



- 12 Point of interest
- Route
- Walking track
- Swimming
- Food
- Cafe
- Shop
- Museum
- Scenic views
- Iconic photo stop!
- Local favourite
- Don't miss
- Surf lifesaving
- Petrol station
- EV Charging



Did you know?
Lying 22 kilometres offshore Taranga and Marotiri / Hen and Chickens Islands were declared scenic reserves in 1925 on account of their valuable flora and fauna. They are now a nature reserve for seabirds, tieke (saddlebacks) and tuatara.

Did you know?
The distance between the west coast's Kaipara Harbour and the east coast's Mangawhai Harbour is only around 12km!

Did you know?
Tara iti / NZ Fairy Tern live here! They are NZ's most threatened shore bird.

Drivers note:
Take extra care when pulling out on to SH1 from Waipū

KAIWAKA
Mangawhai 19KM →

MANGAWHAI VILLAGE

MANGAWHAI HEADS

WAIPŪ

RUAKĀKĀ



THE WELCOMING COAST



Nau mai, haere mai - we extend a warm welcome to the north and invite you to embrace our Te Tai Tokerau Northland way of life.

Relax and enjoy the pleasant pace of our coastal communities, and the local healthy flavours to be found here. You may not know this, but the boundary between Northland and the rest of New Zealand is a fairly narrow piece of land about 12km wide from south-east of Mangawhai through to the Kaipara Harbour.

This journey is famous for its spectacular coastal views including protected islands, wide open beaches, stunning sunrises and friendly locals. The town of Waipū offers visitors a hundred thousand welcomes, and all along this journey you'll enjoy feeling the embrace of beautiful Bream Bay and the spirit that is Te Tai Tokerau.

Combine this journey with the inland route over the Brynderwyn ranges on State Highway 1 to create a loop itinerary from Kaiwaka.

1 Kaiwaka
Welcome to the twinkling lights of Kaiwaka, sitting at one of the upper reaches of the west coast's Kaipara Harbour. Kaiwaka is famous for its night-time fairy lights, its iconic sculpted concrete cafe Eutopia, and the nearby cheese shop. There is also a vintage / op shop and Italian morsels to discover.

2 Mangawhai Village
Welcome to Magical Mangawhai! The Village is sited on the upper harbour and has a host of shops, cafes and restaurants. The local Bennetts of Mangawhai chocolatier and the historic harbourside Mangawhai Tavern are must-visits.

3 Mangawhai Museum
The Mangawhai Museum is a new and modern museum that celebrates life around our harbour, from building ships to building sandcastles. Stories tell of an epic battle of the Māori wars, lost gold bullion and the fight to save the critically endangered Fairy Tern.

4 Mangawhai Activity Zone
Unleash the kids and welcome back your inner child at the amazing Mangawhai Activity Zone. Facilities include picnic facilities, bike & walking tracks, multi sports court, pump track, playground and great skatepark with rippable bowls. The nearby Mangawhai Golf Club welcomes visitors wanting a game with a view.

5 Wood Street Shops
Wood Street is a vibrant wee street with a lot going on, fuel up the car and then yourself at the cafes, bakery and restaurants and be sure to check out the Mangawhai Opportunity Factory.

6 Mangawhai Harbour
The Mangawhai harbour area is a cool place to hang out and cool off, with its swift flowing current that changes with the tide. There are plenty of opportunities here for swimming and picnicking as well as fishing off the wharf.

7 Mangawhai Heads
The entrance to Mangawhai harbour is a fascinating place, with sentinel rock, the surf beach with surf life saving, and a tidal harbour. Look for the famous 'Mangawhai Bar' surf break on the south side of the harbour mouth. From here set off on the Mangawhai Cliffs Walkway.

8 Langs Beach
Keep your eyes on the road! This is a spectacular roadside beach, well-known for surfing, swimming, its sandy beach and pōhutukawas. Langs is also the beginning / end point of the Waipū Coastal Walkway.

9 Waipū Cove
A quintessential wee slice of Northland is Waipū Cove. Grab your surfboard, beach umbrella, an icecream for the kids from the dairy, a coffee from the cafe and head to the beach! Check out the amazing local mural on the public toilets. This is the other end of the Waipū Coastal Walkway. This walk, requires a reasonable level of fitness and agility. There are stiles, steps, ladders and rocks to climb plus some wading through water so check out the high tide times.

10 Waipū township
Ceud Mile Failte - A hundred thousand welcomes to Waipū! Waipū is a character filled settlement with a unique Scottish heritage story to explore. Waipū township offers great rewards for a stroll, explore the vintage shops and cafes. No trip would be complete without a sample of the local McLeods beers at the Waipū Pizza Barn.

11 Waipū Museum
Well worth a look is the Waipū Museum. It tells the interesting story of the Scottish settlement of this local area. It'll give you a better understanding of why there are all these Scottish flags and tartan about!

12 Waipū Caves
Tear yourself away from that beautiful coast and enjoy the underworld at Waipū Caves, a welcome relief for sun kissed bodies. An amazing world of glowworms, stalactites (ones that come down), stalagmites (ones that go up) awaits. There is a cool walking track set in beautiful karst landscape, farmland and regenerating native bush. About 12km from SH1.

13 Uretiti Beach
Located on the coast in the middle of Bream Bay is the fabulous Uretiti beach. Famous for its stunning location and sunrises, DOC camping, and surf beach activities. If clothes and togs aren't your beach thing you're in luck as to the south is a naturalist area.

14 Bream Bay
Captain Cook named the body of water between Te Whara and Te Paepae-o-Tū, Bream Bay due to the abundance of Bream (Tāmure / Snapper). See those Islands out there that look like a Hen with her Chickens? They are called the Hen (Taranga) and Chicken (Marotiri) Islands, all of which are important nature reserves.

15 Ruakākā
Ruakākā's name is linked to the bush parrot, the beautiful and often noisy kākā. The township has a small shopping complex, including supermarket and recreation centre. Down by the river is great for spotting birds and for fishing.

16 Ruakākā Beach
Ruakākā Beach is a continuation of the Uretiti and Waipū beaches that make up Bream Bay. It offers beautiful swimming, surfing, sand castle building and during summer months surf life saving patrols. This is the home of local surfboard shaping legend Roger Hall and his surfline surfboards.

17 Marsden Cove
Marvel at the man made marina and canal development, Marsden Cove, great for a look around with its cafe and shops. It has one of the best boat launching facilities on Whangārei Harbour and boat charters run out of here.

18 One Tree Point
This harbourside location with iconic views of pōhutukawa, Whangārei Heads and the harbour is a must see and photo stop especially when the pōhutukawas are flowering in early summer. Great sheltered swimming at high tide.

Must Dos

Welcome Northland time

Relax, chill, take it easy my friend, you are on Northland time. No rush, no worries.

Embrace fresh and local

We brew our own beer (McLeod's) here, make our own chocolates and wine, grow beautiful fresh vegetables and fruit, so take your time and discover and enjoy.

Greet the morning sun

Take some deep breaths and get that wonderful salty air in your lungs while you watch the sun rise out of Bream Bay and above the many offshore islands.

Scenic activities

The gently curving bay and offshore islands make this one of New Zealand's most spectacular places for a beach swim, walk, horse trek or, for those keen on golf, the coastal courses at Mangawhai and Waipū are epic.

