatile vacation



Kapiti Island. Photo by Capture Studios.

With seaside towns draped along the water's edge like a string of pearls, the Kapiti Coast will check off everything on your summer bucket list. Whether you're keen to camp, post up in luxury accommodation, or keep it Kiwiana at a sandy bach, you'll be spoiled for choice and things to do in this pocket of heaven.

It goes without saying that all manner of ocean fun is at your fingertips, but you can also visit Kapiti Island. An ecological jewel, here you'll encounter native flora and fauna that you would be hard-pressed to see in the wild anywhere else in Aotearoa.

Blessed with beach and mountain access, the Kapiti Coast is a great base for exploring the Tararua Ranges. Enjoy walking, hiking, cycling, and horseback riding tracks that range from easy to epic.

After your nature experience you can fill your cup and your plate with a wonderful selection of markets, eateries, artisan produce, and liquid goodness in one of the gorgeous seaside towns – not to mention catch shows and pop into artist studios along the way.

From Paekākāriki to Ōtaki, you'll be blown away by the versatility and beauty of the Kapiti Coast.

Living history



Take a trip to the Netherlands from right here in New Zealand!

Nestled proudly in the Horowhenua District is Foxton. The quaint town has a strong Dutch history, the centrepiece of which is De Molen, a working replica of a traditional 17th century Dutch flour mill.

Completed in 2003, De Molen, or the mill, is located in Te Awahou Riverside Cultural Park. The creation of Dutch immigrants Cor Slobbe and Jan Langen, the mill is a celebration of New Zealand's Dutch heritage and serves as a piece of living history for current and future generations.

Visitors can venture inside to see the inner workings of De Molen. The mill produces maize, rye, organic wheat, wholemeal, buckwheat, and spelt flours. You can even purchase bags of flour and treats to take with you. At Café De Molen you can feast on traditional Dutch meals and baked goods made with a Kiwi flavour fusion while you enjoy the view of De Molen's sails turning in Foxton's gentle breeze.

Before you leave, stock up on Dutch goodies to bring home a slice of Foxton!

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★★★★★ Immaculately clean and tidy. Highly recommended this Motel.

★★★★★ A great motel and lovely owners. Paul and Lesley were great hosts and helped us around the area. I would recommend this to anyone staying in Foxton.

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Café De Molen, situated right next door to De Molen, has a selection of both menu and cabinet food available, including Dutch favourites!

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Follow us on Facebook and Instagram to check for our hours

www.foxtonwindmill.co.nz

Creative Kapiti



Prepare to be inspired when you visit the Big Mac Slabs Furniture Creative Centre.

Over 100 Artists and 7 Businesses showcase their impressive selection of Art, Furniture, Homewares and Landscape products in both indoor and outdoor family and pet-friendly galleries.

Handily located across the road from the Custard Pie, you can grab a cuppa and a delectable treat and take it to the Centre to enjoy. You can also bring a picnic – just don't leave rubbish.

Kids love exploring and finding creatures in the gardens as well as the Natural Playground with a slide, giant Jenga and swings.

Once you have wandered around the outdoor display areas, meander through the ever-changing art galleries and indoor spaces showcasing artworks, homewares, fashion accessories, pottery and unique gifts. The artworks encompass every colour on the spectrum, and an extremely diverse selection of mediums including repurposed materials.



The Big Mac Creative Centre is a cultural hub that gives voice to creativity in its truest form. It showcases both established and emerging artists and gives you inspiration and an appreciation for how art and furniture can connect us to each other and the world around us.

You are likely to need an hour for your first visit to the Creative Centre whether you are an art lover or a curious explorer. There is no charge to visit, park or use the facilities and it is suitable for wheelchairs and prams.

Groups of 20+, please book at admin@bigmacslabs.co.nz

The Big Mac Furniture Creative Centre is open daily 10-4 and is located just 5 mins off the Expressway or from Southward Car Museum at:

289 Mazengarb Road, Paraparaumu

www.bigmacslabs.co.nz/creative-centre



Kapiti-Horowhenua

All aboard



Take the tram to the beach this summer at the Wellington Tramway Museum! Located in Paekākāriki's beautiful Queen Elizabeth Park, this open-air museum is chocka with tramcars that can take you on a trip back in time.

The Wellington Tramway Museum was incorporated in 1964 as a way to preserve tramcars and other tramway paraphernalia to establish a working museum where visitors could appreciate tram heritage.

The trams date from the 1900s through to the 1930s and were used throughout Wellington City until the closure of the last tram routes in the 1960s. The trams have been restored to their former glory, reliving their heyday along the original rails that used to criss-cross the capital.

Today, there are 10 trams that make up the Wellington Tramway Museum fleet. On weekends and public holidays, visitors can take the 20 to 25-minute scenic ride that runs along a two-kilometre track through the natural wetlands and sand dunes of Queen Elizabeth Park. On a clear summer's day, you'll be able to glimpse Kapiti Island, journey through native flora, and perhaps even spot the native fauna that call this gem of a coastal park home.

Fizzing Foxton



A special place just a 90-minute drive from Wellington, Foxton is a meeting point between worlds, where history and art mix and mingle, and tradition two-steps with innovation.

The town's centre and side streets recount its multi-ethnic past. Over 30 murals depict the history of the district and settlement. Foxton could be considered Aotearoa's largest permanent outdoor art gallery – everything is within walking distance, so see if you can spot them all!

In the middle of Main Street is Foxton's cultural hub, inhabited by Te Awahou Riverside Cultural Park with its award-winning centrepiece Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom. Take a stroll through this modern creative facility with two museums and a stylish art gallery – telling the stories of mana whenua and Dutch immigrants, side by side with tales of Foxton's early days and flax industry.

Sharing the space with the cultural park is De Molen, Foxton's 17th-century working replica of a Dutch windmill. Built in 2003, the windmill has been grinding away ever since, with a café filled with fresh Dutch treats waiting to be gobbled up.

Take a jaunt up the coast and discover how funky and fun Foxton can be!








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more than just a museum

Tramway Prices: Adult \$12.00 | Child \$6.00
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Also available are one way tram ride only fares.
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The Tramway is open every Saturday and Sunday and on Public holidays from 11 am. So visit Queen Elizabeth Park and take a trip back in time by riding to the beach in one of our vintage Wellington Trams.

Queen Elizabeth Park (McKays Crossing), Paekakariki State Highway One, Kapiti Coast | www.wellingtontrams.org.nz

KAPITI COAST ELECTRIC TRAMWAY
Take a Journey into the past!

Māpuna Kabinet Art Gallery: A tranquil haven for true art Lovers



Nestled in the heart of Foxton's town centre, Māpuna Kabinet Art Gallery in Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom offers an inviting space where art and architecture seamlessly blend.



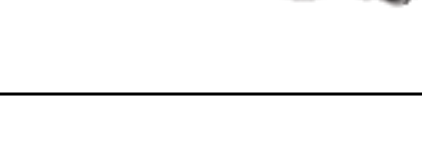
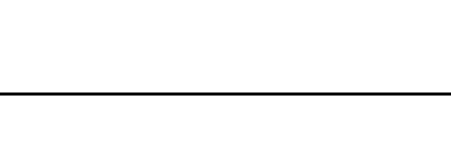
As visitors enter through the spacious foyer, they are ushered in by the captivating grand entrance and soaring ceilings.

The gallery's minimalist design allows the natural light to pour in from above, creating a peaceful ambience that encourages quiet reflection.

With each exhibit thoughtfully curated, Māpuna Kabinet is a destination for those looking to immerse themselves in art, explore local creativity, and enjoy a moment of serenity – a true gem for art enthusiasts and travellers alike.

Open weekdays from 9 am to 4 pm, Saturdays and Sundays from 10 am to 3 pm. Closed public holidays.

 teawahou.com  92 Main Street Foxton  (06) 363 5571

Kapiti-Horowhenua

Simply summer



Nestled between Ōtaki and Foxton, just a stone's throw from one of the most beautiful stretches of surf and sand in the lower North Island is Waitārere Beach. A little town with lots of charm, this seaside gem will steal your heart and welcome you back every summer.

Waitārere Beach will give you and your friends or whānau the kind of summer you read about in books – a slice of Kiwiana that will remind visitors of a New Zealand from a time gone by.

From surfing to swimming in the gentle waves to barbecuing and stargazing on the long sandy beach, there's room for everyone's favourite silly season activities. Not to mention the nearby forests and parks perfect for treks, bush walks, bike or quad rides, and everything in between.

Hydrabad Holiday Park and Waitarere Beach Motor Camp are a hop, skip, and a jump from the beach and the bush, and perfect for all kinds of travellers. Whether you want to pitch your tent, bring the whole campervan setup, or simply show up and have your accommodation ready, these spots are like a home away from home, connecting you and your crew with fun in the sun.

Coastal car collection



While exploring the Kapiti Coast, make a pitstop at Southward Car Museum, one of the most impressive vehicle collections in the Southern Hemisphere.

What started as Sir Len and Lady Vera Southward's passion project in the 50s has grown into a world-class destination nestled into the foothills behind Paraparaumu. Now with over 400 vehicles, motorcycles, aircraft, and motoring memorabilia spanning over 100 years of history on display, Southward Car Museum will appeal to motor enthusiasts, history lovers, families, and travellers alike.

The full catalogue includes cars and motorcycles from across the globe and dating back to as early as the 1900s. Meanwhile the aircraft collection showcases the unique innovation, design, and history of aviation. Rare vehicles, a record-setting boat, and even an organ from the golden age of cinema join the roster at Southward Car Museum.

While perusing the collection, check out the social calendar. Thanks to the onsite Southward Theatre, there is always something happening – from theatre performances and concerts to exhibitions and fundraising events and parties.

Find out more or book your trip to Southward Car Museum at www.southwardcarmuseum.co.nz

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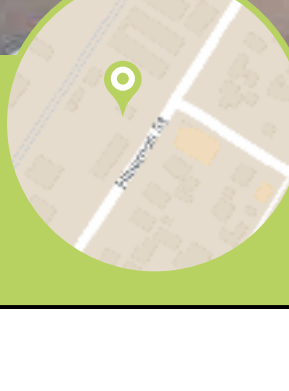


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Kapiti-Horowhenua

Roll up your sleeves



The Festival of Pots and Garden Art will once again transform the Kapiti Coast into a vibrant celebration of creativity, community, and craftsmanship over the Wellington Anniversary long weekend, from the 15th to the 19th of January 2026. Set within the stunning park-like surrounds of Anam Cara Gardens in Ōtaki, this much-loved summer festival invites visitors to immerse themselves in art, nature, and inspiration.

Hosted by the Ōtaki Pottery Club, the festival brings together more than 100 artists from across Aotearoa to showcase an exceptional variety of work. While ceramics take centre stage, visitors will also discover paintings, stone and wood carvings, garden sculptures, glass, and mixed-media creations. The event celebrates the imagination and skill of both established and emerging makers, offering something to delight every art lover, collector, or curious newcomer.

Wander through the lush gardens filled with beautiful displays, enjoy the live music drifting through the trees, and take home a piece of handmade New Zealand art. The relaxed and welcoming setting makes it easy to explore at your own pace, and with an onsite café offering coffee, cold drinks, and light meals, visitors can linger longer among the art and greenery, soaking up the creative energy of the day.

This year's programme includes guest artist talks and the popular have-a-go sessions, where adults and children alike can try their hand at pottery – both on the wheel and through hand-building – completely free of charge. These interactive experiences are always a highlight, encouraging visitors to roll up their sleeves, get a little messy, and discover the joy of shaping clay into something uniquely their own.

For those looking for a little extra magic, the Friday late night event offers an evening of art, music, and connection. Bring a picnic, or pick something up from the BBQ, and settle in to enjoy the live entertainment as the gardens come alive under the summer sky.

Entry costs very little for adults and is free for students and children, making it an affordable and inspiring day out for families, art enthusiasts, and anyone curious about New Zealand's creative scene.

Open daily from 10am to 4pm, the Festival of Pots and Garden Art is a celebration of artistry, imagination, and community spirit – a truly unique experience on the Kapiti Coast.

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Festival of Pots & Garden Art 2026

January 15th - 19th

10am - 4pm

Late night Friday 16th until 8pm - BBQ food available

Anam Cara Gardens

150 Rangiuru Rd Ōtaki

Have-a-go - Artist Demos - Art for sale

www.otakipotteryclub.org

Back to contents

Whanganui



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Courtesy of Discover Whanganui.**

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Whanganui

Have it all



As New Zealand's UNESCO City of Design, Whanganui is an artist's playground. From her exceptionally preserved heritage downtown to the art studios and galleries nestled within, travellers who are keen for quirky and creative will find this North Island town exquisite.

Joining the galleries in the town centre are cool cafés, exceptional eateries, classy cocktail bars, and hip hangout spots, which often feature any number of events come evening. If you're visiting at the weekend, the Saturday morning Whanganui River Markets are an excellent introduction – think food, handmade products, locally made goods, antiques, music, and so much more.

What makes Whanganui so special is that alongside the culture and creativity is abounding nature.

Explore the river on a jetboat, kayak, or canoe. Make for the mountains, stop through nature reserves, or amble through botanic gardens. Go boating, water-skiing, or swimming in Lake Wairua. Sunbathe on the black sand at Castlecliff or dive beneath the waves at Kai Iwi Beach.

With sports fields, aquatic centres, speedways, and playgrounds, families will love it here too. Find everything and more in Whanganui.

Real steam, real stories



There's no better way to discover Whanganui than from the river that shaped it. Step aboard the *Waimarie*, New Zealand's last-operating coal-fired paddle steamer, and step back in time on a voyage that carries the memories, mana, and spirit of exploration that has defined this awa for generations.

Hop aboard and feel the deck vibrate beneath authentic steam power. Watch the paddle wheel turn as it did in the 19th century and hear tales of the past. This is slow travel at its most meaningful, where every bend reveals how the past meets the present.

The experience reaches beyond the boat itself. Before or after your cruise, settle into Ngaporo, our riverside coffee bar. Hire a bike and follow the riverbank trails at your own pace. Gather your group for an intimate charter or simply soak up the dockside atmosphere as steam rises and stories come alive.

Whether you're here for history, discovery, or a taste of something local, the *Waimarie* offers an experience that captures the essence of this place: authentic, creative, and unique.

Your story lives here too. Book your journey at www.waimarie.co.nz

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Whanganui

Experience creativity unbound



Whether you are an artist, collector, glass enthusiast, or simply intrigued about an artform that isn't often accessible to the public, New Zealand Glassworks – Te Whare Tūhua O Te Ao (NZG) lets visitors experience the magic of glass from New Zealand's UNESCO City of Design. As the national centre for glass in Aotearoa and an incredibly important part of the artistic community in Whanganui, NZG is a vital part of the local and national artistic community, providing a space for collaboration, creativity, and development of new techniques in the field.

Located in one of New Zealand's most historic and culturally significant regions, NZG is a dynamic and innovative hub and the only open-access glass studio in the country, providing professional artists with access to state-of-the-art equipment needed to create new and innovative glass pieces. NZG offers a unique opportunity to see professional artists at work, fostering an environment to learn about the techniques, precision, and craftsmanship involved in creating pieces from glass. The facility offers regular workshops, demonstrations, and exhibitions, inviting visitors to learn about the history of glass and how to create their own pieces.

Through these programmes, NZG has become a hub for creativity and collaboration, bringing together artists from different disciplines and levels of experience. The facility offers a unique space for artists to share ideas, techniques, and knowledge, and to learn from each other, resulting in a vibrant and dynamic glass community.

It is an exciting and dynamic facility that invites people of all ages and backgrounds to learn about and experience the beauty and artistry of glassmaking. With its commitment to sustainability, innovation, and collaboration, NZG is set to continue playing a vital role in the growth and development of the art of glassmaking in New Zealand for many years to come.

Within the NZG gallery, visitors can also peruse the catalogue of creations made in the world-class facilities by visiting and resident artists. From jewellery to homewares, sculptures to wall art, there are styles and techniques that reflect all manner of preferences.

NZG is open seven days a week from 10am to 4:30pm, only closed on public holidays, and looks forward to welcoming visitors of all ages and abilities, backgrounds and interests. For more information and to check out the online events calendar, visit www.nzglassworks.com



Whanganui

Experience the rush



If you love speed, adrenaline, and the roar of V8 engines, then you need to get to the New Zealand Jetsprint Championship in Whanganui! Round two will be hitting the waters at the Shelter View Jetsprint Track on Saturday the 27th of December, but if you can't make it that day then you have a second chance at round five on Sunday the 1st of March 2026.

Jetsprinting is likened to rallying but on water, where a driver and navigator negotiate their way in shallow channels around a series of islands, racing for the best time of the day. Boats range from 500 to 1500 horsepower and reach up to 140 kilometres per hour in under two seconds.

The New Zealand Jetsprint Championship is a fun-filled, family day out where spectators can sit on the banks around a track the size of a rugby field and experience the madness close up. Adrenaline junkies race in knee deep water with no brakes, where hesitation could mean elimination, but everyone is gunning for the podium. Get your blood pumping and your heart racing at the ultimate jetsprint competition this summer. If you haven't experienced the rush yet, you're missing out! For all you need to know, visit www.v8jetsprints.co.nz

Unmatched thrills



The popular annual Suzuki International Series, including the world-renowned Cemetery Circuit street race event in Whanganui on Boxing Day, marks the busiest time of the year for New Zealand's elite motorcycle road racers and international riders. The three-round spectacle kicks off at the Taupo International Motorsport Park on the weekend of December the 6th and 7th, with the excitement continuing at round two at Manfeild, on the outskirts of Feilding, just a week later on December the 13th and 14th.

Then feel the adrenaline and experience the speed as New Zealand's top road racers go head-to-head on the legendary Whanganui city streets at round three: Cemetery Circuit. Since 1951, this tradition has seen local and international racers push their limits, just inches from spectators.

Unrivalled in NZ, this is one of the last remaining street circuits, offering thrills that no traditional racetrack can match thanks to the closeness of spectators and the demanding, tight course that guarantees intense competition.

2025 sees a host of riders from the UK, USA, and Australia on their way over to battle it out with NZ's best. Come and experience a real New Zealand Boxing Day!

