

Whangaroa County

Whangaroa County is 40 minutes drive north of the Bay of Islands and 20 minutes south of Doubtless Bay. With subtropical summers, warm winters and relaxed Northland lifestyle, Whangaroa County is the ideal destination for a family holiday or romantic getaway. Experience kiwi beach bliss at Taupo Bay, Tauranga Bay, Te Ngaere Bay, Matauri Bay and Takou Bay – white sands and clear blue ocean. Whangaroa is one of New Zealand's premier game fishing destinations and is the undisputed Marlin capital of New Zealand. The scenery is awe-inspiring, with towering sheer bluffs and volcanic rock formations protruding through steep forested shores. The harbour is accessible via walking tracks, boat, water taxi, kayaks or the ultimate romantic escape on a houseboat.

On the web: www.northlandnz.com

– Destination Northland

The Bay of Islands

The Bay of Islands is one of the icons of Northland. Golden beaches fringed by pohutukawa trees, secluded coves and tranquil harbours offer a maritime playground for fishing, swimming, boating, diving or relaxing on the beach in the warm, northern sunshine. The seaside town of Paihia offers shopping, restaurants, bars, cruises to the Hole in the Rock, dolphin swimming and more. Waitangi Treaty Grounds, now free for kiwis, is a definite 'must' on everyone's list. Stop off in elegant Russell to explore this historic village and soak up the romantic, colonial atmosphere. Head over to Kerikeri, known for its orchards, wineries, art galleries and weekend farmer's market. The Bay of Islands – New Zealand's subtropical playground.

Paihia Beach Resort and Spa

The five-star Paihia Beach Resort and Spa has opened its doors after an extensive six-month design and multi-million dollar refurbishment.

Tucked away in the midst of native flora and fauna and with uninterrupted sea views of the beautiful Bay of Islands, the resort directly overlooks Paihia's most picturesque beach and is located within walking distance of Paihia Wharf, the departure point to discover the Bay of Islands, the scenic wonderland that forms the historical, cultural and natural heart of New Zealand and location of the signing of the historic Treaty of Waitangi.

– Supplied editorial



Cape Reinga

PHOTO / DESTINATION NORTHLAND



Whangaroa Harbour



Stone Stoves, Kerikeri

PHOTO / DESTINATION NORTHLAND

The Hokianga

Life takes on a more laid back pace in the Hokianga – helped along by the warmth and hospitality of the locals. Opononi and Omapere offer a full range of accommodation and dining options - from top rate hotels to good old fashioned motels and motor camps – making it a great base to discover the Waipoua Forest, our largest kauri rainforest and home to the amazing Tane Mahuta.

Adventure seekers can take a water taxi across the harbour for a thrilling sand toboggan ride down the giant 180m golden sand dunes.

The Top of the North

At the furthest reaches of New Zealand is the Aupouri Peninsula, home of Cape Reinga, 90 Mile Beach, North Cape, the Three Kings Islands and three magnificent harbours. Ahipara, at the southern end of 90 Mile Beach, is renowned for spectacular sunsets and for one of the best left hand surf breaks in the world. Here you can visit an award winning winery, explore gum fields, go quad biking, play a round of golf or start your journey north to the very end of the road at Cape Reinga. A place of intense cultural and spiritual significance and home to the historic lighthouse that looks out over the meeting place of the Pacific Ocean and Tasman Sea, sometimes producing waves of more than 10 metres high. ■



Experience

Tane Mahuta by night

A night time sojourn into Northland's Waipoua forest – the home of Tane Mahuta – is such a humbling experience it's featured in Lonely Planet's Code Green as one of their "Experiences of a Lifetime."

And right from the second you strap your miner's torch to your head, you know its reputation is richly deserved. This is an awesome experience in the true sense of the word, made even more thrilling by the darkness.

The guide sets the scene at the forest entrance with a karakia to acknowledge the spiritual presence and to ask for a blessing to ensure safe passage. His melodious voice fills the darkness and warms the night air as you set out along the forest path.

There is much to see along the way – 6cm kauri seedlings that are years old, and, perhaps, a giant kauri snail on his way somewhere at a speedy 10 metres a fortnight.

That knowledge makes you tread more carefully on this easy forest path, which ultimately rounds a corner and deposits you at the foot of the Lord of the Forest. Tane is 51 metres (169 feet) high and has a circumference of 13.8 metres (45 feet). Stars and open sky surround his crown.

On the web: www.footprintswaipoua.co.nz



PHOTO / FOOTPRINTS WAIPOUA



Situated on a 26 acre peninsula in a unique location with magnificent sea and harbour views. Five minutes drive to bars, restaurants and cafes.

**30 SELF
CONTAINED UNITS**



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