

Bay of Islands Walking Weekend Programme 2019

1: Okiato to Orongo Bay

Take a short bus ride out to Okiato, the site of New Zealand's first capital. Hike back through flat coastal wetland, climb through a mixture of regenerating and magical old native forest, step by step up the valley with points of interest to view where you have been and where you are going. Descend to the stunning mangrove boardwalk with water views of Orongo Bay and the oyster farms where you will be transported back to the Russell Bowling Club. Included in this walk is a lovely pack of local delicacies which is at the bowling club when you arrive back – depending on what the season is doing – oysters, smoked fish etc. The bar will also be open for refreshments.

Fri 18th October - 1pm

Sat 19th October 9.00am

Duration - 3 Hours walking

Distance - 6 kms

Cost - Adult \$35, Child \$20 (includes transport costs and local delicacies)

Grade - medium

Maximum Walkers - 15

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Please note: This walk is part of the Full Circle Walk.

2: Full Circle – Russell to Russell via Paihia

Leaving Russell you head towards Okiato, which is the site of New Zealand's first capital. Walking along the stunning mangrove boardwalks and then into the bush where the terrain is more challenging before settling onto more coastal boardwalks before catching the car ferry in Okiato for a 5 minute ferry ride to Opuā. Plenty of birdsong on this section off the walk, and do keep an eye out for Weka. The picturesque walk from Opuā to Paihia takes you around many points, beaches and bays with the matching changes of flora and fauna all the way to Opuā. Catching the Bay Belle passenger ferry from Paihia back to Russell.

It's a great sense of accomplishment having completed the full circle that many think you can only circumnavigate either by car or ferry!

Sat 19th October 8:30 am

Duration - 6 Hours

Distance - 17 kms

Cost - Adult \$35, Child \$15 (includes both ferries)

Grade - hard

Maximum walkers - 20

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Please note: The Okiato to Orongo Bay walk is part of this walk

3. Paroa Bay Surprise

We can't tell you everything, otherwise it won't be a surprise! But we can tell you a few things – your final destination is Paroa Bay Winery which is a stunning family owned boutique vineyard with traditional handmade, sustainable wines, and to top it off incredible sea views.

As you walk, you will enjoy lush native bush, expansive stunning views of the Bay of Islands, and a beautiful waterfall. Oops, too much information! The walk is less than 6km, medium to hard grade, but the hard grade is optional! All will be explained on the day! There are bees to pass and ropes to use – but don't be put off!

The walk finishes with wine tasting at Paroa Bay Vineyard. These wines are all made with traditional techniques of viticulture and dry grown vines to create distinctive handcrafted wines of character in low yields, reflecting the white clay soils and warm climate of the Bay of Islands.

Limited numbers on this walk, which is over private land. You won't be able to walk it any other time of the year! Enjoy!

Sat 19th October, 9am

Sun 20th October, 9am

Duration – 5 hours

Distance – up to 6km

Grade- Medium to hard

Cost – Adult \$40, Child \$20 (includes wine tasting and transport)

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Maximum walkers - 11

4: “Meet the locals!” Sunrise breakfast and walk

An early start to the day to meet the locals. Have breakfast together to watch the sun rising over the Cape Brett Peninsula before embarking on a mystery tour of Tapeka and Russell. On the way you'll meet some interesting characters, have some beautiful views and get to places you can only get to via the Bay of Islands Walking Weekend.

Saturday 19th October, 6.15am leave the bowling club – sharp! We don't want to miss the sunrise.

Sunday 20th October, 6.15 leave the bowling club – sharp!

Duration – 5 Hours

Distance 5 kms

Cost – Adult \$25, Child \$15 (includes breakfast)

Grade - medium

Maximum walkers - 12

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

5: Omata Estate Vineyard

Omata Estate is a boutique vineyard situated in a stunning location on a sheltered hilltop with wonderful views across the vines to the bay. Their lovely old wooden hexagonal restaurant, brick paths, terraced and sunny garden are reminiscent of an old French vineyard, which creates a perfect atmosphere to sit back, relax and enjoy a glass of wine with a gourmet platter or delicious wood fired pizza.

