



how to have a low-carbon
adventure

a practical handbook

by shanti mathias

^^Introduction^^

This is a zine about how to have a low carbon adventure. It is not a zine about why to have a low-carbon adventure, because the why is pretty obvious.

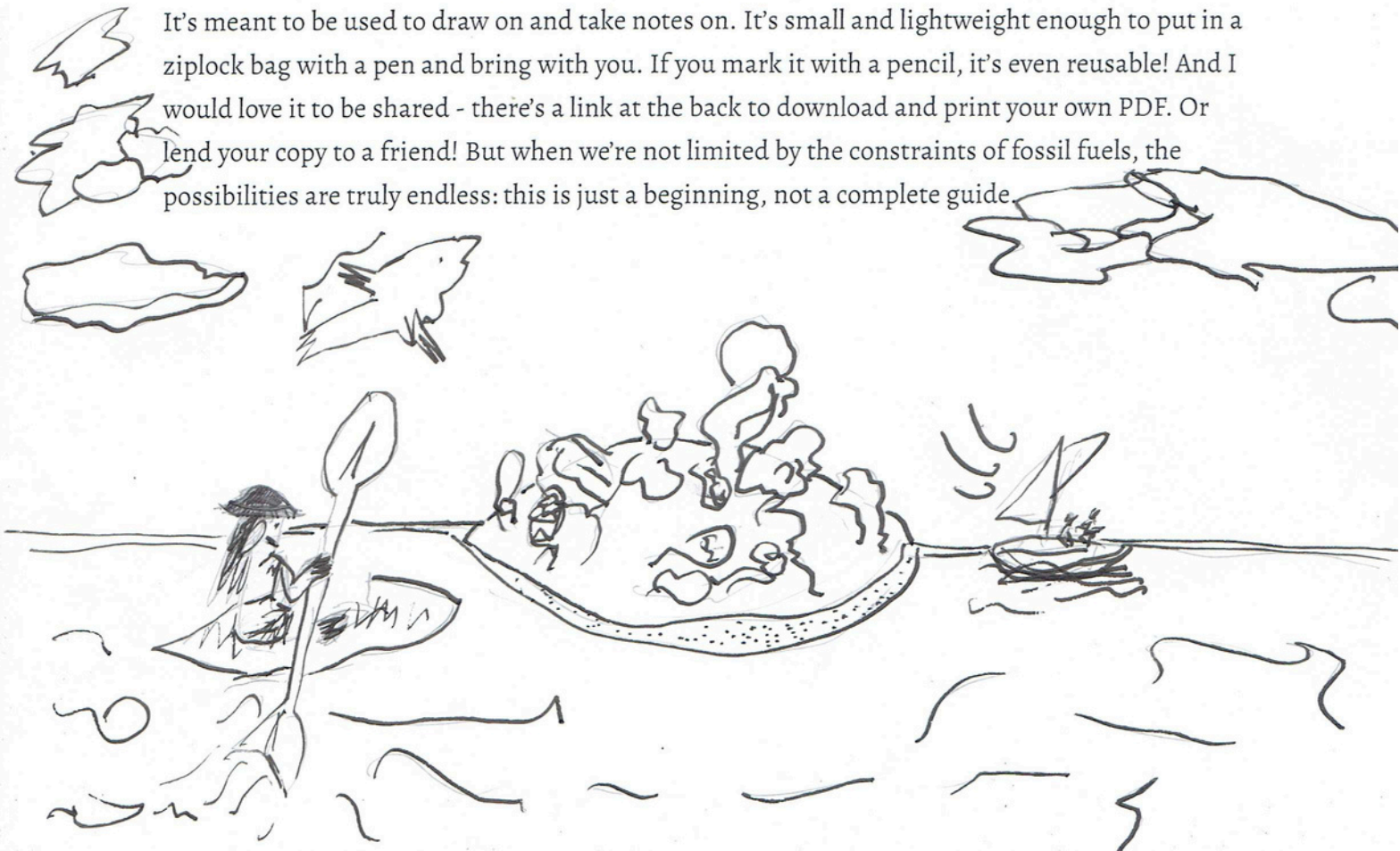
I've been asked for a concrete definition of low carbon adventures. Truthfully, they are what you make them, but the key thing is no fossil-fuel powered private vehicles that are moving solely for your individual enjoyment. That means: yes interregional buses, city buses, trains, ferries, horses, bikes, walking, running, roller blades, scooters, swimming, hitchhiking, ski touring, shamelessly hinting that you want rides from people who were going somewhere anyway, sailboats, kayaks, dog-sleds (and more!). Yes to interesting side routes, spotting cool stuff on the side of the path, getting wet in the rain, asking strangers for directions. No cars travelling just for the purpose of your adventure; no planes, no cruise ships and most especially **NO** helicopters.



