

Whangārei's Best Known Dive Spots

1 | Poor Knights Islands

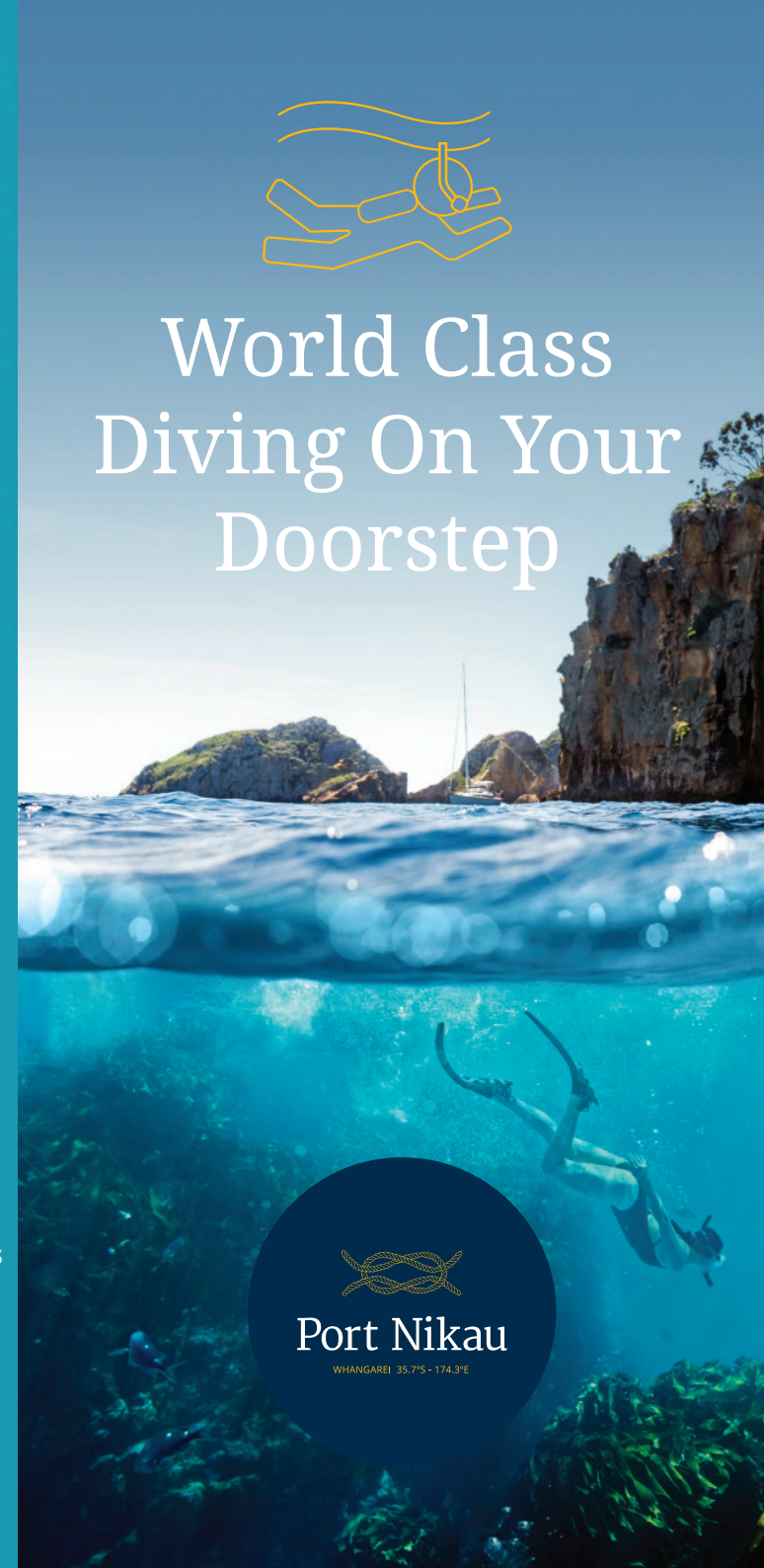
Ranked by Jacques Cousteau as one of the world's top 10 dive spots, the Poor Knights Islands just had to be at the top of our list.

Rich in Māori history as well as marine life, and home to the world's largest sea cave, the Poor Knights were declared a marine reserve in 1981 and is a pending World Heritage Site. The warm, nutrient-rich waters support the many tropical visitors brought down from the East Australian Current (EAC) including manta, humpback whales and turtles, and in the summer months stingrays are known to gather here to mate. The drop-offs, archways, vertical walls, caves, tunnels, kelp forests and sponge gardens provide shelter to species of sea life that you would usually only find in deep water.

Book your dive and equipment hire with Dive! Tutukaka or Dive Now. This is a full-day dive meeting at 8am and returning to Tutukaka Marina at around 4pm. There's even a shuttle bus to and from town, so you don't need a car for this one, just ask for details when you book.



Credit: Dive! Tutukaka, Poor Knights Islands



World Class Diving On Your Doorstep

An underwater photograph showing two divers exploring a vibrant coral reef. The reef is covered in various types of coral, including large orange and purple structures. Yellow kelp is visible in the foreground. The water is clear blue, and bubbles from the divers are visible. The scene is lit from above, creating a bright, clear environment.

Adventures in the Sea

With abundant marine life and great visibility it's easy to see why Northland's dive sites are world renowned. There's so much you'll want to explore, and we've pulled together some of the highlights you won't want to miss.

Credit: Dive! Tutukaka, Poor Knights Islands

2 | Rainbow Warrior & Cavalli Islands

Northland is home to some epic dive sites, so if you can, we'd really recommend making the trip a bit further up the coast to check these out.

The Rainbow Warrior was Greenpeace's flagship vessel on its way to protest French nuclear testing before it was sunk by saboteurs in Auckland Harbour in 1985. She was moved to an artificial reef in the Cavalli Islands and is known as one of the best wreck dives in the world.

Book your all inclusive day trip with Dive Paihia and you'll also visit a few beaches, spend some time snorkelling and get a spot of lunch thrown in too.

3 | Shipwrecks

There are three purpose-sunk shipwrecks in the Whangārei area; HMNZS Canterbury in Maunganui Bay in the Bay of Islands, HMNZS Tui in Tutukaka and HMNZS Waikato just off Ngunguru Bay. These wrecks have been modified to allow for full exploration by divers.

Regular and experienced divers can explore the Waikato and Tui wrecks in a full day of deep dives with Dive! Tutukaka, and divers with less than 15 logged dives can dive the Waikato by booking in with an instructor. Dive Now runs dives to Waikato and Canterbury from around NZ\$200, and they can even help arrange carpooling to the dive site. Too easy!

4 | Hen & Chicks Islands

Your day will start in Warkworth at the New Zealand Diving office so you can rent your equipment but you'll launch from Mangawhai Heads. This day charter tour includes two dives - one in the morning and one in the afternoon. This gives you plenty of opportunities to explore the dramatic drops and cracks where you might find some crayfish and large yellow moray eels hiding. Schools of kingfish are often in the area, along with snapper, blue mao mao, sweep, tarakihi, trevally, goatfish, red moki, demoiselles and mako sharks. There are several species of rays and reef fish to spot too.