

Travel



GURU

by Nicola Quick

Auckland City Harbour Cruise

A 90-minute cruise where you have panoramic views of Rangitoto Island and the City skyline; circle Bean Rock Lighthouse; pass North Head; view the historic naval base at Devonport and a fish-eye view of the Harbour Bridge as you pass underneath it. Sail past the hundreds of yachts moored in the Westhaven Marina.

Devonport

A 12-minute ferry trip to the seaside village of Devonport; one of the City's oldest suburbs. Picturesque Victorian villas; pretty beaches and stylish shops, Devonport is a lovely spot to escape to. Art galleries, boutiques and gift shops line the main street, Victoria Road. Mount Victoria and North Head provide fantastic views across the City and nearby islands.

Auckland War Memorial Museum

Auckland War Memorial Museum is located in the Auckland Domain; on the hill known in Maori as "Pukekawa". The Museum is 'interactive' at the 'Weird & Wonderful' exhibit in the Stevenson Discovery Centre, which is perfect for children (and adults!) alike. It is a good place to delve into New Zealand's past. The Museum is also the only place in Auckland to experience the Maori cultural performance - the Haka! I have only ever seen the Haka when the All Blacks are playing Rugby, and to be honest, it scared me to death! There is so much to see and do at the Museum; it is definitely worth a visit.

SkyCity/SkyTower

The experience of the SkyTower is definitely one not to miss! SkyTower is the tallest tower in the Southern Hemisphere. At 328m (over 1,000 ft) it is taller



than the Eiffel Tower and the Sydney Tower! There are three (3) separate viewing platforms, although the main Skydeck Viewing Platform at 220m is truly awesome. There are spectacular 360° views of the whole City, although the glass floor lifts made me quite nauseous! I did witness three truly mad (!) people trying to SkyWalk around the SkyTower, definitely not for the faint hearted! There is also an option to Sky Jump the 192m, which I (predictably) gave a miss!

Browns Bay

Browns Bay is an Auckland suburb. It is one of the East Coast Bays suburbs and is well known for its shops and beaches. Browns Bay is also well known for its sizeable South African and British communities. Consequently, Browns Bay is sometimes known as "Little Bloemfontein". For Brits, there is Speaker's Corner, one of Auckland's English pubs, as well as Bramptin's - a grocery store selling only British imported goods.

Mangawhai

Follow the winding country road off State Highway One, 80 mins from Auckland to Northlands southern-most resort and you



will soon find any number of explanations for Mangawhai's popularity. Mangawhai beach is a surfer's paradise. The estuary provides further swimming or if a secluded long white sand beach is more for you then Te Arai is a short drive away. Charter and recreational fishing boats ply the offshore waters, where you find superb fishing and world class diving, from the Hen and Chicken Islands to the Mokohinau Islands. Mangawhai Golf Club is a coastal course ranked within the best in the North Island. Unique walking tracks, including the spectacular Coastal Track makes Mangawhai a great place to explore.

New Zealand is the place to be two years from now when the Rugby World Cup 2011 is held there during September and October. The first game of the competition will kick off at a revamped 50,000 seat Eden Park in Auckland on 09 September and the final will be played at the same ground on 23 October.

Don't forget to try the 'Hokey Pokey Ice Cream' (ice-cream with crunchy pieces of toffee), a 'Hangi' (a traditional Maori way of cooking involving packing food into baskets, placing the baskets into hot rocks, and burying it deep underground to cook for hours in its own steam), AND complete a Wine Tour!!!!

New Zealand is a destination like no other. I can hardly wait to return.