

Bay of Islands Walking Weekend– 9th-11th October 2026

Programme of Walks

Note: this is 15 pages long if printing.

Purchase tickets on Eventfinda – links at the end of each walk

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The Russell Bowling Club is our Headquarters and where all the walks start from.

It's a lovely place to relax in, so you are more than welcome to come and join us any time in there over the weekend.

How the walks are graded

- We want to make sure everyone enjoys their walks.
- Please match your level of fitness to your chosen walks to maximise your safety and enjoyment.
- It can spoil the day for you and your group if you set out on a walk you have difficulty completing.

Grade 1 Easy

Suitable for anyone. Tracks are of a good standard, mainly flat with a few gentle rises, well-formed and very easy walking

Grade 2 Medium

Suitable for most people. Flat to hilly on well-formed tracks that are of a medium standard. Surfaces vary with some short steep grades

Grade 3 Medium to Hard

Good fitness level required. Tracks are of variable but good quality including more demanding climbs and descents of moderate duration. Can have muddy/slippery stretches after rain

Grade 4 Hard

High fitness level required. Tracks variable to rough, with longer distances and steeper sections than Grade 3. Can be muddy/slippery after heavy rain

For each walk - Please check

what is included in the walk, the time and length of your walk so you know what you need to bring in terms of food and water. It's always a good idea to have a card or cash on you as you never know what you might encounter along the way.

Walk 1 – Kayak and Walk Adventure to Haruru Falls via the Waitangi River

Saturday 10th October

Start your journey by catching the ferry from Russell to Paihia. From there, enjoy a scenic walk along the Paihia waterfront to Waitangi Bridge.

Hop into a kayak and paddle up the Waitangi River, immersing yourself in the surrounding mangrove forests. View the local wildlife, including a colony of sea birds nesting in trees along the river. Continue to Haruru Falls—where the waterfall cascades dramatically into the basin below. Here, the fun and adrenaline begin! Even first-timers can safely experience the thrill of paddling at the base of the falls—an unforgettable photo opportunity!

For the entire kayak trip our charter boat will be nearby in case you need a break.

Throughout the journey, our knowledgeable guides will share insights into local flora, fauna, Māori legends, and the area's rich history.

After the kayak, walk back along the river via the scenic Haruru Falls track. This sheltered trail is perfect for bird-watching and learning more about the region's history.

The adventure wraps up with a stroll back along the waterfront to Paihia Wharf.

Saturday 10th October

Assemble time: 7.15am

Return HQ: 4pm

Duration: 8 hrs (including ferry and kayak)

Distance: 10.6 km walking in total (Haruru Falls track and along the waterfront)

Kayak up the river. Walk back along the track

Grade: Medium fitness level required—no need to have kayaked before as there is a boat nearby if you tire of kayaking and need a ride

Max: 20

Category: Family-friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 includes a guided walk, ferries and kayak

Book with this link:

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-1-kayak-and-walk-adventure-to-haruru-falls-via-waitangi-river/russell>

Walk 2 – The Full Circle – Russell to Russell via Paihia

Saturday 10th October

Leaving Russell, you head towards Okiato, which is the site of New Zealand's first capital. Walk along stunning mangrove boardwalks and then into bush where the terrain is more challenging. Catch the car ferry from Okiato to Opuā. The picturesque walk from Opuā to Paihia takes you around many points, beaches, and bays. Catching the Bay Belle passenger ferry from Paihia back to Russell.

It is a great sense of accomplishment having completed the full circle that many think you can only circumnavigate either by car or ferry!

Saturday 10th October

Assemble HQ: 8.30am

Return to HQ: approx 3 pm

Duration: 6 Hours

Distance: 17 kms

Grade: Hard

Maximum walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$35 (includes both ferries and guided walk)

Please note: this walk is also part of the Omata Estate walks and the Fours Walks in One.

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-2-the-full-circle-russell-to-russell-via-paihia/russell>

The Pāroa Bay Vineyard Walks

There are 2 Pāroa Bay Vineyard walks.

The same lovely walk but a slight variation when you arrive:

- Dinner – Friday
- Lunch – Saturday

Walk 3 – The Pāroa Bay Vineyard – Friday Wine and Dine.

Friday 9th October

It's a short 15-minute ride in a minibus to the start of the walk which is over private land.

Pāroa Bay Vineyard is a stunning family-owned boutique vineyard with traditional handmade, sustainable wines, and to top it off they have Sage Restaurant which is perched high above the idyllic Bay of Islands for a bird's eye view.

