



New Zealand Trails

New Zealand is a little country that packs a massive punch, with scenery off the scale! From the waterfront city of Auckland to the spectacular Southern Alps, New Zealand is blessed with an array of natural wonders.



YOUR
ADVENTURE
AWAITS

19 days/18 nights

ITINERARY

Day 1: Arrive Auckland

The day is free to relax and recover from the jet lag. Auckland is a beautiful city and worthy of some time to explore. The nearby Viaduct restaurants are an ideal means of overcoming the last of the jet lag and the day just slowly passes by. If you are feeling lucky visit the Sky City Casino tower for one of those lunches you just don't forget. Return to Auckland City Hotel at 6:00 pm to meet the group and for a full briefing with your leader.

(D)

Day 2: Rangitoto Island

Auckland is the City of Sails, so what better way to start your holiday than to take a cruise across the Gulf to the beautiful Rangitoto Island; which at only 600 years old, is the youngest volcano in New Zealand. The island has undergone a significant restoration programme and is entirely pest-free which encourages the native flora and fauna to thrive. We will walk through lava fields and forests to the summit of the island which stands 259m above sea level and has some stunning panoramic views of Auckland and the Hauraki Gulf.

(B)

Day 3: Rotorua

Leaving the city behind us we head south to Rotorua (approx. 3.5 hours drive) and our accommodation. On arrival we stretch our legs with a hike around the redwood forest followed by an optional afternoon at leisure in town or a hike at Blue Lake. The evening highlight is the Marae (ceremonial ground) visit. Our Maori hosts welcome us in their traditional manner before entertaining us with a concert and hangi (traditional meal).

(B)

Day 4: Tongariro National Park

We explore one of New Zealand's most colourful thermal areas with boiling mud pools, hot streams and silica terraces. The natural wonders that first attracted the Maori in the 14th century, and later the European's, still draw large numbers of tourists every year. Rotorua is a unique natural wonder and a must see destination. Leaving Rotorua we drive south (approx. 3 hours) to Tongariro National Park. On the way we visit the steaming Wai-O-Tapu geothermal valley and impressive Huka Falls.

(B)

Day 5: Hike Tongariro Crossing

From the many walking options that exist, you are free to take your choice as we explore this volcanic landform. Two half-day walks to beautiful waterfalls and bush lands (unguided) or the amazing 8hr Tongariro Alpine Crossing are on offer. The Tongariro Alpine Crossing has been called one of the greatest one-day walks in New Zealand and provided the weather is kind the rugged volcanic desert, craters and glacial valleys combined with the incredible views make this a day to remember. The crossing should not be underestimated and there are a number of steep sections where



the loose surface can make it tough going, so come well-prepared. The crossing can take 7-8 hours depending on walking ability. A magnificent scenic flight option also exists for those wanting to understand the volcanic origins of the area.

(B)

Day 6: Wellington

Relax following yesterday's efforts as we drive (approx. 5 hours) south to Wellington. Continue across the Rangitikei and Manawatu Plains and down the Kapiti Coast to Wellington. Across from our hotel is Te Papa, the NZ National Museum which we can explore in the afternoon along with the beautiful Botanic Gardens and cable car and enjoy the exciting nightlife of our capital city.

(B)

Day 7: Ferry across Cook Strait to Marlborough – Abel Tasman National Park

After an early breakfast we board the ferry and leave the North Island behind as we cross the Cook Strait, passing the Marlborough Sounds with 1500kms of beautiful coastline. From Picton we have a 90 min drive to Nelson where we take the time out explore the city – or an optional visit to the amazing Wearable Arts Museum. After this visit we drive to Motueka (approx 60 min) on the edge of the Abel Tasman National Park, with its idyllic golden sand beaches and forests.

(B)

Day 8: Coastal Walk – boat to Motueka

Out of Marahau, this morning coastal walk takes us through the beautiful beaches and ancient forests as the track weaves through the park, providing a kaleidoscope of impressions. The path is well maintained and the walk will take approx 3-4 hours. We meet our sailing boat at the Anchorage Bay, providing the return to Marahau and some time to relax dining out at the small town of Motueka.

(B)

Day 9: Buller River – sunset walk at Punakaiki

Our departure from the Abel Tasman National Park is followed by a scenic drive down the mighty Buller River. After a short stop at Cape Foulwind to see the local seal colony, we then stop at Punakaiki, home of the famous Pancake Rocks, to watch the setting sun (total driving time approx. 5 hours). If the tide is up the ground can physically shake and water spurts from the blow-holes and fissures that dot the coastline.

(B)

Day 10: Fox Glacier

Passing through areas of lush forests, we continue south down the beautiful west coast. We drive onto the small village of Okarito nestled on the lagoon, home of the rare Kotuku (white heron). On offer here is optional kayaking where we float in on the incoming tide and explore the bush-clad waterways seeking out the abundant bird life the lagoon is famous for. Those looking to stretch their legs can hike to the nearby Trig station (approx. 1.5 hours) for the spectacular views over the Southern Alps. Later we continue the short drive through to Fox township.

