



23 DAY ITINERARY

This three-week Tiki Tour from Auckland to Queenstown hits all the highlights and gives you plenty of time to explore New Zealand's most hidden gems.

AT A GLANCE

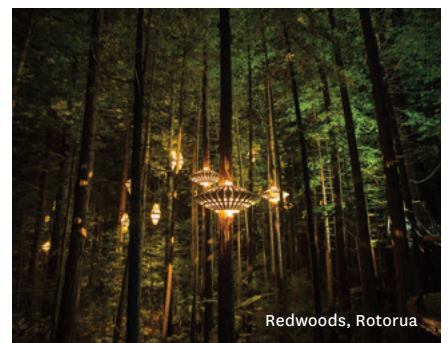
- 22 Nights / 23 Days
- In depth North & South Island
- Geothermal wonders & cultural immersion
- Stunning coastlines
- Breath-taking alpine experiences

DAYS 1-3 (Auckland – Rotorua)

Welcome to Auckland, the City of Sails. Spend a day experiencing everything the city has to offer, from the adrenaline inducing Sky Tower jump to a peaceful wine tasting experience on Waiheke Island, just 40 minutes by ferry, but a whole world away from the bustling CBD.

A quick one-hour flight from Auckland delivers you straight into the

Geothermal wonders of Rotorua. Take a dip in hot pools and feast on Kai (food) cooked in the hot spring lakes at Te Puia. Finish the day with a traditional hāngī dinner and cultural show or colourful night lantern walk through the Redwood Treetops. Mt Tarawera offers a fantastic view across the region and if you're looking for something more adventurous try OGO Zorbing or the Skyline Luge.





Wai-O-Tapu

DAYS 4-6 (Taupō – Wellington)

Continue south towards Taupō, a relaxing lake front town, stopping in at Wai-O-Tapu on the way for more spectacular Geothermal scenery. From Taupō, kayak or cruise out into the lake to see ancient Māori rock carvings in the shadow of Ruapehu and Tongariro mountains, or crank up the energy and take a jet boat up to the mighty Huka Falls.

Tackle the famous one-day Tongariro Crossing hike in National Park, traversing volcanic craters and lava flows to reach stunning emerald

lakes or just explore the shorter walks to beautiful waterfalls and afterwards retire to the Chateau Tongariro.

Keep heading south to the coolest little capital, Wellington. The thriving coffee and craft beer culture means you will never go thirsty. Enjoy a food tour of the city or nature lovers should visit Zealandia, combined with a trip on the Cable Car to get great scenic views of the city and harbour.



Mine Bay, Lake Taupō



Tongariro Crossing, Ruapehu



Wellington

DAYS 7-11 (Nelson – Christchurch)

The three-hour ferry across the Cook Strait to Picton includes a scenic cruise through the spectacular Marlborough Sounds. A short but worthwhile detour west to Nelson promises amazing markets, food and local artists. Keep going and you'll reach Abel Tasman National Park, a haven for hiking, kayaking and marine wildlife. Try a traditional Waka Canoe or a guided kayak and walk to hear about the history of the area.

Head back east to taste some of New Zealand's famous Marlborough Region wines and follow the coastline south to Kaikoura, the renowned whale

watching mecca where you can see Giant Sperm Whales, Humpbacks, Pilot Whales and Orcas. Make sure you get out on the water with Whale Watch Kaikoura and in the water with Dolphin Encounter or Seal Swim.

Continue south to Christchurch, New Zealand's vibrant and ever-changing second-largest city, affectionately known as 'The Garden City'. For stunning views head up the Christchurch Gondola or explore the centre as you ride on the historic Christchurch Tram.



Abel Tasman National Park



Kaikoura



Christchurch



Roys Peak, Wanaka

DAYS 12-15 (Greymouth – Wanaka)

Venture west into Arthur’s Pass, a scenic route intersected by one of the world’s great train journeys, the TranzAlpine. Slightly north of Greymouth is the natural phenomenon of the Pancake Rocks at Punakaiki and just south is Hokitika, famous for Pounamu - New Zealand Jade - and the crystal clear blue waters of Hokitika Gorge.

Franz Josef and Fox Village, roughly two hours south, are best known for Heli hiking and Ice climbing on the glaciers. To keep your feet on the ground, walk along the valley floor to the terminal face of the glaciers, relax in local

hot pools and meet the native Kiwi’s at the West Coast Wildlife Centre. Lake Matheson, just 10 minutes outside of Fox Village, offers a perfect mirror image of the Mountains.

Continue to the Haast Pass at the north end of Mt Aspiring National Park, known for it’s natural beauty. Allow plenty of time for stops as there are amazing waterfalls just metres from the roadside. Drive between Lakes Wanaka and Hawea as you enter Wanaka, Queenstown’s laid back neighbour lakeside town, popular for mountain biking and hiking.



Punakaiki



Hokitika Gorge, West Coast



Franz Josef Glacier, West Coast

DAYS 16-19 (Aoraki/Mount Cook – Dunedin)

Drive north to Aoraki/Mount Cook Village through the scenic Lindis Pass and alongside the aqua-blue Lake Pukaki. A glacier explorer cruise gets up close to icebergs, or a heli-hike takes you right to the top of the glacier. A night in the Mackenzie Region under the Dark Sky Reserve delivers amazing starscapes then continue one hour to Tekapo, famous for the iconic stone Church of Good Sheppard on the banks of another stunning blue lake. Arrive early and enjoy the lakeside hot pools before they get busy.

