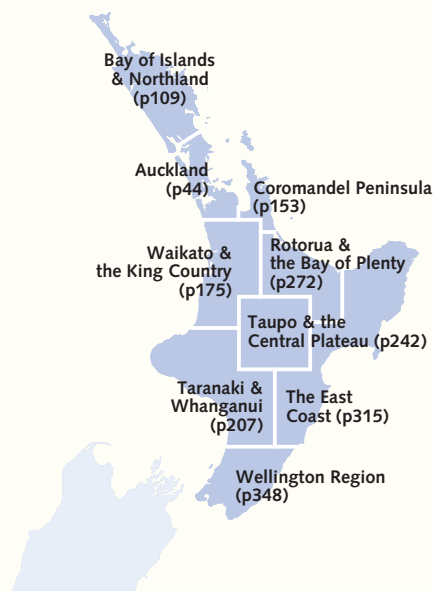


ON THE  
ROADYOUR COMPLETE DESTINATION GUIDE  
In-depth reviews, detailed listings  
and insider tipsSURVIVAL  
GUIDEVITAL PRACTICAL INFORMATION TO  
HELP YOU HAVE A SMOOTH TRIP

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THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

**Brett Atkinson,**  
**Sarah Bennett, Peter Dragicevich,**  
**Charles Rawlings-Way, Lee Slater**

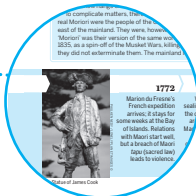
Photos, itineraries, lists and suggestions  
to help you put together your perfect trip

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## What Makes Kiwis Tick?

New Zealand is like that little guy at school when they're picking teams – quietly waiting to be noticed, desperately wanting to be seen. Then, when he does get the nod, his sheer determination to perform sends him surging forward, so much so that he ends up elbowing self people him to score a completely unexpected try. When his mates come to congratulate him he staves at the ground and says, "It was nothing, ya'".

While NZ is a proud little nation, Kiwis traditionally don't go for show-offs. A prominent flag-waving is generally frowned upon as it makes an impression on the international stage that isn't justified. They may well appear to have been historically bad at it, but perhaps a legacy of NZ's early capitalism has meant that the worst impulses of the American dream – rampant greed, holidays and some



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➤ **Every listing is recommended by our authors, and their favourite places are listed first**

➤ **Look out for these icons:**



Our author's top recommendation



A green or sustainable option



No payment required

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# >New Zealand – North Island

## Top Experiences >





### Waitomo Caves

Accessible and adventurous underground thrills (p198)

### Rotorua

Maori culture and bubbling volcanic activity (p274)

### Whanganui National Park

Riverside history, heritage and adventure (p230)

### Hawke's Bay

Gourmet exploring amid historic vineyards (p331)

### Wellington

Capital of cool, coffee and culture (p350)

### Napier

A colourful and stylish art deco townscape (p332)

### Tongariro National Park

A world-beating one-day alpine walk (p259)

0 100 km  
0 60 miles

178°E

176°E

172°E

40°S

40°S

SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

Marlborough Sounds

Golden Bay

Tasman Bay

Karamea

Nelson

Piton

Lower Hutt

Upper Hutt

Paekakariki

Paraparaumu

Masterton

Greytown

Martinsborough

Cape Palliser

Palmerston North

Woodville

Danville

Waipawa

Waipukurau

Cape Turnagain

Whanganui

Taihape

Wairarua

Ohakune

Mt Ruapehu

Stratford

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

New Plymouth

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

North Taranaki Bight

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Whanganui National Park

Waitomo Caves

Waitomo Caves

Waitomo Caves

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Waitomo Caves

Waitomo Caves

Waitomo Caves

Waitomo Caves

## Contributing Authors

**Professor James Belich** wrote the History chapter (p386). James is one of NZ's pre-eminent historians and the award-winning author of *The New Zealand Wars*, *Making Peoples* and *Paradise Reforged*. He has also worked in TV – *New Zealand Wars* was screened in NZ in 1998.

**Tony Horwitz** wrote the Captain James Cook boxed text (p389) in the History chapter. Tony is a Pulitzer-winning reporter and nonfiction author. His fascination with James Cook, and with travel, took him around NZ, Australia and the Pacific while researching *Blue Latitudes* (alternatively titled *Into the Blue*), part biography of Cook and part travelogue.

**John Huria** (Ngai Tahu, Muaupoko) wrote the Maori Culture chapter (p403). John has an editorial, research and writing background with a focus on Maori writing and culture. He was senior editor for Maori publishing company, Huia and now runs an editorial and publishing services company, Ahi Text Solutions Ltd ([www.ahitextsolutions.co.nz](http://www.ahitextsolutions.co.nz)).

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Thanks to Dr David Millar for his help with the Health content, Grace Hoet for her contribution to the Maori Culture chapter, and all the NZ regional tourism organisations for their help with preresearch briefings.



## OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Melbourne, London and Oakland, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

## OUR WRITERS



### Brett Atkinson

**Coordinating Author, Plan Your Trip, North Island Today** On his third research trip to the 'mainland', Brett explored Maori rock art, stayed in a historic cottage in the Gibbston Valley and negotiated a penny-farthing bicycle around Oamaru.

Two weeks researching earthquake-damaged Christchurch left him even more impressed with the resilience and determination of the people of Canterbury.

Brett has covered 10 countries for Lonely Planet, and more than 40 countries as a freelance travel and food writer. See also [www.brett-atkinson.net](http://www.brett-atkinson.net).



