



Northbound Must See Tour

Adventure from Christchurch to Auckland that showcases New Zealand's most iconic landscapes and cultural treasures. Begin with the breathtaking TranzAlpine train journey across the Southern Alps to Greymouth, then explore the glacial wonders of Franz Josef, including a guided eco-tour and a relaxing soak in a private hot tub. Experience the majestic Piopiotahi - Milford Sound with a scenic flight and cruise, and indulge in Queenstown's renowned food and wine scene. Traverse the picturesque Mackenzie Country to Aoraki - Mount Cook for a unique Glacier Explorers tour. In Kaikōura, take to the skies for a whale-watching flight, then cross the Cook Strait on the Interislander Ferry, enjoying exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge. Discover Wellington's vibrant culture with a guided tour of Te Papa Museum, and immerse yourself in Māori traditions at Rotorua's Te Pā Tū and Te Puia. Conclude your journey with a visit to the enchanting Hobbiton Movie Set before arriving in Auckland.

Starts in: Christchurch
Finishes in: Auckland
Length: 14days / 13nights
Accommodation: Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

Included activity: Guided Tour of Te Papa The Museum of New Zealand

Included activity: Te Ra Daytime Experience at Te Puia

Included activity: Shared Transfer from Christchurch CBD Accommodation to Christchurch Train Station with Christchurch Touring Company

Included activity: Franz Josef Nature Tour with Glacier Valley Eco Tours

Included activity: Milford Sound Flight and Cruise with Return Flight

plus much more...

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring

Included activity: Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

Included activity: Restorative Journey with Wai Ariki Hot Springs and Spa

Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

Included activity: TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Christchurch to Greymouth

Included activity: One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

Included activity: Appellation Gourmet Food & Wine Tour

Day 1



Private Transfer Christchurch International Airport to Christchurch Accommodation

On arrival, you will be met by a private driver and transferred to your Christchurch accommodation.

Welcome to Christchurch City

Christchurch New Zealand's garden city is steadily being transformed into a vibrant urban destination. Encompassing a large green belt, it is known for its wide tree lined avenues and lush gardens. A great way to explore the city or easy way to see the sights or ride the historic trams across town to the renowned botanic gardens and the unique cardboard Transitional Cathedral, that's right it is built of cardboard!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Discover Christchurch Afternoon Tour

A half-day sightseeing tour of Christchurch highlighting both the damage to the city inflicted by several large earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 and the rebuild which is currently in progress, together with the surviving beauty of the city and the historical landmarks. Experience the grand architecture, beautiful gardens, and scenic viewpoints on a half-day city tour of Christchurch.

Your accommodation: The Observatory Hotel

The Observatory Hotel is situated in the Christchurch city center, short walk to The Art Centre, restaurants & bars. It brings contemporary style to the heart of a precinct rich with history. Every room offers unique experience, each being individually designed providing luxury, art and comfort.



Day 2



Shared Transfer from Christchurch CBD Accommodation to Christchurch Train Station with Christchurch Touring Company

You will be met by a driver at your Christchurch Accommodation and transferred to the railway station.

TranzAlpine Scenic Train: Christchurch to Greymouth

The early morning departure is rewarded with incredible scenery today onboard the TranzAlpine Scenic Train. Considered one of the world's great train journeys, it travels between the East Coast, Christchurch and the West Coast, Greymouth. From your carriage, you'll see the fields of the Canterbury Plains and farmland, followed by the spectacular gorges and river valleys of the Waimakariri River. The train then climbs into the Southern Alps passing through small settlements and Arthur's Pass National Park before descending through the lush beech rain forest to the West Coast town of Greymouth, a great base for visits to Punakaiki and the West Coast glaciers.

Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

Greymouth to Franz Josef

Leaving Greymouth you will head south into Glacier Country. Pass through Hokitika and be sure to take a 50 minute detour to the spectacular Hokitika Gorge, the famous turquoise-coloured river surrounded by native bush-clad cliffs. Continue on through Ross, a historic gold mining town where several buildings still remain intact and still to this day one of New Zealand's working gold mines. As you travel further down the coast you'll also go through Hari Hari, the town where Guy Menzies, the first person to fly solo over the Tasman crash landed. Heading south along the mighty West Coast highway you pass through ancient temperate rainforests while getting sneak peeks of the wild west coast beach occasionally. Whataroa is the next town where you can see one of the world's rarest birds, the New Zealand white heron or Kotuku nest at the Waitangi Roto Nature Reserve, and guided tours from October to March will take you there. Arriving in Franz Josef township is a lively place with a great atmosphere, restaurants including Blue Ice and Snakebite are worth a meal. This small town is packed with walks, adventure, and scenic activities, something for everyone.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 3



Franz Josef Nature Tour with Glacier Valley Eco Tours

Nestled in thick historic West Coast forest and a stone's throw from wild black sand beaches, this is one of the world's most unusual glaciers. Beautiful blue skies or magical misty rain, whatever the weather - you will feel like you are in Narnia or LOTR.

With easy walking at your pace, information on glaciology, geology, geomorphology, flora and fauna, local legends, history, and small guided groups with fantastic guides, you will experience this glacier in style and in the best hands with the only local company. Wander past glacier rivers and streams and through beautiful podocarp forest; discover hidden natural treasures such as native snails, wild native mushrooms, and dozens of species of native orchids; listen to native bird song and waterfalls; see if you can spot a Chamois or a Tahr on the huge snow-capped mountains above while drinking a cup of tea and talking one-on-one with your guide.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Twin Glacier Scenic Helicopter Flight with The Helicopter Line

A spectacular scenic flight soaring over two of New Zealand's most famous glaciers, Fox and Franz Josef. Landing at the head of one and view the incredible sight of this frozen river as it winds its way through ancient carved valleys.

One Hour Private Tub with Waiho Hot Tubs

Relax and unwind in the soothing comfort of fresh, warm water and aromatic wood smoke. Enjoy your own private tubs, nestled in a lush rainforest setting on New Zealand's West Coast. These wood-fired hot tubs combine the soothing comfort of warm water with the unique atmosphere of wood smoke to give you an unforgettable experience.

Your accommodation: Westwood Lodge

Westwood is a purpose built lodge, crafted entirely from wood and exquisitely decorated throughout. The lounge is the place to meet to watch the Southern Alps turn a soft pink in the setting sun.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 4



Franz Josef to Queenstown (via Wānaka)

Heading south you pass through the second glacier town of Fox Glacier before heading along the coast and into more classic West Coast bush scenery. We can recommend a stop at Knights Point Lookout elephant seals can often be seen basking on the sandy beaches at the far end of the point. Crossing the massive Haast River you turn inland and head into the valley climbing through mountains littered with waterfalls. The Haast Valley offers a spectacular view of the river and its enormous power. Along the way there is ample opportunity to admire Aspiring National Park and a stop at Roarig Billy Falls will leave you in awe. The Blue Pools near Makarora are a great 30-minute walk. The road from Makarora leads to Lakes Wānaka and Hāwea which will guide you into the stunning lakeside township of Wānaka before heading over New Zealand's highest sealed road, Crown Range Road and dropping into the Wakatipu basin, home to Queenstown. .