Back on the east coast continue to the historic Waitaki town of Oamaru, known as the White Stone City for it’s Victorian Heritage and witness the Little Blue Penguin Parade just before sunset. The city of Dunedin, known for its Scottish heritage, offers a 1 hour guided tour of Olveston Historic House providing a glimpse of life in the early 1900s. Larnach Castle, situated on the picturesque Otago Peninsula, is New Zealand’s only castle and for a truly unique experience, offers overnight accommodation. The nearby mainland Royal Albatross colony is accessible by a one-hour guided walk.



Lake Pukaki, Canterbury



Tekapo, Canterbury



Larnach Castle, Dunedin



Queenstown

DAYS 20–21 (Invercargill - Fiordland)

Continue on the Southern Scenic Route towards hidden gem Catlins Conservation Park with its coastal cliffs and headlands, beaches, extensive temperate rainforests and waterfalls. Guides can point out yellow-eyed penguins, fur seals or even the endangered Hector's dolphin at Curio Bay, known for its ancient fossil forest, one of the most extensive and least disturbed examples of a Jurassic fossil forest in the world.

A small detour to Bluff puts you at the southernmost point of mainland New Zealand. Invercargill is an automobile haven, from motorcycles and cars to heavy machinery. Get behind the controls of a bulldozer at Dig This or crush a car in their "aggression session", it's a type of fun you never knew you needed.

Enjoy a scenic drive through Southland to Te Anau, the gateway to the Fiords. Spend a night in Te Anau and catch the later Milford and Doubtful Sound cruises to avoid the crowds from day-trippers.



Catlins, Otago



Milford Sound, Fiordland



Doubtful Sound, Fiordland

DAYS 22–23 (Queenstown)

The views en route to Queenstown are magnificent so allow plenty of time for stops and keep a look out for native Kea's, New Zealand's clever alpine parrots. Once downtown, grab yourself a famous Ferg Burger for dinner, or head up

the Skyline Gondola for a bird's eye view of the city and a satisfying buffet. Queenstown is New Zealand's adventure playground; enjoy jet boats, bungy jumps, skydives, scenic flights so much more, it's a great way to end your trip!



Queenstown



Queenstown



Queenstown



Cathedral Cove, Coromandel

TOP TIPS

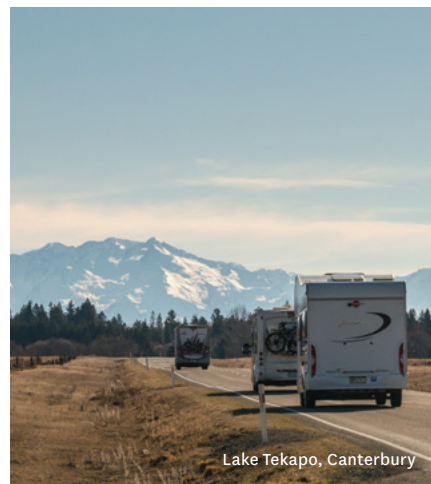
- If you've got longer then consider adding in a few days in the beautiful Northland and Coromandel Regions to enjoy some of New Zealand's best beaches.
- New Zealand has many wine regions – Waikeke Island, Hawkes Bay and Central Otago are famous for their Red Wines, while Wairarapa and Marlborough are famous for their white wines
- When planning a trip around New Zealand consider starting your days early to catch the sunrise as New Zealand is the first country to witness this each day. Early starts will also help with the driving times and mean you can enjoy afternoon activities; arriving later in some rural areas may mean things are closed when you arrive so bear this in mind.
- Make sure you allow plenty of time for windy roads and photo stops. A two-hour drive can take several hours longer if you stop for short walks along the way – make a feature of your journey and include activities along the way.
- New Zealand does experience Seasonal weather but some regions are known for getting “four seasons in one day” so make sure you bring plenty of layers and warm clothes if you are planning to explore alpine regions.
- If driving in remote areas, remember to keep an eye on your fuel gauge, opportunities to fill up could be limited.
- When visiting wineries make sure you are booking guided tours, alcohol limits are particularly low in New Zealand.
- Make sure you wear sunscreen even if it doesn't seem particularly sunny, the sun is deceptively strong here.
- New Zealand is very lucky to have no dangerous animals, so walking through national parks and forests you don't need to worry about those, but please stay on the tracks as our native animals may be nesting close by.
- If hiring a campervan make sure you camp responsibly and only empty tanks at designated areas. You will need to factor in powered sites every couple of nights to re-charge your vehicle.
- Freedom camping is not usually permitted close to towns, if you want to stay more central check holiday parks. In peak seasons these can book up early so make sure you plan several months ahead for December – March travel.
- It's worth comparing costs of a campervan vs car hire & motels as the difference in price may be small, but convenience and comfort may be considerations.



Lake Pukaki, Canterbury



Oparara Arches, West Coast



Lake Tekapo, Canterbury