

CAYENNE S HYBRID

SEEING NEW SEE- LAND

By Wilfried Müller
Photos by Martin Andrew

With its unspoiled countryside and unhurried way of life, New Zealand seems like a place out of time. This is especially true along the remote East Cape, which we set out to explore in our Cayenne S Hybrid—a truly unforgettable road trip which opened our eyes to seeing things in a whole new way.





Top tree:
Visitors to the sleepy town of Te Araroa can marvel at New Zealand's biggest Pōhutukawa tree

Hannah's words are “Five forty-six.” I groan—that means getting up by 4:30 a.m. Hannah is referring to the time of sunrise over Hawke's Bay in eastern New Zealand, and although we've heard it's a must-see, I don't relish the thought of getting up that early. But at least I can tell myself I'll be up before the rest of the world for once. And I mean that quite literally: we're at 177 degrees of eastern latitude, and since the International Date Line is very close by, New Zealanders are some of the world's earliest risers—globally speaking.

But for now, I decide to put the thought of tomorrow's alarm clock out of my mind and enjoy the rest of the afternoon and evening at the “farm” where we're staying and where Hannah is the guest relations manager. The name is an understatement, for The Farm is actually a luxury lodge with bungalows and suites that can accommodate up to 56 guests. The chefs are true magicians, and the selection of wines is fabulous. The whole place breathes quality, generosity, hospitality, all in a very unfussy, matter-of-fact way. Spread out over 6,000 acres (2,400 hectares) on the hills at Cape Kidnappers, it has plenty of space for one of the world's most beautiful golf courses and lots of wildlife besides. But the most striking thing is the primeval-like peace and quiet—something, it turns out, we will find in many places in these most remote of the world's big islands.

It's 5:40 the next morning. Getting up so early was definitely worth it. The white cliffs are aglow in soft pink, which changes to gold and then white again. The waves crash against the rocks 300 feet (100 meters) below us. We take a few deep, deep breaths. The air is crisp, the first rays of sunlight surprisingly warm. But then of course, down here November is early summer. It is somehow strangely exhilarating to know that the only thing between us and southern Chile on the other side of the Pacific is a vast 6,000-mile (9,000-kilometer) expanse of ocean. As we sit down to enjoy our breakfast and the spectacular view, we have the satisfying sense that we've already accomplished something today: we beat everyone else to it.

We say goodbye to Cape Kidnappers to head north, and when I turn the key in the ignition, the engine of our Cayenne S Hybrid purrs softly—very softly, actually, considering its 380 horsepower. The S Hybrid belongs to the youngest generation of the Cayenne series, probably the one that best embodies the distinctive character of Porsche. We're bound for East Cape on North Island, the sparsely populated easternmost tip of New Zealand. As for the roads on the way, the guidebook promises

“very curvy, narrow roads, some only gravel; gas stations are few and far between.” Sounds like it could be work, but the seemingly endless series of curves are a pleasure to navigate in the Cayenne S Hybrid. Even so, the adjustable ride height and three comfort levels are very welcome on the bumpy roads.

