

# Whanganui

## Walkways & Cycling Guide



WhanganuiNZ.com

# Haere mai ki Whanganui Welcome to Whanganui

Whanganui is one of New Zealand's most interesting and distinctive places to visit and with its temperate climate and lots of sunshine hours it's a great place to cycle and walk.

Many of the walks take in parks, gardens and reserves including our five premier parks – Virginia Lake / Rotokawau, Queen's Park, Kōwhai Park, Bason Botanic Gardens and the Castlecliff Coastal Reserve. All the areas are significant to Whanganui's cultural heritage so take the time to seek out points of interest and a little of our history.

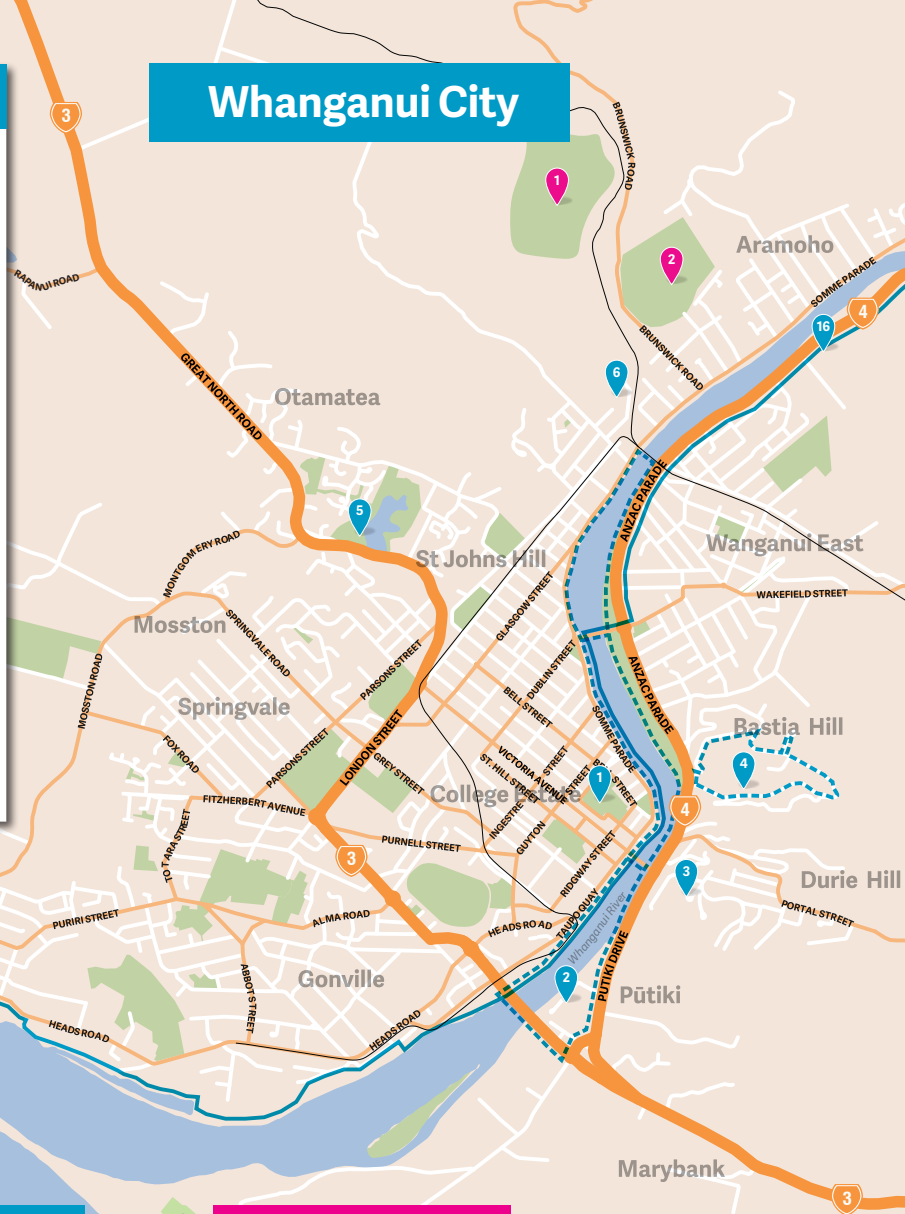
Tēnā koutou katoa.