The 5 km walk out, over private land, includes panoramic views of the Bay of Islands. The destination is Kahuwera Pā, a pā that features strongly in the history of the Bay of Islands.

The 5 km walk back, which is different to the way in, has Sage Restaurant as the destination.

Pāroa Bay Vineyard makes their wine with traditional techniques of viticulture and dry-grown vines to create distinctive handcrafted wines of character in low yields, reflecting the white clay soils and warm climate of the Bay of Islands.

The walk finishes with a three-course meal which is a shared menu and includes a glass of Pāroa Bay wine (or non-alcoholic drink).

The menu will be something along these lines, depending on seasonal availability that week. Shared generous platters served over three courses, featuring a selection of mouth-watering dishes such as a selection of chef's choice canapés, Kohe Kohe Pacific oysters with raspberry vinegar, and aromatic roasted pumpkin in coconut curry. Other highlights include raw fish crudo with kiwifruit and fermented chilli, crispy lamb ribs with aji verde and flatbread, native harissa braised cabbage with macadamia cream, Far North market fish with carrot and vanilla purée, and grilled free-farmed pork cutlet with red onion and nduja purée. To finish, it could be local cheese board with fig relish and honey, and a whipped white chocolate cheesecake with citrus and Anzac biscuit crumb.

Limited numbers on this walk, which is over private land. You will not be able to walk it any other time of the year! Enjoy!

Friday 9th October

Assemble at HQ: 12.30pm

Return to HQ: approx. 8.30pm (transport leaves at 8.15 pm)

Duration: 4.5 hours walking plus dining time.

Distance: 10km

Grade: Medium to hard

Maximum walkers: 18

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$150 - includes a guided walk, dinner, a glass of wine (18+ only) or non-alcoholic drink, plus transport

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-3-the-paroa-bay-vineyard-friday-wine-and-dine/russell>

Walk 4 – The Pāroa Bay Vineyard – Lunch & Wine

Saturday 10th October

It's a short 15-minute ride in a minibus to the start of the walk which is over private land.

Pāroa Bay Vineyard is a stunning family-owned boutique vineyard with traditional handmade, sustainable wines, and to top it off they have Sage Restaurant which is perched high above the idyllic Bay of Islands for a birds-eye view.

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The walk finishes with a 3 -course lunch which is a shared menu and a glass of Pāroa Bay wine (or non-alcoholic drink).

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Limited numbers on this walk, which is over private land. You will not be able to walk it any other time of the year! Enjoy!

Saturday 10th October

Assemble HQ: 7.30am

Return to HQ: – approx. 2.30 - 2.45pm

Duration: 4.5 hours walking plus dining time.

Distance: 10km

Grade: Medium to hard

Maximum walkers: 18

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$150 - includes guided walk, lunch, glass of wine (18+ only) or non-alcoholic drink, plus transport

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-4-the-paroa-bay-vineyard-lunch-and-wine/russell>

Walk 6 – Omata Estate Vineyard from Russell – 10km

Friday 9th and Saturday 10th October – Afternoon - wine tasting, and delicious wood-fired homemade pizza!

Omata Estate is a boutique vineyard situated in a stunning location on a sheltered hilltop with wonderful views across the vines to the bay. Their lovely wooden restaurant, brick paths, terraced and sunny garden are reminiscent of an old French vineyard, which creates a perfect atmosphere to sit back, relax and enjoy a glass of wine with delicious wood-fired pizza.

It is a lovely 10km walk - through Russell township, across mangrove boardwalks, through native bush and has coastal views.

Includes wine tasting and beautiful food, and each wine tasting goes through 5 different varieties of wine all grown on the property.

Catching a minibus back to HQ at the end of it all.

Friday 9th October**Assemble HQ:** 12.30pm**Arrive:** at about 4.00pm pm at Omata Vineyard for wood-fired homemade pizza and wine tasting.**Depart from Omata:** 6pm (takes approx. 15 mins)**Distance:** 10 km /3 Hours walking**Grade:** Medium to hard. A couple of steep hills**Maximum Walkers:** 18**Category:** Family friendly – Children 10 years plus**Cost:** \$75 includes guided walk, wood fired pizza, wine tasting (18+ only) and transport back**Saturday 10th October****Assemble HQ:** 8.30am**Arrive:** about 12pm for pizza and wine tasting.**Depart:** From Omata 2:45pm**Duration:** 3 Hours walking**Distance:** 10 kms**Grade:** Medium to hard. A couple of steep hills**Maximum Walkers:** 18**Category:** Family friendly – Children 10 years plus**Cost:** Adult \$75 includes guided walk, wood fired pizza, wine tasting (18+ only) and transport back**Book with this link**<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-6-omata-estate-vineyard-from-russell-10km/russell>

Walk 7 - Te Wahapu Loop - Bush Walk *NEW*

Sunday 11th October

A few new sections of shared pathway have been made around Russell which allows for some nice circular walks when added to the existing walking tracks.

