

TARANAKI

like no other

# YOUR GUIDE TO LIVING IN TARANAKI



A NEW ZEALAND REGION  
LIKE NO OTHER

# WHY TARANAKI?

**Ask anyone around here and they'll tell you – you couldn't ask for a better place to build a life. Taranaki's humming.**

**We're welcoming and friendly with a strong sense of pride, community, and whānau.**

**If you're seeking that great and easy lifestyle, with abundant opportunities to live, learn, create, work and play – you'll find it here.**

**No matter your age, background or beliefs, Taranaki is where you can create a real future for yourself, and your family.**

Not only is there plenty to do in the weekends, before and after work, there's the time to do it. Short commutes to work, either by car or using the network of buses, scenic walking and riding routes, means there's plenty of time to enjoy Taranaki's great lifestyle. There might even be time for a lunchtime surf or a chance to catch the kids' school events.

In Taranaki, it's easy to achieve an enviable lifestyle without having to compromise on your career. Taranaki is a dynamic and globally acclaimed region for employment. The region is home to strong energy and dairy sectors, robust engineering and primary production and is on the journey to being a low-emissions economy by 2050. The region is also supported by rapidly growing tourism and events sectors as potential visitors are increasingly becoming aware of this slice of paradise.

Taranaki is a place of entrepreneurs. Thanks to a robust economy and population that's big enough to sustain new business, many new arrivals make the most of the opportunity to start the venture they have dreaming of. With the use of modern technology, it's also possible to live in Taranaki while working throughout New Zealand or the world.

What's more, Taranaki has the highest median wage growth in New Zealand. Couple that with our affordable housing and you not only have time to enjoy a great work-life balance, you may even be able to afford to take up some new hobbies.

So where is Taranaki? It is the 'bump' on the west coast of New Zealand's North Island. Located halfway between the main centres of Auckland and Wellington, the region is characterised by the 2518m Mount Taranaki, in Egmont National Park.

Taranaki is home to 124,600 people, most of whom live in the coastal city of New Plymouth. The region is split into three districts, each with its own council: New Plymouth to the north with a population of 86,100, Stratford in central Taranaki with a population of 9,880 and South Taranaki, which includes the main centre of Hāwera, with a population of 28,700. The Taranaki Regional Council covers the entire region, providing services and information on the environment, resource consents, public transport and civil defence.

If you choose to make New Plymouth your home, no matter what suburb you live in, you will be just minutes away from the city centre. It's likely to take you no more than 10 minutes to commute to work each day.

Hāwera, Stratford, Inglewood, Waitara, Ōakura, Ōpunake, Urenui and many of the other towns throughout Taranaki provide an inviting alternative to city living. In these smaller communities you will find homes on spacious sections and lifestyle blocks with sea and/or mountain views.

The biggest challenge will be trying to fit in everything you'd like to do!

**Taranaki.** *Opportunity and Lifestyle Like No Other.*

Let us give you a little taste of Taranaki and share with you the story of our region and what it's like to live here, through the eyes of people who have discovered our unique lifestyle for themselves. You'll see that no matter what your stage in life, Taranaki offers something for everyone. Learn about:

- finding your next career move
- starting a business or moving a business to Taranaki
- bringing the family to Taranaki
- settling in and making connections with locals.

[taranaki.co.nz](http://taranaki.co.nz)



**Employment in 2020**

**59,953**

**Roles in high demand:**

- Professional Services
- Technicians
- Trades
- Community and Personal service workers

**Forecast Job Openings**

**4,746**

**new jobs 2021-2030**

**Growth Industries:**

- Professional Services
- Healthcare
- Manufacturing
- Construction

**House prices, June 2021**

Region	Average price
Bay of Plenty	\$840,000
Hawke's Bay	\$701,000
<b>Taranaki</b>	<b>\$580,000</b>
Wellington	\$885,000
Canterbury	\$569,000
Nelson	\$691,500
Auckland	\$1,150,000

Source: REINZ Residential Statistics Report for June 2021

**Regional strengths:**

- New energy expertise and technology
- Food & fibre, production, regenerative agriculture and agritech





# FINDING A JOB

Taranaki is a great place to find your next job opportunity. If you're looking for a career move coupled with a better lifestyle, there are some great opportunities in our region. This section tells the stories of people who have moved here from other countries or other parts of Aotearoa/New Zealand and their journey to being a part of a region like no other.



# GAZING AT THE VIEW

## MARCIA AND MATTHEW MILLARD, MIDHIRST

**Adventurers Marcia and Matthew Millard from the UK were keen to live abroad and experience life in a different country, it was just a matter of deciding where.**

"I have a half-brother and nephews in Auckland so that helped New Zealand edge out Canada and Germany, which were also favourites at the time."

The couple first settled in Auckland, but soon found the work-life balance that also attracted them to New Zealand was foiled by long daily commutes into the CBD to work.

"Matthew had seen Taranaki profiled at an immigration fair in the UK and liked the look of what he saw, so we paid the region a visit and a month later it was home."

"I can't imagine us ever leaving Taranaki or our house now – we got married here, and became New Zealand citizens, it really is home for us."

Keen to have space and views and be near the coast, the Millards bought a lifestyle property in Midhirst, ten minutes north of Stratford, in 2014 and still enthuse about the tranquility and views.

"In the evenings we often turn off the telly and just gaze at the views and enjoy the sounds of the country."

Swapping town life in the UK for the country hasn't surprised family and friends.

"Friends and family weren't surprised when we said we wanted rural living, they have just been surprised as to how much we embraced it. We love having so much space, the animals and being able to really get away from it all."

Some thought the Millards were crazy to move to Taranaki without jobs but Matthew, an electrician, was able to get work quickly and has now become an expert in on-farm refrigeration and feed systems.

**"We love the real community feel in Taranaki and we feel more inclined to do things for others here than we did in the UK."**

"Matthew travels all around the North Island and helps farmers. He absolutely loves the rural lifestyle and all the beautiful spots his job takes him to. He is always quick to say that none are as beautiful as Taranaki though!"

Marcia was open to a career change but found her extensive experience and skills in community development were appreciated so she now works for Bishops Action Foundation and manages The Wheelhouse, an organisation set up to provide training and support to the not for profit sector.

"Our jobs and hobbies have been an important way to meet people and make friends."

Now the pair have a burgeoning social life and are very active members of the community.

"We love the real community feel in Taranaki and we feel more inclined to do things for others here than we did in the UK. There's a bigger sense of community and long may that continue."

Soon after the couple's citizenship ceremony, a local shop keeper congratulated Marcia on becoming a New Zealand citizen.

"I was touched. She remembered seeing our picture in the paper."

As for tips for newcomers: "Just throw yourself into it one hundred percent and don't compare. Accept and embrace the differences and before you know it you'll be saying jug and jandals too!"



*Becoming NZ citizens. Matthew Millard, Marcia Millard and Stratford Mayor Neil Volzke.*

# ONTO A GOOD THING

## ALICIA AND LAINE CAMERON

**Horse lovers Alicia and Laine Cameron were keen to trade their long and expensive commutes in Auckland for a more relaxed rural life in Taranaki. But first, they decided to ponder the finer details of their move with a six-month trip around Europe.**

"We sold our townhouse in Wainui and went travelling while we decided where to move to exactly. I'd lived in Stratford and commuted to Hāwera when Laine and I first met and thought a lifestyle block in New Plymouth might suit us better this time," says Alicia.

Fate had other plans though and more than 20 people tagged them on a Facebook post for a property for sale five minutes from Stratford while they were busy seeing the sites of Europe.

"Our friends were right. The property was perfect for us, it even had a horse arena!"

When you can sell an Auckland townhouse and buy a 4-acre farm in Taranaki, you know you are onto a good thing.

"Our friends can't believe what we've got for our money!"

And six years of a daily two- to three-hour commute is also a thing of the past.

"We had long days and expensive fuel bills in Auckland. Now I even pop home at lunchtime if I need to."

Alicia has had some great career opportunities since moving to Taranaki, working at first in local government and now at Powerco's head office in New Plymouth.

Husband Laine relocated his blacksmith farrier business and has been very busy from the get go.

"It's a unique business, but he has contacts through doing his apprenticeship here and fortunately he's been flat out. But now his day finishes at a normal time, not 9 PM with all the commuting he had to do in Auckland,"

While Alicia sometimes misses the variety a big city offers, she's found small towns have lots of free community events.

"There's plenty to do in Stratford and new cafés and cool places are opening all the time."

Alicia and Laine have also found it easy to meet friends.

"It doesn't take long to make friends through your work and other friends and we meet heaps of people through horse riding."

