

# THE ULTIMATE KIWI ADVENTURE



SMALL GROUP GUIDED TOURS. **RATED #1 IN NZ!**



  
**MTB**



  
**SNOW**



  
**ADVENTURE**



  
**PREMIUM**



  
**PRIVATE**



# 12-DAY WANDERER TOUR

ROUTE: AUCKLAND TO CHRISTCHURCH

A sample platter of North and the South Island highlights - you'll get a great overview of New Zealand's scenic wonders on this tour. From Auckland, we'll visit beautiful Coromandel and Raglan beaches; the thermal wonderland of Rotorua and Taupo; stop in at Tongariro National Park; enjoy vibrant Wellington before crossing the Cook Strait from the North Island and on to the South Island wine region of Marlborough; then to the whale-watching mecca of Kaikoura before ending in Christchurch. Or - vice versa! - you can also take this tour from Christchurch to Auckland.

Created for travellers in their mid-thirties and upwards, our tours are the best, most relaxed way to see Aotearoa New Zealand. We always like to showcase the indigenous Maori culture, so we include a cultural performance at a living Maori village within this tour. You can also learn about Māori traditions at an optional bone pendant carving session.

This tour includes special activities such as walking to the spectacular and photogenic Cathedral Cove, a traditional Māori meal, and a walk amidst towering - and magically lit - treetops and the 'most scenic ferry crossing in the world'. You can also choose to select some tour add-ons such as hiking the Tongariro Alpine Crossing - otherwise known as Mordor, kayaking to a natural hot pool, visiting an offshore eco-sanctuary, visiting Hobbiton, having a surf lesson, or viewing whales on a whale watching flight!

**FIRSTLIGHTTRAVEL**   
*Your South Pacific Travel Specialists*

New Zealand is known for being home to many different adventures, so be sure to make the most of your chance to swim, kayak, skydive, hike, see kiwis (and whales, dolphins, seals and albatrosses), relax in hot pools, and even fly over an active marine volcano!

Pack in as many or as few of the activities on offer - this is your tour, and we want you to have a great time! The tour includes some must-dos, but when it comes to things like bungy jumping and mountain hiking, we leave the choice up to you.

At the end of the day, you can relax in comfortable 3-4 star accommodation to ensure you have a great night's sleep ready for the following day's activities.

**FLEXIBLE DEPARTURE DATES THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.**



# TOUR INCLUSIONS

All the things on this page are included as part of your tour at no extra cost.

## WHAT'S INCLUDED ON THIS TOUR

- ▶ Stay 11 nights in twin-share 3-4 star accommodation: a mix of hotels, motels and lodges.
- ▶ Feast on 6 continental breakfasts and 2 dinners, including a traditional Māori hāngī cooked in an underground oven.
- ▶ Walk a stunning coastal track to Cathedral Cove (as seen in the Chronicles of Narnia movies).
- ▶ Ride one of the most scenic ferry journeys in the world, over Cook Strait.
- ▶ Watch a Māori cultural performance and check out a geothermal valley of bubbling mud pools including the famous Pōhutu Geyser in Rotorua.
- ▶ See endangered kiwi birds up close and personal.
- ▶ Soak up a sunset boat cruise in the West Coast surf town of Raglan - the fish and chips are on us!
- ▶ Brave the Redwoods Treewalk, crossing 23 raised suspension bridges.
- ▶ Hike through the forested gorge of Ruakuri (45 minutes) - bring your camera for this one.
- ▶ Stay in Tongariro National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Area.
- ▶ Taste some of the world's best sauvignon blanc at a Marlborough wine tasting.
- ▶ Plus, many more surprise stops along the way!

## ALL TOURS INCLUDE

- ▶ **PASSIONATE AND KNOWLEDGEABLE LOCAL KIWI GUIDE**
- ▶ **COMFORTABLE AND AIR-CONDITIONED BUS TRANSPORT**
- ▶ **SMALL GROUPS OF MAXIMUM 16 PEOPLE**
- ▶ **ORIENTATION TOUR OF EACH AND EVERY LOCATION**
- ▶ **EXPERIENCES TO TEACH YOU ABOUT OUR UNIQUE MĀORI CULTURE**



# ITINERARY SUMMARY

## **DAY 1 - AUCKLAND**

Welcome to New Zealand's largest city! Settle into your accommodation, meet your guide and new tour friends and get a tour briefing.

