



# Wellington Region

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## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Ortega Fish Shack (p367)
- ➔ Logan Brown (p367)
- ➔ Fidel's (p365)
- ➔ Gladstone Inn (p381)
- ➔ Beach Road Deli (p375)

## Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ YHA Wellington City (p363)
- ➔ City Cottages (p364)
- ➔ Museum Art Hotel (p364)
- ➔ Ohtel (p364)
- ➔ Martinborough Top 10 Holiday Park (p378)

## Why Go?

If your New Zealand travels thus far have been all about the great outdoors and sleepy rural towns, Wellington will blow the cobwebs away. Art-house cinemas, funky boutiques, hip bars, live bands and endless restaurants all await you in NZ's cultural capital.

Wellington is the crossing point between the North and South Islands, so travellers have long been passing through these parts. The likes of Te Papa and Zealandia now stop visitors in their tracks, and even a couple of days' pause will reveal myriad other attractions: a windswept harbour with a walkable waterfront, hillsides clad in pretty weatherboard houses, urban surprises and some of the freshest city air on the planet.

Less than an hour away to the north, the Kapiti Coast has a slower, beachy vibe, with Kapiti Island nature reserve a highlight. An hour away to the northeast over the Rimutaka Range, the Wairarapa plains are dotted with quiet towns, farms and hip wineries, hemmed in by rugged, wild coastline.

## When to Go

- ➔ Wellington has a bad rep for blustery, cold, grey weather, but this isn't the whole story: 'Windy Welly' breaks out into blue skies and T-shirt temperatures at least several days a year, when you'll hear locals exclaim, 'You can't beat Wellington on a good day'.
- ➔ November to April are the warmer months here, with average maximums hovering around 20°C. From May to August it's colder and wetter – daily temperatures lurk around 12°C.
- ➔ The Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa are a different story – both warmer and less windy, with more blue-sky days to bask in.



## Wellington Region Highlights

- 1 Te Papa (p357)**  
Getting interactive at NZ's finest museum, followed by drinks on Cuba St.
- 2 Kapiti Island (p374)**  
Meeting a real live kiwi on a nocturnal walk.
- 3 Drinking in Wellington (p368)**  
Seeing what kind of fun comes your way along Cuba St after dark.
- 4 Wellington Botanic Gardens (p353)**  
Riding the cable car up from Lambton Quay, or getting an alternative view from Mt Victoria Lookout.
- 5 Wairarapa Wine Country (p377)**  
Maintaining a straight line on your bicycle as you tour the wineries around Martinborough.
- 6 Mt Victoria Lookout (p353)**  
Getting an eye-full of Wellington below, and a lungful of hill-top air.
- 7 Cape Palliser (p378)**  
Scaling the lighthouse steps on this wild and remote headland.
- 8 Queen Elizabeth Park (p375)**  
Rambling through the dunes near beachy Paekakariki.

## **i** Getting There & Away

Wellington is a major transport hub, being the North Island port for the interisland **ferries** (p371). Long-distance KiwiRail Scenic Journey ([www.kiwirailscenic.co.nz](http://www.kiwirailscenic.co.nz)) trains run from Wellington to Auckland via Palmerston North. **Wellington Airport** (p371) is serviced by international and domestic airlines.

InterCity ([www.intercity.co.nz](http://www.intercity.co.nz)) is the main North Island bus company, travelling just about everywhere. Approaching Wellington city from the north, you'll pass through either the Kapiti Coast to the west via SH1, or the Wairarapa and Hutt Valley to the east via SH2.