Queenstown

Queenstown known in Māori as Tāhuna, is home to many adrenaline-inducing activities. Nestled on the shores of Lake Wakatipu, this alpine town has very distinct seasons, and most adrenaline-filled activities can be accessed year-round. Queenstown is home to jet boating, bungy jumping, rafting, skydiving, paragliding, and even indoor thrills. If you want that rush - head out on the Shotover Jet, dive off the Nevis Bungy, freefall on the Canyon Swing, or Zip line the Gondola. While arguably the brightest gem in New Zealand's crown, Queenstown offers far more than an action-packed getaway. If you're looking for a slightly slower pace, there are plenty of recreational activities, including hiking and biking trails to explore, guided tours, boat cruises, scenic flights, or spa and wellness options to help you get away. Head to the lakefront, eat at one of the al fresco eateries, and soak up the local vibes; catch a ride on the iconic 100-year-old steamship the TSS Earnslaw; or take the Skyline Gondola and enjoy bird's-eye views of the Remarkables mountain ranges and Lake Wakatipu. Pack a picnic and go for a hike, only 20 minutes from Central Queenstown, Coronet Peak opens for summer sightseeing. You can ride the Peak Gondola to the top for panoramic views and hike the trails, or go for a bike ride on many excellent biking trails. In winter, Queenstown becomes a world-class winter resort, with four ski areas and a range of activities, bars, restaurants, and ways to relax and unwind.

Your accommodation: Kamana Lakehouse

As the highest situated hotel in Queenstown only 3kms from downtown, immerse yourselves in sweeping views of Lake Wakatipu and The Remarkables mountain range, while enjoying an exclusive peaceful retreat in New Zealand's "adventure capital".

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 5



Milford Sound Flight and Cruise with Return Flight

Departing Queenstown Airport, you enjoy a scenic flight to Milford Sound. During the flight you will experience panoramic views of spectacular alpine scenery, lush rainforest, and finally Milford Sound. Once on the ground at Milford Airport you are transferred by coach to the RealNZ Visitor Centre to board a luxury vessel for a cruise the full-length of Milford Sound. The vessel provides excellent viewing and there is plenty of time available to enjoy the waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife. Sheer cliffs starting hundreds of metres below the waters surface rise spectacularly to the sky. It is 16 kilometres from the head of the fiord to the open sea and RealNZ cruise ships will take you there and back comfortably. Dolphins and seals can often be seen, and following a large downpour the waterfalls that line the fiords are magnificent, particularly the 146 metre high Stirling Falls. The luxury vessels stop at various points and offer excellent viewing of waterfalls, rainforest, mountains and wildlife. The cruise is accompanied by comprehensive commentaries. Following the cruise, you are transferred the short distance to Milford Airport by coach for your return flight.

Your accommodation: Kamana Lakehouse

As the highest situated hotel in Queenstown only 3kms from downtown, immerse yourselves in sweeping views of Lake Wakatipu and The Remarkables mountain range, while enjoying an exclusive peaceful retreat in New Zealand's "adventure capital".

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch



Day 6



Explore Queenstown

Well-known as New Zealand's "adventure capital", Queenstown is home to a range of adventures, from the world's first and most famous bungy jumps to jet boat thrills, white-water rafting, and skydiving. However, Queenstown offers far more than a fast-paced, action-packed holiday. Settled on the shores of beautiful Lake Wakatipu beneath a soaring panorama of the Remarkables Mountain Range, this alpine town is surrounded by many historic, gastronomic, and scenic wonders. Take a stroll through the beautiful lakefront parks and gardens, browse through market stalls on weekends, dine in wonderful al-fresco restaurants, or ride on the 100-year-old historic Steamship - TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak Station. Take the Queenstown Gondola up to Bob's Peak and soak up the panoramic views of the magnificent lake and mountain ranges. And after all of that, if you do want the adrenaline rush, Queenstown is known for taking your pick from the Shotover Jet, Canyon Swing, Zipline, Luge, or Heli-hike.

Appellation Gourmet Food & Wine Tour

An indulgent and diverse full day tour showcasing the very best sights and tastes from the Central Otago region. Let an experienced wine guide lead you on a tasting journey through the three contrasting Central Otago wine sub-regions of Gibbston, Bannockburn and Cromwell. Visit 4 premium vineyards, extensively sampling the region's renowned cool-climate wines and retrace history by discovering the historic settlements of Old Cromwell and beautiful Arrowtown.

Enjoy a guided tour through New Zealand's largest underground wine cave and savour a unique lunch of 5 dishes cooked in retired oak barrels and perfectly matched with 5 wines.

