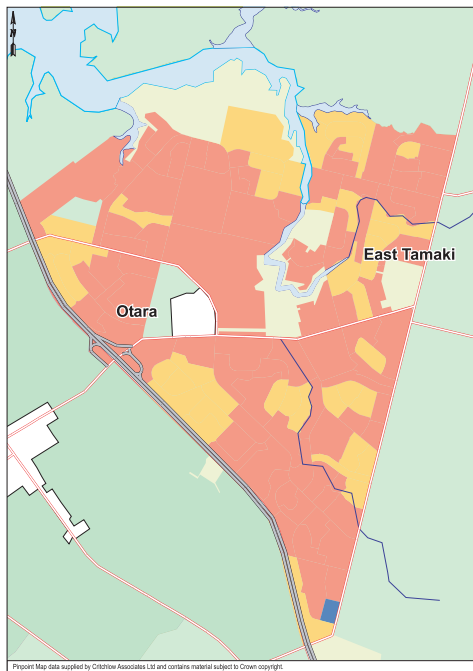


including East Tamaki



Otara is one of the most well known suburbs in New Zealand. Unfortunately, it's not famous for its community spirit, well-attended churches or creative talent – all of which it has in abundance – but for its negative characteristics such as poverty, crime and ill-kept state housing. At the heart of the suburb is the Manukau Institute of Technology and, across the carpark, the Otara Town Centre. Early every Saturday morning that carpark transforms into one of Auckland's liveliest markets, with second-hand curiosities, exotic food from Asia and the Pacific, bargain electronics, and the best and cheapest in fresh produce. A word of warning though. While you're soaking up the ambience, hold on to your valuables. The largely industrial nearby area of East Tamaki has received a long-overdue makeover with the opening of the water-side reserve and Highbrook Business Park.



For colour key, see page 230

### Population Profile

Population	17,568
% Aged Under 15 Years	34.82
% Aged Over 65 Years	5.65
% European	8.44
% Maori	19.18
% Pacific Peoples	71.67
% Asian	2.13

### Who Lives There?

Otara is predominantly populated by Pacific Islanders and, to a lesser extent, Maori. Recent subdivisions in East Tamaki have brought Indians and Asians into the area. Trying to judge residency by the vendors at the Saturday markets is tricky; many come from further away just to take part in the famous market.

### Typical Homes

The classic mid-20th-century state house (three bedrooms, weatherboard-clad) is everywhere in Otara. There are stand-alones, duplexes and multi-unit townhouses. Over in East Tamaki, the

homes (brick-and-tile with internal garaging) are slightly larger (with three or four bedrooms) and the sections slightly smaller.

## Amenities

### Schools ★★★

Otago has at least 12 primary schools, two intermediates and two secondary schools. Bairds Mainfreight Primary School gained national profile as the first school to win a business sponsorship and a recent ERO report described the teaching as consistent "and high quality."

Clover Park Middle School is a large, composite middle school for years 7-10 and in 2002 it was named the Goodman Fielder Composite School of the Year. Sir Edmund Hillary Collegiate has a primary, intermediate and high school (each with their own principals) on the same site.

The Manukau Institute of Technology is the biggest educational draw-card around here, offering 1,500 full-time and part-time certificate, diploma, degree and post-graduate study programmes. For a full list, see page 270.

### Shops ★★

You can get the basics at the Otago Town Centre... plus lavalava fabric by the truckload, tapa cloth by the kilometre and corned beef

by the tonne. The weekend flea market is an Auckland wide institution, but, given the choice, most people would travel to either Manukau or Botany Downs to do most of their serious shopping.

### Leisure ★★

Otago is blessed with plentiful reserves, including an extensive one with a walkway along the foreshore of the Otago Creek. The basketball courts at O Tamariki Reserve, opposite the town centre, appear to be in constant use, day and night.

Manukau City Council runs a community centre with a difference in Otago: Takutai-a-kiwa, the Otago Music Arts Centre, has a recording studio, which is used by local amateur and professional musicians. Fresh Gallery in the Otago shopping centre exists to showcase local artists.

The Norman Kirk Memorial Pool in the Otago town centre is always busy. The dining experience in Otago is largely fast food, with some exotic options at the Saturday market. East Tamaki has some family-style restaurants.

## Real Estate

### Trends

Otago is improving and property prices are rising thanks to the pull of the Flat Bush



development on its fringes, which is slowly helping it to shake off some negative stereotypes. In the meantime three-bedroom homes are selling for \$250,000 to \$350,000 quite commonly, but it probably won't be long before Otara buyers (and investor buyers) are reminiscing about these prices. Four-bedroom homes are particularly popular with the larger and extended families

In East Tamaki, the Highbrook Business Park is not yet complete but is already having an impact and raising the tone of the neighbourhood. When finished, it will provide 15,000 extra jobs and have its own motorway interchange. The centre of East Tamaki is still primarily commercial and light industrial, the edges are seeing steady conversion into residential areas.

**Best Streets**

Anything near the Otara shopping centre or Manukau Institute of Technology.



**Look Out**



There's plenty of demand for rental properties in Otara but the area doesn't suit every investor. Many tenants don't come from a culture of home ownership and properties are not always cared for.

**At a Glance...**

**House Prices**

House

Bedrooms   
Price \$450,000- \$550,000

Larger house

Bedrooms   
Price \$550,000 - \$700,000

**Average Rents**

Flat

Bedrooms   
Price \$350/wk

House

Bedrooms   
Price \$440/wk

Bedrooms   
Price \$500/wk

**Travel Times**

CBD peak 80 min  
off peak 20 min

Southern motorway 3 min

Airport 15 min

Manukau city shopping centre 10 - 15 min

The area is well served by buses.