Using less carbon doesn't have to be about giving up things: it can also be about the many, many things we stand to gain, as individuals and communities, from remembering that our lives depend on the earth beneath our feet, the atmosphere above us, the incredible free energy from the sun and the care we owe each other. There is connection and abundance in this way of life: most of all there is joy and adventure.

This is a resource for thinking about how and where you want to have low carbon adventures.

It's meant to be used to draw on and take notes on. It's small and lightweight enough to put in a ziplock bag with a pen and bring with you. If you mark it with a pencil, it's even reusable! And I would love it to be shared - there's a link at the back to download and print your own PDF. Or lend your copy to a friend! But when we're not limited by the constraints of fossil fuels, the possibilities are truly endless: this is just a beginning, not a complete guide.



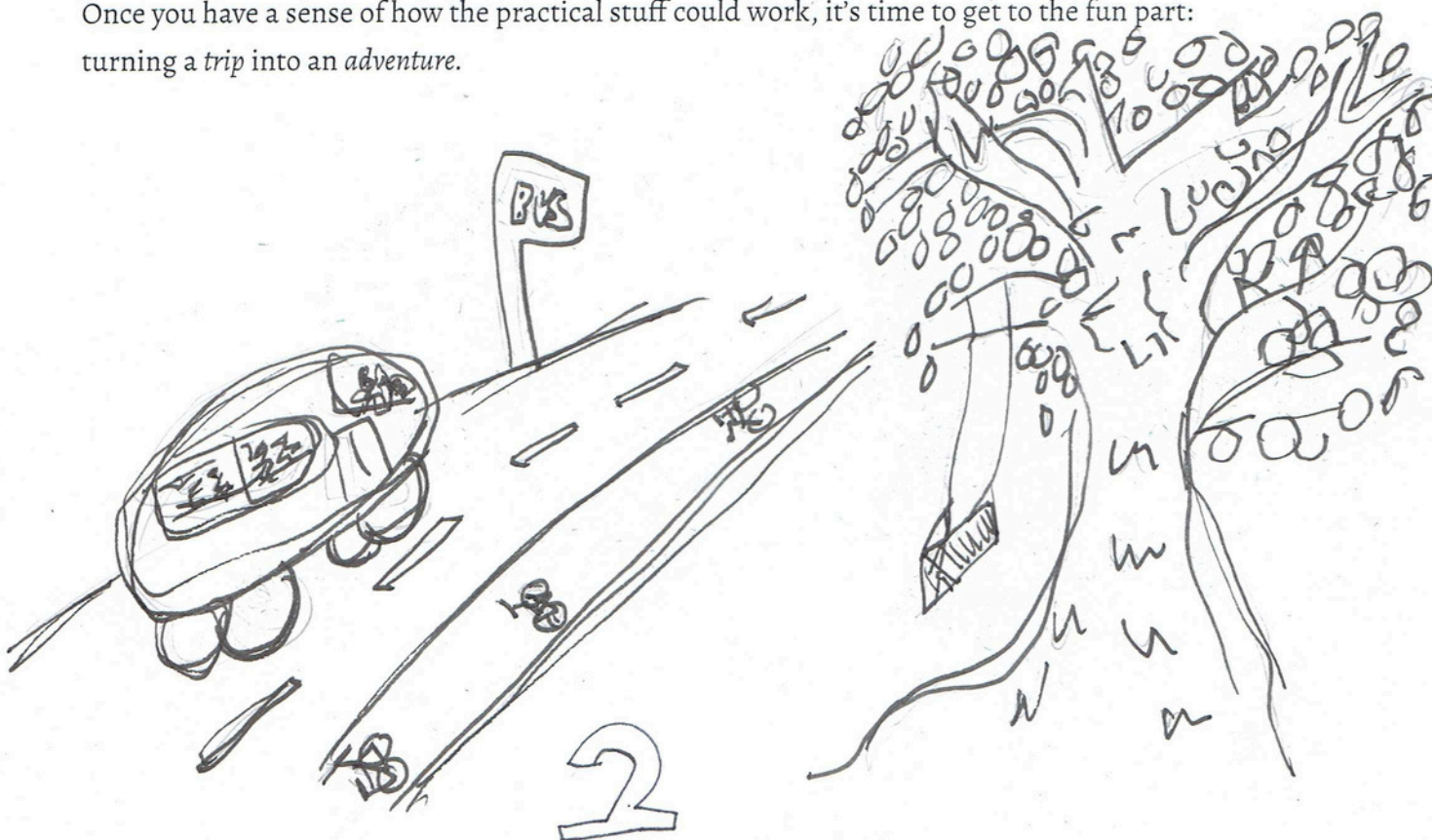
~~Beginning~~

One person's adventure is someone else's commute, so the beginning of an adventure is to think about what is adventurous for you. Give yourself some limitations. Novelty is a good way to start: is there a part of your town or city you've never been to before? Is there a form of movement or transport that you're interested to try? Starting with a particular destination, activity or companion(s) in mind can be particularly useful.

Practical details also matter. What forms of transport are available to you? Proximity to a bus stop might determine the shape of your adventure; a ferry not allowing bikes might mean you change your plans. Think as well about how one form of transport can be combined with other types of movement. Also crucial: How much time do you have? Does the weather matter for your adventures? If you're not starting with a destination in mind, perhaps browse some public transport timetables (mostly available online) or look at a map to spot something interesting (a park adjoining three different supermarkets!).

