

FREE EXPERIENCES // IN MANAWATŪ



Discover Manawatū's top free experiences from scenic trails to cultural gems, there's plenty to explore without spending a cent.



Location



Entry
Details



Picnic
Tables



Onsite
Parking



Toilet
Facilities



Dog
Friendly



Level of
fitness



ARAPUKE MOUNTAIN BIKE PARK



Kahuterawa Road, Linton,
Palmerston North

Arapuke Mountain Bike Park is the lower North Island's premier destination for mountain biking, offering over 50km of trails ranging from Grade 2 to Grade 6. Located just 20 minutes from Palmerston North, Arapuke is a must-ride spot for all levels of riders.

The park features a growing network of trails through native bush. First-time riders entering from the Kahuterawa Road end can ascend via Pupu Rahi or Back Track to access the main trail area and start their ride with elevation.



HE ARA KOTAHĪ // MANAWATŪ RIVER PATHWAY



Maxwells Line, Awapuni,
Palmerston North

Take a leisurely walk or ride along the Manawatū River and experience the ever-changing views that it offers. There are many access points to this trail, which runs over 10kms. Along the walkway you'll find:

>> He Ara Kōrero - an interactive storytelling trail sharing the history of Rangitāne o Manawatū along the Manawatū River.

>> Turitea Pā - A viewing platform along the He Ara Kotahi pathway which offers an unobstructed view of our beautiful awa (river) and city.

>> Urban Eels is a platform on the Turitea Stream where you can view and feed native Tuna (Eels)



TE ĀPITI - MANAWATŪ GORGE



1631 Napier Road,
Aokautere, Palmerston
North

Just 12 minutes from the city, Te Āpiti-Manawatū Gorge offers native bush, waterfalls, birdsong, and epic views. Walk the 4km Tawa Loop or the full 11km Gorge Track from access points at Ashhurst or Ferry Reserve, and meet Whātonga, a 6-metre-tall Māori chief sculpture along the way.



RANGIWAHIA HUT TRACK



 Renfrew Road,
Rangiwahia, Manawatū

Take a scenic day or overnight tramp to Rangiwahia Hut, a 3 - 4 hours return track crossing an iconic arched bridge and winding through native bush to the tussock-covered Whanahua Range. The 13-bunk serviced hut has heating and water just pre-purchase your DOC ticket and bring a portable stove for cooking.



SLEDGE TRACK




 Kahuterawa Road, Linton,
Palmerston North

The Sledge Track offers a family-friendly walk past waterfalls and picnic spots before climbing into more challenging terrain for experienced hikers, with mineshafts, stunning views, and links to Arapuke's mountain bike trails. Access it from the car park at the end of Kahuterawa Road, just off Old West Road in Palmerston North.

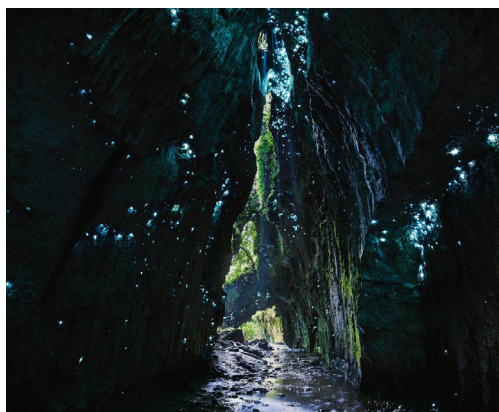


TE ARAPIKI A TĀNE I THE STAIRWAY OF TĀNE



 Access the steps from
Te Motu o Poutoa Anzac
Park

Te Arapiki a Tāne is a striking stairway of nearly 600 steps that winds down the Anzac Cliffs to the Manawatū River, offering a powerful blend of fitness, culture, and natural beauty. Along the way, He Kupu Rangatira - The Proverb Pathway shares wisdom from across cultures, celebrating the region's bicultural roots and diverse community. At the top, Te Motu o Poutoa (ANZAC Park) provides sweeping views across the city and the Manawatū awa, with a lookout perfect for stargazing along the Star Path and reflecting on the deep cultural significance of this sacred site.



