

Ten Must-See Spots on New Zealand's North Island

Kia Ora! New Zealand is a beautiful, picturesque country and so we completely understand that you may feel overwhelmed when choosing where to start exploring. We've compiled a list of the top ten must-see spots when visiting New Zealand's North Island. Famous for its volcanic activity, outstanding national parks and multicultural cities there's something for everyone.

1. Mount Maunganui Summit Track

Invest in some quality hiking boots to take advantage of the stunning tracks available around the island. The Mount Maunganui summit track will take around 1 hour 20 minutes and you need to be physically fit but the views when you reach the top are absolutely breath-taking.

2. Tongariro Alpine Crossing

Whilst you're in the hiking mood, make sure you don't miss 19.4km hike into a volcanic atmosphere. Tongariro alpine crossing, often referred to as one of New-Zealand's best day-hikes could have you thinking you're on a different planet.

3. Orakei Korako geothermal reserve park

Spend a day at, arguably the best thermal area left in the whole country. Stroll across amazing geothermal walkways and soak up the atmosphere from colourful silica terraces to bubbling mud pools and gushing geysers.

4. Mount Manaia Track

Take your time to walk the Mount Manaia track for unspoilt views of Bream Bay, Hauraki Gulf to the south, Whangarei Harbour to the west and the Poor Knights Islands and Northland coast to the north. This is one of the easier tracks and is also suitable for children.

5. Tiritiri Matangi Island

This island is a nature lover's paradise. Prepare to be serenaded by birdsong throughout your day strolling around this beautiful native forest. Hobbs Beach is a 10 minute walk from the wharf and an ideal spot for a picnic or a swim on a warm day.

6. Auckland Botanic Gardens

When in Auckland be sure to visit the Botanic Gardens. They cover 64 hectares and are home to over 10,000 plants from all around the world. Stunning lakes, an on-site café, free parking and an edible garden are some of the highlights you can enjoy when you spend a tranquil day here.

7. Mount Paku

Mt Paku in Tairua is a volcanic peak growing up between the southern end of Tairua Beach and the Tairua harbour mouth. 8 million years ago, Paku erupted. Be sure to visit just before sunset for an exceptional view.

8. Matamata

Lord of the Ring's fan? Join a guided tour of Hobbiton at Matamata! Home to over than 44 distinctive hobbit holes, as well as Bag End – Bilbo Baggins House! Wander through the heart of the Shire and listen to the interesting commentary of how it was all created.

9. Tauranga

Visit Tauranga and book a kayak glow worm tour for an unforgettable, unique experience. Enjoy local wine and cheese before embarking on the lake at twilight to view the spectacular glow worms on the side of a high canyon.

10. Huka Falls

Walk across a footbridge over a rushing white-water pool and witness the phenomenon of natural hydro power as the powerful 220,000 litres per second waterfall gushes above you.

Lucky Crisp