



Bay of Islands & Northland

09

Includes ➔

Mangawhai.....	124
Waipu & Bream Bay.....	125
Whangarei.....	126
Tutukaka Coast & the Poor Knights Islands ..	131
Russell Road	133
Bay of Islands	134
Russell.....	138
Paihia & Waitangi.....	141
Kerikeri.....	145
Cape Reinga & Ninety Mile Beach.....	152
Hokianga.....	156
Kauri Coast	159

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 here 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. The site of the earliest settlements of both Maori and Europeans, Northland is unquestionably the birthplace of the nation.

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ à Deco (p130)
- ➔ Havana Cabana (p133)
- ➔ Bennetts (p125)
- ➔ Food at Wharepuke (p148)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Endless Summer Lodge (p155)
- ➔ Relax a Lodge (p146)
- ➔ Tree House (p156)
- ➔ Kahoe Farms Hostel (p150)

When to Go

- ➔ Northland's beaches go crazy at New Year and remain busy throughout the January school holidays, with the long, lazy days of summer usually continuing into February and March.
- ➔ The 'winterless north' boasts a subtropical climate, most noticeable from Kerikeri upwards, which averages seven rainy days per month in summer but 16 in winter.
- ➔ In winter the average highs hover around 16°C and the average lows around 7°C.
- ➔ Temperatures are often a degree or two warmer than Auckland, especially on the east coast.

Bay of Islands & Northland Highlights

- 1 Splashing about, body surfing, sunbathing and strolling at **Matauri Bay** (p148)
- 2 Watching oceans collide while souls depart at **Cape Reinga** (p152)
- 3 Paying homage to the ancient kauri giants of the **Waipoua Forest** (p159)
- 4 Diving at one of the world's top spots, the **Poor Knights Islands** (p131)
- 5 Frolicking with dolphins and claiming your own island paradise among the many in the **Bay of Islands** (p134)
- 6 Surfing the sand dunes at **Ninety Mile Beach** (p152) or Hokianga's **North Head** (p156)
- 7 Delving into history and culture at the **Waitangi Treaty Grounds** (p142)



TASMAN
SEA