

### General Information

The Coromandel Peninsula has some of the best beaches and coastlines of the North Island. The Coromandel Mountain Range, with its deep river gorges and steep cliffs, runs along the center of the entire peninsula, making this rugged and densely forested area very scenic. The views from the coastal hills where the mountain range drops to the sea are magnificent. Due to its mountainous terrain, cycling on the Coromandel Peninsula can be quite challenging, especially if one is crossing the peninsula from west to east or vice versa. However, relatively flat routes can be found on the east side or along The Firth of Thames on the west side of the peninsula.

Although Coromandel Peninsula is becoming more popular with weekend and holiday vacationers from Auckland, it is still a serene place to visit and enjoy. On the west coast of the peninsula, the town of Thames is considered the gateway to Coromandel Peninsula and is the largest town of the west coast and also a tourist center. The town of Coromandel located at the northern part of the peninsula is probably one of the more picturesque towns on the peninsula, with history dating back to the gold rush of 1850's. Today it is known for its alternative lifestyle and relaxed attitude. Whitianga and Whangamata are the beach towns of the peninsula's east coast and are bustling with beach goers and vacationers during the high summer season.

The Coromandel Peninsula is also home to the renowned K2 one-day endurance ride offering challenging cycling routes around the peninsula with 100km (62.5 miles) or 200km (125 miles) options held at the end of October of each year.

Total # of Rides Listed: 1

Family Rides: 0

Road Rides: 1

MTB Trails: 0

Bike Path Rides: 0

 Loop Rides: 1

 Out & Back Rides: 0



### When to Visit

The best time to visit Coromandel Peninsula for cycling is before and after the high summer (southern hemisphere) season (December - January) when there is much less traffic and less crowds. Because the climate is quite mild cycling in Coromandel can be quite enjoyable any time between October and April and frequently into May and June.

If you are planning to visit during December and January, it is advisable you make lodging reservations ahead of time.

Note: Stay away during the high summer season and on long holiday weekends. Since most of Auckland heads for Coromandel during this time, cycling in traffic on the few paved Coromandel roads, especially in the mountains, can be quite perilous.

### Climate and Weather

The Coromandel Peninsula often has annual rainfalls over 3,000 mm (120 in) and sometimes in excess of 4,500 mm (180 in), but the climate is quite mild throughout the year with most of the rain falling during the winter months

The temperature from the end of November (when the high summer season sets in with long warm days) averages mid-70's F (20's C). This is ideal weather for outdoor activities and perfect for cycling; and although autumn arrives in April, it is still generally warm late into the day. From June to August (the winter months) the average daily temperatures are in the 50's F (13°C - 15°C).

### How to Get There

Thames is the main transport center to and from the Coromandel Peninsula. The InterCity bus service runs daily between Auckland and Thames. Check their web site for the latest fares and schedules. Also, double check their policy on carrying bicycles, especially if you are riding a tandem.

Unfortunately, there is no passenger train service to Thames, but a viable and comfortable alternative is a ferry service that runs several times a week from Auckland to Hannaford's Point Wharf at Te Kouma, just a 20-minute bicycle ride south of the town of Coromandel. The ferry service is run by 360 Discovery Tours from the Auckland's Passenger Ferry Terminal at Pier 3 and it departs every Tuesday, Thursday, Sunday and Public Holiday. The trip lasts around 2 hours. Be aware however that weather can impact the service as it crosses open waters, which can get quite rough. As a result, service may be cancelled without prior notice. Note: Since the crossing can be quite rough (if you suffer from sea sickness be prepared).

The Auckland Fullers' Ferry Terminal is located across the street from Britomart Transportation Station. You can take the local train transit (MAXX) <http://www.maxx.co.nz/> to the Britomart Station (Auckland's Central Business District and transportation hub). A bicycle ticket must be purchased for each train trip at the cost of NZ\$1 (as of February 2007). Carrying of bicycles onboard trains is dependent on space and at the discretion of onboard staff. Avoid travelling with bicycles at peak times, as space will be limited.

Alternatively, you can ride your bicycle from Auckland to Thames via Te Seabird Coast (see TrekByBike Seabird Coast Tour for details). Take the Southern Line (MAXX) train from Auckland to Papakura, then follow the road from Papakura to Clevedon and then on to Seabird Coast, as described in the TrekByBike Seabird Coast Tour.

Finally, if you are driving by car, take the Southern Motorway SH 1 (freeway) to SH 2 exchange. Take SH 2 east to SH 25 and continue on SH 25 east to Thames. If you are heading for the east coast of Coromandel Peninsula, then continue on SH 2 until you reach Waihi. Turn off onto SH 25 in Waihi and head north to Whangamata.

### Accommodations

There is plenty of accommodation on Coromandel Peninsula, ranging from campsites, youth hostels and simple motels, B&Bs and lodges. Although the accommodation choices are generally plentiful, reservations are recommended during the high season from December to end of January and on any of the summer and autumn holiday weekends.

### The Roads

The roads around Coromandel Peninsula are mostly of paved sealed chip surface and can be narrow and steep in places, with minimal or no guardrails. Most of the roads (with few exceptions) do not have a shoulder to shield cyclists from the traffic and hence should be cycled with utmost care. The secondary roads on the east side of the peninsula, especially around Whitianga are quite enjoyable for almost traffic-free cycling.

### What You Need To Know

Coromandel Peninsula is the closest getaway for most Aucklanders on long holiday weekends and during the summer holidays. As a result the traffic on the peninsula is horrendous; and for cyclists, it is best to avoid Coromandel during this time.

Hot Water Beach and the Cathedral Cove are some of the main natural attractions worth visiting and enjoying. Both are in relative proximity and can be visited on bicycle in a single day.

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#### Road Rides (1-1 of 1)

##### Road Rides

[Whitianga Loop](#)

24.5 mi/39 km (*Loop*)

