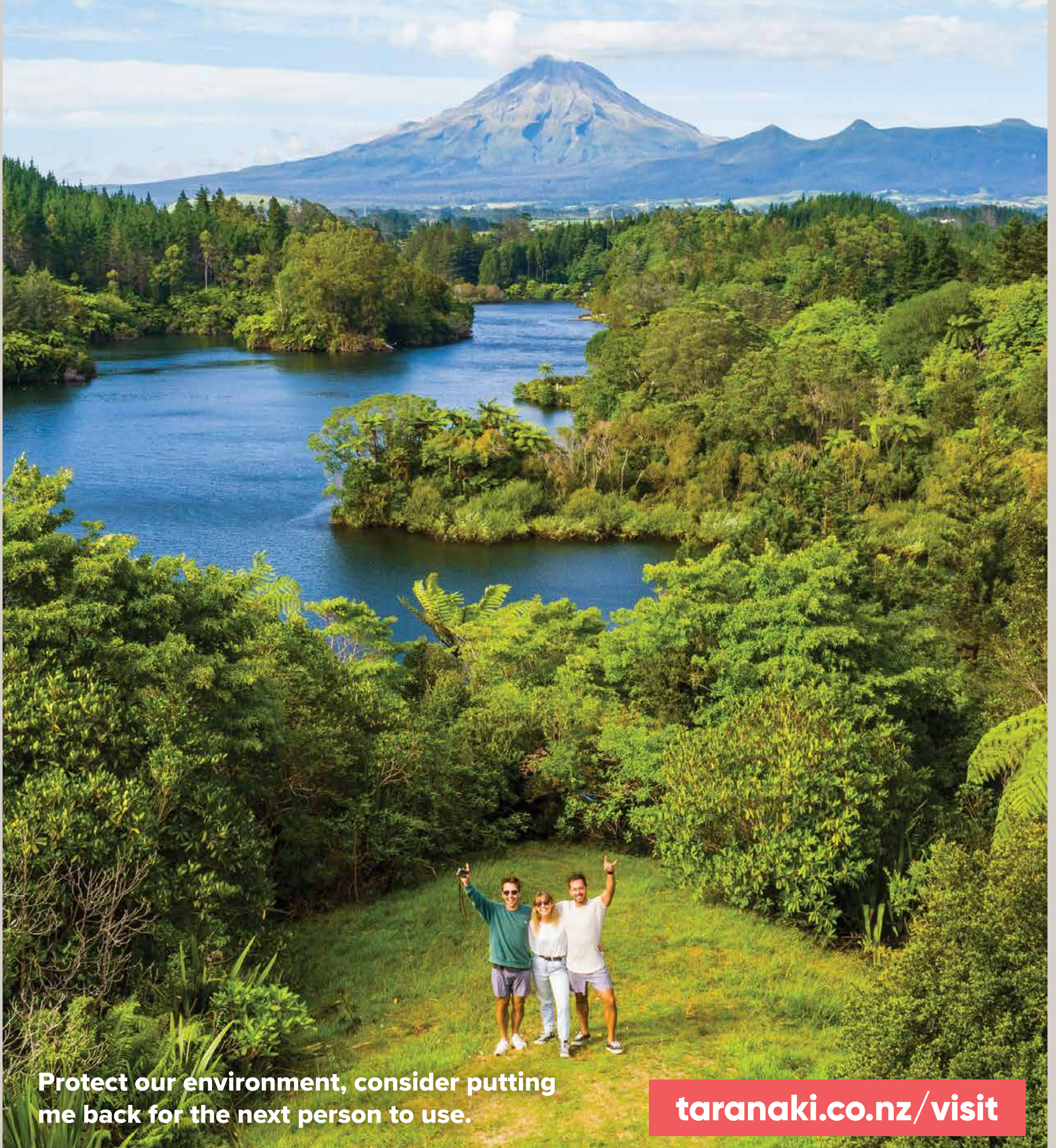


TARANAKI

like no other

# TARANAKI: AN INSIDER'S GUIDE

**Your guide to all the local secrets that  
make Taranaki a great place to visit**



**Protect our environment, consider putting  
me back for the next person to use.**

[taranaki.co.nz/visit](https://www.taranaki.co.nz/visit)

