



New Zealand Wanderlust Adventure

24-DAY COMPLETE NATIONAL TOUR

Duration: 24 days / 23 nights

Start/Finish: Auckland

Departures:

- 7th February 2023
- 21st March 2023
- 2nd November 2023

Price (NZD): \$5,495 (dorm share)

Day 1: Arrival Auckland

Kia Ora (hello) and welcome to Aotearoa (New Zealand) the land of the long white cloud. Make your way to your hostel and either relax or get out and take a walk around the city, the waterfront is an ideal place to start and an enjoyable walk from your accommodation. Meet your Guide at 4pm for an introduction to your tour and a welcome drink.

This evening, you're going to experience the Auckland Harbour on a dinner cruise.

Accommodation: Central city hostel

Free activities: Walk the waterfront

Included activities: Welcome drink, Dine and Cruise Auckland Harbour

Day 2: Auckland Island Experience

Auckland has one of the best harbours in the world, its other name is the "City of Sails" with over 400,000 different watercrafts owned within the region. Today you'll get to experience Auckland from the water as we head out to Rangitoto Island for the day, this dormant volcano which is 1 of 44 in the region sits just out from the city in the Waitemata harbour, the views are simply stunning from the city scape and out to the gulf and surrounding islands. It's the perfect way to get you in the groove with this amazing country and clear your head to get you ready for the amazing experience over the next 26 days of non-stop adventure!

Accommodation: Central city hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast, Lunch

Included activity: Water taxi to Rangitoto Island, hike a volcano

Day 3: Auckland to Hahei

Today's the day we say 'haere rā' to Auckland and 'kia ora!' to the trip of a lifetime! First stop, Hahei Beach on the Coromandel Peninsula. This gorgeous little place will capture your heart (and have you calculating how much it would cost to move to NZ's coast eternally). When the tides are right,

we'll drive over to the nearby Hot Water Beach and dig ourselves an all-natural hot pool in the sand. Who said backpackers can't do luxury?

Accommodation: Cabin accommodation by the beach

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: We'll stop at a supermarket to stock up on supplies en-route - Self-cater or join the optional group BBQ dinner

Free activities: Dig a hot pool at Hot Water Beach

Day 4: Hahei to Rotorua

Rise and shine for an early start this morning as you walk to Cathedral Cove to watch the sunrise. Then it's straight back into the bus for a walk through the incredibly scenic Karangahake Gorge.

Before we get to Rotorua, we'll head to the home of the Hobbit and enjoy a tour of this fantastical land and the real movie set which was created right here in Middle Earth. Rotorua is known as the North Island's geothermal hot spot and hub for all the very best adventure activities and is 100% one of the best places to explore... even if your nostrils tell you otherwise!

Accommodation: Central Rotorua hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Included activity: Hobbiton

Free activities: Whakarewarewa Redwood Forest walk

Day 5: Rotorua to Lake Aniwhenua

This morning we'll head to see some geothermal activity at the Kuirau Park where we'll see boiling mud pools and steaming lakes!

After hanging out in a major tourist destination like Rotorua, you'll probably feel ready to experience a more authentic slice of New Zealand culture. Today we venture off the beaten track to the shores of Lake Aniwhenua. Kohutapu Lodge is owned by a local Maori family who are passionate about showcasing their Maori tribal heritage. You'll see sacred Maori rock carvings, play traditional stick games and watch the preparation of a ground cooked 'hangi', before tasting it for yourself! Prepare your tastebuds - this will probably be the best meal you eat in New Zealand, or maybe even in your lifetime!

Exclusive experience includes:

- 1 night's accommodation at the serene lakeside Kohutapu Lodge
- Full traditional hangi buffet dinner & dessert
- Continental breakfast
- Guided tour to sacred Maori rock carvings
- Introduction to the Murupara area, its people, history and challenges

Accommodation: Scenic lakefront cabins

Included activity: Learn the Haka, Maori flax weaving

Meal inclusions: Breakfast, traditional hangi dinner and dessert included

Free activities: Maori rock carvings, volleyball, Maori cultural games

Day 6: Lake Aniwhenua to Taupo

Rise and shine, strayers! Enjoy your buffet breakfast and get ready for a day of jam-packed adventure. Keep your togs (swimwear) handy, because our first stop is Kerosene Creek – a naturally hot river and the perfect place for a morning soak. Then it's on to Taupo to see Australasia's largest lake and the mighty Huka Falls, grab lunch and take a walk to explore or simply relax at your accommodation.