## Whanganui Region



## Whanganui City



### Walkways & Cycleways

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| 2. Round the Bridges              | 10. Kai Iwi Beach to Castlecliff      |
| 3. Durie Hill Tower Walk          | 11. Kai Iwi Beach to Okehu Stream     |
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### Cycling Parks

1. Matipo Park
2. Hylton Park
3. Lismore Forest
4. Harakeke Forest



# Directory

Whanganui is filled with numerous places to walk and cycle within the city and surrounds. We hope to provide you with options within this brochure so you can select the best way for you to enjoy our wonderful landscape, history and environment. Many of our pathways are shared by walkers and cyclists alike and we ask that you show the usual courtesies to all users.

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**\*Shared by pedestrians, hikers  
and cyclists**

## Safety & Courtesy

- ▶ Many of our pathways and cycle ways are suitable for prams and wheelchairs, although some do contain obstacles and slopes that people with wheelchairs will need assistance with.
- ▶ Please be aware of other people at all times on our shared pathways. If you are a cyclist, alert pedestrians to your presence, slow down and give them a wide berth – just the same as cyclists would like to be treated by motorists.
- ▶ Tell someone of your plans, where you are going and when you expect to return. Check that there is mobile phone coverage where you wish to go.
- ▶ Always carry a mobile phone and personal identification in case of emergencies.
- ▶ Bright clothing and lights will enhance your visibility and safety.
- ▶ Remember to check the weather forecast and dress appropriately for warmth at cooler times. Take waterproof clothing if the forecast suggests and carry water at all times.
- ▶ Cyclists should check tyres and brakes, carry a pump and spare tube and lock.
- ▶ Cycle helmets are compulsory on road ways in New Zealand.
- ▶ In New Zealand, the emergency number is **111**

*Help us keep our cycle ways and walk ways safe  
and enjoyable for every user.*



# Walking & Hiking Tracks



## Inner City Heritage Walk

Start from the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre

Self-guided or guided, these two options are a fantastic way to learn more about Whanganui's heritage and imagine the hustle of the river trading in the early 1900's. Bookings for the Guided Tours can be made at the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre and are able to accommodate groups. Allow 90 minutes or more.

Self-guided tours are available with directions in the Whanganui Heritage brochure and allow approximately 1 hour unless you wish to stop and enjoy the shopping, cafés and restaurants on route.

Points of interest along these walks may include:

- ▶ 'Mable' – the No. 12 Tram
- ▶ P.S. Waimarie & Hatricks Wharf
- ▶ Whanganui Riverboat Centre and Museum
- ▶ Moutoa Gardens / Pākaitore
- ▶ Wanganui Repertory Theatre
- ▶ Rutland Building
- ▶ Watt Fountain
- ▶ Royal Wanganui Opera House
- ▶ The Bell Tower at Cooks Gardens
- ▶ Queen's Park
- ▶ Whanganui Regional Museum
- ▶ Wanganui Memorial Centre

## Westmere Walkway

Entrance from Kelvin Street or Brunswick Road.

A rural walkway over privately owned farmland and the Matipo Park Reserve, this walk is a Rotary Club of Wanganui project and exists through the generosity of the land owners and the efforts of club members.

Various walks provide great views, valleys and the peace and quiet of rural Whanganui. You should expect to experience livestock, uneven ground, mud and manure, no toilets and unfenced water. Please prepare your clothing and footwear appropriately and carry your own water.

White marker poles detail the route and stiles are provided to climb over fences.

- ▶ 'Restawhile Lookout' – 40 minutes return.
- ▶ Top Flats and Jeanie Lynas Reid Reserve – 2 hours return.
- ▶ Matipo Park Lower Route – 1 hour return.
- ▶ Matipo Park via Top Flats – 2 hours return.