There are two Omata Vineyard Walks to choose from. Both include wine tasting and beautiful food. Each wine tasting goes through 5 different varietals of wine all grown on the property.

Friday afternoon/evening we have a walk that takes you to the vineyard for wine tasting and delicious wood fired homemade pizza!

Saturday walk to the vineyard for a daytime experience of wine tasting and sumptuous platters! It's a hard choice!!

This is a walk for those who like a small reward at the end - a few glasses of wine and some good food in a perfect setting!

Gather at the Russell Bowling Club for what is normally a very light hearted walk.

Head through the township, past some significant heritage buildings, then up 'that hill' which signifies the real start of the walk. From there it is an easy pleasant walk down to sea level and through the stunning mangrove boardwalk, stopping briefly to learn about the fascinating history of Tikitikioure and its mining heritage. The stories of manual labour hardship and a hillside village that was, at its time, larger than Russell township. (Russell was not all about whalers and wenches!)

Walkers carry on, thankful that we live in a day and age where manually chipping away at the mineshaft is behind us, and stroll round Orongo Bay taking in the extensive oyster farm operations. One more steep climb up and over, through well-established native bush. Plenty of bird life and a rather cheery atmosphere to keep you well entertained, but still, your glass of wine will be well appreciated.

Your destination is the beautiful grounds of Omata Estate where you will be warmly welcomed. There is nothing more rewarding than doing some good old fashioned exercise before settling down to a glass of wine and some beautiful food.

Friday 18th October

3pm. Arrive about 6pm at Omata Vineyard for wood fired pizza and wine tasting.

Sat 19th October

11am - Arrive about 2pm for gourmet platters and wine tasting.

Duration – 2 Hours plus 1.5 hours at the vineyard, before taking the bus home

Distance 5 kms

Cost – Adult \$55, Child \$40 – includes food, wine tasting and transport back

Grade: medium to hard. A couple of steep hills

Maximum walkers - 20

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

6: Urupukapuka Island

This year you have the choice of the long island loop or a shorter walk.

Urupukapuka Island is the largest island in the Bay of Islands and is a slice of paradise well worth exploring. As well as boasting some of the most spectacular panoramic views imaginable and gorgeous beaches with crystal clear water there are dozens of pristinely preserved archaeological sites on the island, some of which may be up to 1000 years old. From prehistoric Māori pā, villages, gardens, and food storage, right up to early 20th Century buildings used by famous author Zane Grey, there are countless historic sites to explore on Urupukapuka Island.

You will travel by commercial launch to Urupukapuka Island, getting a feel for the Bay of Islands as you venture into the inner islands where you will disembark at the stunning Otehei Bay. The full walk is 11km on very well maintained trails and there is plenty to see. (For those who don't like steps a shorter version will be available if the group decides to split in two.) You will hike through forest which holds treasures of Project Island Song such as the North Island robin and saddleback, which are the jewels amongst the abundant tui and fantail population. From sheltered bays, ancient pa, a wildlife hide and created wetland, climb through regenerating Manuka forest to scintillating views along the impressive seaward coastline. Looping around the island with one view to Zane Grey's campsite and the other out to the waters he fished, before catching your vessel back to Russell.

Sat 19th October 8:00 am

Sun 20th October 8:00 am

Duration – 5 hours walking
30 minutes each way boat travel.

Distance 11 kms

Please note – For those who don't like steps a shorter version will be available if the group decides to split in two, we will have extra guides to allow this to happen, and you can still experience the panoramic views and all the island has to offer.

Cost Adult \$60.00, Child \$30 (includes boat transfers)

Grade: Hard for the long walk, medium for the shorter

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Maximum walkers - 20

7: Moturua Captain Cook Connection

Sailing out to the islands in a roomy comfortable yacht, experience the peacefulness of arriving at Cook's landing places just how he did – with the wind in his sails and no noisy engines or petrol fumes! A perfect way to travel to your walks in the Bay of Islands.

