

Tutukaka Coast

1 | Matapouri

This sheltered white sand beach is picture-perfect in every way! Enjoy gentle waves, clear water and a walk around the estuary, or simply soak up the sun and the view. There's a great walking track from the left end of the beach over to Whale Bay and world-class fish and chips for lunch or dinner from the local shop.



2 | Whale Bay

A relaxed 10 minute walk through the bush brings you to Whale Bay, the most sheltered bay on the coast. Enjoy a refreshing swim in stunningly clear and calm water and then curl up with your book under one of the many Pohutukaka trees that offer shade over the sand. Pack for the day - you won't want to leave this hidden treasure!



3 | Whangaumu Bay

Known locally as Wellington's Bay, this beautiful white sand beach is ideal for a swim, a boogie board or a picnic under the trees. At low tide, head over the headland at the right end of the beach to Ngunguru, a beautiful coastal community where you'll find coffee, pizza, and fish and chips.

Local Tip *Heading to Whangaumu, you'll pass harbourside pebbly beaches ideal for a relaxing swim. The Te Maika Headland Walkway connects all the beaches, so plan a day of beach hopping!*



Best Local Swimming Spots



Ocean swimming at its best

Whangārei is renowned for its awesome swimming beaches which is a great way to cool off and see some of our amazing coastline in the summer months (or even during winter!) While there's 100 beaches in the district, we've chosen our favourites within a 40 minute drive.

Whangareī Heads

4 | Ocean Beach

This beach is loved locally for surfing, body-boarding and hiking. Strong rips can form so always swim between the flags and follow lifeguards' instructions in the summer months.

Climb the hill at either end of the beach for stunning views up and down the coast, and carry on down the other side to kilometres of beautiful beaches. At the lookout, you can see the memorial to commemorate New Zealand's WWII navy vessel HMS Puriri.



5 | Pataua

Pataua South is a tidal estuary and offers safe swimming and white sand beaches to relax on between swims. At high tide, we recommend you join the locals and have some fun jumping from the footbridge in the estuary!

Local Tip *You can cross over the short footbridge and walk around to Pataua North, a popular coastal surf beach if you prefer swimming with waves.*



6 | Urquharts Bay & Smugglers Cove

Urquharts Bay is a great little beach for swimming and kayaking, and a 20 minute walk from the carpark is the secluded Smugglers Cove. With clear water, it's ideal for snorkelling and swimming. Check out the WW2 gun emplacement at Home Point as you walk along the Busby Head Track (around a one-hour return trip from the carpark with stunning coastal views from the headland).

Local Tip *The walkway to Smugglers is through farmland so please be respectful of the animals and note pathways may be muddy and slippery after rain*



7 | McLeod Bay

McLeod Bay is a great spot for sailing, kayaking and fishing off the wharf at Stuart Road (you can grab a handline at any of the local fishing shops and bait from the service station on your way). This is a popular spot for locals.



8 | Kauri Mountain Beach

The climb down a series of steep steps is worth it when you arrive at this amazing beach, with plenty of shady areas, safe swimming, picturesque views and a 6km stretch of unspoilt white sand. Unless you have a 4-wheel drive car, avoid going after recent rain.



9 | Reotahi

The Reotahi Marine Reserve is good for swimming, snorkelling and kayaking. When you're done in the water, the Reotahi Coastal Walkway is an easy walk skirting the reserve and taking you through the ruins of a historic meat processing plant.

Local Tip *Refuel at The Deck Cafe or McLeod's Bay Fish & Chips.*



Bream Bay

10 | Ruakākā

Ruakaka Beach goes for miles and miles, so it's the perfect spot to find your patch of sand and feel like you're the only one around. Enjoy a walk or run along the beach, and keep an eye out for lifeguards in the summer. There's also a pop-up cafe in the car park selling coffee, ice cream and snacks over summer.

Local Tip *Make sure you bring a sunhat or some shade with you as you'll want to stay for a while.*



11 | Waipu Cove

A picture-perfect white sandy beach with plenty of shade and places to enjoy a picnic. Lifeguards are on duty in the summer months. Sit back and enjoy watching the local surfers or grab a beer at the nearby Cove Restaurant.