And now they have time to hang out with friends and indulge their interests.

"It's so much easier to work to live, not live to work down here."



Alicia and Laine Cameron



# WALTZING HER WAY INTO THE COMMUNITY

MARIA CASHMORE

**A day after Maria tied the knot with her husband Ross in 2002, the pair traded their Auckland life for Hāwera. Years on, they have never looked back.**

“Even though Ross was a born-and-bred Aucklander he was keen to move out of the hustle and bustle of a big city and I was open to the idea,” says Maria, who had moved to Auckland from the Philippines in 1996.

An unplanned meeting with one of the senior staff members of Fonterra’s Whareroa plant started the ball rolling.

“I [Maria] was at a conference and was chatting to a person from Fonterra who mentioned the trouble they were having recruiting microbiology technicians for the Whareroa plant, a role I was doing at the time for what is nowASUREQuality.”

One thing led to another, and Maria was quick to say: “You take me and you take my husband too.”

Ross is a chemist, which fortunately for the Cashmores was also a hard-to-fill role for Fonterra.

“They encouraged us to visit South Taranaki before committing to the move.”

Fortunately, the Cashmores liked what they saw and made the move to Hāwera in 2002.

As with any change there were some adjustments – the main ones were adapting to having more time and fewer expenses.

“We knocked a hundred dollars off our rent and doubled the size of our house and section when we moved to Hāwera.”

The savings didn’t stop there.

“We have always enjoyed bike riding and found it much nicer to ride in South Taranaki, so we saved on petrol and other vehicle costs cycling to and from work.”

“We also had much more time to enjoy the outdoors, which we love, especially tramping.”

Being new to the area, Maria quickly discovered the importance of clubs and community in settling in.

“I’d always enjoyed acting so joined the Hāwera Repertory Society. Then came dancing, and that led to winning several dance competitions and becoming a dance teacher. Now I am too busy!”

Maria teaches Latin, ballroom and street Latin dancing, including running some not-for-profit classes for community groups such as free dance classes for the blind.

Maria made many friends through work, but it was her involvement in clubs that cemented her sense of belonging.

“I didn’t realise just how many clubs there are in South Taranaki, any hobby you can think of we have it here. Joining groups and clubs opened the floodgates for me. All the volunteers amazed me, then I ended up being a volunteer as well and now a Justice of the Peace. I really feel part of the community.”

Maria has also built a reputation as the go-to person for fundraisers.

“When the earthquake struck Christchurch a small group of us pulled together a show in 10 days that raised in excess of \$5,000 for the people of Christchurch. That is something I am proud of.”

“I consider it a great opportunity to now work for the Taranaki District Health Board as a Sustainability Lead. A new role created to ensure that the carbon footprint of the Taranaki Base and Hāwera Hospitals’ (including other sites) is reduced and an effective, efficient and practical sustainability platform is adopted. I’m proud to lead the sustainability operations of Project Maunga, new \$300 million wing at Taranaki Base Hospital and the first Five Green Star rated building in New Zealand.”



# TIPS FOR JOB HUNTERS

We asked Catherine Lo-Giacco, from the local branch of Human Resources Institute of New Zealand (HRINZ), for some tips for people searching for a job in Taranaki.

## FINDING A ROLE

- Visit [taranaki.co.nz/live-work-and-learn/work-here/jobs/](http://taranaki.co.nz/live-work-and-learn/work-here/jobs/) for Taranaki job vacancies.
- Other good places to look are Seek, Trade Me Jobs, recruitment agency websites, industry organisations, associations and trade groups, social networks and of course if you are interested in a particular organisation check their website.
- Contacting workplaces directly can help you find out more about an organisation, job or industry, and sometimes they may have a vacancy or know of one coming up.
- Use your networks. New Zealand is a small place and one of the best ways of getting a job is through people, so spread the word!
- If you are new to town join industry organisations, clubs and networking groups to make local connections.
- Create your own job – contracting is an appealing way of working for both employee and employer. Or maybe you have a small business idea brewing.

## CV PREPARATION

- Check your CV – make sure it is up to date and well presented. This is your first impression, so make it a good one.

- Talking of first impressions, employers might Google you – check your online footprint and consider changing your settings so the right people see the right information.

- Tailor your letter of application and CV to each job – the recruiter should know within a few seconds of looking at your resume that you have the right skills.
- Often the skills you bring from other less directly related industries or roles are ‘transferable’ to the new role – give examples of how these skills may apply.
- Make yourself an obvious fit. Where appropriate, match the words and phrases that are used in the job description with your own skills and experience highlighted in your CV.

## INTERVIEW PREPARATION

- Read the job description in advance of an interview and think ahead to the questions you may be asked and examples of how you have demonstrated the skills in prior roles.
- Consider the questions you would like to know about the company or the role. Remember this is an investment in your future – it is as important that the organisation is a good fit for you as you are the right fit for the role.
- After an interview, ask what the next steps are and how long it should be before you hear if you have been successful in progressing to the next stage. It helps to know what the process will be so you can manage any other applications you may have open at the same time.



  
HRINZ

# STARTING A BUSINESS

New Zealanders are known for being entrepreneurial. It is a business-friendly country and there's lots of support available. Taranaki is small enough to make great connections and large enough for a small enterprise to be viable. We've picked a few examples here of people from a range of places and at different stages in life to tell the story of starting or moving an enterprise to Taranaki.



# RUNNING TO HIS OWN SCHEDULE

## AJINKA JAGDALE

### **Ajinkya (AJ) Jagdale's first day in New Zealand wasn't as easy as it is for many new arrivals.**

When the then 18-year-old landed at Auckland Airport from Mumbai, India, en route to Taranaki to study a degree in hotel management at Pacific International Hotel Management School (PIHMS), AJ discovered his luggage hadn't made the trip.

"I had an hour and a half to track it down, then run to get my connecting flight to New Plymouth," he says. The day went from bad to worse as AJ dislocated his shoulder shortly after arriving. His new teachers had to take him to the hospital for his first night in the country.

Fortunately, AJ's fortunes have well and truly turned around. Since that day in 2005 he has built a successful business and a life for himself in Taranaki, starting by learning the many intricacies of hotel management.

"My mum placed huge importance on making visitors to our home feel welcome, and my dad taught us the value of working hard," AJ says.

The Jagdale family was focused on education and his parents sacrificed a lot for him to attend a good boarding school in India. The school had international students from all over the world, which helped open AJ's eyes to other cultures and made him curious about travelling and studying abroad. It's perhaps unsurprising that when AJ met the team from PIHMS at a study fair in India, he made



*Back Beach, New Plymouth / Ngāmotu*

**“This is the perfect place to run a business and still have a great lifestyle,” he says, while acknowledging that meeting his wife Kate, a Taranaki local, was also a factor in the decision to stay.**

the decision to come to Taranaki to study at the specialist hotel and hospitality private training academy, where students live on site in accommodation run just like a hotel.

“To be honest I knew very little about New Zealand before I came here – just a bit about the cricket team,” he says. But after getting a part-time job in one of New Plymouth’s burgeoning up-market bars, AJ quickly built a wide network of friends and business contacts.

“The owner Mark Louis was a great mentor, welcoming me back whenever I returned from an industry placement, part of the learning process at PIHMS. He became a friend, a mentor, and now a business partner.”

AJ and Mark have teamed up to create a string of successful restaurants and bars, which are winning favour with Taranaki locals and visitors alike. But it’s the life beyond the often tough hours of the hospitality sector that have kept AJ in Taranaki.

“There’s just so much to do here; arts, culture, sports and lots of business opportunities. There’s nowhere else I’d rather be!”

During their days off AJ and his family like to visit the beach, walk the dog and catch up with friends. And It’s been easy to keep in touch with family back in India. Even with the demands of owning a business he manages to get back to India to visit family and friends once a year.



AJ’s advice to people considering moving to Taranaki for study or work is “get to know Kiwi culture. Find out how they do things and respect that, but at the same time make sure you retain your identity. People will understand what it is like to be somewhere new and will help you through any challenges that you face.”

## FROM STUDY TO EMPLOYMENT

Taranaki offers excellent pathways from being a student to employment. The region has two large tertiary providers, Western Institute of Technology at Taranaki (WITT) and Pacific International Hotel Management School (PIHMS). These providers have strengths in project management, hotel management, cookery, nursing and a range of trades training. Many courses offer internships with Taranaki employers, which can be a great first step to employment. For more information visit [taranaki.co.nz/live-work-and-learn/learn-here/](http://taranaki.co.nz/live-work-and-learn/learn-here/).