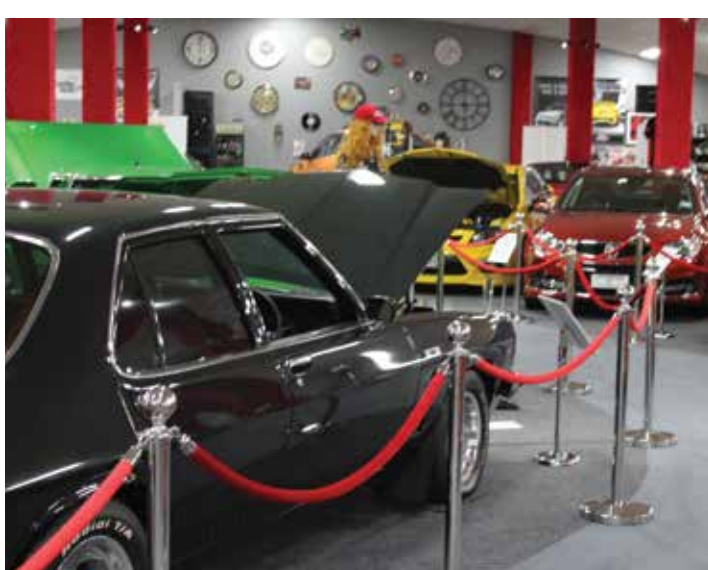
# HIT THE SURF (HIGHWAY, THAT IS)

**Surf Highway 45** traces the Taranaki coastline from New Plymouth in the north to Hāwera in the south, past surf breaks, historic sites, cool towns and more. Almost every road that heads towards the coast will offer a surfable wave – stock up on wax and more at one of the region’s great surf shops that double as anything, from cafés to surf history museums. Alternately, find a quiet beach for a picnic or visit the historic **Cape Egmont Lighthouse** (Cape Rd) or the **Cape Light Museum** (at the end of Bayly Rd) to learn of the lighthouse’s dramatic past or check out the **Wreck of the SS Gairloch**, the bow of which is still visible off the end of Timaru Rd. The laid-back towns of Ōakura, Ōkato, Ōpunake and Manaia punctuate the journey, offering their own stories and attractions and great walking trails. Great spots for beach cricket, sandcastles and swimming can be found at **Fitzroy**, (Beach St, New Plymouth) **East End** (Nobs Line, New Plymouth) **Ōakura** (Jans Tce, Oakura) **Ōpunake** (Beach Rd, Ōpunake) and **Waitara** (off Centennial Dr, Waitara) to name but a few.



For more information head to  
[taranaki.co.nz/visit](https://www.taranaki.co.nz/visit)

# MUSEUMS OF ALMOST EVERYTHING



The many stories of Taranaki are wonderfully told through the region's museums. Here are some of the best:

- **Tawhiti Museum and Traders & Whalers** has been repeatedly judged one of the country's best museums, and has to be experienced to be believed. Visit the website for opening hours/days. 401 Ohangai Rd, just out of Hāwera.
- **Puke Ariki** is New Plymouth's waterfront museum, library and i-SITE providing information about the city's past and present. A fascinating guided walk is also available – book at the i-SITE, 1 Ariki St, New Plymouth.
- **Aotea Utanganui**, the Museum of South Taranaki, tells the stories of the area in central Pātea. 127 Egmont St, Pātea.
- **Pioneer Village** offers a collection of historic buildings, activities and more. SH3 1km south of Stratford.
- **Hillsborough Holden Museum** New Zealand's largest private collection of Holden cars and memorabilia. 683 Egmont Rd, New Plymouth.

To discover many more of the regions museums, grab a free *Museums and Galleries Guide* from the region's i-SITES or online at [taranaki.co.nz/visit](http://taranaki.co.nz/visit).

# SCALE NEW HEIGHTS

If you've got a head for heights, here's a few opportunities to get a bird's-eye-view of Taranaki:

The **Hāwera Water Tower**, built in 1914 as a defence against fires that ravaged the town, has 215 steps leading to spectacular views over Hāwera. The tower is open daily – contact the site at its base for access. 55 High St, Hāwera.

**Paritutu Rock**, the sharp volcanic outcrop alongside Port Taranaki, is also scalable for great views of the coast, mountain and New Plymouth city. Wear sturdy shoes. Centennial Dr, New Plymouth.

Of course for the best views of the region, head for a hike on **Taranaki Maunga**. The Dawson Falls, Stratford Plateau or North Taranaki access roads lead you to visitor centres or the historic **Ngāti Ruanui Stratford Mountain House** and Ngā Rere, a new 18-room cultural lodge (set to open 2026). There are many short and long walks beyond that are suitable for all levels of fitness. Go prepared though as conditions can change. We advise you to check conditions at [doc.govt.nz](http://doc.govt.nz) beforehand.



