



# HAURAKI RAIL & WAIKATO RIVER TRAILS

Sep 2022

**Sun 04 Sep**

**Cambridge**

Arrive in Cambridge anytime this morning. Transfers available from Hamilton Airport. This afternoon we will visit the popular **Hamilton Gardens** and spend some time admiring the different gardens and architecture from around the world.

Our hotel is centrally located in the charming town of **Cambridge**, known for its trees and champions, and recently voted NZ's "Most Beautiful Large Town". Before dinner, we'll take an orientation walk around town before dining in a local restaurant.

*Accommodation: Hidden Lake Hotel, Cambridge*

**Mon 05 Sep**

**Cycling 30km**

This morning we'll be introduced to our E-bikes and cycle out to Tamahere on the Te Awa River Ride. This is a lovely undulating track on a wide paved path following the Waikato River and farmland to the settlement of Tamahere. Lunch at one of the delicious cafes before riding back to Cambridge stopping enroute at the **Velodrome**. Time for a look inside this world-class indoor cycling track.

Later in the afternoon we'll visit one of Cambridge's famed **horse studs** where you'll see for yourself the passion and dedication that goes into the breeding and rearing of elite bloodstock.

*Accommodation: Hidden Lake Hotel, Cambridge*



**Tue 06 Sep**

**Cycling 55km**

Enjoy a hearty breakfast in the hotel dining room before checking out of hotel and transferring up to the trail start point (approx. 1.5 hour drive).

We start the Hauraki Trail from the sleepy wee town of **Kaiaua**. This section of the trail winds around the edge of the shallow Firth of Thames over shelly banks and passes through **wetlands of international significance** teeming with migratory birds from the Arctic circle. There is an Information Centre on the Trail where you can learn about the birds. We'll then wander out on to wetlands via boardwalks to the bird hides for a closer look. Continue riding along the trail, stopping for a refreshment along the way before crossing over the infamous **Kopu Bridge**.

We'll take a stroll along the waterfront into town for dinner - hopefully Thames will provide one of its legendary sunsets along the way.

*Accommodation: Tuscany on Thames Motel*

**Wed 07 Sep**

**Cycling 33 km**

This morning is a short walking tour to learn about the golden era of **Grahamstown** (the heritage end of Thames) and have a look at some of the historical buildings. It's hard to imagine that this was once the biggest town in NZ! Time to have a quick poke through some of the quirky shops in Thames.

We'll then start our ride heading south, following the old railway line out of Thames township. The **Matatoki Cheese Barn** is the first stop for morning tea and a taste of some delicious cheeses. Continue riding across lush farmland with impressive views of the **Hauraki Plains and Kaimai Ranges** in to **Paeroa**.

This afternoon you might like to ride out to the **Historical Maritime Park**, once NZ's most inland port, and perhaps catch the riverboat back to town (optional & tide dependent). Paeroa is famed for **L&P** where you can get the obligatory photo beside the big bottle. There are also some great antique shops.

*Accommodation: Pedlars Motel, Paeroa*



### Thu 08 Sep      Cycling 22 km

After breakfast, continue riding along the Ohinemuri River in to the spectacular **Karangahake Gorge**. This distinctly different landscape features a ton of history and a 1100-meter tunnel which is fun to ride through. We'll make a photo stop at the gorgeous cascading **Owharua Falls** before continuing along the river past gold mining ruins. At the historical **Waikino Pub** you might like to partake in a tippie whilst reading up on the history of this tiny village. The trail then winds along a picturesque part of the river and into the gold mining town of **Waihi**. Check in to accommodation and relax, or you might like to spend some time at the **Gold Discovery Centre** in town.

Later this afternoon we will drive over to **Waihi Beach** where you will have free time. There are some great bush walks, a 10km long beach perfect for roaming along, and boutique shops. We'll stay on for dinner at **Flat White Café** which is superbly located right on the beachfront.

*Accommodation: Gold Mine Motel, Waihi*

### Fri 09 Sep      Cycling 43 km

Back on the bike and ride back through **Karangahake Gorge**. You won't be bored with doing this twice as the scenery is just so pretty and you will be looking at it from a different angle. We'll take a break from the saddle to do the popular **Windows Walk**. Picnic lunch in the Gorge before riding on across the **Hauraki Plains** through dairy farms and into **Te Aroha**.

Nestled at the foot of Mt Te Aroha and a short walk from our accommodation, is where you will find the **Mokena Hou Geyser** (the only natural soda water geyser in the world) and right next to this is the oldest intact **Edwardian domain** in New Zealand.

*Accommodation: The Nunnery, Te Aroha*

### Sat 10 Sep      Cycling 37 km + 12 km

The last section of the Hauraki Trail follows alongside the road past farmland and the **Kaimai Ranges**. There are a couple of good cafes enroute to break the journey, and we will also make a stop at the **Firth Tower** on the outskirts of town for a look through the heritage buildings. **Matamata** is a bustling town known for thoroughbred horses and hobbis and is the end of our Hauraki adventure.



The bike shuttle will meet us in Matamata around midday and transfer us across to the **Waikato River Trail**. From the **Arapuni Dam swing bridge** we will ride along the river back to the Pokaiwhenua Bridge where we'll say goodbye to our bikes and drive back to Cambridge.

Celebratory drinks and an end of tour dinner this evening.

**Accommodation:** *Hidden Lake Hotel, Cambridge*

**Sun 11 Sep**

**Tour ends**

Take your time to depart this morning – Cambridge has some great shops, an interesting little museum, and some nice river walks.

Complimentary transfers available to Hamilton Airport for departures up to 3pm.

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### Price

\$2115 per person twin share

Single supplement \$600 (*If you are travelling solo, and would like to twin share let us know*)

### Includes

- 7 nights accommodation (as specified or similar)
- Daily breakfast + 2 dinners
- Transfers, Support Vehicle & Local Guide/Driver
- Luggage transfers
- E-bike hire, Helmet, tube & puncture repair kit, lock, carrier, Gel seat cover

### Excludes

- Meals & Refreshments (unless otherwise specified)
- Flights/transportation to/from Hamilton
- Travel Insurance

### Group Size

Minimum 7, maximum 10