Your accommodation: Kamana Lakehouse

As the highest situated hotel in Queenstown only 3kms from downtown, immerse yourselves in sweeping views of Lake Wakatipu and The Remarkables mountain range, while enjoying an exclusive peaceful retreat in New Zealand's "adventure capital".

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 7



Queenstown to Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park

Depart Queenstown and head through the Kawarau Gorge and over the historic Kawarau Bridge, a popular bungy jumping location. Choose to participate in this daredevil sport or watch others instead. Continue through Gibbston home to some of the best wines in the country. Follow the gorge to arrive in Cromwell, known for its many fruit orchards. Cromwell was completely submerged when the Clyde Dam was built and Lake Dunstan was established in 1992, the remnants of the old Cromwell town provide a unique snapshot into the history of this area. Head over through the Lindis Pass, one of New Zealand's highest roads, with the summit reaching 971 metres. Its tussock-covered hills are a barren but beautiful sight as you descend into the Mackenzie Basin. You'll go through the towns of Omarama and Twizel, the last stops before you arrive at Lake Pukaki and take the Aoraki-Mt Cook Highway to arrive in the small village

Glacier Explorers

Experience 500-year-old icebergs up close on the Aoraki-Mt Cook terminal lake. The Glacier Explorers tour is the only one of its kind in New Zealand and one of only three in the world! Very few glaciers terminate into lakes and even fewer of them are accessible. See towering ice cliffs and floating icebergs from the safety of a specially designed boat. These boats provide a safe way to view unseen and inaccessible areas of New Zealand's largest glacier The Tasman.

Your accommodation: Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium

The Hermitage Hotel ringed by magnificent snow-capped peaks of the Southern Alps, is a world-renowned tourist destination and has been an icon of superior accommodation and dining since 1884.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 8



Aoraki-Mt Cook National Park to Christchurch

Leaving Aoraki Mt Cook National Park, travel a short distance for a stop at the visitor centre on the southern shores of Lake Pukaki. Learn about the formation of the region and take in the spectacular views of Aoraki-Mount Cook. Along the way you'll come to Lake Tekapo which also displays the same reflective qualities as Lake Pukaki, making the waters bright turquoise. It's a great place to take a scenic flight, soak in a hot spring or just marvel at the magnificent views. From here you travel through Burkes Pass and into the rich farming valley that surrounds Geraldine. Continue across the vast Canterbury Plains to Christchurch.

Christchurch

Christchurch known in Māori as Ōtautahi, is the largest metro area in the South Island. Commonly referred to as New Zealand's "Garden City", Christchurch is home to one of the biggest public parks in the country, and beautiful botanic gardens. The city was hit with devastating earthquakes in 2010 and 2011, now the city crosses the line between its English heritage and a new modern architecture. To take in some arts and culture, pay a visit to the Canterbury Museum or the Christchurch Art Gallery. Take a step back in time with a tram around the city or punt along the Avon River. If tasting your way around the city is your means of travel, try out a cultural eating tour. A short drive from the CBD will lead you to the outskirts of the Banks Peninsula beachside suburb of Sumner or through the tunnel to Lyttelton Harbour which hosts fantastic markets on Saturday mornings.

Kai Bites Share with Amiki Cultural Food Tours

Discover cultural treasures hidden in plain sight and savor the city's diverse flavors with this two-and-a-half-hour inner-city walk featuring kai stops, the perfect way to explore Ōtautahi Christchurch. This tour includes the Ōtautahi Hikoi stops and embraces the principles of manaakitanga (hospitality) and whanaungatanga (connection), emphasising the importance of sharing kai (food) in Māori culture. The cultural food tour celebrates the diversity of modern-day Ōtautahi-Christchurch. From historic tales of gathering mahinga kai along the riverbanks to sampling some of our finest contemporary flavours, this tour offers a sensory journey like no other.

