

MUSSEL BED

*Boutique
Bed & Breakfast*

Driving Directions to Mussel Bed B&B

From Auckland or Hamilton

From Auckland Airport, head south on the highway to Manukau City and then take State Highway (SH1) on the Southern Motorway to Pokeno, turn left onto SH2 and follow the signs to Thames via SH25. Just after crossing the long Kopu Bridge, you have 2 choices which you reach the roundabout : To take the (1) scenic route or (2) the shortest route to Cooks Beach:

(1) Scenic Route following the Pacific Coast Highway www.pacificcoast.co.nz through Thames, Coromandel Town, Kuaotunu, Whitianga, Cooks Beach - takes an extra 2 hrs. Turn left and take the west coast road through Thames to Coromandel Town then over the hills to the east coast beaches and down to Whitianga (passing lots of nice beaches on the way). Drive through Whitianga and follow the road for approx 30-40 mins following the signs to Cooks Beach/Ferry Landing.

(2) Shortest Route to Cooks Beach (takes approx 1 hour)

Turn right following the signs to Tairua. 800 metres past Kopu turn left on SH25A. Follow the SH25 through Tairua for approx 30-40 mins until you arrive at Whenuakite (School on left). Be sure not to follow the road on to Whitianga at this point! Look out for the large blue sign for your turnoff on your right to Hot Water Beach/Hahei/Cooks Beach. Follow the directions to Cooks Beach (via Purangi Road) for 9kms and you can't miss our sign on the right.

From Rotorua and South

Head north through Te Puke, Mt Maunganui/Tauranga, Waihi, Whangamata and follow the signs to Tairua. Proceed to Cooks Beach as above.

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Our Suggested Itinerary - for all numbers in brackets refer to map on page 3

A visit to Coromandel Peninsula deserves a stay of at least 3 - 5 days in your NZ itinerary. Paul & I are passionate about the whole of our area and we have put together an itinerary to see some of the best of what Coromandel has to offer:

Visitors can easily self-drive the Coromandel by road. Only 1.5 hrs from Auckland, follow the Pacific Coast Highway around the Firth of Thames to the historical old goldmining town of Thames (1), the gateway to the Coromandel. The Thames Coast Road hugs the scenic west coast all the way to Coromandel Town.

Stop off at Tapu and follow the signs to Rapaura Watergardens (2) in the midst of the Coromandel Forest Park. Rapaura also offers comfortable accommodation and a good base to visit the many artists studios and galleries in nearby Coromandel Town. Don't miss Sally & Sacha's scrumptious food in their "Koru Café"!

Children of all ages will enjoy the quirky Waiau Waterworks (3) on the 309 Road near Coromandel Town and Driving Creek Railway (4) - a unique journey through native kauri forest.

We highly recommend the Coromandel Mussel Kitchen (5) on the corner of the 309 Road and SH25. They collect, cultivate, harvest, cook & serve to you guaranteeing freshness delicious ways of eating greenlipped mussels! Take home packs available.

Stay an extra day and join Coromandel Discovery Tours (6) exploring the town and northern Coromandel. We loved the self-guided walk (6) (3 - 4 hours) with wonderful coastal views finishing at Stoney Bay, where the driver picks you up with a welcoming refreshment.

Follow the Pacific Coast Highway over the Whangapoua Hills and take the detour to beautiful Whangapoua Beach (7). At the northern end of Whangapoua beach, take a drink & a picnic to the untouched white, sandy New Chums Beach (8) - rated one of the top 10 beaches in the world. The track is a mix of having to pick your way along the rocky edge and a well-formed coastal track and takes you through one of the most beautiful Nikau Palm stands we've seen.

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Travel on to the equally as beautiful Kuautunu Beach (9) with views to the outlying Mercury Islands. The biggest & best icecreams are at the general store! If you don't have time, a day trip with a picnic & bottle of wine from "Mussel Bed" to Chris's favourite Otama Beach (10) & further on, Opito Beach (11) can be had by taking the no exit Blackjack Road from the Kuautunu shops.