## GET CREATIVE

There are plenty of places to check out what's going on in the local arts scene. Here are some to get you started.

- The iconic **Govett-Brewster Art Gallery and Len Lye Centre** is at the heart of New Plymouth's burgeoning West End Precinct, and presents cutting edge contemporary art and events with a focus on leading kiwi artist Len Lye. 10am-5pm daily. Corner of King and Queen Sts, New Plymouth.
- Stratford's **Percy Thomson Gallery** presents great local and touring exhibitions. Miranda St, Stratford.
- The **Lysaght Watt Gallery** in Hāwera offers an ever-changing celebration of local creativity. 6 Union St, Hāwera.
- Follow the pulse of creativity along the **Coastal Arts Trail**, NZ's longest self-drive art experience between Taranaki, Whanganui, and Manawatū.

# GLORIOUS GARDENS AND PARKS

Taranaki has been known as the Garden of New Zealand since pioneering days, and offers a wide range of public and private gardens and parks. For a full list head to [taranaki.co.nz/visit](http://taranaki.co.nz/visit):

- The expansive inner-city **Pukekura Park** includes a lake, fountain, stunning fernery and picturesque tea house. Main entrance Fillis St, New Plymouth.
- On the slopes of the mountain, **Pukeiti** hosts one of the world's biggest and most diverse rhododendron collections as well as themed treehouses for the kids, a fitness trail and an option to stay overnight in the bookable Pīwakawaka Family Hut! 2290 Carrington Rd, New Plymouth.
- **Hollard Gardens** is a horticultural oasis in the heart of dairy country. 1686 Upper Manaia Rd, Kaponga.
- Former Chapman Taylor-designed homestead **Tūpare** is surrounded by a spectacular garden. 487 Mangorei Rd, New Plymouth.
- **Te Kainga Marire**, an inner-city native garden, is one of New Zealand's few 6-star gardens. 15 Spencer Pl, New Plymouth.

## PUKEITI



# SCENIC SPLENDOUR

From a picture-perfect mountain to sparkling surf coast, Taranaki is perfect for selfies or scenic photo shoots.

- Tongapōrutu and the beaches of north Taranaki offer many scenic spots, from the **Three Sisters** to the **White Cliffs**, the beaches of Mōkau to the mountain silhouette in front of the setting sun.
- **Taranaki Cathedral Church of St Mary's** is New Zealand's oldest stone church and while currently closed for earthquake strengthening, still offers a very photogenic façade. Te Whare Hononga (the house that binds), is also on site, offering an immersive look into the history of the Taranaki land wars and reconciliation between the Church and Ngāti Te Whiti hapū. 37 Vivian St, New Plymouth.





# A LITTLE BIT OUT THERE

For a slightly quirkier Taranaki experience, check out the following:

- Try the **Forgotten World Adventures** in cleverly adapted self-drive rail carts along the disused railway line between Taumarunui and Stratford.
- Located in the main street, Stratford's **Glockenspiel Clock Tower** performs excerpts from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet at 10am, 1pm, 3pm and 7pm daily.
- Inglewood's **Fun Ho! Toy Museum** is a great destination for both young and old. SH3, Inglewood.
- Experience deep relaxation at **The Floatation Sanctuary** with high-quality floatation pods, infrared sauna, and an oxygen bar. 229 Devon St East, New Plymouth.
- **The Hideaway** is home to the **Hillsborough Holden Museum**, the largest collection of Holden memorabilia this side of the ditch, complete with luge, Bathurst-themed mini-putt and onsite café. 683 Egmont Rd, New Plymouth.

## DISCOVER A FORGOTTEN WORLD

The **Forgotten World Highway** is a stunningly scenic drive through New Zealand's heritage. The winding 155km route traverses four natural saddles, includes a 180m-long tunnel, and passes through the Republic of Whangamōmona, a heritage village that is so remote it has its own passport and president. The iconic Whangamōmona Hotel offers the chance to meet some of the locals.

# MEET THE LOCALS

Taranaki is home to many fascinating creatures. To meet them, check out the region's zoos and wildlife experiences.