Your accommodation: The Observatory Hotel

The Observatory Hotel is situated in the Christchurch city center, short walk to The Art Centre, restaurants & bars. It brings contemporary style to the heart of a precinct rich with history. Every room offers unique experience, each being individually designed providing luxury, art and comfort.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 9



Christchurch to Kaikoura

The drive north from Christchurch to Kaikoura takes you through the rolling hills of North Canterbury's major wine region, the Waipara Valley. Allow time for a detour and visit Hanmer Springs for a dip in the mineral hot pools. Continue on and cross the Hawkswood Range before descending to the spectacular Kaikoura coastline - where the road hugs the ocean for the last leg of the drive.

Kaikōura

Kaikōura is a breathtaking seaside town teeming with marine life and natural beauty. As you wander through this coastal paradise, you'll be enveloped by the fresh sea breeze and the sounds of the ocean. Begin your adventure by observing the lively fur seal colony at the tip of the peninsula. For an unforgettable experience, board a boat to go whale watching and marvel at the majestic whales that call these waters home year-round. If you're feeling adventurous, take the plunge and swim with the playful dusky dolphins in their natural habitat. For bird enthusiasts, Kaikōura offers the chance to get up close with the native albatross, an awe-inspiring sight. The town is rich with attractions, walking tracks, and activities for every visitor. A walk around the Kaikōura Peninsula is a must, where you can explore tide pools teeming with marine life, observe sea creatures basking on the rocks, and watch seabirds soaring above. Be sure to keep a respectful distance from the sleeping sea lions you might encounter along the way. Ohau Point is another highlight, where you can watch fur seals frolic in their natural environment. To delve into Kaikōura's fascinating history, visit Fyffe House. This historic whaler's cottage offers a glimpse into the town's whaling past and its evolution over the years. No trip to Kaikōura is complete without sampling the local seafood. Renowned for having some of the best fish and chips in the country, Kaikōura's eateries serve fresh catches straight from the morning's haul, ensuring a delicious and authentic dining experience. If you need a break from the action, unwind at Lavendyl Lavender Farm. Stroll through the fragrant lavender fields, relax in the serene atmosphere, and browse the gift shop for a variety of lavender products. Kaikōura seamlessly blends adventure, history, and relaxation, making it a perfect destination for travellers seeking a unique and enriching experience.

Ocean Safari Whale Watching Flight with South Pacific Helicopters

Explore Kaikōura's wildlife colonies from the air in this incredible 45-minute helicopter Ocean Safari. Fly over the Seaward Mountain Ranges and Kaikōura Peninsula before reaching the vastness of the Pacific Ocean, home to nature's most amazing marine life. Kaikōura is located on the migratory routes for Humpback Whales, Southern right whales, Orca, and even Blue whales depending on the time of year. Other mammals that may be sighted include Dusky dolphins, fur seals, and albatross. Land at an exclusive location to experience the vistas of the mountains and sea before finishing with a flight back to Kaikōura Airport.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Lavendyl Lavender Farm

Lavendyl farm grows over 50 different varieties of lavender plants on the 5 acre Lavender farm. A visit to the farm is a sensory experience. Stroll through the gardens while admiring lavender and native New Zealand plants and flowers, meet the friendly sheep and take in the spectacular views. From January to February, when the flowers are at their peak for oil production, the distilling process can be observed on site. All year round a wide range of lavender products are available to purchase from the unique onsite gift store and gallery. Finish your visit with a relaxing cup of tea or coffee and delicious lavender ice cream inside the tearoom or out in the gardens. For more information, including opening hours visit www.lavenderfarm.co.nz.

Your accommodation: Sudima Hotel Kaikōura

This state-of-the-art waterfront hotel in Kaikōura has a 4.5 star rating with an outstanding in-house restaurant, a bar and conference facilities.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 10



Kaikōura to Picton

Today follow the coast to Picton, located at the top of the South Island. As you leave Kaikōura you'll take in the spectacular shoreline and keep a lookout for native wildlife as you go. Stop to view adult fur seals at Ohau Point, and take a short stroll along the oceanside walkway. Continuing on, you'll have the ocean on one side and the Kaikōura ranges on the other before traversing the dry hills of Marlborough, New Zealand's largest wine-producing region. Visit one of the vineyards surrounding Blenheim for a wine tasting or a gourmet lunch before beginning the final leg of your journey to Picton.

