

33 AROUND NELSON

DRIVING TOUR ■ 73 KM ■ 4 HOURS ■ ARTS AND CRAFTS AND GOLDEN SANDS

The Nelson region is one of the sunniest in New Zealand. This, together with its superb local food and wine, innovative arts, relaxed lifestyle and idyllic unspoiled coastline make it an enchanting place to visit.

In 1841 Edward Gibbon Wakefield's New Zealand Company founded the settlement of Nelson, part of a grandiose scheme to systematically colonise the whole country with small farms clustered around centrally located towns. The idea was to transplant a selection of migrants from all of the English social classes to found the new colony, but in reality 'too few gentlemen with too little money' took on the challenge. Land in the towns was distributed early but the farmland remained unallocated, forcing the settlers to live in the towns and use up their capital. The New Zealand Company's entitlement to the land was under dispute, Captain Wakefield was killed in the Wairau Affray and the New Zealand Company was later declared bankrupt. The infant colony almost foundered in its early years for lack of money but the favourable climate and much hard work enabled the settlers to establish themselves and eventually prosper.

Today the city is renowned for its parks and gardens, and boasts a number of stately old homes and restored cottages dating back to the 1860s. A flourishing arts and crafts movement is represented in numerous galleries, and in September each year Nelson hosts the Wearable Art Awards.

1 NELSON

Many small and large town residences survive from the early days of Nelson's settlement, including workmen's cottages in South Street and Richmond Avenue, and the rather grand mansion Melrose on Brougham Street. Bishop's School in Nile Street East has a display of textbooks and items dating back to 1844, when it first opened. Nelson's Christ Church Cathedral on Trafalgar Square – the third church to be raised on the site – was built over a 40-year period from 1925 and is an imposing presence in the middle of the city.

Founders Park on Atawhai Drive replicates a colonial town. This museum park, which also features an audio-visual display on the Port of Nelson and a maze, is set in two separate sections connected by an operating railway. Nearby are the Miyazu Japanese Gardens.

The Suter Art Gallery on Bridge Street houses a permanent collection of important paintings and lithographs including works by Lindauer, Van der Velden and Woollaston, with exhibitions covering a diverse range of subjects including sculpture and fibre crafts. Nelson is renowned for the quality of its local



clay and is famous for its pottery. Glassblowing, wood-carving and other arts and crafts are much in evidence.

The Visitor Information Centre on Trafalgar Street has an Arts Trail and Gallery Guide showing the location of the numerous galleries and studios, as well as information on the vineyards in this area which is noted



An early cottage, Nelson.



At Founders Park in Nelson visitors can hop aboard a beautifully restored, operating tram.



Broadgreen, one of the oldest houses in Nelson, has elegantly stood the test of time. Many of the trees in its extensive gardens were planted by the original owner.

for the quality of its grapes and distinctive wines. Fine views over the city can be obtained by driving up onto Botanical Hill.

2 STOKE

From Nelson take SH 6 and drive 7 km south to reach Stoke.

At Isel Park on the main road in Stoke rhododendrons and azaleas grow under the shelter of century-old trees brought to the area from all over the world by sea captains at the request of wealthy landowner Thomas Marsden. The two-storey stately home built of stone is Isel House. It has been restored and is used as a gallery and museum. Behind it is the Nelson Provincial Museum, the oldest in the country, with a large collection of Maori artefacts and an extensive array of historical photographs from the area.

Stoke is also the location of Woodstock, a notable cob house built in the 1850s and Broadgreen (1855), which is one of the largest rammed-earth cob houses in the country. Set in beautiful gardens, Broadgreen has been restored and furnished with careful attention to period detail as a fine example of a gentleman's residence. McCashin's Brewery, the home of the fabled Black Mac beer, is on the right on SH 6 as you leave Stoke.

3 RICHMOND

Continue south 7 km on SH 6 to Richmond.

Named after Richmond-on-Thames in England, this town boasts one of New Zealand's finest country churches, the Holy Trinity, a traditional English-style church built in timber and consecrated in 1872. The huge gum tree that stands at the entrance to the racecourse was planted by Francis Otterson, one of the earliest settlers who arrived on the *Lord Auckland* in 1842.

