

Match made in Marlborough

Take a winter break, breathe the crisp air and revel in the natural beauty, brilliant food, wine and places to stay

Marlborough is a foodie's delight. From the warm and traditional to the truly extraordinary, the Marlborough region offers abundant flavours and the best restaurants, cafes and cellar doors to experience them. Take your pick of fresh seafood, king salmon, wild game, olive oil, garlic, figs, honey, pine nuts, walnuts, hazelnuts – the list goes on! And, of course, famous for its wine, Marlborough has over 30 cellar doors, many of which have restaurants offering delicious seasonal menus.

GOING FOR GOLD

Just 15 minutes from Blenheim CBD, Marlborough's 'golden mile' covers a short distance of 6km. Winding through the villages of Rapaura and Renwick, it's a trail of accommodation, restaurants and cellar doors complemented by breathtaking scenery and amazing local hospitality.

For the indulgent and classic Marlborough experience, book a leisurely lunch at a vineyard restaurant among the vines. With its sweeping views over the Richmond Ranges, Wither Hills offers award-winning single vineyard wines and a restaurant newly refurbished for lunch with a stylish design by *The Block* judge Paul Izzard.

Famous for its amazing platters, Giesen Wines brings out the woodfired pizzas during the winter months. Many people choose to bike the golden mile, which is why in September and October Giesen Wines offers a cool winter deal for two or more people who book a full day Biking Wine Tour with Explore Marlborough – you'll receive a free platter lunch that includes a glass of wine each at the Giesen Winery (tell them you heard it here first to claim!).

Highfield Estate TerraVin restaurant and Brancott Estate Heritage Centre restaurants are both known for their views as far as the eye can

see – keep an eye out for the endangered New Zealand falcon swooping above the vines while dining at Brancott Estate.

The family-owned winery restaurants of the region include Allan Scott's Twelve Trees restaurant, Saint Clair Vineyard Kitchen, and Wairau River Winery restaurant. If you're a journeyman sommelier or simply a travelling gourmet, Allan Scott and Saint Clair have winter deals – such as the chance to win a meal with the winemaker – and all three wineries offer hosted tastings, gorgeous surroundings and menus that showcase the best of Marlborough produce. Think warming seafood chowders, seasonal vegetables, local cheeses and premium game, all matched with the perfect Marlborough wine – of course.

To get closer to the action, Arbour restaurant in Renwick offers full immersion: dine inside



FAR LEFT

If the famous southern skies are clear, grab the chance to dine outside under the vines.

TOP LEFT

Perfectly prepared and served Cloudy Bay Clams bring subtle richness, texture and all-round deliciousness to the table.

BELOW LEFT

Accompanied by freshly baked bread the palate-pleasing platter at Giesen Wines features mouthwatering flavours – Marlborough style.

the kitchen and watch the chefs at work. Or in Blenheim, let your appetite lead you to Made in Aotearoa, the dining experience that aims for harmony between land and sea.

GET SOME GAME

All across the country, diners are becoming more concerned with the provenance of their food. Premium Wild Game, based in Blenheim, boasts outstanding quality-certified wild game meats. Its registered hunters have access to some of the most natural and untouched areas of Marlborough and can plot exactly where each and every animal has been sourced.

Their meats can be enjoyed at restaurants all over Marlborough and New Zealand, but if you're stopping at the Marlborough Farmers' Market, you can select a fresh cut of wild hare or pork to create a mouthwatering recipe of your own.

KAI AND KAIMOANA

With a landscape that ranges from valleys of vines

to the sheltered waterways of the Sounds, the Marlborough terrain produces a deliciously diverse range of world-class comestibles – you really will be spoiled for choice.

Makana Confections is a boutique chocolate factory in the heart of the Marlborough wine trail. It's set up like a cellar door so you can watch how the chocolate is made – and taste a few, too. Their macadamia butter toffee crunch comes highly recommended.

The Omaka Marae in Blenheim is the source of unique handmade preserves and condiments. Their Manaaki condiments are made using traditional Maori ingredients, with a modern spin – pick up a few jars as a gift or treat to take home.

For foodies seeking culture, Vines Village is an artisan hub in the heart of the Marlborough wine region, specialising in the best local art, craft, food, fashion, wine and design. A cafe, cellar door and six artisan stores are nestled among expansive tranquil lakeside grounds just 15 minutes from Blenheim CBD.

Head to Burleigh Pies on the fringe of Blenheim for a gourmet twist on the classic Kiwi pie. Don't let the small, unassuming shop front put you off – within its walls are incredible, award-winning pies including pork belly, steak and blue cheese and jerk chicken flavours.

The popularity of nut and seed oils, spreads and kernels is growing. Uncle Joe's factory on the outskirts of Blenheim is an earthy haven of award-winning nut and seed oils – try the crunchy walnut and hazelnut spread.

For a sweet experience, the beehives of Taylor Pass Honey are nestled at the foot of the nearby hills. They claim that from your first taste of their honey, a part of you will find a home in the south, so be prepared!

Not far from Taylor Pass is the fragrant pine plantation of Pinoli. Richly delicious, the pine nuts grown there are exported all over the world but you can also buy them at local farmers' markets or at speciality food stores nationwide to bring the classic flavour of the Mediterranean home with you.