WHANGANUI



2025 NEW ZEALAND
JETSPRINT
Championship

TWO ROUNDS

27 DEC 2025

R2

1 MARCH 2026

R5

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Whanganui

A passion for the awa

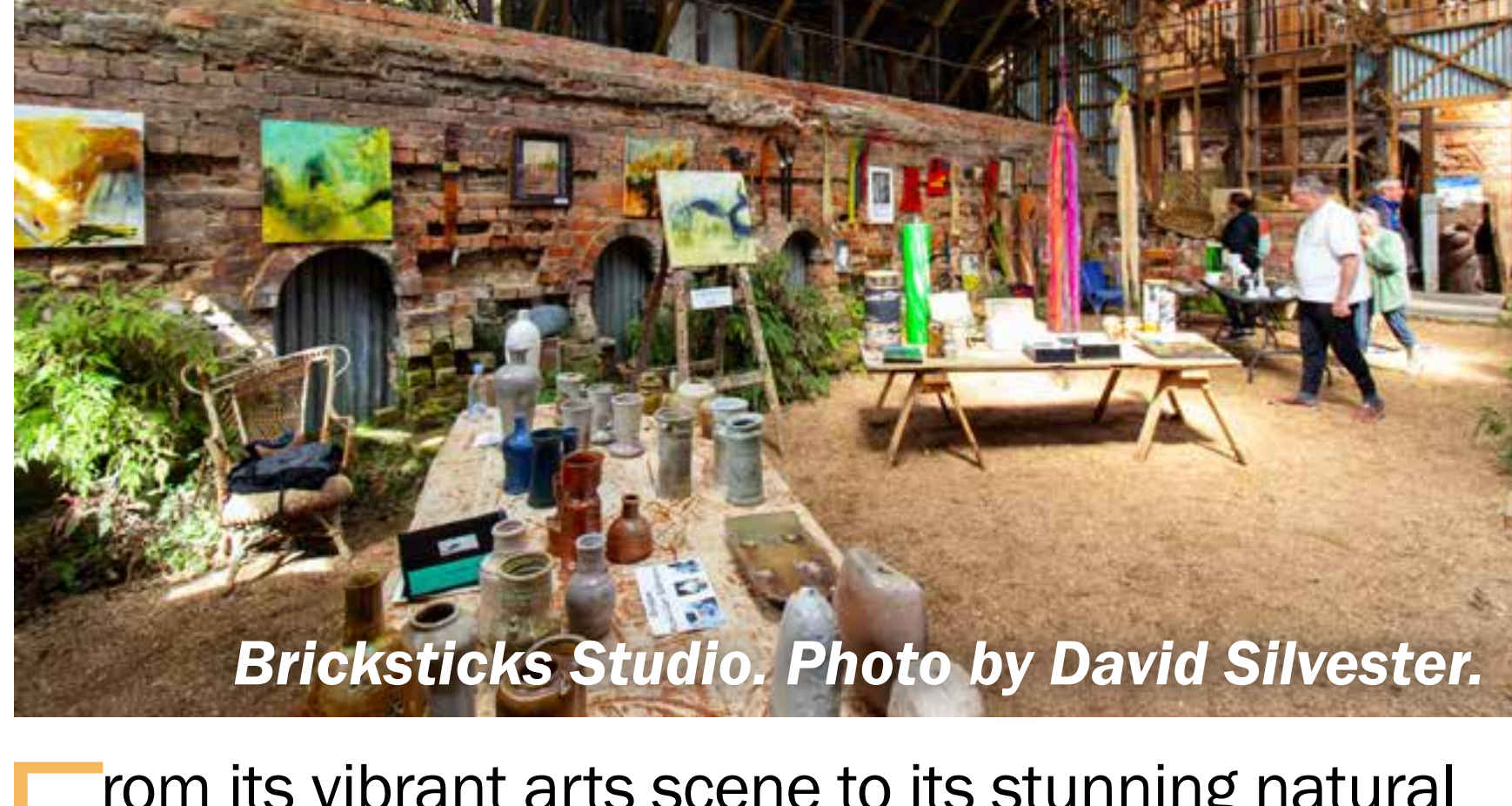


Whanganui is steeped in cultural heritage – central to this is her awa (river). Flowing from Mount Tongariro to the Tasman Sea, the Whanganui River has provided a lifeline for centuries with the Te Awa Tupua Act 2017 conferring it a legal personality and protection by law.

You can explore the lower reaches of this extraordinary place by jet boat with Whanganui Scenic Experience Jet, which is the closest jet boat tour to Whanganui at just 25 minutes' drive from the city. With an emphasis on sharing the knowledge and stories they have been taught, the friendly crew specialise in personalised guided experiences of the Whanganui River Valley, including a two-hour tour traversing the scenic Atene Bush in the southern part of the Whanganui National Park and visits to the historical Kawana Flour Mill, Matahiwi Gallery, and the village of Jerusalem Hiruhārama. An all-day package to the Bridge to Nowhere – one of the biggest attractions in Whanganui National Park – can also be arranged.

They aim to provide you with an unforgettable experience of real Kiwi life and insights into the people who have lived in the valley. Immerse yourself in the magic of the awa with Whanganui Scenic Experience Jet!

Whanganui Open Studios




Bricksticks Studio. Photo by David Silvester.

From its vibrant arts scene to its stunning natural landscapes, Whanganui has something to offer everyone, but it has become best known for its creativity.

Whanganui's 2026 Artists Open Studios is poised to be an unmissable cultural highlight of Aotearoa's calendar. Set across two weekends between the 14th and 22nd of March, this premier art trail offers a rare invitation to step beyond the gallery wall and into the working studios of this thriving art scene.

Whanganui's status as a UNESCO City of Design is affirmed by the sheer diversity and calibre of mahi on display. Visitors will encounter established and emerging artists across myriad mediums – from the master glasswork and ceramics for which the city is renowned, to contemporary painting and sculpture, and everything in between.

This is your opportunity to engage directly with the makers, to hear the stories behind their creations, and acquire a unique New Zealand taonga. Plus, it's a great way to explore the city, discover hidden gems, and experience the creativity of Whanganui at its best. Mark your diary – this journey into the heart of the River City's creative soul is one for the discerning traveller.




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ARTISTS OPEN STUDIOS

WHANGANUI

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The Arts Destination of New Zealand

2026

14 – 22 March

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Experience why our UNESCO City of Design is a haven for both emerging and established artists.

To discover all studios, artists, and events, visit our website: openstudios.co.nz

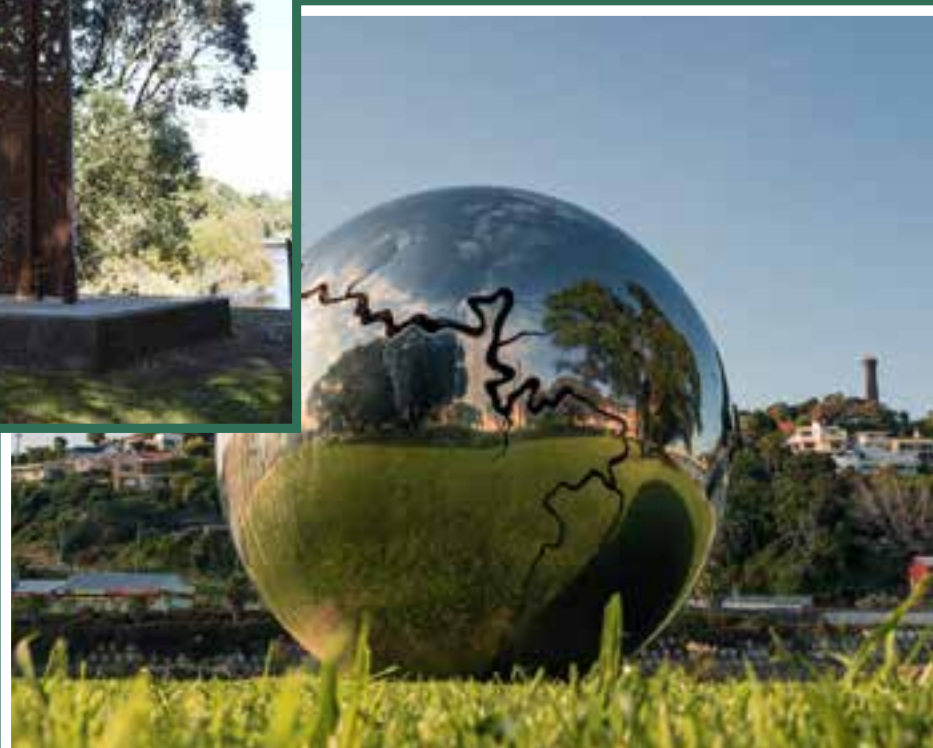
Follow us: **#AOS2026**



Authentic EXCEPTIONAL



Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery.



Nestled at the mouth of her namesake's awa, verdant forests cloaked around her shoulders and a string of black and gold-sand beaches draped around her neck, Whanganui is a picturesque river city on the west coast of Te Ika-a-Māui. Recognised for its historic and contemporary contributions to art and creativity, New Zealand's only UNESCO City of Design has so much to discover – from history and heritage to art and adventure, culture and cuisine, with a vibrant events calendar to boot.

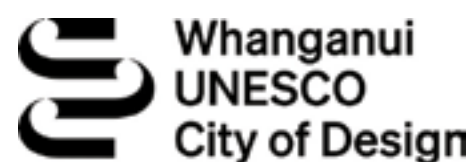
Arts aficionados will find their bliss here. Peppering Whanganui's beautifully preserved heritage city centre and its surrounds are studios, museums, and galleries spanning jewellery to fine arts, flax weaving to glasswork, costumiers to filmmakers, and so much more. Standing pride of place at Pukenui, Queen's Park is the beloved Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery.

One of Aotearoa's oldest and grandest galleries, Te Whare o Rehua Sarjeant Gallery has undergone restoration, earthquake strengthening, and unveiled its stunning new extension Te Pātaka o Tā Te Atawhai Archie John Taiaroa. Reimagined by architects Warren and Mahoney in a codesign partnership with Whanganui iwi, this dedication to respected kaumātua Sir Archie Taiaroa KNZM is a space for the storage and sharing of knowledge, experience, and wisdom from one generation to the next. Its bounty for the senses asks us to meditate on what we hear, how we see, and why we feel.

Opened in 1919, the lovingly restored gallery was gifted the name Te Whare o Rehua, or House of Inspiration, by local iwi in 1995. A fitting title for the heritage building, which houses a collection of more than 8000 items of significance that traverse four centuries of European and New Zealand art history.

Perfect for family escapades, weekends with friends, or romantic getaways with the one you love, Whanganui's magic lies within those who call it home. Community and connection form the city's lifeblood. Whether you're paddling the river on a guided tour or cruising its emerald waters on a paddle steamer, perusing the locally run boutiques or dining on plates from its fertile plains at an award-winning eatery, you'll find manaakitanga at every turn. That hospitality will warm your bones in winter and your soul all year round as it beckons you back time and time again.

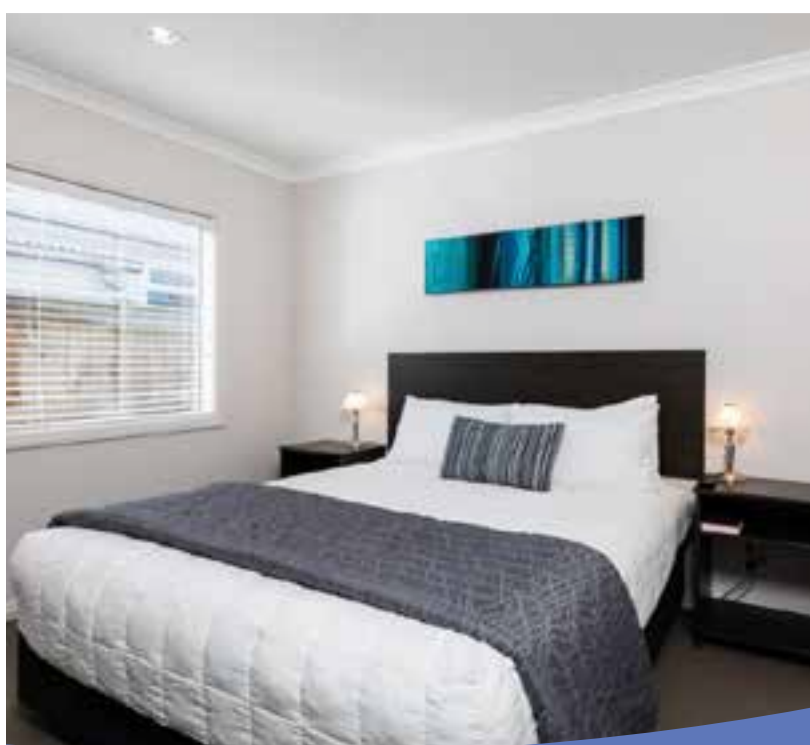
One thing's for certain: Whanganui's indelible impression will remain stamped on your heart forever.



Taranaki



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South Taranaki

Stories and memories of the past and present



Photo by Richard Wotton.



The modern, welcoming Aotea Utanganui Museum of South Taranaki plays an active role in the community, while striving to achieve excellence in research, curatorship, and preservation. The exhibitions embrace the digital age with technological creativity and innovation.

Several permanent exhibitions are available for the first-time visitor. *Oral Histories of South Taranaki* is mounted within the permanent gallery space utilising a sound dome and interactive television that plays 51 stories from our South Taranaki communities. Through spoken word, stories and memories of the past and present are preserved as intangible heritage.

Turuturu-mōkai tells the ancient story of the pā site located inland from Hāwera. It is displayed in the foyer with two carved pou by Henare Toka, the original tohunga whakairo who carved the Goodwill Post at Turuturu-mōkai in 1938. A mini-documentary features Reg Korau, a descendant of Ngāti Tupaea, relating his memories of the site.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi and the South Taranaki Land Wars exhibition is mounted in the Livingston-Baker Reading Room. Alongside the nine copies of Te Reo versions of Te Tiriti is the translation by Hugh Kawharu and the Land League Letter penned by the Chiefs of Taranaki in 1854. *The Land Wars* tells of the debilitating diseases brought to these shores by settlers and colonists; the start of trade in the area between Pākehā and Māori; and the resultant greed for more land from local Māori, which culminated in wars being fought to control the commercial assets of Māori land.

The returning visitor will be thrilled to learn that after two years of building, then installation, the *Agricultural and Transport* exhibition and storage facility on Richmond Street is now complete and available to view by appointment.

Puanga Kai Rau – Puanga Hao Tangata is the newest exhibition at the museum. Puanga, the star also known as Rigel, marks the new year for South Taranaki iwi and its appearance in the night sky signals a time to honour ancestors and past achievements. Providing an in-depth explanation of Matariki and the Māori celebrations associated with each season, the exhibition shows how significant star constellations relate to food sources and which ritenga (ceremonies) were conducted throughout the year to request the blessings and guidance of atua (gods).

Call into Aotea Utanganui Museum of South Taranaki, located on State Highway 3 in Pātea. Listen to our rich history and learn about what makes this region a popular tourist destination.

Puanga Kai Rau

Puanga Hao Tangata

This exhibition provides an explanation on Matariki and Māori celebrations over different seasons of the year.

Puanga or the star Rigel marks the new year for South Taranaki Māori: a time for honouring the ancestors and the previous year's achievements. The exhibition shows how significant star constellations relate to food sources in the area and which ritenga (ceremonies) were conducted during different months, to ask for guidance and blessings from the four principal atua (gods).

Come along and immerse yourself in the experience.

127 Egmont Street, Patea
 Open 10am-4pm | Closed Sundays, Good Friday, Christmas and Boxing Day
 Phone: **0800 111 323** | www.museumofsouthtaranaki.wordpress.com

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Taranaki

Ōpunakē: a coastal haven on New Zealand's Surf Highway



Ōpunakē Beach.



Ōpunakē main street.

Nestled along the famous Surf Highway 45, Ōpunakē is a beloved seaside destination and a true gem for anyone exploring New Zealand's North Island. This small coastal town boasts one of the best surf beaches in the country, framed by rugged cliffs, sweeping ocean views, and the majestic Taranaki Maunga. Whether you're into surfing, swimming, fishing, or simply soaking up the sun and strolling along the sand, the town's location between New Plymouth and Hāwera makes it an ideal coastal stop.