Return your rental car

Return your rental vehicle to your designated depot before your next adventure.

Interislander Ferry Picton to Wellington with exclusive access to the Premium Plus Lounge

The 92 km journey between Picton and Wellington takes around 3 hours and has been described as 'one of the most beautiful ferry rides in the world'. Around one hour of the cruise takes you through the Marlborough Sounds. This region of bush covered mountains, small islands, crystal clear waters and secluded bays is a true photographic opportunity. From the Cook Strait spectacular views of the Kaikoura Ranges on the South Island can be enjoyed and dolphins and many sea birds are often seen. After crossing the strait you approach Wellington Harbour and pass many interesting points such as Pencarrow Head on top of which is New Zealand's oldest lighthouse (1859). Red Rocks is home to a seal colony and Oterangi Bay is the site which recorded the country's highest ever wind speed of 268 kph (167 mph).

When you're not out on the deck enjoying the amazing views, you can retreat to the exclusive premium plus lounge which is the most comfortable and relaxing way to travel across the Cook Strait. You'll enjoy complimentary beverages, light snacks, lunch or breakfast, internet access, magazines and newspapers and the most comfortable seating, so you can sit back and enjoy the journey.

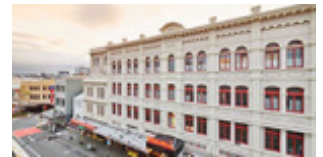
Collect Rental Car

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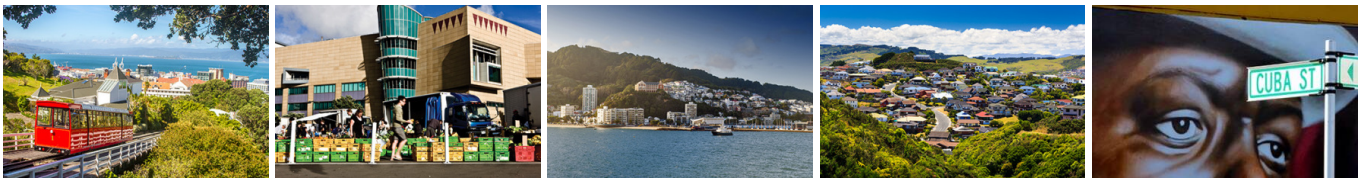
Your accommodation: Naumi Hotel Wellington

Naumi Studio Wellington, an iconic heritage landmark in the heart of the Cuba Street precinct. After an extensive renovation, this 116-room property has transformed into visual feast for the senses, enthralling guests with eclectic spaces inspired from seafaring, the library world and enduring love.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 11



Wellington

Wellington known in Māori as Te Upoko o Te Ika a Maui is home to New Zealand's centre of government. Often referred to as 'mini Melbourne', this windy city is a melting pot of art, culture, food, and fashion. Quirky laneway bars, underground art shows, and hipster eateries make up its inner-city vibe, while a host of sandy beaches outside the urban bustle bring a cheerful holiday feel. Head to Te Papa Museum for a history lesson and a ticket to one of its many international exhibitions or jump aboard the Wellington Cable Car - the only running funicular railway in the country. For those with an eye for boutique, fashion wander through Cuba St to sample some of the city's best vintage stores. Break for coffee at a hipster cafe and be sure to snap a pic outside the 'Beehive', New Zealand's parliamentary debate chamber. Go behind the scenes at Weta Workshop Experience, the Oscar Award Winning design studio behind Lord Of The Rings, The Hobbit, and Avatar. If you're a foodie at heart, a two-hour round trip to Martinborough is a must-do. Take your time as you wind through spectacular wine country. For an educational day out, learn about New Zealand's native species at Zealandia, the world's first fully-fenced eco-sanctuary and home to over 40 types of endangered and native birds.