When starting to dream up an adventure, I often start with the practical details: bus timetables, level of fitness, consulting maps, talking to friends; there are probably great resources in your community already, which might include older people who were adventuring before the high-carbon way of transport was a widespread reality, or kids who are creative about where to go simply because they don't have drivers licenses or credit cards.

Once you have a sense of how the practical stuff could work, it's time to get to the fun part: turning a *trip* into an *adventure*.





What form of transport will my adventure use?

- Walking
- Biking
- Bus
- Train
- Hitchhiking
- Skating
- Sailing
- Scooter
- Kayak
- Skiing
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-
-
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Do I want company? Who could I go with?

Myself!		

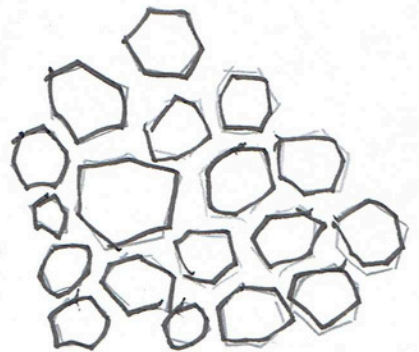
Where would I like to go? (*see appendix)

How much time do I have? When is best for my modes of transport?

(feel free to draw some inspiration in this box too, or make a quick map!)



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~~ Going ~~

Once you have a sense of where you're going, or what you're trying to do, it's time to nail down the actual details. If you're going with others, this might mean sitting down together, or sending messages back and forth, to make sure everyone's on board with the plan. You can also assign different people different legs of the trip to sort out, especially if you're using multiple modes of transport. Your own capacity for spontaneity is known only to you, so only plan as much as you feel you need — the more you adventure, the better you get at knowing what works and what doesn't.

Again, practical stuff matters. Where will you get water? Who is bringing snacks? What do you need to be prepared for the weather? If part of your adventure includes visiting someone, make sure they know that you're coming; if you're going to a place that has some time sensitivity, then account for that (it would be a shame to show up at the caves on the only day they're closed, or discover that the only train of the day is at the same time as the sunset over the lake). If you need to borrow equipment, like a cycle trailer that fits a kayak or a bus card for a city you don't live in or a really comfortable backpack, ask boldly — and treat the borrowed stuff carefully.

