



PRESS RELEASE



EAT YOUR WAY AROUND NEW ZEALAND

From huhu bug eating and oyster shucking contests to vintage vertical tastings – New Zealand's growing range of food festivals add a gourmet twist to your travels



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New Zealand is well known as a gourmet travellers' paradise with an abundance of homegrown produce, world-class wine and a burgeoning craft brewery scene, ensuring every region has something to tickle the taste buds. Combining a trip with one of the growing number of food festivals springing up across the country is the perfect way to add a unique twist to any visit.

WELLY ON A PLATE - 15-31 AUGUST 2014

New Zealand's 'coolest little capital' is in the midst of its latest serving of the annual 'Welly on a Plate' festival, taking place every August. Visitors to the festival can look forward to over 100 events – from a celebration of New Zealand's growing craft beer scene at 'Beervana' to master classes in urban beekeeping, foraging and beer matching trips and Wairarapa Truffle tasting. A festival highlight is the 'Battle of the Buns', which sees 69 restaurants compete to offer Wellington's best burger. Pop ups will also see give visitors the chance to try some unusual collaborations including the 'Tripe, Trotters and Testicles' tasting evening from The Larder restaurant head chef Jacob Brown, and Pigfish @Prefab – running for 13 nights of the festival and combining the best of land and sea (think sticky pork hocks and six kinds of freshly shucked oysters). Visitors can also take advantage of the two-week DINE Wellington celebration, which sees 100 of the region's finest eateries offer special set lunch and dinner deals to showcase local produce at its best. www.wellingtononaplate.com

WHITIANGA SCALLOP FESTIVAL, COROMANDEL - 6 SEPTEMBER 2014

One of New Zealand's most popular seafood events, The Whitianga Scallop Festival celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, with over 60 food and wine stands, seafood cooking

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demonstrations from iconic New Zealand chefs, a weekend of Kiwi bands and performers and even a scallop shucking competition. In a spectacular location overlooking the Whitianga Harbour on the North Island's Coromandel Peninsula, the region is renowned for its sweet, succulent scallops and is one of the country's most popular beach holiday destinations thanks to its white sand beaches, native rainforest, pristine coastal walking trails and laid back artistic atmosphere. Tickets cost from NZ\$45 per adult. www.scallopfestival.co.nz

FOOD AND WINE CLASSIC (FAWC!) SUMMER SERIES, HAWKES BAY (31 OCTOBER - 9 NOVEMBER 2014)

F.A.W.C! Food and Wine Classic is New Zealand's hottest and fastest growing food and wine festival taking place in both summer and winter. A series of "out of the box" food and wine experiences set in stunning locations throughout Hawke's Bay, it's a chance to get up close and personal with chefs and food producers, wine makers and all the other clever people that make up the New Zealand food and wine scene. The Summer Series kicks off Friday 31 October with a spectacular launch party in the vines of Craggy Range Winery. 70 events are scheduled across the ten days throughout various locations in Hawke's Bay including vintage vertical tastings, pre releases, master classes, degustation dinners, private chefs in homes and NZ celebrity chefs to name a few. Ray McVinnie, from the TV series NZ Masterchef, is the F.A.W.C! Ambassador and will host an array of events over opening and closing weekends. Tickets on sale from mid August. www.fawc.co.nz

GISBORNE WINE AND FOOD FESTIVAL (25-26 OCTOBER 2014)

The legendary wine-producing region of Gisborne (and the unofficial capital of Chardonnay) is one of New Zealand's sunniest spots and a haven for gourmet travellers, with its idyllic surf beach setting on the northeast of the North Island. The annual festival begins with 'Cellar Door Saturday' - the chance to meet the personalities behind the region's best wineries and learn first-hand about the different styles and techniques at each venue, with each laying on new release wines, food pairing and tastings and live music. Sunday brings together the best local wineries and producers under one roof at the Awapuni stadium in a boutique marketplace combined with live bands and entertainment. East coast artisan food makers will be at the fore, with the menu including locally grown beef, lamb, kaimoana, olive oils, cheeses and fresh produce. Wine Appreciation Workshops will run throughout the day alongside tastings and food pairings from a wealth of wineries including Villa Maria Estate and Milton Vineyards. www.gisbornewineandfoodfestival.co.nz

TASTE OF AUCKLAND (13 - 16 NOVEMBER 2014)

New Zealand's most celebrated foodie festival (sister event to Taste London) attracts the best local and international chefs and food and drink producers to celebrate the start of summer

in gourmet fashion. Live cooking demos, tastings and entertainment take place across four-days in the new green fields Western Springs venue. New additions for 2014 will include a New Zealand Avocado garden party and a 'Tea Sensology' experience, whilst multiple Michelin star awarded Kiwi chef Josh Emmett who launched Gordon Ramsay at Claridges and recently opened the acclaimed Ostro brasserie in the Britomart area of Auckland, will lead proceedings. Auckland is establishing itself as a foodie capital to rival Wellington, with new developments in everything from street food to fine dining, making Taste of Auckland the perfect introduction to a gourmet trip around New Zealand. www.tasteofauckland.co.nz

HOKITIKA WILDFOODS FESTIVAL (14 MARCH 2015)

Creative foodies with a taste for wild fare have put the small town of Hokitika – on New Zealand's South Island West Coast – on the international culinary map with an adventurous food festival that attracts thousands of intrepid gourmets. Wild and wacky is the name of the game with everything from snails, seagull eggs, grasshoppers and mountain oysters to huhu beetle grubs served live, cooked, or chocolate-coated on the menu. Local producers serve up fresh from the sea scallop kebabs, tasty paua (abalone) patties, kina (sea egg) shots, marinated tuna, whitebait patties and whalebait. Meat lovers can also sample rare fare such as pukeko (swamp hen), smoked river trout and paradise duck, all to a backdrop of music and wild fancy dress. Made famous as the setting for Eleanor Catton's Booker prize winning novel *The Luminaries*, Hokitika is a perfect base for exploring the wild-west coast with its dramatic rock formations and spectacular coastal highway. www.wildfoods.co.nz

BLUFF OYSTER FESTIVAL (23 MAY 2015)

With the tag line 'unsophisticated and proud of it', you're guaranteed a real Kiwi experience at this annual festival, held on the South Island's most southerly point in the salty seaside town of Bluff. Held annually to celebrate the seasonal harvest of what are said to be the most flavoursome oysters in the world, festival entertainment is oyster related from morning to night with the 'piping in the oyster' to start the event and everything from oyster opening and eating competitions to oyster sack creativity awards set to a backdrop of live local music. A nature lovers paradise, Bluff in Southland is the oldest European settled town in the country and the gateway to New Zealand's third island, Stewart Island, famed for its native bird sanctuaries and walking trails such as the Rakiura Track, one of New Zealand's 'Great Walks'. www.bluffoysterfest.co.nz

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For more information on New Zealand gourmet events visit www.newzealand.com

