

New Zealand's Cycling Heartland

A trip to the Waikato region isn't complete without a few days spent exploring by bike.

There are hundreds of kilometres of trails to discover, offering riders a close-up look at the region's picturesque scenery and fascinating past.

Whether its racing down forest-clad hills or meandering alongside winding rivers and through rolling farmland, the region's tracks and trails offer memorable experiences for riders of all fitness and skill levels.

Laid-back riders and family groups will love the sights of the Hauraki Rail Trail and the backcountry scenery of The Timber Trail.

There are shorter rides to enjoy too, from mountain biking on Mount Te Aroha and in

the Te Miro Mountain Bike park, to urban adventure on Hamilton's riverside cycling and walking paths. Family groups will love Te Awa - The Great New Zealand River Ride, while those wanting a compact off-road experience shouldn't miss Hamilton Mountain Bike Track.

The region's cycling future is bright, with new trails and facilities being developed all the time. In New Zealand's cycling heartland, one visit is never enough.

KEY: ●●● Trails 🚴 NZ Cycle Trail Great Ride

CYCLING SAFETY

Safety while cycling for you and other track, trail and road users is paramount. Please see the 'plan your ride' section of the Nga Haereinga – The New Zealand Cycle Trail website for information on both on and off road cycling safety as well as biking etiquette guidelines.

nzcycletrail.com/plan-your-ride

MORE INFORMATION

While we have highlighted some of the most popular cycle trails in the region there are many other fantastic trails available – for more information about these as well as the tracks and trails profiled in this brochure please visit: waikatonz.com/cycling





Hamilton City River Rides

This shared walkway and cycleway runs for 10km through central Hamilton, along the banks of the Waikato River.

The track is well signposted and can be accessed at multiple points along the river. It stretches between Pukete in the north, where it links with the nearby Hamilton Mountain Bike Track in Pukete Farm Park, and Hamilton Gardens in the south. It is suitable for riders of all fitness and experience levels.

There are park benches and grassy areas along the track for those who want to stop to picnic or watch boats and people go by, and it forms part of the wider Te Awa River Ride.

AT A GLANCE:

- Located in the heart of Hamilton
- River and cityscape visits
- Hamilton Gardens, at the trail's end

Length: 10km Grade: 1-2

Access: The ride can be accessed at various points along the trail
For more information visit: waikatonz.com/hamilton-city-river-rides



Hauraki Rail Trail

The Hauraki Rail Trail is a 197km ride which makes a great 4-5 day ride. Stretching from Kaiaua on the Coromandel Peninsula to the towns of Te Aroha and Matamata, the trail takes in historic sites and stunning scenery.

One of New Zealand's easiest Great Rides, this trail follows historic railway lines combining beautiful scenery with a glimpse into the area's rich gold mining past. Its easy gradient makes it perfect for relaxed riding and family adventures.

The Hauraki Rail Trail is divided into five sections - Kaiaua to Thames, Thames to Paeroa, Paeroa to Waihi, Paeroa to Te Aroha and Te Aroha to Matamata. Starting from Kaiaua in the North, the trail traces the Shorebird Coast and riders enjoy contrasting landscapes from the lush Hauraki Plains to the spectacular Karangahake Gorge, and through farmland to Hobbiton™ Movie Set.

AT A GLANCE:

- Discover the area's rich gold mining history
- Explore the spectacular Karangahake Gorge
- Cycle through old railway tunnels
- Enjoy a mineral spa in Te Aroha after a day of cycling

Kaiaua to Thames Length: 55km Grade: 1

Thames to Paeroa Length: 34km Grade: 1

Paeroa to Waihi Length: 24km Grade: 1 & 2

Paeroa to Te Aroha Length: 23km Grade: 1

Te Aroha to Matamata Length: 37km Grade: 1

Access: This ride can be accessed from various points along the trail.

For more information visit: haurakirailtrail.co.nz



Avantidrome - Home of Cycling

With Olympic medal winning cyclists such as Sarah Ulmer (road and track) and Sarah Walker (BMX) calling Cambridge home, the town is now fast becoming New Zealand's official home of cycling with the new national cycling centre of excellence situated just north of town.

The \$28.5 million Avantidrome features a world class 250m velodrome track, the Gallagher Bike Skills Park and links with nearby BMX, road, trail and mountain biking facilities. It also features an area large enough to host other indoor sports and community events and houses the offices of national sporting organisations such as Bike NZ and Triathlon NZ, a cafe, public fitness centre, bike shop, meeting and office space.