As you set sail there is more talking than walking before you disembark to visit the site of early interaction between Maori and Europeans. Before heading back on board to Moturua Island, where you walk the ultimate island loop track. Crossing ridges, the track descends to four very different beaches, ranging from soft sand to pebble and stone. As you explore the islands your guide will regale you with stories of the rich history at each of the bays. Moturua Island has brought the birdsong back to life and you can often see kiwi footprints on the sand as you walk.

This day trip is truly entertaining with its stories and majestic in its beauty. A full day with some of the best the Bay has to offer.

Saturday 19th October, 7.30am
Sunday 20th October, 7.30 am

Duration 8 hours – sailing and walking
Distance - 5 km walking
Grade - Medium
Cost – Adult \$75, child \$50
Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus
Maximum Walkers: 16

8. Pukehuia Magic and Whangamumu Whaling Walk

(includes making your own Kawakawa balm!)

This spectacular walk is one of heart stopping vistas and rich history.

From Russell you take a forty minute bus ride out to Rawhiti which is the start of your walk.

Before we start walking though we will start with a bit of magic. You'll participate in some local activities like making your own magical potion from the therapeutic kawakawa leaf and magical flowers that last forever! That's the easy part!

Then it's a climb up Pukehuia. Don't be put off by the "hard" rating, it's well worth it, and only hard because of a few hills - but no steps!!

Pukehuia is a significant maunga or mountain, on the landscape of the southern arm of the Bay of islands, Ipipiri. The first hour is spent ascending through native bush to the high point with frequent stops for rests and photographs. The stop at the top is an opportunity to bunch the group up again and fill the water bottles – perfect for that ultimate photo of the Bay of Islands!

The hard yards complete the rest of the walk journeys down a south facing ridge with a young kauri grove mingled with mature podocarp and broadleaf forming the canopy. Witness the recovery from pest control efforts, enjoy views of distant Mimiwhangata and the horizontal Poor Knights.

You join up with the Whangamumu track which takes you to the Whangamumu Whaling Station which was the only one in the world that caught whales with nets, and it was Northland's longest running and most successful station. Today the physical remains at Whangamumu represent the last factory based whaling station in Northland. The remaining historic structures include vats or tanks that held whale oil, the slipway on the beach front, and the old boiler. It's an eerie and intriguing place to visit.

You have the option to descend to the relics of the whaling station or spend time above the harbour enjoying the views before turning your back to the ocean and descending down the old farm track to Tangatapu Wetland, a local restoration project of replanting. Always keeping an eye out for the elusive fern bird - often heard but not seen!

Saturday 19th October 7.30 am
Duration 8 hours

Distance 8 km
Grade hard
Cost Adult \$40, Child \$25 (includes transport, and activities)
Maximum walkers 20
Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

9 . Kotikoti Walk

This spectacular walk is on private land which is opened for the Walking Weekend. A perfect opportunity to do something you can't do the rest of the year! This walk takes its name from the Maori Pā Site you will visit on the walk.

You walk from the Walking Weekend HQ to the back eastern corner of town and leaving the road you enter private property with an introduction to a land under transition. Walk through the lush canopy of regenerating coastal forest with distant views along the way...these are snippets to the final spectacular vista of the outer Bay of Islands.

Settling down to enjoy your morning tea or lunch and the views as the guides point out areas of interest at your feet from Moturoa island, the second largest island, the stunning lava formation of the Black Rocks, the distant northern entrance of Tikitiki through compass north to the clump of eastern islands and the magnificent Cape Brett peninsula with the peaks of Rakaumangamanga and Pukehuia. Then descend down through kanuka, manuka and ponga forest to the coast and secluded beaches seldom visited. Clamber around the rocks with pohutukawa arriving at Long Beach, Oneroa, for a wander along stable sand before rising over the hill into town and back to the Club for refreshments.