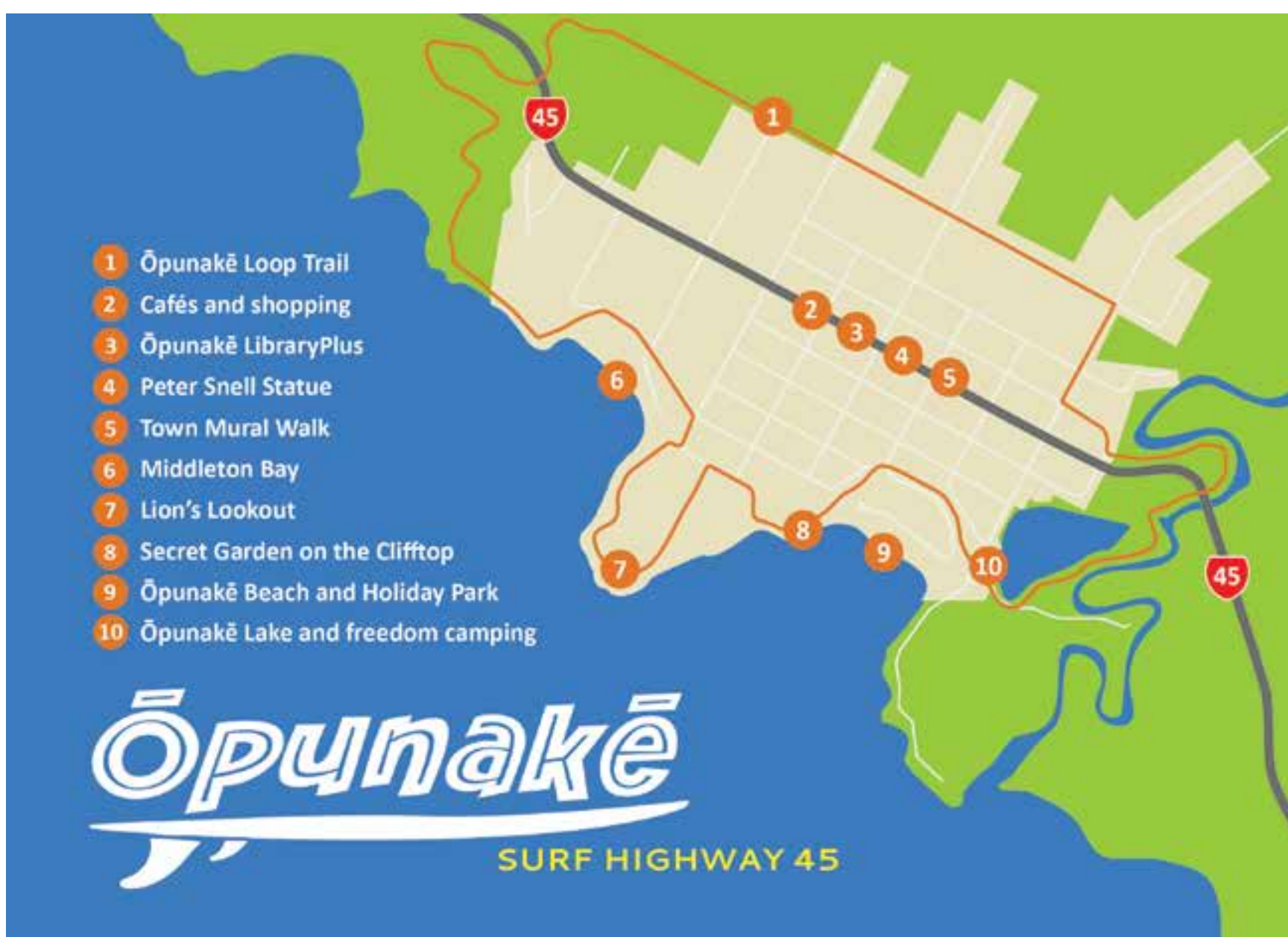
The Ōpunakē Loop Trail is a scenic seven-kilometre walk or cycle route that circles the town, offering stunning coastal vistas, peaceful lakeside spots, and plenty of vantage points to admire the mountain. Along the way, you'll discover sites of cultural and historical interest that share stories of the region's past.

The town's creative spirit shines through the Ōpunakē Mural Trail, featuring over 20 vibrant murals that capture the region's rich history, from early Māori stories to dairying and the natural gas industry. Art lovers will also enjoy the Ōpunakē and Coastal Open Studios and Galleries, where several local artists work in painting, photography, sculpture, and more, welcoming visitors year-round.

Known for its warm, laid-back atmosphere, the town's café scene is another highlight. Enjoy a coffee and a slice of house-made cake at Arty Tarts, savour generous cabinet food at Sugar Juice Café, or soak up the friendly vibe at Buzzy Beans. Shop local with surf gear from Dreamtime Surf, stylish fashion from Karam's Clothes on the Coast, handcrafted leather from Citizen Leather, distinctive homewares and gifts from Licorice, or vintage treasures at Cecilia's on Tasman.

Ōpunakē Beach offers consistent waves for surfers of all levels and safe swimming waters for families. Anglers are spoilt too, with snapper, kahawai, and trevally often on the line. For a taste of local heritage, visit Everybody's Theatre – a lovingly restored 1920s cinema showing new releases, classics, and community performances.

With its blend of natural beauty, artistic flair, friendly locals, and coastal charm, Ōpunakē is the perfect stop on any New Zealand road trip. Whether you come for the surf, the scenery, or the community spirit, you'll leave refreshed and inspired.



Taranaki

Taranaki treasures



Courtesy of Taranaki Content Library.

Take the time to travel to Taranaki and you'll be rewarded with sun, sand, and surf, beaches, bush, and bustling streets – basically, anything you could ask for and more.

Whether Mount Taranaki is in your rearview mirror or framing your horizon, wherever you find yourself in the region you're never far away. If you're a tramping trooper, carve out the time to summit the mountain. Not only will you be met with jaw-dropping views from the peak, but along the way you'll traverse terrain so beautiful you'll be grateful to see it again on the descent. If hiking up the mountain sounds daunting, there are plenty of other tracks and trails criss-crossing the region that are suitable for all ages and abilities.

While in the surf capital of Aotearoa, hitting the beach is mandatory. Enrol in a surf lesson, grab your boogie board, or just plunge right in! Save some time to take a walk along the beaches too – some are punctuated by rock formations while others are simply magical.

Relax and unwind each evening in the happening districts. Stratford, South Taranaki – including the bustling Hāwera and Pātea – and, of course, New Plymouth each have their own vibe and charm.

Light up summer



Courtesy of Taranaki Content Library.

New Plymouth will be set aglow this summer with the TSB Festival of Lights – a celebration of art, community, and nature in the deep green surrounds of Pukekura Park that brings magic to Taranaki from the 20th of December 2025 to the 24th of January 2026.

Free to the public, TSB Festival of Lights is the longest-running event of its kind in Aotearoa. Gleaming and glowing creations from all over New Zealand and the world take up residence in the park over five weeks, accompanied by a stacked lineup of local and national music acts and a vibrant schedule of family-friendly entertainment.

Whether the whānau is hyped for Festival Kids or you're locked in for the New Year's Eve event with your crew, you've planned a romantic rendezvous at the outdoor cinema or a night of boogieing under the disco balls, remember that simply wandering the grounds is an activity in and of itself.

This year's installations include a lit-up rose garden, a symphony of light and sound, an ode to ancient nature, dynamic interactive soundscapes, larger-than-life retro-style flowers, and so many more moments of magic incarnate.





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Canterbury



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North Canterbury – Kaikōura

A whale of a time



With mighty mountain ranges to the west and the endless, deep blue sea to the east, Kaikōura is perfectly positioned for adventurous spirits to make the most of everything Aotearoa has to offer.

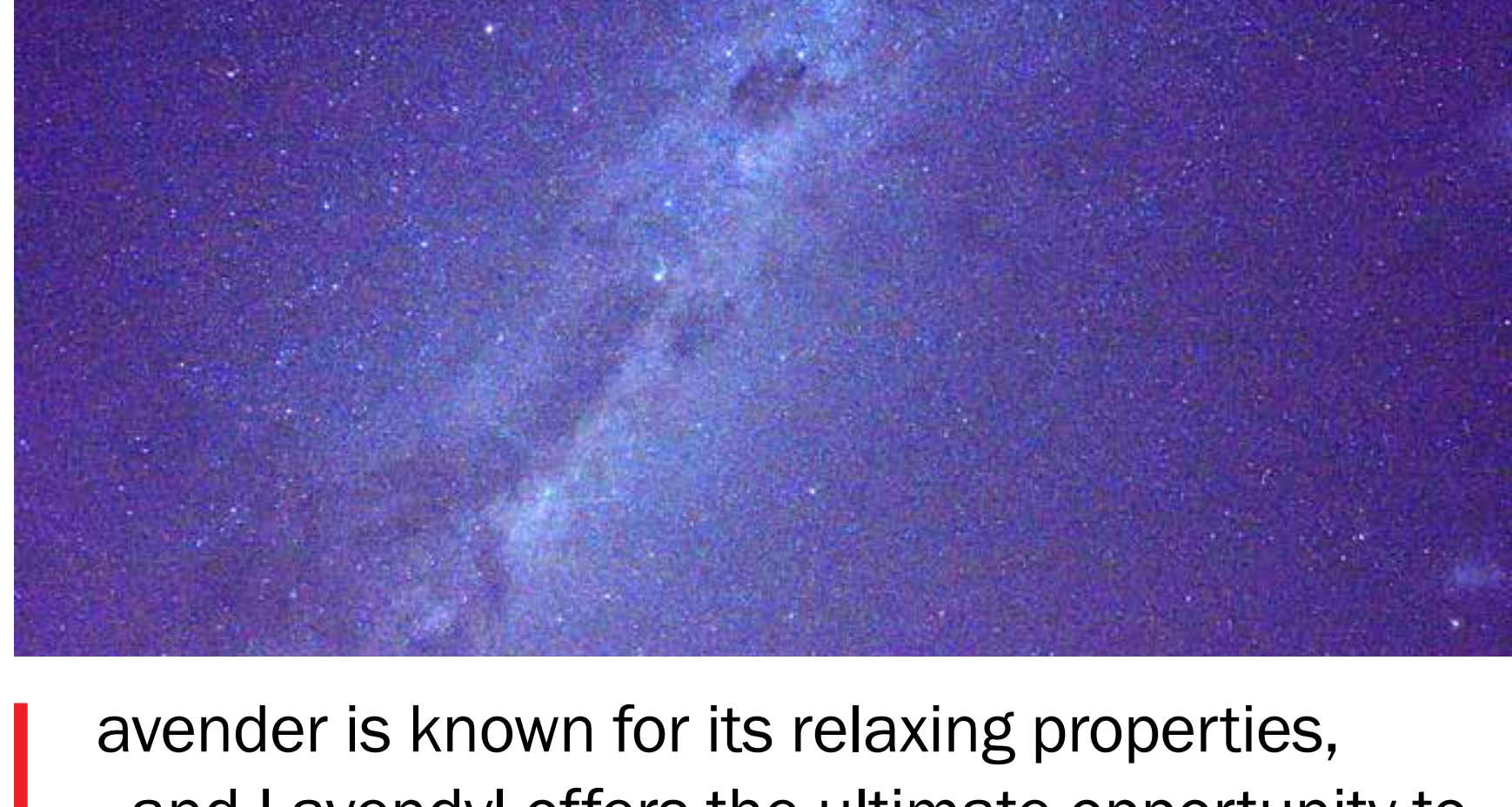
The town's most famous activity is whale watching, and for good reason! Kaikōura began as a whaling station in the 1840s and remained so until well into the 20th century. The majestic beasts congregate in this area thanks to the two-kilometre-deep Kaikōura Canyon, which runs right up against the coast. Visitors can learn all about the history at Fyffe House before embarking on a whale watching expedition by sea or air.

For more on-the-water fun, consider scuba tours, kayaking, fishing charters, surfing, or even swimming with dolphins.

On land, visitors can follow the three-hour Kaikōura Peninsula Walkway past Fyffe House to the Point Kean seal colony. If you summit the cliff, you'll be rewarded with breathtaking views. The Kaikōura Ranges and Mt Fyffe are perfect for biking, hiking, camping, and more.

Don't forget to try some of Kaikōura's famous kaimoana on the beach – after all, it's what the town was named after!

A lavender life



Lavender is known for its relaxing properties, and Lavendyl offers the ultimate opportunity to unwind by booking in at Dylan's Country Cottages. Nestled in the foothills of Mt Fyffe, Lavendyl is a five-minute drive from Kaikōura town centre. On their 6.5 acres of farmland, guests can find 50 types of lavender, a variety of natives, and all sorts of other plants peppered throughout the garden, so there's plenty to see year-round.

Have a Lavendyl-provided picnic in the circle of thyme or enjoy a beautiful high tea at the café. Attend one of the many craft and cooking classes. Browse the shop's lavender and craft products for a memento. Stroll through the garden with a homemade lavender-themed ice cream in hand.

Come evening, settle into Dylan's Country Cottages. The two unique chalet-style spaces offer rustic self-contained accommodation. The tariff includes a superb continental breakfast with homemade breads, preserves, muesli, and yogurt.

The cottages are perfect for enjoying Kaikōura's International Dark Sky Sanctuary – a telescope, binoculars, and literature are on hand. Ask about astrophotography so you can always remember the experience.

Relax and live the Lavendyl way.

With breathtaking stargazing and optimised viewing from hot tubs, swings, hammocks, and more. Te Mahuru Retreat has stunning views day and night, making it perfect for couples, groups, and events.

TE MAHURU RETREAT - Call 021 465 030

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Email: info@temahururetreat.co.nz | www.temahururetreat.co.nz

Kaikōura Museum

A Journey to the soul of Kaikōura. Our multi award winning Museum offers a modern and relaxed environment with a contemporary and fun approach to telling the stories of Kaikōura's natural, social, and cultural journey. With a new Surfing exhibition and activities for the kids, we're a "must do" experience for all.

03 319 7440 | 96 West End, Kaikōura | www.kaikoura-museum.co.nz

- * Take a well deserved break in the rustic cottages
- * Browse the collection of natural lavender products and hand crafted woollen goods in the shop
- * Watch the craft demonstrations with a cuppa or have a go yourself
- * Stroll in the beautifully landscaped gardens full of lavender, natives and more

Kaikōura's Idyllic Lavender Gardens & Dylan's Country Cottages

268 Postmans Road, Kaikoura | Tel: 03 319 5473

www.lavenderfarm.co.nz | info@lavenderfarm.co.nz

Canterbury

Adventure meets leisure



Courtesy of Visit Hurunui.

Renowned for the natural hot waters flowing forth from the depth of the earth, Hanmer Springs is a South Island gem packed full of charm and exciting things to do that's only 90 minutes from Christchurch.

The quaint town is tucked away in the mountains, making it a convenient base for outdoor adventures. There are endless nearby tracks and trails that are begging to be explored via hiking, biking, horse trekking, and ATV riding. Plus, streams and rivers that are perfect for fishing, kayaking, jetboating, and paddling.

At the end of the day, whether you're sweaty or soaked, muddy or mucky, relax and unwind in the thermal waters to soothe your bones as you relish in the day's excitement. Daytime dips will be framed by mountain panoramas, while evening soaks reward bathers with a blanket of stars. Choose from public and private pools around town, just make sure to opt for a mineral bath to soak in all the good stuff Hanmer's springs are famous for. The town itself is quaint and cute, with excellent eateries, boutiques, and family-friendly activities to boot. Plan a quintessential summer vacation in Hanmer Springs.

Saddle up



Imagine spending your summer with the wind ruffling your hair, your heart racing in time to the sound of hooves, and nothing but nature on the horizon. Mountain Horses Outfitters is your gateway to 78,000 hectares of untamed alpine wilderness in the legendary St James Conservation Area.

Focusing on wild freedom and authentic cowboy culture, Mountain Horses Outfitters offers half, full, and multi-day packhorse expeditions traversing the South Island's high country. You'll cross rivers and summit ridgelines, spending nights soaking your bones in natural hot springs, swapping stories by the campfire, and dreaming of what tomorrow will bring.

The Mountain Horses Outfitters crew are firm believers that the best experiences are found off the beaten track, where authentic connection with the people, the animals, and the land flows freely. They're for the overseas drifters, freedom chasers, and curious souls who crave more than postcards and paved roads.

From easy rides to cowboy climbs, horseback hunting to midnight meanders, Mountain Horses Outfitters will give you a raw experience. New Zealand's wild spirit burns bright, you just have to know where to find it.





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Canterbury

Adventure awaits



New Zealanders have never shied away from adventure. From sailing the high seas while blazing towards a faraway land to climbing snowy peaks in record-setting feats, bungee jumping off bridges to skydiving from high above the clouds, doing daredevil activities is in our blood. If you're a bit of an adrenaline seeker yourself, visit Christchurch Adventure Park. Here, you, your friends, and your whānau can get the rush of a lifetime on New Zealand's longest and highest ziplines.

The zipline experiences at Christchurch Adventure Park are special. Offering spectacular views over the garden city, the full tour takes two and a half hours and features four ziplines. The first zipline is 490 metres long and has the best view, while the second sits at 430m and prepares you for the next step up. The second half of the tour is where you get into record-breaking territory. Number three is the highest zipline in New Zealand at a staggering 150m above ground. Number four, dubbed The Long Ride, is the longest in Aotearoa at a whopping 1.1 kilometres! Once you feel the wind in your hair and see the beautiful plateau below, you'll be hooked on the feeling that washes over you when you're whizzing through the air.

If you're short on time, you can opt to just try out The Long Ride with an experience lasting one and a half hours. If you're a flying fox veteran and keen for something a bit different or are always up for unique activities, book in for the nighttime zipline experience. Race through the forest in the dark and catch glowing panoramas of the city skyline on a tour lasting two and a half hours and featuring all four flying foxes.

Christchurch Adventure Park is rated awesome by people of all ages. As long as you fit the height, weight, and health requirements and can walk the short distance between the zip stations, you're good to go.

Christchurch Adventure Park is the perfect place to indulge your adventurous spirit. And in the summertime, there is nothing quite like getting your blood pumping on an adrenaline-inducing activity. Whether you want to chase the thrill and add something new to your bucket list, or you're simply seeking to step out of your own comfort zone, Christchurch Adventure Park is safe, supportive, and so much fun. Come rain or shine, book in for an experience that's guaranteed to leave you smiling from ear to ear.

Adventure Starts Here



Home to
**New Zealand's
highest & longest** ziplines!

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Book Now

Canterbury

NZ premiere at Orana Wildlife Park



Flying Penguins, photograph by Paul Nicklen / National Geographic: Greatest Wildlife Photographs.

For the first time in New Zealand, National Geographic's The Greatest Wildlife Photographs exhibition is on display and Orana Wildlife Park is the proud host.

Experience over 70 awe-inspiring moments from the animal kingdom, captured by National Geographic's most iconic photographers. This powerful exhibition, on until the 30th of April 2026, features nature's most breathtaking images and is a bold celebration of wildlife, showcasing the raw beauty, provoking drama, and untamed spirit of life on Earth. The Greatest Wildlife Photographs is organized and traveled by the National Geographic Society. Don't miss this extraordinary exhibition, where art and wildlife come together in a truly unique experience. Orana is New Zealand's only open range zoo, a place where every visit connects you with incredible wildlife. Come face to face with the only gorillas in the country, eyeball a mighty rhino, hand-feed majestic giraffes, and meet New Zealand's national icon, the kiwi. There's a full day of adventure waiting, with 12 daily animal presentations. Every visit supports our vital conservation work, including breeding kākāriki karaka, one of Aotearoa's rarest native birds, for release to the wild.

Visit www.oranawildlifepark.co.nz

Summit to sea



Run Akaroa is as much about the views as it is about the running. Starting from the summit and winding its way down to the sparkling sea on the 17th of May 2026, soak in the experience and the atmosphere.