For those seeking university study in Taranaki, Massey University offers New Zealand’s most extensive distance education online. In 2017, the university was ranked in Quacquarelli Symonds World University Rankings in the top 300 universities in the world for student employability. Other universities offer online learning in some subjects so for more information visit [universitiesnz.ac.nz](http://universitiesnz.ac.nz).

If you are moving from overseas to study in Taranaki, we recommend contacting Immigration New Zealand and Education New Zealand for a student visa and immigration and education agent details.



# LOCAL CONNECTIONS BILLOW BAKERY

## ROSIE SARGISSON AND JEFFREY FONG

**A year after selling their first loaf of artisan sourdough bread at New Plymouth's Farmers' Market, returning New Zealanders and freshly minted foodpreneurs Rosie Sargisson and Jeffrey Fong have realised their goal of opening a retail outlet for their bread-making business, Billow. And what an outlet it is – nestled in a trendy wee pocket of land down an alley off the main street of New Plymouth and housed in shipping containers from Christchurch's Re:START Mall, it's a setting and destination befitting their brand and ethos.**

"We love the relationship people have with their food suppliers in Europe and by having a bricks and mortar bakery, or in our case ex-shipping containers, we are able to connect with more customers more often than just selling at weekend markets allowed," says Rosie.

The sourdough bread dream first took seed in Europe after the pair left their sales and strategy roles with Fonterra in Singapore to indulge in their mutual love of trail-running and to see the world, while working out the next career move.

"We were over working for big corporates and the pull of New Zealand was strong but the 'what's next' question took a bit of brainstorming," says Rosie.

"When the bread idea struck, we both knew New Plymouth would be perfect. It has a culture of people willing to support new local things that excite them, it's small enough that word gets around but big enough for there to be enough interest to support products like ours," says Rosie.

"Taranaki is a really unique rural region in New Zealand, with both a thriving dairy industry as well as international oil and gas companies. Because it has both these industries there seems to be a high expat population, which was a very exciting prospect for us given we make a product well-known in the European market," adds Jeff.

Both also had a connection to New Plymouth. Auckland-born Rosie had spent a university summer working in New Plymouth and Jeff grew up here, which proved handy when the pair needed a kitchen to first start making their bread and a place to stay.

"We worked from my parents' kitchen for a year, selling at local markets," says Jeff.

Now the couple not only have a retail outlet but also the promise of a home of their own.

"We love it here. We recently bought a section and have plans to build," says Rosie.

"One thing we've noticed is people love living here and they make you love it too. It's a very optimistic place and people's enthusiasm is addictive," says Jeff.



“One thing we’ve noticed is people love living here and they make you love it too. it’s a very optimistic place and people’s enthusiasm is addictive.”

Through Billow, the pair have also established a strong network of fellow food producers who they’ve been able to share ideas with and support one another.

When Rosie and Jeff are not busy managing their business they still make time to hit the trails.

“It’s great to have the ocean five minutes away and the bush trails so close. We love heading up to the huts on Mount Taranaki for the night and disconnecting. We couldn’t do that before,” Jeff says.

“The parks and outdoor spaces here are fantastic. New Zealand in general is globally remote. The variety of food from different cultures is limited in contrast to Singapore, and travel to different countries and cultures takes longer, but the landscape and ease of accessing it balances this out.”

“We completely changed our lives moving here. We’ve gone from a huge city to a smaller city with a really strong community spirit, and traded working for large companies for running two new businesses. This community spirit has been a huge help as we get our businesses up and running. People are incredibly friendly here, and willing to give people a chance.”



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# DESIGNING A NEW LIFE WITH WORK-LIFE BALANCE

## THE BAKERS

**Battling Auckland traffic sealed Catherine's bold decision to not only move her young family but also her growing branding and packaging design business out of Auckland.**

"It got to the stage where we couldn't face going away on long weekends for fear of what the traffic would be like," says Catherine.

The Bakers – Catherine, husband Simon and young son – had no ties to Auckland, except for their careers, and had been pondering a move to a more lifestyle-oriented location for a while.

"We'd been eyeing up a move for some time and New Plymouth kept popping up as a good option for us. We'd been to New Plymouth on holiday and enjoyed it, people said it was a great place to raise a family and we liked the access to the outdoors, the creative scene, the business opportunities and of course house prices."

It was actually Catherine's Dad who gave them the final push to try New Plymouth and in July 2018 the move took place.

The nuts and bolts of relocating ran smoothly for Catherine and Simon once the decision to move was made.

"We waited for Simon to get a job, which he got at Powerco, then we stayed in an Airbnb in Fitzroy while we house hunted. Within a couple of months we were moving into our first home."

Affordable house prices were a definite attraction and the Bakers settled on making Frankeligh Park their home.

"We couldn't get over how nice the houses were and there were loads of them available."

Then there was the pleasant surprise as to just how welcoming people were.

"I couldn't believe it when a new colleague popped around from Simon's work bearing the Taranaki Lifestyle Toolkit, a list of playgroups and welcome gifts," says Catherine.

A year on, the friendliness and support hasn't let up.

"I have had wonderful support from the business community. Venture Taranaki has been very helpful and the Chamber of Commerce have offered personalised support. I get the feeling that everyone wants you to do well."

Relocating a new strategic branding and packaging design business (The Brand Depot) from big-city clients and networks was a risk, but the change of address is paying off in an unexpected way.

"I was nervous about relocating my new business. I didn't want to be out of sight, out of mind, but I have found clients respected my decision to move and it's become a real point of difference and a positive talking point."

Catherine uses technology to communicate with national clients, travels to meetings when required and says her clients get value for money with her lower overheads.

"When I initially set up in Auckland I liked the idea of being near my target customers' head offices, but in reality I had contacts and clients all around New Zealand. Now I've discovered I can work remotely with anyone, no matter their location, which is enabling me in turn to live and work in the place I choose."

As well as saving on house prices and overheads for her clients, Catherine is also well aware of how much time she saves.

"I have at least an hour more a day from not being in the traffic. I get more out of life, which is especially important with a young child."

The pleasant surprises keep coming for Catherine.

"I am constantly surprised by how many international people are here. It makes the city feel more cosmopolitan and I wasn't expecting that."

"People rave about New Plymouth and don't want to leave, and now I know why. I think the difference is people choose to live here so put a lot in and consequently we all get the rewards."

Catherine has a clear message for those in a similar boat.

"If you are worried about going to a sleepy New Zealand town, don't be. I feel more energised here, and I feel like I have my life back. New Plymouth has all of the great things a New Zealand lifestyle offers and it is accessible to everyone. New Plymouth gives us more than Auckland at this time of our lives."

"I definitely recommend Taranaki for people with young families. New Plymouth feels progressive, with a great energy and it is just the right size."



**"New Plymouth feels progressive with a great energy, and it is just the right size."**

## TIPS FOR START-UP ENTERPRISES

We asked Michelle Jordan, General Manager of Enterprise at Venture Taranaki about support and tips for people starting-up or operating a business or other enterprise in Taranaki.

### DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Whatever your idea or proposition, do your homework. Develop your idea, test and validate and do this well. Think carefully about your customers and your business model. Be flexible, be prepared to listen and pivot as you develop your plan and thinking.

### SEEK HELP AND GET SUPPORT

Find good people who will help support you and your aspirations. There's a wealth of enterprise support on offer in Taranaki including private sector support through professional services firms and banks, as well as our co-working spaces and other organisations, the angel investor group Launch Taranaki, and, of course, Venture Taranaki, your regional development agency.

Venture Taranaki delivers a wide range of services to help sustainably grow the region. These range across the enterprise lifecycle, from idea and inception through to growth and export, and offer value for individuals, enterprises, and sectors/industries. Venture Taranaki's enterprise support services include business start-up

venture  
TARANAKI  
Te Puna Umanga



clinics, enterprise advisory, mentoring support, co-funding support for building business management capability, innovation and research and development activity; and many other services including PowerUp, which includes a business start-up competition. There's also a vast array of regional intelligence information, sector support and development activity and much more. Take a look at [taranaki.co.nz](http://taranaki.co.nz) to find out more.

### NETWORK AND GET INVOLVED

Whether you choose to join the Taranaki Chamber of Commerce, one of the business associations around the maunga, or a network specific to your chosen sector, networking and connecting is key to developing the relationships you'll need in business and will also help build your profile. You get the gift of time living in Taranaki and I'd recommend using some of it to get involved in your community. A mentor or a sounding board is also an invaluable asset to many enterprises. Whether it's a formal or informal arrangement, an independent voice is always useful.

Finally, choose work you care about. Running an enterprise takes a huge amount of time and energy. Know what you're trying to achieve, ensure you're committed and of course, believe in yourself.



