

**CENTRAL HAWKE'S BAY**

**SEPTEMBER TO OCTOBER 2026**



**Spring  
FLING**

Standout events capturing the  
essence of Central Hawke's Bay

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# IT'S SPRING FLING TIME!



Sign up to our mailing list and book your Spring Fling at [thespringfling.nz](https://thespringfling.nz) or scan the QR code



As the September sun warms the paddocks and the first lambs begin to play, Central Hawke's Bay transforms into a vibrant canvas of gold and green. The 2026 Spring Fling Festival invites you to shake off the winter chill and immerse yourself in the season of renewal.

Running throughout September and October, this year's festival is a curated showcase of our district's finest heritage, hospitality, and heart.

Your Spring, Your Way

Whether you're seeking a long, indulgent lunch in a historic garden or a heart-pumping coastal trek, there is a Spring Fling experience crafted specifically for you. Central Hawke's Bay is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered, come and experience the warmth of our hospitality and the magic of our landscapes.

SUPPORTED BY



Photo credit: Central Hawke's Bay Museum

## SPRING FLING EVENTS

To purchase tickets or for more event information, visit [thespringfling.nz](https://thespringfling.nz)

### Daffodil Days

5-20 Sept • 9am-4.30pm daily  
(fundraiser)

Wander through Taniwha Daffodils and discover hundreds of unique daffodil varieties. Whether you're meandering through the blooms or picking a vibrant bouquet to take home, it's a perfect day out for the whole family. Pack a picnic to enjoy under the shade of the trees while the kids embrace nature at its finest.

Take home 30 stems for \$10. If you're visiting just for the scenery, please donate \$10 per car. All proceeds support the Central Hawke's Bay Pregnancy & Parenting Hub.

A coffee truck with food offerings will be available during weekends.

### Tracks through Waipukurau

Friday, Saturday, Sunday throughout Sept  
10am-4pm • Free entry

150 Years of Journeys, Stories & Connection. Celebrate the rich railway heritage that shaped Waipukurau. This special exhibition showcases a fascinating collection of artifacts, photographs, and memorabilia spanning 150 years. From the roaring steam era to modern travel, explore the lives of the people who built and journeyed along the line.

Featuring personal recollections and interactive displays, this exhibition invites all ages to discover the railway's enduring role in linking communities and generations. Experience a century and a half of progress and connection.



## Central Hawke's Bay Spring Market

**Sat 5 Sept • 11am-3pm • Free entry**

Celebrate spring with a free, family-friendly farmers market day out. Browse stalls with local produce, artisan crafts, and handmade treasures. Savour delicious bites from local food carts and settle in for a relaxing picnic while live music fills the air. It's the perfect opportunity to reconnect with friends, embrace the community spirit, and experience the very best of our district.

Bring the kids and join us, everyone is welcome. For an extra adventure, jump on a scenic train trip to a neighbouring town (check the details on the adjacent column for more info). Most importantly, help us honour a major milestone: the 150th anniversary of our historic train station venue.

## Spring Fling Express

**Sat 5 Sept • 7am-8:45pm • Prices vary**

Celebrate the season in style aboard the Spring Fling Express. This heritage rail journey whisks passengers from Kapiti through the lower North Island's most breathtaking landscapes, arriving in Central Hawke's Bay's Waipukurau.

In town, explore the bustling Spring Market, catch a shuttle to the spectacular Taniwha Daffodils, or opt for short "shuttle" train trips to discover charming neighbouring townships. Combining nostalgic rail travel with the very best of country hospitality, this is the ultimate springtime escape.

## Heritage Train Shuttles

**Sat 5 Sept • 11:45am or 1:10pm • \$25**

Departing from Waipukurau

Hop aboard the Spring Fling Flyer for a delightful short-haul heritage rail experience during the festival's launch weekend. Operating as charming shuttle excursions from Waipukurau, these trips offer a nostalgic journey to both Ōtāne and Takapau, connecting communities and celebrations along the line.

While at the station, don't miss 'Tracks through Waipukurau', a platform exhibition celebrating 150 years of journeys, stories, and connection. It is a fun, flexible, and scenic way to immerse yourself in the Spring Fling festivities while experiencing the golden age of rail.