4 MOTUEKA

From Richmond take SH 60 and drive north-west 33 km to Motueka.

Motueka is the main centre in a horticultural area famous for its hops, green tea and fruit growing. The tall hop vines are trained onto poles and wire frames, and the scaly cone-like fruit is kiln-dried and used in brewing beer. The main fruit-picking season is from March through to June for apples, kiwifruit and grapes.

Motueka was founded in 1842 and today retains its small port on the Moutere Inlet, a short distance from the main street. Te Ahurewa, on Pah Street, is one of the South Island's few Maori churches. Built in 1897, the small church contains a number of interesting relics and Maori decorations.

5 RIWAKA

Continue north-west 4 km on SH 60 to Riwaka.

The quaint old port at the mouth of the river is now largely unused but the area has remained an important centre for research in the growing and processing of hops.

6 MARAHAU

Continue north-west 3 km from Riwaka on SH 60 and turn off right to Marahau, 14 km north on the inland road.

Marahau is the southern access point to the Abel Tasman National Park and also the starting point for the renowned Abel Tasman Coastal Track. The track is 55 km long, but visitors can take a short walk on the start of the track through forest above small

bays and numerous beaches divided by rocky granite headlands.

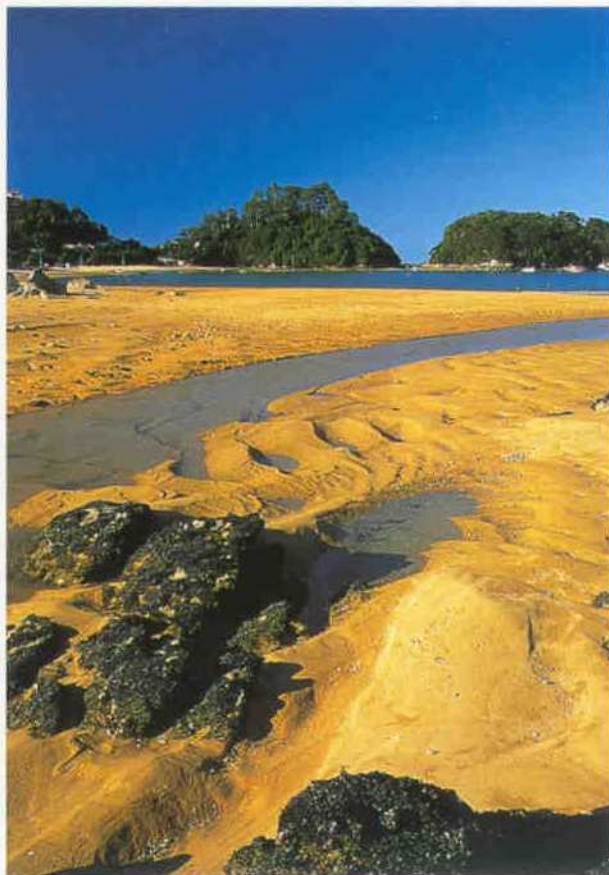
The Tinline Walk is a short coastal track that runs through forest near the start of the Abel Tasman Track. Many of the native tree species including beech, kahikatea, rimu and pukatea have been labelled on this 30-minute loop track.

This part of the bay is named the Astrolabe Roadstead because the French navigator Jules d'Urville anchored his corvette the *Astrolabe* here in 1827. Adele Island, close offshore, was named after d'Urville's wife.

7 KAITERITERI

From Marahau drive south-east 5 km to Kaiteriteri on the coast road.

One of the most popular beaches in the South Island, Kaiteriteri has picture-postcard appeal with its clear blue water and the golden sands that are typical of this region. The sands derive from granite rock that runs from the hills to the coastline. Granite is a very hard rock formed deep within the earth's crust under extreme heat and pressure. As it cools, tiny cracks called 'joints' form. Large areas of granite that have been uplifted to the earth's surface are subjected to weathering. Weak acids from vegetation combine with rainwater and eat their way into the joints, breaking apart the crystals of quartz, feldspar and mica that make up the granite. The glittering gold mica particles turn into iron compounds and are eventually washed down the rivers along with the hard quartz crystals to form magnificent golden beaches.



The golden sands of Kaiteriteri Beach.