

Wellington Harbour Explorer Tour Highlights

Welcome to Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington Harbour)

Traditional guardians: local iwi Te Āti Awa, Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa.

Vessel: Ika Rere, the Southern Hemisphere's first fully electric passenger ferry – a quiet, zero-emissions journey.

Harbour and City

Wellington – world's southernmost capital, also famous as the windiest city.

Home to film, science, and creative industries (Sir Peter Jackson, Weta Workshop, Taika Waititi).

Māori name: Te Whanganui-a-Tara ("The great harbour of Tara").

European name: Wellington, after the Duke of Wellington. Became NZ's capital in 1865.

Key Landmarks

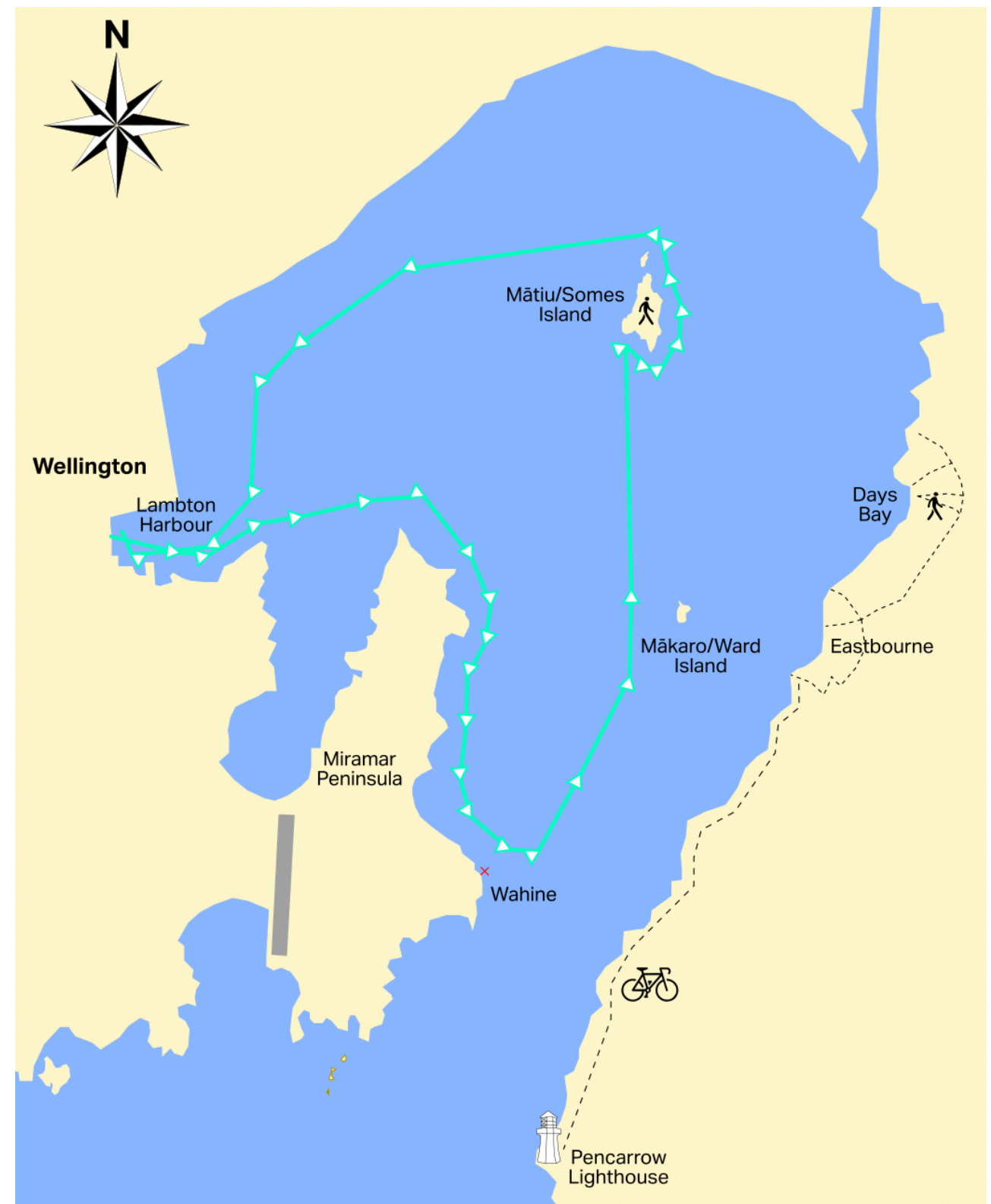
Oriental Bay – golden sandy beach (sand imported from South Island).

Carter Fountain – landmark water fountain (50+ years old).

St Gerard's Monastery – iconic hilltop building.

Te Papa Tongarewa – NZ's national museum (opened 1998).

Frank Kitts Park – home to one of the Wahine masts, memorial to 1968 disaster.



Stories of the Sea

Wahine Disaster (1968): Inter-island ferry sank in a cyclone; 53 lives lost.

Lighthouses: Pencarrow – first lighthouse in NZ (1859), kept by Mary Bennett, the only female keeper.

Harbour ferries: Passenger ferries have operated since 1893; East by West continues this tradition.

Nature & Wildlife

Zealandia and community projects like Predator Free Wellington and Capital Kiwi have restored native birdlife.

Bird sightings have increased by 8,000% in 20 years.

Keep watch for little blue penguins, dolphins, orca, and seabirds.



Harbour Islands

Mātiu/Somes Island – wildlife sanctuary, once used as a quarantine station and WWII internment camp. Now predator-free, home to kiwi, kākāriki, penguins, and wētā.

Mokopuna Island – once called "Leper Island," linked to the story of Kim Lee.

Ward/Mākaro Island – WWII submarine defenses; land bridge lies just below the water.

www.eastbywest.co.nz

+64 4 499 1282