Celebrating elite runners through to first-time competitors, the courses are designed for maximum wow-factor as well as accessibility. Walkers and runners participating in the marathon, half marathon, or 10K will be challenged safely as they make their way around the fully sealed iconic Summit Road. Scenic spots are dotted throughout every leg of the journey. Plus, competitors will be bused or driven to the starting line to ensure their legs are rested and ready.

Make the most of Akaroa after the run by enjoying everything the historic settlement has to offer. Whether you're keen to simply wander the beautiful town enjoying a much-deserved rest or want to explore the rest of Banks Peninsula to make the most of your runner's high, there is so much to see and do in this stunning section of Aotearoa.

Explore Canterbury in the most unique and immersive way possible at Run Akaroa.

An exhibition from **NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**

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Photograph by: Christian Ziegler

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42.2K, 21K, 10K + Kids Dash
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Canterbury

Welcome to Waimate District



Calling all families, couples, solo explorers, outdoor adventurers, art lovers, history buffs, foodies, and anyone in between – the Waimate District is where it's at!

Nestled in the rolling foothills of South Canterbury, the stunning landscapes of the Waimate District make the perfect backdrop for your next holiday adventure. It's hard to beat the pristine rivers and lakes, native bush, expansive views, and rugged coastline.

Shopaholics and foodies will love the fabulous destination shops and extensive selection of delicious eateries set in beautiful Edwardian streetscapes.

If you love the outdoors, there are picturesque walking and biking tracks for all abilities, an abundance of world-class fishing and hunting spots, and two amazing golf courses. Our district is also known for disc golf – perfect your aim at three scenic courses.

Explore ancient Māori rock art, visit EnkleDooVery Korna Tame Wallaby Park, and be wowed by the street art, including on the towering grain silos. Enjoy the many parks and reserves, try berries from local farms, or relax at the lakes.

With so much on offer and a packed summer event calendar, head over to waimate.org.nz to start planning.

Camp in all the best spots



For a memorable camping experience, head to the Waimate District! Just a two-and-a-half-hour drive from Christchurch, it's an ideal destination for a weekend getaway or summer break.

Camp on the shores of stunning Lakes Aviemore and Waitaki – popular for anyone who enjoys spending time in and around water.

Victoria Park Camping Ground is perfect for families and just a stroll from the heated swimming pool and Waimate's centre. Nearby, is a New Zealand Motor Caravan Association park.

Knottingley Park and Arboretum offers a tranquil campsite set among trees a short drive from Waimate. Enjoy Morven Reserve or take in the sea air at St Andrews Recreation Reserve, which is 15 to 20 minutes from Waimate and Timaru.

Fishing enthusiasts will love Glenavy's Waitaki River Motor Camp. To camp within native bush, choose Kelceys Bush Holiday Park or Gunns Bush Camp, which is perfect for big groups.

There are also several Department of Conservation (DOC) campsites in beautiful areas. Dogs are welcome at all sites except DOC camps. Freedom campers must be in certified self-contained vehicles.

Start planning at waimate.org.nz

Take a moment...

Explore Waimate District



WAIMATE
a district to explore
waimate.org.nz

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Experience

Waimate District Camping

Kiwi style!

Waimate Lakes Camping areas

Victoria Park Camping Ground

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St Andrews Recreation Reserve

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Waimate
District Council

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New Zealand history

Art for art's sake



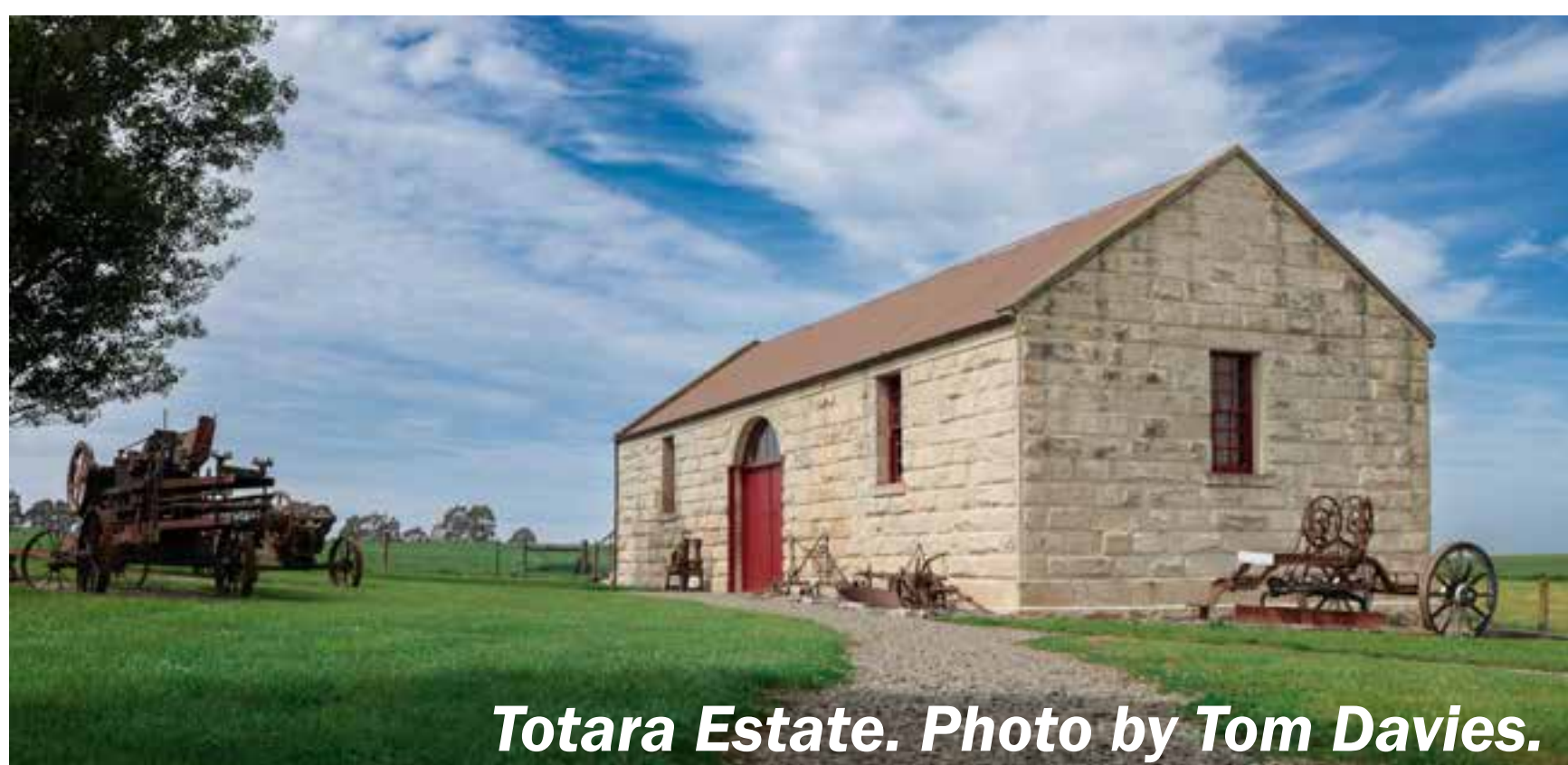
Established in 1882, the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts (NZAFA) is one of the longest-serving arts institutions in the country.

The NZAFA society held their first gallery opening in 1892 and exhibited the work of leading New Zealand artists, such as Charles Goldie, Petrus van der Velden, James Nairn, and Frances Hodgkins. They purchased these artworks and other British and European pieces with the intention of developing a New Zealand art collection. This early selection would become the founding collection of Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa.

The NZAFA continued to support New Zealand artists both male and female throughout the 20th century, adapting to times and styles. In 2007 they became an incorporated society and registered charity. Today, they continue to function as a non-profit organisation, always retaining their commitment to the arts and the exhibition of Aotearoa artists.

Though no longer located in a permanent building, NZAFA hosts exhibitions in venues across the capital, including at Wellington Cathedral and Tākina Wellington Convention and Exhibition Centre, to promote the arts and make them accessible to a wide range of creatives and audiences.

Journey into the unexpected




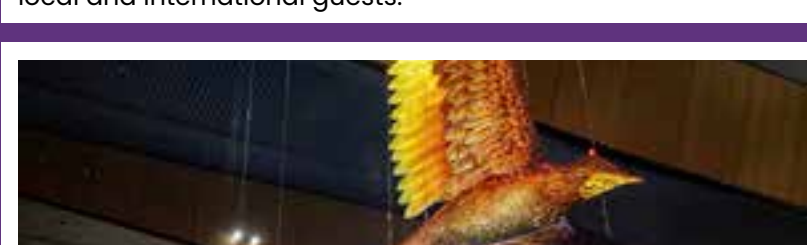

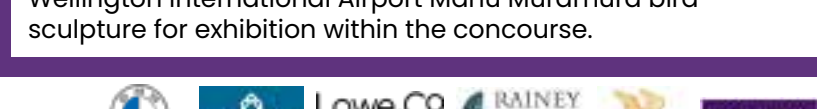
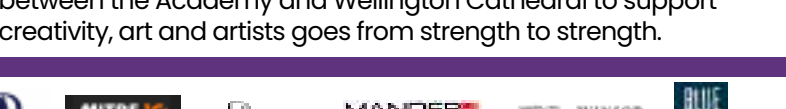


Across Aotearoa New Zealand, our heritage places are alive with stories waiting to be discovered. From grand city homes to rugged coastal landmarks, every site reveals a different chapter in New Zealand's past and an experience that feels just as rewarding today.

Start your journey with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. Step inside Pompallier Mission & Printery in Kororāreka Russell and sense the energy of 19th-century printing and bookbinding. Wander through the peaceful gardens of Kerikeri Mission Station, where the nation's oldest surviving buildings still stand. In Christchurch, Te Whare Waiutuutu Kate Sheppard House honours the women whose voices changed our future. In Central Otago, Historic Hayes and Tōtara Estate tell stories of Kiwi ingenuity and the beginnings of a global trade.

Every region offers something unique. Old St Paul's in Wellington with its soaring wooden arches, Fyffe House on its whalebone foundations in Kaikōura, or Clarks Mill in Ōamaru, the last operating water-powered flour mill of its kind.

Our places connect the past with the present in unforgettable ways. Plan your visit today at www.visitheritage.co.nz/startyourjourney

 <p>New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts</p>	<p>Call us: (04) 499 8807 Find us: www.nzafa.com Follow us: f nzafa @ academygalleries Contemporary New Zealand art</p>
 <p>Academy Artist Showcase at Hilton Lake Taupo 21 Dec 2025 – 31 March 2026 Each piece tells its own story and together, they add a local voice and personality to the hotel experience for both our local and international guests.</p>	 <p>Artist Showcase - DoubleTree by Hilton Wellington Date: December 2025 – March 2026 Two new artists will succeed Pavithra Devadatta and Min Kim in being exhibited within this wonderful hotel in an exciting collaboration with the Academy and Le Cordon Bleu Wellington.</p>
 <p>Manu Muramura Exhibition 1 Dec 25 – 31 Mar 26 Concourse at Wellington International Airport Flight, movement, sky and waves to complement the new Wellington International Airport Manu Muramura bird sculpture for exhibition within the concourse.</p>	 <p>Summer at Wellington Cathedral 14 February – 8 March 2026 This popular annual exhibition returns in 2026 as the collaboration between the Academy and Wellington Cathedral to support creativity, art and artists goes from strength to strength.</p>
	

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He Tohu

A DECLARATION | A TREATY | A PETITION



*He whakapapa kōrero, he whenua kura –
Talking about our past to make a better future*

1835 He Whakaputanga o te Rangatiratanga o Nu Tirenī –
Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand

1840 Te Tiriti o Waitangi – Treaty of Waitangi

1893 Women's Suffrage Petition – Te Petihana Whakamana
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o Aotearoa, which are part of the Department of Internal Affairs*

St Mary's College (Wellington) students viewing the original
Waitangi sheet of Te Tiriti o Waitangi. Photographer: Mark Beatty

Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa
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Te Ruā Mahara o te Kāwanatanga
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Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Government



Nelson-Tasman

Blown away



The Nelson region is brimming with art. Boutiques and galleries are nestled into historic buildings, each one home to locally made treasures. From contemporary to classic, painting to pottery, photography to fine art, creativity flows freely through the town centre, into the suburbs, and beyond.

One such space is Höglund Art Glass in Appleby, which is just a five-minute drive from Richmond and a 20-minute journey from Nelson City. The studio, store, and gallery thoughtfully showcase creations handcrafted by local artists, with everything from bowls and bottles to jewellery and vases and everything in between on display.

Visitors can also peek inside the glassblowing studio, where Höglund Art Glass creatives work most weekdays. Here, you can find out how they craft their glass masterpieces through live glassblowing demonstrations of different techniques and styles. A glassblowing video is also on loop in the gallery area, providing visitors with educational and historical backgrounds of glass art.

Whether you're shopping for your home, searching for a keepsake, or simply curious about the glassblowing process, pop by Höglund Art Glass to be blown away.

Nowhere like Nelson

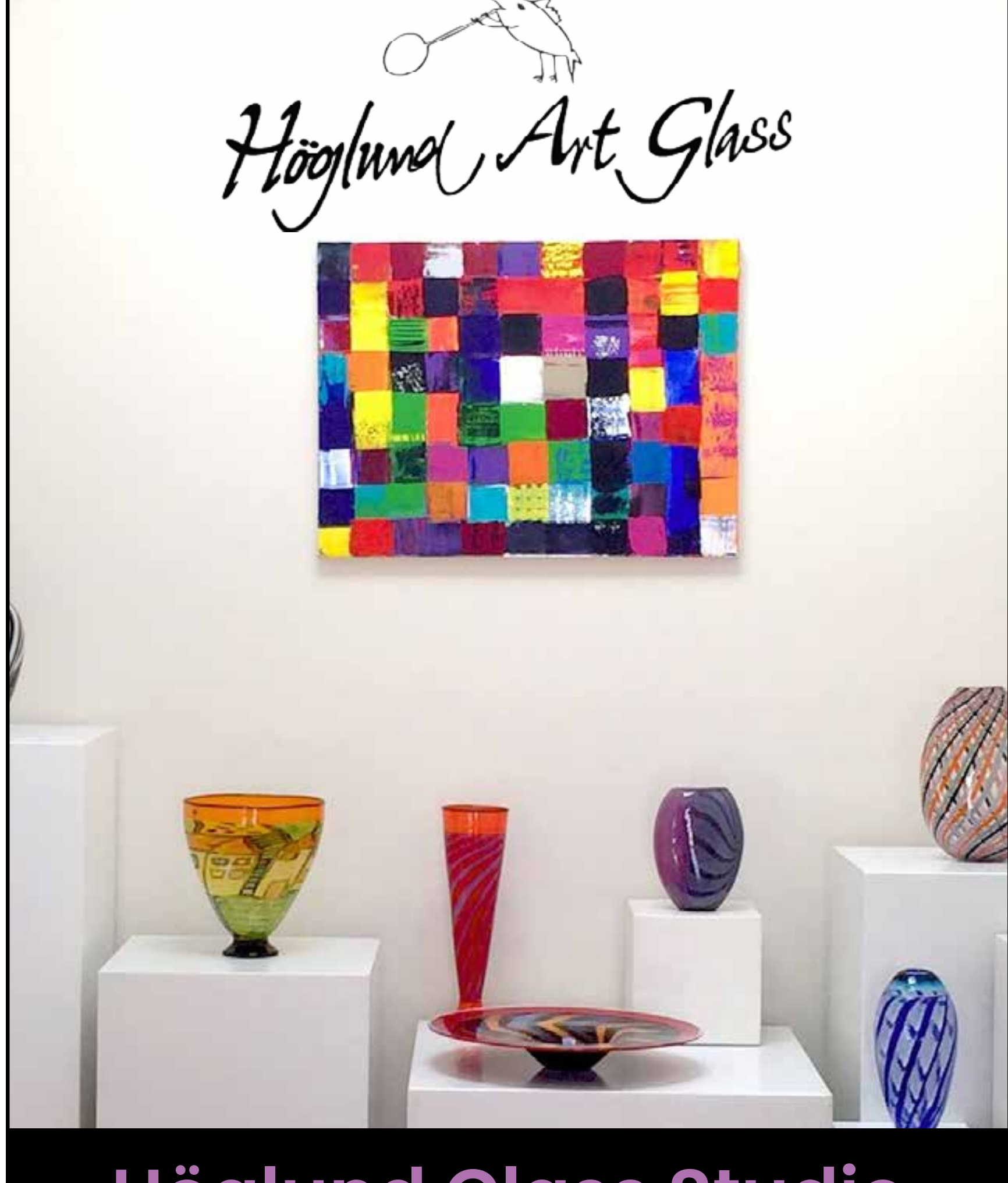


Courtesy of NelsonTasman.nz.

Nestled into Nelson are nooks of all kinds, nourishing the souls of every kind of traveller. Sunny and warm with beaches and bush nearby, it's ideal for a weekend away, or perhaps more?

Tree-lined streets are home to boutiques, eateries, cafés, and galleries. Whether you're up for a morning mission or you're keen to while away a lazy summer afternoon, Nelson is the place to be for a vibe that can be described as cosmopolitan meets country. When evening descends, pop into any of the excellent restaurants or bars for an afternoon aperitif or a meal along the bustling streets.

There is no shortage of nature in Nelson. Flee to the cool canopy of bush-clad tracks where walking and cycling will reward you with views aplenty. After you're suitably sweaty, hightail it to your nearest beach! Regardless of which one you choose, you'll find some of the clearest, sparkliest water in the country lapping the golden, shimmering shore. A kayak or boat ride could be a fun activity. Snorkelling is always a good idea to explore the world beneath the waves. Or perhaps you simply want to lie in the warm sand, book in hand to soak in the rays.



Höglund Glass Studio

NELSON – Visitors welcome

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Nelson – Golden Bay

Simply special



When people think of the Tasman District with its crystalline water, gleaming sand, and bush-clad tracks skirting the sea, odds are they've conjured up an image of Golden Bay / Mohua. Perhaps it's such a famous place because Wharariki Beach served as the Windows background for years, or maybe it's because this picturesque part of Aotearoa is a slice of heaven.