A short bus ride takes us out to the start of the track.

This 5 km medium/hard walk shows great examples of what happens when predator control is happening. Explore groves of Tanekaha (celery pine), beautiful ferns, colourful moss and some of the biggest totara you have probably seen. Descending down to a stream you can enjoy the mature nikau, New Zealand's only palm tree. You will usually see signs of kiwi too.

The walk finishes at NZ's first capital, now known as Okiato.

Sunday 11th October**Assemble HQ:** 8.30 am**Return time:** 12.00 noon**Distance:** 5 km /2 to 3 hours**Grade:** Medium to Hard**Maximum Walkers:** 15**Category:** Family friendly – Children 10 years plus**Cost:** \$35

Book with this link:

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-7-te-wahapu-loop-bush-walk-new/russell>

Walk 8 - Elliot Bay Magic *NEW*

Saturday 10th October, Sunday 11th October

Discover the magic of Elliot Bay.

After a 40 minute bus ride, your guides will take you on a discovery tour of magical Elliot Bay, a surfers paradise and a place to recharge.

The beach itself has more birds than humans! Watch out for the camouflaged dotterel, Caspian terns, oyster catchers, red bill gulls, paradise ducks, fantails, kotare, welcome swallows and the elusive blue penguin!

On a good day, (when you return), your footprints will probably be the only ones in the sand.

The brand new walk takes us to some viewpoints where you can see as far as the Cavalli Islands in the north, and the Poor Knights in the south.

Bring your togs – if the tide is right, the sand and rock pools are amazing. Unless of course you want to body surf!!!

Saturday 10th October, Sunday 11th October

Assemble HQ: 9.00 am

Return time: 3.00 pm

Distance: 5 km /2 to 3 hours

Grade: Medium to Hard

Maximum Walkers: 15

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$40 (includes bus and guided walk)

Book with this link:

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-8-elliott-bay-magic-new/russell>

Walk 9 – Kotikoti Walk – over private land

Friday 9th and Sunday 11th October

This spectacular walk is on private land which is opened for the Walking Weekend. A perfect opportunity to do something you cannot do the rest of the year!

Walk from HQ through town to enter the walk with regenerating coastal forest with distant views along the way finishing with a spectacular vista of the outer Bay of Islands. You can see Moturoa

Island, the stunning lava formation of the Black Rocks, the distant northern entrance of Tikitiki through compass north to the clump of eastern islands and the magnificent Cape Brett Peninsula with the peaks of Rakaumangamanga and Pukehuia. The walk ends by walking the length of Long Beach, Oneroa, before walking over the hill to return to HQ.

Friday 9th October

Assemble HQ: 2.30 pm

Return time: 5.30pm

Distance: 7 km /2.5 to 3 hours

Grade: Medium to Hard

Maximum Walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$20 (includes guided walk)

Sunday 11th October

Assemble HQ: 8.30am

Return time: approx. 11.30 am

Distance: 7 kms /2.5 to 3 hours

Grade: Medium to Hard

Maximum Walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$20 (includes guided walk)

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-9-kotikoti-walk-over-private-land/russell>

Walk 10 – Moturua Island - By launch

Friday 9th, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th October

Travelling aboard a commercial launch to Moturua Island through the beautiful Bay of Islands. Once at Moturua Island you will disembark for fantastic walking with prolific birdlife, many of the beaches have their own unique archaeological historical perspective. A beach you visit is one of the earliest known landing sites of voyaging Polynesians. Diggings have revealed a collection of artefacts dated back to approximately 1320.

Moturua was host to some early French explorers, a significant farming operation supplying milk to the mainland, a substantial defence battery and barracks, an underground network of bunkers communication and a water reservoir. Enjoy the fantastic birdlife and views.

Fri 9th October

Assemble HQ: 8.15am

Return to Russell wharf: 3.30pm

Distance: 5 km walking / 3 hours

Grade: Medium

Maximum Walkers: 18

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 (includes guided walk and return trip by launch)

Sat 10th October

Assemble HQ: 8.15am
Return to Russell wharf: 3.30pm
Distance: 5 km walking / 3 hours
Grade: Medium
Maximum Walkers:18
Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus
Cost: \$75 (includes guided walk and return trip by launch)

Sunday 11th October

Assemble HQ: 8.15am
Return to Russell wharf: 3.30pm
Distance: 5 km walking / 3 hours
Grade: Medium
Maximum Walkers:18
Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus
Cost: \$75 (includes guided walk and return trip by launch)

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-10-moturua-island-by-launch/russell>

Walk 12 – Four walks in One! 21km

Saturday 10th October

Due to popular demand, we have introduced a longer walk. (Please note this walk includes sections of 4 of our individual walks)

Catch the passenger from Russell to Paihia and walk four walks in one!

