



ANCIENT KAURI TRAIL



Through the farmland and villages of the wild, untamed West Coast, to the peaceful shelter of the kauri forests, prepare to be awed by a journey of dramatic contrasts.

Follow the road through the Kūmara Capital, and feel the sea spray on your skin as you reach the ruggedly beautiful West Coast beaches. Further north, the ancient living forests wrap their deep green embrace around you. These mighty trees have supported lives and livelihoods for centuries. But despite their immense size and strength, these giants are also fragile. Humans have harvested their precious timber and gum over the centuries, and have now come to protect these great guardians of the forest.

Yet still a few living links to our ancient past stand - tall, strong and proud - like the ships and masts carved from their sturdy timber. Ships that weathered wild storms, and carried people safely to far off places.

Follow in the footsteps of the kauri loggers and gumdiggers of days gone by. But tread lightly on your journey, for the time has now come for us to play our part in protecting these majestic icons.

1 Maungaturoto
Fancy yourself a modern day gumdigger? This cute and quirky village has the first of many great second hand stores along this route, where you can stop and dig for precious nuggets.

2 Paparoa
Grand historic buildings like the former National Bank hark back to the glory days of this region. You can grab a bite at the cafe or local pub. There are several good forest walks in the area too.

3 Pahi's Giant Moreton Bay Fig Tree
If you thought the only giant trees here were kauri, think again! This impressive Australian fig tree reaches nearly 30m high, with a canopy over 50m wide.

4 The Kauri Museum - Matakohe
Discover the fascinating story of our ancient kauri, and the people who have carved their livelihoods from these magnificent trees throughout the ages.

5 Ruawai
Ruawai has declared itself as the "Kūmara Capital of the World"

6 Tokatoka Peak Viewpoint
In the pioneering days, the river pilot would climb this volcanic peak to watch for ships. Are you as fit as he was? See how quickly you can reach the top!

7 Dargaville
A treasure-trove of cafes, restaurants and shops, as well as many galleries and studios that are open to the public.

8 Dargaville Rail Cruises
Drive a buggy down an abandoned railway line all the way to Waiotira. This gives you a unique perspective on the kauri trading routes of days gone by.

9 Dargaville & Wairoa River Scenic Lookout, Pou Tu o Te Rangi
The town, country and harbour views from the hilltop setting at Pou Tu o Te Rangi Harding Park are the perfect picnic spot. Learn about the early pioneers and local history at the Dargaville Museum and neighbouring Kaipara Heritage Machinery Museum.

10 Baylys Beach
A short detour takes you to Baylys Beach on the wild West Coast - NZ's longest driveable beach, and a top spot for surfing, quad biking, horse riding and fishing.

11 Omamari Beach
If you can resist the lure of the Kai Iwi Lakes, a turn to the left on the same side-road will lead you to stunning Omamari Beach.

12 Kai Iwi Lakes
Set back from the wild West Coast breakers lies a hidden gem - sparkling freshwater lakes fringed by pristine sandy beaches.

13 Trounson Kauri Park
An easy 40 minute loop walk takes you under the canopy of a thriving kauri stand, and gives you a sense of what untouched kauri forests were once like.

14 Self-guided Kiwi Night Tour
Nighttime is when the kauri forests really come alive. Guests of the Kauri Coast Top Ten Holiday Park can experience the incredible nocturnal sights and sounds of the ancient forest and it's native wildlife residents with a "Kiwi Walk Kit".

15 Maunganui Bluff
For the more intrepid, a hike to Maunganui Bluff will get you out in the elements, and reward you with spectacular views up and down the coast.

16 Tāne Mahuta and Te Matua Ngahere.
The Waipoua Forest is home to the two largest living kauri trees in the world. Marvel at Tāne Mahuta, the Lord of the Forest, over 2000 years old, and the Father of the Forest, Te Matua Ngahere.

17 Footprints Waipoua
Take a spine-tingling tour of our ancient trees by day, night or twilight, for a real sense of the spiritual connection with our oldest living treasures.

18 Hokianga Harbour
Sip a cool drink and quietly contemplate the ever-changing vista, as you watch the sun go down over the immense sand dunes from the deck of the historic Ōpononi Hotel.

Must Do's

Learn

A stop at The Kauri Museum in Matakohe is a must on your way north. The informative and entertaining exhibits provide context for the rest of your journey, and will enrich your experience of the kauri trees and the places you'll visit along the way.

See

Experience the difference between the largest living kauri trees in the Waipoua Forest that tower above all else, and the impressive density of kauri at the Trounson Kauri Park. But be sure to only look, as Kauri Dieback Disease now threatens these living taonga (treasures). Stick to the paths and follow signposted instructions to help protect these ancient trees

Dig

Dig for buried treasures at one of the many second hand stores, op shops and craft shops along the way. Keen treasure hunters should also check out Nelson's Ancient Kauri in Kaihū.

Explore

Dargaville and the Kauri Coast is becoming a cycling playground for enthusiasts of all codes. Harding Park boasts a BMX Track, Selwyn Park has a Pump Track, Kai Iwi Lakes has cycle trails. Stage 1 of the Kaihū Valley Trail is now open, and over 20km of trails are established at the new Kauri Coast Mountain Bike Park