There is so much to see and do while visiting. Farewell Spit is one of the largest natural sandspits in the world and home to over 90 species of birds – explore it on horseback, by four-wheel drive buses, or by plane. Take a one-hour return trek to Wainui Falls; go caving for geological wonders; visit Harwoods Hole, Aotearoa's deepest vertical shaft that's 176 metres deep; or simply wander the quaint towns of Tākaka and Collingwood – they're chocka with eateries, galleries, and boutiques.

As the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park, Golden Bay has become one of New Zealand's calling cards. Visitors come from across the globe to hike the world-class trails and swim in the azure sea, but many Kiwis haven't been, even though it's in their own backyard. What are you waiting for?

A Middle Earth experience



At the top of Tākaka Hill beneath the mist of the marble mountain, the magnificent Ngarua Caves await. A place of historical and ecological significance, the Ngarua Caves are 35 to 40 million years old.

Explorers will be guided through a 300-metre limestone stretch of stalactites, stalagmites, and cavernous halls – not the least of which is the Cathedral, a resonant chamber (and wedding venue!) boasting marvellous acoustics.

Along your journey, you can't miss the bones of the very unlucky moa that slipped through the cracks with no escape. The bones will remain a huge attraction for years to come. You'll also find remnants of the cave's other past, rather unfortunate inhabitants.

The Ngarua Caves are a great attraction for all ages and fitness levels. With lights to guide you, railings to hold, and an easy-walking track, they don't pose a physical challenge to navigate.

After being led through the caves by knowledgeable, passionate tour guides, you'll emerge to find a stunning landscape upon which various scenes of *The Hobbit* trilogy were filmed. Venture into the Ngarua Caves for what truly is a Middle Earth experience.

CAVES NGARUA

- TAKAKA HILL



SH60 on the way to Golden Bay!

Features:

- Millions of stalactites
- Wedding cathedral
- Moa bones
- 'The Hobbit' location site
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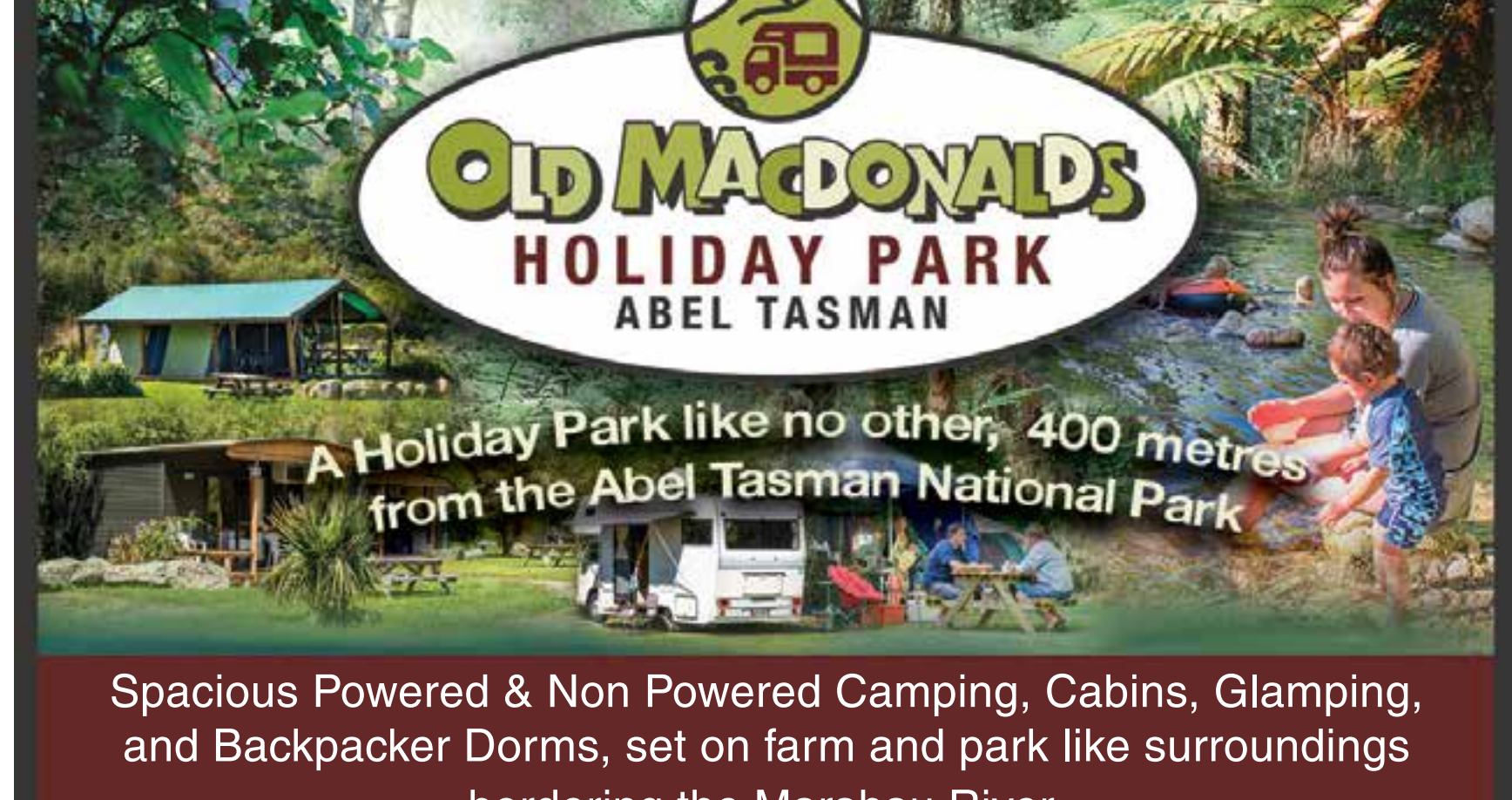
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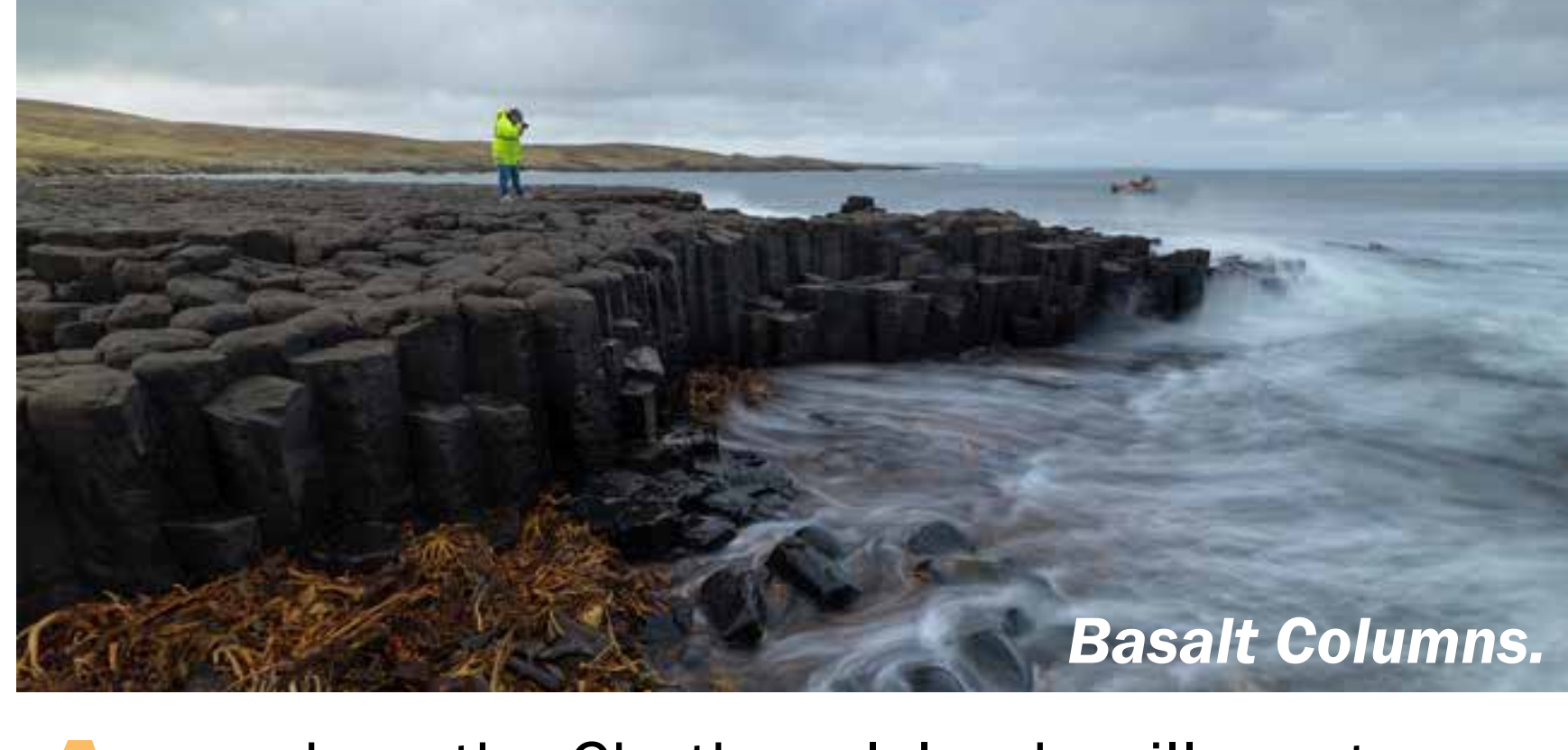
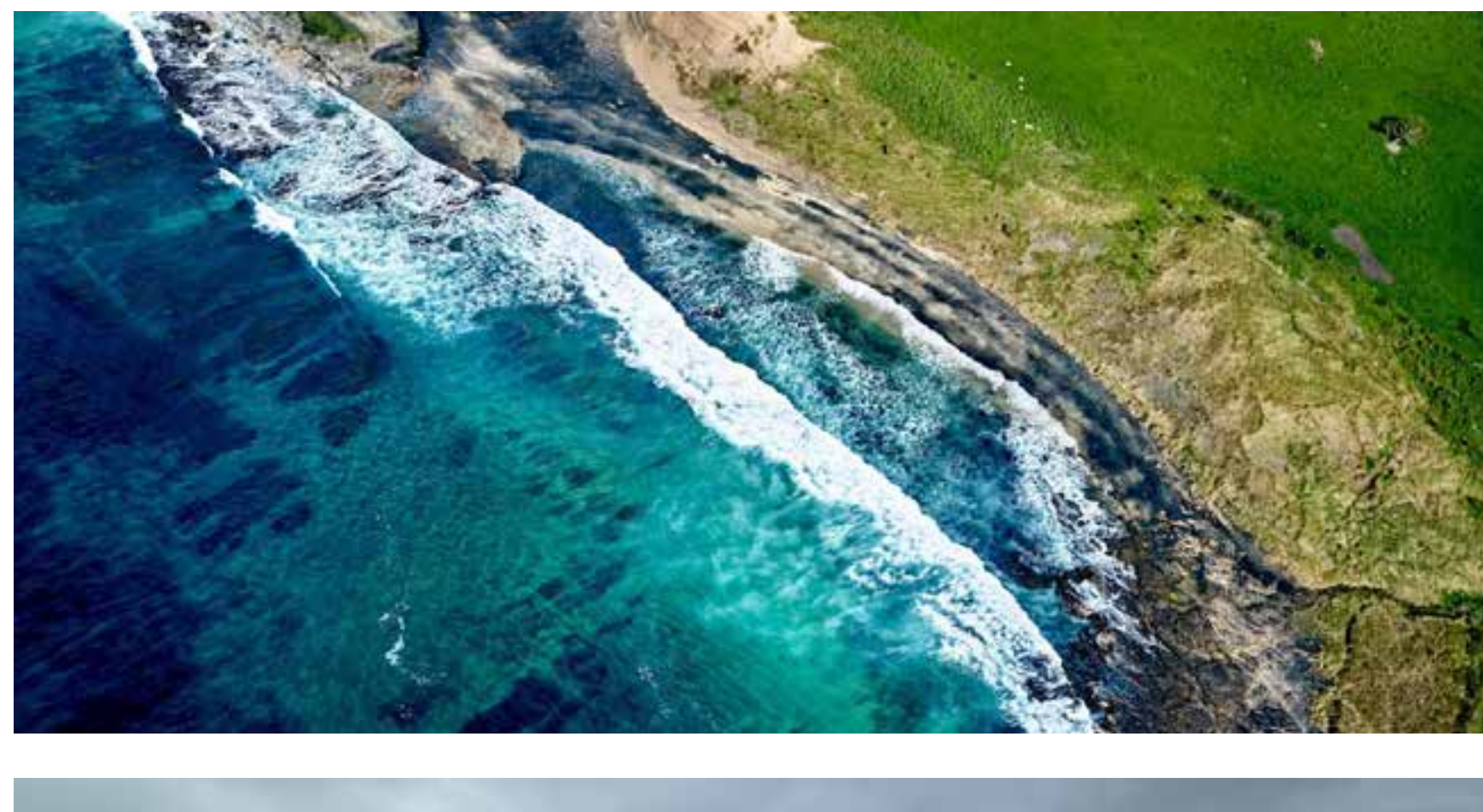
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Chatham Islands

Island paradise



A week on the Chatham Islands will reset your soul. Lying 800 kilometres east of mainland New Zealand, they're a whole world away, yet spare you the hassle of visas, travel jabs, or language barriers.

It takes roughly two hours to reach these misty islands on Air Chathams – give or take 15 minutes depending on whether you depart from Auckland, Wellington, or Christchurch – and it's recommended visitors spend at least a week exploring the two islands of Chatham and Pitt. By the time you've disembarked, you'll already wish you'd planned for more.

Take time to explore your surroundings. Whether you're staying in the main town of Waitangi or you've booked a spot out in the bush, mosey about on island time to really get a feel for life on the Chatham Islands. Take some strolls, wander the shops and galleries, grab a bite from farm-to-table eateries, and lie back on the golden-sand beaches. Catch your breath and truly unwind – you're in one of the most remote islands in the world, so there's no keeping up with the Joneses here.

During the summer months, the Chatham Islands register an average temperature that is simply perfect – not too hot and not too cold. Warmed by the sun, it's impossible not to take a dip in the crystalline waters every chance you get. The pristine ocean is teeming with marine life and excellent for snorkelling, diving, and fishing, but it's also ideal for lounging on the beach and soaking up the golden rays – a true island paradise.

Nature is the Chatham Islands' calling card. From ancient forests to native and endemic species, these isles enjoy an incredibly unique natural environment. Explore the basalt columns and 90-million-year-old fossils – there are over 700 recorded archaeological hotspots including middens and occupational sites. Hike or horseback through Henga Scenic Reserve, Nikau Bush Conservation Area, Admiral Gardens, and Tuku Nature Reserve, where you'll encounter one-of-a-kind species of flora and fauna.

The Chatham Islands aren't lacking in cultural and historical attractions either, with 11 registered historic places dotted around. Port Hutt's picturesque bay frames a beached WWII minesweeper. Kōpinga Marae promotes the Moriori cultural, linguistic, and artistic revival. Hāpūpū/J.M. Barker National Historic Reserve features remnants of rākau momori or Moriori memorial tree impressions.

Blending nature, recreation, culture, and history, the Chatham Islands are a world unto themselves.

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Otago



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WAITAKI

WHY GO ANYWHERE ELSE?



Between the towering Aoraki Mount Cook and the mystical Moeraki Boulders lies a world of thrilling adventures, award-winning hospitality, and landscapes that take your breath away.

While the region is home to New Zealand's longest and most stunning cycle route, the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail, this magnificent landscape is best explored on an unforgettable road trip. Whether you start from Dunedin (a 90 minutes drive away) or Christchurch (a scenic three-hour drive), your camera and walking shoes will be your most essential companions.

To reach your starting or finishing point, we recommend travellers take the scenic route off State Highway 1 to the historic coastal town of Ōamaru. Known for its historic Victorian precinct, you'll find award-winning restaurants and cafés throughout. Set up camp around sparkling Waitaki Lakes during summer, drive through scenic burnt-orange colours in autumn, then stargaze and ski to your heart's content in winter. There's something for every season in this hidden gem of a region.

FOR THE ACTIVE ADVENTURERS...



Ōamaru is the perfect place to get your bike ready for the Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail – from the Southern Alps to the Pacific Ocean, it's an epic journey for the summer and autumn adventurer. Whether you decide to do all of it or just sections of it, rent an e-bike or bring your own two wheels, you're sure to pass through stunning views and the intriguing townships.

For the snow enthusiast, head to Ōhau Snow Fields for

a day of skiing and snowboarding with arguably one of the best views as you slide down the slopes. Take in breathtaking panoramic views of Lake Ōhau and the snow-capped Main Divide mountain range in the distance.

Covering a large part of the Waitaki region and spanning 7,214 square kilometres the Waitaki Whitestone Geopark is New Zealand's first UNESCO Global Geopark. This remarkable landscape boasts breathtaking limestone cliffs, towering rock formations, and ancient fossils, showcasing the region's rich geological heritage. You can uncover the geopark's wonders as you wind through charming historic towns, with hidden gems around every bend.

FOR THE HERITAGE ENTHUSIASTS...



For an unforgettable photo opportunity, take a break at Anatini. Explore the limestone caves and location of Aslan's camp in the movie *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and The Wardrobe* before driving a few minutes down the road to nature's playground, Elephant Rocks. Dig for fossils at the Vanished World Centre, or walk across wetlands and hilltops.

A trip to the Takiroa Māori Rock Art Site, located just a few minutes from the Vanished World Centre, is a fascinating journey into the region's past. Estimated to be over 500 years old, the drawings tell stories of early Māori settlement.

Stop in at cosy pubs or historic hotels, chic boutiques and local wine bars before settling in for the night at a Waitaki Lakes campsite – a perfect way to end your day in the balmy height of summer. With six tranquil lakeside

campsites to choose from, wake up to birdsong and a stove-top coffee or pick up a barista-made cup at a local favourite, Waitaki Braids café.

As you continue up the Waitaki Valley, and find yourself in the small township of Ōtemātātā, it's another scenic detour winding past two of New Zealand's most impressive earth dams. The first is Benmore Dam, a massive structure holding back the deep blue waters of Lake Benmore. A nearby lookout offers breathtaking panoramic views of the dam and its hydroelectric power station. It's a spectacular sight, especially at sunrise or sunset when the landscape glows. The drive in autumn is particularly stunning.

