

19 DAY RURU SELECT TOUR

Auckland to Christchurch Tour



DAY 01

Arrival Auckland

Kia ora (hello), welcome to Aotearoa New Zealand! You can check into your hotel from 3pm, then feel free to explore. Stroll over to the vibrant waterfront, discovering why Auckland is the 'City of Sails.' Meet your guide at 6pm for an intro before your welcome dinner.

DAY 02

Auckland to Rotorua via Waitomo Caves

First stop today is Waitomo, where you have the option to gaze at the hundreds of glittering glowworms above you. Then we'll head to Rotorua, the North Island's geothermal hotspot and a great place to experience Māori culture. We'll head straight to our hotel, which is home to a spa, swimming pool and unlimited Wi-Fi!

DAY 03

Rotorua

Today it's all about the Roto (Māori for 'Lake'). Travel past the vibrant Blue and Green Lakes on our way to Lake Tarawera. Take an aqua taxi to Te Rata Bay, home to Hot Water Beach. Spend the afternoon rafting, ziplining or relaxing at a geothermal spa.

DAY 04

Rotorua to Lake Aniwhenua

Travel to Lake Aniwhenua and Kohutapu Lodge for an authentic Māori cultural experience. Receive a traditional welcome on tribal lands, watch 'hangi' preparation, enjoy afternoon tea with fried bread, practice weaving and haka skills, then feast on the ground-cooked hangi (traditional meal) in the evening.

DAY 05

Lake Aniwhenua to Blue Duck Station

Today we visit Taupo to see New Zealand's largest lake and the powerful Huka Falls. Then head inland to Blue Duck Station for an off-grid experience. Learn about daily station life, settlement history, and conservation efforts to protect the rare whio (blue duck), before a home-cooked meal and relaxing around the campfire.

DAY 06

Blue Duck Station

This morning, take a 4WD tour through native bush to the 'Top of the World' for epic views of Mount Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Ngauruhoe, plus station history. Later, explore on your own: hike to Kaiwhakauka waterfall and spot the rare whio (blue duck). Evening: play games at the lodge, relax by the campfire, or make s'mores.

DAY 07

Blue Duck Station to Tongariro National Park

This morning, rise early for the world-famous Tongariro Alpine Crossing – a challenging 19 km one-day hike through volcanic peaks, craters, and turquoise lakes. (Guide and gear may be required in icy conditions; weather-dependent with alternatives if needed.) After the trek, unwind in your accommodation's spa.

DAY 08

Tongariro National Park to Wellington

After breakfast, head to Wellington, New Zealand's capital. Visit Te Papa National Museum (own cost), then explore freely: enjoy a craft beer at a brewery, hike Mt Victoria for panoramic views, stroll the waterfront, or savour an exceptional flat white in the city's renowned coffee scene.

DAY 09

Wellington to Marahau (Abel Tasman)

Catch the ferry across the Cook Strait to the South Island. Enjoy stunning views of the Marlborough Sounds from the viewing deck. Arrive in Picton, then travel through the picturesque Marlborough region to Marahau on the edge of Abel Tasman National Park. Spend the evening relaxing around the campfire!

DAY 10

Marahau (Abel Tasman) Free Day

Hike directly from our accommodation into the park (no water taxi needed) along the Abel Tasman Coastal Track to Anchorage Bay. Enjoy lush bush, golden sand beaches, and brilliant blue waters for swimming. The walk is about 4 hours each way, or take a water taxi back for more time to relax and explore.



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DAY 11

Marahau (Abel Tasman) to Hokitika

Today, enjoy the wild West Coast – a top scenic route with rugged beaches and lush rainforest. Stop at Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and blowholes, then continue to Hokitika for its arts scene. Tonight we're staying by the Tasman Sea; enjoy an Ocean View restaurant dinner and visit Sunset Point for amazing views. After dark, walk to the glowworm dell before a peaceful nights rest.

DAY 12

Hokitika to Franz Josef Glacier

It's a short drive to the charming village of Franz Josef, transitioning from coastline to dramatic lush rainforest – prime photo territory. We arrive around lunchtime for plenty of time at Franz Josef Glacier: take a shuttle and hike through native bush and glacial streams to the terminal face for spectacular views and photos, or relax in the township. For a closer experience, opt for a heli-hike to stand on the glacier itself (additional cost).

DAY 13

Franz Josef Glacier to Queenstown

Enjoy a relaxed walk around Lake Matheson for stunning reflections of Aoraki/Mt Cook (on still days). Next, visit charming Wānaka to enjoy its beautiful lake and mountain views, have lunch, and snap a photo of the famous Wānaka tree. Then head to Queenstown, and check into accommodation with a swimming pool, fitness centre, and sauna!

DAY 14

Queenstown Free Day

Today is a free day in Queenstown. Yaaaasssss Queen(stown)! After breakfast, go and explore the beautiful mountain scenery with one of the many free hikes or join an activity of your choice! This evening, we recommend trying the famous Fergburger, checking out the nightlife, or enjoying a hot chocolate on the lakefront and listening to the live artists scattered across the shore.

DAY 15

Queenstown to Te Anau

Today, depart Queenstown for Te Anau, gateway to Fiordland. Watch the stunning Ata Whenua - Shadowland film at Fiordland Cinema, previewing the park's landscapes ahead of tomorrow's Milford Sound cruise. Afternoon (summer only): water taxi to Brod Bay, walk part of the Kepler Track via Coal Creek Bridge along Lake Te Anau shores back to accommodation. Overnight in the serene lakeside town.

DAY 16

Day Trip to Milford Sound

Today, depart Te Anau for iconic Milford Sound and board a cruise across the fjord to see towering Mitre Peak, rainforests, waterfalls, and wildlife including fur seals, penguins, and dolphins. In the evening, choose to visit the glowworm caves, stroll through town or along the lake, or relax at accommodation.

DAY 17

Te Anau to Aoraki Mount Cook

Today, depart Te Anau early over Lindis Pass through Mackenzie Country and past vivid blue Lake Pukaki to Aoraki/Mount Cook – one of NZ's most stunning drives. Arrive early afternoon for optional activities: glacial lake boat tour, Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre, or short walks like the top-rated Hooker Valley Track (weather dependent). Clear nights offer exceptional stargazing.

DAY 18

Aoraki Mount Cook to Christchurch

Leaving Mount Cook, travel through Lord of the Rings landscapes to Lake Tekapo. Stop at the turquoise lake and iconic Church of the Good Shepherd for photos, with options to relax in the hot pools, snow tube or ice skate (winter only), or hike to Mt John Observatory for epic views. After lunch, continue to Christchurch for your final overnight stay and an optional group dinner to celebrate the journey around Aotearoa New Zealand.

DAY 19

Depart Christchurch

This morning, explore Christchurch: wander street art laneways, check out the modern shopping district, enjoy a beer at a quirky pub, punt down the Avon River, visit the stunning Botanic Gardens, or ride the historic tourist tram. As our final day, say goodbye to your Stray mates (or see you soon!) and head off – we hope you had a blast!



What to Bring:

- Camera
- Sturdy walking shoes/boots
- Warm clothing
- Waterproof jacket
- Hat & sunscreen
- Bathers/towel
- Water bottle
- Motion sickness tablets
- Insect repellent

Terms and Conditions