The facility provides a base for New Zealand's cycling elite and is also available for community use, allowing those keen to give track cycling a chance to follow in the footsteps of the country's legends.

AT A GLANCE:

- World class 250m indoor velodrome track
- Links to nearby BMX, road, trail and mountain biking facilities
- Open to the community for a range of uses including track cycling lessons

Length: 250m Grade: N/A

Access: State Highway 1, just north of Cambridge

For more information visit: avantidrome.co.nz



Te Awa - The Great New Zealand River Ride

This scenic river ride runs between Ngāruawāhia and Horahora, 20km south of the Mighty River Domain at Lake Karapiro. Routes weave through rural and urban landscapes, taking in waterfalls and historic Māori sites as well as trendy shops, cafes and eateries.

Riders can take in the full beauty of the Waikato River with a two hour cycle journey from Ngāruawāhia all the way to Hamilton Gardens and again between Cambridge and Lake Karapiro. The final section from Hamilton to Cambridge is set to be completed by December 2021. The track is primarily wide, smooth and largely flat making Te Awa suitable for cyclists of all fitness and experience levels.

AT A GLANCE:

- River views and a mix of rural and urban landscapes
- Wide track suitable for social riding
- Stunning views of Lake Karapiro and a 400m boardwalk around the edge of the lake
- Perry Bridge - an iconic 120m cycle/walk suspension bridge at Horotiu

Length: 📍 70km (once completed) sections open now. Hamilton 15.5km, Cambridge - Lake Karapiro 15.2km **Grade:** 🚲 1-2

Access: This ride can be accessed at various points along the trail
For more information visit: te-awa.org.nz



Timber Trail New Zealand

Timber Trail New Zealand follows historic tramways through the ancient native forest of the Pureora Forest Park. It stretches for 85km between Pureora Village and the old logging town of Ongarue, offering riders a backcountry adventure through an area abundant in birdlife.

The trail takes in 42 bridges, including eight suspension bridges, as it winds its way through giant rimu, totara and kahikatea trees. The longest suspension bridge on the trail is the 141-metre-long Maramataha Bridge, which crosses the Maramataha River near the site of a historic viaduct. The area was once home to a booming logging industry and much of the trail follows the Ellis & Burnand Ongarue Tramway. The tramway is the longest bush tramway in New Zealand and a highlight of the journey is the Ongarue Spiral.

The trail can be cycled in either direction, but north to south is the easier option as it is predominantly downhill. The trail can be completed in one to three days (average two days to complete).

AT A GLANCE:

- Ride through ancient native forest, abundant in birdlife
- Follow New Zealand's longest bush tramway and see the marvel of engineering that is the Ongarue Spiral
- Travel over 42 bridges - eight of them suspension bridges
- Experience a slice of New Zealand's forestry history

Pureora to Piropiro **Length:** 📍 40km **Grade:** 🚲 3

Piropiro to Ongarue **Length:** 📍 45km **Grade:** 🚲 2

Access: This ride can be accessed at the northern and southern end as well as in the middle at Piropiro.

For more information visit: timbertrail.nz



Hamilton Mountain Bike Park

Conveniently located within Hamilton's city limits, Hamilton Mountain Bike Track in Pukete Farm Park is great for riders looking for something close to the city, cramming plenty of tracks into a relatively small, centralised area.

The largely flat track is surrounded by native tree plantings.

Its easy contour is suitable for beginners and families as well as more advanced riders who will appreciate the track's tight twists and turns, table top jump and the more rugged northern corner.

Pukete Farm Park links with other nearby cycling tracks such as Te Awa – The Great New Zealand River Ride and the shared Hamilton City river rides & walks.

AT A GLANCE:

- 10 minutes drive from central Hamilton
- Links with other nearby cycling tracks such as Te Awa and the shared Hamilton City river rides & walks
- Sections suitable for riders of all skill levels

Length: 📍 10km **Grade:** 🚲 2-3

Access: Maui Street, Hamilton

For more information visit: hamiltonmtb.org.nz



Raglan - Mount Karioi Loop, Pipiwharauoa Trail and Te Ara Kakariki

Raglan, famous for its left-hand surf break, is home to some great cycle trails. Mount Karioi Loop is a challenging half-day ride, boasting views of the west coast and surrounding farmland. The loop starts and finishes in Raglan. The 45km track circles Mount Karioi on both gravel and sealed roads. It offers winding uphill climbs and speedy downhill to thrill experienced riders.