The nearby Benmore Peninsula Track offers an easy yet rewarding walk, winding through native bush with breathtaking lookouts over the lake—perfect for stretching your legs after a day of adventuring. Whether you're on foot, on a bike, or just stopping for a scenic break, this is one of Waitaki's hidden gems.

Back in the car, the sealed road hugs the shoreline of Lake Aviemore, hugging its waters before crossing the Aviemore Dam and reconnecting with the main route.

FOR THE MEMORY MAKERS...



Nestled at the junction of the Waitaki and Mackenzie regions, you'll find the charming town of Ōmārama, known for its world-class gliding, where adventurers can soar with breathtaking views of the Southern Alps.

But there's more to this small town than just the skies—visitors can unwind at Hot Tubs Ōmārama, where private, wood-fired tubs offer the ultimate relaxation under star-filled skies. The nearby clay cliffs, with their towering, wind-carved formations, provide a striking landscape for exploration. Whether you're chasing adventure or looking for a peaceful retreat, Ōmārama is a must-visit destination on your Waitaki journey.

Continue on towards the Mackenzie District, or if you're up for it, turn your bike around on the Alps to Ocean Cycle Trail and head back towards thriving Ōamaru.

FOR THE FESTIVAL FANATICS...



End summer on a good note at the Harbour Street Jazz and Blues Festival. Held on 20 – 22 March, 2026, enjoy three days of soul-stirring music, vintage charm, and a vibrant mix of jazz and blues that take over the town's bars and venues.

Over King's Birthday weekend, the annual Steampunk NZ Festival returns to Ōamaru. The 2026 'Frontiers of Steam' theme will bring a riot of colourful and innovative steampunk attire. Don't expect to find anything else like it, anywhere! While Ōamaru will always welcome you with open arms, it is prudent to book accommodation well in advance for such occasions – book now and you'll get first pick of the beautiful B&B and glamping options across the region.

FOR THE WILDLIFE WANDERERS...



For a slice of nature and wildlife, check out the world's smallest penguins at Ōamaru Penguins. See the kororā (little penguins) in their natural environment, supported by a team of researchers who take pride in their conservation efforts. Immerse yourself in the new discovery centre, build your own digital penguin, then learn about their lifestyles from the resident penguin experts, and watch the little blues return home at dusk after a long day fishing at sea.

Ready to lock in Waitaki for your next getaway?

Whether you're seeking thrills, a touch of luxury, or unforgettable family moments, get inspired by our six different wanderer itineraries online.

Find out more, or create your own itinerary, at www.waitakinz.com



Bountiful beauty



*Heritage Precinct, Cromwell.
Photo by Hayden Parsons.*

Cromwell is as picturesque as it is quaint, with historic buildings lining its streets, lake views peeking out behind houses, and the horizon punctuated by the Remarkables. No wonder it's considered one of the South Island's jewels.

Any trip to Cromwell demands an amble down the main street, which is dotted by heritage buildings housing cute boutiques, local art galleries and studios, and cosy cafés serving up a cuppa joe and tasty treat. It has been preserved like this in its original condition from the 1880s, making Cromwell feel like a step back in time complete with stone buildings, barns, and shops.

If you're itching to get active, Lake Dunstan offers plenty of opportunities for fun on the water as well as a great barbeque spot. Hike along one of Cromwell's many trails, suitable for all levels. The Old Reservoir Trail only takes 20 minutes and – although it is a bit steep – offers a particularly rewarding view from the top.

The Cromwell Basin is where much of Central Otago's famous pinot noir is grown, so be sure to pop into cellar doors or wine bars while in town.

A dunner stunner day



Baldwin Street. Courtesy of DunedinNZ.

When visiting Dunedin, you may brave the Antarctic currents if you wish, but the city has multiple public pools and even a hot saltwater swimming pool right on the water's edge.

After your morning dip, take the UNESCO City of Literature's Writers' Walk around town. At the same time you can follow along the Dunedin Street Art Trail and admire the historic Edwardian and Victorian architecture that makes Ōtepoti so picturesque. While roaming the streets, track down the birthplace of SIX60, and Baldwin Street, which holds the Guinness World Record for the steepest street.

Pop into a café for lunch and then into a museum (or several) – they offer a glimpse into the rich past, while galleries and art studios provide present-day perspectives from local creatives.

Long evenings and warm days make summer the perfect time of year to explore the Otago Harbour and Peninsula. By hopping on a wildlife cruise, you'll spot all kinds of animals including penguins, seals, sea lions, albatrosses, and kiwi.

Bars, pubs, beer gardens, cocktail lounges, and clubs are dotted throughout the city too, meaning you can keep the night going well past the 9pm sunsets.

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Otago – Arrowtown

Fall for Arrowtown



The leaves prepare for their autumn dance, changing their frocks from shades of green to hues of red, yellow, and orange in preparation for their golden pirouette from limb to ground.

Arrowtown looks straight out of a movie this time of year, with crunchy leaves carpeting the streets, snow-capped peaks framing the horizon, and the smell of fresh rain wafting through the crisp air.

Grab a cuppa cocoa and put on your favourite autumnal outfit – complete with scarf and boots – to make the most of the spoils of the season at the Arrowtown Autumn Festival between the 15th and 19th of April. Now in its 40th year, the celebration of arts and culture, food and drinks will chase any post-summer blues away in no time.

With a programme featuring comedy, acrobatics, music, dance, and the beloved parade, among many other exciting offerings, visitors of all ages can get involved in the festivities through competitions, events, and activities. A fan favourite is always the Pumpkin Competition – submit your own homegrown gourd for a chance to win!

As for the fall treats, there is plenty of hot cider, cocoa, chestnuts, baked goodies, and more to keep you feeling cosy all weekend long.

Discover Arrowtown



Arrowtown is where history, nature, and recreation meet, and summer is the perfect season to enjoy it all. Long, sunny days create the backdrop for biking, golf, gold panning, or discovering the arts.


Bikers are spoilt for choice with trails ranging from gentle riverside rides along the Arrow River Bridges Trail to the spectacular new Wharehuanui Trail linking Arrowtown to Arthurs Point. Walkers can enjoy everything from the shady Arrowtown Millennium Walkway to the more challenging Sawpit Gully Track, both rich with gold rush history and rewarding views.

Golfers can tee off at Millbrook Resort's championship course or test their skills at the character-filled Arrowtown Golf Club, while families can try their hand at gold panning in the Arrow River – an activity that delights all ages.

Art lovers will enjoy the Arrowtown Arts Trail, where you can tour the galleries and studios, and meet artists in their workspaces. After a day of exploring, unwind with alfresco dining at Arrowtown's cafés and restaurants or browse boutique shops offering fashion, footwear, and one-of-a-kind finds.

Arrowtown in summer is alive with outdoor adventure, culture, history, and charm.

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Otago

Packed with personality



Lake Dunstan. Courtesy of 100% Pure New Zealand.

There is enough fun in Central Otago to last the whole summer through. Sliced by valleys, bisected by rivers, accentuated by lakes, framed by mighty peaks, and limited only by the big sky stretching out endlessly above, Central Otago guarantees adventure.

The region is punctuated by charming towns such as historic Clyde, park-like Alexandra, wine-soaked Cromwell, nature-filled Roxburgh, and the Art Deco Ranfurly. All of them are brimming with boutiques, eateries, unique history, and friendly locals, but each one packs its own personality.

Famous for its sweeping landscapes and outdoor recreation opportunities, Central Otago is fantastic for hiking, horseback riding, biking, and four-wheel driving. The region boasts the hottest temperatures in New Zealand, which means a Central Otago summer is overflowing with lake and river activities too. Go kayaking or fishing for trout at Lake Roxburgh. Lake Dunstan is picturesque and ideal for boating and watersports. The many rivers offer great opportunities for rafting and fishing.

Sip internationally acclaimed pinot noir and pop into farm-to-table eateries along the way.

Pedalling paradise



Lake Dunstan Trail. Photo by Geoff Marks.

Otago's five Ngā Haerenga Great Rides offer some of New Zealand's best walking and cycling experiences. The purpose-built trails span an inter-connected network of over 500 kilometres, traversing landscapes from Queenstown, through Central Otago to Dunedin.

The Lake Dunstan Trail crosses the spectacular Cromwell Gorge to connect to the Otago Central Rail Trail and then onto the Roxburgh Gorge Trail. This and the Clutha Gold Trail offer spectacular journeys along the banks of the mighty Clutha River, through dramatic gorges, and past historic goldfields. In Queenstown, a network of 135 kilometres of off-road trails meander along the shores of Lake Wakatipu.

Other picturesque routes include Kawarau Gorge to connect Queenstown to Cromwell, a Wanaka to Cromwell trail with panoramas aplenty, and the Dunedin Tunnels Trail. Explore the mountains and lakes at your own pace, venture into the wilderness and forge your own path, or go big with a multi-day journey along New Zealand's Great Rides with your friends or whānau.

Otago cycle trails cater to all levels, with well-maintained paths and support services available. Embark on an epic two-wheeled adventure.





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Central Otago

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Clutha District

Wonderfully wild



Curio Bay. Courtesy of Great South.

Mystical, majestic, and mostly untouched, the Catlins are a wooded, wild coastal corner of the South Island. The land rises sharply from the sea, forming inland ranges where rivers slice through the landscape and waterfalls seem to be nestled behind every corner. The best part? As one of New Zealand's most remote locations, you could have it all to yourself, even at the height of summer.

At Curio Bay, you can step into the past by visiting the 170-million-year-old petrified forest. Destroyed by massive sheet floods of volcanic debris, the distinct bands of fossils can be seen in the now-exposed cliff – when the tide is low, visitors can glimpse tree stumps, logs, and other fascinating fossils exposed by erosion. The nearby Tumu Toka Living Forest is thought to be the only place in the world where a direct descendent of a forest lies so close to its petrified counterpart.

The Catlins are renowned for their abundant wildlife. Spot Hooker's sea lion colonies, rare native birds such as the mohua/yellowhead, penguins, and the endemic Hector's dolphin.

With walks to waterfalls and tracks to tucked-away pockets, the Catlins are your ticket to wonderment.

Enjoy the atmosphere



Balclutha sits on the banks of the mighty Clutha Mata-Au River and is often considered the gateway to The Catlins. With a goldmining history and a famous, 90-year-old arched bridge framing its centre, it's the perfect town to make your base when exploring the mighty Clutha District. Standing tall and stately at the top of Balclutha's main drag, Arches Café & Bar is a brand-new, beautifully crafted gastropub designed to deliver great food and good times.

Arches Café & Bar has big shoes to fill, occupying the site where the long-standing Hotel South Otago – known affectionately as The Southy – used to welcome locals and visitors alike. But general manager Ross Balloch has no doubt that the new gastropub will serve as a gathering place for the community, filling the glasses and hearts of patrons to the brim.

The 260-square-metre premises features a contemporary design with big glass doors that let in light and open out onto a manicured green space, perfect for enjoying a pint with mates or dinner with the whānau this summer. Serving up food and drinks for all palates, pop into Arches for a taste of South Otago.

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Clutha District

Stay a while



Pūrākaunui Bay, the Catlins. Photo by Lennon Bright. Courtesy of CluthaNZ.



McLean Falls, the Catlins.

Authentic Aotearoa can be found hidden away in the Clutha District. Stretched between Dunedin and Invercargill and encompassing everything from the wild southern coastline of the Catlins to the rolling farmland and heritage towns further inland, it offers visitors a taste of unspoilt nature, history, and Kiwi culture.

Clutha encourages visitors to breathe, reconnect, and enjoy the quiet moments that make travel meaningful. If you're biking the famous Clutha Gold Cycle Trail, don't forget to stop to soak in the breathtaking vistas. If you're scouring the heritage towns uncovering local history, take time to amble down alleyways to admire the architecture and cultural scene. If you're criss-crossing the district chasing waterfalls, stop off in local eateries to enjoy the atmosphere. If you're trying to glimpse every unique species in the district, make sure to admire the landscape they call home. Regardless of your interests, Clutha has it, but the key to unlocking the true magic of the place is to pause and be present in each moment.

There are so many hotspots dotted across Clutha that it may be hard to choose an itinerary. The Catlins straddle 100 kilometres of coastline and are home to lush rainforests, golden beaches, and diverse wildlife. As one of the most untouched and unexplored places in New Zealand, there is no shortage of adventure within this ancient land. Nugget Point lighthouse is your best bet for a photo op with panoramic views over the Pacific and plenty of wildlife encounters. Other coastal gems include Taieri Mouth, a great spot for swimming and surfing, and Papatowai Chaslands, featuring an incredible estuary, lakes, and seemingly endless waterfalls.

Inland Clutha is home to a string of beautiful towns, many of which popped up during the goldrush and are chocka with history, arts, and culture. Sitting on the banks of the mighty Clutha Mata-Au River, Balclutha is one of the bigger centres and has everything you may need. Lawrence was once the site of one of the world's largest goldrushes, with the nearby Gabriels Gully marking the first place the precious metal was discovered in Aotearoa. Today, the historic town's exquisite Victorian and Edwardian buildings are brimming with boutique shops and quirky eateries.

Bush or beach, history or hiking, nature or culture, Clutha is a raw, authentic, and wonderfully welcoming corner of Aotearoa.



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Southland

Ticket to paradise



People come from all over the world to visit Fiordland. Since this incredible natural wonder is in your backyard, why not see it for yourself? One of the most spectacular and immersive ways to experience this bucket-list destination is by boat. Cruise through Doubtful Sound/Patea or opt for a multi-night discovery cruise with Fiordland Expeditions.

From the boat, you'll have an unimpeded view of the scenery, which was carved by glaciers over the course of 2,000,000 years. Glimpse glassy waters reflecting towering peaks, waterfalls cascading hundreds of metres into black fiords, and ancient rainforests draping the cliffsides in a cloak of gleaming emerald – just as they did thousands of years ago.

While on board, you'll also have the opportunity to go kayaking and fishing. The world-class chefs will cook up your fresh catch for a delicious meal complemented by local ingredients. The fiords are also teeming with wildlife, so odds are you'll get to see all kinds of creatures along your adventures too, including dolphins, seals, penguins, and native species of birds.

Seeing the sights from the prow of one of Fiordland Expeditions' ships will take your breath away.

The eighth wonder



Courtesy of Great South.

Famously referred to as the “eighth wonder of the world” by Rudyard Kipling, Fiordland National Park is one of the most dreamed-of destinations in the world. Visitors from near and far travel to witness the breathtaking beauty of its plunging waterfalls, emerald valleys, glassy waters, and breathtaking views every year.

The region is home to three of Aotearoa's great walks (Milford, Kepler, and Routeburn tracks) for all levels abounding throughout. The warmer seasons are the best times to embark on a multi-day journey thanks to more settled weather and higher temperatures, but single day trips are just as worth it so long as you can glimpse some of those picture-perfect panoramas.

The townships of Te Anau and Manapouri, nestled on the shores of Lake Te Anau, offer enticing gastronomic experiences, luxury accommodation, and activities aplenty both within and without the fiords. Take a kayaking tour or boat expedition to see the fiords towering over you from sea level. Jump in a plane or helicopter for an aerial experience dipping between the sounds. Dive to the depths to meet the wildlife.

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Southland

Perfect conditions



Oreti Beach. Photo by Videocopter.

As our southernmost city, Invercargill seems like a super start for a winter escape, but why not take the opportunity to explore it while the trees are green and the skies are blue? Bonus: for those who don't love sweltering heat, it averages a perfect 18 degrees this time of year.

Oreti Beach is abuzz in summer, but instead of just swimming, beachgoers are horse riding, dog walking, kayaking, surfing, playing sports, sandcastle building, and shell collecting. At around 26 kilometres in length, there is plenty of ground for all kinds of fun in the sun. Kiwi motorcycle legend Burt Munro used it to set a world speed record in 1957!

There are loads of places and activities to keep you busy within the city too. From unconventional theme parks like Demolition World and Splash Palace to transport museums and escape rooms, you're spoiled for choice. Invercargill is also peppered with parks perfect for picnics. Find more nature fun along the one-hour return Estuary Walkway, or within Thomsons Bush reserve.

With beautiful architecture, boutiques and artisans, and a vibrant shopping scene, Invercargill is a delightful vacation destination.

Keeping legends alive



Photo by Sam Deuchrass.

The life of Southland motorcycle racer Burt Munro is more than the stuff of Hollywood movies; it's the stuff of legend. The record-breaker's story is one of passion and determination that can be fully explored at E Hayes & Sons Motorworks Collection in Invercargill.

Burt's original 1920 Indian Scout – the very same that broke the world record for the fastest under-1000cc vehicle – forms the centrepiece of a unique display of over 100 classic, vintage, and modern motorcycles, automobiles, engines, equipment, and memorabilia. From working examples of early pioneering vintage machinery, farm equipment, and turn-of-the-century models to racing bikes and classic cars from the modern era, this remarkable collection is ever-expanding. Each piece tells a story, which E Hayes & Sons are proud to honour.

What sets E Hayes & Sons Motorworks Collection apart from others of its kind is that the display is spread throughout one of New Zealand's largest and most extensive independently owned hardware stores. That means that the team behind the wheel know their stuff and are happy to share their knowledge regarding the display or products on the shelves!