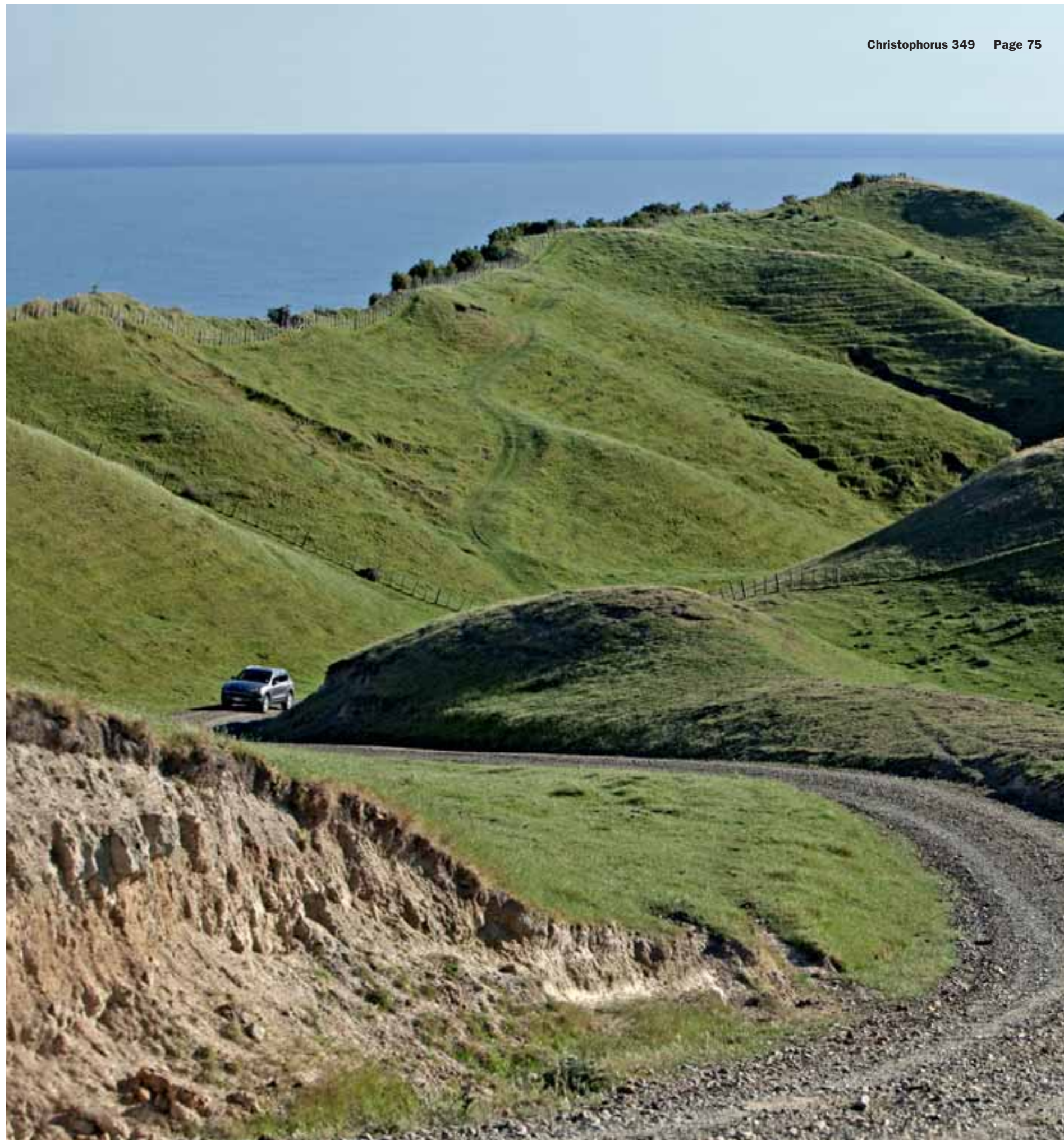
We pass countless vineyards as we drive north along the wide, sweeping arc traced by Hawke's Bay. This is one of the sunniest regions in New Zealand and it's the area with the longest wine-growing tradition. The Catholic Society of Saint Mary established Mission Vineyard, the country's first winery, in 1851, not long after the first significant numbers of Europeans followed the whalers, missionaries, and adventurers to settle here.

We decide to take a short break in Napier, a tranquil town of about 60,000 inhabitants. We cruise slowly down Marine Parade, Napier's premier avenue, which separates the jade-green Pacific and gray gravel beach from the rest of the town. The place reminds me a bit of California, with a dash of Cornwall thrown in (and not just because they drive on the left). Napier made the headlines when it was hit by an earthquake in February 1931. The locals rebuilt the town quickly, and while they were at it, imported various styles of architecture that were popular in the United States at the time—stripped classical, Spanish Mission, and, above all, the American variant of Art Deco—making Napier's streets into something like a snapshot of the 1930s.