- Family-friendly **Brooklands Zoo**. Brooklands Dr, New Plymouth.
- **Te Popo Gardens** features beautifully crafted bronze animals – a safari experience you can touch and photograph
- The predator-free environment of **Lake Rotokare Scenic Reserve** is home to regenerating flora and fauna. Sangster Rd, 12km east of Eltham.

# GET OUTDOORS

- **Take a dip** in one of the region's rivers, popular beaches, or at the civic pool complexes in towns around the mountain.
- Fishing is a popular pastime from Port Taranaki's **Lee Breakwater**, and check out the Breakwater Bay collection of shops and eateries. Ocean View Parade, New Plymouth. Alternatively, try fly fishing with **Guided Fly Fishing Taranaki**.
- **Taranaki Cycle Park and BMX Track** at Bell Block offers something for all the family, while the **Mangamahoe Mountain Bike Park** caters for those that like to get dirty.
- For the really intrepid cyclist, take the **Forgotten World Cycle Trail** 180km between Taumarunui and New Plymouth, via Whangamōmona or the Kōpiko trail from East Cape to Cape Egmont.
- Eighteen **golf courses** span the region – everything from championship level to rural links. See [taranakigolf.co.nz](http://taranakigolf.co.nz) for details and locations.





# WONDERFUL WALKS

There are plenty of opportunities to explore the region on foot. Here are just some of them:

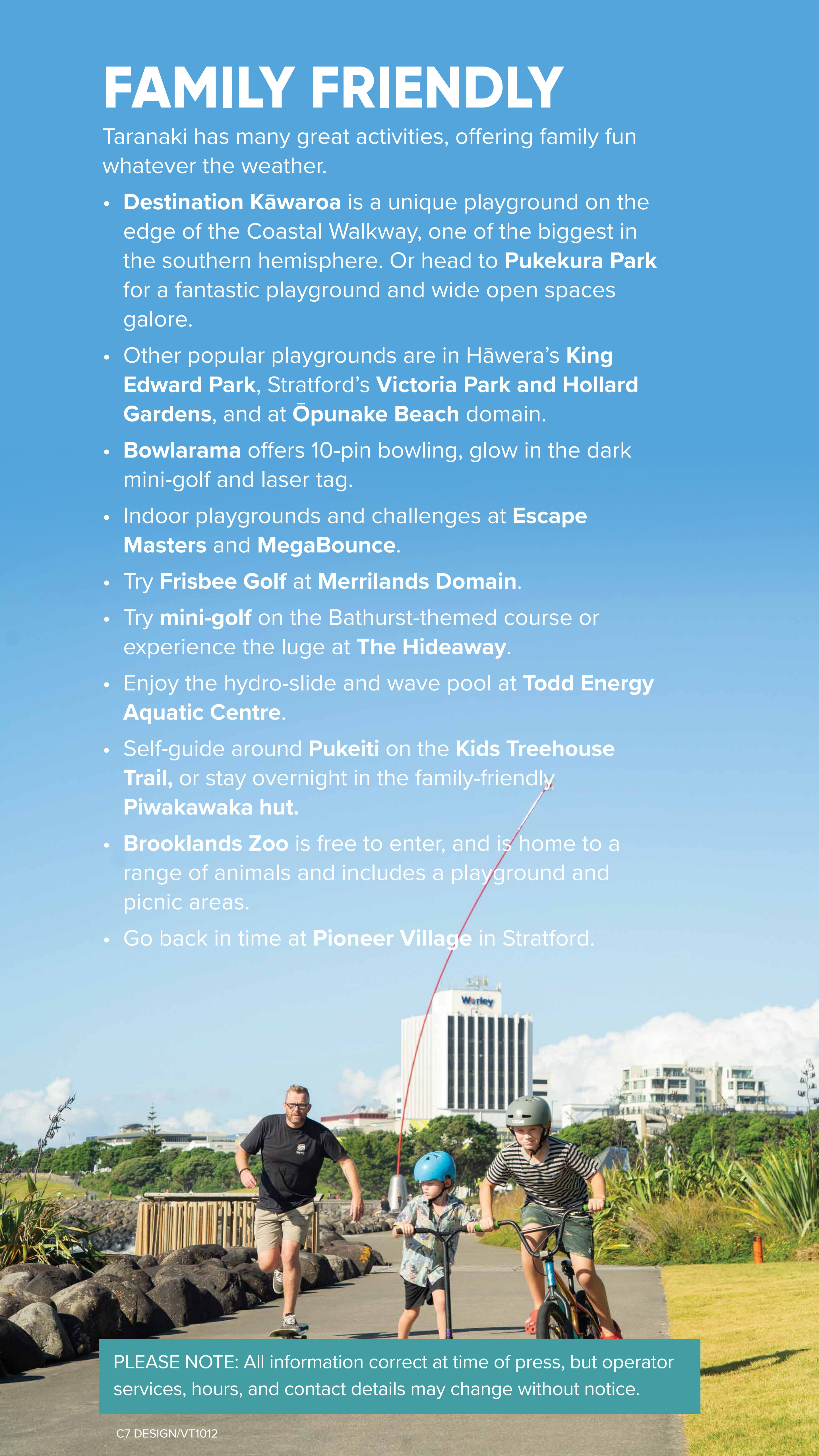
- The perfect mountain reflection can be found on the **Pouākai Crossing**. A high level of fitness is required for the 19km walk and takes a full day, leaving from either the **North Taranaki Visitors Centre** or Mangorei Road ends.
- New Plymouth's iconic 13km **Coastal Walkway** offers many scenic and historic spots including the **Te Henui Walkway**, Len Lye's towering **Wind Wand** and **Te Rewa Rewa Bridge**, which frames views of the mountain.
- **Te Rere-o-Noke/Dawson Falls** and **Wilkie Pools** walks are popular short walks through the eerie **Goblin Forest** on the southern slopes of the mountain. Access via Manaia Rd, from Kaponga.
- **Lake Mangamahoe** offers areas for walking, mountain biking and horse riding through a forest filled with birds. SH3 just south of New Plymouth.
- Take a family-friendly walk to the striking 100-metre long **Manganui Gorge Suspension Bridge** on Taranaki Maunga. Access via the Stratford Plateau Carpark.



