

Into the Wide Blue Yonder

# NORTHLAND JOURNEYS



**Drivers Tip:**  
Many points of interest are located on the 'harbour side' of the road and are easier to access on your return journey.

**Drivers Tip:**  
Keep an eye in the mirror and let the locals pass safely!

**Did you know?**  
Whangarei Heads is one of only five kiwi sanctuaries in New Zealand, so please be aware that dogs are not permitted on any Department of Conservation (DOC) tracks. When in Whangarei Heads your dog should be on a lead at all times

**Did you know?**  
The giant volcanic formations of Whangarei Heads are over 20 million years old!

**Did you know?**  
The Whangarei Harbour is over 23km long and home to a variety of fish, shellfish and bird species. It's large tidal range means it's perfect for high tide swimming and low tide exploring.



## WHERE GIANTS GATHER - MAP LEGEND

- Point of Interest
- Route
- Walking track
- Swimming
- Food
- Cafe
- Shop
- Petrol Station
- Scenic views
- Iconic Photo stop!
- Local favourite
- Don't Miss



Find more at [northlandjourneys.co.nz](http://northlandjourneys.co.nz)

# WHERE GIANTS GATHER

Journey through a grand landscape where giants surround you. Giants of geology, nature and history are gathered here, like the majestic creatures that inspired Ngati Wai to name this place Whangarei-te-rerenga-paraoa (the gathering place of whales).

Take the meandering road from Northland's largest city, all the way to the coast and the boundless Pacific Ocean beyond. Follow the great mass of water that ebbs and flows through the towering Whangarei Heads. Walk in the footsteps of those who carved history out of this colossal landscape, and create lasting memories of your own as you journey Where Giants Gather.

- 1** **Town Basin Marina**  
Galleries, museums, cafes shops and walks give you plenty of reasons to while away a few hours.
- 2** **Mt Parihaka**  
Walking tracks, mountain bike trails and many sites of historical significance can be found on this iconic peak.
- 3** **Matakohe - Limestone Is.**  
Just a short boat-ride or paddle from shore, this predator-free sanctuary is home to kiwi and other wildlife.
- 4** **Waikaraka Marine Reserve**  
Fish, shellfish and wading birds make their home here. Learn all about them from information boards along the shore.
- 5** **Tamaterau Beach**  
Opposite the tennis courts, a sheltered beach offers clear water swimming in the shadow of a gigantic Pohutukawa tree.

- 6** **Parua Bay Golf Club**  
At low tide you can walk around the beach to Motokiore Island and its historic pa site. Park on the roadside just past the golf club.
- 7** **Harbour views**  
Take in immense views of Whangarei Harbour and the Bream Head ranges from this primo photo stop.
- 8** **Parua Bay Tavern**  
Enjoy pub fare and cold beer, served with spectacular views from the private jetty of this historic tavern.
- 9** **Parua Bay Cemetery**  
Easier to spot and access on your return journey, this historic graveyard is said to date back to 1886.
- 10** **Parua Bay Shops**  
A good opportunity to stock up on essentials and grab a coffee. The well stocked gas station also offers LPG and dive tank fills.
- 11** **McLeod Bay Historical Early Settlers Cemetery**  
Park and walk around the beach at low tide. This cemetery houses the graves of many early settlers.
- 12** **McLeod Bay**  
Wet a line from the wharf on Stuart Road, or simply stop and watch the oystercatchers from the picnic and playground area.
- 13** **McLeod Bay Historical Church**  
Built by Scots settlers, this tiny church has huge historical significance, being one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in NZ.
- 14** **The Deck Café**  
Enjoy a coffee or refreshing cold drink as you take in expansive views of the harbour and the craggy rock fingers of Mount Manaia above.

- 15** **Reotahi**  
Park at the Tiller Park sign and ascend the steep track to a series of spectacular lookouts, offering incredible views.
- 16** **Mt Manaia**  
Climb to near the top of sacred Mt Manaia and you'll be rewarded with the best views in the area. The ideal place to enhance your social media presence.
- 17** **Whangarei Heads Community Library**  
Delve deeper into the history of the Whangarei Heads area with the free public resources available at the library, located on Whangarei Heads Primary School grounds.
- 18** **Taurikura**  
Take a stroll along the natural volcanic causeway, then cool off with a swim and a cold drink from the Old Taurikura Store.
- 19** **Urquharts Bay**  
Historic sites from Maori and European cultures await you on the Busby Head and Smugglers Bay walking tracks, along with great swimming, snorkelling, diving and fishing.
- 20** **Ocean Beach**  
You've made it to the Pacific Ocean, have a dip or climb a sand dune for more amazing views. Surf lifesaving patrols throughout summer.
- 21** **Pukaki Memorial**  
Read about this fascinating true story at the lookout overlooking the beautiful Ocean Beach.
- 22** **Bream Head (Te Whara) Scenic Reserve**  
A place of outstanding natural heritage, flora and fauna and community involvement.

## To Pataua South

- 23** **Taiharuru Estuary**  
A great spot for birdwatching, and swimming at high tide.
- 24** **Frogtown Beach**  
This family-friendly beach is well known for surfing and boogie boarding. The local campground store is open in summer.
- 25** **Pataua Footbridge**  
Join the local kids as they leap from the bridge into the river at high tide, or enjoy the sheltered swimming and picnic area.

## To McGregors Bay

- 26** **The Gap**  
Marvel at the force of the great Pacific Ocean as its roaring waves crash through a narrow cleft of rocks, known as The Gap.
- 27** **Huitau Pa**  
Spectacular views can be expected when you follow the walkway to a historical pa site overlooking McGregors Bay.
- 28** **McGregors Bay**  
This stunning crescent moon bay is an idyllic spot for swimming and exploring.

## Must Dos

### Walk:

From a short stroll around one of Whangarei's many walking trails, to a herculean ascent of the magnificent Mount Manaia, you'll be surrounded by choices for wonderful walks.

### Swim:

Join the locals and enjoy a refreshing swim at one of the many sheltered and ocean beaches along the Whangarei Heads coastline. Or take a giant leap from the bridge at Pataua - if you dare!

### Photo:

It's easy to imagine how early explorers and settlers must have felt when you see the towering peaks of Whangarei Heads looming large over the glistening harbour. Climb to the top and stand on the shoulders of giants - you'll be rewarded with unrivalled views of a giant of modern times - the refinery and port below.

### Relax:

Stop for an ice cream or classic fish and chips from one of the many inviting cafes or the tavern along the way. Or wet a line and try to catch a monster of your own - there are plenty of wharfs where locals and visitors alike gather to go fishing.

