

EXTENSION: BAY OF ISLANDS



This information should answer some of your questions about a possible trip and give you a better idea of what you can do day-to-day. It doesn't hope to answer everything. If you have any questions please get in touch.



Bay of Islands photo Caroline Sterritt

The trip

This extension in the Far North takes 5 nights/6 days at a relaxed pace and offers a variety of coastal walks and Northland beaches, an ideal way to either recover from jetlag or relax after a trip. It can be combined with a visit to Great Barrier Island.

- DAY 1 Arrive in **Auckland**, hotel. Optional “*Pride of Auckland*” dinner cruise (allow \$110pp).
- DAY 2 **Bay of Islands:** Pick up the rental car and head off up the Twin Coast Discovery Highway (4 hours driving), stopping on the way at the Goat Island marine reserve for some snorkelling or a 3km (1.5 hr) walk. There are plenty of other beaches to explore on the way to Paihia. Self catering apartment, with a choice of restaurants nearby. (B)
- DAYS 3-5 Based in Paihia, there are lots of activities to choose from. Our favourites include:
- A full day walk in the Cape Brett scenic reserve. It is 20km one way to the lighthouse hut (8 hours), but you can walk along the track as far as you have time for (\$30pp track fee applicable).

- A 3 hour return walk through the Waitangi River Estuary mangroves to Haruru Falls.
- Visit the Waitangi Treaty Grounds – where the founding document of New Zealand was signed in 1840.
- Take a cruise out to the Cape Brett “Hole in the Rock” (allow NZ\$86pp) or the “Cream Trip” cruise delivering mail to the island locals (allow NZ\$96pp).
- Go swimming with the dolphins (allow \$129pp)
- Visit historic Russell by ferry.
- Take a day trip to Opononi and walk along the part of the Hokianga Coastal Walkway starting at South Head on the Hokianga Harbour. An 8km, 3-4 hour walk takes you along high cliffs and the beach to the Waimamaku River. Return the same way, so allow a full day to walk to the river and back.
- Visit the Waipoua Kauri forest, the best kauri forest remaining in New Zealand. These forest giants once covered large areas of Northland, Coromandel and Gt. Barrier Island, but were extensively logged in the 1800s. There are 7 short walks in this area ranging from 10 minutes to one hour.

DAY 6 Depart Paihia for Auckland, taking the slow, scenic, eastern route along the Kaipara Harbour, visiting the Kauri museum at Matakohe on the way. Depart Auckland or continue with your own arrangements.

Cost NZ\$840pp (£330pp*) based on 2 people sharing

* Exchange rate used £1 = NZ\$2.55 (costs subject to exchange rate)

Includes:

Rental car 6 days

1 night Auckland in city centre hotel, twin share including breakfast

4 nights Paihia in self catering apartment twin share, breakfast not included.

(B&B option also available)

Prices are valid till June 2010.

This itinerary starts and finishes in Auckland, and is only a sample. Variations are possible depending on the number of people, style of accommodation, length of time available and activity level. If you have longer and wish to tour the region, you could consider the following:

- A 3½-4 hour drive from Paihia takes you to the northernmost tip of Northland, Cape Reinga. There is a 16km loop walk (5 hours) here, or shorter options to beaches east and west of the Cape.
- Bird watchers may consider a visit to the Muriwai gannet colony and the Maori Bay beach on the west coast, west of Auckland, which is unusual for its volcanic cliffs (2 hours walk).
- There are walking options between Karekare (where the film “The Piano” was filmed) and Whatipu, which go along the top of the cliffs or on the black sand beach (2 to 7 hours depending on route choice).
- Further walking such as the Fairy Falls (2-3 hours) can be done in the Waitakere Ranges before heading back to Auckland.

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