### Sarah Bennett & Lee Slater

**East Coast, Wellington Region** Raised at the top of the South, Sarah migrated to Wellington at 16 and has lived there ever since, except for various travels and a stint in London working at Lonely Planet's UK office. During research, she strives to find fault, particularly in relation to baked goods and beer selection. Sarah is joined in this endless quest by her husband and co-writer, Lee. English by birth and now a naturalised New Zealander, Lee's first career as an engineer has seen him travel extensively around Europe, the Middle East, North Africa and the Caucasus. Sarah and Lee are co-authors of *Let's Go Camping* and *The New Zealand Trumper's Handbook*. They are also freelance feature writers for newspapers and magazines, including the *Dominion Post* and *Wilderness*.



### Peter Dragicevich

**Auckland, Bay of Islands & Northland, Coromandel Peninsula, Taupo & the Central Plateau, The Kiwi Psyche, Arts & Music** After nearly a decade working for off-shore publishing companies, Peter's life has come full circle, returning to West Auckland where he was raised. As managing editor of Auckland-based *Express* newspaper

he spent much of the '90s writing about the local arts, club and bar scenes. Peter has worked on several of Lonely Planet's New Zealand guides and, after dozens of Lonely Planet assignments, it remains his favourite gig.



### Charles Rawlings-Way

**Waikato & the King Country, Taranaki & Whanganui, Rotorua & the Bay of Plenty, Survival Guide** English by birth, Australian by chance. All Blacks fan by choice:

Charles' early understanding of Aotearoa was less than comprehensive (sheep, mountains, sheep on mountains...). He realised there was more to it when a wandering uncle returned with a faux-jade *tiki* in 1981. Mt Taranaki's snowy summit, Raglan's point breaks and Whanganui's raffish charm have enthralled. He's once

again smitten with NZ's phantasmal landscapes, disarming locals and determination to sculpt its own political and indigenous destiny.

OVER MORE  
PAGE WRITERS

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# itineraries

*Whether you've got one week or two, these itineraries provide a starting point for the trip of a lifetime. Want more inspiration? Head online to [lonelyplanet.com/thorntree](http://lonelyplanet.com/thorntree) to chat with other travellers.*



## 10 Days to Two Weeks Northern Highlights

Discover the harbours, beaches and Pacific culture of **Auckland**, before heading north to the **Bay of Islands**. At **Waitangi**, explore colonial history and New Zealand's indigenous Maori culture, before hitting the water to swim with dolphins.

Return to Auckland and detour east to the rugged **Coromandel Peninsula** for bushwalking and sea kayaking. Stay overnight in the sleepy beach community of **Hahei**. Then follow looping SH25 around the peninsula to the historic mining town of **Waihi**, before continuing to **Tauranga**, gateway to beachy **Mt Maunganui**.

Head south to **Rotorua** for the classic combo of bubbling thermal activity and vibrant Maori culture. Splash out on a helicopter ride for stunning views of **Mt Tarawera** and the surrounding lakes. Continue south to **Lake Taupo** for jetboating thrills or the more relaxed appeal of trout fishing. If you're feeling brave, bungee jump from 47m above the Waikato River.

Follow the coves of the lake's picturesque eastern shore to **Tongariro National Park**, where there's good winter skiing and the Tongariro Alpine Crossing, judged one of the world's best one-day walks.



- » (above) Bungee jumping over the Waikato River
- » (left) Hot springs, Rotorua



## One Week to 10 Days Second Time Around

From energetic and cosmopolitan **Auckland**, head north to sleepy **Tutukaka** for diving around **Poor Knights Islands**. Kayaking, paddleboarding and snorkelling are also available. Further north combine sailing and dolphin swimming trips at **Doubtless Bay** with possibly the world's best fish and chips at **Mangonui**. Continue to windswept **Cape Reinga**, the end of the road for NZ's SH1.

Venture south, skirting the windswept expanses of **Ninety Mile Beach**, before hitting **Ahipara** and traversing massive sand dunes on sand yachts or quad bikes. Continue to **Hokianga** for a taste of colonial history, before heading south through Auckland to **Whakatane**. Take a boat or helicopter out to **Whakaari** (White Island), NZ's most active volcano.

Meander on the SH35 around the **East Cape**, a procession of hidden coves and bays. Here locally owned tourism operators showcase NZ's indigenous Maori culture. Maybe go horse riding on the beach or try a *hangi* (Maori feast). Continue to **Gisborne** for excellent wines and craft beers. NZ's iconic combination of active adventure and stunning scenery is definitely not restricted to the country's South Island.

## One Week to 10 Days Action Stations

Kick off in **Auckland** with the vertiginous combination of SkyWalk and SkyJump. Slow down with a twilight sea kayaking trip across the harbour, before heading to the **West Coast Beaches** for canyoning down bush-clad waterfalls.

Take the long way round to the **Coromandel Peninsula** for the legendary beach town of **Hahei** and more kayaking around stunning Cathedral Cave. Finish the day – if the tides are in your favour – by digging a natural spa pool at nearby **Hot Water Beach**.

Back on the road, head to **Rotorua**, where action options include zorbing, jet-boating, mountain biking and a downhill luge. White-water rafting and river sledging on the nearby Grade V **Kaituna River** are exciting, especially the 7m drop over the Okere Falls.

Continue south to **Lake Taupo** for skydiving with mountain views and bungy jumping above the Waikato River, before completing the superb Tongariro Alpine Crossing, a stunning one-day tramp in **Tongariro National Park**.

Saving the best for last, head back north to **Te Kuiti** and black-water rafting at **Waitomo Caves**.

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