



Welcome to Pukekura Pā

Muaupoko (Otago Peninsula) is home to the people of Otakou. Natural resources from across this region have long been utilised as important sources of food, medicine, fibre, building materials, tools and more.

Pukekura was the location of a fortified village which provided security in times of danger. The steep cliffs made it difficult to access from the sea and the palisade of sharpened hardwood offered further protection.

Established about 1650, the Pa was occupied until 1840's. This site continues to be revered today as **Wāhi Tūpuna**, an ancestral cultural site.



Pukekura



Okia



Otakou

Wāka

Wāka are narrow boats that are paddled or sailed. Totara is the favoured wood for construction due to its high oil content and light weight.



Tūwatawata

The tūwatawata is the single wood palisade that surrounds the Pā. The high fence of sharpened kanuka stakes provides some protection to the interior space.



Waharoa

The waharoa is the gateway to the pā.



Whata

Whata are fish drying racks and were used to dry mangā (barracouta) a customary fish caught in coastal waters and more recently, tuna (eels) gathered from local wetlands.



Ahu Otaota

Ahu otaota are places where the remains of kai (shells and bones), cooking stones, ash and charcoal from fires, and other traces of settlement can be found.



Umu

Umu is an earth oven. Fish, birds, shellfish and vegetables are wrapped with natural materials and placed in a pit with hot stones and doused with water. The umu is covered to trap the steam to cook the kai.



Kororā

Kororā is the smallest penguin in the world and nest along the coastline. The presence of their bones in ahu otaota (midden) suggests that they were a food source for Māori.



Tarāpunga

Red-billed gull

Eggs and adult birds were collected for kai and were an important part of the Māori diet. Seabird bones were used for fish hooks, musical instruments and tattooing.



Titi

Mutton bird, Storm Petrol

Titi has the longest migratory path of any bird in the world. It is an important source of kai (food) for Māori. Cultural harvesting still occurs today on the Titi Islands.



Pōhā

Pōhā are made from the blade of rimurapa (kelp). They are used to store titi (mutton birds) and other kai (food) and covered in totara bark. The pōhā is airtight therefore preserving kai for years.



Toroa

Northern royal albatross

This ocean going bird has breed on the mainland since the 1900's. The huruhuru (feathers) and bones are highly prized and considered tāonga (treasure).



Ngaio

Myoporum laetum

Ngaio is poisonous when eaten. Māori made a poultice of the leaves to treat wounds and infections.



Tī Kōuka

*Cabbage Tree,
Cordyline sp.*

This tree has many uses. The roots and trunk are cooked to provide a sweet gum, Kauru. The central shoot can be used as a vegetable. The leaves provided fibre to make strong rope and have been used for medical bandages.



Harakeke

Phormium tenax

Harakeke is one of the most important and versatile plants to Māori. Its fibre is used for weaving, fishing nets and line. The flower stem, korari, is used in building light temporary waka. The plant also has a variety of medicinal properties.



Koromiko

Hebe sp.

Koromiko flowers make a refreshing sweet tea. The tender leaves can be boiled and the liquid used as a mouthwash.



Kowhai

Sophora sp.

The hard wood of the kowhai was highly valued for fish hooks, weapons and tools. Although poisonous, the bark of Kowhai facing the rays of the sun was pounded and boiled to make a poultice to treat severe bruising.



Wī

Poa sp.

Wī was boiled to treat rheumatic pain and arthritis and the ashes of burnt wī were sprinkled on burns. It is excellent thatching for whare (building), used in weaving and planted for wind breaks.



Kanuka / Manuka

Kunzea ericoides

Leptospermum Scoparium

Both Kanuka and Manuka are highly prized for their antibacterial properties. They are currently used in a variety of health care products as it is thought to stimulate healing.

The hard wood is used for Tūwatawata (Palisade) and to add flavour to hāngi (food cooked in earth oven).



Horopito

Pseudowintera sp.

The edible leaves of Horopito have a hot peppery taste, leaving a burning sensation in the mouth. It is very good for toothaches.



Nau

Cook's scurvy grass
Lepidium oleraceum

Nau was a common coastal plant but is now quite rare. Eaten as a green, it is known for high levels of vitamin C.



Maukoroa

The red clay is cooked to make Kokowai, which is crumbled and mixed with fish oil and used as a paint or stain for ceremonial purposes.

