During the last week of the holidays and the first week of this term, 23 of our years’ 6-9 students went on an amazing adventure to New Zealand. We spent 12 days exploring the Bay of Plenty and the Waikato Region in the North Island. Our home base was the Waiteti Caravan Park, a beautiful little park set on the banks of the Waiteti Creek and only a short walking distance from the shores of Lake Rotorua.

The trip was made up of a mixture of cultural, educational and adventure activities. Everyone was encouraged to set personal goals, whether that meant overcoming a fear (especially of heights!), becoming more independent and organized while away from home, making new friends and working as a team or a physical challenge like hiking, biking or mountain climbing.

Some of our major highlights were:

The Luge – Everyone loved racing down the side of Mount Ngongotaha in a cart!

Maori Culture- We visited several Maori villages and saw some amazing Kapahaka performances. Mr Boyden even got to be our chief when we visited Tamaki Village.

Adventure- Swooping, Blobbing, water sliding, kayaking, jet boating and the trapeze jump at Rock and Ropes.

Scenery – Everywhere in New Zealand is beautiful and we had an amazing view from the top of Mount Maunganui.

Hot water pools- There’s nothing quite like a good soak in thermal water. We swam in commercial pools which were great but we also swam in wild water at Taupo and Kerosene Creek. The feeling of sitting under a hot waterfall in the middle of the bush is indescribable.
Mountain biking- The Redwood Forest is spectacular and we got to ride through it. Drop offs, mud patches, narrow bridges and ledges, we did them all. Lucy’s group rode further than most because they got lost!

The Rugby- We went to Waikato stadium to watch the Chiefs play the Blues. Luckily the Chiefs won or Mr De would have been grumpy for the rest of the trip.

Hangi- We ate hangi twice and most of us came home addicted to steamed kumera.

Wingspan – Not only did we get to watch the falconers work with wild falcons, some of us got to hold them.

Rock and Ropes – This was a new activity on the camp and involved a terrifyingly high ropes course. Every single student went up the ropes, even though some of them were petrified. It was fantastic to see the smiles of accomplishment (and relief) as they swung down.

Of course this incredible journey would not have been possible without lots of support from teachers and parents. Many thanks to Mr De Manser for organizing the trip and the teachers and parents who accompanied it.

The memories will last a lifetime!