(B)

Day 11: Walk to Fox Glacier – Wanaka

After breakfast we stroll around the reflective Lake Matheson, a photographer's dream. As an optional extra (weather permitting), you can take a helicopter ride over the glaciers that lace the Southern Alps. As we head out of town, we take a drive up the valley and hike to a viewpoint of the spectacular Fox Glacier. We then continue south along bushclad roads and past the dramatic coastline with its wild windswept beaches to the settlement of Haast. Turning inland we climb over Haast Pass, the southernmost crossing of the Southern Alps that forms the boundary between Westland and Otago. From here the tussock lands of the eastern slopes merge with the beech forests. We travel through to Wanaka, home for the next two nights.

(B)

Day 12: Jet boat in Matukitiki

In the morning we head into the Mount Aspiring National Park and experience an exciting jet boat ride along the braided rivers leading into the park. Jet boating was invented in NZ as a means to negotiate the shallow braided rivers which we use to access a track leading to a hike into the cirque surrounded by huge mountain walls. Back at our coach we eat our picnic lunch before driving onto our 3 hr hike at the beautiful Diamond Lake that provides stunning views of the river delta and the landscape.

(B)

Day 13: Milford Sound

From Wanaka we depart early heading for Te Anau and then into the Eglington Valley through to the start of the Routeburn Track. At the saddle we take a 2-hour walk to Key Summit from for some spectacular views. We continue further into the spectacular mountains of the Milford region and then into Milford Sound itself where we join our floating accommodation for the night. The newly refurbished boat has private two bed cabins with shared facilities. We set sail amidst dolphins and mighty peaks towering above the fjord.

(B, D)



Day 14: Cruise Inner Sound – Queenstown

After an early morning breakfast we cruise the inner sound again searching for dolphins and seals before disembarking and retracing our tracks to Te Anau and then a stunning lakeside hike (approx. 5km) through the rainforest. After this hike we drive (approx. 3 hours) onto Queenstown and our next two nights are spent here.

(B)

Day 15: Queenstown

A free day to enjoy the scenic delights of this world famous destination, home of the famous bungee jump! Optional activities include a 4 x 4 drive into the remote Skippers Canyon; a visit to the historic gold mining centre of Arrowtown; a cruise aboard the historic steamship to Walter Peak sheep station; paragliding or bungee jumping! Then again, you may just prefer to simply spend the day shopping or relaxing.

(B)

Day 16: Mt. Cook National Park – trek in Hooker Valley

Travel through the barren Kawarau Gorge where large amounts of gold were dredged at the turn of the century. Drive over Lindis Pass to the tussock-covered plains of the Mackenzie basin and into the Mt Cook National Park (total approx. 4 hours). Beneath NZ's highest peak we walk into the Hooker Valley with its crashing glaciers and glacial lakes. By early evening we reach our motel and watch the spectacular view from the warmth of the restaurant.

(B)

Day 17: Canterbury Plains – Christchurch

After breakfast we have the option to hike (approx. 2 hours) to the nearby red tarns on Mt Sebastapol or an optional visit to the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre and the local Department of Conservation Centre. By late morning we depart for nearby Lake Tekapo and visit the observatory on the summit of Mt John, a short hike down to the township. From here we drive (approx. 3.5 hours) across the mosaic of the Canterbury Plains out to Christchurch and the end of our drive.

(B)

Day 18: Christchurch

Above Christchurch is the summit walkway and in the morning we have a final hike (approx. 2-3 hours) enjoying the spectacular views into the Lyttleton harbour and across the Canterbury Plains. After the devastating earthquakes of 2010/11, the city is undergoing a major rebuild, unrivalled in the world. The afternoon is free to explore this city rebuild as well as the beautiful gardens and Hagley park.

(B)

Day 19: Tour ends in Christchurch.

You can depart anytime today, as the tour ends today in Christchurch.

(B)

Details

Group Size: Maximum 16

Trip Code:

009390-W20

INCLUDED

- Transportation and activities listed in itinerary
- Tour guide throughout
- 17 nights of accommodation in comfortable hotels and lodges
- 1 night cruise-boat accommodation with shared washroom facilities
- Breakfast daily, 2 dinners

NOT INCLUDED

- International airfare to Auckland, return from Christchurch
- Meals and drinks not specified
- Travel insurance
- Visa fees or vaccinations, if required
- Items of a personal nature

TOUR NOTES

Disclaimer: We do our utmost to ensure that information posted on our website is correct at the time of publication, however trip details are subject to change without notice by the suppliers and operators involved. We update the information as soon as possible when changes are advised to us, however, we cannot assume responsibility for such changes made by the suppliers and operators.



ROUTE MAP



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