Nearer the coast at Lake Grassmere, Cloudy

Bay Clams offers sustainably harvested, wild New Zealand surf clams. Diamond shell, tua tua, storm clam and moon shell clams are baked, grilled, steamed (or raw) on the menus of many a Marlborough restaurant – and beyond.

Sitting between Blenheim and Picton is the Grovetown Hotel. From the outside it looks like an average rural pub but on the inside it's one of Marlborough's best-kept secrets: a vibrant and bustling bar and eatery with a welcoming vibe, serving up a wide range of craft brews, fine wines and delicious Kiwi-Japanese fusion food.

A SOUTHERN WELCOME

Tucked between the green folds of the surrounding hills, the town of Picton is the first port of call in the South Island for many visitors. The inter-island ferry terminal is here and much, much more.

Near the marina, the restaurant at the boutique hotel Escape to Picton has an impressive reputation forged on satisfying meals created using fresh, locally-sourced produce. Imagine fish of the day with seasonal local vegetables and a luscious

BELOW LEFT

Sweeping views across the vines at Brancott Heritage Estate.

TOP LEFT

Salmon royalty – fresh New Zealand King Salmon grown in the Marlborough Sounds is on the menu

TOP RIGHT

Hidden away in an inlet in the Marlborough Sounds, a stay at the Punga Cove Resort feels like a true escape.

BELOW RIGHT

A leisurely lunch paired with the perfect glass of wine at Wither Hills Restaurant.



Picton dining

citrus beurre blanc sauce. Or if you prefer to keep things simple, grab fish and chips in Picton and head down to the waterfront to take in the view of the Marlborough Sounds and watch the boats sail by – don't forget the tomato sauce!

The Marlborough Sounds are renowned for truly awesome scenery and there are so many ways to make the most of it. The Queen Charlotte Track reaches from historic Ship Cove to Anakiwa, and offers both casual walkers and stoic hikers a journey from past to present. The track is complete with ocean panoramas, lush native bush and encounters with weka, fantail, wood pigeon and even seals.

Keen bikers will be kept smiling with the choice of trails in the area or rent a kayak and take to the sparkling waters of Pelorus or Kenepuru Sounds.

WATER INTO WINE

On a Greenshell™ Mussel Cruise, you can taste world-famous wine and food seasoned with the stories of its source – all while cruising the sheltered Marlborough Sounds.

Cruises depart from Havelock, the Greenshell™ mussel capital of the world, and feature freshly steamed mussels paired with a glass of Marlborough sauvignon blanc for the ultimate 'match made in Marlborough'.

If you're combining a cruise with a few stops on the Blenheim area wine trail, you can book a Greenshell™ Mussel Cruise during June-September and get free return transport to Havelock Marina from Blenheim (tell them you heard it in *Taste* magazine).

Those who prefer to keep their feet on dry land may like to head to the Slip Inn Cafe nestled on the water's edge offering the famous Havelock green-lipped mussels fresh off the boat, paired with award-winning Marlborough wines and stunning views over the marina – it'll be hard to leave!

Or maybe mussels aren't your thing? Apples for Charlotte in Havelock is a little tea shop that's earned legions of fans for its darling atmosphere, bagels and baking. Book in for one of their high teas for an afternoon of old-world charm.

A REFRESHING REST

After the fine food, fine wine, fresh air and exercise, you'll probably be ready to stretch out in a comfortable bed. From The Marlborough Lodge, a luxury country estate in secluded parklands, to Scenic Hotel in the centre of Blenheim or the easy convenience of Lugano Motor Lodge, there are accommodation options to keep you busy, cosy, or steeped in luxury. For a lush, beachside escape among the native bush, discover the comforts of Punga Cove Resort hidden away in Endeavour Inlet in the Sounds.

Visit MarlboroughNZ.com to take advantage of the range of visitor-friendly deals on offer when planning and booking your holiday in Marlborough. While online, take a moment to discover how to win some of the prizes – and keep an eye out for local secrets and insights.

Winter is a beautiful time to book an escape, so head to MarlboroughNZ.com to find out more.

Here's the deal...

Escape on an indulgent break in Marlborough with these tempting offers.

The real delicious

Book dinner at Escape to Picton from July to August and receive a complimentary amuse-bouche and every 10th table will receive a free bottle of sauvignon blanc – just mention this deal to claim.

At the Chateau

Stay three nights at Chateau Marlborough during any weekend from June to September and receive a \$100 voucher at Quench Restaurant – mention this deal to claim.

Ride for free

Book a minimum of two nights at Lugano Motor Lodge between July and October and receive 10% off your stay and free bike hire. Let them know you heard about the deal in *Taste*!

Win a winemaker

Book a lunch online at Allan Scott's Twelve Trees restaurant during June, July or August for up to four people and go in the draw to win a three-course meal with winemaker Allan Scott.

Breakfast for two

Stay at Marlborough Vintners Hotel from June to October, and when you purchase a continental room service breakfast, you'll get the second one free!

Tuck into it kids

Receive a free child's meal (age 12 and under) with a paying adult at Saint Clair Vineyard Kitchen. Valid June to September, just mention this deal to claim.

To find out about these deals and more, visit www.MarlboroughNZ.com.



Image credit: Brent Parker Jones