The first part is the Paihia School Road Lookout.

A pleasant 2km climb to a view of the Bay of Islands. From the viewpoint, you can see the Bay from Opua to Waitangi and over the Russell Peninsula to Urupukapuka Island and Cape Brett in the distance.

The second part of the walk is the Oromahoe Traverse (no longer part of the programme), a medium to hard walk, a unique opportunity to walk this ancient trail used by Māori for hundreds of years, that runs right through the heart of the stunning Opua State Forest. Learn about the community's mammoth effort in taking out over 11,000 pests and the explosion of native wildlife that followed, particularly the magnificent Northern Green geckos, kiwi, wood pigeons, tomtits, owls, and so much more.

The third part of the walk includes some metal road walking and the stunning Opua Kauri Walk (no longer part of the programme). The kauri walk is a short but delightful stroll, partly on a boardwalk through groves of kauri to an elevated lookout platform and bench seat. Once at the lookout, you will be surrounded by kauri trees of different ages – from young rickers up to 25 years old to more mature trees of about 400 years in age.

Returning to the road we walk down Oromahoe Road to join the fourth part of our walk – a section of the Opuia to Paihia coastal walkway – which is part of the Full Circle Walk. Wonderful views of Veronica Channel can be seen here along with a stunning mangrove boardwalk.

You will feel a great sense of achievement as you catch the passenger ferry from Paihia to Russell again. After all – you will have walked around 21 km!!! A half marathon!!!

Saturday 10th October

Assemble HQ: 7.15am

Return to HQ: approx. 5.00 pm (transport at 4.30pm)

Duration: 8 Hours

Distance: 21 kms

Grade: Hard

Maximum walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$35 - includes guided walk and both ferries

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-12-four-walks-in-one-21km/russell>

Walk 13 – Mana, Missionaries and Mayhem

Friday 9th October

The ultimate tour of Russell - significant landmarks and captivating stories! Finish up enjoying a cold drink at the iconic Duke of Marlborough Hotel which has been refreshing rascals and reprobates since 1827.

Russell (Kororāreka as it was then known) was once the main trading port in Aotearoa, with the infamous reputation as the 'Hell Hole of the Pacific'. Home to American whalers and traders of all nations, it was a scene of 'uncivilised behaviour' described by Charles Darwin in his visit to New Zealand in 1835 as 'the land of cannibalism, murder and all atrocious crimes'. It is anything but that today as your guided walk of this enchanting seaside town will soon reveal. Indeed, alongside this picture of 'vice' ran the voice of 'virtue' as Missionaries sought to convert local Māori (and anyone else who would listen) to Christianity.

Includes an eye-opening walk around Russell, entry into and a tour of Pompallier Mission and Printery and a drink at the Duke of Marlborough Hotel.

Friday 9th October

Assemble HQ: 1.00pm

Conclude at the Duke at 5.30pm for a drink.

Duration: 4 hours

Distance: 4km

Grade: Medium to Hard (a hike up Maiki Hill)

Maximum walkers: 14

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: Adult \$30 - includes a guided walk, a refreshment at the Duke, and the tour of Pompallier Mission

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-13-mana-missionaries-and-mayhem/russell>

Walk 14 – The Club Walk - Humour is the heart of Russell

Friday 9th October

An introduction to the heart of the Russell community, walking between the clubs, stopping for a drink and some fascinating stories.

The Russell Boating Club, sitting right on the water's edge, threatening to float away with the sea level rising.

The Swordfish Club located upstairs on the waterfront which is the oldest game fishing club in New Zealand is a must-do when you visit the Bay of Islands.

The RSA is full of its own history of fighting for survival.

The Bowling Club which is an integral part of the community. Take in the photographic history and hear the stories behind the memorabilia which helps keep our town alive.

Once you have visited each club and appraised each menu you can return for dinner and a cosy night in with the locals.

