



WELLINGTON WONDERLAND

Windy but delightful Welly is NZ's unsung hero

You'd be forgiven for thinking the waterfront is the star of Wellington's show. Curving for kilometres around the capital's harbour, it's packed with cafes, markets, art, skate parks and historic buildings. You could happily spend a weekend strolling, cycling, splashing in the chilly water, having a coffee or an ice-cream, and doing it all again.

Hiring an e-bike (yes, it has a motor. No, you shouldn't feel any shame about that) from Switched On Bikes is an exhilarating way to experience that waterfront, from the crowded promenade, past the sands of Oriental Bay around to the charming weatherboard houses on Mount Victoria's slopes. All that and no sore legs.

Prefer an even lower-effort mode of transport? Wellington Helicopters offers perhaps the most spectacular way to spend time by (or, er, over) the harbour: hovering high above it. Back on solid ground, spend a few hours at the harbourside Te Papa Tongarewa,

Wellington's magnificent museum. Stand-out exhibits are the world's only complete colossal squid, the earthquake simulator, Te Marae (the meeting place), and of course the extraordinary *Gallipoli: The Scale Of Our War* exhibit, whose figures of New Zealanders involved in that conflict – rendered in painstaking detail at 2.4 times life-size – are deeply moving.

The city's charms do, of course, extend beyond the waterfront. Quirky Cuba Street brims with boutique shops and delightful cafes (Floriditas is a chic bistro; Olive Restaurant has a rustic French vibe inside, and a lantern-twinkled, palm-planted courtyard outside). Nearby Havana Bar, which inhabits two vibrantly painted historic houses, serves Cuban-inspired cocktails of sufficient potency to lower my resistance to the siren call of local designers Karen Walker and Kate Sylvester. My advice: don't even try to fight it. Just to ensure I won't fit into my new purchases for long, I dine indulgently

at The Bresolin, a new venture from experienced restaurateur brothers, Lorenzo and Leonardo Bresolin.

It's soon clear fabulous food is never far away. I spend a morning with Zest Food Tours strolling the city, eating, drinking and chatting to owners and makers. Highlights include a locally owned, organic ice-creamery, Gelissimo Gelato, with flavours that are ever-changing (I dive into cucumber and mint) and Hannahs Laneway, which is home to Fix & Fogg peanut butter, the tempting Leeds Street Bakery and the organic, ethical Wellington Chocolate Factory, where I spend big on single-origins bars.

Further afield, a historic cable car rattles up to the hilltop Botanic Garden, where I stumble across an antiquarian and artist named Alex Blacksmith in the Dominion Observatory, surrounded by antique prints and globes, delicately hand-painting a vintage map.

On the other side of town, Weta Workshops displays its magical creatures (book a morning tour then lunch at nearby Cafe Polo, where you'll find divine bistro food dished up at local cafe prices). Bird-lovers should explore Zealandia, a wildlife sanctuary with enchanting twilight tours. More wildlife awaits: I slake a thirst for adventure with Seal Coast Safari, which takes me seal-spotting where the wild Tasman Sea batters the rocky west coast – and gives me marvellous muffins and tea to boot.

Distinctly calmer, thankfully, is my trip across the harbour – there's not a breath of that infamous Wellington wind as I climb aboard the ferry to Eastbourne. You can walk along the bay, lunch



KIWI CRUSH
(from top)
Wellington's historic cable car; Olive Restaurant; the scenic Zealandia bird sanctuary.

at the Chocolate Dayz Cafe, and then stay overnight at the Days Bay Homestay, where the glorious Crowsnest Suite is lined with windows overlooking the water. In the morning, head around the harbour to Petone's excellent gallery, The Dowse Art Museum.

In town, rest your head at the luxurious InterContinental, or go boutique and quirky at the Museum Art Hotel, where the Hippopotamus restaurant offers fine dining with a fabulous view.

And I haven't even mentioned the craft beers... **HANNAH JAMES**
FOLLOW HANNAH ON TWITTER @HFJAMES

UP AND AWAY Cable cars to queue for BY ALLEY PASCOE



SUGARLOAF CABLE CAR, BRAZIL

Cable to the top of Sugarloaf Mountain in Rio de Janeiro for 360-degree views of Guanabara Bay and Copacabana Beach. Barry Manilow impersonations welcome. Visit bondinho.com.br.



MOUNT STANSERHORN CABLE CAR, SWITZERLAND

Breathe in that mountain air on the world's first cable car with a roofless upper deck – travelling 1900 metres to the summit. Visit stanserhorn.ch.

HAVE CARAVAN, WILL TRAVEL

No tow ball, no worries. MyCaravan will deliver caravans and campers to your chosen site across Australia, from Brunswick Heads to Beerwah. Visit mycaravan.com.au.



PHOTOGRAPHY: WELLINGTON RESOURCE HUB/ WELLINGTONNZ.COM, THINKSTOCK, SWISS RAILWAYS

ESTÉE LAUDER YOUR GIFT OUR TREAT

Receive your deluxe gift FREE with any Estée Lauder purchase of \$75 or more.*

Available Sunday 3rd April to Sunday 17th April 2016, while stocks last.

Shop in-store or online at myer.com.au/esteelauder



Choose Your Moisturiser

*One gift per customer. Minimum \$75 spend must be in one transaction. Excludes gift sets. Not to be used with any other offer.

MYER

