

Waitakere  
WAITAKERE WARD  
**History**

Like other parts of Waitakere City, the Waitakere area is steeped in history. The Maori were the first to value the land, tempted to the area by the rich Manukau Harbour and coastal belt along the west coast. Archaeology and ethnology reveal a rich Maori heritage much of which still remains, such as the Pa site on Lion rock at Piha and the Watchman at Karekare, defensive fortifications for Te Kauwerau a Maki.

Early European settlers valued the land for its economic potential with timber milling, gum digging, logging for firewood and the harvesting of flax beginning in the 1830s and continuing on for around 100 years. Farming took over once the land was cleared, but unlike other parts of Waitakere City it did not succeed due to the unsuitability of the landscape. By the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century Auckland newspapers were promoting the area as a tourist destination and with accommodation offered travel was limited to boat and coach, the latter of which had to compete with poor road quality. As roading improved in the 1920s and 30s the population began to steadily rise and the completion of telephone lines by the 1920s ended the isolation of some of the coastal settlements such as Karekare and Bethells.

Signs of early settlement are made up of predominantly family homes kept in good condition over the past century. Remains of earth dams and mill sites remain throughout the ranges. Two historic buildings are open to the public: Rose Hellaby House on Scenic Drive and Oratia Folk Museum in Oratia. Rose Hellaby House offers a historical display for visitors look into the Maori and European history of West Auckland. The Oratia Folk Museum is an early settlers cottage built from Kauri trees between 1855 and 1870.

Today the ward is dominated by the Waitakere Ranges which from 2008 is officially protected as a heritage site under the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Act 2008. This ensures preservation of ecological, historical and cultural heritage for most of the Waitakere Ward.

Waitakere  
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**Playgrounds**

- ..... Foothills Lane Reserve
- ..... Huia Domain
- ..... Kensington Gardens
- ..... Laingholm Scenic Reserve
- ..... Les Waygood park
- ..... Piha Domain
- ..... Robert Knox Memorial Park
- ..... Swanson Station Park
- ..... Takaranga Reserve
- ..... Tamariki Reserve
- ..... Tangiuri Reserve
- ..... Titirangi Beach
- ..... Township Park
- ..... Waimea Reserve
- ..... Waitakere War Memorial Park
- ..... Wood Bay Reserve
- ..... Woodlands Park



**Mt Atkinson Park**



One of the hidden gems of the Waitakere Ranges Mt Atkinson Park is a quiet surprise for many West Aucklanders. Located on the foothills of Titirangi, Mt Atkinson offers a wonderful scenic bushwalk and stunning Manukau Harbour views. Meander quietly around the tracks as fantails frolic in your footsteps.

**HOW TO GET THERE:**  
Kohu Road, Titirangi. Drive through Titirangi Town Centre to the large roundabout. Drive straight on through to Kohu Road and Mt Atkinson.

**Waitoru Reserve**



Surprise! Another Waitakere walkway just waiting quietly for you to enjoy. Take a peaceful stroll through the cool sheltered bush of the Waitakere foothills, listen to New Zealand's unique birdlife or shake hands with a Rimu tree. Enjoy, relax and reflect as you explore a special part of your backyard.

**HOW TO GET THERE:**  
Just a short drive along Bethells Road from Waitakere Township. Keep an eye open after the Duffy Road turn off as Waitoru is moments later on your right.

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Other brochures in this series:  
HENDERSON WARD  
NEW LYNN WARD  
MASSEY WARD

Waitakere  
WAITAKERE WARD



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Contact us:  
24-hour call centre 09 839 0400  
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Book a Park  
09 836 8075



## Swanson Station Park



- PLAYING • SKATING • PICNICKING • HISTORY
- BBQ

Swanson Station Park is a mix of nature, activity and history all on one site. Catch the train to or from the park and relax. Have a picnic or BBQ and watch as the kids speed around the playground and zoom down the flying fox. A significant historic weatherboard building, Swanson Station was moved from Avondale and restored to its present state. Come and enjoy a relaxing cup of tea and a muffin and help keep Waitakere's heritage alive.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Swanson Road, Swanson.



## Waitakere War Memorial Park



- PLAYING • WALKING • PICNICKING
- SPORTS • SKATING

Waitakere War Memorial park is a quiet reserve set in a tranquil semi rural neighbourhood at the start of the road to Bethells Beach. Throw a ball or frisbee or play fetch with man's best friend. This domain has soccer posts permanently set up for the public so come down and enjoy a friendly game of soccer with friends.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

From Swanson Road take Waitakere Road until you reach the bridge at Waitakere Township. Turn left after the bridge onto Bethells Road. The park is opposite the school on the right.



## Te Henga /Bethells Beach



- WALKING • PICNICKING • SWIMMING

Bethells/Te Henga means sand and there's black sand for almost as far as you can see. A single lifeguard tower breaks up the skyline, the base for lifeguards who watch over the summer crowds swimming and surfing at this wild surf beach. This beach is isolated and relatively untouched and not quite as busy as its other famous neighbours. A calm lagoon is great for small children to play in and you can follow the stream away from the coast to the Te Henga Wetland. There is also a large grassy domain near the main car park which is sheltered from the wind by the large dunes. Don't forget to swim between the flags.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Bethells Road via Waitakere Road.



