

FAMILY CAMPING WITH BOOTS AND BIKES



Ride the Alps 2 Ocean cycle trail while staying at Omarama Top 10 Holiday Park

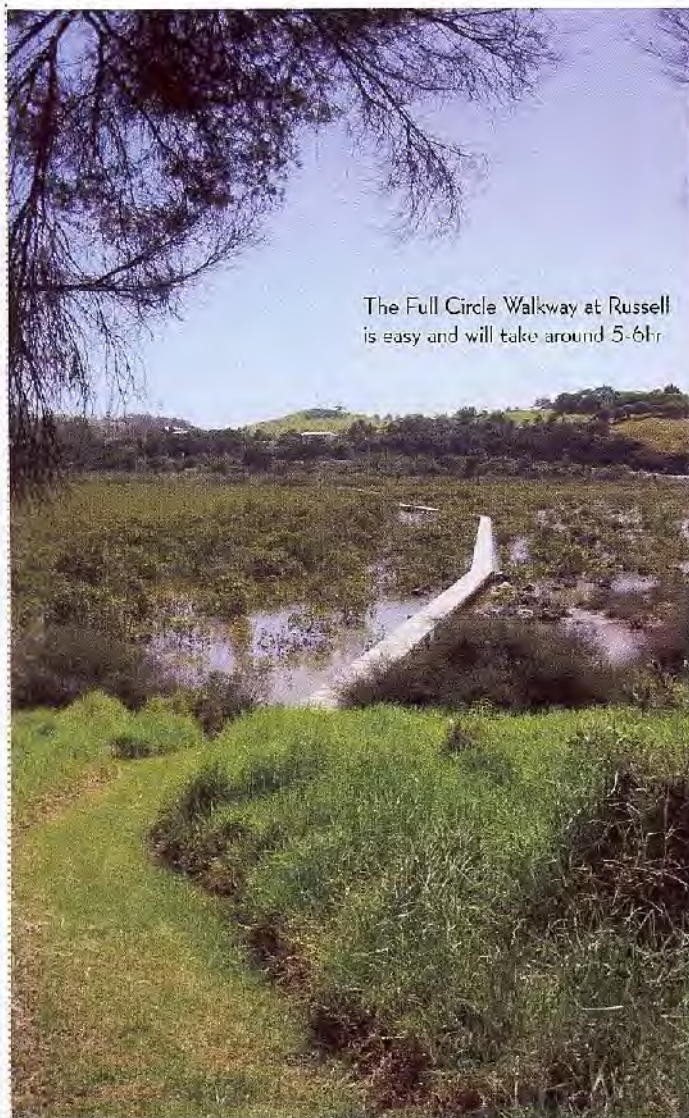
WE'VE EMERGED FROM ANOTHER WINTER TO BE REWARDED WITH LONGER DAYS AND THE PROMISE OF SUMMER HOLIDAYS SPENT WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS, AND IN A SPIRIT OF OPTIMISM WE'RE READY TO START PLANNING OUR CAMPING TRIPS.

This summer will be even better than ever, because as of November this year we have more than 20 new cycle trails, many of which take the 'mountain' out of mountain biking and make scenic, off-road riding accessible to nearly everyone. As off-road cycling gathers momentum across New Zealand, so the number and diversity of accessible wilderness adventures increases, too. Never has there been a better time to take a family holiday in the great outdoors. Here are some tips and inspiration to get you going.

- Sarah Bennett and Lee Slater

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GREAT FAMILY CAMPING SPOTS



The Full Circle Walkway at Russell is easy and will take around 5-6hr

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RUSSELL-ORONGO BAY HOLIDAY PARK, NORTHLAND

Why go? Not only incredibly picturesque in that nestled-in-a-cove kind of way, the tiny town of Russell is full of history, close to a range of outdoor adventures on sea and land, and odds-on it will be warm and sunny.

Walk The Full Circle Walkway (www.boiwalkways.co.nz) connects Russell, Paihia, Opua and Okiato – forming a loop of 5-6hr walking broken up with a couple of short ferry rides. Easily tackled in stages, the 3-4 hour Russell to Okiato section close to the holiday park has accessible, flat boardwalk stretches suitable for pushchair outings. Also nearby is spectacular Cape Brett, offering a 6-7hr one-way walk which keen teenagers may well enjoy.

Bike The holiday park itself is perfect for young riders, with plenty of room to ride well away from driveways. Parts of the dual-use Full Circle Walkway may also be cycled, and linked up with various back road detours. Ask the locals for options to suit your abilities. The holiday park is a Cycle Hub, has bikes on site, and can fix you up with local rental, too.

Explore Russell is a great place to rediscover New Zealand history and eat ice cream at the same time. Walk off any indulgences on the half-hour walk up Flagstaff Hill where Hone Heke chopped down the flagpole.

Camp details A 5.6ha-site with a spacious tent area and lots of native bush (and endangered kiwi, teal, fern birds and North Island weka), it's no wonder Russell-Orongo Holiday Park has been described as a 'great big adventure playground'. **Location:** 5960 Russell Road, Russell, russellaccommodation.co.nz.