

Ranfurly Banks

Season: October to January

Location: 25 miles north east of East Cape, New Zealand

Nearest Port: Whakatane

Time to get there: 12 hours

Departure times: 7.30pm the night before the trip, travelling down to Cape Runaway overnight onto the bank by lunchtime Day One.

Return: 1 – 3pm on the last day.

Trip Length: Recommended 4 -5 day trip, minimum 3 days

Cost: \$3400 per day for up to eight people , recommendation six

Food: fully catered \$60pp per day

Bait and Tackle and Rods supplied: \$50pp per day



Ranfurly Banks is an underwater mountain range situated approx. 25 miles northeast of East Cape of New Zealand. This part of NZ is very isolated. Departure port is Whakatane and trips are completely liveaboard. Each night is spent in a calm anchorage such as Hicks Bay or Lottin Point on the Coast.

As the Ranfurly is very inaccessible to the recreational and every day commercial fishers this makes the fishery very robust and abundant. It is not unusual for some groups to release up to 100 kingfish on a Ranfurly and go home with stretched arms and exhausted.



That is the huge attractant in fishing the banks, they rarely disappoint!



The terrain is a mixture of sea mounts, reef systems and drop offs in about a 30 nautical mile radius. The tops of the banks comes up within 20 -40 metres of the surface and drops off to around 200 – 400 metres. This makes the upwellings of currents and bait an attractant for the likes of the yellowtail kingfish.

Fishing around the Banks you would expect to catch Bass, hapuka, bluenose, kingfish, trumpeter and in the summer months blue and striped marlin and the odd yellowfin tuna and mahimahi.

The highlight of the Banks would have to be the excellent topwater fishing for Yellowtail kingfish using stickbaits and poppers. The banks can really perform with surface action of kingfish crashing the bait and rail pinning anglers hooked up to a very aggressive top water kingfish. Mechanical jiggging is another very effective way to target fish on the banks with some extraordinary catches every year of kingfish into the 40 -50kg range and regular catches 25 – 35kg. We also find livebaiting with flying fish and yellowtail mackerel a huge attractant and can be used for all fishing on the banks, puka, marlin and kingis. So encourage groups to spend the time filling the livebait tank on each trip as you never know what the taste of the day is....



The summer months December and January the East Coast come alive. This is the peak of the game season for this area. Waihou Bay through to Tolaga Bay become the stomping ground for the mighty Blue Marlin. One of the only places in the country that the Blue Marlin love to congregate. Fish from 150 to 400+kg monster fish frequent the area. The mighty striped marlin are also regularly seen and caught on the banks and with good surface bait can be seen charging the stickbaits alongside the kingfish. 2014 saw our first truly hooked stickbait marlin landed.

On rough days there are options to fish around East Island on the Coast for snapper or depending on wind direction down the east coast towards Tolaga Bay. Diving is also very rewarding around the coast of the East Cape / Cape Runaway area for paua and crayfish.



Although there are calm days, weather on the Banks is always a bit more than you would expect on the coast. So it is normal to fish 20 knots of wind and current and 2 metres of swell. The boats however are built to deal with heavier seas. Both Cova Rose and Enchanter are over 30 tonnes, are surveyed by Maritime NZ to fish in offshore up to 100 miles and carry extensive safety equipment. They are very stable platforms to fish from and have very good sea handling abilities. Both skippers are Offshore Masters and very experienced to fish offshore places such as the Ranfurly.

The world record for Wreckfish or Bass as we call them in NZ has been broken several times here at Ranfurly with the current world record being held by Enchanter at 86.2kgs caught by Terrance Price in 2010. There is a place at Ranfurly called Jurassic park and lives

up to its name for massive puka and bass. Ranfurly is a place to tick off on your bucket list of fishing places to go.. Many groups come back each year for their annual Ranfurly expedition both professional and recreational with many fishing promotional videos made most years including Heavy Metal at the Ranfurly by Chris Wong, the Jigstar Team from both New Zealand and Africa, ITM Fishing Show with Matt Watson, Jigging Master with Pony Liu and Jigging Master Australia and NZ and the mechanical jigging icon Mogi Yoichi visits almost every year with a group of Japanese enthusiasts.

If your looking for a fishing safari then Ranfurly is a great place to stretch your arms and fish to the limit!