Note this was previously called Matatea.

Friday 18th October - 12.30pm
Saturday 19th October – 8.30am

Duration 4 hours
Distance 7 kms
Grade hard
Cost Adult \$20, Child \$10
Maximum walkers - 20
Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

10. Te Araroa Taster – New walk this year!

Te Araroa – New Zealand's Long Trail passes through the Bay of Islands. This walk extends from Cape Reinga to Bluff. One of the walks of Te Araroa is called "Russell Forest Track" and is one of the highlights of Te Araroa. Expect to get wet boots on this track, as 4km of the track is in the beautiful Papakauri Stream, where you will be boulder-hopping or simply wading through reflective pools overhung with young totara.

It'll take longer than you think, and at this time of the year the water could be cold, so wear appropriate clothing and bring a change of clothes for when we are out of the water. Roughly 4 km is in water and 6 km out of it! Poles are a good idea too! (Please note: organisers reserve the right to take you on another walk should the weather not be appropriate as this walk should not be attempted during or after heavy rain!)

Saturday 19th October

Start 8.00am

Duration walking 5 to 6 hours

Plus 30 minute bus ride to the start and 45 mins back to HQ

Distance 10km

Cost Adult \$40.00, Child \$25 (includes transport)

Grade Medium

Maximum walkers 16

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

11A: Opua Forest - Papatūānuku Earth Mother Tours – short walk

This walk was new last year and got rave reviews from everyone who went on it.

Experience an exclusive Māori cultural guided tour through an amazing native kauri forest.

Leave Russell and catch the ferry to Paihia where you will be met by Stella from Papatūānuku Earth Mother Tours, she will take you on an informative, educational short walk through a native Kauri forest in the Opua State Forest where you will learn how traditional Maori once used the forest to live and support their growing families. She will share her knowledge of the birds the trees and the insects and show you how her ancestors used the different plants and trees to make their clothing, medicines, musical instruments and many other things.

She will also show you how things are very different now and how once the forest was trapped to sustain life and now how it needs to be trapped to save the creatures in it. Learn about the community's mammoth effort in taking out over 11,000 pests and the explosion of native wildlife that followed, particularly the magnificent Northern Green geckos, kiwi, wood pigeons, tomtits, owls, and so much more.

At the end of the walk Stella will find a lovely spot to for you to sit, relax and enjoy some homemade Maori fry bread with local honey and herbal tea. Stella will drop back at the Bay Belle ferry for your return to Russell!

Friday 18th October

Start time 12.30pm

Return HQ 5:00pm

Duration – walking time – 2hrs

Grade – easy

Cost: Adult \$45, Child \$30 (includes transport, ferry and bush snacks and herbal teas)

Maximum walkers - 11

Meet at the Russell Bowling Club

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

11B: Opuia Forest Traverse

Another walk that was new last year and got rave reviews!

Leave Russell and catch the ferry to Paihia where you will be met by Stella from Papatūānuku Earth Mother Tours, she will take you on an informative, educational short walk through a native Kauri forest in the Opuia State Forest where you will learn how traditional Maori once used the forest to live and support their growing families. She will share her knowledge of the birds the trees and the insects and show you how her ancestors used the different plants and trees to make their clothing, medicines, musical instruments and many other things.

She will also show you how things are very different now and how once the forest was trapped to sustain life and now how it needs to be trapped to save the creatures in it.

Stella will drop you with Brad from Bay Bush Action who will take you on the Oromahoe Traverse, a medium to hard walk, a unique opportunity to walk this ancient trail used by Māori for hundreds of years, that runs right through the heart of the stunning Opuia State Forest. Learn about the community's mammoth effort in taking out over 11,000 pests and the explosion of native wildlife that followed, particularly the magnificent Northern Green geckos, kiwi, wood pigeons, tomtits, owls, and so much more.

At the end of the walk Stella will meet you and you can all relax and enjoy some home made Maori fry bread with local honey and herbal tea. Stella will drop back at the Bay Belle ferry for your return to Russell!

