

New in town Auckland

Preface

A neighbourhood that used to have an unsavoury reputation has become a tasteful alternative to pricey inner-city locales.

Writer

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Photographer

Simon Wilson

New Lynn was once known as a hangout for “westies”: leather-clad drinkers fond of huge cars and high-octane motorcycles. Now the Auckland neighbourhood is home to a creative crowd and a growing number of young families, nudged out of pockets closer to the centre such as Ponsonby and Grey Lynn where property prices are skyrocketing. The arrival of this new demographic has brought with it new cafés, organic food markets and boutiques.

Emily Harris, a co-ordinator at the Keep Waitakere Beautiful Trust and founder of edible garden collective Urban Pantry, moved to the suburb about a year ago with her partner Hayden Raw, who co-owns digital-services start-up The Common Room. “There’s so much change happening,” says Raw. “There’s a cool buzz.”

Contributing to this sense of transformation is the development of a new transport hub in New Lynn. Though trains have long run through the area, the network is becoming electric: a fast and efficient way to access downtown Auckland. The city has never been strong on public transport and that has made it difficult to negotiate its sprawling mass without a car. However, this is gradually changing – and with it the attitudes of locals.

Photographer Tobias Kraus and gallery manager Anna Jackson credit their young daughter Francesca with helping them to discover this neighbourhood anew, having bought on the cusp of New Lynn and Titirangi just months before she was born. “Now we go to the cafés around here heaps more,” says Jackson. “We spend a lot of time in the parks and green spaces, which we didn’t use before.”

Ben Howe, who heads up New Zealand-based independent record labels Arch Hill Recordings and Flying Nun, is of a similar mind. “I think if you live in New Zealand you may as well enjoy what’s really good about the country: that there are a lot of public spaces



The residents
Anna Jackson & Tobias Kraus
“All the houses we looked at and tried to buy were within five or six blocks of here. We decided we’d rather live further out from the city centre and being close to leafy Titirangi is a bonus.”

Property guide

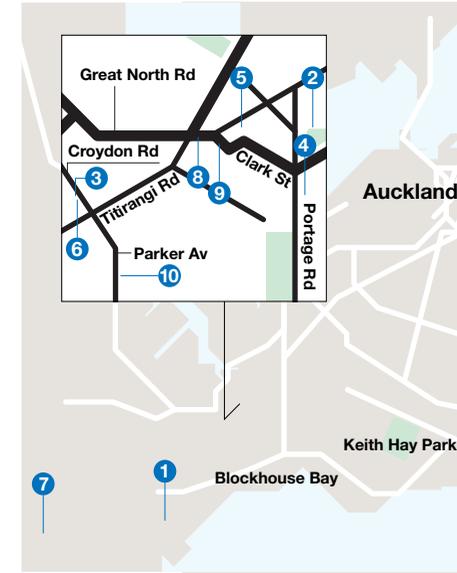
Buyers must get a copy of the New Zealand Residential Property Sale and Purchase Agreement Guide prior to buying. Overseas investors investing in property worth more than NZ\$100m (€60m), or buying protected land, must have consent from the Overseas Investment Office. Buyers who have been granted permanent residency face few restrictions on the property they can purchase. However, it is important to obtain a property’s Certificate of Title via a licensed salesperson so that your legal agent can confirm its type and status.

Prices (average)

1 bedroom: NZ\$230,000 (€140,000)
2 bedroom: NZ\$380,000 (€230,000)
3 bedroom: NZ\$530,000 (€320,000)

Estate agent

Julia Barnett
+64 21 987 906
barfoot.co.nz



Eat & drink

- The Tannery**
A collaboration between Mt Atkinson Coffee and Kohu Road Creamery.
kohuroad.co.nz
- Bunga Raya**
Found on an otherwise unremarkable street but serves some of the country’s best Malaysian food.
2/3062 Great North Road
+64 9 827 8666
- Humbug**
A popular daytime café with a play area for children.
32 Rua Road
+64 9 827 5124
- Refreshment Room**
A busy Italian restaurant where the chickpea and mozzarella fries are a must.
therefreshmentroom.co.nz

Stay

- Fringe of Heaven**
Boutique bed and breakfast accommodation surrounded by native plants.
fringeofheaven.com

Shop

- East West Organics**
Natural health and organic food shop and café that offers free advice from in-store naturopaths, a herbal dispensary and garden centre.
eastwestorganics.co.nz
- Deco2Retro**
Vintage furniture shop with a great selection of Crown Lynn crockery, a local brand.
3 Torno Street
+64 9 825 0582
- Mr Zhou’s Dumplings**
Try the cucumber tofu salad, and pork and fennel dumplings.
3130 Great North Road
+64 9 827 8800
- Night market**
Diverse assortment of quality street food. Held Thursdays from 17.30 to 21.00.
45 Totara Avenue
+64 9 301 0101, ext 42 8434
- West Lynn Garden and Butterfly House**
This park’s paths weave through native vegetation and a butterfly house.
westlynnngarden.org.nz



and greenery.” Howe has lived in the area for three years with his partner Sonya Waters, a film-soundtrack composer. “It’s a quality of life thing,” he says.

Jacob and Emily Parsons are responsible for opening the doors to New Lynn’s first premium coffee shop. In collaboration with local ice-cream brand Kohu Road (which houses its creamery in the other half of the space), the Tannery is a flagship for the couple’s coffee brand Mt Atkinson Coffee. Work is underway on a speciality coffee bar but in the meantime customers can see the roasters through a window inside the café as they wait for their flat whites.

Good coffee, cheaper housing and green spaces aren’t New Lynn’s only attractions: proximity to some of Auckland’s best vineyards and west-coast beaches such as Piha and Karakare also play a part. Combined they make this neighbourhood a major draw for those wanting to enjoy the simple things in life. — (M)