



PRESS RELEASE



ISLAND HOPPING IN NEW ZEALAND

There's more to New Zealand than its North and South Islands. The country is an island nation and there are many hot spots to be discovered dotting the coastlines.



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For a sense of true escapism and adventure, to encounter endangered wildlife or to treat yourself to a little bit of luxury, New Zealand's islands offer something for everyone. Whether it's standing on an active volcano on White Island or spotting Kiwi on Kapiti, Tourism New Zealand has selected the best islands visitors shouldn't miss.

Best for wildlife...

NEW ZEALAND'S 'OFFICIAL' THIRD ISLAND - STEWART ISLAND

Subantarctic Stewart Island, which lies 30 kilometres south of the South Island, has a land area of nearly 2,000 square kilometres and 85% of it is included within the boundaries of Rakiura National Park. Key highlights include nocturnal bird life and the calls of ruru, weka and kiwis by night and listening to red-crowned parakeets, bush parrots and Stewart Island robins by day. Stewart Island is a paradise for hikers with 245 kilometres of walking tracks that can all be accessed from the town of Oban. Visitors can participate in short walks through Fern Gully, Horseshoe Point or Moturau Moana and for the adventurous, a three day 'Great Walks' hike. Just off the west coast of Stewart Island is Ulva Island, the home to Te Wharawhara Marine Reserve. Here, guests can explore the 56 species of marine fish including kina, sea cucumber, starfish, kelp species and brachiopods with diving trips and sea kayak safaris.

WHERE TO STAY... Overlooking the harbor of Paterson Inlet, Observation Rock Lodge on Stewart Island is a new luxury boutique lodge offering secluded gardens, untouched native forests and panoramic ocean and mountain views. The Lodging Deluxe package costs from £412 per night based on two people

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sharing including a double room in the Lodge House, a four course dinner, an exclusive outdoor Kiwi hot tub, a bush sauna and a guided activity such as a garden tour or cooking class.
www.observationrocklodge.co.nz

THE BEST PLACE TO SPOT A WILD KIWI BIRD - KAPITI ISLAND

Hosting some of New Zealand's most endangered birds including the kiwi, Kapiti Island is a 2,000-hectare nature reserve and its protected waters are home to an abundance of marine life. Located just 50 kilometres north of Wellington on the western coast, visitors can take a 15-minute ferry ride leaving from Paraparaumu Beach with only 100 visitors being allowed to visit each day. One of the most memorable experiences in New Zealand is to spot a Kiwi Bird in its natural habitat, Kapiti Island is the best place for this as Kiwis are extinct on the mainland and there are over 1,200 Little Spotted Kiwi Birds to see on the island. Visitors will also have the opportunity to spot other endangered New Zealand birds such as Takahē, Kokako, Weka, Morepork, Blue Penguins and Royal Spoonbills. For those who want a little more adventure, kayaking, snorkeling and walking trails to the highest point, Rangatira Landing, are also available.

WHERE TO STAY... Kapiti Nature Lodge, at Waiorua Bay, is the only accommodation on the Island and offers bird and history tours, traditional harakeke-flax weaving, seal watching and seafood gathering. Kapiti Nature Lodge offers tours from £203 per person per night in a four-bed cabin including return ferry transport, all meals, wine and beer, Department of Conservation permits and a guided walking tour at night.
www.kapitiislandnaturetours.co.nz

Best for culture...

VISIT THE FIRST GOVERNOR'S PRIVATE RESIDENCE AT KAWAU ISLAND

Originally settled by early migrations of Maori people and then purchased as a private residence by Sir George Grey, one of New Zealand's first governors, Kawau Island is now a must-visit island offering unusual history, fishing, swimming and boating. Just an hour and a half from Auckland in the North Island, visitors can take ferries or water taxis from Sandspit Wharf near Warkworth. A major feature of the island is the historical, stately, Mansion House that stands alone in a secluded sunny bay with an extensive garden containing exotic plants and animals from all over the world such as wallabies and peacocks. From the mansion, visitors can head to the walking tracks leading through the regenerating native forest to beaches, Maori pa sites and old copper mines.

WHERE TO STAY... Situated in the peaceful North Cove on Kawau Island, Kawau Lodge is a romantic hot spot with no choice but to relax as each suite offers a private deck

overlooking the ocean and surrounding bush area. Kawau Lodge offers the Queen Weekend Package from £367 per couple including two nights accommodation in a Queens Lodge Room, meals including two breakfasts, one lunch and two evening meals and return transfers from Sandpit to Kawau Lodge.

www.kawaulodge.co.nz

Best for wine lovers...

