



SCENIC EAST CAPE & MAHIA

April 30th – May 3rd 2010

The East Cape offers a slow, peaceful existence to those who reside there, and an equally relaxed, enchanting place for its visitors. With few harbours and a mountainous, wild bush interior, the Cape has been isolated for many years until the road network was completed. And still today, given the remote proximity of the region, few people take the opportunity to explore what seems to be one of New Zealand's last frontiers. Inhabited predominantly by Maori, Gisborne and the Cape region place great emphasis on the retention of their culture and traditions - it is here you will hear Te Reo Maori (the Maori language) being spoken fluently and freely. The coastal road is windy 'tour of discovery' providing spectacular views of a wild coastline interspersed with picturesque little bays, inlets and coves. Dozens of clear freshwater streams flow through stunning gorges from the mountains and in the summer months are greeted at the shoreline by the bright crimson blooms of the pohutakawa trees. Popular for fishing, diving and boating this must surely be one of the county's best-kept secrets! Beautiful beaches contrast dramatically with rugged cliffs and rocky outcrops providing the perfect home to what seems to be an abundance of crayfish!

Day 1 Friday 30th April 2010 HAMILTON – WAIROA

(D)

Departing Hamilton we make our way to Wairoa travelling through Rotorua progressing on through Murupara and Mataatua to the Urewera National Park which protects part of the largest native forest area in the North Island. We stop to view Lake Waikaremoana, (sea of rippling waters). Birds, trout, deer and other wildlife are plentiful in the park. From here we continue to Wairoa. It is the northernmost town in the Hawke's Bay region, and is located on the northern shore of Hawke Bay at the mouth of the Wairoa River and to the west of Mahia Peninsula. Servicing a large rural community Wairoa's population is 4272 (2006 Census) and a further residing in the wider Wairoa region 4212 (2006 Census). Wairoa is only unique in two areas that we are aware of, firstly a very wide river runs through the centre of town and secondly there is a Lighthouse positioned on the river bank opposite the main shopping area. Early settlement in the area included a whaling station and trading post, dealing largely in flax. Its initial name was Clyde, but this was changed largely to avoid confusion with Clive near Napier and Clyde in the South Island. The town rose to prominence during the Maori Wars, during which time it was a garrison town. Today, Wairoa is a manufacturing and farming service town.

Day 2 Saturday 1st May 2010 WAIROA – MAHIA – GISBORNE

(BD)

Departing Wairoa we travel to Mahia. Mahia Peninsular provides a vast adventure playground for a great variety of activities. Safe sandy & uncrowded beaches all round the peninsula are perfect for swimming and picnics. The attraction is the peninsula itself. It's a diamond shape with an isthmus connecting to the mainland - it's almost like having an east coast and a west coast. The Oputama beach is a five kilometre long crescent of sand to the beach settlement of Mahia Beach. We will stop at the Morere Hot pools for a swim (own expense). These are a mere 20min drive from Mahia. They are natural hot mineral springs in a bush reserve. Public and private pools are available. For those not wanting a swim there are spectacular scenic bushwalks. We back track a little to Nuhaka before continuing on to Gisborne. The Gisborne region has been settled for over 1000 years, although Europeans did not arrive until late in the 19th century when the first whaling station was established in the area. It was in Gisborne, however, that Captain Cook made his first landfall on New Zealand soil in 1769, naming it Poverty Bay after deciding it had nothing to offer! We visit the monument to Cook which is at the foot of Kaiti Hill, near the spot he first set foot, and a statue of 'Young Nick' sits at the river mouth. Nicolas Young, Cook's cabin boy, was the first member of the crew to sight land - Cook named the white cliffs across the bay 'Young Nick's Head'.

Day 3 Sunday 2nd May 2010 GISBORNE TO HICKS BAY

(BD)

Calling in to Whangara we visit the area where the local movie "The Whale Rider" was filmed. Travelling up the coast we visit Anaura Bay and the old wharf area to Tologa Bay. Some very good craft can be purchased here. We then visit **Waipiro Bay (Kiri Te Kanawa once lived here)** and then move on to **Tokomaru Bay**. The skeleton of the old meat processing works still adorns the area as well as remnants of the many old works houses. We visit Ruatoria stopping here to visit the area where Sir Apirima Ngata came from. He also appears on our \$50 notes. Steeped in Maori tradition, Ruatoria is an interesting stop for visitors to Eastland. The town is home territory for the Ngati Porou tribe. From here, subject to weather conditions, good views of Mt. Hikurangi (1752 metres) can be had, the first point on the New Zealand mainland to see the sunrise each day. Rejoining State Highway 35 we visit the historic church at Tikiti. Following the bay we view the lighthouse at East Cape and if you're fit enough, climb the 300 odd steps to take in the expansive views of the area. Before reaching our accommodation we visit New Zealand's largest pohutakawa tree at Te Arorua.

Day 4 Monday 3rd May 2010 HICKS BAY – HAMILTON

(B)

We are able to make many photo stops and breaks as we leisurely tour to Waihou Bay. Reluctantly we leave this beautiful area, and move on. Following the shores of the Ohiwa Harbour, we tour on to Opotiki. The town of Opotiki is situated on a harbour inlet formed by the junction of two rivers, the Waioeka and the Otaru. Bounded by these rivers on three sides. The county which extends from Ohiwa to Cape Runaway has a population of 9,201. We then follow the coastal road and have expansive views of White Island, which is an off shore active volcano before arriving in Whakatane. This will be our lunch stop. The district is steeped in history and culture. The Mataatua canoe landed at Whakatane and pa sites from early settlement are identifiable along the coast. 40% of the population is Maori and their culture and language is strong and vibrant. Predominant Iwi in the region include Ngati Awa, Tuhoe, and Te Whakatohea. The region is rich in forestry resources and has some of the country's best dairy farms, along with a large dairy processing plant located at Edgecumbe. The fertile soil of the district supports a variety of horticultural activities including market gardens, apple and kiwifruit orchards and flower growing. Bottling water for export is an emerging industry. We visit Edgecumbe and carry onwards to Matata. The coastal road on which we travel is historic in it's own right as at Maketu the Arawa Canoe is said to have come ashore here. A plaque is seen here to mark the event. We will make a stop at Kiwi Fruit country to view their product and allow you to purchase a cuppa if you wish. Departing Te Puke we travel over the Kaimai Range and make our way back to Hamilton.

TOUR INCLUSIONS:

- 3 nights twin share/double accommodation – single rooms available with surcharge
- Tour admissions as per the itinerary
- Breakfasts (B), lunches (L) and dinners (D) where indicated on the daily itinerary
- Touring in modern air conditioned Coach
- Roadside Morning Teas – where possible

TOUR PAYMENTS PER PERSON:

- Share Twin Accommodation \$595.00
- Single Supplement Extra \$175.00
- Deposit due at time of booking \$100.00
- Balance of tour payment due 6 weeks prior to tour commencement