



# Wanderlust Adventure 2023/24

## Exclusive Itinerary

### 24 DAY NEW ZEALAND TOUR

**Duration:** 24 days / 23 nights

**Start/Finish:** Auckland

## 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 then go and explore the city, we recommend starting at the waterfront which is a downhill walk from your accommodation. Meet your Guide at 4pm for an introduction to your tour and a welcome drink before heading out for a group dinner together.

**Accommodation:** Central city hostel

**Free activities:** Walk the waterfront

**Included activities:** Welcome drink

## Day 2: Auckland Island Experience

Auckland has one of the best harbours in the world and it's known locally as the "City of Sails". 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 23 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' (goodbye) to Auckland and 'kia ora!' (hello) 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 our journey to the geothermal wonderland of Rotorua.

Before we get to Rotorua, we'll stop for an incredibly scenic walk through the Karangahake Gorge and then we'll head to the home of the Hobbit and enjoy a tour of the real movie set, which was created right here in Middle Earth! When we arrive in Rotorua, head for a walk through the Whakarewarewa Redwood Forest and then explore the township. There are so many activities available in Rotorua - ask your guide for options!

**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 Kuirau Park where we'll see some geothermal activity, 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 their Maori tribal heritage and their local community. 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! 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:** Centrally located hostel by the lake

**Optional paid activities:** Skydiving or bungee 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 for 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, and this is 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 19 km 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 great 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 a 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 the coffee lovers, 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)

Today we'll catch an early 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 and spot some wildlife. From there we'll set off through the picturesque Marlborough region to Marahau, our accommodation is situated right on the edge of the spectacular Abel Tasman National Park - perfect for exploring arguably the best National Park in NZ.

**Accommodation:** 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 because you have a full day to explore New Zealand's most popular national park today. From our accommodation we'll be picked up and taken by water taxi to Anchorage Bay, admiring the park's natural golden sand beaches and brilliant blue waters along the way. Enjoy a picnic on the beach before checking out Cleopatra's Pools, moss lined fresh water pools with a natural water slide and then, we'll walk approximately 4 hours back to our accommodation, stopping along the way to take amazing photos and swim in the secluded bays.

**Accommodation:** Waterfront accommodation

**Included activity:** Water taxi into Anchorage Bay

**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 phone reception but you are NOT going to 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. Tonight, we'll have a group dinner together at our accommodation.

**Accommodation:** Central hostel accommodation

**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:** Central hostel accommodation

**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. First up is the amazing Lake Matheson, known as the mirror-lake, 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! Once settled, put on your dancing shoes and head out to explore this lakeside resort, 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 Days)

Yaaaasssss Queen(stown)! You've got 2 full days in the adventure capital. With an awesome 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

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 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 where you can check out some one of the many restaurants Queenstown has to offer - or try the famous Fergburger!

**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 this morning where we'll see an electric blue lake framed by the Southern alps. Walk over to the famous Church of the Good Shepherd, a quaint stone church right on the edge of the lake for some awesome photo opportunities. 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:** 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 super cool city with the Avon River running through it, full of lush parks and cool laneway bars! Spend your afternoon wandering the city streets to discover creative street art and hidden eateries, visit the Botanic Gardens, do some shopping or hop on the tourist tram and see the sights!

**Accommodation:** Lodge accommodation

**Meal inclusions:** Breakfast

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

**Free activities:** Explore Christchurch by foot, check out the new Riverside Market, Botanic Gardens

## Day 20: Christchurch to Kaikoura

We've got an early morning start for a beautiful drive up the coast to Kaikoura, arriving around midday so you 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. Or, if you'd like to see whales and dolphins, jump on a boat or plane!

**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'll catch the afternoon Ferry across the Cook Strait and then you'll have the evening in Wellington, your second chance to explore the city's nightlife!

**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, a jewel on the west coast of the North Island. Raglan is the mecca for surfing in New Zealand and a creative's delight, living in Raglan is a life where the sunsets are nothing short of jaw dropping and the motto is 'no worries'!

**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

Head out and catch a wave this morning, or enjoy a relaxing morning soaking in the amazing cafe scene. On our way back to Auckland, we'll check out Bridal Veil Falls, an impressive 55m high waterfall. Then we'll continue north, arriving in Auckland early afternoon, with plenty of daylight left to enjoy your last night in New Zealand 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

All good things must come to an end, and 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. Please come 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)
- 23 Breakfasts, 2 Lunch, 2 Dinners
- 2x Inter-island ferries
- Rangitoto Island and Water Taxi
- Kauri Forest visit
- Karangahake Gorge visit
- Cathedral Cove
- Hot Water Beach
- Hobbiton Tour
- Geysers and boiling mud pools
- Lake Aniwhenua Cultural Experience
- Huka Falls
- Guided Canoe on the Whanganui River
- Tongariro Crossing Alpine Crossing
- Visit Te Papa Tongarewa museum
- Abel Tasman Track and Water Taxi
- Trip to Punakaiki Pancake Rocks
- Franz Josef Glacier
- Day trip and Cruise to the Milford Sound
- Stargazing Experience in Lake Tekapo
- Hooker Valley Trek Mt. Cook
- Seal Colony
- 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

*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.*