Entry onto the walkway is on the condition that you enter at your own risk.

For more details collect the Westmere Walkway brochure from the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre.



## Round the Bridges Whanganui

Anzac Parade, Somme Parade, Pūtiki Drive and Taupō Quay.

A popular route for much of the Whanganui community, an annual charity Fun Run in May and a '3 Bridges Marathon' in December each year. You can opt to do a circuit of one of the city bridges or all four.

The routes take you along the relatively flat boardwalks of the river, footpaths and park tracks as you take in the beauty of the Whanganui River, majestic trees, public art and surrounding town suburbs.

In 1969 the original cast-iron and hardwood deck town bridge was demolished and replaced with the existing City Bridge. Work began in January and the 'new' bridge was officially opened on the 12th of December in 1970.

The 310 metre long Dublin Street Bridge was opened in November 1914 and took two and a half years to build. One thousand tonnes of steel, 30 tonnes of rivets and 1800 yards of concrete were used in its construction. Concrete cylinders are embedded at least 9 metres below the riverbed to support the bridge.

Kōwhai Park is the most visited and unique children's park located on Anzac Parade. Many parents now bring their children to play where they once played as children themselves.

The Railway Bridge was opened in 1877 linking Whanganui to both New Plymouth and Wellington by 1886.

- ▶ Cobham & City Bridge Circuit – 3.6 km
- ▶ City & Dublin St Bridge Circuit – 4.2 km
- ▶ Dublin St & Railway Bridge Circuit – 3.3 km
- ▶ Cobham & Dublin St Bridge – 10.5 km

For more details about Marathon and Fun Run events, see:

[www.wanganuiharrierclub.co.nz](http://www.wanganuiharrierclub.co.nz)

[www.sportwanganui.co.nz](http://www.sportwanganui.co.nz)

Bridge information sourced from:

<https://www.ipenz.org.nz/ipenz/publications/engineering-NZ/volume32-1977/NZ-Engineering-1977-09.pdf>





## Durie Hill Tower Walk

Either walk from the Whanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre across the City Bridge or park on Pūtiki Drive near the entrance and traffic lights. Approximately 20 minutes.

One of Whanganui's iconic features and unique in the Southern Hemisphere is the Durie Hill Elevator. Located just 100 metres away is the Memorial Tower and both provide the best panoramic views of the city, Whanganui River – Te Awa o Whanganui and the harbour. On a fine day you can see Mt Taranaki (Egmont), Mt Ruapehu and the northern-most tip of the South Island.

The entrance to the 213m tunnel is opposite the City Bridge and marked by a carved gateway. Enter the elevator to ride up to the Memorial Tower. If you're keen climb the 176 spiral staircase steps to the top of the Memorial Tower otherwise use the Durie Hill Elevator Viewing Platform.

Complete the circuit by coming down the 193 steps back to the City Bridge. These steps are a popular exercise route and have been a venue for the NZ Masters Games Stair Climb event.

### Elevator Hours:

Weekdays 8:00am to 6:00pm

Weekends & Public Holidays 10:00am to 5:00pm

\$2.00 per adult and \$1.00 per child one way.

## Bastia Hill Water Tower

Begin at either the base of Georgetti or Wairere Roads off Anzac Parade. Approximately 1 ¼ hours.

A hill walk up Georgetti Road is the easiest start, passing the old brick works, now home to artisan furniture maker Greg Betts' studio. The original brick works were closed in 1959 and left abandoned until Mr Betts brought the property in 1986. The studio is open by appointment only.

Bastia Hill Water Tower was erected in 1923 to improve pressure to the town's water supply. Bastia Hill was named by an early settler, Mr Augustine Georgetti who originally came from the town of Bastia on the island of Corsica.

Return down Wairere Road for remarkable panoramic views of the central town area, Queen's Park (once the site of Rutland Stockade, the largest in NZ at the time) and Moutoa Gardens / Pākaitore.