## **DAY 2 - AUCKLAND TO COROMANDEL**

We waste no time in introducing you to New Zealand's famed natural beauty as we drive to the picture-perfect Coromandel. You can explore by kayak or enjoy a hot pool soak.

## **DAY 3 - COROMANDEL TO RAGLAN**

We explore another laid-back coastal town on the west coast. Keen surfers and hesitant beginners should take this chance to catch some waves, others may enjoy some boutique shopping.

## **DAY 4 - RAGLAN TO ROTORUA (VIA WAITOMO)**

Today you can choose to go underground at the Waitomo Caves - world famous for its millions of glowworm inhabitants. We'll take an evening stroll through a magically lit forest.

## **DAY 5 - ROTORUA**

Explore Rotorua's geothermal wonderland with plenty of time for adventure activities before our visit to a Māori village where you'll learn about the culture and enjoy an earth-cooked meal.

## **DAY 6- ROTORUA TO NATIONAL PARK (VIA TAUPŌ)**

Today's your chance to try bungy jumping or sky diving! We'll leave the sulphur smells behind as we head south, visiting bubbling mud pools, a giant lake and thundering waterfalls en route.

## **DAY 7 - NATIONAL PARK**

We spend all day in this UNESCO World Heritage Area with three active volcanoes. Challenge yourself on the world famous Tongariro Crossing, or something a bit more relaxed.

## **DAY 8 - NATIONAL PARK TO WELLINGTON**

With a few scenic stops, we'll head to Wellington where, after a quick orientation tour, you'll discover the vast array of tasty drinking and dining spots Wellington is known for.

*Continued...*



# ITINERARY SUMMARY

## CONT...

### DAY 9 - WELLINGTON

Enjoy vibrant and artsy Wellington, visit Te Papa, stroll the picturesque waterfront, spend some time with Weta Workshop's imaginative artisans or take a tour to an off-shore ecosanctuary.

### DAY 10 - WELLINGTON TO KAIKŌURA

We leave the North Island via one of the most scenic ferry journeys in the world and we'll toast our arrival in the South Island by sampling some world-class wines - Cheers!

### DAY 11 - KAIKŌURA TO CHRISTCHURCH

Dolphins! Seals! Whales! They all like to visit and play around Kaikoura's waters. While we're here, you may as well meet some of them before we head to Christchurch.

### DAY 12 - CHRISTCHURCH (POST TOUR DEBRIEF)

Oh, no, is it over so soon? As you check out, be sure to swap contact details with your new friends.





## DAY 1 - AUCKLAND

Kia ora (hello!) and welcome to Aotearoa (New Zealand).

Settle into your accommodation and be ready for the 6pm pre-tour meeting. Here you will get to know your Tour Manager and be introduced to your new roadtrip friends.

Afterwards, the evening is yours to enjoy. We recommend a good night's sleep to be ready for tomorrow's early start, but you may want to experience Auckland's exciting nightlife - the choice is yours!



## DAY 2 - AUCKLAND TO COROMANDEL

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Breakfast
- ▶ Visit Hot Water Beach
- ▶ Visit Cathedral Cove

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ The Lost Spring
- ▶ Cathedral Cove Kayaking
- ▶ Bone Carving

Rise and shine! After a continental breakfast this morning, it's time to board our comfortable air-conditioned vehicle and leave the big city behind.

The Coromandel Peninsula is a paradise of beautiful beaches and misty rainforests. The drive here is truly spectacular - the road twists and turns dramatically round the coastline and the ocean gets clearer and more pristine before your eyes. Cameras ready - the views are magnificent.

The Coromandel is home to famous Hot Water Beach - thousands visit each year to dig their own personal hot tub. If the tide times allow, we'll grab our buckets and spades and get busy.