Accommodation: Taupo

Optional paid activities: Skydiving or bungy in Taupo

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: We'll stop at a supermarket to stock up on supplies - Self-cater or join the optional group dinner

Free activities: Huka Falls, Spa Park walk Taupo

Day 7: Taupo to Tongariro National Park

This morning we'll head to the iconic Tongariro National Park where we'll have an adventurous couple of days. On arrival at the park, we'll receive a safety briefing for our canoe tour along the Whanganui river, part of one of New Zealand's Great Walks. Whanganui National Park is covered in lush native forest with the Whanganui River flowing through the heart of it, where you'll be canoeing today. The river is rich with Maori and European history, the largest reminder of which is the famous 'Bridge to Nowhere'. Paddling downstream you'll see waterfalls, spectacular sheer gorges and farmland - views for days!

Accommodation: Alpine chalets

Included activity: Guided canoe tour along the Whanganui River

Meal inclusions: Breakfast, lunch

Day 8: Tongariro National Park

Limber up! Today you get the chance to tick off one of the most popular hikes in New Zealand, the epic Tongariro Alpine Crossing. Considered one of the world's top one-day walks, this 19km hike takes you across a rocky plateau with dramatic volcanic peaks, craters and turquoise lakes that you (and your Instagram feed) will remember for a lifetime. The Crossing is open to walk year-round (alpine gear and guide are required in winter), but it is subject to the weather conditions. If the weather prevents you from doing the Crossing, there are other awesome short-walks in the area. Tonight, unwind after a big day in your chalet.

Accommodation: Alpine chalets

Included activities: Tongariro Alpine Crossing transfers

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Pack a lunch & plenty of snacks and water.

Free activities: Taranaki Falls walk, visit the Volcanic Centre, Tawhai Falls (Gollum's pool)

Day 9: Tongariro National Park to Wellington

Onwards to Wellington, the 'coolest little capital in the world'! Wellington packs a lot of character into its downtown district, with funky restaurants and bars along Cuba Street and Courtenay Place. Fill your afternoon by browsing through the exhibits at Te Papa National Museum, grab a craft beer at an edgy brewery, climb to the top of Mt Victoria for panoramic views or take a stroll along the waterfront and

Oriental Parade. Oh and, most importantly for those who seek 24/7 caffeination, you'll be glad to know that Wellington's coffee culture and cafe scene is considered one of the best in NZ.

Accommodation: Central city hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Walk Oriental Parade, head up Mt Victoria for fantastic views, visit Te Papa National Museum, Gumboot (welly) throwing

Day 10: Wellington to Marahau (Abel Tasman)

We catch an early BlueBridge Ferry across the Cook Strait and through the magnificent Marlborough Sounds to the South Island. If the weather's good, head out to the viewing deck to witness some incredible scenes. From here we'll set off through the picturesque Marlborough region. Then we continue to Marahau, situated right on the edge of the spectacular Abel Tasman National Park.

Accommodation: The Barn, waterfront accommodation

Optional paid activities: Wine tasting (usually \$5-10)

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: We'll stop at a supermarket to stock up on supplies - Self-cater or join the optional group dinner

Free activities: Stargazing

Included activity: Ferry Crossing to the South Island

Day 11: Marahau (Abel Tasman)

Count yourself lucky - you have a full day to explore New Zealand's most popular national park. From our accommodation we'll be picked up and take a water taxi 12 kms to Anchorage and you'll see the park's natural golden sand beaches and brilliant blue waters along the way. The walk is approx. 4 hours each way but there's enough photo stops en-route to spend an entire day exploring. Enjoy a picnic on the beach before checking out Cleopatra's Pools, moss lined fresh water pools with a natural water slide.

Accommodation: The Barn, waterfront accommodation

Included activity: Water taxi into Anchorage, Abel Tasman

Optional paid activities: Kayaking, skydiving, canyoning - (PM)

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Pack a picnic lunch and lots of snacks for your hike, self-cater in the kitchen or use the BBQs

Free activities: Hike in the national park, relax on the golden sand beaches, see Cleopatra's Pools

Day 12: Marahau (Abel Tasman) to Franz Josef

Buckle up for an awesome day driving down the incredibly scenic 'wild' West Coast, an area known for its untamed beaches and spectacular rainforest. Through Buller Gorge and down a stretch of road named one of the top drives in the world by Lonely Planet, there's not much cell phone reception but you are NOT gonna need it – we dare you to peel your eyes away from the window for even just a second. We'll stop at Cape Foulwind and the Punakaiki Pancake Rocks and blowholes to explore this unique part of coastline before continuing on to the quaint township of Franz Josef, set amongst the rainforest.

