

## NELSON DAYOUT

Nelson is a compact city which charms visitors, many of whom return to live there. They enjoy its good climate, relaxed way of life and easy access to an interesting region.

You can spend a dayout in the central city. Visit the public gardens (our favourite is the Miyazu Japanese Gardens) and the Suter Gallery. Take in some historic buildings, and climb Botanical Hill for a splendid view of the city.

Beaches and picnic spots are close at hand for those who want a relaxing day in the sun. The cafe scene is vibrant and at least one vineyard visit is a must if you want to experience an important feature of the region.

The winemaking community adds character to the area; Nelson is equally well-known for its arts and crafts community. Allow yourself plenty of time to visit galleries to see their high quality ceramics, glass and paintings.

The Montana New Zealand Wearable Art Awards take place in September. It's such a popular event that World of Wearable Art Gallery has been established to display costumes shown at the parade.

### HERITAGE

The region with its fertile land and coastal resources was very attractive to early Maori whose history recounts how a succession of tribes came from the North Island to occupy by force the lands of the tribe prevailing at the time. The Waitaha were succeeded by Ngati Mamoe and Ngati Tumatakokiri. Ngai Tahu, who dominated the region for about a century, were defeated by the Ngati Toa forces of Te Rauparaha. Today six iwi (tribes) hold ancestral occupation rights over particular areas in the Nelson region and have three marae. Whakatu, the marae in Nelson, keeps alive the Maori name for the area.

### European Settlement

Colonel William Wakefield of the New Zealand Company bought land from Te Rauparaha in the north of the South Island for a planned model settlement. After considerable indecision about the exact site, an exploratory group chose the 'haven' behind Boulder Bank. Nelson came into being when the *Fifeshire* arrived with the first settlers in February, 1842.

Further ships followed, the most notorious being the *Lloyds* with the wives and children of the exploratory party. Sixty-five children died on the voyage and Wakefield claimed the ship was a floating 'bawdy house' when it was revealed that the captain and crew had slept with the women.

The colony struggled in its early years as there were few people with money to create employment. A further setback occurred when 22 settlers, including Arthur Wakefield, brother of William, were killed by Maori at Wairau in 1843. They had attempted to take over land which Te Rauparaha had not sold.

Eventually small landholders started to prosper. Some of these were Germans, who developed orchards and vineyards in the Moutere area.

### Baron Rutherford of Nelson 1871-1937

Known as the father of nuclear physics, Ernest Rutherford is the Nelson area's most famous son.

He was born in the little township of Brightwater and educated at Nelson College, Canterbury University College and Cambridge University. He made many scientific discoveries, but is best known for splitting the atom. Rutherford's many honours included several honorary doctorates, the Nobel Prize for Chemistry, the Order of Merit, a peerage and a final resting place in Westminster Abbey.

His name lives on in Nelson at the city's largest hotel, in Rutherford Street and Rutherford Park.

## ARCHITECTURE

### South Street Cottages

These cottages built for local tradesmen are a stone's throw from the Rutherford Hotel and the Cathedral and make an interesting contrast with the larger buildings. Most were constructed between 1863 and 1865. Although they've been restored to a state that is probably much more attractive than they ever were when first built, it's a pleasure to see their well-painted exteriors adorned with flower boxes.

### Broadgreen House - mid 1850s

*276 Nayland Road, Stoke*

Open 10.30am - 4.30pm except Christmas Day and Good Friday. Entry fee.

Edmund Buxton chose to build in cob, a mixture of earth and straw and a surprising choice of material for a wealthy merchant's house - though the exterior was marked to resemble stone. The house was well-built with a Welsh slate roof, timber floors and interior lathe and plaster walls. Unlike many small cob cottages of the same era, it survives today as an excellent example of cob construction.

You can view 11 rooms, many with original wallpapers, which are furnished and decorated to reflect a family home of its period. The servants' domain of kitchen, scullery and dairy have interesting exhibits, and among other fine collections on display are 19<sup>th</sup> Century clothes and antique quilts - one dating back to 1776.