## CREATING A LEGACY

### JO & DAVE JAMES

**It was Taranaki first, making gin second for Jo and Dave James who returned to Taranaki in 2015 after a 25-year hiatus.**

“When we first decided to move back, we considered carrying on with our careers that had taken us all over the world or trying something completely different. We’ve travelled together, raised a family together but we’ve never worked together,” says Jo.

The pair researched and debated, but it was Jo’s love of gin and management experience coupled with Dave’s engineering background that has resulted in the creation of Juno – a bespoke gin-producing business based in Westtown, New Plymouth.

“We make a collection of premium New Zealand gins, following sustainable practices, using Taranaki water and New Zealand-grown botanicals where possible,” says Dave.

Jo and Dave chose to distance themselves from the distillery and have settled in Strandon, near the beach.

“Funnily enough we live just around the corner from where Jo grew up,” says Dave.

Driving across town to ‘work’ is nothing nowadays compared to Jo’s former one-hour journey in Melbourne to attend her public health management job.

Jo jokingly insists New Plymouth should remain a best kept secret: “Otherwise our morning commute will take 12 minutes instead of ten!”

“Even though we have lived, worked and travelled all around the world, New Plymouth has always been home. There’s something about the place. The connection to the mountain, living by the sea and of course the people,” says Jo when asked why they chose to return to New Plymouth.

The pair have reconnected with old friends and are naturally seeing much more of family now they are based in the same country.

“I don’t know how happy our family are to have us back as we rope them into all sorts of gin-making jobs. One sibling starts the distillery on their way to work and another grows botanicals for us,” Dave jokes.

In addition to plenty of social time with family, the couple have met a lot of new friends through gin too.

“New Plymouth is incredibly well endowed with clever engineers, innovators and growers. It is amazing the pool of talent the city has but yet it still retains a community atmosphere,” says Jo.

“I worked out we had connected with 50 local businesses in launching our own, from marketers, to accountants to growers. We call it the Juno effect,” she adds.

“Starting your own business introduces you to so many people, which helps you fit in and provides the opportunity to be socially engaged alongside completing meaningful work,” says Jo.

The pair are determined to create a legacy business.

“It’s an amazing feeling bringing something to the community and we feel the collective pride of the region, which gives us a lift,” says Jo.

In their downtime you’ll see the couple walking the Coastal Walkway, swimming at the local beaches, fishing and tramping.

“We’re outdoorsy people, and we always make sure we make the most of all the festivals and amazing artists. We love the great restaurant and café scene here too,” says Dave.

**As for the future, there may be opportunity for travel again, not only to Australia to see their two daughters and visit Australian suppliers, but also Asia as they look to establish an export market there.**

# TAKING THE FAMILY TO THE LIFESTYLE

The first question people looking to move to a new country or a new region ask themselves is – what can the family do? We've asked some families across the region what they love about their new home.

**“When friends come to visit they are amazed at what we have here, it’s a little secret.”**





# FINDING THE GOOD LIFE

KAREN, NEW PLYMOUTH



**“I feel really settled now. we’ve got great friends, a nice house, the boys are safe and living the life we dreamt for them.”**

**While the idea of living in Italy sounds like La Dolce Vita to many of us, to Karen and her husband Gianluca the good life was fast becoming the stressed life and the couple wanted more for themselves and their three sons.**

“We wanted a safe environment, a lifestyle where the boys could have space, be close to nature and have plenty of opportunity to find happiness,” says Karen.

The couple are medical professionals who owned their own clinic, worked long hours and felt the continual pressure of keeping up in what was becoming an overcrowded country.

“It felt like money and status were becoming more important than lifestyle and happiness.”

Karen and Gianluca quickly found out that deciding to immigrate was easy, making it happen was a different story.

“We did an enormous amount of research and planning, involving the boys in the process as we went as we knew if they weren’t happy it wasn’t going to work.”

Once they settled on New Zealand as the destination, the study and preparation began in earnest, starting with rugby. The boys joined the local rugby club – an hour’s commute from the family’s home near Milan – and started learning about New Zealand.



"They probably know more about New Zealand than some of their friends as we studied it so much before we came!"

New Plymouth wasn't on the itinerary of Karen and Gianluca's 2012 reconnaissance trip to check out hospitals and schools in a variety of small cities up and down New Zealand.

"We made a lot of connections with other Italians living abroad, met immigration agents and recruitment people and tried to improve our English. However, it wasn't until I passed the IELTS exam and finalised my application to the Midwifery Council that I began applying for jobs and one in New Plymouth caught my eye."

Before taking the application any further, the whole family sat together after dinner one night, Googled New Plymouth and liked what they saw.

"We found the 'Like No Other' site [Venture Taranaki's tourism site] and loved the photos. The mountain reminded us of the Dolomites, the seaside location appealed as we love sailing and the tramping opportunities looked amazing. Even the weather was a good thing. I like four seasons."

After two years of careful planning it seemed reckless making a decision to move to a city based on a few photos and gut instinct. But a day after her phone interview with staff from Taranaki Base Hospital, Karen signed a contract agreeing to join the Midwifery team in October 2014.

Gianluca, a doctor, joined the hospital's Obstetrics and Gynaecology team around a year later after tying up loose ends in Italy and, like Karen, getting his English up to the

required level for the English language test for high-skilled migrants.

There were no tests for the boys however. Instead, they were immersed in the English language once they arrived. Gregorio, the youngest of the three is now questioned about his Italian heritage.

"People don't believe Gregorio was born in Italy as his English is so flawless."

Moving country isn't for the faint hearted, but Karen feels the challenges have been worth it.

"While there was a settling in phase with lots of ups and downs, not once did any of us want to go back to Italy."

"We've adapted to people turning up with food for shared meals, leaving doors unlocked and I even cope with the boys wearing bare feet or gumboots everywhere!"

Buying a house, which took place in 2017, was a defining moment.

"I feel really settled now. We've got great friends, a nice house, the boys are safe and living the life we dreamt for them."

Karen is now looking to future goals, including being an apprentice falconer, further study and completing her novel about starting a new life in New Zealand, all the while she minds her four beehives, a flock of heritage chickens, a cow and tends her enviable vege garden.

Sounds like the good life, doesn't it?





# ALL ABOUT WHĀNAU

## LANDON ELDER & AYNSLIE HARPER

**There's a sign on the door of George's, an establishment in the New Plymouth suburb of Moturoa, which captures what's different about George's. It reads:**

*A brief history of how George's Moturoa came about. Firstly the name comes from my amazing Grandad George Manu. This man spent his whole life serving others. Whether that was cooking out at the Marae, gathering kai moana or toiling in the garden to provide for his whānau. We at George's Moturoa are very lucky to have been blessed with this same passion for cooking for others and hope this shows through with our kai and service. Whānau and especially children were very important to Grandad as they are to us, we not only allow, but encourage you to bring your tamariki in to play, make noise and eat real unprocessed food just like Grandad made for us. So if you haven't already done so bring the kids down for a feed and a play or just to say hello. All our food is made onsite from real ingredients. We strive to bring awesome coffee and real food to the real people of New Plymouth. No packets, no short cuts.*

The lunchbar was started in 2018 by Landon Elder and Aynslie Harper, and it's fast becoming famous for its fried bread, a traditional snack that is usually found at gatherings on marae – Māori community hubs. The bread is made from a recipe belonging to Landon's Koro (grandfather), George Manu. As soon as the eatery opened people began asking for it. George's Facebook

site regularly tells everyone that customers have to get in quick because it is so popular!

This connection to Māori culture is central to both the business, and to Landon, who shares the values of whanauatanga (family) and manaakitanga (hospitality). Becoming a chef was a logical career move, linking both values, and together with his high-school sweetheart, Aynslie, Landon moved to Australia, settling in Melbourne to pursue his dream. Meanwhile Aynslie gained success as an editor in the publishing industry.

Something of a culinary capital, Melbourne offered Landon some great opportunities, and the family – now with two boys, who Landon admits were “latte kids” – enjoyed all that Melbourne had to offer. But a work week that regularly stretched to 70-80 hours wasn't easy for the young family, and the idea of a return to Taranaki started to gain some serious appeal.

**“Setting up the business was a lot easier than we had thought. New Plymouth District Council were really helpful..”**

"Whenever we went home to Taranaki, Xavier was straight into all the things that are part of being a Kiwi kid – playing with cousins, climbing trees, and visiting the beach," Landon says.

"When you're young you don't appreciate what's right there in front of you. I took it all for granted."

The Elders returned to Taranaki in 2017 so sons Xavier and Toby could enjoy the Taranaki lifestyle and grow up closer to their family.