## Gwavas Homestead, Garden & Bush Tour

**13, 19 Sept & 3, 11, 18 Oct**

**10am-3:30pm • \$95**

Immerse yourself in the history of the Gwavas Garden Homestead, its heritage garden and the ancient Puahanui Bush with fifth generation owners Phyllida and Stuart Gibson. Begin with morning tea on the side lawn verandah before exploring the protected 132 hectare virgin bush, home to majestic totara, kahikatea and matai of over 600 years. After your bush walk, enjoy a leisurely lunch followed by a guided tour of the homestead. Then it is time to hit the stunning 9-hectare woodland garden with a guided tour highlighting the colours and scents of spring. Provenance and passion - not to be missed.

## Long lunch in the Redwoods

**Sat 19 Sept • 2pm-6pm • \$180 • 18+**

A long lunch of fine food, local legends, and redwood magic.

Gather beneath majestic redwoods for an unforgettable long lunch celebrating the very best of Hawke's Bay produce and fine wine. Dynamic chef duo Conor Mertens (Elephant Hill) and Kate de Latour, whose creative partnership was forged at the historic Wallingford Homestead, have crafted a menu deeply connected to the land.

Between exquisite courses, Sean Burns from Smith and Sheth will guide you through an intimate, curated wine tasting. It's an afternoon where nature, community, local legends, and world-class cuisine converge in a truly magical setting.

## High Tea in historic Ongaonga

**26 Sept • 10:30am or 2pm • \$35**

Step back in time for a charming afternoon of history and hospitality in the iconic Ongaonga Village. Indulge in a traditional high tea served in exquisite china at the historic Ongaonga Hall, a 1900 masterpiece built by the Coles Bros. Your ticket includes entry to the Ongaonga Museum and Coles Factory (valid on the day or any future Sunday). Between sittings, stroll through the historic village, or enjoy a family picnic in the beautiful gardens. With two sessions available, gather a group and secure your preferred time for a rare heritage experience in the heart of Ongaonga.

## Spring Flowers with Foraged and Found

**26 & 27 Sept • 10am-2pm • \$150**

Join celebrated florist Katie McHardy of Foraged and Found for a floral workshop and flower farm tour at Aramoana Homestead. You'll begin with an inspiring garden tour exploring the sustainable growing practices behind the flowers.

After a delightful morning tea join Katie's demonstration before crafting your own hand-tied spiral bouquet to take home. Conclude the experience by connecting with fellow flower lovers over a mouthwatering paella lunch prepared by The PanMan. It's the perfect blend of botanical artistry, creativity, and fine food in a breathtaking setting.



## Son et Lumière “Sound & Light”

27 Sept • 2pm-3:15pm • \$15-\$20

Experience a unique slice of Central Hawke’s Bay in the serene setting of St Mary’s Church. The afternoon begins with an insightful talk about the history and symbolism behind the church’s exquisite stained-glass windows. Following this journey through light and story, immerse yourself in a delightful concert with In è gal Baroque Ensemble. Performed on period instruments, this performance offers a rare, historically informed window into the past, blending the timeless music of Handel, Purcell, Vivaldi and more with the architectural beauty of St Mary’s.

## An Evening Springtime Escape

3 Oct • 6:30pm-10pm • \$100 • 18+

Set within the historic Waipukurau Railway Station, hosts Matt and Jay (pictured) return for an elevated evening of flavour and fun. Following last year’s sold-out success, this cocktail soirée celebrates premium local produce through an Asian fusion menu. Guests will be greeted with a bespoke spring cocktail, artfully crafted to capture the season.

Indulge in curated bites and premium beverages as this heritage landmark transforms into a refined social space. With limited tickets, this event promises an intimate experience where history meets modern culinary artistry. Join us for a night of heritage charm and contemporary flair.



## Woburn Homestead High Tea

3, 10 & 17 Oct • 2:30pm-4pm • \$50

Step back in time at the historic Woburn Homestead for a traditional high tea set amongst hundreds of blooming roses. Soak in the charm of yesteryear while indulging in a curated selection of sweet and savoury delights.