Find out more at www.ehayes.co.nz

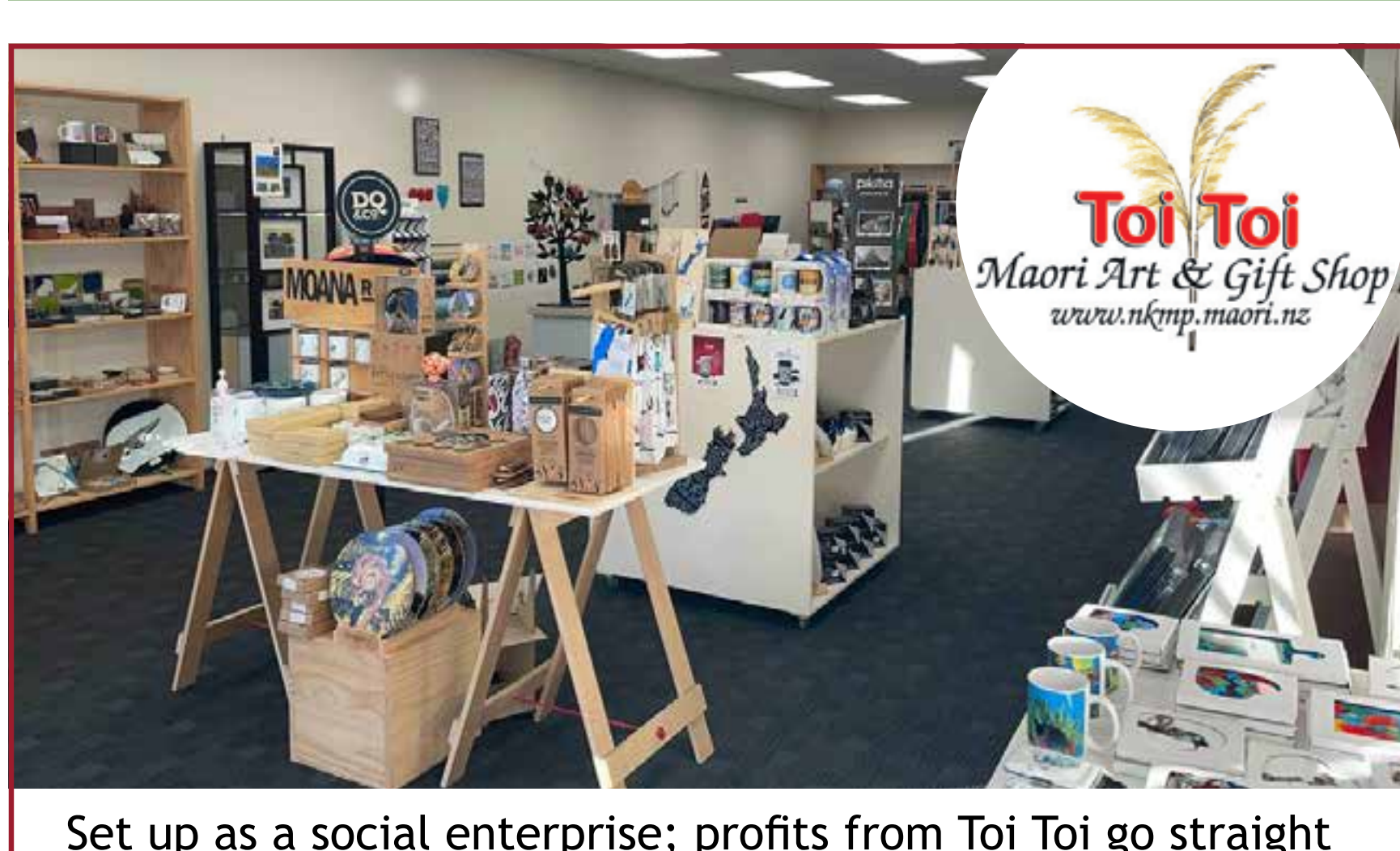
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Fiordland Historic Cruises

Southland

Fit for a legend



Engines rumble, the smell of exhaust saturates the air, and adrenaline pulses through the crowd as motorcycle-lovers from around the motu and the world congregate in Invercargill for the Burt Munro Challenge.

To delve into the nature of the largest motorcycle rally in the Southern Hemisphere, we must first take a step back to where it all began: with the indomitable Kiwi motorcycle legend Burt Munro. After setting a number of New Zealand land speed records, Munro departed for the Bonneville Salt Flats in Utah at age 63. Here, he set a land speed record of 178.97 miles per hour in 1962, while his 1967 record of 183.58mph still stands today. He is known the world over for clocking the fastest-ever recorded speed of 190.7mph on an Indian motorcycle.

Following the success of *The World's Fastest Indian*, a movie about Munro's life, the Burt Munro Challenge was born in 2006. It quickly became a major motorsport event, with 2026 seeing seven different races between the 4th and 8th of February.

Kicking off the motor madness is the Southland Honda Track Day at Teretonga Park Raceway, where riders test their limits on one of the southernmost circuits in the world. The Star Insurance NZ Hill Climb challenges competitors to conquer Flagstaff Road, a twisting ascent that demands both skill and nerve. In the evening, The Indian Motorcycle Twilight Drag Racing lights up the Teretonga track with head-to-head sprints.

At Oreti Beach, where Munro once opened throttle, dirt bikes will race down the mile-long stretch of sand in the E Hayes & Sons Beach Racing and NZ Champs. Spectators can watch from atop sand dunes as native wildlife and seabirds flit across the ocean backdrop. Super Seller Shelley Speedway fills Oreti Park Speedway with adrenaline.

Across several days, spectators can catch the E Hayes & Sons Teretonga Sprint Races and Star Insurance NZ Superbike Champs, while the Burt Munro Rally rumbles through Oreti Park throughout the weekend.

As much about people as it is about bikes, the event features activities, music, and everything from highly tuned modern machines to lovingly restored vintage vehicles. A motor haven, the Burt Munro Challenge is a fitting tribute to a legend.

For the full event schedule, updates, and behind-the-scenes content, visit www.burtmunrochallenge.co.nz

Burt Munro

Challenge

4-8 February 2026

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West Coast



Punakaiki Rocks. Courtesy of Tourism New Zealand.

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Experience West Coast

A wild and wonderful wander

by **Alessia Belsito-Riera**



On Franz Josef Glacier.



Jas in Shantytown.



Alessia at Bonz 'N' Stonz.

It's not until you cross the snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps at altitude that you realise what a special slice of the country the West Coast is. Remote and raw, it lived up to its title of wild and wonderful from the moment my partner Jas and I stepped off the aircraft, which felt more like a handkerchief than a plane when suspended thousands of feet above sea level. Lucky for us, it was smooth sailing on our inbound flight with views stretching far into the horizon, leaving our spirits sky-high upon touch down.

Thanks to RaD Car Hire, within 15 minutes of landing in Hokitika we were on the road and heading north to Shantytown Heritage Park, which greeted us with shining sun as Andrea handed us our maps and prospector permits before setting us free in the recreated goldrush village. The historic buildings are both replica and original structures from the 1800s, with memorabilia and artefacts tucked away within. After exploring the town, we hopped aboard *Rosie*, a 1957 Diesel TR107 train with Iona at the helm. She invited Jas and I into the cab to show us how she operates the heritage trains before handing us off to Charlie, who set the sluice gun in motion, freeing up enough debris for us to go gold panning... and gold we found – a special keepsake to remember a Shantytown experience filled with childlike wonder.

At lunchtime, we zipped to The Hokitika Sandwich Company. It was busy and bustling, but we didn't mind as it gave us time to grab a picture in front of the famous Hokitika driftwood sign and wander along the beach. Lunch secured, we set off to the Hokitika Gorge, where we ate our scrumptious sammies overlooking the glacial Hokitika River – lunch with a view! As we looped around the two-kilometre podocarp-clad track and over swing bridges, the vistas got better at every bend.

Following a fish 'n' chip and whitebait fritter dinner on the beach, we snuggled into Thatcher & Small for something sweet, and two delectable desserts and a local pint later, we slinked into our perfectly warmed, beautifully restored suite at Hokitika Fire Station for a luxurious sleep ahead of an early rise.

It was barely light out when we began our journey south to Franz Josef. The drizzle that set in didn't diminish the beauty of the drive, but as it steadily increased to a downpour, it did mean our kayak tour was cancelled. And yet, Dee and Dale at Franz Josef Wilderness Tours went above and beyond to ensure our day was nothing but smiles by sending us on an off-road quad adventure with guides Leo and Jacob. As the rain pummelled down, they led us deep into the rainforest through puddles that passed our gumboots and under ferns that eclipsed the sky before taking us onto the riverbed where thunder boomed and we careened through streams at full tilt. We were fizzing when we pulled into the lot and thrilled we got to have this fortuitous experience that I would highly recommend to anyone come rain or shine. Soaked and smiling from ear to ear, we jaunted off to the ever-so accommodating Legacy Te Waonui Hotel Franz Josef for a hot shower in our beautiful room overlooking the rainforest and mighty mountains beyond.

We were in a room so serene it was hard not to snooze to the sound of rain and native birds, but the afternoon called for an encounter with some locals that we didn't want to miss. At West Coast Wildlife Centre we came face to beak and claw with all manner of Kiwi beasties. Kath introduced us to her clan of tuatara while telling us all about what makes them unique before moving down to the incubation room where the conservation team ensure kiwi hatch and are fit and healthy enough to be released into the wild. In fact, lucky for us, a Haast tokoeka had been born just hours before our arrival. After some hands-on learning, we tip-toed through the kiwi room where two scratched and fossicked in the undergrowth! Never have I seen our special species so closely; what magic to witness their world. As if we hadn't gotten lucky enough, the centre opened the brand-new penguin facility that day. Here, injured kororā/little blue penguins that cannot be released back into the wild have a place to call home and serve as ambassadors to teach visitors about conservation. As a northern hemisphere import, seeing penguins will never cease to fill me with joy.

Tuckered out, we tucked into bed after a delicious dinner at Monsoon Restaurant and a stroll in the calm, periwinkle evening, dreams of the next day's activities dancing in our heads.

With bellies full from the hotel's bountiful buffet brekkie, we rolled down the road to Franz Josef



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Experience West Coast

A wild and wonderful wander

by **Alessia Belsito-Riera**



Peters Pool.



Penguin ranger Paula Brown.

Glacier Guides. After a touch-and-go couple of hours due to volatile weather with the incredibly prepared, proactive, and patient team, Jas and I found ourselves standing at a helipad ready to embark on an adventure like nothing we had experienced before. The second of only two groups that would manage to see the famous Franz Josef Glacier that day, our helicopter bobbed and weaved through the valley past tumbling waterfalls and Jurassic Park-like scenery until suddenly, out of the clouds, the glacier emerged like an icy tongue ready to swallow us up. It's hard to describe an experience so surreal, but stepping onto the glacier felt both ancient and otherworldly. We were giddy, like kids on Christmas morning holding a moment that felt simultaneously like an out-of-body experience and deeply, inherently rooted to a planet pulsing with raw, primordial force.

A bumpy chopper ride brought us back down to Earth, and needing to do something with the energy that had collected in our tummies, we decided to take a look at Lake Mapourika and the Okarito River. We had it all to ourselves and frolicked along the shore and in the riverbed while enjoying the temporary relief from the rain. With time to spare before our next activity, we entered Westland Tai Poutini National Park, which is just a quick drive up the road from Franz Josef along the river. As the rain set in, we set out to Peters Pool, a viewpoint where the two mountains that cup the glacier are picturesquely mirrored in the small kettle lake.

Soggy enough to warrant a warm-up, off we went to Waiho Hot Tubs. Surrounded by punga, the woodfired baths are an oasis. The water glints with golden shimmers, raindrops patter to the forest floor, and birds chirp overhead. Despite being in the centre of town, it feels as though you're immersed in a private world unto yourself. Ahh... pure bliss.

After a peaceful sleep post-gallivanting and soaking, the next morning we awoke much more prepared for our buffet breakfast, which we approached with the tactical manoeuvres of a well-trained military unit. We had a bit of a drive ahead of us to get to West Coast Treetop Walkway, where we climbed through the trees and up a tower to the zipline starting point 20 metres above ground. With no time to think, we jumped, skirting between towering 800-year-old rimu trees along the 425-metre dual zipline at 60 kilometres an hour back to base. What a rush! The rain on our faces cooled the adrenaline as we ambled along the 450-metre steel canopy walkway greeting birds and overlooking views that stretched out over Lake Māhinapua and the Pacific Ocean.

Our last stop along our whirlwind trip of the wild West Coast was a carving session at Bonz 'N' Stonz. Carver Te Huia, overflowing with infectious energy, helped us choose our pounamu, bone, or stone and work through design ideas. Ever so patiently, he showed each of us how to use the machines, ensuring we were comfortable before leaving us to our own devices. First, we shaped the pendants, then engraved them with our designs, and finally set to polishing before the lovely Wendy did our wrapping. Te Huia gently guided us, offering advice but largely letting us discover on our own. The pieces we made truly felt like ours, and with the good vibes from the studio etched into the very being of the piece, I can't wait to give mine to the person I made it specially for. Bonz 'N' Stonz give you more than an artistic and cultural experience; they give you a taonga through which to remember the West Coast by.

After any trip or party or special occasion, Jas and I play a little game that we have begrudgingly adopted from a friend where we choose a highlight, a lowlight, and a learning moment. Following our West Coast trip, it would be impossible to choose a single highlight, and as far as lowlights go, not even the raindrops dampened our spirits. As for a learning experience? That the West Coast is a magic corner of Aotearoa saturated in stories and storms, in myth and mayhem, in ancient forests and fizzing atmosphere. Its history is woven into its landscape; criss-crossing from the tallest peaks to the tumbling coast like its glacial braided rivers, the two are inextricably linked. It's a place where the spirits of the past walk hand in hand with the stories of the present; somewhere that needs to be seen, heard, and felt to be truly known.

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What's on North Island



Top of the North

30th-31st Dec 2025

Northern Bass:

Settlement Road, Kaiwaka – various times.

Music festival.

31st Dec 2025

Waipu Highland Games and Ceilidh/Hogmanay:

Various locations in Waipu – 8:30am. Cultural

festival.

10th Jan 2026

Tall Ships Regatta:

Russell Boating Club, Russell – 8am. Sailing.

6th Feb 2026

Waitangi Day:

Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Waitangi – various times.

5th-8th Mar 2026

Cruz'n the Bay:

Waitangi Sports Grounds, Paihia – various times.

Car show.

19th-22nd Mar 2026

Forest Healing Festival:

Earth Village, Kerikeri – 9am. Spiritual festival.

Auckland

30th Dec 2025-2nd Jan 2026

AUM:

Leighton's Farm, Parakai – various times.

Music festival.

31st Dec 2025

Highlife NYE:

Wild Estate, Waiheke Island – 3pm. New Year's

festival.

7th-15th Feb 2026

Agatha Christie's Murder On the Orient Express:

ASB Waterfront Theatre, Auckland CBD – various

times. Theatre.

21st Feb 2026

RRE Agency Boulevard Arts Fiesta:

Moana Reserve, Orewa – 11am. Art festival.

21st Mar 2026

Mānuka Phuel SYNTHONY Festival:

Auckland Domain, Grafton – 12am. Music festival.

Great Barrier Island

10th Jan 2026:

Rarohara Kūtai & Kai Festival:

Port Fitzroy, Great Barrier Island – 10am.

Mussel festival.

24th Jan 2026:

Afterglow Festival:

Great Barrier Island Sports & Social Club, Great

Barrier Island – 2pm.

Music festival.

Gisborne

28th-31st Dec 2025

Rhythm & Vines:

Waiohika Estate, Gisborne.

Music festival.

24th Jan 2026

First Light Marathon:

Midway Beach, Gisborne – 5:40am.

Rotorua

25th-29th Mar 2026

Shimano Volcanic Epic:

Various locations in Rotorua – various times.

Mountain bike race.

2nd May 2026

Red Stag Rotorua Marathon:

Various locations and times in Rotorua.

Hawke's Bay

28th Dec 2025

Le Currents:

Riverside Park, Napier – 12pm. Music festival.

31st Jan 2026

Outfield Music, Food & Arts Festival:

Gordon Road, Hastings – 2pm.

14th Feb 2026

Te Awanga Wine Festival:

Clearview Estate Winery, Hastings – 10:30am.

19th-22nd Feb 2026

Napier Art Deco Festival:

Various locations and times in Napier.

1st Mar 2026

Napier Triathlon Festival:

Spriggs Park, Napier – 7:45am.

Wairarapa

9th-11th Jan 2026

Wairarapa Music in the Country:

Tauherenikau Racecourse, Featherston – various

times. Music festival.

22nd-24th Jan 2026

Cruise Martinborough:

Various locations in Martinborough – 9:30am.

Car show.

21st Feb 2026

Wairarapa Wines Harvest Festival:

The Cliffs, Carterton – 11am.

4th-7th Mar 2026

World Golden Shears Championship:

Masterton War Memorial Stadium, Masterton –

various times.

Shearing competition.

21st Mar 2026

Castlepoint Races:

Castlepoint Beach, Castlepoint. Horse racing.

Manawatū

19th-20th Dec 2025

PBR New Zealand:

Manfeild Park Stadium, Feilding – 7pm; 6:30pm.

Rodeo.

16th-18th Jan 2026

Marton Country Music Festival:

Sir James Wilson Memorial Park, Marton – various

times.

17th Jan 2026

Gravel and Tar Classic:

Feilding, Manawatū.

Cycle race.

31st Jan 2026

Manfeild Live:

Manfeild Park Stadium, Feilding – 4pm.

Music festival.

7th-8th Feb 2026

ENZED Superstock Teams Champs 2026:

Central Energy Trust Arena, Palmerston North –

6pm.

Car racing.

