



The East Coast

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Mister D (p336)
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- ➔ Three Doors Up (p336)
- ➔ Eastend Cafe (p329)
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Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Stranded in Paradise (p318)
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- ➔ Ahi Kaa Motel (p323)
- ➔ Pebble Beach Motor Inn (p335)

Why Go?

New Zealand is known for its mix of wildly divergent landscapes, but on the East Coast it's the sociological contours that are most pronounced. There's a full spectrum of NZ life here, from the earthy settlements on the East Cape to Havelock North's moneyed, wine-soaked streets.

Māori culture is never more visible than it is on the East Coast. Exquisitely carved *marae* (meeting house) complexes dot the landscape, and *te reo* and *tikanga* (the language and customs) are alive and well.

Intrepid types will have no trouble losing the tourist hordes – along the Pacific Coast Hwy, through rural back roads, on remote beaches, or in the mystical wilds of Te Urewera National Park. And when the call of the wild gives way to caffeine withdrawal, you can get a quick fix in Gisborne or Napier. You'll also find plenty of wine here: the Hawke's Bay region is striped with vine-rows.

When to Go

- ➔ The East Coast basks in a warm, mainly dry climate. Summer temperatures around Napier and sunny Gisborne nudge 25°C; in winter they rarely dip below 8°C.
- ➔ The Hawke's Bay region enjoys mild, dry, grape-growing conditions year-round, with an average annual rainfall of just 800mm. Harvest time is autumn (March to May).
- ➔ In winter heavy downpours sometimes wash out sections of the Pacific Coast Hwy (SH35) around the East Cape: check road conditions at either end (Opotiki or Gisborne) before you hit the highway.

East Coast Highlights

1 Napier (p330)

Time-warping back to the 1930s, surrounded by art deco, in this mighty charming town.

2 Hawke's Bay

Wine Region

(p340) Sniffing and sipping your way around the local wineries.

3 Gisborne

Wineries (p322)

Finding more fab NZ wine around Gisborne.

4 Te Urewera

National Park

(p326) Losing yourself in these mighty forests, rich in Maori culture.

5 Pacific Coast

Hwy (p316)

Counting off landmarks as you cruise around the East Cape: Cape Kidnappers, Tolaga Bay, Tokomaru Bay

