

ALL ABOUT ISLANDS

With over 140 islands to choose from in the Bay of Islands, this Northland Journey is All About Islands.

Discover islands rich in history, culture and natural beauty. Large and small islands, rocky and sandy islands. Strap on a mask and explore magnificent underwater islands, reefs and wrecks. Other places like the historic Waitangi Treaty Grounds, the quaint Russell township and remote Cape Brett have a distinct island-feel.

Another great joy of visiting islands is that getting there can be a lot of fun too. There are so many options to get yourself onto an island including; tour cruise, ferry, private boat, kayak, sail, row, paddle, swim.

Whether it's an island of fun and adventure or an island of peaceful relaxation, it's out there waiting for you.

Paihia Township

The busy hub of the Bay of Islands. The perfect place for information, bookings, cafés, pubs, restaurants, supermarkets, accommodation and is the main wharf departure point.

Haruru Falls / Waitangi River A lovely horseshoe shaped waterfall

that's only 3km from Paihia. Also connecting with a 5km walk through to the Waitangi Treaty Grounds. Explore the river your way from kayak, paddleboard, dinner cruise or drive to the top of the waterfall itself.

3 Waitangi Treaty Grounds

With sweeping views of the Bay of Islands in a park like setting, not only is Waitangi Treaty Grounds a significant national historical site, it is a very beautiful one. Follow the trails to historic sites and buildings, café, giant waka (canoes), carved meeting house. Take in a cultural performance or explore the new museum and learn about the Treaty of Waitangi. This is an island of history, knowledge, culture and beauty.

Motuarohia / Roberton Island

The poster child island with twin lagoons. Motuarohia is arguably one of the most beautiful locations in the Bay of Islands. Explore the rocky coastline on one side, on the other unwind on the beach. Motuarohia has a number of short walks including a panoramic view of the Bay of Islands. Captain Cook anchored the Endeavour just off its shores in 1769 in what is now known as Cook's Bay. Be prepared as there are no public facilities on this island and it is always hard to leave paradise once you find it.

5 Motorua Island

A scenic reserve with a fantastic walking track. The 4.6km loop takes about 2hrs without stopping and there are great swimming beaches and snorkeling spots. Moturua has a long history of Maori settlement, early European explorers and the Navy during WWII. More recently as part of Project Island Song, North Island Robin (Toutouwai) and the North Island Brown Kiwi have been released, so keep your eyes and ears open!

6 Rangihoua Heritage Park

A place where Māori and Europeans lived side by side through an agreement between Chief Ruatara and Reverend Samuel Marsden. The Marsden Cross memorial marks the place where New Zealand's first Christmas Day service was held, led by Reverend Marsden in 1814.

Waewaetorea Island

A DOC recreation reserve offering stunning white sand beaches perfect for swimming and lounging. Walking tracks with great views and early Maori settlement sites. Waewaetorea island offers safe ancorage, is less visited and well worth the extra effort to get to.

8 Otehei Bay

The site of legendary author and fisher Zane Grey's fishing camp. Otehei Bay is located on the largest island, Urupukapuka, and is considered 'the hub' of the islands in the Bay. Offers swimming, snorkelling, kayaking, summer time café, conservation centre and paddle boarding. Otehei Bay is the perfect spot to spend the day or use as a base to explore more off the beaten path locations.

Urupukapuka Island

Urupukapuka has a great name and is the largest and easiest island to get to with regular scheduled ferry and tour services. On arrival you'll see why it's so popular (it's beautiful). It ticks all the boxes for having an amazing island adventure with walking tracks, beautiful swimming beaches, amazing birdlife, views, picnic spots, diving, snorkelling, full facilities, coffee, restaurant the list goes on. It's all so good you won't want to leave... and the good news is, you don't have to. Pack a tent, book and stay at one of the 3 beautiful DOC camping sites and enjoy.

10 HMZS Canterbury Wreck

Sunk in 2007 and lying on the bottom of the sea floor upright and intact, is the wreck of the former frigate HMNZS Canterbury. Dive with the brilliant marine life around this underwater island.

Deepwater Cove

A beautiful sheltered cove and landing site with pebble beach to explore. A track joins the steep Cape Brett walk making Deepwater Cove the perfect place for a water taxi pick up or drop off for those not wanting to do the full Cape Brett Walk.

Cape Brett Walk

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For those wanting to get out on a geographic limb. Beginning in Rawhiti, the Cape Brett walk offers a 16km rugged bush-clad track with exceptional coastal views ending at the Cape Brett lighthouse and DOC hut, where you can stay the night. There is the option to shorten the walk by getting picked up and / or dropped off at Deepwater Cove by water taxi.

Motukokako

Captain Cook named it Piercy Island and no trip to the Bay of Islands would be complete without visiting the famous "Hole in the Rock". Options include landing on the steep sided island in a helicopter or a classic tour boat cruise through the 'hole'.

Russell Historic Township

Formerly known as Kororareka, Russell was once referred to as the 'hell hole of the Pacific' and was the first permanent European settlement and seaport in New Zealand. Russell has a real islandfeel with lots of character. It is the perfect place to wind down after a busy day out on the Bay and has regular ferry service with Paihia.

Must Do's

Get on an Island

Don't just look at them from afar, get out and explore an island.

Go Under

The island doesn't stop at the beach. There is amazing marine life to observe underwater with snorkeling and scuba diving opening up another world within the Bay of Islands.

Get up close and personal with sea

life Marine mammal viewing will get you closer to bird life, dolphins and seals/whales (seasonal).

Under your own steam

With so many options to get out on the water the hardest part will be deciding what activity is for you....paddling, swimming and diving or just relaxing on a boat.

Overnight camping

Camping in the Bay of Islands is only available on Urupukapuka Island.

© Tohu Whenua are places around New Zealand that matter to us. Northland has nine 'Tohu Whenua' - places rich in historical or cultural significance. Visit www.tohuwhenua.nz

