



# Bay of Islands & Northland

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## Best Places to Eat

- » à Deco (p134)
- » Acorn Bar & Bistro (p156)
- » Bennetts (p129)
- » Food at Wharepuke (p152)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Kahoe Farms Hostel (p155)
- » Endless Summer Lodge (p161)
- » Little Earth Lodge (p133)
- » Tree House (p162)

## Why Go?

For many New Zealanders, the phrase 'up north' conjures up sepia-toned images of family fun in the sun, pohutukawa in bloom and dolphins frolicking in pretty bays. From school playgrounds to work cafeterias, owning a bach (holiday house) 'up north' is a passport to popularity.

Beaches are the main drawcard and they're present in profusion. Visitors from more crowded countries are flummoxed to wander onto beaches without a scrap of development or another human being in sight. The west coast shelters the most spectacular remnants of the ancient kauri forests that once blanketed the top of the country. The remaining giant trees are an awe-inspiring sight and one of the nation's treasures.

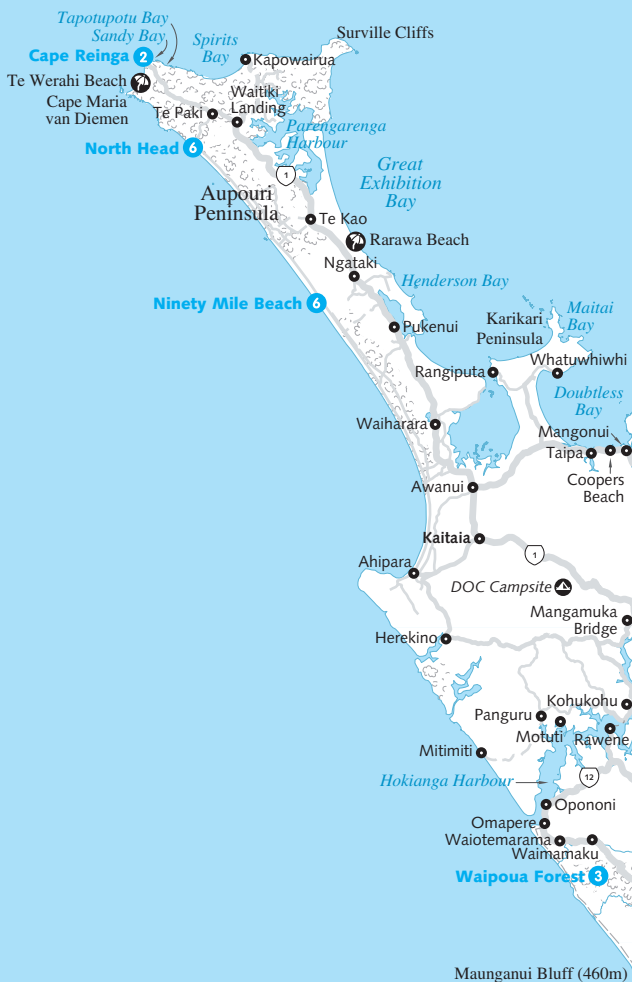
It's not just natural attractions that are on offer: history hangs heavily here as well. The site of the earliest settlements of both Maori and Europeans, Northland is unquestionably the birthplace of the nation.

## When to Go

The 'winterless north' boasts a subtropical climate, which is most noticeable from Kerikeri upwards. It averages seven rainy days per month in summer but 16 in winter. Temperatures are often a degree or two warmer than Auckland, especially on the east coast. Like all the nation's beach hotspots, Northland's beaches go crazy at New Year and remain busy throughout the January school holidays. Don't fret, as the long lazy days of summer usually continue into February and March. Even in winter the average highs hover around 16°C and the average lows around 7°C.

## Bay of Islands & Northland Highlights

- 1 Splashing about, body surfing, sunbathing and strolling at any of the abundant beaches on either coast
- 2 Watching oceans collide while souls depart at **Cape Reinga** (p158)
- 3 Paying homage to the ancient kauri giants of the **Waipoua Forest** (p165)
- 4 Diving at one of the world's top spots, the **Poor Knights Islands** (p135)
- 5 Frolicking with dolphins and claiming your own island paradise among the many in the **Bay of Islands** (p138)
- 6 Surfing the sand dunes at **Ninety Mile Beach** (p158) or Hokianga's **North Head** (p162)
- 7 Delving into history and culture at the **Waitangi Treaty Grounds** (p146)



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