Accommodation: Rainforest Retreat
Meal inclusions: Breakfast, Dinner
Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen
Free activities: Cape Foulwind, Buller Gorge, Pancake Rocks and blowholes, Hokitika

Day 13: Franz Josef

Ice, ice baby! Get ready to experience the Franz Josef Glacier, an iconic highlight of the West Coast. Take a short drive to the beginning of the track. Hike through native bush and across glacial streams to the terminal face of the glacier for spectacular photos or just hang out at the Retreat and relax in one of NZ's largest spa pools.

Accommodation: Rainforest Retreat
Optional paid activities: Shuttle to the track
Meal inclusions: Breakfast
Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen
Free activities: Glacier hike, bush tracks, soak in the spa

Day 14: Franz Josef to Queenstown

It's another scenic journey today with plenty of photo stops – your Mum isn't gonna be the only one who thinks your travel photos are world-class! First up is the amazing mirror-like Lake Matheson for a short walk. We travel inland through the mountainous Haast Pass and alongside beautiful Lake Hawea to arrive at the Kawarau Bridge on our way into town a.k.a. the first commercial bungee jumping site in the world. If you're feeling brave you can tick the bungee off your bucket list or if you'd prefer to just watch then you can cheer your mates on from the viewing platform! We'll head out for a group meal once settled, make sure to bring your dancing shoes, there are over 100 clubs and bars to choose from in Queenstown!

Accommodation: Central Queenstown hostel
Meal inclusions: Breakfast
Optional paid activities: Puzzling World, skydiving, mountain biking, pilot your own stunt plane or learn to fly and take a friend for free, bungee jumping
Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen
Free activities: Watch people jumping off a bridge!

Day 15 & 16: Queenstown (2 Free Days)

Yaaaasssss Queen(stown)! You've got 3 full days in the adventure capital. With a buzzy night life, beautiful mountain scenery and plenty of outdoor activities, it's easy to understand why so many backpackers refuse to leave this place.

Accommodation: Central Queenstown hostel
Optional paid activities: Any adventure activity that we Kiwis can dream up (bungee, swing, jet boating, skydiving, mountain biking, zipline, horse riding...)
Meal inclusions: Breakfast
Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen
Free activities: Hike Ben Lomond, the Queenstown Hill, or Bob's Peak

Day 17: Milford Sound Day Trip ex. Queenstown

Today you'll hop aboard the Coach and we'll take you to the stunning and world famous Milford Sound. After a super scenic drive, you'll board the boat and cruise across the impressive Sound. Look out for the impressive Mitre Peak, lush rainforests and (if it's been raining) thundering waterfalls. You'll also have the opportunity to spot lots of amazing wildlife like Fur Seals, Penguins and Dolphins. Once you've snapped as many pics as you possibly can, it's back to Queenstown. We recommend checking out the buzzy nightlife and many restaurants Queenstown has to offer.

Accommodation: Central Queenstown hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Included activity: Day trip to Milford Sound

Day 18: Queenstown to Tekapo

It's a short drive to Lake Tekapo, an electric blue lake framed by the Southern alps. See the famous Church of the Good Shepherd, a quaint stone church right on the edge of the lake. In the afternoon, take a hike up to the Mount John Observatory to see the incredible views. Or if you'd rather just have a 'self-care' afternoon, then the Tekapo Hot Springs are the perfect place to relax.

Tonight, we'll head to the team at Dark Sky for their Summit Experience where you'll have the chance to stargaze at one of the best stargazing spots in the country.

Accommodation: Tekapo accommodation

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Included activity: Roy's Peak Hike, Dark Sky Summit Experience

Optional paid activities: Tekapo Hot Springs, Ice Skating, Snow tubing

Meal options: Self-catering in the hostel kitchen or local bars and restaurants

Free activities: Mount John Observatory Hike, Church of the Good Shepherd, stargazing

Day 19: Tekapo to Christchurch

Our next stop is Christchurch, a city where old meets new, as the rebuild continues following the devastating 2011 earthquake. Spend your afternoon wandering the city streets to discover creative street art and hidden eateries. See how Christchurch earned its nickname as the Garden City by visiting the Botanic Gardens. Take a walk down Hereford St to see the 'Cardboard' Cathedral and the earthquake memorial of 185 White Chairs.