We arrive in Whitianga with plenty of time for your guide to show you around. Sample the sandy beaches, take a surf lesson with the locals, or simply enjoy the vibes.



## DAY 3 - COROMANDEL TO RAGLAN

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Raglan Sunset Boat Cruise
- ▶ Fish & Chips Dinner

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Surf Lessons
- ▶ Paddleboarding
- ▶ Kayaking
- ▶ Caving/Rock Climbing

Today's road trip to the arty surf mecca of Raglan will give you a first glimpse of the North Island's rolling tree-lined hills and valleys. Your guide has some great sights to show you en route, including the 55-metre high Bridal Veil Falls.

If you have always wanted to try surfing, or if you're dying to get back on your board, Raglan is the perfect destination both for beginners and experienced surfers.

Not keen on surfing? There's plenty to enjoy in this laid-back township. With an awesome blend of cafes, bars, surf shops and galleries, the streets here ooze character and creativity. Relax on the beach and leave any lingering jet-lag behind, or enjoy a variety of bush and coastal scenery on Raglan's walking trails.

For dinner tonight, tuck into New Zealand's unofficial dish - fish and chips (or fush and chups, as it tends to sound in a Kiwi accent). And what better way to enjoy a tasty meal than on a sunset boat cruise of Raglan Harbour?





## DAY 4 - RAGLAN TO ROTORUA (VIA WAITOMO)

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Redwood Forest Canopy Walk

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Footwhistle Cave Tour

Our first stop of the day is the Waitomo Caves famous for its glow worms. There are fantastic and informative walking tours of the caves where you can learn more about the history, geology and Māori mythology of this unique area of New Zealand.

For those who prefer to stay above ground, we highly recommend exploring the tree-studded gorges and limestone arches of the nearby Ruakuri Forest Walk; definitely a favourite amongst the guides.

This afternoon we'll make our way to Rotorua, famous for its geothermal activity and Māori culture.

We start our time in Rotorua with The Redwoods Treewalk. This amazing included activity allows you to experience the majestic Redwood Forest from a series of suspension bridges and living decks (platforms), elevated from 9-metres to 12-metres at the highest point.



## DAY 5 - ROTORUA

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Breakfast
- ▶ Dinner (a hangi cooked in an underground oven)
- ▶ See the world famous haka dance
- ▶ See the Pohutu Geyser
- ▶ See kiwi birds

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Hobbiton Movie Set Tour
- ▶ Forest Ziplining
- ▶ White Water Rafting
- ▶ Mount Tarawera Crater Hike
- ▶ OGO
- ▶ White Island Scenic Flight
- ▶ Guided Kayak to Hot Pools
- ▶ Skyline Gondola Rotorua

Rotorua has it all: natural beauty, unique geothermal landscapes, and iconic *Lord of The Rings* destinations. We stay here a full day to make the very most of it.

This area is world-renowned for its geothermal activity, with neon blue and red lakes, steaming rivers, violent geysers, and bubbling mud pools galore.

A visit to the picturesque Hobbiton movie set is a must-do activity for many. Even if you haven't seen the films, it's impossible not to be charmed by this gorgeous hobbit village set amongst the lush green hills of Matamata.

For a truly epic brush with nature, fly high through the lush ancient forest canopy on a zipline tour complete with swing bridges crossings and treetop platforms. What better way to get to know the native plants and birds -many of which unique to New Zealand.

This evening we are welcomed to a Māori village for an unmissable cultural experience featuring combat demonstrations and - of course - the breathtaking haka. This experience extends beyond the performance - you'll have the chance to see magnificent geothermal activity and get to spot kiwi birds.



## DAY 6 – ROTORUA TO NATIONAL PARK (VIA TAUPŌ)

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Breakfast
- ▶ See Huka Falls

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Skydiving
- ▶ Bungy Jumping
- ▶ Sail Fearless
- ▶ White Water Rafting

Rotorua is a spectacular whitewater rafting destination, and with expert guidance it can be experienced by first timers and pro-paddlers alike. For the ultimate thrill this morning you can raft the highest commercial waterfall drop in the world – the 7-metre Tutea Falls, on the Kaituna River.