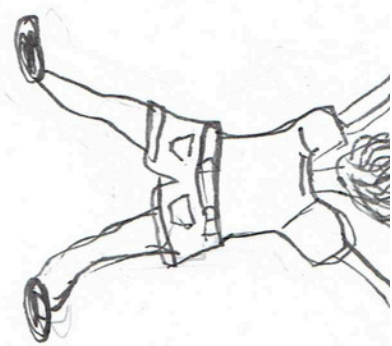
It's also useful to do some back-up planning. Check how frequent the ferry services are in case you miss one, bring your bicycle repair and first-aid kit, have a means of communication in case someone gets injured and you need help. Sometimes, low-carbon adventuring does mean you're working with limitations that people guzzling at the fossil fuel feeding frenzy don't have; on the plus side, it is much better for the spirit to be living as if the limitations of earth matter.



How long am I planning for my trip to take?

What do I need to bring?

- Snacks or meals
- Hat
- Raincoat
- Warm layer(s)
- Money
- Maps
- Phone
- Notebook
- Pen
- Book
-
-
-
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If you're using public transport, note down the number of the bus or train you're getting, and some landmarks that you might need to look out for if you're in unfamiliar territory. This is especially helpful if your phone runs out of battery, doesn't have data, or doesn't run maps.

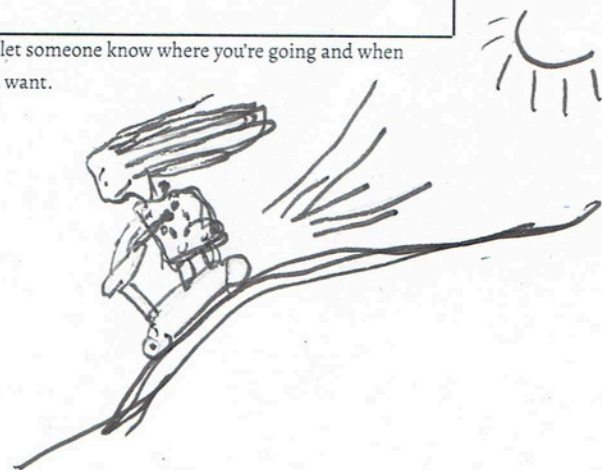
Public transport type	When it's leaving	Where it's leaving from	Route name or number

Intentions

If you're going to be out of phone contact, or away for more than a few days, make sure you let someone know where you're going and when you're getting back for safety - take note of who you told and what you told them here if you want.