Accommodation: Bealey Quarter

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Explore Christchurch by foot, check out the Cardboard Cathedral and inner-city street art, the new Riverside Market, Botanic Gardens, Canterbury Museum and 185 White Chairs memorial.

Day 20: Christchurch to Kaikoura

Wakey wakey! We've got an early morning start for a beautiful drive up the coast to Kaikoura. Arriving in Kaikoura around midday, you will have the afternoon free to explore. See the Kekeno (NZ fur seal) colony

near Goose Bay and hike around the peninsula to check out the breathtaking views from the lookout. You're likely to see sea birds, seals and maybe even whales or dolphins if you're lucky!

Accommodation: Warm modern hostel

Optional paid activities: Whale watching by boat or by plane, swimming with dolphins, guided fishing trip

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Visit a fur seal colony, walk around the peninsula and up to the lookout

Day 21: Kaikoura to Wellington (via Picton)

This morning we'll hop on the bus and wind our way up the coastal roads towards the top of the South Island. We will catch the afternoon BlueBridge Ferry across the Cook Strait. The evening in Wellington is free for a second chance to explore this funky town's nightlife at any of the bars and restaurants along Cuba Street. It's your last night guys – go wild! Alternatively, it's a good time to craft your master plan on how to stay in New Zealand forever. Either or.

Accommodation: Central city hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Seal and dolphin spotting

Included activity Ferry Crossing to the South Island

Day 22: Wellington to Raglan

Today is a spectacular drive through the central North Island to the surf town of Raglan, we'll arrive late afternoon to this jewel on the west coast of the North Island. Raglan is the mecca for surfing in New Zealand and a creative's delight, life is about living in Raglan where the sunsets are nothing short of jaw dropping set in a slow-paced sanctuary.

Accommodation: Warm modern central hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Walk the beach and see the sunset!

Day 23: Raglan to Auckland

All good things must come to an end but before that happens, we'll head to Bridal Veil Falls once the surfers have come in from the waves, for those not surfing enjoy a relaxing morning in Raglan perhaps soaking up the amazing cafe scene and shopping the crafts on offer. We'll arrive in Auckland early afternoon with plenty of daylight left to enjoy your last night in New Zealand where it all started 23 days earlier so soak up the last few moments with your new Stray family.

Accommodation: City central hostel

Meal inclusions: Breakfast

Meal options: Local restaurants or self-cater in the hostel kitchen

Free activities: Walk the beach, check out the town

Optional paid activities: Surfing, kayaking, or a creative class

Day 24: Depart Auckland

After an incredible few weeks of exploring New Zealand, it's officially time to head to the airport. We hope this was truly a once in a lifetime experience for you and you'll take some of New Zealand's way of life home with you and be back and visit us again someday.

What's Included:

- Experienced tour guide
- Private coach transport
- 24 days of once in a lifetime experience
- 23 nights' accommodation (dorm-style)
- 22 x Breakfasts, 2 x Lunches, 3 x Dinners
- 2 x inter-island ferry
- Auckland Dine and Cruise Experience
- Rangitoto Island and return ferry
- Kauri Forest visit
- Karangahake Gorge visit
- The Cathedral Cove, Coromandel
- Hot Water Beach
- Hobbiton Tour
- Geysers and boiling mud pools
- Lake Aniwhenua Cultural Experience
- Huka Falls
- Guided Canoe on the Whanganui River
- Tongariro Alpine Crossing
- Visit Te Papa National Museum
- Abel Tasman Track and Water Taxi
- Trip to Punakaiki Pancake Rocks
- Franz Josef Glacier
- Day trip and Cruise to the Milford Sound
- Summit Experience in Lake Tekapo
- Hooker Valley Track in Mt Cook National Park
- Seal Colony in Kaikoura
- Sunset Beach Walk Raglan

What to Bring:

- Camera
- Sturdy walking shoes/boots
- Warm clothing
- Waterproof jacket
- Hat & sunscreen
- Bathers/towel

- Water bottle
- Motion sickness tablets
- Insect repellent

Please Note:

- Upgrades to twin/double and private rooms are available subject to availability
- Room upgrades do not apply in Hahei
- Luggage is limited one backpack, bag or suitcase per person with a maximum weight of 20kg plus a day pack
- A basic level of fitness is required for medium length walks

This itinerary is a guide. Given the spontaneous nature of our trips and lack of control over New Zealand's weather(!), what we do each day might occasionally vary.