



# Rotorua & the Bay of Plenty

## Includes »

Rotorua.....	290
Around Rotorua.....	304
Bay of Plenty.....	308
Tauranga.....	308
Mt Maunganui.....	315
Katikati.....	319
Te Puke.....	321
Whakatane.....	322
Whakaari (White Island).....	326
Ohope.....	327
Opotiki.....	328

## Best Outdoors

- » Surfing at Mt Maunganui (p315)
- » Waimangu Volcanic Valley (p307)
- » KG Kayaks (p327)
- » Agroventures (p294)
- » Redwoods Whakarewarewa Forest (p305)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Regent of Rotorua (p299)
- » Warm Earth Cottage (p320)
- » Captain's Cabin (p324)
- » Opotiki Beach House Backpackers (p329)

## Why Go?

Captain Cook christened the Bay of Plenty when he cruised past in 1769, and plentiful it remains. Blessed with sunshine and sand, the bay stretches from Waihi Beach in the west to Opotiki in the east, with the holiday hubs of Tauranga, Mt Maunganui and Whakatane in between.

Offshore from Whakatane is New Zealand's most active volcano, Whakaari (White Island). Volcanic activity defines this region, and nowhere is this subterranean sexiness more obvious than in Rotorua. Here the daily business of life goes on among steaming hot springs, explosive geysers, bubbling mud pools and the billows of sulphurous gas responsible for the town's 'unique' eggy smell.

Rotorua and the Bay of Plenty are also strongholds of Maori tradition. There are plenty of opportunities to engage with NZ's rich indigenous culture: check out a power-packed concert performance, chow down at a *hangi* (Maori feast) or learn the techniques behind Maori arts and crafts.

## When to Go

The Bay of Plenty is a beachy haven: it's one of NZ's sunniest regions, with Whakatane recording a brilliant 2350 average hours of sunshine per year. Summers here are gorgeous, with maximum temperatures hovering between 20°C and 27°C. Of course, everyone else is here too, but the holiday vibe is heady. Winter can see the mercury fall as low as 5°C overnight, although it's usually warmer on the coast. Visit Rotorua any time: geothermal activity is a year-round wonder, and there are enough beds in any season.



## Rotorua & the Bay of Plenty Highlights

- 1 Watching Rotorua's famous geyser Pohutu blow its top at **Te Puia** (p291), then tucking into a steaming-hot Maori *hangi*
- 2 Ogling kaleidoscopic colours and bubbling mud pools at **Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland** (p307)
- 3 Mountain biking on tracks (both humble and

- hardcore) in the **Redwoods Whakarewarewa Forest** (p305)
- 4 Carving up the surf over NZ's first artificial reef at **Mt Maunganui** (p315)
- 5 Flying or boating to NZ's only active marine volcano, **Whakaari (White Island)** (p326)

- 6 Kicking back in **Whakatane** (p322) – NZ's most underrated seaside town?
- 7 Swimming with dolphins at **Tauranga** (p308)
- 8 Drinking in **Mt Maunganui** (p315) after a day at the beach
- 9 Climbing the pohutukawa-studded flanks of **Mauao** (p315)