Pipiwharauoa Trail, located south of Raglan, winds through Te Uku Wind Farm and gives riders a chance to view the 137m high wind turbines up close. The 18km ride covers steep to rolling terrain and offers 360 degree views over the Waikato region.

Te Ara Kakariki is Raglan's newest mountain bike trail, located at Wainui Reserve. The grade 2 tracks are perfect for families, whilst more challenging sections are great for the more advanced biker.

AT A GLANCE:

- Mount Karioi Loop: Winding uphill climbs and speedy downhill
- Pipiwharauoa trail: 360 degree views over the Waikato region

Mount Karioi Loop Length: 📍 45km Grade: 🚲 3

Pipiwharauoa Trail Length: 📍 18km Grade: 🚲 3

Te Ara Kakariki Length: 📍 4km Grade: 🚲 2

Access: Mount Karioi Loop starts and finishes in Raglan. Pipiwharauoa Trail is signposted from Te Mata Rd, off State Highway 23 between Raglan and Hamilton. Te Ara Kakariki starts on Ririra Kereopa Memorial Drive, Raglan.

For more information visit:
waikatonz.com/raglan-cycle-trails



Mount Te Aroha

Nestled in the foothills of Mount Te Aroha, this mountain bike track offers something for all abilities, including challenging ascents and exhilarating downhill sections for more daring riders.

The varied track takes in native bush, open grassy areas, waterfalls and stream crossings. Tui, kereru, pheasants and quail can often be seen from the track and night riders may spot glowworms. The 10km track starts and ends in Te Aroha Domain by the Mokena Geyser, the world's only hot soda water geyser.

The domain also offers picnic tables and barbeque facilities, and is home to the town's thermal spas – great for relaxing after a ride.

AT A GLANCE:

- Challenging ascents and exhilarating downhill for more daring riders
- Native bush, open grassy areas, waterfalls and stream crossings

Length: 📍 10km **Grade:** 🚲 3

Access: Te Aroha Domain, Te Aroha

For more information visit: waikatonz.com/mount-te-aroha



Te Miro Mountain Bike Park

Te Miro Mountain Bike Park, 20 minutes north-east of Cambridge, is a new mountain biking area in the Waikato that's proving popular with a wide range of riders. Built by Te Miro Mountain Bike Club for the enjoyment of their members and other like-minded individuals, Te Miro Mountain Bike Park offers a variety of terrain and tracks to suit active families as well as hard-core enthusiasts.

With trail names such as 'Big Red', 'Ready or Not' and 'Kaimai Kurla' the tracks are sure to be entertaining — some with technical single track sections and steep downhill, others with large sweeping berms or lakeside trails.

Native and exotic forest surrounds the park's trails, providing not only great infrastructure but also picturesque scenery and plenty of interesting places to stop for a breather.

AT A GLANCE:

- Native and exotic forest trails
- Stunning views over the reservoir lake and surrounding farmland
- Optional jumps and rollers
- Challenging technical sections on grade 4-5 tracks (all tracks are well signposted)

Length: 📍 Tracks vary in length from 500m - 3km (total track network of over 20km) **Grade:** 🚲 2-5

Access: Waterworks Road, Te Miro

For more information visit: temiromtclub.co.nz

Lovers of the great outdoors are spoilt for choice with a range of cycling trails on offer in the Waikato



The Timber Trail

Guide to Trail Grades

Grade One: Easiest

Flat and suitable for all riders. Surface is either firm gravel or asphalt and trails are wide enough for two people to cycle side by side most of the way.

Grade Two: Easy

Predictable and mostly flat with some gentle climbs. Surface is either firm gravel or asphalt and trails are wide enough for two people to cycle side by side most of the time.

Grade Three: Intermediate

Can be narrow in sections and may include hill climbs, steep drop-offs and small river crossings.

Grade Four: Advanced

May include steep or narrow track, sections where traction is poor, and obstacles that are difficult to avoid.

Grade Five: Expert

Technically challenging and may include physically demanding climbs, numerous obstacles and narrow track. Some walking and bike carrying may be required.

MORE INFORMATION

There are many other riding options also available in the region - for more information about these as well as the rides listed in this brochure please visit: waikatoz.com/cycling