LIMESTONE CREEK




 Limestone Road, Āpiti,
Manawatū


Hidden in northern Manawatū, Limestone Creek Reserve is a true off-the-beaten-path adventure. Wander through moss-covered gorges, wade across streams, and explore glow worm-filled caves, best visited at dusk or night with a torch. Just 2km before Sixtus Lodge, this 600m trail is a must for nature lovers, but take care the track can be slippery, and access is limited for larger vehicles.



ART & CULTURE



 Various Palmerston North City and Feilding locations

 Opening hours of museums, galleries and theatres vary

Manawatū's creative scene is buzzing with energy, shaped by the talented people who call this place home. From galleries and theatres to live performances and museums like Te Manawa and The Coach House, inspiration is everywhere. In Palmy's city centre, discover public sculptures, pop-up installations and street art at every turn. Grab a free map from the i-SITE or simply roam, Berryman's Lane is a great place to start.

Follow the Coastal Arts Trail to discover galleries and studios dotted along Manawatū's coastline, where local creativity meets stunning natural landscapes.



HĪMATANGI BEACH




 Koputara Road, Himatangi Beach, Manawatū

Just 30 minutes from the Palmerston North, Hīmatangi Beach is a wild west coast gem perfect for walking, fishing, kayaking, and exploring one of Aotearoa's largest sand dune fields. Build a driftwood hut, grab a coffee from the local store, or enjoy fish and chips by the sea, even in winter. With a playground, skate rink, mini golf and cosy holiday park nearby, it's a spot the whole whānau will love year-round.




VICTORIA ESPLANADE



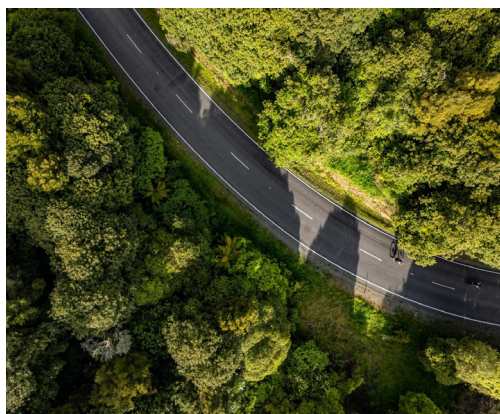
 Victoria Esplanade Drive, West End, Palmerston North

Open 8am to 9pm from October to March and 8am to 6pm April to September


 Opening hours of museums, galleries and theatres vary

Victoria Esplanade is a lush 19-hectare escape in the heart of Palmerston North, filled with gardens, nature trails, playgrounds, paddling pools, and picnic spots. Meet native wildlife at Central Energy Wildbase Recovery, where sick and injured birds receive world class care after treatment.

Explore the stunning summer blooms of the Dugald Mackenzie Rose Gardens, home to more than 5,000 varieties, or ride the miniature train through the trees on the Esplanade Scenic Railway. It's a family favourite all year round.



THE COUNTRY ROAD

 Manawatū Scenic Route
Peep-O-Day Route
Stormy Point Route
Iron Gates Experience

The Country Road scenic routes take you off the beaten track to uncover Manawatū's hidden gems, from cosy country cafés and heritage sites to gardens, galleries, and walking trails. Picnic and swim at the Ruahine Dress Circle, soak up panoramic views at Stormy Point Lookout, or explore the world-class conifer collection at Ian McKean Pinetum. It's the perfect way to slow down and explore the region at your own pace.



FEILDING FRIDAYS



Mancheser Square,
Feilding

If you're in Feilding on a Friday, you're in for a real local treat. Start your morning at the award-winning Feilding Farmers' Market, open from 9am to 1:30pm, and browse fresh produce, pastries, cheeses, and more from some of Manawātū's best growers and makers. All for free. Then wander over to the Feilding Sale Yards, where you can freely explore one of New Zealand's largest livestock markets and experience the buzz of a live stock auction, with sheep, cattle, and working dogs in action, offering a genuine taste of rural life.

To find more experiences
ManawatuNZ.co.nz/explore



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