One of the big unknowns was what the family would do for work and how they could utilise their skills.

But the universe provided, in a way that seems to happen with great regularity in Taranaki, and contacts got Landon work driving a truck for food supplier Bidvest. This led to getting to know the owner of a cake shop on St Aubyn Street in Moturoa, who mentioned she was looking for a change. The couple seized on the opportunity and George's was born.

"Setting up the business was a lot easier than we had thought. New Plymouth District Council were really helpful and provided us with the advice and support to get started," says Landon.

The couple are passionate about what they're doing, and providing good food to families at an affordable price. It's easy to see how the eatery has quickly become a focal point in the local community, while becoming a key caterer for Taranaki iwi.

The family lives nearby, just a short stroll from the business, and they are equally close to the beach.

"We would never have been able to afford a home in Melbourne, let alone one so close to the coast," Aynslie says.

While Taranaki doesn't always offer the same availability of ingredients and inspiration that Melbourne did, the quality of both produce and lifestyle more than make up for it.

The kids are growing up outdoors with their cousins, the garden is filled with fresh vegetables for the eatery and Koro George's legendary fried bread is regularly whipped up for visitors to both their home and business. Landon and Aynslie couldn't imagine a better mix of family and hospitality – whanauatanga and manaakitanga – than what they now have living in Taranaki.

## FIVE FAVOURITE SUNDAY ADVENTURES

**While running George's is a time-consuming business, Sundays are reserved for the family. Here's where you'll likely find them:**

### 1. ON THEIR BIKES

"The Coastal Walkway stretches the length of New Plymouth and is amazing for learning to ride. Plus the bike park at Bell Block is perfect for small children," says Landon.



### 2. THE BEACH

"Even if it's cold and raining, there's always something to discover. We keep a bucket and spade in the car all year round for impromptu beach trips."



### 3. PUKEKURA PARK

"In the middle of New Plymouth is the most amazing park. It's particularly good during the Festival of Lights every summer – free entertainment for everyone."



### 4. REGIONAL GARDENS

"Xavier loves Tupare in New Plymouth. It's huge, with so many places to discover, and a fantastic swimming hole next to a free barbeque."



### 5. TARANAKI MAUNGA

"You can't miss it, and there's a walk suitable for all ages and abilities," Landon says.





# IT'S ALL THE LITTLE THINGS

## ERIN, MYLES, IZZY & ALEX WEBB, SOUTH TARANAKI

**A house with neighbours just metres away on all sides is a stark contrast to a villa surrounded by trees and set amidst lush green fields, but the latter is a dream home for the Webb family, and just one of the many factors that make their new life in South Taranaki so amazing.**

The family – mum and dad Erin and Myles, and kids Izzy and Alex – knew they wanted more than a cheap house in the suburbs of Hamilton, and neighbours watching every move. An experienced teacher, Myles was looking for a deputy principal position anywhere around the country, and the family bravely agreed to go wherever the job was.

When a suitable job came up at Auroa School in South Taranaki, a rural school with around 200 pupils, the Webbs leapt at the opportunity, despite neither Erin nor Myles ever having been to South Taranaki before.

“It was a risk,” Myles says, “but both the school and the community have been an amazing fit.”

The family moved into the school house, a fantastic way to meet the community, Erin says.

“It’s such a contrast to our former lives. I’d take baking over the fence for the staff, and the kids would just climb over the fence after school. It’s completely private with tons of room to live and play.”

All this space has given Izzy and Alex some new pastimes they would never have discovered in Hamilton.

“Things like feeding eels, watching the maize harvest. It really is all the little things that make the difference,” says Erin.

“Here we can lead a life that’s in touch with nature. We’ve discovered that we really love living in a rural community.”

When they first arrived in 2014, Erin and the children joined the local playcentre to meet local families, and the kids have since gone on to attend Auroa School, where both children made more new friends.

“We’ve ended up with an amazing network – neighbours who will just drop off a load of firewood and stack it up for winter or have given us the location of secret swimming spots around the area.”

“If spending quality time as a family is part of your parenting philosophy, then living in the country is a great option,” says Myles. “You do need to travel for certain things, but the time you have with family more than makes up for it.”

The community spirit has been incredibly supportive when it comes to overcoming one of the reservations the family had to moving to the country. Alex has the neuro-muscular condition Duchenne’s Muscular Dystrophy, which requires specialist medical and physical therapy support, necessitating regular trips to New Plymouth.

“This does require a little more planning than we had to do in Hamilton, but everything Alex needs is right here in Taranaki. Just down the road in Hāwera is a branch of Riding for the Disabled, and the municipal swimming pool offers great swimming therapy sessions.”

The family’s journey in understanding Alex’s condition prompted Erin to write a book explaining it to those afflicted by it. A copy of this has been crowd-funded for everyone in New Zealand with the condition.

# FINDING A HOME – INSIDERS’ TIPS

Taranaki has a vibrant property market with a vast range of housing options for all types of families. It’s often the quality and value for money for housing that attracts people to the region. No matter what your budget and whether you’re renting or buying, there’s an option for your family. We asked Real Estate Institute of New Zealand’s Taranaki Ambassador, Gary Malcolm for his top house-hunting tips.



## BUYING A HOME

- Visit as many properties as possible to get an idea of the market.
- Have a licensed building inspector go through the property either before making an offer or make a building inspector’s report a condition of the sale being finalised. This protects the buyer from any unforeseen building issues.
- Don’t be afraid to ask the salesperson questions. It is the salesperson’s job to respond and answer your questions. If there are known issues related to the property they are legally required to disclose them.
- Always get a Land Information Memorandum from your local district council. This will tell you everything the council knows about the property and can be used to check that all works are permitted. Each council has slightly different land management rules and bylaws.
- In New Zealand, an agent must present all offers to the vendor in writing. Once your offer has been accepted and your conditions of sale have been met you cannot be “gazumped” by another buyer offering a better price or conditions of sale.
- Always engage a solicitor to act on your behalf and review the contract, land titles and other legal documentation related to the sale.

A great website is: [settled.govt.nz](http://settled.govt.nz)

## RENTING A HOME

- Rentals can either be rented privately or through a property management company.
- Do your research, look online and in the newspapers, to get a feel for prices.
- It is illegal to charge a letting fee. However, it’s likely that you will be asked for a bond (usually around two weeks’ rent). The bond must be lodged with the Tenancy Tribunal.
- At certain times of the year, the rental market can be in high demand. Make sure you have good references from previous landlords. Proof of employment and credit information can be useful too.
- Make sure the property is safe to live in. Record any obvious defects or issues.
- It is the tenant’s responsibility to get power, gas, and other utilities connected so factor this into your budget.
- If you have pets, make sure the landlord or property manager is aware of that as not all landlords want pets in the home.

For more information about tenancy in New Zealand see: [tenancy.govt.nz](http://tenancy.govt.nz)





# TIPS FOR MOVING YOUR FAMILY

**Venture Taranaki’s Talent Advisor (and mother of two) Rachael Berndt offers the following tips on bringing your family to Taranaki:**

## HEALTHCARE

Taranaki has a regional hospital in New Plymouth. The hospital has new patient wards and the rest of the facility underwent a major rebuild in 2020. There is a smaller hospital for emergencies in Hāwera, and general practitioners, dentists and dental clinics located throughout the region. In larger centres there is access to weekend and after hours healthcare. Families moving to the region will need to contact general practitioners in their area and enrol.

## RECREATION AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- A great way to find out what’s available to do in your community is to contact your local district council: [southtaranaki.com](http://southtaranaki.com), [stratford.govt.nz](http://stratford.govt.nz) [newplymouthnz.com](http://newplymouthnz.com)
- Visit your local library; most towns in Taranaki have community libraries, which have community notice boards. [pukeariki.com](http://pukeariki.com) [stratford.govt.nz/our-district/stratford-district-library-and-visitor-information-centre/library](http://stratford.govt.nz/our-district/stratford-district-library-and-visitor-information-centre/library) [southtaranaki.com/our-facilities/libraryplus](http://southtaranaki.com/our-facilities/libraryplus)
- Free community newspapers are delivered to letterboxes throughout the region; they will have lists of upcoming events. Alternatively the Taranaki Daily news is available in print and online.
- In New Plymouth Live Magazine and Mood Magazine are free lifestyle magazines with stories and information about the community.
- Sport Taranaki list information about sports events and clubs in Taranaki; [sporttaranaki.org.nz](http://sporttaranaki.org.nz)

## FINDING A DAYCARE, PRECHOOLS AND SCHOOLS



- Options for daycare and preschools are varied and able to suit different needs. Taranaki’s options for preschools and daycare include traditional centre-based care, home-based care options where trained educators take small groups of children and nanny or au pair options. Services such as Playcentre or Playgroups, where parents and children go along together, can be a great way to meet other parents if you are new to Taranaki. Early childhood services have 20 hours free childcare for over 3-year-olds that can be split across multiple services.
- The size of primary schools varies from one-teacher schools to schools with over 400 pupils. Secondary school options include both singlesex and co-ed schools. Both levels offer state and state-integrated schools, which tend to have links to churches.
- Many New Plymouth primary schools have enrolment zones and children living in those zones get priority for school places, so it’s important to work out what primary school you want your family to attend before committing to long term accommodation.
- For students with special needs, ask schools that you are considering how they accommodate those needs.
- School-age children of families with work visas are treated as domestic students. Dependent children of student visa holders have some restrictions and you should seek advice from an immigration advisor if this is an issue. Children of parents on a work visa will pay international student fees for tertiary study.