For those seeking extra sparkle, the outdoor garden bar offers premium bubbles and beer for purchase. Guests are invited to wander the picturesque grounds and catch a glimpse of life as it was in 1893. Experience heritage, elegance, and the timeless beauty of the homestead in full bloom.

## Central Hawke’s Bay Homestead Trail

Sun 4 Oct • 9am-5pm • \$160

Experience the grandeur and elegance of Central Hawke’s Bay’s most storied residences. This exclusive day tour invites you to stroll through the impressive gardens and soak in the rich heritage of Gwavas, Ashcott, and Woburn homesteads.

Along the way, you will meet the wonderful hosts who keep this history alive and finish the afternoon with tasty canapes and a glass of bubbles or juice. It is an unforgettable weekend experience that showcases a truly unique piece of Central Hawke’s Bay history. Don’t miss this rare opportunity to step back in time.



## Waipawa Spring Festival - Duck Day

Sat 10 Oct • 9am-2pm • Free event

(fundraiser)

Affectionately known as “Duck Day,” the Waipawa Spring Festival has been a cherished Central Hawke’s Bay tradition since 1995. Held at Nelly Jull Park, this vibrant event offers a full day of family-friendly fun, featuring eclectic market stalls, delicious food trucks, live music, and entertainment for all ages. The heart of the festival is the legendary duck race along the Waipawa River. Join the crowds to cheer on creatively decorated corporate ducks before the main spectacle: 1,900 bright yellow ducks racing for the finish line. This year also sees the return of the high-energy powered duck category.

## Shed Shenanigans: Bitches’ Box Live

Sat 10 Oct • 6pm-10pm • \$55 • 18+

(fundraiser)

Big laughs, live action, great food, and a buzzing crowd. Join in the fun, a high energy comedy night set in the iconic shearing shed at the Central Hawke’s Bay Showgrounds. Featuring renowned performers Emma Newborn and Amelia Dunbar of The Bitches’ Box, expect bold characters, quick wit, and plenty of laugh-out-loud moments as live entertainment unfolds throughout the night. With tasty food available, cash bar, and a buzzing atmosphere, it’s the ultimate spring night out with friends. This is a fundraiser for the CHB A&P Association.

## Tulips, Treasure & the Table at Wallingford

Sun 11 Oct • 12pm-4pm • \$140 • 18+

Celebrate a quintessential spring afternoon at Wallingford Homestead, starting with a glass of Vilaure Blanc de Blanc and a touch of garden mischief. Embark on a leisurely treasure hunt through the grounds to discover curated prizes, including a Wallingford Luxe Stay, Table 8 vouchers, and Chateau Garage favourites.

Post-hunt, gather at a long garden table for an abundant ten-plate Italian feast by award-winning chef Christopher Stockdale. Designed for lingering, this long lunch captures the essence of the season. Conclude the afternoon with a cuppa by the open fire—the perfect end to a civilized country escape.

## Spring Awakening at Woodland Hills

Sun 11 Oct • 11am-3pm • \$50

(fundraiser)

Breathe deeply and celebrate seasonal renewal at Woodland Hills, a stunning 18-hectare park of beautiful oaks, liquidambars, and other trees. This event invites you to practice Shinrin-yoku, the Japanese art of “forest bathing.” Unlike a typical hike, this is a slow, mindful immersion designed to lower stress and boost wellbeing.

Follow a self-guided Five Senses Trail featuring reflection stations and scenic pauses to help you truly see, hear, touch, and smell the forest. A packed lunch is included, with accessible options available near the house. All profits support the Knowledge Bank Hawke’s Bay.





## Omakere Coastal Hill Country Walk and Trail Run

**Sat 17 Oct • 9am-3pm • \$25-\$60**  
(fundraiser)

Celebrate the great outdoors at the Omakere Coastal Walk and Trail Run, perfect for competitive runners and leisurely walkers alike. Choose your challenge with the shorter scenic route or the longer coastal adventure option, both offering stunning panoramic views from rolling hills to sparkling ocean. After crossing the finish line, reward your efforts with a delicious lunch, then join the vibrant finish-line festivities featuring live music, local market stalls, and refreshing drinks. Relax with friends in this picturesque setting while supporting a great cause. Lace up your shoes, gather your friends, and experience a day of fitness, fun, and fabulous coastal vistas.

