

ROTORUA

NEW ZEALAND



On the cheap

ROTORUA
feel the spirit
Manaakitanga

Rotorua's lakes

With 16 lakes, Rotorua is an aquatic paradise. Lake Okareka and Blue Lake are popular swimming spots in summer, and all the lakes offer endless opportunities for water skiing, kayaking, fishing, cruising, hiking or picnicking.

Blue Lake has a very nice walk around the lake's circumference through pine forest. It is 5km long and takes 90 minutes. The south side of the lake also has good swimming beaches that are accessible from the walkway and from the lookout car park between Blue Lake and Green Lake.

Okareka Walkway is a 5.5km return walk starting at Acacia Rd and following the lake edge to Okareka Outlet. The walk bypasses farmland, beach, lake and wetland scenery, views and wildlife. The 500m boardwalk provides assisted wheelchair access to the wetland area.

Okere Falls Scenic Reserve is 21km from Rotorua on Trout Pool Rd (off SH33). A well-formed bush walk has scenic lookouts over the Okere River and its waterfalls. The landscape around Lake Tarawera was shaped by the 1886 eruption of Mt Tarawera. There are three tracks in the Tarawera catchment, ranging from 40 minutes to six hours return. Highlights include Tarawera Falls, Hot Water Beach and traditional Maori paintings on a rock face at Tarawera Orchard. A ferry provides services to Hot Water Beach, where visitors can bathe in the hot mineral waters.

The Redwoods

Whakarewarewa Forest, five minutes' drive from the city centre, gives visitors a chance to experience nature at its best. If you love the outdoors this area is for you. A 288-hectare area of the Whakarewarewa Forest known as the Redwoods is dedicated to recreation. Californian Redwoods guard a vast network of walking and mountain biking tracks for all skill levels. Stunning panoramic views of the Rotorua region can be glimpsed through Redwood and native trees from all the tracks.



The most popular walk is the Redwood Memorial Grove track where walkers can meander through the towering Redwoods, planted in 1901. These majestic trees are 60m tall and 163cm in diameter. Walks range from 30 minutes to several hours long. For more information contact the Redwood Forest Visitor Centre on Long Mile Rd.

Kuirau Park

At the junction of Ranolf St and Lake Rd in Rotorua's city centre, Kuirau Park reserve is part of the Rotorua Walkway. A geothermal area, it is home to boiling mud pools, crater lakes and sulphur vents. There are also two hot pools where visitors can soak their feet. People are advised to stick to the tracks for safety reasons.

Government Gardens

Government Gardens, in central Rotorua, are formal gardens that offer views of Rotorua Museum and Blue Baths, both historic buildings.

Sulphur Bay walkway

Sulphur Bay walkway starts at the Rotorua lakefront. The path takes walkers along the promenade to a path leading to Motutara Point (Sulphur Bay). This area of the lake is on top of an active geothermal area, so the water is a



cloudy white. Further round the point there are boiling mud pools and sulphur vents. The earth's crust is thin in places so visitors should stick to the pathway at all times.



St Faith's Church

View the historic and richly decorated St Faith's Church at Ohinemutu. Construction of this Tudor-style church was completed in 1885. It was used as a church hall till 1936 when it collapsed in a storm. The church was rebuilt and opened in 1914, but wasn't consecrated till 1918. Its interior comprises woven and painted wall hangings and decorations, and a window looking over the lake shows a Maori Christ, in a traditional Maori cloak, who appears to be walking on water.

Hamurana Springs

A 20-minute drive northeast of Rotorua, Hamurana is renowned for the crystal clear fresh water springs that flow from the ground and into Lake Rotorua.

The surrounding wildlife sanctuary is home to many types of birds, such as black teals, herons and endangered dabchicks.

Hamurana is a popular attraction for families and has plenty of picnic spots in a picturesque setting.

The easy and scenic walking track passes through a Redwood grove and is suitable for all ages and fitness levels.



Rainbow Mountain

Rainbow Mountain (Maungakakamea - mountain of coloured earth) is significant in botanical and scientific terms. It is home to various plant species, some of which are rare and unique to geothermal areas. Located 26 km southeast of Rotorua on State Highway 5, it offers a couple of great walks.

The crater lakes walk is an easy 20 minutes' return. Follow the signs from the car park for views over two crater lakes, set against a backdrop of steaming brown, orange and red cliffs.

From the craters, a moderate tramping track leads up through regenerating native vegetation and geothermal ridges for a three-hour round trip to the summit, which has extensive 360° views over the Rotorua region. A forestry road to the summit is open in daylight, but the last section of this is suitable only for 4WD vehicles.

Dogs, horses, vehicles (including bikes and motorbikes), fires, removal of plants or animals, camping and hunting are not permitted in Rainbow Mountain Scenic Reserve. The geothermal landscape is fragile and potentially dangerous. Please keep to marked tracks and supervise children closely.

Rotorua Arts Trail

The Rotorua region has a thriving artistic community. Some of New Zealand's leading artists live here, and Rotorua is a great place to explore traditional or contemporary Maori art. It pays to phone galleries on the art trail ahead of time to check opening hours. For more information go to www.creativerotorua.org.nz

Golf Rotorua

What better way to spend a day than on the golf course? Rotorua boasts several world-class courses, such as Hamurana, Arikikapakapa, Government Gardens and Springfield.

Springfield Golf Club is Rotorua's only championship course and is known for its tight fairways and vast amount of trees. Play alongside natural hazards such as bubbling mud pools and steaming craters at the Rotorua Golf Club, established in 1906.

Hamurana is a nine-hole course, while the Lakeview Golf Club has a driving range and an 18-hole, par-72 course offering plenty of challenges. Government Gardens Golf is at the Lake Rotorua end of Government Gardens. There is an excellent driving range, a nine-hole course and mini golf here.