# CONNECTING WITH THE COMMUNITY

A positive experience of moving to a new community is about the connections that you make. It can be difficult to know where to go to meet people and this section has some great advice about connecting with the community and making yourself at home. It talks about understanding the working culture, finding a home, and what to do and where to eat in the region.



# CHOOSING HAPPINESS

MAHA ALFAYYAD



**Keen to support her husband's desire to further his career and training in animal production, Maha was willing to move to New Zealand from Jordan with the pair's young son and give living in New Zealand a two-year trial. Little did she know, 13 years would pass, three more boys would be added to the family and they would all eventually call Taranaki home.**

"My husband discovered that experience was more important than a PhD and he was fortunate to keep getting opportunities to step up to new positions in the poultry industry," says Maha

While there were plenty of opportunities for Maha's husband to advance his career, she found her qualification wasn't recognised here and she would have to undertake further study to work as a lawyer in New Zealand.

"Initially I wasn't sure whether it would be worth the study if we were going to end up moving again. It was hard to make the transition from having a successful career to being a full-time housewife," she admits.

Maha's husband's first job in New Zealand saw the pair and their eldest son based in Matamata. They then moved to Tokoroa before finally settling in Taranaki nine years ago.

**"I like it that people accept different cultures and give back to the community, I feel I share the same values as many locals."**

"Taranaki is not too big and not too small. I like it that people accept different cultures and give back to the community. I feel I share the same values as many locals."

Like others new to a country, Maha took a practical approach to improving her English, making connections and improving her chances of work – joining groups, studying, attending Toastmasters, running small catering enterprises and working as a volunteer, but has found attitude is the key to feeling at home.

"I realised feeling at home was a choice and once I stopped feeling like I was betraying Jordan by enjoying New Zealand, I was free to feel at home here. Fitting in was all in my head."

She also found volunteering her time not only helped make connections and polish her English but made her feel good. Maha volunteers at Migrant Connections Taranaki and has also given her time to Victim Support and the Cancer Society.

"Giving makes you feel good and I want to contribute to make Taranaki a better place, not just for me and my kids but for everyone."

After a series of self-employment and entry-level jobs, Maha has turned her exploring mindset and emotional and cultural intelligence into a business coaching career.

"I studied for a diploma in management and business and a diploma of professional coaching and combined that with my interest in psychology and motivation to become a business coach."

Maha now has coaching clients in both New Zealand and Jordan where she helps people reach their potential, assists organisations to add diversity to their workforce – people are more than a list of skills on a CV – and helps them get the best out of their people.

Maha's coaching experience gives her a unique insight into the emotional and mental challenges of moving to a new culture. Her advice to new migrants is:

1. Be aware of your own emotions, values and what you want to be.
2. Work on belonging mentally to a place – what makes you feel like you belong and what is stopping you from feeling like you belong?
3. Ask for help – it's normal to find change hard.
4. As a migrant, you may have different experiences and values, but acceptance of differences and tolerances is helpful.



# SETTLING IN – TIPS FOR NEW ARRIVALS

Migrant Connections Taranaki (MCT) in New Plymouth is a point of contact for migrants and their families who choose to make Taranaki their home. MCT is a community-based initiative which assists migrants on a case-by-case basis to get accustomed to the shift in culture, to overcome challenges in a new country and integrate into the local community. MCT runs programmes on topics as diverse as the tax system, health, job hunting, and the legal system, to name but a few. Please see [migrantconnections.org.nz](http://migrantconnections.org.nz) for more information.

We asked Geetha Kutty, Manager at MCT, for her tips around settling in.

## SIGN UP

- Sport and hobbies are a good way to meet local people and get a taste of Kiwi culture
- Consider voluntary work to meet people and be active in the community, [volunteeringnewplymouth.org.nz](http://volunteeringnewplymouth.org.nz)
- Join your local Toastmasters Club where you'll get the opportunity to practise speaking English, a lot! [toastmasters.org/find-a-club](http://toastmasters.org/find-a-club)
- Join Neighbourly to find out what's happening in your area and to meet your neighbours [neighbourly.co.nz](http://neighbourly.co.nz)

- For parents of young children, Plunket has courses and groups you can join to share information about parenting and meet other people with young families [plunket.org.nz](http://plunket.org.nz)
- If you have school-age children get involved with school events



## FIND SUPPORT GROUPS AND NETWORKS

- Go along to the Migrant Women Meet to meet people in a similar situation – phone 06-759 6060 for days and times
- Local councils have helpful resources so check out their websites, give them a call or drop into their offices
- English Language Partners offer a variety of courses for people who want to learn English – some courses are free, some are subsidised, 06-759 1118
- Take part in the 'Making yourself at home' radio programme at Access Radio Taranaki or listen to other people's stories, [accessradiotaranaki.com/shows/making-yourself-at-home](http://accessradiotaranaki.com/shows/making-yourself-at-home)
- For professional women, join The Network, a networking and empowerment group, [thenetworkinc.co.nz](http://thenetworkinc.co.nz)
- For young professionals, Taranaki Young Professionals is a great networking group, [typ.co.nz](http://typ.co.nz)



# NAVIGATING THE KIWI WORKING CULTURE

**One of the most common challenges for new arrivals is learning about workplace culture. We asked a group of migrants to share their experience and advice.**

Hungarian Mihaly Hazag came to New Plymouth from Budapest in December 2017 with his family: wife, Ildiko, and three children. Mihaly has built a career in the Information Technology industry. They settled in Taranaki after he found a job at TSB. The family have made many friends here and now have residency.

Venezuelans Ronelba and Rafael Moreno came to New Plymouth in September 2012 with their two boys. Both Ronelba and Rafael have over 20 years of experience in the energy sector, working as engineers. The family moved to New Zealand for job opportunities and love it here. Their kids are true kiwis, the family recently received New Zealand citizenship and are thrilled to be now Taranaki Hard Core.

Chemistry and quality management specialist, Florence Mbou, is French born and bred. She worked in Australia and the UK before moving to New Zealand in 2011 with a young family. She has worked in information systems project management roles at Taranaki District Health Board and transmission company Powerco.

Natacha and Mark Dunn, and their children, left the UK in 2010 and moved to New Zealand, seeking a change in lifestyle. A job opportunity for Mark in the manufacturing sector led them to Taranaki and they haven't looked

back. Natacha found a role with a local innovative manufacturing business, before moving into a role helping enterprises in the region grow. They enjoy the huge range of activities Taranaki has to offer.

## HOW DOES WORKING IN NZ DIFFER FROM OTHER COUNTRIES YOU HAVE WORKED IN?

The culture is non-deferential and accepting of entrepreneurial thinking, people who have worked in the UK or Australia will find some cultural similarities. New Zealand's regulatory structure makes it easy for small business to thrive and Taranaki's size makes business networking easy.

**Natacha** – Where I've worked it's been very flat in terms of structure. I've been able to work across a range of different things rather than just working in my little area.

**Florence** – There are more self-employed people here than in France; people are less likely to be permanent employees working for just one company. The downside of a flatter structure means that, in NZ, sometimes everyone wants to be involved in the decision and things can take time.

**Ronelba** – I love the fact that everyone is an entrepreneur and anyone can have their own successful company. The whole platform supports you to start a business ... not everybody is born to work for a company or be behind a desk all day.

## WHAT ARE NEW ZEALANDERS LIKE TO WORK WITH?

New Zealanders can take some time to get to know, especially outside of work. Once colleagues get to know your skills, they are likely to give you opportunities to showcase your skills.

**Mark** – I think it's easier to develop positive working relationships in smaller businesses rather than large corporates and luckily most companies are smaller. I'd recommend working in a New Zealand-owned company or Australian-owned company, as they tend to be a better fit with the workforce culture. Compared to working in the UK, you can move around a lot more instead of being stuck in one role.

