

CULTURAL WONDERS & LOCAL CUISINE

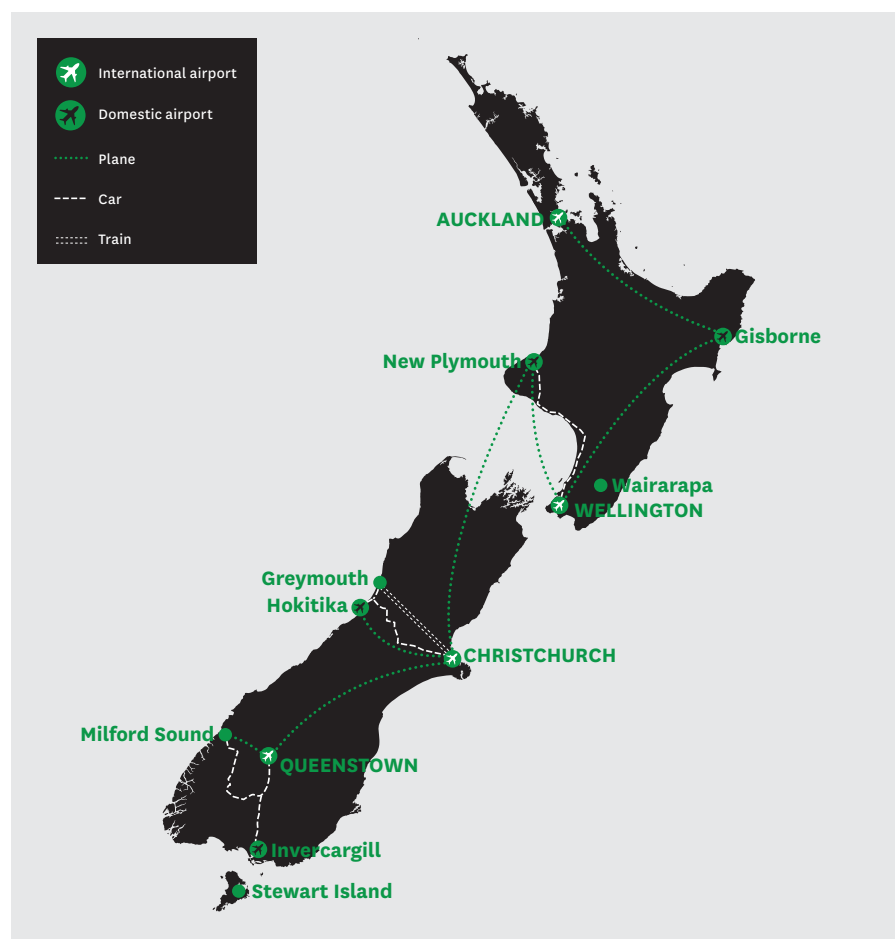
Aotearoa New Zealand
23 days self-drive and fly



Maunga Hikurangi
Gisborne



Tick off bucket list items on this 23 day itinerary across the length of Aotearoa New Zealand. Discover dramatic coastal views, rare birdlife and surprising pockets of art, architecture and heritage on this journey from Auckland to Southland. The diverse wealth of Māori culture, performing arts, museums and art galleries will leave even the most fervent arts and culture buffs satisfied.



Walking



Gardens



Culture



Food and Wine

HIGHLIGHTS

- Indulge in ‘forest therapy’
- Visit a Garden of National Significance
- Walk among the tree tops
- Witness the Eighth Wonder of the World
- Stargaze in the southernmost point of New Zealand



Waiheke Island

TE IKA-Ā-MĀUI THE NORTH ISLAND

DAYS 1 & 2:

Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

Auckland is a multi-cultural urban oasis of food, music, arts and culture. It's where sparkling waters and lush landscapes meet city sophistication. Visit the **Auckland Museum** and arrange a guided Gallery Highlights tour to discover the stories of New Zealand, our place in the Pacific and our people. Or join a guided food or arts tour with **Fine Art Tours NZ** to go behind the scenes and speak to artisan producers. Collection from your clients' inner-city hotel or cruise port is included.

For a culinary extravaganza, book a Gourmet Food and Wine Tour on Waiheke Island (a 40 minute ferry from central Auckland) with **Ananda Tours**. Whilst on the island, explore off the beaten track with **Terra & Tide**. Partake in one of their wellbeing workshops, such as 'forest therapy' or take to the water and discover the Hauraki Gulf by catamaran.