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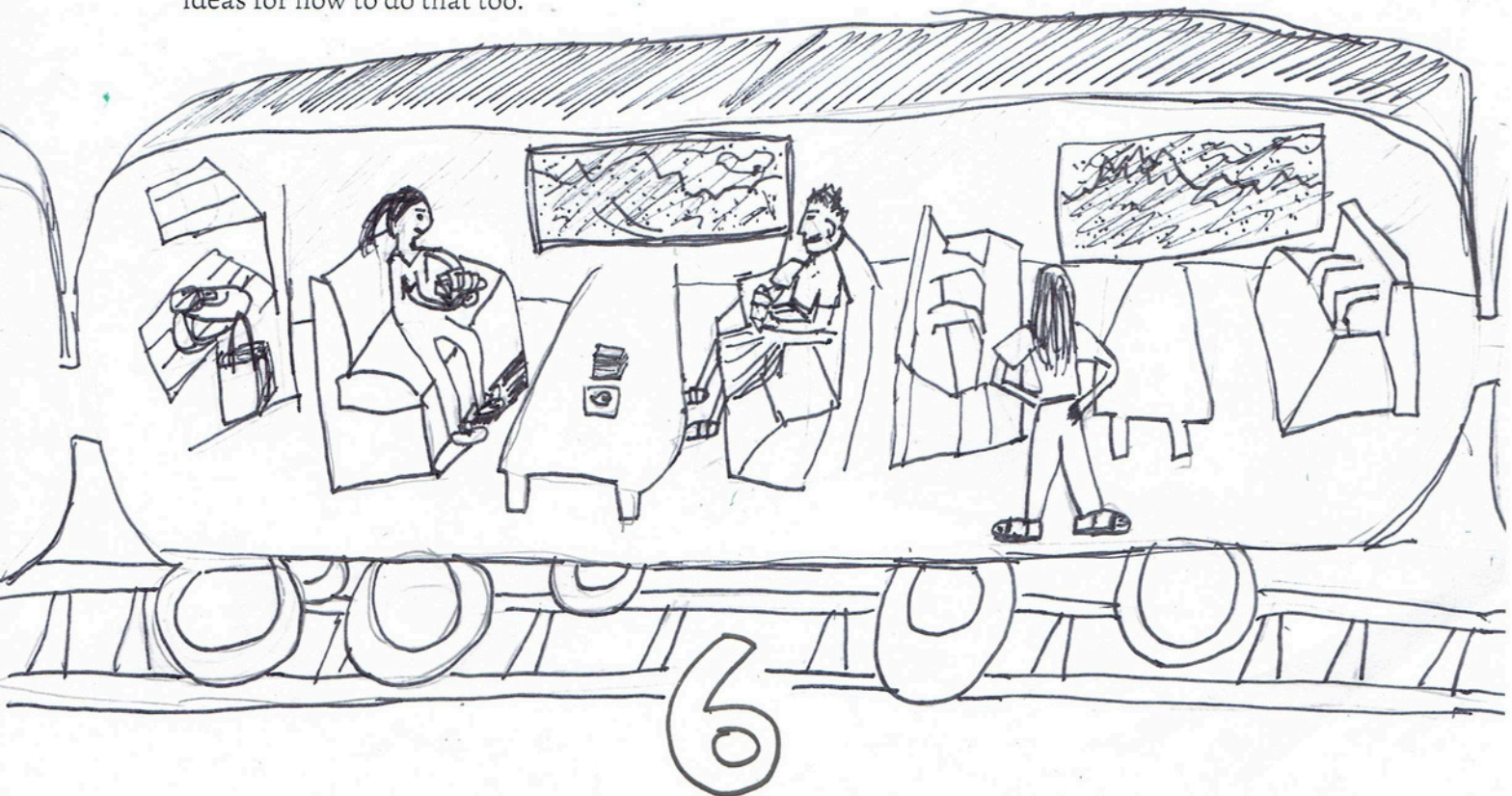
~~Adventuring~~

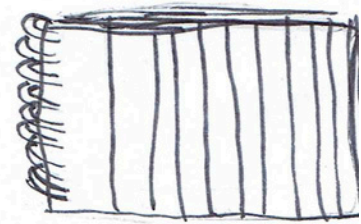
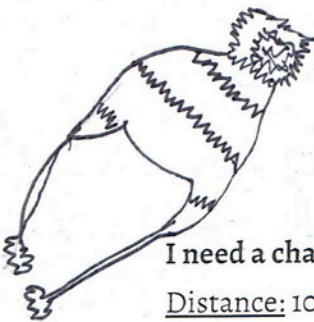
Okay. The practical details are sorted. You've thought about where you're going and how you're going to get there. Now, you want to turn your trip into an adventure.

Part of this is about attitude; a trip to the art gallery can be an adventure if you want it to be. To me, adventure is about giving yourself the gift of seeing things differently: that sense of shining possibility, that the world is bigger than you normally let yourself imagine.

Personally, I find arbitrary challenges a good catalyst to create an adventuring attitude. Some ideas for challenges follow. In general, adventuring requires a spaciousness of time; I'd rather have an adventure doing something more slowly than usual than trying to do something fast. But maybe that's because I think it's an adventure to not be busy; if you feel that your ordinary has a lot of things that require lots of time, then maybe challenging yourself to have an adventure with time limits will be helpful.

I encourage low-carbon adventure enthusiasts to cultivate a spirit of curiosity and attention in having as much fun as possible with what's available to you, and putting yourself in positions that allow you to feel deeply connected to the world around you and the people dwelling in it. This curiosity might also prompt you to think about what isn't possible: why aren't there affordable long distance trains? Why do only some parts of the city have bike lanes? Part of the adventure can be channelling joy and possibility into the political system, so there are some ideas for how to do that too.