## Gordon Park Scenic Reserve

No. 3 Line and Kaimatara Rd corner. 10 minutes from Whanganui.

A small reserve with a boardwalk through lowland forest of matai, tōtara, titoki, tawa, kōwhai and kahikatea trees and many native birds. From the car park this short walk is wheelchair and buggy accessible and a great walk for children.

## Virginia Lake / Rotokawau

Great North Road, SH3.

A range of short walks are available at Virginia Lake / Rotokawau from the popular 2km track around the lake to a 6km circuit around the lower track and above the Deer Park and surrounding reserves. The upper track is more demanding and can be uneven underfoot in places.

The walk around the lake takes you past public art given to the city by generous past and present citizens, the Band Rotunda, twin bridges and wisteria pergolas.

For more details collect the Virginia Lake brochure from the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre.

## Bason Botanic Gardens

Rapanui Road, off SH3 North, 11km from the centre of Whanganui.

The Bason Botanic Gardens are rated a 'Garden of National Significance' by the NZ Gardens Trust. There are a variety of walking trails around the lake and through the various planted areas as well. There is a 'Bason Red Kiwi' Orienteering Course for enthusiasts to follow and a Frisbee 3 Hole Golf Course as well. Garden areas are the:

- ▶ Exotic Conifer Arboretum
- ▶ Dress Circle, Homestead and English Garden
- ▶ Blanche Bason Conservatory Complex of Orchid, Begonia and Tropical Houses
- ▶ Millennium Hill
- ▶ Native Bush (Forest) and Wetlands
- ▶ Lakeside Flats
- ▶ Woodlands

Free gas BBQ's are available and it is a great picnic spot.

For more information collect the brochure from the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre or see [www.basonbotanicgardens.org.nz](http://www.basonbotanicgardens.org.nz)

### Open Hours:

Daily from 8:00am until dusk.

### Conservatory Hours:

Daily from 9:00am to 4:30pm.





## Westmere Lake Wildlife Reserve

Rapanui Road, 0.7km from SH3 North.

An easy 1.7km loop with the map signposted. Allow 30 minutes. A designated wildlife refuge which provides a rare opportunity to see wild fowl and native birds in their natural environment.

## Bushy Park Sanctuary

Rangitautau East Road, off SH3 North, 25km from Whanganui.

A 100 hectare predator-free native bird sanctuary set amongst virgin lowland forest. Well maintained 3.4km of walking tracks with a wide variety and multitude of birds to escort you – kereru, bellbirds, the North Island Robin, saddlebacks, hihi and others. Look for 'Ratanui', the large northern rata tree estimated to be over 500 years old, 43 metres high and a girth of more than 11 metres.

### Summer Hours (December to April):

Monday to Friday 10:00am to 3:00pm.

Weekends & Public Holidays 10:00am to 5:00pm

### Winter Hours (May to November):

Weekends 11:00am to 4:00pm

\$6.00 entry fee per adult, children free. Please pay at the Homestead when open or the donations box at the track entrance.

For more information enquire at the Whanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre or see: [www.bushyparksanctuary.org.nz](http://www.bushyparksanctuary.org.nz)

## Waitahinga Trails

20km from SH3, 1.1km along Junction Road off Rangitautau East Road.

A collection of walks have been established at the no longer used Whanganui Water Catchment Reserve by the Whanganui Tramping Club to mark the club's 60th anniversary. The walks vary for different fitness levels with picnic spots and look outs.

Most of the walking trails are under native forest canopy with a combination of original forest and very old regeneration. Peaceful, beautiful and the emerald Waitahinga Dam makes for a worthwhile destination.

- ▶ *The Picnic Dell – 10 minutes from the car park.*
- ▶ *The Chicken Run – 1 hour return easy walk.*
- ▶ *Cropper's Clearing – 90 minute return easy walk.*
- ▶ *Waitahinga Dam – 4 to 5 hours return with steep climbs.*

**Closed in July and August or by permit only.**

For more details collect the brochure from the Whanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre.