# FAMILY FRIENDLY

Taranaki has many great activities, offering family fun whatever the weather.

- **Destination Kāwaroa** is a unique playground on the edge of the Coastal Walkway, one of the biggest in the southern hemisphere. Or head to **Pukekura Park** for a fantastic playground and wide open spaces galore.
- Other popular playgrounds are in Hāwera's **King Edward Park**, Stratford's **Victoria Park and Hollard Gardens**, and at **Ōpunake Beach** domain.
- **Bowlarama** offers 10-pin bowling, glow in the dark mini-golf and laser tag.
- Indoor playgrounds and challenges at **Escape Masters** and **MegaBounce**.
- Try **Frisbee Golf** at **Merrilands Domain**.
- Try **mini-golf** on the Bathurst-themed course or experience the luge at **The Hideaway**.
- Enjoy the hydro-slide and wave pool at **Todd Energy Aquatic Centre**.
- Self-guide around **Pukeiti** on the **Kids Treehouse Trail**, or stay overnight in the family-friendly **Piwakawaka hut**.
- **Brooklands Zoo** is free to enter, and is home to a range of animals and includes a playground and picnic areas.
- Go back in time at **Pioneer Village** in Stratford.



PLEASE NOTE: All information correct at time of press, but operator services, hours, and contact details may change without notice.

# EVENTS

Taranaki is home to an epic events calendar. Here are some of the favourites throughout the year.

For the most up-to-date information and events go to [taranaki.co.nz/visit](http://taranaki.co.nz/visit)



## TARANAKI ARTS FESTIVALS

### Twice per year

Bringing you festivals packed with theatre, cabaret, comedy and music twice a year. The events include Winter Fest and Right Royal Cabaret Festival. With something for everyone, these events are not to be missed! [taft.co.nz](http://taft.co.nz)



## TSB FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

### December-January

Over summer, New Plymouth's annual TSB Festival of Lights transforms the city's Pukekura Park after dark, offering hundreds of lighting effects and dozens of free performances. [festivaloflights.nz](http://festivaloflights.nz)



## AMERICARNA

### February

This massive celebration of American cars and culture takes to the streets and roads around the mountain, culminating in a street cruise and park-up in central New Plymouth. [americarna.com](http://americarna.com)



## FANTASTIC GARDEN FESTIVALS

### October-November

Taranaki gardens are so spectacular they host two massive garden festivals every spring: from the curated creations of the Centuria Taranaki Garden Festival to the more eclectic offerings of the Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival. [gardenfestnz.co.nz](http://gardenfestnz.co.nz)  
[taranakigardens.co.nz](http://taranakigardens.co.nz)



## FOOD FESTIVALS

### Seasonal

Discover our top local producers on a behind-the-scenes taste trail at Taste and Tales, or feast at our award-winning venues at Feastival, a seasonal celebration of the region's produce and people.