Saturday 19th October

Start time 08:30am

Return HQ 2.45pm

Duration – walking time – 5hrs

Grade – Fairly hard

Cost: Adult \$50, Child \$30 (includes transport, ferry and bush snacks and herbal teas)

Maximum walkers - 11

Meet at the Russell Bowling Club

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

12: Haruru Falls Kayak and Walk

Catch a ferry from Russell to Waitangi. To make the most of high tide and kayaking through the mangrove forest you will kayak up the Waitangi River – the kayak is a relaxing paddle up the sheltered waters of the historic Waitangi River, experience the amazing unique horseshoe shaped Haruru waterfall with a chance of exploring the fascinating mangrove forest. Your guides will share with you fauna, flora, local history and Maori legends while being your personal photographers. Walking back from the falls you follow the Waitangi inlet, with impressive views peeking out through native bush, walk across bridges and the boardwalk through our beautiful mangrove forest. The ferry will take you back to Russell from Waitangi.

No experience required, suitable for all.

Saturday 19th Oct 9.30am . Arrive back in Russell at 3.45pm.

Duration - There is approximately 2 hours of kayaking and 2 hours of walk, the extra time is 30mins each way on the ferry and a break to have lunch.

Grade - Easy to Medium.

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Maximum walkers - 20

Cost: Adult \$70, Child \$50 (includes ferry and kayak tour)

13: Tour of Russell

Based in Russell, this short tour is rich in history. Step back in time and learn about the days when Kororareka was called the Hell Hole of the Pacific. A fascinating guided walk through town leads you to buildings of archaeological significance: Christ Church (the oldest existing church in New Zealand today), Russell Museum and finishing at Pompallier Mission with option of a tour of Pompallier.

Fri 18th Oct, 2.00pm

Sun 20th Oct 10.00 am

Duration – 1 hour walk

Distance 2km

Cost Adult \$10, Child \$5

Grade - easy

Category - Family friendly – all ages.

Mobility scooter/wheelchair friendly

Maximum walkers - 20

14: Club Walk

An introduction to the heart of the Russell community, walk between the clubs, stopping for a drink and some fascinating stories. Visit the Boating club, sitting right on the water's edge, threatening to float away with sea level rising. The Swordfish club located upstairs on the waterfront which is the oldest game fishing club in New Zealand is a must do when you visit the Bay of Islands. The RSA is full of its own history of fighting for survival. And of course, we have the Bowling Club which is an integral part of the community. Take in the photographic history and hear the stories behind the memorabilia which help keep our town alive. Once you have visited each club and appraised each menu you can return for dinner and a cosy night in with the locals.

Fri 18th Oct 3:30 pm

Duration – 4 hour

Distance 2km

Cost - free

GRADE: easy

Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Maximum walkers - 20

15: Rakaumangamanga – Cape Brett Lighthouse Overnight Walk

This must be one of the best hikes in New Zealand – a must do! A difficult but totally rewarding walk... enjoy outstanding views of the outer Bay of Islands, north to the Cavalli Islands and south to Whangaruru and beyond to the Poor Knights Islands, while taking in the peace and tranquillity that only isolation can provide.

Cape Brett The Guiding light: The light at the end of Cape Brett/Rakaumangamanga has guided and protected visitors to New Zealand for hundreds of years. The light reflecting off the crystalline rocks

once helped guide the earliest waka to a safe landfall in this new homeland. For the last 100 years the Cape Brett lighthouse has lit and protected the coast for all seafarers.

Starting our day with a boat ride out to Maunganui Bay, which is a gorgeous experience in itself, travelling by water through the Bay of Islands. Walkers begin with a climb from the once established fishing village known as Deep Water Cove, up through forest under restoration and intense pest control. Search for native orchids along the track edges, pass over an extensive pā with terracing and kumara pits concealed under the canopy. As the forest reaches the cliff edge you can rest up and enjoy lunch as you catch your first sight of the challenge ahead. You will see evidence of the pest control operation with the regrowth of plant species, presence of Fantail, Wood Pigeon, Pied Tit and Tui.