Friday 9th October

Assemble HQ: 3.30pm

Return to HQ: 8.00 pm

Duration: 4 hours

Distance: 2km, Grade: Easy

Maximum walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: Free includes a guided walk

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-14-the-club-walk-humour-is-the-heart-of-russell/russell>

Walk 18 – PhatHouse Brewery and River Walk

Saturday 10th October

Begin your adventure with a scenic ferry ride from Russell to Paihia. From there, enjoy a leisurely walk along the Paihia waterfront to Waitangi, leading to the start of the Haruru Falls track. This sheltered trail offers stunning views, rich local history, and excellent birdwatching opportunities. The trail leads to the horseshoe-shaped Haruru Falls, whose name in Te Reo Māori—Haruru—means "to roar" or "big noise."

Your journey continues to PhatHouse Brewery, where you'll enjoy a selection of stone baked flame fired pizzas and fries and a tasting paddle of PhatHouse's finest craft beer.

Saturday 10th October

Assemble HQ: 8:15 am

Return to HQ: approx. 4 pm

Duration: 3.5 hours walking

Distance: 10km

Grade: Medium

Maximum walkers: 20

Category: Family friendly – Children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 includes return ferry, guided walk, pizza and beer tasting (18+ only) or a non-alcoholic drink, return transport from PhatHouse Brewery.

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-18-phathouse-brewery-and-river-walk/russell>

Walk 19 – Urupukapuka Island – The Ultimate Loop Walk

Friday 9th, Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th October

Urupukapuka Island is the largest island in the Bay of Islands and is a slice of paradise well worth exploring. As well as boasting some of the most spectacular panoramic views and gorgeous beaches with crystal clear water there are dozens of pristinely preserved archaeological sites on the island, some of which may be up to 1000 years old. From prehistoric Māori pā, villages, gardens, and food storage, right up to early 20th-century buildings used by famous author Zane Grey.

Travelling by commercial launch to Urupukapuka Island, venturing into the inner islands where you will disembark at the stunning Otehei Bay.

The full walk is 8 km on very well-maintained trails, with some steep climbs and steps and there is plenty to see.

Hiking through a forest which holds treasures of Project Island Song such as the North Island robin and saddleback, which are the jewels amongst the abundant tui and fantail population. From sheltered bays, ancient pā, a wildlife hide and created wetland, climb through regenerating Manuka forest to scintillating views along the impressive seaward coastline. Looping around the island with one view to Zane Grey's campsite and the other out to the waters he fished, before catching your vessel back to Russell.

Friday 9th October

Assemble time: 8:15am

Return HQ: 3:30pm

Duration: 5 hours walking

Distance: 8 km

Grade: Hard

Max: 20

Category: Family-friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 includes a guided walk and boat transfers

Saturday 10th October

Assemble time: 8:15am

Return HQ: 3:30pm

Duration: 5 hours walking

Distance: 8 km

Grade: Hard

Max: 20

Category: Family-friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 includes a guided walk and boat transfers

Sunday 11th October

Assemble time: 8:15am

Return HQ: 3:30pm

Duration: 5 hours walking

Distance: 8 km

Grade: Hard

Max: 20

Category: Family-friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$75 includes a guided walk and boat transfers

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-19-urupukapuka-island-the-ultimate-loop-walk/russell>

Walk 20 – Garden Safari – Te Wahapu Style

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th October

Curious about exploring stunning homes and gardens? Come on a walk to explore some of our local gardens! From garden features to sea views – you won't be disappointed.

You will be transported to the start of the "trail" and collected from the end point. The walk is a one way walk and includes over 6 gardens, a bit of road walking as well as some "unformed tracks".

Bring something for morning tea and enjoy the ambience of each garden.

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th October

Assemble time: 8.30 am

Return HQ: 12.30 pm

Duration: 3.5 hours

Distance: 5.00 km

Grade: Medium

Maximum walkers: 18

Category: Family friendly – children 10 years plus

Cost: \$35

Book with this link

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/walk-20-garden-safari-te-wahapu-style/russell>

BOI Walking Weekend Saturday Dinner

Saturday 10th October

On Saturday night we always have a fun prize-giving followed by a scrumptious 2 course dinner.

Prize-giving takes the format of spot prizes and “taking the mickey “ out of the walkers. (We deal to the guides on Sunday). Feel free to dob in your friends or family or even your guides!!!!

Please see the registration table with your words of wisdom!

Prize- giving starts at 5.30 pm. With dinner around 6pm.

Clare makes us our homely two course dinner. Those of you who have been before know how yummy it is. The main course will be glazed ham, hot vegetables, 3 salads, and plenty of it to wrap in fresh bread rolls

Vegetarians will be catered for.

Please book online to give us an indication of how many we should cater for.

Book with this link:

<https://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/boi-walking-weekend-saturday-dinner/russell>