Continuing on through Whitianga (12) - the largest centre in Mercury Bay, you can purchase any supplies at the local supermarket if you wish. Whitianga is easily accessed also from "Mussel Bed" by catching the local passenger ferry 2 kms down the road from us - only a 5 min. ride to Whitianga's many cafes, restaurants and shops.

The turnoff to Hot Water Beach, Hahei & Cooks Beach (13) is approx 30 mins drive from Whitianga along the Pacific Coast Highway (SH25). Follow the signs to Cooks Beach (via Purangi Road) and you can't miss our big blue "Mussel Bed" sign on Purangi Road. Allow time to relax, soak up the sun and enjoy safe swimming at beautiful Cooks Beach (14). There is so much to do...

We highly recommend Whitianga's new The Lost Spring (15) Luxury Hot Pools & Spa. Take the ferry to Whitianga from Ferry Landing. Get us to book you a taxi or its a 10min walk from the Wharf to the Lost Spring . Enjoy an evening with a hot swim, cocktails by the pool, a massage & dinner. Open 7 days until 9pm for dinner. (Note: Children under 14 not allowed in the pools.)

Wander the Coromandel Ranges, take a bike ride to explore the area, enjoy the beautiful coastal scenery on board a charterboat, take a trip to famous Cathedral Cove (16), relax in your own spa pool at Hot Water Beach (17) or simply relax at the beach - the only problem you'll have is to choose what to do first...

After what we hope was a memorable stay at "Mussel Bed", join the Pacific Highway again through Tairua. Take time to drive up Paku Hill (18) for 360 degree views of Tairua & Pauanui and the outlying islands of Slipper, Shoe & Aldermans. Beaches galore await you on the coast drive through Whangamata (19) and on to Waihi Beach - an area renowned for goldmining. Enjoy Waihi Beach (20), a historical vintage train trip and walk the stunning Karangahake Gorge. Relax at one of the Southern Coromandel lodges

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Other recommended links:

Some places have a special place in your memory and we would like to share these with you:

Raglan, west coast of NZ - We've stayed with Edi & Therese at "**Waters Edge**" beachfront B&B <http://www.watersedge.co.nz>. We loved the very private, little beachfront cottage!

We loved our stay at **Coopers Beach Beach Lodge** - luxury accommodation at Coopers Beach, Far North www.beachlodge.co.nz for its wonderful sunny aspect and tasteful decor. Margaret the owner very friendly & hospitable.

When you visit Waiheke Island, stay at "**Heartsong Retreat**" - Chris would go back in a heartbeat! Soak in their beautiful inground rock pool, romantic and lovely - it ticks all the boxes. www.heartsongretreat.co.nz

Visiting Auckland City? We loved our very special stay & delicious breakfast with Donald & Kathy at **Sunderland House**, Herne Bay close to Ponsonby Road Cafes & the Waterfront www.sunderlandhouse.co.nz. Would highly recommend also Beth at "**23 Hepburn**" www.23hepburn.co.nz and Bernadette & Johnathan of **Ponsonby House** www.thebedandbreakfast.co.nz Trip advisor reviews say it all!

Wanaka, South Island - we can thoroughly recommend "**Riversong B&B**" near Wanaka, overlooking the Clutha River www.riversongwanaka.co.nz Ann & Ian are wonderful hosts.

Before heading on to Rotorua, stay in Matata, Bay of Plenty with Hilton & Bev at **Fothergill's on Mimiha B&B** www.fothergills.co.nz

Kapiti Coast, Waikanae Beach. Stay at "**Te Nikau Forest Retreat**" www.tenikau.co.nz Idyllic retreat in NZ native bush and mountain streams.

For a family reunion on the Kapiti Coast we stayed at **Sandcastle Motel** - an amazing place caught in the 70's architecture, and literally rises up out of the sandhills - we loved it! While you are there, visit the many art studios but don't miss "Decorative Pinboards" www.pinart.co.nz in Pekapeka, Kapiti Coast. Greg custom designs noticeboards, blackboards & whiteboards for home or business - they are amazing!

We can recommend for your special day - Wedding Photographer www.aaronlang.co.nz

For all promotional merchandise, big or small, contact Sandra Castle of China Girl Ltd www.chinagirl.co.nz