**Natacha** – Most people here are forward thinking. Sometimes you might come in with skills that may not seem like an obvious match, but often people from abroad bring in other skills, and once you win people over and show you are competent then things usually go well.

## WHAT ABOUT NEW ZEALANDERS' FAMOUS LACK OF DIRECTNESS?

Compared to other workplace cultures, New Zealanders' communication style can come across as indirect.

**Mihaly** – If you are direct with people at the start they might switch off. Build a relationship first and you can have a franker discussion in the office.

**Florence** – However, there are so many people here from different countries that Kiwis do adapt their communication style.

## WHAT'S WORK-LIFE BALANCE LIKE?

For everyone in the group, work-life balance was the most attractive thing about being in Taranaki.

**Ronelba and Rafael** – We are here because it's a nice place to be and our kids are safe and well. The most important thing for us at this stage in our lives is quality of life. New Zealand is at a different pace and it took us a while to adapt ourselves to the slower pace. That was a shock at the beginning but eventually we managed to use the time to explore other things and we ended up doing a certificate in organic horticulture at WITT and a certificate in Te Reo Maori in Te Wananga Aotearoa, which have been really amazing.

**Natacha** – It can feel that your career is not going as fast, but you can pursue skills and interests and if it fits with a great lifestyle, that's good.

## AS A PERSON FROM ANOTHER CULTURE, HOW HAVE YOU BEEN TREATED?

Everyone felt that they had been made to feel welcome.

**Mihaly** – In the time I've been here nobody has said "why did you come here – go home?" Nobody's said learn this language properly. We got residency in August, and we went back to Hungary for a holiday in October. When we returned to NZ, at immigration in Auckland, the officer handed back our Hungarian passports with the visa in it and said "welcome home". My wife was in tears because it was so touching.

**Ronelba** – It meant a lot for us when we became citizens and we sang the national anthem. For us, our country Venezuela is politically unstable and we do not have the option to go back and have a good life there; therefore, feeling safe and having quality of life for our family means a lot to us. We really appreciate being here in New Zealand.

On the one occasion where negative things happened these were dealt with effectively.

**Florence** – My kids have brown skin, and there has been teasing about their father being from Africa, but the school was very proactive and dealt with it effectively. That's one incident; we had a very good welcome.

## WHAT PREPARATION SHOULD SOMEONE DO BEFORE ARRIVING HERE?

Learn about the rights of workers in the workplace. There are laws to ensure that you get a fair deal.

For families of young children learn about options for daycare and if you are working full time, you will need to factor in the cost of after-school care and care during school holidays (2 weeks every quarter and 6 weeks over summer).

Open a bank account before leaving home, it will save you time.

Come with an open mind and be prepared to be flexible and open to new opportunities.

**Natacha** – If you go in with an open mind, it will be OK. The job might not be exactly what you are expecting but you will learn new things. I have had three jobs since we have been here, and it's been great ... You have to be flexible about what you do and be prepared to give anything a go and sell your skills. It's been a great thing actually, knowing that I can adapt. In France, the workforce is very structured and hierarchical, and you don't interact with the boss.

## TELL US A FUNNY STORY ABOUT SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU WERE NEW TO NZ?

**Florence** – My first day at the hospital [working], we had an induction seminar. They were giving the health and safety instructions and the instructor was saying "in an emergency, please assemble in the lift". I thought this was very strange as we were on the ground floor and there was no lift. It took me a while to work out she was saying "on the left".

**Mark** – My issue was my accent. At my first job I gave what I thought was a great presentation about all the changes I wanted to make and got no reaction or response. I was shocked and wondered if I'd done something offensive. Later my colleagues said that nobody could understand me.



# WHAT TO DO

## TARANAKI IS THE BEST PLACE – A YOUNG PERSON’S GUIDE TO THINGS TO DO IN TARANAKI

Families looking to move cities or countries often worry about how their children will settle into a new place. We decided to go straight to the experts and have asked a few young people who have made the move to Taranaki with their families what they enjoy doing.

### OUT AND ABOUT IN NORTH TARANAKI

James and Luca Dunn were born in the United Kingdom and they moved to New Zealand in 2010 with French Mum, Natacha, and Welsh Dad, Mark. Both boys already consider themselves true locals. We asked them what they love best about living in Taranaki.

“If we put the boys in charge of making a promotional video about the region, it would focus on the region’s recreation assets and feature Mount Taranaki, waterfalls, New Plymouth’s iconic Pukekura Park and people out biking and walking,” says mum Natacha.

Both boys are sports mad and suggest:

- trying your hand at one of the region’s many golf courses or a round of mini-putt at Hillsborough Museum and Mini Golf
- joining the New Plymouth surf rider’s club
- giving Ultimate Frisbee at Merrilands Domain a go.

True to their French heritage, James and Luca know where to find great food. They recommend:

- Indian restaurant Flame on New Plymouth’s Devon Street
- Ms White’s Pizza at the West End Precinct
- Petit Paris in the heart of New Plymouth for French pastries
- Holy Guacamole for Mexican style food with a view at Ōakura.

The boys love their schools and say they have made great friends. They point out that in New Zealand it’s warm and relaxed enough to not have to wear shoes all the time. They think that it would be amazing for their uncle and cousins to move here. We agree and maybe it’s time your family joined them!





## EXPLORING SOUTH TARANAKI

Izzy and Alex Webb of Kapuni, near Hāwera, are keen explorers of South Taranaki and are eager to share their favourite things to see and do. Alex has a neuro-muscular condition that sometimes requires him to use a wheelchair, but this hasn't stopped the duo exploring the best of South Taranaki. Some of their favourites are:

- Hollard Gardens in Kaponga, which has many paths that can be explored, even when Alex needs his wheelchair. The playground and games shed is great, and there are even umbrellas for you to use if it rains.
- Ōpunake and Ohawe Beaches are great for a swim on a hot summer afternoon. For furry members of the family, Ohawe is dog-friendly too.
- King Edward Park in Hāwera is just beautiful and is flat for easy access. Izzy loves the playground.
- Eltham's Rotokare Reserve is a predator-free sanctuary teeming with native bird life.
- Outdoor movies in Eltham are popular, free and great family fun.
- Wilkies Pools, a ten-minute walk from the Dawsons Falls Visitors' Centre in Egmont National Park, is wheelchair-accessible right up to the viewing platform at the pools.
- The Powerco Aquatic Centre in Hāwera is a hit with Izzy as well, even if the hydro-slide is a bit fast for her!

## LOTS TO DO IN STRATFORD

Teenager Aimee Hare moved to Stratford from Waimate in Mid-Canterbury with her family 10 years ago. While initially she was nervous about moving and making new friends she need not have worried as now you struggle to find her at home.

During winter she's busy playing age-group representative rugby for Taranaki and in summer she's out enjoying the different beaches dotted along the coast and walks on and around Mount Taranaki.

Aimee has one word to describe Taranaki – "fun".

"The scenery here is amazing – you must visit the mountain. The Wind Wand and Coastal Walkway are stunning too," she says.

For lazy hot summer days in Stratford, the beautiful Pātea River in the middle of town has swimming holes she loves.

Aimee also likes riding motorbikes and she and Dad Andrew have found a great local motocross circuit.

And for those times that you just need somewhere to hang out with friends, Aimee recommends Stratford's Inkpot café. "It's lots of fun and the food is yum", she says.

**To find out more of the activities on offer around Taranaki see:**  
**[taranaki.co.nz/visit](http://taranaki.co.nz/visit)**



## WHERE TO EAT

**Foodies will love Taranaki. There are many places to try and there's a thriving café scene. No matter where you are in the region you are never too far away from a great dining experience.**



**We asked local food and wine connoisseur Rachel Church to give us her thoughts on what she loves about the food scene in Taranaki.**

**Originally from Long Island New York, Rachel moved to**

**New Plymouth via stints in San Francisco and London with local partner Rodney Hosking. In 2013 they created Hosking House, providing boutique accommodation and began recommending our local restaurants, cafés and bars to their guests. Rachel's previous career in events, passion for our food scene and love of our region inspired her to create the local event "Festival" in 2018, a feast around Taranaki that takes place annually in the winter. [festival.co.nz](http://festival.co.nz)**

### **WHAT ARE YOUR TOP TIPS FOR AFTER 5PM ENTERTAINMENT?**

#### **Mix it up:**

Re-think your favourite restaurants ...