28th Feb 2026

Race to the Brewery:

Broadway Avenue,

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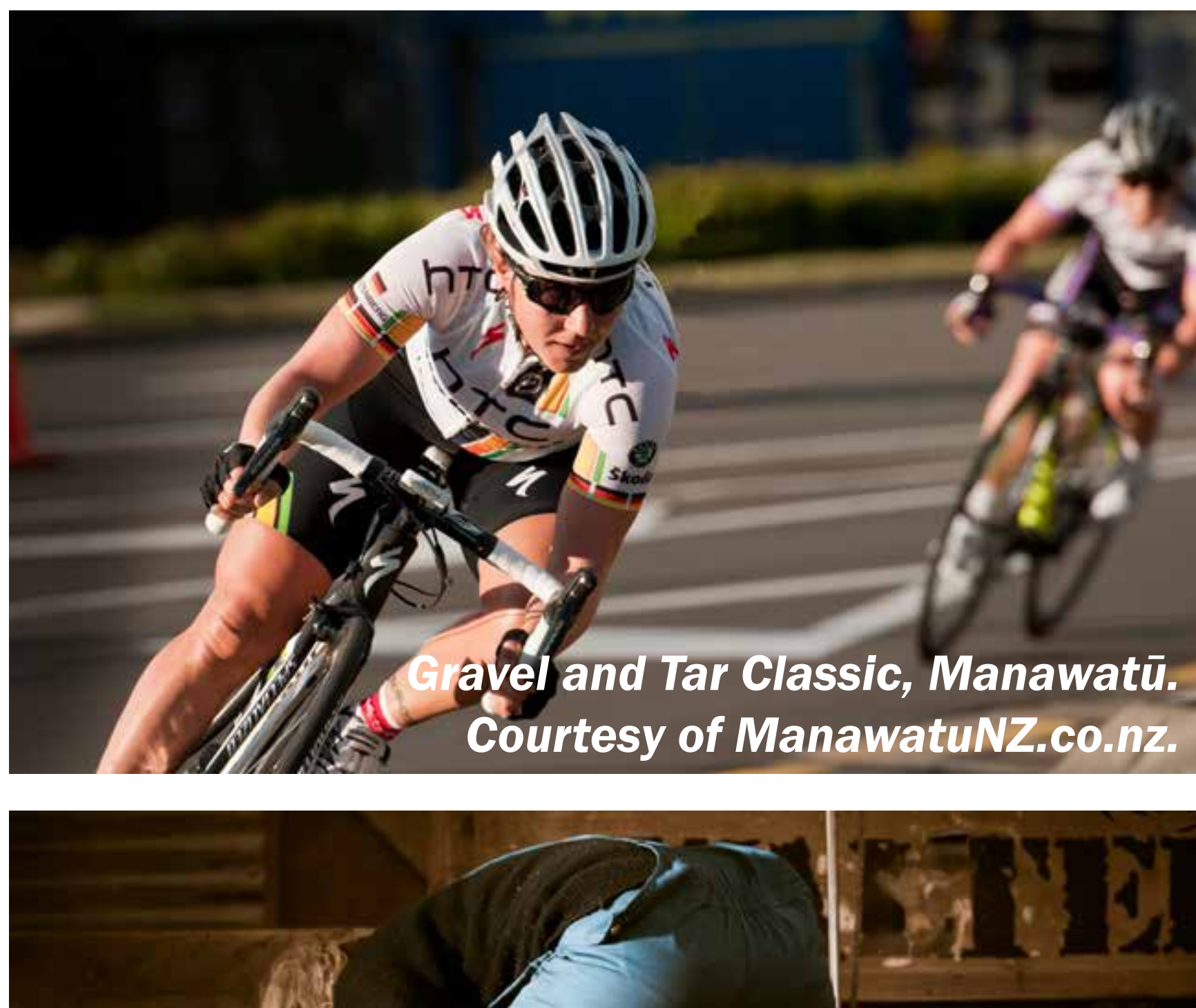
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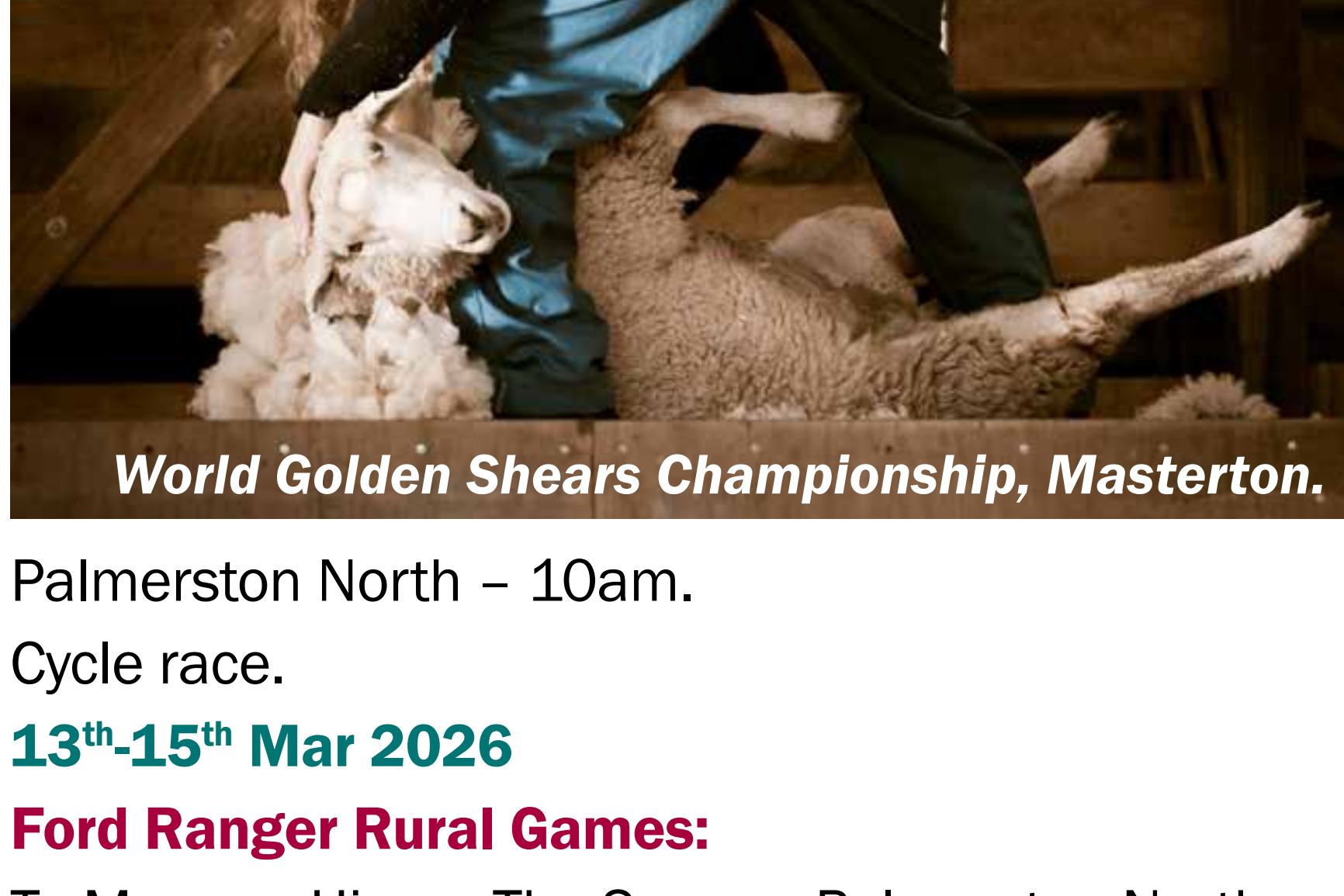
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What's on North Island



*Gravel and Tar Classic, Manawātū.
Courtesy of ManawatuNZ.co.nz.*



World Golden Shears Championship, Masterton.

Palmerston North – 10am.

Cycle race.

13th-15th Mar 2026

Ford Ranger Rural Games:

Te Marae o Hine – The Square, Palmerston North –

9am.

1st May 2026

Manawatu Art Members' Awards:

Feilding Art Centre, Feilding – 5:30pm.

17th-19th Jul 2026

Manawatu Art EXPO:

Palmerston North Conference & Function Centre,

Palmerston North – 9am.

Wellington

Until 11th Jan 2026

Robin Hood – The Pantomime:

Circa Theatre, Wellington Waterfront. Theatre.

10th Feb 2026

Bill Bryson:

The Opera House, Te Aro – 7:30pm. Talk.

13th Feb-7th Mar 2026

New Zealand Fringe Festival:

Various locations and times in Wellington.

25th Feb-15th Mar 2026

Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts:

Various locations and times in Wellington.

8th Mar 2026

Newtown Festival:

Newtown, Wellington – various times.

Street festival.

8th Mar 2026

Hutt Sounds:

Brewtown, Upper Hutt – 2pm. Music festival.

18th-29th Mar 2026

The Rocky Horror Show:

St James Theatre, Te Aro – various times. Theatre.

28th-29th Mar 2026

CubaDupa:

Cuba Street, Te Aro – various times.

Street arts festival.

28th May-7th Jun 2026

Heathers The Musical:

The Opera House, Te Aro – various times. Theatre.

Kapiti-Horowhenua

5th-7th Jan 2026

Kirtan Festival:

Strathean Retreat Centre, Te Horo – various times.

Spiritual festival.

15th-19th Jan 2026

Festival of Pots and Garden Art:

Anam Cara Gardens, Ōtaki – 10am.

14th Feb 2026

GinFlatables:

The Bond Store, Paraparaumu – 5pm.

Gin festival.

21st Feb 2026

Ales and Eats Festival:

Heights Experience, Shannon – 1pm.

Culinary festival.

22nd Feb 2026

Kāpiti Women's Triathlon:

Raumati Marine Gardens, Raumati Beach –

8:30am.

7th Mar 2026

Kapiti Tattoo & Arts Festival 2026:

Paraparaumu Memorial Hall, Paraparaumu – 10am.

8th Mar 2026

Footprints in the Sand:

Foxton Surf Life Saving Club, Foxton Beach – 7am.

Run.

14th-15th Mar 2026

Ōtaki Kite Festival:

Ōtaki Beach, Ōtaki – 9:30am.

21st Mar 2026

XTERRA Wellington Festival:

Queen Elizabeth Park, Paraparaumu – 6am.

Triathlon.

24th-28th Mar 2026

Māoriland Film Festival:

Various locations and times in Ōtaki.

Indigenous film festival.

29th Mar 2026

The Web Genius Kāpiti Run for Youth:

Maclean Park, Paraparaumu – 8:30pm. Charity run.

Whanganui

14th Dec 2025

Whanganui Christmas Market:

Whanganui Jockey Club, Whanganui – 2pm.

16th-19th Jan 2026

Whanganui Vintage Weekend:

Various locations and times in Whanganui.

21st-26th Jan 2026

Kiwiburn:

Cooks Road, Hunterville.

Music festival.

31st Jan 2026

Turakina Highland Games:

Turakina Domain, Ratana – 8:30am. Cultural

festival.

28th Feb 2026

Fest-a-Bull:

Te Matapihi – Bulls Community Centre, Bulls –

10am. Festival.

Taranaki

20th Dec 2025-24th Jan 2026

TSB Festival of Lights:

Pukekura Park, New Plymouth – various times.

29th Dec 2025

Rock the Bowl:

Bowl of Brooklands, New Plymouth. Music festival.

14th Feb 2026

Kingston Calling:

Bowl of Brooklands, New Plymouth – 3:15pm.

Concert.

20th-22nd Feb 2026

Taranaki Country Music Festival:

Waitara War Memorial Hall, Waitara – various times.

24th-28th Feb 2026

Americarna:

TSB Stadium, New Plymouth.

Car show.

20th-21st Mar 2026

2026 New Zealand Pipe Band Championships:

TET Stadium & Events Centre, Inglewood – 9am.

10th-12th Apr 2026

Taranaki Art Show:

TSB Stadium, New Plymouth – 10am.

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What's on South Island



Marlborough Wine & Food Festival.



Foil Drive Wingfoil Regatta, Nelson.

Canterbury

13th Dec 2025

Christmas on the Bay 2025:

Caroline Bay Soundshell, Timaru – 5pm.

Music festival.

28th Dec 2025

Hidden Lakes Festival:

North Hagley Park, Christchurch – 12:30pm.

Music festival.

10th Jan 2026

Aotearoa Ultra Marathon:

Halswell Quarry Park, Christchurch – 5am.

17th Jan 2026

Hanmer Springs Adventure Run:

Soldiers' Block, Hanmer Springs – various times.

17th Jan 2026

Wine Run:

Rossendale Vineyard, Christchurch – 4pm.

18th Jan 2026

Natalie Weiss in Concert:

The Piano, Christchurch – 8pm.

31st Jan-1st Feb 2026

The Otipua Challenge 2026:

Redruth Resource Recovery Park, Timaru – various times. Endurance event.

6th-8th Feb 2026

Merrell Summer Challenge:

Ashburton Trust Event Centre, Ashburton – various times.

Adventure race.

6th-8th Feb 2026

Fantasizers Festival:

Riccarton Park Event Centre, Christchurch – various times.

Costume festival.

20th-22nd Feb 2026

Spirited Women:

Market Place, Twizel – various times.

Adventure race.

21st Feb 2026

Lexus Urban Polo:

North Hagley Park, Christchurch – 12pm.

27th-28th Feb 2026

Electric Avenue:

Hagley Park, Christchurch.

Music festival.

27th Feb-1st Mar 2026

Prowear Chrome Expression Session 2026:

Ruapuna: Euromarque Motorsport Park, Christchurch – various times. Car festival.

28th Feb 2026

Twizel Salmon & Wine Festival:

Lake Ruataniwha, Twizel – 10:30am.

7th Mar 2026

Selwyn Sounds 2026:

Lincoln Domain, Lincoln – 11am. Music festival.

8th Mar 2026

North Canterbury Wine & Food Festival:

Glenmark Domain, Waipara – 10:30pm.

11th Mar 2026

The King's Singers:

Douglas Lilburn Auditorium, Christchurch – 7pm. Concert.

11th-15th Mar 2026

The Rocky Horror Show:

Isaac Theatre Royal, Christchurch – various times. Theatre.

14th-15th Mar 2026

Gindulgence Christchurch:

Ilam Homestead, Christchurch – 12pm, 11am. Gin festival.

17th May 2026

Run Akaroa:

Akaroa Domain, Banks Peninsula – various times.

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17th May 2026

What's on South Island



Gore Christmas Carnival. Photo by Jackie Tav.



Wildfoods Festival, Hokitika. Courtesy of West Coast NZ.

Chatham Islands

6th Dec 2025

SIX60:

Admiral Garden, Chatham Island – 3pm.

Otago

19th Dec 2025

Nadia Reid:

Regent Theatre, Dunedin – 8pm. Concert.

26th Dec 2025

Millers Flat Rodeo:

Millers Flat Rodeo Ground, Millers Flat – 11am.

28th Dec 2025

National Cherry Pit-Spit Championship:

Cromwell Heritage Precinct, Cromwell – 11am.

29th-31st Dec 2025

Rhythm and Alps:

Robrosa Station, Cardrona – various times.

Music festival.

30th Jan-1st Feb 2026

NAPA 70th New Zealand Grand Prix:

Highlands Motorsport Park, Cromwell – 8am.

31st Jan-8th Feb 2026

New Zealand Masters Games:

Various locations and times in Dunedin.

14th Feb 2026

Central Otago A&P Show:

Omakau Recreation Reserve, Omakau – 9am.

15th Feb-3rd Mar 2026

Dunedin Chinese Cultural Festival:

Various locations and times in Dunedin.

27th Feb-1st Mar 2026

Otago Home & Garden Show:

Edgar Centre, Dunedin – 10am.

28th Feb-7th Mar 2026

Goldfields Cavalcade:

Middlemarch Museum, Middlemarch.

Heritage festival.

7th Mar 2026

Motatapu Trail Marathon:

Arrowtown, Queenstown – 9:30am.

12th-22nd Mar 2026

Dunedin Fringe Festival:

Various locations and times in Dunedin.

14th Mar 2026

South Dunedin Street Festival:

King Edward Street, Dunedin.

21st-22nd Mar 2026

Northburn100:

Northburn Station, Cromwell – various times.

Adventure race.

5th Apr 2026

Clyde Wine and Food Festival:

Town Centre, Clyde – 10:30am.

Clutha District

13th Dec 2025

Tokomairiro A&P Show:

Union Street, Milton – 9am.

14th Feb 2026

Toko Auto Show & Cruise:

Main Road, Milton – 9am.

7th Mar 2026

Milton Gutbuster and Family Trail Ride:

Cullen Road, Clarendon – 8:30am. Motorcycle ride.

Southland

14th Dec 2025

Christmas Carnival & Santa Parade:

Gore Gardens, Gore – 12pm.

18th Jan 2026

Southland Summer Challenge:

Croydon Lodge, Gore – 8:30am. Adventure race.

24th Jan 2026

Mavora Explorer:

Mavora Lakes Road, Te Anau – various times.

Adventure race.

4th-7th Feb 2026

Burt Munro Challenge:

Various locations and times in Invercargill.

Motorcycle championships.

7th Feb 2026

Gore A&P Show:

Bury Street, Gore – 9am.

14th Feb 2026

MLT Moonshine Trail:

Dolamore Park, Gore – 9am. Adventure race.

8th Mar 2026

Wensley's Cycles Surf to City:

ILT Stadium Southland, Invercargill – 9am.

Cycling.

22nd Mar 2026

Try Whānau Festival:

Bluff Rugby Club, Bluff – 9:30am. Triathlon.

West Coast

28th Dec 2025

Lake Brunner Trail Run:

Moana, Lake Brunner.

10th Jan 2026

Kumara Gold Nuggets:

Kumara Racecourse, Kumara – 7am.

Horse race.

21st-25th Jan 2026

Driftwood & Sand Beach Art Festival:

Hokitika Beach, Hokitika – 10am.

31st Jan 2026

Gold Trail:

Shantytown, Greymouth – 9:30am. Cycle race.

13th-14th Feb 2026

Kathmandu Coast to Coast:

Serpentine Beach, Kumara.

Adventure race.

14th Feb 2026

Buller Gorge Marathon:

Hawks Crag, Buller Gorge – 8:30am.

19th-22nd Feb 2026

True West Adventure Race:

Wanganui Flat Road, Harihari – various times.

14th Mar 2026

Wildfoods Festival:

Cass Square, Hokitika – 10am.

Food and arts festival.

9th May 2026

South Island Ultra Marathon:

Beachfront Hotel, Hokitika – 5am.

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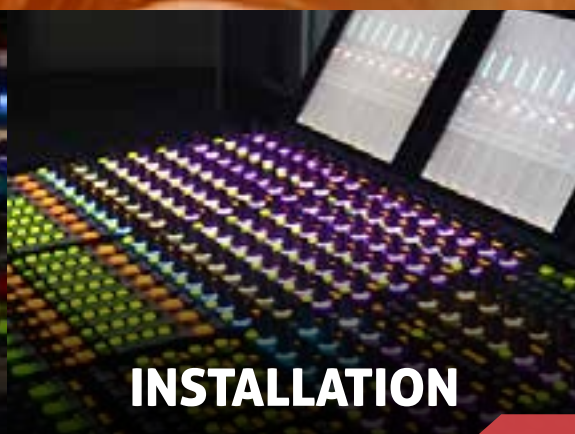
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