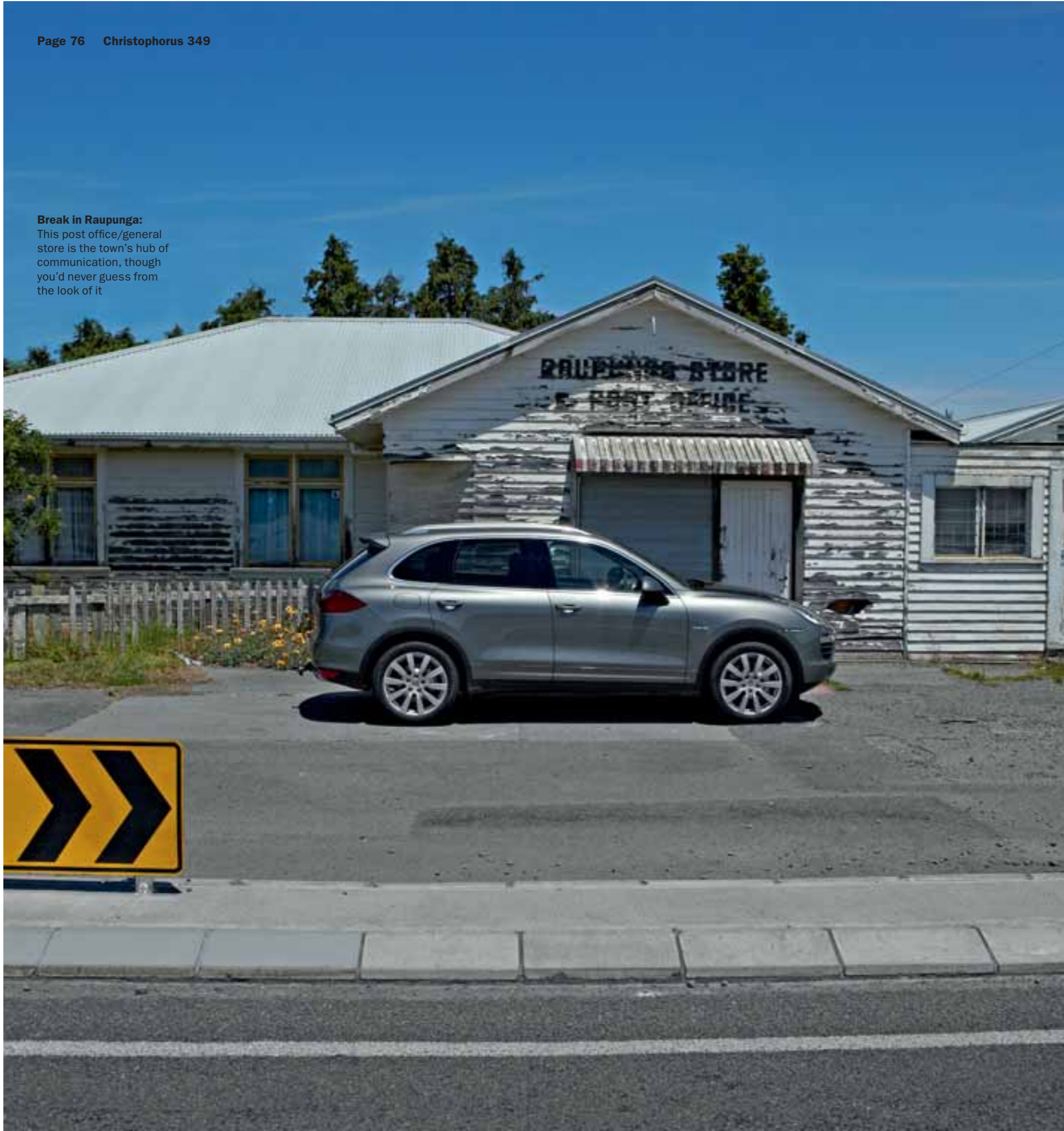
We continue along State Highway 2, following the northern half of Hawke's Bay east until we reach Wairoa, a little town populated mostly by fishermen and forestry workers. Situated at the mouth of the Wairoa River, its main landmark is a wooden lighthouse. It also boasts an airstrip from which Cessnas depart for flights over Te Urewera National Park, the largest contiguous tract of native rainforest on New Zealand's North Island. It is home to giant trees with exotic-sounding names like kauri and kahikatea, to delicate nikau palms and impressive tree ferns; and with its primeval

Far out:

Shortly after sunrise on Cape Kidnappers, the Cayenne S Hybrid has the road to itself



Break in Raupunga:
This post office/general store is the town's hub of communication, though you'd never guess from the look of it



Gone fishing: Looks like everyone in Tolaga Bay is at the beach to haul in a big catch



The long view: The Farm at Cape Kidnappers offers an unobstructed view of 6,000 miles of ocean



Whittling away: Les in Tokomaru Bay is a master in the art of traditional Maori wood carving



Check it out: It doesn't take long for newcomers to attract attention in Gisborne

vegetation, it looks amazingly like Jurassic Park. Actually, many of the species are unique to the area. Because of its long isolation, New Zealand boasts an amazing diversity of plants that grow only here, between the 34th and 47th degrees of southern latitude.

Occasionally the road passes through sleepy little towns along the coast. Some of them are blessed with beaches so stunning they would surely draw hordes of tourists in many other parts of the world. But not in New Zealand, where you can still find plenty of solitude and travel off the beaten track even in today's age of chartered jets and package tours. Near the little town of Muriwai, the promontory Young Nick's Head juts a mile or so out into the Pacific. Captain James Cook named it after his twelve-year-old cabin boy Nicholas Young, who on October 7, 1769, became the first European to set eyes on New Zealand again after it was first sighted by Abel Tasman in 1642. Tasman never actually set foot on

the New Zealand mainland; after a violent encounter with Maori in which four of his men were killed, the Dutch captain set sail again without going ashore. Not so Cook: the captain landed on the wide bay about six miles (10 kilometers) north of Nick's Head on Sunday, October 8, 1769, and thus became the first European to set foot on New Zealand soil. Today the town of Gisborne is located on what is known as the "Sunrise Coast," and an obelisk marks the site of Cook's landing.