## Kai Iwi Beach to Castlecliff

14km west of Whanganui at the end of Rapanui Road.

12km easy walk taking approximately 2 to 3 hours. A beautiful, black sand beach walk at low tide from Kai Iwi Beach to Castlecliff Beach.

## Kai Iwi Beach to Okehu Stream

From the same starting point as the above walk but 2 hours in the other direction and again only to be done at low tide.

Check [www.metservice.com/marine-surf/tides/wanganui](http://www.metservice.com/marine-surf/tides/wanganui) for current tides.

## Ototoka Beach

20 km North of Whanganui, turn down Maxwell Station Road. This will lead to Ototoka Beach Road (unsealed). 5 minutes from the car park.

Park on the cliff tops, pass by a small waterfall on the path to the beach and your reward will be a pristine iron sand beach to explore. Great for fossil hunting with cliffs showing shells over 1.5 million years old.

## Ātene Skyline Track & Viewpoint Walk

Whanganui River Road, just past Ātene. Parking is on the side of the road.

It is advised to begin at the upriver end of the track.

The Viewpoint Walk is a 2 hour return uphill walk to a lookout point. From here you can see views of the cut-off meander of the old Whanganui River Bed. Return the same way.

For the more serious walker or hiker the Ātene Skyline Track is a 6 to 8 hour round trip with steep climbs through Whanganui National Park. A campsite midway provides shelter, water and a toilet. The highest point of the track is at 572m.

For more details collect the Department of Conservation brochure from the Wanganui i-SITE Visitor Centre.







## Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail Ngā Ara Tūhono

The Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail is the most diverse in NZ. With a range of sections in Ruapehu, the final stages travel down the Whanganui River Road, through the natural and cultural heritage of the Māori and early Europeans. Carry on into the city along boardwalks and past art on the riverbank to where the river meets the Tasman Sea.

The Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail is one of the longest and the most diverse cycle trail in New Zealand with something to suit riders of all abilities, from the most daring and adventurous to more relaxed sections with amazing scenery.

To complete the full Mountains to Sea Cycle Trail begin at the mountains of the Central Volcanic Plateau and ride to the Whanganui River. Travel by jet boat from the Mangapurua Landing to Pipiriki, and follow the trail down the historic

Whanganui River Road before traversing all the way to the Tasman Sea through the boardwalks and paths of urban Whanganui.

The full trail takes approximately 5 days so have some fun and do it over a couple of weekends as you take the time to enjoy mountain views, historic railway viaducts, a visit to the Bridge to Nowhere, canoeing the Whanganui River and the richness of natural and cultural heritage along the Whanganui River Road.

Engage with locals, absorb the serenity and history as you cycle alongside the Whanganui River through the small settlements of the Whanganui River Road. A range of accommodation options are available.

For extensive information and help in planning your ride, visit [www.mountaintosea.co.nz](http://www.mountaintosea.co.nz)



# Whanganui River Road



Travelling the scenic Whanganui River Road from the city to Pipiriki takes a leisurely 2 to 4 hours depending on your choice of stops and photo opportunities. This is an authentic journey back in time. Local iwi heritage, remnants of early European settlement and historic landmarks feature amongst the stunning views.

Look out for St Mary's Church at Upokongaro famous for its unusual 3-sided spire. Stop at the Aramoana Summit at 230 metres above sea level to look down the river and out to Mount Ruapehu. Don't miss the amazing Oyster Cliffs on the side of the road where layers of fossilised oysters lined sea beds and can now be seen. Travel through the historic and beautiful marae and villages of Ātene, Koriniti and Matahiwi – please ask for permission before visiting a marae as these are treasured places.

Kawana Flour Mill is tucked away off the road but worth the stop with a small restored building and museum.

Ranana is the next community as you travel through to Hiruharama (Jerusalem), previously home to two historically famous figures, Mother Mary Joseph (Suzanne Aubert), and acclaimed New Zealand poet James K. Baxter. Halfway to Pipiriki there's a great photo opportunity of the Omorehu Waterfall and then before you know it you'll be at Pipiriki – our gateway to Whanganui National Park and the famous 'Bridge to Nowhere'.

