



Bay of Islands & Northland

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ à Deco (p126)
- ➔ Wood Street Freehouse (p121)
- ➔ Gables (p136)
- ➔ Food at Wharepuke (p144)
- ➔ Little Kitchen on the Bay (p148)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Endless Summer Lodge (p152)
- ➔ Waipoua Lodge (p157)
- ➔ Tree House (p154)
- ➔ Kahoe Farms Hostel (p147)
- ➔ Kokohuia Lodge (p155)

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.

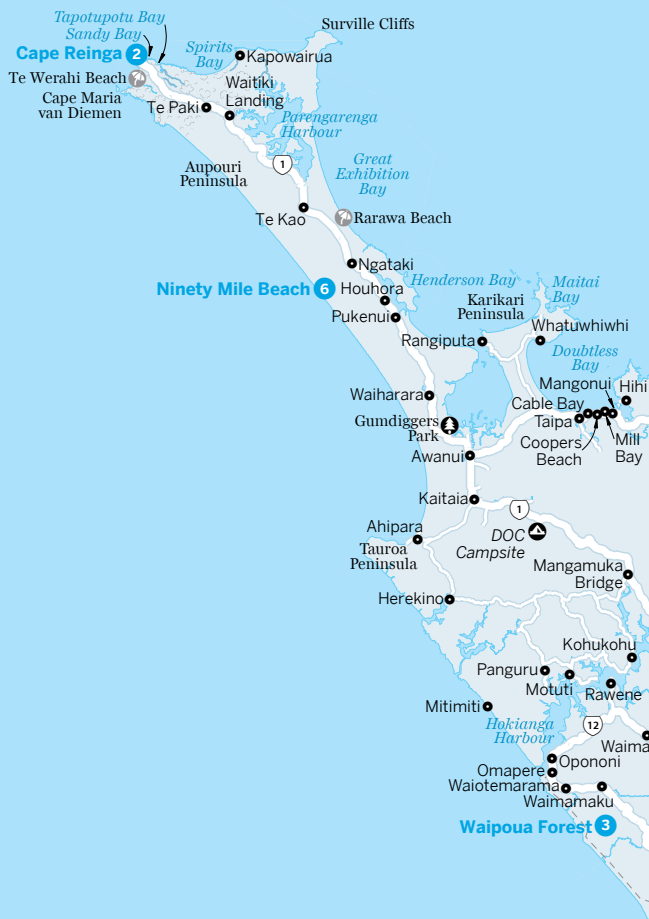
It's not just natural attractions that are on offer: history hangs heavily here. The site of the earliest settlements of both Māori and Europeans, Northland is unquestionably the birthplace of the nation.

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 Matauri Bay** (p145) Splashing about, body surfing, sunbathing and strolling.
- 2 Cape Reinga** (p149) Watching oceans collide while souls depart.
- 3 Waipoua Forest** (p156) Paying homage to the ancient kauri giants of this forest.
- 4 Poor Knights Islands** (p129) Diving at one of the world's top spots.
- 5 Bay of Islands** (p130) Cruising northern waters and claiming your own island paradise among the many in this bay.
- 6 Ninety Mile Beach** (p149) Surfing the sand dunes.
- 7 Waitangi Treaty Grounds** (p136) Delving into history and culture.



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SEA