The walk itself is an introduction to hard yakka with great rewards, gasping for breath from both exertion and extreme views. Upon reaching the iconic lighthouse above Motukokako or Piercy Island, the home of the Hole in the Rock, you will look down on your accommodation for the night.

The house is comfortable with bunk rooms, and the kitchen has cooking facilities and is fitted out with long wooden tables - the perfect spot to swap tramping stories. Down at the hut you can unburden your back, empty your pack, make up your bunk, and enjoy whatever refreshments you may have carried out with you while taking in the peace and tranquillity that only isolation can provide. Then as the sun sets through the windows the guides will be busy preparing your evening meal.

The following morning after an adequate breakfast, a slightly lighter pack and time on your side, trek back over familiar territory with new views back to Maunganui Bay, where your lunch will mysteriously appear ahead of your boat trip back to the Club headquarters.

You will need to bring; lunch for first day and water, sleeping bag, pillowcase, plate, bowl, cup, knife, fork, spoon, tramping boots, wet weather gear, any refreshments and of course a sense of humour! Each year it has been challenging with sea conditions to get people picked up at Cape Brett, so we have refined the existing walk to increase the chances of achievement, by catching your boat transport in the calm Deep Water Cove. A little more to carry in your pack made up of supplies for your overnight adventure, balanced by less distance to cover but still saving the best to last. The views and effort are hard to beat. This sold out last year so be sure to book early.

Friday 18th October - 8.00 am

Return Saturday 19th October – 2pm pick up Deep Water Cove

Duration 28 hours – walking time 3 hours each way

Distance 6km each way

Grade hard

Cost \$180 - includes dinner, breakfast, lunch, accommodation, guides and water taxis

Maximum walkers - 20

Category – not suitable for children, but we have had some fit kids on this so speak to us first.

16: The Whalers Walk

A walk and talk led by Lindsay Alexander around Russell. Lindsay will captivate you and take you back in time – you can see the ships in the bay, hear the shouts of the men and almost smell the bustling streets. Included is a stop at Christ Church to learn about some of the characters buried there and a visit to Russell's museum which houses a refurbished whaling boat. Lindsay has been researching the Bay of Islands' whaling history for six years and has published books on the subject.

Sat 19th October 11:30 am
Sun 20th October 11:30 am

Duration – 1 hour
Distance 2km
Cost Adult \$10, Child \$5
GRADE: easy
Category: Family Friendly – all ages
Mobility scooter/wheelchair friendly
Maximum walkers - 20

17. Paihia Lookout and Lunch

Ferry from Russell to Paihia, where your walk starts 700m from the centre of Paihia. This is a pleasant walk that is 4km return (2km each way) through regenerating native forest to a view point overlooking the bay. From the viewpoint you can see the Bay from Opuia to Waitangi and over the Russell peninsula to Urupukapuka Island and Cape Brett in the distance. Meander back down to Charlottes Kitchen which is situated on the end of the Paihia Wharf for one of their superb lunches. The perfect way to finish the Bay of Islands Walking Weekend.

Sunday 20th Oct, 10.30am

Cost - Adult \$40, Child \$30 (includes lunch and ferry)
Grade Medium
Maximum walkers - 20
Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

18. Night time Walk

A short walk through the streets of Russell, an introduction to the wildlife and of the efforts of the community to enhance the flora and fauna of the peninsula. Then listen for the evening chorus of tui and weka, before, with torch in hand, you venture down the trail into the forest to listen for kiwi and ruru. Along the way visit the glow worms, before enjoying the stars from Maiki hill and views of Russell at night.

Friday 18th October 7.00pm

Duration 1.5 hours
Distance 2km
Cost Adult \$15, Child \$10
Grade Medium
Maximum walkers - 20
Category - Family friendly – Children 10 years plus