If that's not your cup of tea, spend the morning exploring Rotorua's many attractions such as the ultra-relaxing Polynesian Spa, or perhaps the naturally-impressive Kuirau Park full of steaming, hissing and boiling geothermal pools.

There are also some fantastic cafes and bakeries in the area. Why not grab a sweet treat for the road – a ginger slice is as Kiwi as it gets!

From Rotorua it's a quick drive to Taupō; a beautiful lakeside town with a stunning mountain backdrop. It's a short drive but we'll take our time, checking out bubbling mud pools and thundering waterfalls en route.

We finish our day nestled in Tongariro National Park, where we'll spend the next 2 nights, home to one of the 10 best one-day walks in the world – the Tongariro Crossing.



## DAY 7 - NATIONAL PARK

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Breakfast

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ The Tongariro Crossing - Full Day / Guided
- ▶ The Tongariro Crossing - Half Day Guided
- ▶ The Tongariro Crossing - Full Day / Unguided
- ▶ Forgotten World Adventures

Decision time - is today the day you brave the Tongariro Crossing?

Considered one of the world's top 10 best one-day walks, this 19.4km mountain trek boasts emerald green lakes, venting steam, lava flows, craters and rich green bush.

Not for the faint-hearted - it's a challenging day! But every step of the way the views are spectacular. Our guides highly recommend this activity, it's definitely a highlight.

If 19.4km is a little too far for you, there are plenty of shorter walks and hikes to enjoy. However you choose to spend today in this UNESCO World Heritage Area, we guarantee you won't forget it.



## DAY 8 - NATIONAL PARK TO WELLINGTON

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Breakfast
- ▶ Mount Victoria Lookout

Today we head to the coolest little capital city in the world, the hip and happening Wellington.

Perched on the edge of a spectacular harbour, encircled by green, towering hills, Wellington is a stunning and compact city. Vibrant, exciting and cultured, the nation's capital combines the stimulation and sophistication of a big city with the quirkiness and personality of a much smaller town.

After a quick afternoon orientation from your guide, head up Mount Victoria for some of the best views in town.

This evening, the city lights are yours to enjoy. Discover why Wellington is celebrated for its foodie culture - you are truly spoilt for dining choices tonight.

Wellington is also widely regarded as the craft beer capital of New Zealand. Want to test this for yourself? Talk to your guide to find the hidden gems.



## DAY 9 - WELLINGTON

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Te Papa Museum Tour
- ▶ Weta Workshop
- ▶ Kapiti Island
- ▶ Zealandia

Soak up the atmosphere of vibrant Wellington. Famous for being a bit on the windy side, be prepared to ditch the hairspray and go with the flow.

As always, your guide will introduce you to the city with an orientation tour - including a drive around the bays through central Wellington to the Botanic Gardens and Parliament Buildings.

You will also stop by Weta Studios, most famous for its creative contribution to all things Lord of the Rings. Take an optional tour to see prop-makers in action and learn about the immersive world of filmmaking.

Wellington has a feast of cultural attractions and its crowning glory is Te Papa, the national museum of New Zealand. Situated on Wellington's magnificent waterfront, this internationally acclaimed museum combines leading edge technology with traditional exhibits to tell the stories of New Zealand's land and people. The museum is free for all.

If being outdoors is more your thing, head off to Kapiti Island for an optional nature tour. Here you can see endangered birds up close and learn more about New Zealand's unique flora and fauna.



## DAY 10 - WELLINGTON TO KAIKŌURA

### INCLUDED

- ▶ Cook Strait Ferry
- ▶ Wine Tasting

This morning we say farewell to the North Island and take one of the world's most scenic ferry journeys as we cross the Cook Strait.

The South Island has a stunning welcome in store for us - gliding through the Marlborough Sounds as we approach Picton Harbour, you'll feel like you're in another world.

One of the best ways to explore Marlborough, the region at the top of the South Island, is with your tastebuds. That's why we jump straight on a wine tasting, to sample some of the best vineyards in the country.