Terra & Tide, Waiheke Island



Maunga Hikurangi, Gisborne

DAYS 3 & 4:

Tairāwhiti Gisborne

Auckland to Gisborne ✈️ 1 hour 5 min

Welcome to the land of beautiful sunrises, warm locals, and laidback charm. One of the most accessible places to catch the stunning east coast sunrise is Wainui Beach, go for a stroll along the shore and enjoy the dawn of the day. Half an hour from here the **Eastwoodhill National Arboretum of New Zealand** is beautiful in any season and home to over 131 hectares of incredible exotic and native trees and shrubs and over 40 kinds of birdlife. For those with a good level of fitness, a hike up the sacred **Maunga Hikurangi** (Mount Hikurangi), two hours from Gisborne is a rich cultural experience. Two thirds of the way up the mountain stand nine whakairo (Māori carvings) depicting Māui and his whānau (family). A **guide** is strongly advised to get the most out of this experience.

After a day in the wilderness, head to one of the boutique wineries or breweries and have a chat with the friendly locals. **Matawhero Wines** have a great cellar door and is the perfect spot to relax with a glass of their famous chardonnay and a gourmet platter. Matawhero Wines also offer quality, boutique accommodation with tranquil views across the vineyards.

Expert tip: For a luxurious ocean-view stay, check out **The Blackhouse** situated atop Wainui Beach overlooking the Pacific Ocean. The Blackhouse is on a 1000 acre working farm with breathtaking ocean and rural views.



Castlepoint, Wairarapa

DAYS 5, 6 & 7: Te Whanganui-a-Tara Wellington & Wairarapa

Gisborne to Wellington ✈️ 1 hour 15 min

Touch down in the world's 'coolest little capital' Wellington, a vibrant city where visitors are never far from a cold craft beer and sensational barista coffee. After exploring **The Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa**, venture north of the city to discover **Kāpiti Island Nature Reserve**, a utopia for native wildlife, and rich in New Zealand history. Accessible only via one licenced tour operator, this is one of the Wellington region's best kept secrets. Guided walks can focus on either the natural history or the cultural history of the island – let your clients choose. When back in Wellington city, settle in for dinner and drinks at one of the many lively bars and restaurants dotted around the inner city.

The next day, embark on a guided full day tour with **Kaewa Tours**, over the Remutaka hill to the magnificent wine region of the Wairarapa. Guests will visit artisan food producers, sample world class wines and enjoy the scenic drive to the southernmost point of the North Island, Cape Palliser or the rugged Castlepoint (hopefully spotting some fur seals along the way!)



Kapiti Island Tours



New Plymouth, Taranaki

DAYS 8, 9 & 10: Taranaki

Wellington to New Plymouth ✈️ 1 hour

🚗 353km / 219mi | 4 hours 30 min

Taranaki is a vibrant coastal region, placed under the watchful eye of the revered Taranaki Maunga (Mount Taranaki), which you may recognise from a few Hollywood blockbusters. Take a walk or cycle down **New Plymouth Coastal Walkway** and discover sculptures and art installations such as Len Lye's Wind Wand, the Mothers & Daughters stone and Te Rewa Rewa bridge to name a few.

Be surrounded by distinctive flora and fauna at **Tūpare Garden**, and arrange a guided tour of the heritage Tudor style homestead on site. Or visit the famous **Pukekura Park**, a Garden of National Significance and take a leisurely row across the lake, spotting glimpses of the snow-capped mountain through the trees. For an art gallery experience like no other, **Govett-Brewster/Len Lye Centre** is an immersive experience with ever-changing exhibitions. A private tour with one of the gallery experts is recommended to really do the art justice.

Expert tip: For a contemporary yet luxurious stay, book **King and Queen Hotel Suites**, New Plymouth's leading boutique hotel located across the road from the Len Lye Centre.



TranzAlpine

TE WAIPOUNAMU THE SOUTH ISLAND

DAYS 11 & 12:

Ōtautahi Christchurch

New Plymouth to Christchurch ✈️ 1 hour 30 min

Artisan producers and laneway hospitality precincts await in the colourful city of Ōtautahi Christchurch. Get the lay of the land with a **street art tour**, discovering hundreds of vibrant artworks by inspiring artists. Hop on board an electric shuttle and enjoy an informative guided tour through the spectacular **Botanic Gardens**, or experience the chill of the **International Antarctic Centre**.

For experiences out of the city, take the short trip over the hill to the French-inspired town of Akaroa. Cruise the harbour with **Pipi Journeys**, and experience traditional Māori culture and indigenous philosophies such as manaakitanga (deep expression of hospitality) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship and protection).

