



Wellington Region

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Best Places to Eat

- » Ortega Fish Shack (p364)
- » Trio Café at Coney Winery (p377)
- » Moore Wilson Fresh (p367)
- » Logan Brown (p365)
- » Scopa (p365)
- » Schoc Chocolates (p379)

Best Places to Stay

- » YHA Wellington City (p360)
- » Ohtel (p360)
- » Martinborough Top 10 Holiday Park (p377)
- » Moana Lodge (p360)

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-music venues and lashings of restaurants – all can be found in the ‘cultural capital’.

As the crossing point between the North and South Islands, travellers have long been passing through these parts. Te Papa and Zealandia now stop visitors in their tracks, and even a couple of days’ pause will reveal myriad other attractions, including a beautiful harbour and walkable waterfront, hillsides clad in pretty weatherboard houses, ample inner-city surprises, and some of the freshest city air on the planet.

Less than an hour away to the north, the Kapiti Coast offers more settled weather and a beachy vibe, with Kapiti Island nature reserve a highlight. An hour away over the Rimutaka Range, the Wairarapa farm plains are dotted with sweet towns and famed wineries, hemmed in by a wind-swept coastline.

When to Go

‘You can’t beat Wellington on a good day’, they say, and such days are a lot more frequent than you might think. For while the nickname ‘Windy Welly’ is justly deserved, Wellington’s climate is largely pleasant, and the Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa are even better.

November to April are the warmer months, with average maximums hovering around 20°C. From May to August it’s colder and wetter – daily temperatures lurk around 12°C. No matter: there’s plenty to do indoors.



Wellington Region Highlights

- 1** Getting interactive at NZ's finest museum, Wellington's **Te Papa** (p358)
- 2** Scaling the lighthouse steps on wild and remote **Cape Palliser** (p378)
- 3** Meeting real live kiwi on a **Kapiti Island** night-time walk (p375)
- 4** Exploring the capital's creative side on **Cuba Street**
- 5** Rambling the dunes of **Queen Elizabeth Park** (p373) near beachy Paekakariki
- 6** Riding the ratchety **cable car** (p355) from Lambton Quay to the leafy **Wellington Botanic Gardens** (p355)
- 7** Maintaining a straight line on your bicycle as you tour the picturesque **Martinborough wineries** (p378)
- 8** Discovering the joys of NZ single-track on the trails of **Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park** (p357)

i Getting There & Around

Wellington is the North Island port for the inter-island ferries. Long-distance **Tranz Scenic** (☎0800 872 467, 04-495 0775; www.tranzscenic.co.nz) trains run from Wellington to Auckland via Palmerston North. Wellington Airport is serviced by international and domestic airlines.

InterCity (☎04-385 0520; www.intercity.co.nz) is the main North Island bus company, trav-

elling just about everywhere. Approaching Wellington from the north, you'll pass through either the Kapiti Coast to the west via State Hwy1 (SH1), or the Wairarapa and heavily populated Hutt Valley to the east via State Hwy2 (SH2).

Getting into and out of Wellington on regional trains and buses is a breeze. Metlink (p372) is the one-stop-shop for regional transport services, from Wellington to the Kapiti Coast and the Wairarapa.