I need a challenge to make my trip into an adventure! (circle, or write your own ideas on the lines below)

Distance: 10, 21, 42, 50, 100 km and beyond

Finding or identifying: Insects, birds, trees, leaves, graffiti, languages, free food

Transport method: Maximise the number of different bus routes, how much you can carry on your bike, how many people can scooter side by side on the foot path

Costume adventure: it's a classic for a reason!

Interacting with strangers: asking for directions, introducing yourself to other public transport travellers, asking to pet people's animals, waving

Art challenges: found poems, photo-essays, collaging, writing on the bus

~transport (and adventures) are political~

What do you notice or think about on your adventure that you'd like to change?

- Lack of public transport options
- Unsafe roads
- Missing amenities (toilets, water)
- Pollution, damage to nature
- Access issues
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Who can you talk to about this?

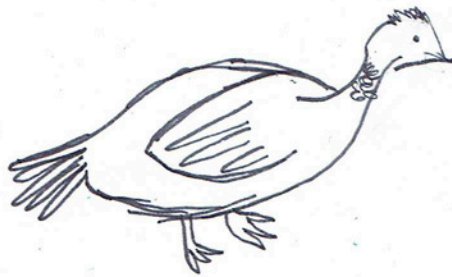
- Local government - council, local boards
- Your MP
- A select committee consulting on a relevant bill
- An activist group campaigning around this
- Local residents or community members

Do some research - are there local bills or bylaws? Petitions to sign? Opportunities to submit and join others?







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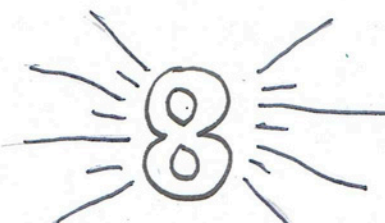





**Appendix: Where should I go?*

As a starting point, here are some low carbon adventures from around Aotearoa I've (mostly) had the pleasure of doing myself. There are options starting in most major cities except Tauranga, Hamilton and Palmerston North (sorry team!). If you want more details about any of these in particular, contact me at the details overleaf. The list doesn't include much outside of major cities, but if you're interested in this, the Intercity bus routes are a good place to start. These are all in Aotearoa, but feel free to add some from other countries - and tell me about it!

 <p>Dunedin - Silverpeaks trip Walking, biking, hitchhiking Overnight options</p>	<p>Dunedin - Otago Peninsula exploring Walking, biking, buses, hitchhiking, swimming</p>	<p>Dunedin- Kamau Taurua (Quarantine Island) Ferry, walking, swimming, kayaking, sailing Overnight options</p>
<p>Christchurch - Bridle Path to Cosair Bay Biking, bus, swimming, walking</p>	<p>Christchurch - Te Ara Pātaka Walking, hitchhiking, bus, ferry</p>	<p>Christchurch - Quail Island Kayak, swim (?), (expensive) ferry</p>
 <p>Wellington - Brooklyn Wind Turbine to Island Bay Walking (+ easy river crossing), bus</p>	<p>Wellington - Skyline Walkway Bus, walking</p>	<p>Wellington- Belmont, Dry Creek to Pito-one Walking/running, train Overnight options</p>
<p>Wellington - Kapakapanui track Train, bike, walking Overnight ideal</p>	<p>Wellington - Wairarapa to Lower Hutt Biking, bus, train, tramping Overnight options</p>	<p>Auckland - Waiheke Bike, walk, sail, ferry Overnight options</p>
 <p>Auckland- Rangitoto Ferry, walk/run, kayak Overnight options (book ahead!)</p>	<p>Auckland- Waitakeres via Oratia Walk, bike, train</p>	<p>Auckland - Miranda/Thames via Hunuas Train, bike, walk, ferry Overnight options (not just for birds)</p>
 <p>Auckland - Hobsonville (or North Shore beyond) Bike, ferry</p>		





A Mostly Good Ideas zine

For a PDF copy, go to

mostlygoodideas.nz/zine

Contact me for feedback, cool
pictures, route ideas or more:

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Happy adventuring!