



Taranaki & Whanganui

Includes ➔

New Plymouth.....	216
Mt Taranaki (Egmont National Park).....	223
Surf Highway 45.....	227
Whanganui	229
Whanganui National Park.....	235
Palmerston North	240
Manawatu Gorge & Around	244

Best Outdoors

- ➔ New Plymouth's Coastal Walkway (p219)
- ➔ Surfing along Surf Highway 45 (p227)
- ➔ Walking on Mt Taranaki (p223)
- ➔ Canoeing the Whanganui River (p235)
- ➔ Tramping in Whanganui National Park (p235)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Fitzroy Beach Motel (p221)
- ➔ Ahu Ahu Beach Villas (p227)
- ➔ Anndion Lodge (p232)
- ➔ Plum Trees Lodge (p242)

Why Go?

Halfway between Auckland and Wellington, Taranaki (aka 'the 'Naki') is the Texas of New Zealand: oil and gas stream in from offshore rigs, plumping the region with enviable affluence. New Plymouth is the regional hub, home to an excellent art gallery and provincial museum, and enough decent espresso joints to keep you humming.

Behind the city, the moody volcanic cone of Mt Taranaki demands to be visited. Taranaki also has a glut of black-sand beaches: surfers and holidaymakers swell summer numbers.

Further east the history-rich Whanganui River curls its way through Whanganui National Park down to Whanganui city, a 19th-century river port that's ageing with artistic grace.

Palmerston North, the Manawatu's main city, is a town of two peoples: tough-talkin' country fast-foodies in hotted-up cars and caffeinated Massey University literati. Beyond the city the region blends rural grace with yesterday's pace: you might even find time for a little laziness!

When to Go

- ➔ Mt Taranaki is one of NZ's wettest spots, and frequently cops snowfalls, even in summer: weather on the mountain can be extremely changeable. Ironically, New Plymouth frequently tops the North Island's most-sunshine-hours list. Expect warm summers and cool winters.
- ➔ Over in Whanganui the winters are milder, but they're chillier on the Palmerston North plains. Sunshine is abundant hereabouts too – around 2000 hours per year!

Taranaki & Whanganui Highlights

- 1 Walking up or around the massive cone of **Mt Taranaki** (p223)
- 2 Riding the big breaks along **Surf Highway 45** (p227)
- 3 Getting experimental at New Plymouth's **Govett-Brewster Art Gallery** (p216)
- 4 Bouncing from bean to bean in **New Plymouth's cafes** (p221)
- 5 Watching a glass-blowing demonstration at one of **Whanganui's glass studios** (p230)
- 6 Redefining serenity on a canoe or kayak trip on the **Whanganui River** (p236)
- 7 Traversing the rainy **Whanganui River Road** (p235) by car or bike – it's all about the journey, not how fast you get there
- 8 Flexing your All Blacks spirit at Palmerston North's **New Zealand Rugby Museum** (p240)



TASMAN SEA