### Isel House, Stoke

*Entrance from Marsden Road or Main Road, Stoke and walk through Isel Park.*

This solid-looking, gabled stone house was built for early settler Thomas Marsden, who came to the area in 1842. The house contains furniture and china that belonged to the Marsden family.

Isel Park is worth visiting for the very fine specimen trees which Marsden had sea captains bring from around the world.

The Nelson Provincial Museum is located behind the house but is due to be moved to central Nelson

### Bishop's School - 1881

*Nile Street*

Bishops Selwyn, Hobhouse and Suter had connections with this school. Selwyn planned the first schoolhouse made of red brick which opened in 1844. Nelson parents, however, opted for a non-sectarian education for their children and the school closed in 1855.

Bishop Hobhouse, keen to foster religious education, re-opened the school five years later. Bishop Suter had the old building demolished and a much larger wooden classroom built. The school was closed in 1895 but the New Zealand Historic Places Trust re-opened the restored classroom in 1977.

### Christ Church Cathedral - 1927

The hill where the cathedral stands was once the site of a Maori pa; it also served as a fort for early European pioneers who feared a Maori attack after settlers were killed at Wairau.

The third church on the site, the cathedral has a surprisingly modern feel inside, probably because its design and its building materials have been changed over the years - initially Takaka marble was used. Although not considered to be of great architectural distinction, it is historically interesting: inside are memorials to people who made a significant contribution to Nelson's history.

### Holy Trinity Church, Richmond - 1872

Holy Trinity with its simple, bold exterior is an excellent example of a timber colonial church whose design has been adapted from English church architecture.

### St John's Church, Wakefield - 1846

The oldest church in the South Island, St John's was built by members of the small community of New Zealand Company labourers who settled at Wakefield in 1843.

It was extended and lined with kauri when the settlement became more prosperous.

### St Michael's, Waimea West - 1867

Thomas Brunner, best known for exploring the West Coast, was Nelson's chief surveyor when he designed this lovely colonial-style wooden church. It features timber buttresses and a corrugated iron spire.

## MUSEUM

### Nelson Provincial Museum

*Marsden Road. Open Mon-Fri 10am - 4pm; weekends and holidays 12 noon - 4pm.*

It has historical photos and displays of the area, some Maori artefacts, and for those with an interest in the gruesome, the death masks of the notorious Maungatapu bushrangers. They were hanged for ambushing and murdering four gold diggers who were bringing gold over the Maungatapu trail to Nelson.

### Founders Historic Park

*87 Atawhai Drive. Open daily 10am - 4.30pm, except Christmas Day and Good Friday.*

Admission fee.

You can see 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings, a maritime display and vintage transport. There's a playground for children, an organic brewery for parents and a cafe for all.

## GALLERY

### Suter Gallery

*Open 10.30am - 4.30pm daily except Christmas Day.*

Bishop Suter's art collection, gifted to the city by his wife, launched Nelson's public art museum. His collection included many watercolours by his friend John Gully. The gallery has continued to collect works of notable New Zealand artists, including Goldie, Frances Hodgkins, Philip Clairmont, Tony Fomison and Jane Evans and it has a nationally significant collection of Sir Toss Woollaston's paintings.

It also has an important collection of ceramics, including works of Mirek Smisek, Harry and May Davis, Steve Fullmer and Jack Laird.

### World of Wearable Art and Collectable Car Complex

Open 9am - 6pm daily in summer; 10am - 5pm in winter. Admission fee.

Each September Nelson hosts the Montana World of Wearable Art Awards Show, an internationally known extravaganza. Fantastic costumes from past shows are displayed at this complex.

When you have exhausted the creativity of wearable art, you can explore creative car design in the collectable car section of the complex.