Guided Tour of Te Papa The Museum of New Zealand

Beginning over one hundred million years ago, join your guide on a journey through New Zealand's rich history and cultures. Hear stories of our adaptive wildlife, the resilience of the Māori people, and artistic interpretations of life in the South Pacific.

Whether you have limited time or here for an extended visit, this tour will give you a great opportunity to understand the vibrant landscapes and cultures you will encounter throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

Wellington to Rotorua

The drive from Wellington to Taupo takes you via the Kapiti Coast and the seaside towns of Plimmerton, Paekakariki and Paraparaumu are worth a short detour. Heading north you pass through the rural towns of Taihape, Mangaweka and Bulls before arriving onto the central plateau. A little further the military town of Waikouaiti is home to the National Army Museum, an incredible collection of New Zealand's military history and a memorial to its servicemen. Skirting Tongariro National Park, one of New Zealand's three world heritage sites, you can see the 2,500 metre peak of the volcanically active Mt. Ruapehu. You might also recognise the symmetrical shape of Mt. Ngauruhoe as this was used as the scenery of Mt. Doom in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy. The township of Taupo sits on the shores of New Zealand's largest lake, Lake Taupo - a gigantic volcanic caldera formed during one of the world's largest ever eruptions. Just north of the town are the Huka Falls and a short detour to view is advised. The Huka Jet can get you much closer with a thrilling jet boat ride. Nearby Craters of the Moon is a geothermal reserve with great walking tracks around its many boiling pools and steaming vents. Continuing on to Rotorua you pass the volcanic valley, visit either Wai O Tapu or the Waimangu Valley for a closer look. Arriving into Rotorua the city's geothermal activity is evident with steam rising from the roadside and hills. Rotorua is considered the heart of New Zealand's Maori cultural and it's here you can learn of their history and traditions. The Ohinemutu Village is located on the site of the first Maori settlement in the area. One of the most popular introductions for many to the Maori culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village. Here you will gain an insight into the traditional Maori way of life through song, dance and entertainment. A dinner prepared in the traditional manner is served to finish the evening off.

Restorative Journey Package with Wai Ariki Hot Springs and Spa

Indulge your senses in a Restorative Journey (Wai Whakaora), a thoughtfully designed therapeutic experience inspired by the practices and culture of Ngāti Whakaue. Embrace the healing power of the natural environment as your senses awaken through a series of hot and cold therapies. Your journey begins beneath a cascading waterfall, cleansing your body and mind. Transition to Te Ahi Tupua, where a sequence of hot and cold immersions invigorates and rejuvenates. Relax in the soothing waters of the Geothermal Pool, sourced from the renowned Rachel Spring. Follow this with a refreshing cold plunge, easing muscle tension and reducing inflammation. Conclude your experience in the Kohu Wai Arik steam room, where heated stones create a serene space for reflection and relaxation, leaving you revitalized and restored.

Your accommodation: On the Point

On the Point is a beautiful lodge accommodation in a stunning location and offering panoramic views. It also offers gourmet New Zealand food and wine, as well as a range of on site activities from pampering massage, fly fishing from the private beach, water sports, tennis, gym and boating and is only 10 minutes from the heart of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 12



Te Puia: Te Rā Daytime Experience

Te Puia welcomes you to explore the magic hidden within Te Whakarewarewa Thermal Valley. Become face-to-face with the majestic Pōhutu Geyser, the largest naturally active geyser in the Southern Hemisphere. Feel the thrill as it erupts, sending plumes of steam into the sky. Then, step into the Kiwi Conservation Centre, for a close-up encounter with this rare native species, a symbol of our nation's unique wildlife. Part of your ticket is donated to support the conservation of the Kiwi in this sanctuary. As you continue through the Te Puia Valley, look upon the dynamic landscape of bubbling mud pools, and steaming vents and feel the power that the land holds. Throughout this, everywhere you look you will see beautifully crafted Māori-made artwork and sculptures, each piece a story carved in wood and stone, adding a layer of cultural depth to the natural beauty. Step into the New Zealand Māori-made artwork and sculptures, each piece a story carved in wood and stone, adding a layer of cultural depth to the natural beauty. The guides are direct descendants of the original tour guides, and you can feel their excitement to show their culture and land.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Mount Tarawera & Orakei Korako Thermal Explorer by Floatplane with Volcanic Air