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

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



## COASTAL FIVE

### November

Tackle the Coastal Five, the most scenic running event in New Zealand. Held over two days, this unique festival lets you run five different events totalling 42.2km, or choose your favourite.

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



## NZ TATTOO AND ART FESTIVAL

### November

Australasia's biggest tattoo event comes to Taranaki bringing in hundreds of the world's finest tattoo artists, tattoo models, and art, trade displays, food and entertainment. Head along for a fresh tattoo or a great insight into this rapidly emerging art form.

[nztattooart.com](http://nztattooart.com)



## BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!

- **Summer at the Bowl** – Enjoy a diverse calendar of live entertainment every summer at New Plymouth's iconic Bowl of Brooklands.
- **Te Kupenga Stone Symposium, every second Jan** – carvers work on local stone on New Plymouth's foreshore.
- **Whangamōmona Republic Day, every second Jan** – a fantastic celebration of this unique republic.
- **Taranaki Multi-Ethnic Extravaganza, Mar** – a day to celebrate diverse cultures, colours, flavours and arts.
- **Taranaki Beer Festival, May** – Showcasing some of the best beer, cider, cocktails, and seltzers from across New Zealand.
- **Tour of Taranaki, Jan** – Challenge yourself with 150km cycle around Taranaki Maunga either solo or as a team.
- **Taranaki Arts Trail, Oct-Nov** – add to your collection with exclusive access to Taranaki studios.
- **Ōakura Arts Trail, Oct-Nov** – check out the Ōakura arts scene over two weekends.
- **Sustainable Backyards Trail, Oct-Nov** – Taranaki backyard examples of how to live a more sustainable life.
- **Stratford Shakespeare Festival, April** – Stratford comes alive with performances, theatre workshops, and events inspired by the legendary playwright's work.
- **Hāwera Arts in the Park, Dec** – arts, craft and entertainment in King Edward Park.
- **Markets, year round** – New Plymouth's Seaside Market and Farmers Market showcase the best of the region.

To catch everything that's going on in Taranaki head to [taranaki.co.nz/visit](https://www.taranaki.co.nz/visit)

- EXPLORE: NEW PLYMOUTH**
- BOWLARAMA
  - BREAKWATER BAY
  - BROOKLANDS ZOO
  - COASTAL WALKWAY
  - ESCAPE MASTERS
  - EAST END & FITZROY BEACH
  - GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY/ LEN LYE CENTRE
  - LEE BREAKWATER
  - MEGABOUNCE
  - MERRILANDS DOMAIN
  - PUKE ARIKI
  - PUKEKURA PARK
  - TE WHARE HONONGA
  - TE HENUI WALKWAY
  - TE KAINGA MARIRE
  - TE REWA REWA BRIDGE
  - THE FLOATATION SANCTUARY



## GET A TASTE OF TARANAKI

From coffee to fine dining, the Taranaki hospitality scene is legendary. Choose where to eat at [taranaki.co.nz/visit](http://taranaki.co.nz/visit)

# TARANAKI: AN INSIDER'S GUIDE

BROOKLANDS ZOO



Visitor information, maps, souvenirs, internet facilities, and accommodation, activity and transport bookings for Taranaki and all of New Zealand are available from:

## **NEW PLYMOUTH ISITE VISITOR CENTRE**

Puke Ariki, 1 Ariki Street, New Plymouth

**Email:** [info@newplymouth.govt.nz](mailto:info@newplymouth.govt.nz) **Phone:** 0800 639 759

**Hours:** Monday–Sunday 10.00am–5.00pm

## **STRATFORD ISITE VISITOR CENTRE**

Prospero Place & Miranda Street, Stratford

**Email:** [info@stratford.govt.nz](mailto:info@stratford.govt.nz) **Phone:** 06 765 6708 or 0800 765 6708

**Hours:** Monday–Friday 8.30am–5.00pm.

Saturday 9–1pm, closed Sundays and Public Holidays

## **SOUTH TARANAKI ISITE VISITOR CENTRE**

121 High Street, Hāwera

**Email:** [visitorinfo@stdc.govt.nz](mailto:visitorinfo@stdc.govt.nz) **Phone:** 06 278 8599

**Hours:** Monday–Friday 8.30am–5.00pm.

Weekends and public holidays 10.00am–3.00pm.

All isites are closed Christmas Day.