After lunch, our next destination is Kaikōura which literally means "to eat crayfish" - and the area is teeming with them. The nutrient-rich waters of this area attract a wide variety of marine wildlife including the stars of the show - the whales and dolphins.



## DAY 11 - KAIKŌURA TO CHRISTCHURCH

### OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- ▶ Dolphin Encounter
- ▶ Whale Watching
- ▶ Whale Watching Flight
- ▶ Guided Seal Kayaking
- ▶ Swim with Seals
- ▶ Surf Lesson

The chance to swim with dolphins in the wild is a massive New Zealand highlight for many travellers, and Kaikōura is one of the best places to find them, with pods of up to 300 of these playful creatures hanging out here at any one time.

If you want to get up close to the giants of the ocean, a whale watching tour here is the way to do it. Humpbacks, sperm whales and orca all stop by at various times of year, so this is a great chance to meet some of them.

After visiting the local seals on our way out of town, our road trip continues to our home for the night - Christchurch, known as the "Garden City" for its peaceful parklands and lazy rivers.





## DAY 12 - CHRISTCHURCH POST TOUR DEBRIEF

### INCLUDED

Today is the final day of the tour, where we exchange photos and stories over breakfast before saying our goodbyes and parting ways.

- ▶ Breakfast



## FAQ

### WHERE DOES THE TOUR START AND END?

This tour starts with a 6pm pre-tour meeting at your Auckland accommodation on Day 1 and ends in Christchurch at 10am on Day 12.

### DO YOU VISIT MILFORD SOUND ON THIS TOUR?

This tour doesn't go to Queenstown - if you've got more time up your sleeve, why not check out the 20 Day New Zealand Uncovered Tour? It includes everything that the 12 day tour does, plus a South Island Christchurch-to-Christchurch loop. And that tour can include an optional trip to the wonderful Milford Sound while in Queenstown. There are a few different options for the excursion, which you can view online.

### WHAT ARE THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES ON THIS TOUR?

Everyone has their own favourites, but in general we find that these are the most popular:

- ▶ The Tongariro Crossing - National Park
- ▶ Hobbiton & Rafting - Rotorua
- ▶ Skydiving - Taupō

Please be aware that your guide will fit your activities in the best way possible depending on what activities are selected - so they may take place on different days or times than those listed on this itinerary.

### I AM TRAVELLING ALONE, CAN I JOIN THIS TOUR?

Yes! Around 70% of our guests are solo so you can absolutely join this, or any other of our tours. There are no single person supplements unless you want to have your own private room - in this case, upgrades are available.

### HOW MUCH SHOULD I BUDGET PER DAY FOR FOOD AND WHAT FOOD IS INCLUDED?

Included in this tour are 6 continental breakfasts and 2 dinners - including a traditional Māori hāngī, cooked in an underground oven.

Our guides know the best places in each town and city for different budgets and tastes, and they will point these out on the way into each location.

The tour group, along with your guide, will often head out to a local pub for a beer and a meal. Meals can range from NZ\$15 upwards.

### DO YOU CATER FOR VEGETARIANS AND VEGANS?

Yes - we often have vegetarian/vegan guests and all cafes and restaurants in New Zealand will offer meat-free options. If you can't see anything on the menu just ask, as most places will happily prepare something for you.



## FAQ

### HOW FAR IN ADVANCE SHOULD I MAKE A BOOKING?

We recommend booking as soon as you know you can travel, and have decided on which tour you would like to go on. Some of our tours can be quite popular so it's best to secure your spot as soon as possible. Your spot can be booked with just a NZ\$99 deposit, with the full balance due 45 days prior to departure. You can log into your account at any time up until 45 days prior to pay off part of your tour balance, add activities and customise your tour.

### WHAT AGES IS THIS TOUR FOR?

This tour was designed for travellers in their mid thirties and upwards, however anyone over the age of 18 is welcome to join. More important than age is attitude - we have found over the years that if you have a thirst for adventure then age is no barrier. Please do keep in mind, though, that a reasonable level of fitness is required for any optional activities - we can talk you through any concerns you may have.

**CONTACT US TODAY FOR THE BEST PRICES AND SERVICES**

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