From above Mount Tarawera's impressive views include vast volcanic rifts, distant national parks, and our treasured lakes. Flying south on a floatplane, you will gain an appreciation of what local Maori refer to as the 'Sisters of Fire'. Here, volcanic activity has pierced the earth's surface across the fault line forming the reserves of Waimangu and Wai-O-Tapu which, when viewed from above, display a spectacular palette of nature's most vibrant colors. Landing at Orakei Korako, 'the Hidden Valley', is an amazing opportunity to experience hot springs, gushing geysers, and the natural beauty of this geothermal wonderland.

Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

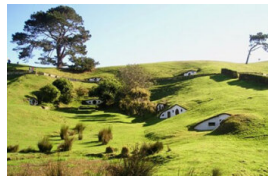
Your accommodation: On the Point

On the Point is a beautiful lodge accommodation in a stunning location and offering panoramic views. It also offers gourmet New Zealand food and wine, as well as a range of on site activities from pampering massage, fly fishing from the private beach, water sports, tennis, gym and boating and is only 10 minutes from the heart of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 13



Rotorua to Matamata

Leave the steaming vents and boiling pools of the geothermal region behind as you make your way through the lush dairy pastures of the Waikato. Take in the emerald green landscapes most famous for their role in the Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films. Arrive into the small town of Matamata, for a visit to the fully intact set of Hobbiton.

Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

In the heart of New Zealand, you can step into the lush pastures of the Shire with a guided tour of Hobbiton, as featured in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit Trilogies. Hobbiton is located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region. Here you can visit such iconic Hobbit locations as Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree with a guide sharing behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interior, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Matamata to Auckland

Your drive continues north west crossing the dairy country of the Hauraki Plains before arriving at State Highway 1. The Bombay Hills guide you to Auckland City.

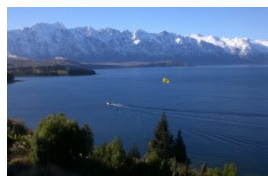
Your accommodation: M Social Hotel Auckland

A contemporary hotel for the curious, the explorers and those who thrive on new experiences. Functionally chic, this contemporary hotel overlooks the vibrant Princes Wharf that is home to a good array of dining, entertainment and shopping experiences.

Meals included: Breakfast



Day 14



Depart Auckland today

Explore more of vibrant Auckland city before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Farewell from Aotearoa-New Zealand

Bid farewell to New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Maori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Self Drive Tour (FTNZ ONLY)
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	14
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Private train station transfers
Includes	Interislander ferry crossing
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Christchurch to Greymouth
Includes	Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Matamata
Includes	Te Puia Maori Arts & Crafts
Includes	Rotorua Forest Canopy Tours
Includes	Glacier Explorers Tour, Mt Cook National Park
Includes	Milford Sound Fly-Cruise-Fly and Dart River combo
Includes	Half Day Franz Josef Eco Tour

Accommodation summary

Day 1	The Observatory Hotel
Day 2	Westwood Lodge
Day 3	Westwood Lodge
Day 4	Kamana Lakehouse
Day 5	Kamana Lakehouse
Day 6	Kamana Lakehouse
Day 7	Hermitage Hotel, Aoraki Wing Premium
Day 8	The Observatory Hotel
Day 9	Sudima Hotel Kaikōura
Day 10	Naumi Hotel Wellington
Day 11	On the Point
Day 12	On the Point
Day 13	M Social Hotel Auckland