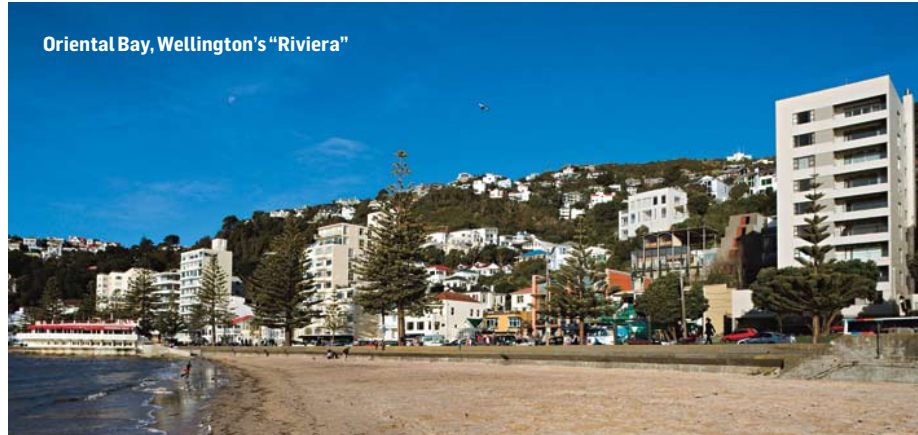


JUMPING OFF IN Wellington

S The ferry to Picton—and the beginning of the Marlborough wine region—leaves from the outskirts of Wellington, New Zealand’s seat of parliamentary government. Those short on time often skip visiting it, but overnighting in the world’s southernmost capital makes for a fun, urban counterpoint to the wine trail. The setting bears an uncanny similarity to San Francisco, considering its steep hillsides dotted with wooden homes perched over a picturesque harbor. In fact, prime

examples of Victorian houses that are dead ringers for San Francisco’s colorful Painted Ladies can be found along Wellington’s smashing waterfront promenade, Oriental Parade, which extends past the glitzy **Te Papa Tongarewa Museum of New Zealand**. Their rooftops are visible from the delightful **Wellington Cable Car**, which ascends the slopes behind Lampton Quay. Bed down near the water at the new **Ohtel Hotel**, a smart, intimate 10-room boutique hotel,



Oriental Bay, Wellington’s “Riviera”

with fashionable studios overlooking Oriental Parade, or the elegant **Museum Hotel** nearby, which has 165 rooms in masculine, muted tones—all come with oversize baths, some

with museum-facing balconies. Save room for the city’s first-rate food scene, localized on pedestrian-only Cuba Street: The trendy **Matterhorn**, a local institution with a buzzing

bar and dining room, and the formal **Logan Brown Restaurant and Bar**, with its accent on contemporary New Zealand cuisine, are two of our favorites.