## Ōtāne Village Market Day

**Sun 18 Oct • 9am-1pm • Free event**

Experience the charm of Ōtāne, where heritage meets community spirit, proudly hosted by the Ōtāne Village Artisan Market. Start your day browsing beautifully handcrafted artisan pieces, grab something delicious to eat, and relax with live music as you soak up the atmosphere. With a range of added experiences, there's much more to explore—wander the township on foot along the Historic Pavement Walk, hop on the vintage fire truck or ride in style in a vintage car for a unique ride. Immerse yourself in a day that celebrates local culture, history, and the warmth of community connection.

## River-Run Backyard Ultra

**Sat 24 Oct • 9am • Free event**

Held over Labour Weekend, this "Last One Standing" ultramarathon is a test of endurance. Participants tackle a 6.7km loop through a mix of limestone and river trails, starting on the hour, every hour. The challenge continues until only one runner remains to be crowned the winner.

The flat, "runnable" course alongside the Tukituki River is accessible to all abilities; completing the loop within the hour is achievable at a fast walking pace for most. Whether you're chasing a personal milestone or the title, experience the grit and spirit of this unique trail event. Koha welcome.

## Feast in the Forest

**Sat 24 Oct • 12pm-2pm • \$95**

Celebrate the long weekend with an unforgettable feast in the forest. Rub shoulders with old friends and new and dine en familia style (shared plates) beneath majestic trees planted in the mid-1800s.

Savour the best of Central Hawke's Bay with a long lunch featuring seasonal, locally sourced, and home-grown ingredients. Enjoy a complimentary drink on arrival before diving into a spread of old-fashioned classics with modern twists. The garden bar will also be available for additional refreshments.

## Takapau & District Community Fun Day

**Sat 31 Oct • 10am-5pm • Free event**

Join in and celebrate a remarkable milestone: 150 years of Takapau. The festivities kick off with a street parade through town, leading everyone down to the Memorial Grounds for a free, fun-filled community afternoon.

Immerse yourself in the local history with vintage machinery and cart displays, then enjoy the modern energy of live music, diverse food trucks, and bustling market stalls. With games and activities for all ages, it's the perfect day to celebrate our heritage. Don't miss this historic gathering.

## Peonies at Twilight

**Sat 31 Oct • 3pm-8pm • \$50**

Experience the magic of rural Central Hawke's Bay at Peonies at Twilight, an enchanting evening celebrating the fleeting beauty of Tikokino Peonies. As these vibrant blooms peak for just one month a year.

Settle in for a relaxed Saturday featuring live acoustic music and fine local wines. Enjoy a picnic-style dinner and dessert (included), with food trucks on-site for extra treats. Simply bring a chair or blanket, sip something local, and soak up the social atmosphere as the sun sets over this breathtaking landscape.

## Ranui Farm Walk

**Sat 31 Oct • 10am-2pm • \$35**

Embark on a breathtaking 10-kilometre journey through 1,000 acres of stunning, rolling sheep and beef farmland. Take in panoramic vistas stretching across Central Hawke's Bay and beyond.

Pack a picnic, you're sure to find the perfect spot along the trail to pause and enjoy amidst the picturesque landscape. Once you've soaked in the views, choose your own finish: complete the circuit on foot or take advantage of a convenient ride back to the starting point. A perfect blend of adventure and relaxation! The onsite cafe will be up and running, barista coffee and snacks available to purchase.

## Ranui Sunday Funday

**Sun 1 Nov • 10am-2pm • \$35**

Gear up for an adrenaline-fuelled Sunday adventure! Soar across our 100-metre flying fox, zip down the 80-metre waterslide, or test your precision with archery, axe throwing, and golf. Thrill-seekers can hit the BMX jump park, while little ones enjoy the dedicated playground.

Looking for a slower pace? Explore the scenic Outback Walk or relax with a family picnic on the grounds. Best of all, every activity is included at no additional cost. It's the ultimate Sunday adventure for all ages. The onsite cafe will be up and running, barista coffee and snacks available to purchase.