## Lake Wainamu Scenic Reserve



- WALKING

Sand, sand and more sand! Lake Wainamu Scenic Reserve offers a rolling dune landscape made up of fine grained black sand. Scamper over the heated grains in the summer and then cool off as you follow the meandering stream to Lake Wainamu. Bring a chilly bin full of cold drinks and snacks as you laze in the warm sun, take a cool dip in the lake or have energetic races up and down the steep dunes.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Bethells Road via Waitakere Road. The carpark is on the left just after the one way bridge. If you get to the beach carpark you have gone too far.



## Piha



- PLAYING • PICNICKING • SWIMMING • WALKING

Piha is New Zealand's most famous surf beach. The scenery and surf are BIG and so is the adventure. Pack your boogie board, frisbee, sun umbrella and plenty of water and head to the beach for the day. Go early morning or enjoy an evening sunset to avoid the crowds. There are also plenty of walking tracks and pohutakawa trees to sit under to get out of the sun. Stay overnight by the beach at the campground on Piha Domain, only a hop, skip and a jump from the beach across the award winning 'Story of the Eel' footbridge. Don't forget to swim between the flags.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Turn onto Piha Road via Scenic Drive and follow until you reach the township. The entrance to parking at Piha Domain is on your left just after the campground.



## Karekare Scenic Reserve



- PLAYING • PICNICKING • WALKING

Located at the entrance to the secluded yet powerful Karekare beach, Karekare reserve offers a perfect picnicking spot away from sea spray and sand with the power of the surf echoing up the valley. From the reserve it's just a hop skip and a splash through the stream to the wild west coast beach of Karekare, or indulge in a hike through the cool kiwi bush.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Turn onto Piha Road via Scenic Drive then turn left onto Karekare Road.



## Huia Domain



- BEACH • KAYAKING • PLAYING • BASKETBALL
- SKATING • PICNICKING • SWIMMING • BBQ

Huia Domain sits in a sheltered cove on the Manukau Harbour. Enjoy a picnic under the heritage pohutakawa trees and use the free BBQ. A playground and skate ramp is also located in the domain to keep the kids entertained. If you are keen for a swim, make sure you head to the area at high tide! Drive a few minutes past the domain to reach Little Huia Beach.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

From Titirangi Road drive through Titirangi Town Centre till you get to the large roundabout and turn left onto Huia Road. Follow Huia Road to Huia with the Domain on your left.



## Armour Bay



- PLAYING • TENNIS • KAYAKING • PICNICKING
- SWIMMING • BBQ • BOATING

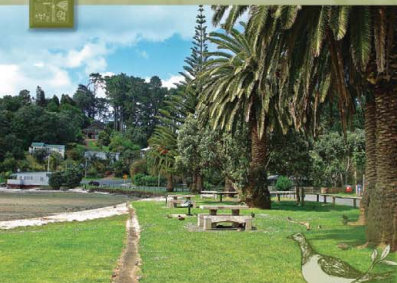
Armour Bay is calling all families. Come and enjoy a stimulating day out in the sun. Play games in the park, challenge each other to a game of petanque or an exhilarating game of tennis with scenic vistas to spur you along. Explore the rock pools, frolic in the cool Manukau waters or paddle around in a dinky or kayak. Bring a packed picnic or make use of the BBQ facilities. Perfect for a sunny summers day.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Take Huia Road, go just past Parau and turn left onto Armour Bay Road at the sign marking Armour Bay Reserve.



## Sandy's Parade



- KAYAKING • WALKING • PICNICKING
- SWIMMING

Panoramic harbour views greet you as you pull up to Sandy's Parade. Park along the water's edge and lay out your picnic blanket. Sandy's Parade offers a safe place to swim or dip your feet in the cool waters with a dairy across the road for a cool afternoon ice cream. Scenic views offer opportunities for keen photographers looking for that perfect photo. Stroll along the sand with the dog or take a sheltered walk along the bush track at the neighbouring Warner Park.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Take Huia Road and turn left into Laingholm Drive. Follow Laingholm Drive then left onto Warner Park Avenue. Follow the road to the bottom of the hill.



## Laingholm Scenic Reserve



- WALKING • PICNICKING • BIRD WATCHING

Looking for a refreshing walk on a hot sunny day? Laingholm Scenic Reserve lets you wander through cool canopied native bush. Breathe in the moist smell of the bush as you wander the tracks and listen to the melodic sound of native wildlife.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

Follow Huia Road and turn left into Victory Road and head into Laingholm. Follow Victory and turn left into Warner Park Avenue, parking is at the top of the hill.



## Titirangi Beach



- KAYAKING • PICNICKING • PLAYING
- BIRD WATCHING • WEDDINGS • SWIMMING

Titirangi beach offers constant variation to an exciting day out. Bring the family down at high tide and take a dip in the calm waters off the beach. When the tide is out take the opportunity to learn more about the intertidal zone, watch the wading birds and let the silty mud squeeze up between your toes as crabs scurry by. Titirangi has a large green open space for fun activities and picnicking and an exciting playground just sitting there waiting for young imaginations to take flight. A secluded picnic area backed by lush native bush is the perfect spot for a romantic wedding.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

From South Titirangi Road, turn left into Park Road then turn right into Titirangi Beach Road, Titirangi.



## Tamariki Reserve



- PLAYING • PICNICKING

A small neighbourhood park, Tamariki Reserve boasts an exciting playground for all the family. With extra long slides, climbing walls and swings, the playground offers the perfect place for children to unleash their energy. Make it a fun game and time their descent down the slides and over the playground. Tamariki Reserve also has plenty of green open space for picnics and other activities.

### HOW TO GET THERE:

South Titirangi Road, Titirangi.

