

Happy anniversary, baby

It's easy to diss Auckland, complaining about the terrible traffic, the ridiculous price of housing and the weather. But this weekend, on the city's 177th birthday, let's talk the old girl up. Weekend asked well-known Aucklanders what they love about their home town.

MICHAEL VAN DE ELZEN

chef and TV presenter

Lifelong Aucklander, apart from a stint overseas “which I loved, but travel makes you realise just how amazing home is”

There’s a great deal I love about Auckland. I especially love the mountain biking out west and the fact that within 30 minutes you can be at a beach.

The city is home to such a wide variety of restaurants offering a huge range of cuisine. A perfect summer Sunday would be a ride at Woodhill, home to prepare a picnic lunch and as a family, including Hector the dog, then we head right on to Muriwai Beach for an afternoon

in the trusty old Hilux. Then it’s sandcastles, Hector going crazy in the sea, tasty food I’ve rustled up that’s eaten right off the back of the ute and a treasure hunt for driftwood, shells and seaweed to finish off the day.

Mike has recently moved to Muriwai and is working on his new brand, Good from Scratch