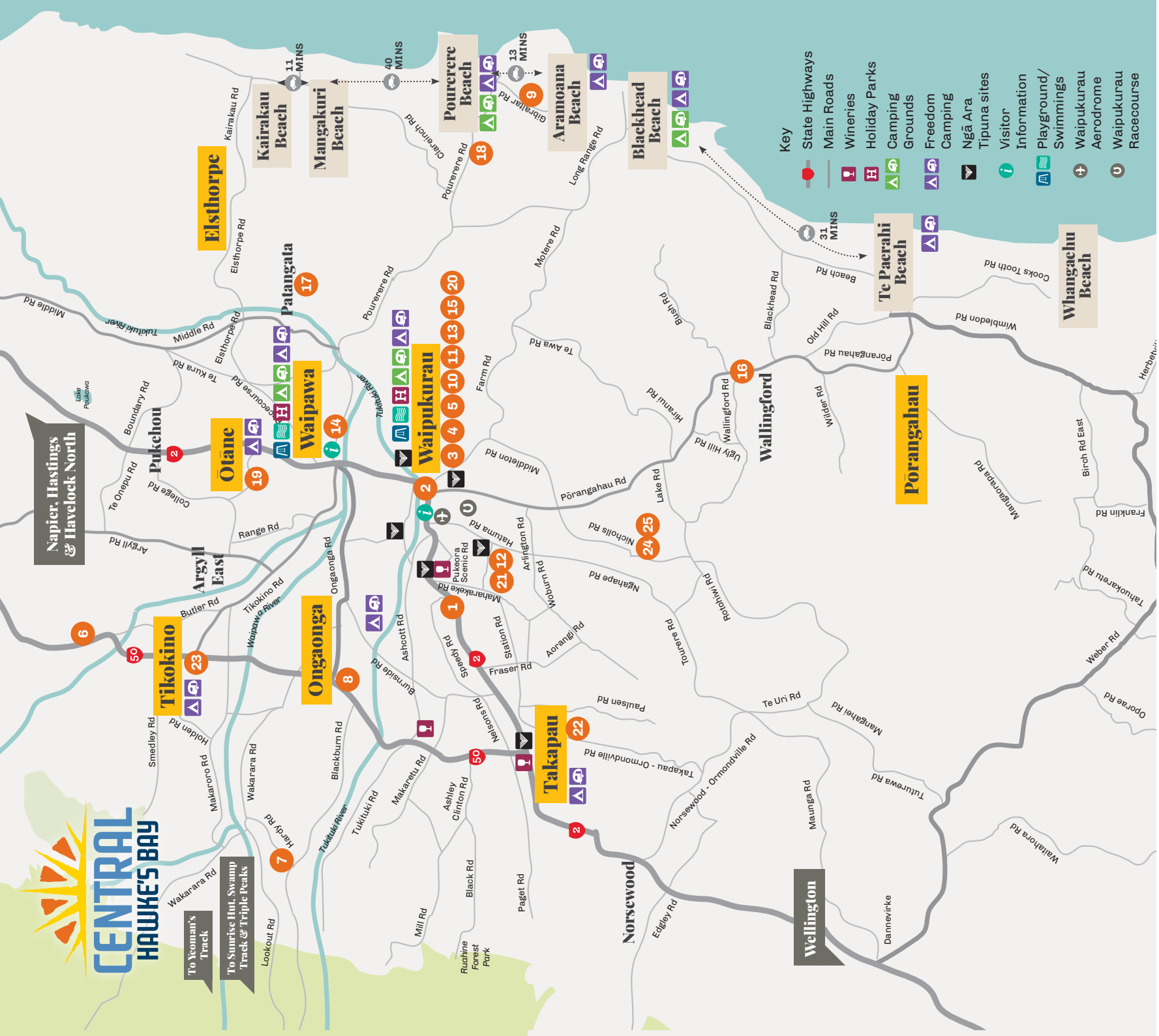


# CENTRAL HAWKE'S BAY

To Ycoman's Track

To Sunrise Hunt, Swamp Track & Triple Peaks

Napier, Hastings & Hawke's Bay North



## EVENTS

- 1 Daffodil Days
- 2 Tracks through Waipukurau
- 3 Central Hawke's Bay Spring Market
- 4 Spring Fling Express
- 5 Heritage Train Shuttles
- 6 Gwavas Homestead, Garden & Bush Tour
- 7 Long lunch in the Redwoods
- 8 High Tea in historic Ongaonga
- 9 Spring Flowers with Foraged and Found
- 10 Son et Lumière "Sound & Light"
- 11 An Evening Springtime Escape
- 12 Woburn Homestead High Tea
- 13 Central Hawke's Bay Homestead Trail
- 14 Waipawa Spring Festival - Duck Day
- 15 Shed Shenanigans: Bitches' Box Live
- 16 Tulips, Treasure & the Table at Wairangi
- 17 Spring Awakening at Woodland Hills
- 18 Omakere Coastal Hill Country Walk and Trail Run
- 19 Otāne Village Market Day
- 20 River-Run Backyard Ultra
- 21 Feast in the Forest
- 22 Takapau & District Community Fun Day
- 23 Peonies at Twilight
- 24 Ranui Farm Walk
- 25 Ranui Sunday Funday

# STANDOUT EVENTS CAPTURING THE ESSENCE OF CENTRAL HAWKE'S BAY

**5-20 Sept**  
**Daffodil Days**  
Taniwha Daffodils

**Fri, Sat & Sun through Sept**  
**Tracks through**  
**Waipukurau**  
Waipukurau Railway Station

**Sat 5 Sept**  
**Central Hawke's Bay**  
**Spring Market**  
Waipukurau

**Sat 5 Sept**  
**Spring Fling Express**  
Departs from Kapiti

**Sat 5 Sept**  
**Heritage Train Shuttles**  
Depart from Waipukurau  
Railway Station

**13, 19 Sept & 3, 11, 18 Oct**  
**Gwavas Homestead,**  
**Garden & Bush Tour**  
Gwavas Homestead