THE HAMPTONS OF AUCKLAND - WAIHEKE ISLAND

Located just a 40-minute ferry ride from Auckland, Waiheke Island is the Hamptons of the city with countless stunning wineries, a growing local food scene, stunning white sandy beaches, an eclectic arts scene, galleries and studios and a growing crop of uber cool boutique properties. Those with a passion for wine can enjoy the island's wineries that produce unique, high quality wines based on Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, Cabernet Franc and the recent move into Chardonnay grape varieties. At Mudbrick Vineyard, hand-picked fruit is nurtured from vine to bottle and the wines are carefully selected from classic French varieties. Stonyridge Vineyard is nestled in a valley of olive trees, colourful vines and the aromas of the south of France and offers wine tastings and café dining. Te Whau Vineyard is described as one of the most achingly beautiful and dramatic places a vineyard has ever taken root and grows five star Chardonnay and Cabernet Sauvignon/Merlot, the best of Waiheke wine.

WHERE TO STAY... Located in the heart of Oneroa Village on Waiheke Island, The Oyster Inn offers a renowned seafood restaurant, bars, beach shops and just three luxury boutique guest rooms all rolled into one. Founded by designer Jonathan Rutherford Best and former fashion PR for Louis Vuitton and Topshop Andrew Glenn, The Oyster Inn comes equipped with a vintage VW taxicab bus on hand for excursions and to collect the guests from the ferry terminal as well as a Fish & Chippery take-away window at hand at all times. The Oyster Inn guest rooms start from £146. www.theoysterinn.co.nz

For the adventurous...

WALK ON AN ACTIVE VOLCANO AT WHITE ISLAND

Take a walk on the wild side and head to New Zealand's only active marine volcano, White Island, a giant, barren moonscape streaked with iron oxide reds and vivid sulphur whites and yellows. White Island is located 48 kilometres off the shores of Whakatane in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, just 100 kilometres from Rotorua in the North Island. For those who want to arrive in style, take a flight with White Island Flights (www.whiteislandflights.co.nz) flying over farm land, white sand beaches, off shore islands and landing right on the volcano. For

the truly adventurous, take a 90-minute boat cruise arriving 50 kilometres offshore to the island and then an unforgettable two-hour walking tour past steaming cracks in the ground, bubbling pools and roaring gas fumaroles. The cliffs rise vertically to over 300-metres high and the crater lake, a huge expanse of steaming water, is a must see.

WHERE TO STAY... White Island Rendezvous provides a variety of accommodation to fit all needs from backpackers to the luxurious and is just walking distance to the departure point for White Island tours. Rooms start from £69 per night based on two people sharing. www.whiteisland.co.nz

For relaxation...

SEEKING THE SIMPLE LIFE? HEAD TO MOTITI ISLAND

To get away from it all, Motiti Island is the perfect getaway offering ultimate relaxation and seclusion with a population of just 40 people. Just a ten-minute flight from Tauranga in the North Island, Motiti Island is paradise for diving, fishing, swimming and snorkeling and offers all kinds of beaches from white sand sheltered bays to rocky shorelines on the ocean side. Keen divers can even explore the tug-boat wreck known as Taioma, which lies on the sea floor just a few metres offshore. Fancy a seafood dinner? At the right time of year, divers can collect crayfish and scallops while fishermen can catch snapper, kingfish, terakihi and blue mao mao and cook them right on the beach

WHERE TO STAY... Situated on the mainland, Tauranga Lodge is a luxury Bed & Breakfast in a private setting with views over Tauranga City, Mt. Maunganui and Motiti Island. Tauranga Lodge offers suites from £116 per night based on two people sharing. www.taurangalodge.co.nz

A MUST DO IN NEW ZEALAND - BAY OF ISLANDS

Known for its beauty and history, the Bay of Islands is paradise for those who love beaches and water activities. Just a three-hour drive or 35-minute flight north of Auckland, the Bay of Islands consists of 144 islands including Cape Brett, the Purerua Peninsula, Moturua Island and towns such as Opuha, Paihia, Russell and Kerikeri. Whether it's sand dune surfing in Cape Reinga, a cruise to the famous "Hole in the Rock", a day at the beach in Paihia or a boat ride around Tapeka Point to spot wild dolphins, whales and marlin, the Bay of Islands has something for everyone. For the more adventurous should head to Urupukapuka Island for hard-core walking tracks and secluded campsites.

WHERE TO STAY... Eagles Nest offers world-class luxury villas each set within their own grounds in a 75-acre private estate on a cliff top in Russell. Guests can choose from one of the five villas including Sacred Space, First Light Temple, Eagle Spirit, The Eyrie or the Rahimoana Villa where they can enjoy an invigorating swim in a horizon-edge pool or luxuriate in an

outdoor spa. Villas start from £5270 per night.
www.eaglesnest.co.nz

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