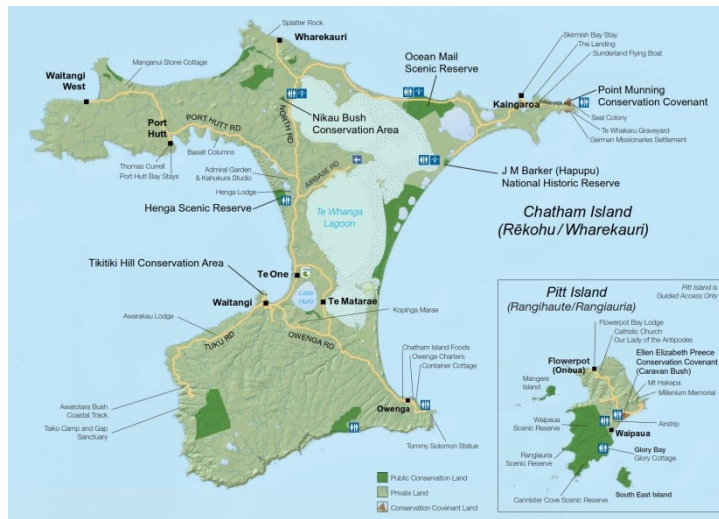


## 41 Club Trip to Chatham Islands 23<sup>rd</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025

Back from such a great trip to Chatham Island, wonderful hospitality, food, land and seascapes, so much history sad as it may be, the people are nearly all related somehow and let the past be past. Only 650 residents and everyone has 2 or 3 jobs!



Located at 44 degrees south, 176 degrees west, 860kms East of Christchurch.

Mori name for Chatham Island is Rekohu

Maori name is Wharekauri, translated as Misty Islands and from our experience it lived up to that plus **Windy** as well!!

Chatham covers 90,000 hectares with a 20,00 hectare lagoon. Pitt Island is 6,300 hectares

7 couples from as far South as Gore and Alexandra and North from Nelson gathered at Christchurch airport all with great trepidation, no passports, Immigration or customs to go through. Boarded the plane and flew just over 2 hours and landed with a few bumps on the newly extended runway and modern terminal at Karewa Airport to be greeted by our ever smiling, laid back Hotel Chatham owner Toni Croon. Baggage collection is straight off the trolley from the plane then onto bus and into Waitangi and the Hotel Chatham and greeted by Bonnie the lovely ball of energy manager and a couple of small dogs who showed us to our lovely on suite rooms overlooking the harbour, fishing fleet and bay.

Most of the Islands income comes from fisheries with the result that some farms are rather neglected, big areas of gorse, liquorice all-sorts cattle and daggy sheep but also some very well run bigger farms. Tourism is also quite a big industry for a population of only 680 residents who are so welcoming and nothing is a bother. There were only 13,000 people including locals last year came to the Chatham's.

We were lucky to have been there for the annual pig and pest hunt on Saturday where probably more than 1/3 of the population was there and what a great family day, reckon like maybe 20 - 30 years ago here, competitions for all ages, pigs possums, eels, swan eggs (black swans are a real pest there), pig carrying with possums for the wee ones through rather wet conditions and many a slip, possum skinning and tug o war in the mud. So much laughter and enjoyment for all, I'm sure that OSH would not approve at all.

Vehicles don't have WOF checks and probably no registration as they don't last very long in the salt laden air. Never seen so much rust, fence wire needs replacing in 7 years.

Although originally volcanic Chatham Island has so many variations from scrub covered peat lands, low bush (no native big trees) lots of horizontal old macrocarpa used for shelter and pine trees, through to rolling hills, volcanic cones, beautiful beaches etc.

The weather didn't treat us very well with cold strong winds and rain showers except of course the day we came home, the sun shone but didn't stop us traveling in the hotel bus driven by our delightful local guide Marcel all over the island! Because of the weather both going to Pitt Island and fishing trip couldn't happen so we went to one of the fish factories and all came home with 3 or more kg of frozen, Blue Cod at \$34 per kg, yummy!!

We were taken on the bus every day to explore just about every road and destination with talks from passionate people about their special interests, conservation efforts, farms and places, lots of walks both short and long and even went fossilised shark tooth hunting along a very exposed and windy beach, with some success!!

Tine really enjoyed her Birthday treats, the gang and staff sang Happy Birthday, not very tunefully and her Mud Cake Desert came with a Birthday candle after a great day including a visit one of the remaining Rakau Momori trees, unfortunately most of these have died of old age but the carvings have been recorded and many displayed at the Moriori Kopinga Marae, a great building in the shape of an albatross from outside where we had a welcome and talks by the Kaumatua Jason and Levi the manager of the extremely well run 4000hectare Moriori Trust Kaiangaroa Station, very interesting.

Yes we would thoroughly recommend a trip there and maybe I'll organise another sometime in better weather so we could visit Pitt and go fishing!!

YI41

Derek and Tine

