

DAY 1

Arrive Auckland

On arrival at Auckland Airport, transfer to your Auckland Hotel.

The balance of the day is at leisure to begin your exploration of the City of Sails.

Duration 2 Nights

Accommodation Heritage Auckland Hotel

DAY 2

Best of Both Worlds

Experience the best sights of Auckland City in the morning combined with an afternoon Wilderness Experience -- a day of contrasts. Auckland is set on 52 dormant volcanic cones and between two harbours, the sparkling Waitemata and the brooding Manukau. Known as the City of Sails, it's New Zealand's largest and busiest city. The morning tour is a journey of discovery designed to explore the history and sights as well as see how Aucklanders live and play.

A 30 minute drive from downtown Auckland brings you to the Arataki Centre, the gateway to the rain forest, where the sweeping decks give breathtaking panoramic views from the Tasman Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Absorb the local history and admire the traditional Maori carvings that stand guard there. Head further west and experience the power of the wild and rugged west coast. Feel the black sand beneath your feet as you stroll along some of the most awe-inspiring beaches the world has to offer.

With your knowledgeable and experienced guide, your eco-tour continues on to the lush rain forest where you hear native birdsong as you walk the easy bush tracks amongst New Zealand's famous kauri trees and giant tree ferns.

Duration 8 Hours

DAY 3

Auckland to Rotorua via Hobbiton

Travel south from Auckland over the Bombay Hills to the rich farmland of the Waikato region. You travel through the heritage town of Cambridge where tree-lined streets add to the English-style atmosphere. From here your journey takes you through undulating green hills reminding you that you are approaching Hobbiton Shire.

On arrival at Shire's Rest you embark on your Hobbiton movie set tour. This location is the largest "green set" in the world and the only place where you get an emotional response to a movie set in a natural setting. You see 44 hobbit holes, the Mill and double arch bridge and the party tree. At this stunning location you can take a photo at the door of Bilbo's house, "Bag End", looking out over the whole set to the hills in the distance. The tour ends with a visit to the Green Dragon Inn for a drink. After the tour at Hobbiton, board the shuttle at Shire's Rest Cafe for your journey to Rotorua.

Meal Plan Lunch
Duration 2 Nights
Accommodation Regent of Rotorua

DAY 4

Geothermal Wonderland and Tamaki Maori Village

Experience the amazing geothermal activity and stunning volcanic landscapes of the "world's youngest geothermal area" Waimangu Volcanic Valley on a combination guided walk and boat cruise. The walking tracks offer spectacular views of the valley's diversity of hot crater lakes, steaming cliffs, hot streams, hot pools, boiling springs, hissing fumaroles, vividly colored silica terraces, unique thermally adapted plants, rainforest, and native birdlife. On the scenic Rotomahana, Crater Lake boat cruise learn of the areas fascinating volcanic past and the history of the 1886 Mount Tarawera eruption whilst enjoying your picnic lunch and the spectacular vistas of volcanic scenery surrounding the crater lake.

This evening, you will engage in an immersive experience blending the best in Maori culture and cuisine. Tonight, participate in a heart-warming ritual and the mystical ceremony of the umu kohukohu while feasting on delicious and nourishing seasonal kai (cuisine). Crackling bonfires in the native tawa forest and cozy whare (houses) are the intimate backdrop to Tu Te Ihi.

Upon arrival at the village, a torch-lined path leads you to a candle-lit wharekai for a sumptuous four-course hakari (feast). Feel amazed as the mementos of Aotearoa history and eras, as well as the warm whanau (family) vibe intensify the spirit of hakari. Your winter forest kai morsels have been designed by award-winning Maori chefs, and they may include local delicacies like spit-roasted tuna (native eel), mugs of steaming hot pork and watercress boil up, creamed paua on rewena crostini, foraged greens, chunks of smoked kahawai with lashings of basil sauce and corn husk wrapped kumara kept warm in ashes.

Meal Plan Dinner

DAY 5

Rotorua to Queenstown

This morning, transfer to the Rotorua airport for the flight to Queenstown on New Zealand's South Island. (Flight not included in price).

On arrival at Queenstown, you will be transferred to your hotel.

The balance of the day is at leisure.

Duration 3 Nights
Accommodation Heritage Queenstown

DAY 6

Milford Sound Fly and Cruise

Following a transfer to the Queenstown airport, board an aircraft for the flight to Milford Sound. During the 35 minute scenic flight, take in expansive views of golden tussocked high country and the upper reaches of Lake Wakatipu and fly over the snow-capped Southern Alps. A hidden landscape unfolds below revealing glacial lakes, waterfalls, densely forested valleys and cloud-piercing summits.

On reaching Milford Sound join an extended and leisurely cruise of Milford Sound to the Tasman Sea. Nature cruises have a relaxed and flexible itinerary designed to allow guests to see and experience what makes Milford Sound world renowned. Spend up to two and a half hours nudging into waterfalls, spotting wildlife and listening to the informative commentary from a specialist Nature Guide who mingles with guests. Keep a look out for wildlife including seals, dolphins and penguins. A picnic lunch is included and complimentary tea and coffee is available.

Following the cruise, guests are transferred to the Milford airport for the scenic flight back to Queenstown. Return taxi transfers are provided to accommodation on arrival at Queenstown airport.

Meal Plan Lunch

DAY 7

Queenstown At Leisure

Today is totally free and at leisure. You can take advantage of any optional activities available or simply relax.

DAY 8

Queenstown to Christchurch via Mt. Cook

Today, transfer from Queenstown to Christchurch while exploring some of New Zealand's most spellbinding landscapes. This small group, fully-guided day trip combines all of the key highlights in the region, including the famous Lake Tekapo, Mt Cook National Park, Lindis Pass, and the Church of the Good Shepard making it the ultimate way to get from Queenstown to Christchurch. Your tour is led by passionate tour guides notorious for bringing the journey to life by sharing their stories and rich background knowledge.

Duration 1 Night

Accommodation

Quest Cathedral Junction

DAY 9

Depart Christchurch

Today, you will be transferred to the Christchurch Airport for your onward flight.