

ROTORUA

NEW ZEALAND



Outdoor wonders

ROTORUA
feel the spirit
Manakitanga

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The great outdoors...

Aquatic paradise



Imagine drifting lazily around a sparkling lake in a boat or kayak, the sun warm on your face and birds chirping merrily in native bush lining the lakeshore.

Anytime is a good time to experience the stunning lakes that help make Rotorua New Zealand's top tourist spot.

Visitors flock to the lakes district, where 16 stunning lakes offer cruising, swimming, waterskiing, kayaking and fishing galore. There are myriad walking tracks, kids' playgrounds and secluded beaches where visitors can soak in natural hot water pools. Camping sites are dotted around the lakes, as are barbecues for public use.

Lakes Rotoiti and Tarawera are renowned for quality trout. What could be better than catching a trout, cruising to Hot Water Beach on Lake Tarawera and cooking it in the sand while you soak in a pool heated by thermal vents under the same sand?

It's an easy 20-minute drive from Rotorua's city centre to the lakes and there's plenty of room for everyone; on sunny days, when the beaches are crowded, you can find solitude here.



Stately forests and native bush

With acres of walking trails, the Rotorua region is the perfect place to enjoy the best of nature. Marvel at native bush or stately forests, cook or bathe in the hot springs running into the lakes, or take a helicopter flight up Mt Tarawera. Find your own space.

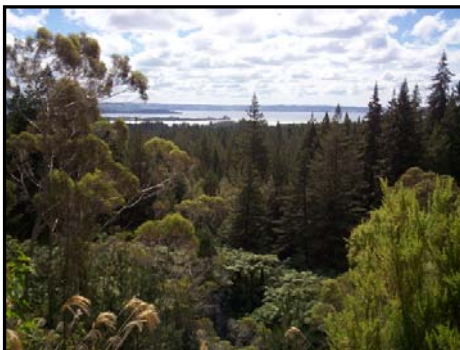
If you like walking but want something tamer, the walks around the lakes district are a great way to see the region. Wander down little-walked bush tracks or mingle with other walkers on better-known lakeside ones. The choice is yours.



Whirinaki Forest and Te Urewera National Park are great for hiking and bird watching. This area is home to some of New Zealand's most magnificent indigenous rainforest and is rich in native birdlife.

Rotorua is New Zealand's premier mountain biking destination; Whakarewarewa Forest is renowned the world over for its tracks. Myriad tracks, winding past stunning lake and thermal views beneath native and exotic trees, draw thousands of visitors every year. New tracks are opened regularly.

Mt Tarawera, a dormant volcano looming moodily over Lake Tarawera, is an iconic part of Rotorua's landscape. Its eruption in 1886 transformed this landscape and is one of the most important events in Rotorua's history. Now, the mountain lends itself to a range of activities. Helicopter or 4WD trips up the mountain are offered. Enjoy a scree slide into the crater or hike to the summit, followed by a death-defying ride down on a mountain bike.

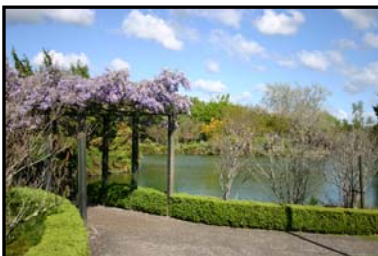


Scenic vistas are everywhere, with walkways and tracks of varying lengths. For short walks, the Redwood Grove in Whakarewarewa Forest is ideal, as is a walk around the Blue Lake. There are also many walks between the lakes, such as Tarawera, Okareka and Okataina and the climb to the top of Rainbow Mountain, named for its colourful make-up and geothermal beauty, is a great walk with beautiful views.

Sacred spots, parks and gardens



Mokoia Island, in the centre of Lake Rotorua, is a sacred gem. One of New Zealand's most accessible native bird sanctuaries, it gives visitors the chance to see native birds extinct throughout mainland NZ. Ancient landmarks include pre-European pa and cultivation sites, a rock statue and fresh water springs.



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

View the 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 features woven and painted wall hangings, and a window looking over the lake shows a Maori Christ in a traditional Maori cloak who appears to be walking on water.

In Rotorua's city centre, Kuirau Park is part of the Rotorua Walkway. 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.