But of course the Europeans weren't the first to settle this land. That distinction belongs to the Maori, the indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand, who came here from the Society and Cook Islands in the late 13th century in large ocean-going canoes called *waka*. Their descendants constitute about 15 percent of New Zealand's present inhabitants. However, the Maori presence is stronger in the eastern part of the country, where they make up about 30 percent of the population. Maori cul-

ture is particularly rich and alive in the area around the East Cape, and their meeting houses, or *marae*, are a vital part of everyday life. Gisborne boasts one of the biggest *marae* in all of New Zealand.

As we keep going north on State Highway 35, we pass more magnificent beaches with names like Wainui, Makorori, or Waihau Beach. They all have one thing in common: they are practically deserted, with the exception of a few lone surfers here and there—like little glimpses of paradise. When we reach Tolaga Bay, we soon spot its main attraction at the southern end: the pier. At over 2,000 feet (660 meters), it is New Zealand's longest. The pier is a remnant from the days when there were no roads inland on which to transport wool, meat, and wood to the transshipment centers from where they would be shipped abroad—anything that needed to go somewhere had to go by boat.

We hit the road again, and the traffic soon thins out until we have the highway virtually to ourselves. As we cruise along, I take my foot off the gas pedal and the compression engine instantly switches off and disengages from the drivetrain. As soon as my foot touches the gas pedal again, the engine re-engages, almost imperceptibly. As the Cayenne S Hybrid cruises toward Anaura Bay, we seem to be gliding along. I doubt Cook could have had a smoother ride when he sailed into the bay on October 20, 1769, to set foot on New Zealand's shores for the second time. Even now, almost 250 years later, you can count the number of houses here on one hand. The pristine sandy beach extends for about a mile and a half, with little but an expanse of native bush beyond.

We stop in for the night at a bed-and-breakfast and are warmly welcomed by the manager, a woman named

Judy. As a high-powered executive in the R&D department of a giant food corporation, Judy used to live life in the fast lane. Then she did what so many New Zealanders do at some point in their lives—she decided to try something completely different. Now she enjoys a more serene life, running this charming B&B overlooking the Pacific with a determined eye for quality and the friendly support of Craig, a microbiologist in *his* former life. That evening, we step outside to savor the sound of the waves and the captivating sight of the nighttime sky, with its glittering stars and completely unfamiliar constellations.

The next morning, we follow the narrow road eastward along the coast to East Cape. At the end, we are greeted by the peaceful sight of horses grazing on a lush green meadow. When we pull into the parking lot, a quick check in our guidebook reveals that we are at 178 degrees and 32 minutes of eastern latitude. The parking lot features what is said to be the world's easternmost public restroom—the sole tourist facility here. Up on the hill, East Cape Lighthouse stands tall and white in the cool breeze and crystal-clear light. The lighthouse has a turbulent history, like many places along this remote coast. The European settlers initially chose a rocky islet just off the coast to build it. The Maori urged them to choose another spot because they regarded the site as sacred, but the Europeans proceeded to build it there anyway. They paid dearly for it: four men drowned during its construction, and life on the East Cape remained dangerous. In 1922 the lighthouse was moved to the mainland, where it now marks the end of the world. The GPS in our Cayenne S Hybrid displays our exact position: 178 degrees, 33 minutes, and 54 seconds east; 37 degrees, 41 minutes, and 23 seconds south. For me, the coordinates spell out one word: freedom. ●

ROAM IF YOU WANT TO

Lucky for you if you have the chance to take a road trip through New Zealand without time pressure. Much of the terrain along Hawke's Bay seems to have been made for the Cayenne. The trip takes a good six hours from Auckland; coming from Wellington, it's about a four hours' drive. But if you really want to see New Zealand, you should take your time.

www.capekidnappers.com



CAYENNE S HYBRID

Engine: V6
 Displacement: 2,995 cc
 Power
 – Combustion engine: 333 hp (245 kW)
 – Electric motor: 47 hp (34 kW)
 – Combined: 380 hp (279 kW)
 Maximum torque:
 580 Nm at 1,000 rpm
 0–100 km/h: 6.5 sec.
 Top track speed: 242 km/h (150 mph)
 CO₂ emissions: 193 g/km
 Fuel consumption
 – City: 8.7 l/100 km
 – Highway: 7.9 l/100 km
 – Combined: 8.2 l/100 km



On to the horizon:
 Almost like in pioneer days
 of the pioneers—but
 way more comfortable