**Sat 19 Sept**  
**Long lunch in the**  
**Redwoods**  
Blackburn Ridge

**26 Sept**  
**High Tea in historic**  
**Ongaonga**  
Ongaonga Hall

**26 & 27 Sept**  
**Spring Flowers with**  
**Foraged and Found**  
Aramoana Homestead

**Sun 27 Sept**  
**Son et Lumière**  
**"Sound & Light"**  
St Mary's Church

**Sat 3 Oct**  
**An Evening Springtime**  
**Escape**  
Waipukurau Railway Station

**3, 10 & 17 Oct**  
**Woburn Homestead**  
**High Tea**  
Woburn Homestead

**Sun 4 Oct**  
**Central Hawke's Bay**  
**Homestead Trail**  
Gwavas, Ashcott and  
Woburn homesteads.

**Sat 10 Oct**  
**Waipawa Spring**  
**Festival - Duck Day**  
Nelly Jull Park, Waipawa

**Sat 10 Oct**  
**Shed Shenanigans:**  
**Bitches' Box Live**  
CHB A&P Show Grounds

**Sun 11 Oct**  
**Tulips, Treasure & the**  
**Table at Wallingford**  
Wallingford Homestead

**Sun 11 Oct**  
**Spring Awakening at**  
**Woodland Hills**  
Woodland Hills

**Sat 17 Oct**  
**Omakere Coastal Hill**  
**Country Walk and**  
**Trail Run**  
Omakere

**Sun 18 Oct**  
**Ōtāne Village Market Day**  
Ōtāne

**Sat 24 Oct**  
**River-Run Backyard Ultra**  
Russell Park, Waipukurau

**Sat 24 Oct**  
**Feast in the Forest**  
Woburn Homestead

**Sat 31 Oct**  
**Takapau & District**  
**Community Fun Day**  
Takapau

**Sat 31 Oct**  
**Peonies at Twilight**  
Tikokino Peonies

**Sat 31 Oct**  
**Ranui Farm Walk**  
Ranui Farm Park

**Sun 1 Nov**  
**Ranui Sunday Funday**  
Ranui Farm Park

**TICKETS ON SALE** [thespringfling.nz](https://thespringfling.nz)

