

Where I Live - Matamata, New Zealand - by Pater Tappin

My name is Peter Tappin and my family and I live in the small town of Matamata which is situated on the eastern side of the province of Waikato in the North Island of New Zealand. Matamata (meaning "Headland") originated in 1830 as a Maori Pa (settlement) and now is home to 12,000 people of which 6,000 are rural. Matamata's slogan is "The town that's racing ahead" and because it is in a young country it is expanding quickly with new housing and businesses.

Matamata is in the heart of dairy farming and thoroughbred horse breeding and racing in New Zealand. About six hundred race horses go through their training exercises at the Matamata Racetrack every morning and the milk from the thousands of cows is processed into a variety of cheeses or milk powders manufactured in the two dairy factories situated five minutes out of town. The majority of this dairy food is sold and exported all around the world.

Matamata is very central to a number of our larger cities and activity areas. Forty five minutes east is Mount Maunganui which is well known for its golden sanded beaches also has great waves for surfing, or getting the boat out and going deep sea fishing. Forty five minutes south and you have Rotorua with its lakes full of Rainbow trout, mud geysers and Maori museums. Forty five minutes west is Waikato's main city of Hamilton home of the provinces rugby side "The Chiefs". Matamata is surrounded by trout filled rivers which are excellent for fly fishing, ten minutes away is Lake Karapiro which is where we go for water sports like skiing, canoeing, kayaking or just swimming. We have a grass airfield where you can learn to fly, take a ride in a glider, parachute or skydive, also two golf courses, three lawn bowls clubs and a motor cross track. There are two rugby clubs, the Matamata Swifts football side which is currently leading the Waikato Bay of Plenty Federation League (my daughter Staci and I go and watch their home games), a gun club, tennis club, squash club, swimming club etc etc. You name it and Matamata has it.

International visitors to Matamata come predominantly via Auckland International Airport which is under two hours north of here. Bus loads call to go on the Hobbiton scenic tour which shows them the site where the movie "The Lord of the Rings" was shot and the new Hobbit movies are about to be shot. Matamata has a number of pre-school and primary schools around the district and Matamata Intermediate which caters for years 7 & 8. Then there is Matamata College which caters for nine hundred year 9 – 13 students annually. There are the usual fast food outlets like McDonalds, KFC, Subway, fish and chip and pizza shops and then there are Indian, Thai and Chinese restaurants along with the numerous cafes and bars. Another thing to do is visit the historical museum, or the sculpture symposium, or walk to the top of the Wairere Falls or through the Kaimai ranges bush.

So if you thought you would like to move here to live the average house price is about three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. Two hundred thousand pounds would buy you a brand new four bedroom, two bathroom, two living areas, double garage, two hundred and fifty square meter brick and tile home on eight hundred square meters of land in a new subdivision. Well there you have it, if you want to play golf, fish for trout, swim in hot pools, jump from a plane, go on scenic walks, visit Bilbo Baggins home at Hobbiton or many of the other things to do in Matamata, come to New Zealand and visit us. You're all very welcome.

