

Palmerston North freebies

10 great things to see and do in Palmerston North, for free.

1 TEM MANAWA: a museum, art gallery and interactive science centre all in one, so there's something fascinating here for everyone, including great collections of Maori Taonga (treasures), New Zealand contemporary art, social and natural history. You'll have to pay \$8 to get into the science centre but the art gallery and museum sections are free. It's at 326 Main Street and is open daily 10am-5pm.

2 VICTORIA ESPLANADE GARDENS: these lovely gardens were opened in 1897 to celebrate the 60th jubilee of Queen Victoria and feature a large duck pond, a cherry drive and an avenue of phoenix palms as well as a miniature railway through native bush, aviaries, a children's playground, paddling pool and free electric barbecues. You'll find the gardens at Manawaroa Street, Fitzherbert Avenue and Park Road.

3 CENTENNIAL LAGOON WALK: there's a lovely one-kilometre walk around the Hokowhitu Lagoon, so spend an hour or two making some feathered friends with the wealth of bird life that calls this lagoon home.

4 OUTDOOR ART: check out some of the city's fantastic outdoor sculptures. Look for the five-metre high wavy 'Returning Column' made of Corten steel at the intersection of Main Street West and The Square; the loopy 'numbers' in Coleman Mall and the Cityscape sculpture outside the library on the steps from George Street.

5 HITATANGI BEACH: unpack a picnic at Himatangi Beach, where you'll find the largest sand dune formations in New Zealand. It's the best place to watch one of the area's famous sunsets.

6 MANAWATU GORGE WALK: step out on the Manawatu Gorge Walk, which stretches the full length of the spectacular Manawatu Gorge, one of the few places in the world where a river passes through a mountain range, not beside it. It will take anywhere between three and five hours to tramp it one way, but if you're pressed for time, try the short Totara Loop Track at the Woodville end of the Manawatu Gorge Track, around 15km east of Palmy.

7 DUGALD MCKENZIE ROSE GARDEN: voted one of the top five rose gardens in the world, this extensive rose garden is home to more than 5000 roses and includes the Rose Breeding and Trialling Centre. It's part of the Victoria Esplanade Gardens and the best time to visit is during the summer months of December to March when all the roses are in bloom.

8 TE APITI WINDFARM LOOKOUT: feel the power of the wind as you stand under the turbine's huge 35-metre-long blades as they whoosh by at the Te Apiti Windfarm Lookout. There's also great views of the surrounding region.

9 THE FRAGRANT GARDEN: immerse yourself in the heavenly scents of this two-hectare country herb garden that is full of fragrant (and useful) plants. A self guided tour is free, but you may blow the budget in the garden shop. You'll find it at 60 Port St East (off Pharzyn St) in Feilding and it's open daily, 9am-5pm.

10 TUI HQ: well, you'll have to pay for the beer you drink, but the Histui museum is free at Tui HQ at Tui Brewery. Tui Brewery was established at Mangatainoka in 1889, and as the slogan says, has been distracting the boys from the task at hand ever since. If you get the taste for more, brewery tours are available, but they cost \$12.50. Visit www.tui.co.nz to book.



**Travelodge
Hotels**