Instead of saving places for only special occasions, think of visiting them more regularly for drinks, platters, appetizers or even a date night dessert. What about drinks at the bar at Itch Wine Bar? Think platters on the patio at Table @ The Nice Hotel or The Good Home ... appetizers and drinks overlooking the water at Salt, Arborio, Okurukuru, or Manou's, a dessert at Social Kitchen, The Hour Glass or Fork n Knife.

#### **Try something new:**

We often stick to the same places, and lots of time order the same thing. Pick a new spot – or ask your waiter to order for you. Most of our amazing restaurants change their menus frequently so get outside your comfort zone. Have you tried the meatballs at Polpetta? Tacos at Frederic's? Housemade pasta at State Pasta? Flambe at the Orangerie at The Plymouth International? The burgers at Deluxe Diner? If not, you're missing out.

### **WHAT ARE YOUR TOP TIPS FOR DAYTIME DINING/ SOCIALISING?**

#### **Celebrate the New Zealand café culture:**

Right around the mountain we have some amazing cafés – the Bach at Breakwater, Café Windsor in Inglewood and Someday Café in Hāwera to name a few. Here in New Plymouth the choices are also amazing and plentiful: Elixir, Ozone, Public Catering Co, Emmalou, Chaos ... I could go on and on ...

#### **Gather a mix of friends and family for a long lunch:**

What about a Sunday session in the courtyard at Ms White, Snug Lounge and Public Catering Co? A lazy long lunch on the weekend with friends at Monica's, Juliana's, Okurukuru or Arborio? Try one of the amazing spots at Liardet Street Projects.

### **FAVOURITE COCKTAIL, WHAT IS IT AND WHERE WOULD YOU HAVE IT?**

Juno Gin hands down! Local gin, made in Taranaki. Featured at many local locations including Governor's Eatery and Bar, The Good Home, Arborio, and Meat and Liquor. I also enjoy a good Guinness at Peggy Gordon's, a rosé on the deck at Table, or a craft beer at Mike's or Shining Peak.



### HAS PORK BELLY HAD ITS DAY, WHAT'S NEXT?

The classics will always be in style. But next I think we'll continue to see the growth in popularity of international menus such as those from Laughing Buddha, Arranged Marriage, Sushi Ninja, Koi Spice & Whisky, India Today, Siam and Café Turkey.

### WHAT ARE THE TRENDS IN DINING/ENTERTAINING?

#### The experience:

Dining is not just the food on the plate but the entire experience, and I see restaurateurs being the leaders in creating the complete experience for their guests. The décor, well trained staff, the mood ... they have always been important but even more so now.

Our local restaurants transport you and give you an experience that goes beyond the food. Most of them host events like wine and beer tastings, degustations, and long lunches.

#### Food as nourishment:

People are becoming aware that good health and self-care can start simply with the food we put in our bodies. We don't have to go full vegan to reap the benefits (but you can if you enjoy the beautiful Lemonwood Eatery in Ōakura,) our cafés and restaurants feature a fabulous mix of healthy food, combined with flavour and enjoyment. Just think of places like Café Green Door!

### WHAT DO YOU SEE HAPPENING OVERSEAS THAT'S HAPPENING HERE?

#### Food provenance – knowing where your food comes from:

Knowing where your food comes from is a huge movement in places like London, New York and San Francisco. It's a basic interest that we've become de-sensitised to in our modern world that people are coming back to. We see it here with local producers and purveyors like Roebuck Farms, Egmont Seafoods, Green Meadows Beef and Egmont Honey. More and more our local restaurants are buying local Taranaki ingredients and showcasing them on their menus. Think of Shining Peak, Meat & Liquor, State Bistro, and Table at the Nice Hotel.

### CONVERSELY WHAT'S UNIQUE TO NZ/NEW PLYMOUTH DINING OUT/ENTERTAINING?

The fact that we have so many high-calibre establishments in our small region. Guests to our region are discovering that we are not just made up of the beauty of our



mountain and sea, our amazing arts scene or lively events – but you dine extremely well in Taranaki too. This creates a true Lifestyle Capital!

### HOW DO YOU RATE THE QUALITY OF THE TARANAKI RESTAURANT AND CAFÉ SCENE?

A+: It's one of the main reasons we decided to live here, why guests to the region are blown away by our offerings and why I created Feastival – an event that celebrates Taranaki's restaurants, bars and cafés. I am passionate about the food scene here and what our restaurant and café owners are creating!

### WHAT'S A GREAT TAKEAWAY OPTION?

Arizona for midweek lunch at the office, a burrito from That Mexican Place, Sushi from Sushi Ninja and a Chinese feast from Laughing Buddha are my top picks ... oh and classic fish & chips from Catch & Co at Port Taranaki.

### WHERE WOULD YOU RECOMMEND GOING ON A BUDGET?

We have a great pub culture – and they serve great food at great prices. Check out the dining room at Peggy Gordon's Celtic Bistro, or further afield at the Midhurst and Toko pubs! Specials are also a great way to dine on a budget.

### CAN YOU THINK OF A GREAT DINING OUT EXPERIENCE SOMEWHERE AROUND THE MOUNTAIN THAT PEOPLE MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT?

Someday Café in Hāwera, run by the stylish and talented Tricia Tasker. Modern, warm atmosphere, great coffee and fabulous food. A hidden gem that also opens occasionally for dinner – be in the know to find out when!



# USEFUL RESOURCES

Web resources change all the time, but here's a list of some useful resources.

## GENERAL TARANAKI INFORMATION

To find out about visitor information, local events, business development support, and statistics about Taranaki visit: [taranaki.co.nz](http://taranaki.co.nz).

This site is regularly updated with tools and tips for living and working in the region.

## LOCAL GOVERNMENT

There are three district councils in Taranaki and a regional council. District councils are responsible for rubbish collection, water reticulation, local roading, animal control, public libraries, parks and open spaces and community events. The regional council is primarily concerned with environmental management. Local councils are great sources of information about what's happening in their local area.

South Taranaki District covers Hāwera, Eltham, Pātea, Ōpunake and the surrounding farm areas. [southtaranaki.com](http://southtaranaki.com)

Stratford District covers Stratford and the surrounding farming districts – [stratford.govt.nz](http://stratford.govt.nz)

New Plymouth District covers New Plymouth, Inglewood, Waitara, Ōakura, Ōkato and the surrounding farm areas and villages [newplymouthnz.com/Council/About-the-Council](http://newplymouthnz.com/Council/About-the-Council)

Taranaki Regional Council  
– [trc.govt.nz](http://trc.govt.nz)

## SUPPORT FOR MOVING TO NEW ZEALAND

Immigration New Zealand has some great online resources. They include checklists for pre-departure, and links to immigration assistance.

[newzealandnow.govt.nz/move-to-nz](http://newzealandnow.govt.nz/move-to-nz)

[immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas](http://immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas)

## VIDEO RESOURCES

YouTube Vlogger, Jen, lives in South Taranaki, and makes videos about moving to New Zealand. They are an excellent source of information, covering everything from shipping to Migrant Stories, her videos are authentic and a great source of information. Search A Thousand Words in YouTube.

## BANKING AND FINANCE

Almost all banks in New Zealand offer the option to open a bank account in your home country prior to moving here. This is recommended.

The New Zealand Now site has excellent material on the tax system: [newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/money-tax/nz-tax-system](http://newzealandnow.govt.nz/living-in-nz/money-tax/nz-tax-system).

## CHOOSING A SCHOOL

Education Counts is an excellent resource for learning about New Zealand's education system. It includes tips for choosing a school or early childhood centre.

[educationcounts.govt.nz/home](http://educationcounts.govt.nz/home)

There are also Taranaki kindergarten and Playcentre websites.

In Taranaki a range of state and religious school options are available.

## FINDING A HOME

Most real estate companies can help with finding rental properties and purchasing a home. Websites such as [realestate.co.nz](http://realestate.co.nz) and Trade Me have extensive listings for real estate agents across Taranaki. Local newspapers will also have listings.

## GETTING AROUND

We drive on the left-hand side of the road. Car dealers import good quality near-new cars, so purchasing a car when you arrive can be a really good option.

There are regional bus transport networks and city transport in New Plymouth.

[trc.govt.nz/buses-transport/routes](http://trc.govt.nz/buses-transport/routes)

New Plymouth Airport connects with other regions.



*Len Lye Centre, New Plymouth*



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**venture**  
TARANAKI  
Te Puna Umanga

Taranaki's Regional Development Agency

25 Dawson Street, PO Box 670  
New Plymouth 4340, New Zealand

T+64 6 759 5150  
E info@venture.org.nz

www.taranaki.co.nz

An initiative of



Te Kaunihera-ā-Rohe o Ngāmotu  
**New Plymouth**  
District Council