[Pick up a detailed Whanganui River Road Guide and map to plan your tour of this unique part of the country.](#)





# Mountain Biking



Mountain biking is popular in Whanganui and the local club has ensured access to local forests and other mountain bike areas within the district with the generosity of the forest operators. The Wanganui Mountain Bike Club maintains and develops riding areas for the community and members and tremendous effort goes into these trails for your enjoyment.

[www.wanganuimountainbikeclub.co.nz](http://www.wanganuimountainbikeclub.co.nz)

## Harakeke Forest

Head south of SH3 and turn right into Pauri Road. Continue on to the gravel road until you reach the car park, main gate and sign.

**Please do not enter the old forest Monday to Friday between 7:00am and 5:00pm due to logging activity. Check the noticeboard and follow any directions on site.**

Six different routes are available and all are named and rated for grade of ease. The tracks can also be ridden as a continuous loop of just over 21 km which is called the Katipo Trail.

- ▶ *Pauri Track – easiest with two loops suitable for all riders, 4.66km.*
- ▶ *Pauri Express – easy intermediate, 1.87km.*
- ▶ *Dipper – easy to hard intermediate, 3km.*
- ▶ *Route 29'er – easy to hard intermediate, 2.23km.*
- ▶ *Ridge Tracks – most difficult track with 3 loops, 5.44km.*
- ▶ *Rozy's Folly – easy intermediate, 1km.*

For young kids take Jamie's Jungle Trail, a 220 metre purpose built wide and easy track creating a 440 metre circuit. 'Wild' animals make an appearance...

A small skills area is off the car park and features narrow planks, a see saw and ramp.

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## Lismore Forest

SUNDAYS only.

20km North of Whanganui, from SH4 turn right into the Old Parapara Road and onto Mangaone Road. Park at the picnic area.

Lismore Forest is an operational forest so please take care at all times. Numerous trails have been developed and the most popular are signposted.

- ▶ Grace Road
- ▶ Terror Firma – downhill course.
- ▶ Nat's Track – downhill with large jumps.
- ▶ Humpty Dumped Me – short downhill.
- ▶ Chicken Track – off camber single track.
- ▶ Old Walking Track

Detailed information and updates on access for all rides and tracks can be accessed on

[www.wanganuimountainbikeclub.co.nz](http://www.wanganuimountainbikeclub.co.nz)

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## Hylton Park

Brunswick Road, Whanganui. On the right hand side opposite the fertiliser works. Park by the gate but please do not block the gate.

Hylton Park has something to offer all riders as this is the cross country venue for the NZ Masters Games and the North Island School Secondary Championships. Trails are generally suitable for beginners to intermediate riders. The level of difficulty greatly increases in wet conditions.

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## Matipo Park

Access from Brunswick Road, Whanganui.

A recreational reserve with a mixture of native and exotic trees donated to the town by the Matipo Land Company in 1913. Walking and mountain bike tracks throughout and a 30 minute ride maximum.



## Events



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## M2C Multisport Race Ngā Ara Tūhono

27 – 29 March 2015

Your next great challenge! Run, pedal and paddle your way from the mountains to the sea. Traverse a massive 270km over 3 days through the most varied terrain – alpine Mt Ruapehu slopes, untouched native forest and the Whanganui River to the Tasman Sea. If you've done the Coast to Coast or an Ironman event, the M2C will take your breath away.

Novices, professionals, individuals and team entries are all encouraged.

For more details and entry go to [www.m2c.kiwi.nz](http://www.m2c.kiwi.nz)

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## Sunday Road Rides

The Wanganui Cycling Club welcome all ages and abilities to join them on their regular Sunday group rides. These rides are always on and always at a distance and speed for you with different groups for different abilities.

Meet at The Red Lion Inn, Anzac Parade, 9:00am on Sundays.

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## Wanganui MTB Club Rides

Evening rides during summer and winter every Thursday, meeting at 6:30pm.



