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Website [www.elocal.co.nz](http://www.elocal.co.nz)

### Enquiries:

Ph: 09 239 1699

Fax: 09 974 4766

[sales@elocal.co.nz](mailto:sales@elocal.co.nz)

**Adbonanza NZ Limited**

**Ground Floor, Professional House**

**12-18 Seddon St, Pukekohe 2120**

**Post - P.O. Box 926 Pukekohe 2340**

**Managing Editor/Director:** Mykeljon Winkel  
[mj@elocal.co.nz](mailto:mj@elocal.co.nz) Mob: 027 597 7272

**Advertising Sales Enquiries:** 09 239 1699 ext 4  
Retail, Business Directory & Web Advertising  
[salesfranklin@elocal.co.nz](mailto:salesfranklin@elocal.co.nz)

**Sales Support/Administrator:** Sofia Andreén  
[salesfranklin@elocal.co.nz](mailto:salesfranklin@elocal.co.nz) 021 876 803

**Production:** Tatiana Skorik,  
[production@elocal.co.nz](mailto:production@elocal.co.nz) 021 876 808

**Writer, Proofing:** Raynor Capper,  
[editorial@elocal.co.nz](mailto:editorial@elocal.co.nz) 021 876 818

**Credit Control:** Marlene Mahan,  
[accounts@elocal.co.nz](mailto:accounts@elocal.co.nz)

**Web development:** Tim Long,  
[webmaster@elocal.co.nz](mailto:webmaster@elocal.co.nz)

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## Number One Holiday Destination

How lucky we are to be living in Franklin with its combination of relaxed country living and up-market city style. Rolling green paddocks and neatly furrowed rows of lush vegetables greet the eye. This is beautiful land for a country drive.

Vineyards, olive groves, golf, creative people selling lovely art and crafts, a zoo, wildlife park, glow worm cave, beautiful parks and of course – endless options for water recreation – make Franklin a place to enjoy. These summer holidays, get out and about in Franklin, peep over the district borders and enjoy a holiday with a difference, fun and recreation, exploring where we live within reach of home. It's all here, and within everyone's budget.

## An area steeped in history

Franklin has been at the forefront of the colonisation of New Zealand. Waiuku used to be a bustling port where supplies were landed and stock and produce loaded to be shipped across to Onehunga and beyond. The Manukau Harbour acted as a watery 'motorway' in days when travel by sea and river was far easier than by painstaking inland trails. Visitors to Waiuku can step back in time along the Heritage Trail of 19th century buildings, including the historic Kentish hotel, built in 1851.

The Glenbrook Vintage Railway offers another chance to experience another era with trips on lovingly restored steam engines. Watch out for special theme days – a wonderful way to entertain kids and adults alike during the summer holidays. Franklin was pivotal in the Waikato Land Wars, with British troops stationed at Alexandra Redoubt, Tuakau and Queen's Redoubt, Pokeno. Alexandra Redoubt is the best preserved of all the military posts built in 1863-64 and was built by a detachment of the 65th Regiment. Queen's Redoubt was the centre of the British push into the Waikato and is being restored by a dedicated group of volunteers. Both redoubts are easily accessed. Get in touch with colonial life in Franklin by visiting the museums in Waiuku, Tuakau and Pukekohe, plus the Pioneer Cottage in Pukekohe.

## The great outdoors

Launch a Great Escape and head up the Awhitu Peninsula to enjoy an area that feels like a magical kingdom of its own. On your way to view the lighthouse at Manukau Heads and its sweeping views you will pass numerous small, home-based businesses specializing in arts, crafts and organic produce. Places to picnic and swim abound along the coasts, while the Awhitu Regional Park and adjacent Matakawau Scenic Reserve are well worth a visit. For something entirely different, visit the Waiuku Forest, a popular place for mountain biking, sightseeing, hiking and horse riding.

Kariaotahi Beach at Awhitu and Sunset Beach at Port Waikato offer the natural beauty of black sand, tall sandhills and surf. Both beaches are patrolled by surf lifesavers and swimming between the flags is advised. Port Waikato is a relaxed village that retains the charm of the traditional Kiwi summer and offers good surfing, fishing and beach walks to the mouth of the Waikato River. The riverside is a popular place for fishing, whitebaiting and bird watching.

Waiau Pa and Clarks Beach nestle beside the picturesque waters of the Manukau Harbour. Think sheltered swimming, boats, kayaking, fishing or just lying and watching the sun sparkle on the water on a pristine day. Drive there past vineyards, olive groves and roadside stalls of country produce. Inland, you can visit the village of Patumahoe and the Water Gardens featuring exquisite water lilies and lotus blossoms.