## Hoglund Glassblowing Studio and Galleries

*Lansdowne Road, Richmond. Open daily 9am -5pm except Good Friday, Christmas and Boxing Days. Garden cafe and children's playground.*

Here you can watch glassblowers at work and enjoy the striking displays of functional and artistic glassware on sale in the gallery.

## Potters' Galleries

Nelson is known for its wide range of contemporary tableware and ceramic art pieces. The Nelson Potters' Association produces a brochure listing potteries and galleries. Some of the best-known are:

- Paul Laird - Waimea Pottery
- Christine Boswijk Studio
- Steve Fullmer Gallery
- McGlashen Pottery
- Bronte Gallery

## WALKS

### Centre of New Zealand Walk

A short uphill walk, well worth doing for an overview of Nelson and its surroundings.

*Signposted from end of Hardy Street East*

A series of tracks take you up Botanical Hill to the Centre of New Zealand. There are splendid views over the city and sea from the lookout. Interpretive panels identify main buildings and mountain ranges.

## Matai River Walkway

*Follow Nile Street to the east where it meets the Matai Valley Road. The walk is along the east bank of the river.*

This is a very pleasant, easy walk on the river bank. There are many lovely picnic spots and swimming holes along the way.

## Grampians Reserve

*Start from the southern end of Collingwood Street.*

Several tracks take you up the Grampians. From the lookout there are spectacular views which make the effort worthwhile.

## BEACHES/PICNICS

### Tahunanui Beach

Very popular for swimming, windsurfing, sunbathing and beach volleyball. Other facilities and attractions include playground, Natureland, roller skating rink, Bumpa Boats, hydroslide, model railway, tennis courts, pétanque court and minigolf.

### Rabbit Island

*25km west of Nelson*

A great sweep of beach and sand dunes. There are many sheltered picnic spots among the pine trees.

### Matai Valley

As you drive up the valley, you see signposts for several picnic places and reserves. Swimming is popular at Black Hole, Dennes Hole, Sharlands Hole and other places in the river.

## GARDENS

### Queens Gardens

Once the site of a swampy lake, Queens Gardens were designated recreation land to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of Queen Victoria. It's a small but very attractive park, a short walk from the city centre. Specimen trees such as Bunya Bunya, Mexican Hand Tree, Swamp Cypress, Dawn Redwood and a fine Titoki are an outstanding feature.

### Miyazu Japanese Garden

Whenever we go to Nelson we visit this delightful Japanese stroll garden, named after Nelson's sister city in Japan. Peaceful and welcoming with native and Japanese plants, water features, boulders and stepping stones, it's lovely any time of the year, but the cherry blossoms are special in spring.

### Isel Park

Notable for its fine specimen trees - some planted as early as 1845, the park also specializes in rhododendrons, azaleas and spring bulbs.

### Gardens of the World

Clover Road East, Brightwater. Admission fee.

Six acres have been landscaped with ponds and divided into areas for plants from different parts of the world. The garden features native plants from New Zealand, Australia, Europe, Africa, the Orient and America.

## WINE

A visit to the Nelson region would not be complete without a day out spent exploring the vineyards and having a relaxing lunch at one of them.

The wine region covers the Waimea Plains and extends to the Upper Moutere hills. Small vineyards specialise in Chardonnay, Sauvignon Blanc, Pinot Noir and Riesling wines. Some well-known vineyards are:

- Neudorf (a consistently outstanding Moutere Chardonnay)
- Greenhough (try their Hope Vineyard Chardonnay and Pinot Noir)
- Seifried Estate (try their Rieslings, Gewürztraminers and Chardonnays)
- Spencer Hill Estate (famous for their Tasman Bay Chardonnay, but taste their Spencer Hill Chardonnays, too)

The Denton Vineyard takes our prize to date for the best vineyard lunch - good food and wine in a very pleasant setting.

For further information about vineyards, see our data base, or [www.nelsonwines.co.nz](http://www.nelsonwines.co.nz)