Then all aboard the **TranzAlpine** bound for the West Coast, a scenic train journey between Christchurch and Greymouth. To delight the tastebuds, the TranzAlpine Scenic Plus class offers a true taste of the Canterbury and West Coast regions with meals filled with fresh ingredients from the paddocks through which passengers pass. Scenic Plus or not, this is a journey rich in beautiful vistas, and not to be missed.



Ōtautahi Christchurch



Punakaiki, West Coast

DAYS 13 & 14:

Te Tai o Poutini West Coast

Christchurch to Hokitika ✈️ 45 min

🚗 353km / 219mi | 4 hours 30 min

Christchurch to Greymouth 🚆 4 hours 45 min

🚗 241km / 150mi | 3 hours 20 min

Disembark the TranzAlpine in Greymouth, this coastal town is a great base for a visit to **Punakaiki** pancake rocks and blowholes. Walk among rainforest giants with **West Coast Tree Top Walk**. View the exquisite Lake Mahinupua through the diverse forest foliage. Further south along the coast brings you to Hokitika, known for the azure blue waters of the gorge and art galleries and workshops specialising in pounamu (greenstone).

See **Franz Josef Glacier** or **Fox Glacier** in all their grandeur from above with a helicopter trip. For those keen on getting up close and personal, a heli-hike is a great way to witness the sheer size of these glacial wonders. Continuing time at high altitude, book a **scenic flight** from Franz Josef to the awe-inspiring Milford Sound in Fiordland National Park. This scenic flight is the epitome of the saying, "Life is about the journey, not the destination".

DAYS 15, 16 & 17:

Te Rua o Te Moko Fiordland

Queenstown to Milford Sound ✈ Scenic flight times vary

Perhaps the jewel in Fiordland's crown, Piopiotahi Milford Sound, was famously described by Rudyard Kipling as the 'Eighth Wonder of the World'. Breath-taking in any weather, its mountainous peaks, cliffs and waterfalls as high as 1000 metres will impress even the most discerning visitor. And when it rains in Milford Sound (and it often does!) the waterfalls multiply with magnificent effect. Take to the water and cruise across Milford Sound, Doubtful Sound or Lake Te Anau. Some operators also offer overnight stays onboard, to experience the surrounding natural beauty in all lights. There are rental car services in Te Anau, otherwise a **scenic flight** to Queenstown is a great option if budget allows.



DAYS 18, 19 & 20:

Tāhuna Queenstown and Maniototo Central Otago

Milford Sound to Queenstown 🚗 287km / 178mi | 3 hours 45 min

You won't go thirsty in Queenstown or Central Otago, these thriving wine regions have a multitude of cellar doors and wineries to visit; **Mt Rosa Wines**, **Carrick Winery**, **Cloudy Bay** and **Amisfield** are just a few local favourites. For something a little more hands on, take wine tasting to the next level with **Kinross's** 'Winemaker for the Day' experience. Held at their cellar door in the Gibbston Valley, your clients will have the chance to create their very own unique pinot noir blend.

Cruise across Lake Wakatipu on the TSS Earnslaw with **RealNZ**. This experience is complete with a tour of Walter Peak, a high country farm. Enjoy a guided walking tour of the farm with the opportunity to feed sheep, deer, alpacas and get up close with Scottish Highland cows.

DAYS 21, 22 & 23:

Murihiku Southland

Queenstown to Invercargill 🚗 188km / 117mi | 2 hours 25 min

There are few places in the country that have such varied landscapes as Murihiku Southland, right on the edge of New Zealand. This region engages the senses in ways that only untouched places can and is home to much of Aotearoa New Zealand's most dramatic places and wildlife. A visit to Southland wouldn't be complete without sampling the local seafood delicacies on Rakiura Stewart Island. An hour by ferry or 20 minutes by air, get a glimpse into a slower lifestyle, one revolving around the natural world of forest and ocean.

Tick off some truly spectacular bucket list items, embark on the **Ulva Island Photography Tour** – for professional photographers and amateurs alike. Or spot our national bird with an evening **wild kiwi encounter**, a tour which includes a guided walk in Mamaku Point Conservation Reserve. Back on the mainland, visit **Transport World** in Invercargill and hear the tales of Burt Munro, one of New Zealand's most celebrated speed bike racers.

Expert tip: For an off the grid escape in Rakiura Stewart Island, book a stay in **Hananui** or **Tokoeka PurePod**. Without light pollution, guests will experience celestial night skies. Both PurePods are located in an eco-sanctuary, and kiwi have been spotted roaming around the property at night.

Can't get enough of Aotearoa New Zealand? Visit the **Travel Trade website** for more itineraries as well as inspiration, tips and important trade information.

