

STELLAR EXPERIENCES IN NEW ZEALAND



Kura Tawhiti, Castle Hill
Canterbury

**100% PURE
NEW ZEALAND**
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
Introduction

Star-studded skies, unique experiences and quality food and wine are just a few of the reasons why manuhiri (visitors) travel to Aotearoa New Zealand.

To showcase the exceptional pairing of stargazing and delicious kai (food), Tourism New Zealand recently invited international tastemakers to a one-off restaurant experience at Kura Tawhiti Castle Hill in Canterbury, featuring a degustation menu created by New Zealand chef Ben Bayly.

For travel sellers like yourself, we've curated a selection of premier stargazing, accommodation, culinary and wellness experiences we know appeal to New Zealand visitors. And with our expert tips, suggestions on the best times of year to visit and sample itinerary, you can feel confident recommending these experiences to your clients.



 Lake Tekapo/Takapō
Canterbury

Magical Stargazing Experiences

Dark, clear skies, unique celestial features and otherworldly landscapes make stargazing in New Zealand a magical experience.

New Zealand has relatively little light pollution and is home to some of the most accessible night-sky observatories in the world.

Best time of year: Year-round, but especially good from March to August when the nights are earlier and longer, and stargazers have the best chance of spotting the Southern Cross and Matariki (Pleiades) star clusters and the Milky Way galaxy.



Magical Stargazing Experiences



Star Safari
Wairarapa

Star Safari

Spot planets, meteors and nebulae (gas clouds) through state-of-the-art telescopes from the Wairarapa's International Dark Sky Reserve.

If clouds obscure the skies, the Star Safari team can take visitors on a virtual journey through the stars thanks to VR headsets. At night temperatures drop so guests need to pack warm layers. The observatories, paths and viewing platforms at Star Safari are gravel, so bear this in mind if booking clients with specific accessibility requirements.

Expert Tip: Multiple sessions are held most evenings and it's recommended that families with young children book the first session held just after sunset.

Need to know

centre@milky-way.kiwi

www.star-safari.nz

 Wellington

Stellar Accommodation Experiences

From glass pods set under the stars to tree houses tucked within native forest, New Zealand's unique accommodations are suitable for every type of traveller. And these offerings are complemented by warm, welcoming hospitality from friendly locals.

Best time of year to travel: From March to November there is greater availability on properties and room types, as well as lower accommodation pricing with some providers and less crowded facilities. Bear in mind, this does not apply to accommodation in New Zealand's ski areas over the peak winter months.



Kokako Retreat
Rotorua

Stellar Accommodation Experiences

Hapuku Lodge + Tree Houses

Just 15-minutes from Kaikōura, Hapuku Lodge + Tree Houses offer a collection of lodge suites, five elevated tree houses and the freestanding Olive House, all with soaking tubs and fireplaces.

Room rates include a full breakfast and a three-course gourmet dinner. Luxury facilities include a year-round heated mineral pool and a studio spa with nature inspired treatments.


If your clients are keen for some soft adventure, beach to forest trails surround the lodge. Use one of the on-site mountain bikes or opt for their packed picnic and explore the area on foot.

For those keen to get out on the ocean, a fishing trip can be arranged where clients can try their luck at catching a kōura (crayfish) and other seasonal seafood.

Need to know

info@hapukulodge.com

www.hapukulodge.com

 Christchurch

 Hapuku Lodge + Tree Houses
Kaikōura



SkyScape

Go off-grid with a stay at an eco-friendly glasshouse – SkyScape.

Your clients can gaze at the stars from the comfort of their king-sized bed through the glass-roofed bedroom. There's also an oversized spring-fed bathtub on the sunken outdoor courtyard.

This adults-only property has three separate pods each accommodating a maximum of two people. A continental breakfast is provided.


Your clients can choose to self-cater (gas stove, fridge and kettle provided), dine at one of the nearby restaurants, or arrange for a seasonal dinner platter delivered to their pod.

Expert Tip: Booking for a group? Full property occupancy (max six people) is an option. Each property is in a private location hidden by natural landscaping, walking distance apart (250 – 400 metres).

Need To Know

info@skyscape.co.nz

www.skyscape.co.nz

 Christchurch or Queenstown

Celestial Culinary Experiences

Gourmet dining, award-winning vineyards and quirky local delicacies create exhilarating food journeys that leave the taste buds singing. Elevate your client's dining with a fun foodie experience and create lasting memories.

Seasonal dining: March to May brings wine region harvests as well as a range of shellfish and leafy greens. March to August is the famous Bluff oyster season, as well as pāua (abalone) and root vegetables. September to November your clients can expect spring lamb, whitebait (small freshwater fish) and juicy citrus fruit.



Te Pā Tū

Spend an evening filled with song, performance, connection and kai (food). Your clients will be immersed in Māori history and traditions through dining and celebration, starting with a pōwhiri (welcoming ceremony) before dining on a seasonal three-course menu curated by celebrated Māori chefs.

Te Pā Tū hosts two seasonal experiences. Tū Te Rā Summer Harvest Celebration (November – April) is aligned with the Māori lunar calendar. Tū Te Ihi Winter Matariki


Celebration (May – October) occurs when Matariki stars are high and bright in the winter sky.

Complimentary return transfers from central Rotorua are included in the 3.5 hour experience.

Need To Know

tiaana@tauharano2.co.nz

www.te-pa-tu.com

 Rotorua



Celestial Culinary Experiences



The Black Diamond Experience by The Lindis

Book your clients an off-the-beaten track, private, fine dining experience at The Lindis' Black Diamond in the remote Ahuriri Valley.

Guests begin with a guided horse-trek, in proper high country station-style, into the remote reaches of the Ahuriri Valley (motor vehicle or hiking options are also available).

Up to eight diners are welcomed with a glass of champagne, canapés and jaw-dropping views while a private chef prepares a gourmet three-course meal.


This experience is only available for guests of The Lindis. Accommodation includes daily meals, minibar and self-guided activities.

Expert Tip: Stargazing opportunities are plentiful due to the remote location of The Lindis. Low season rates are available between May and October. Children 12 years and over are welcome at the property.


Need To Know

reservations@thelindisgroup.com


www.thelindisgroup.com

 Dunedin or Queenstown



 The Black Diamond Experience by The Lindis
Waitaki



 Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa
Rotorua

Divine Wellness Experiences

New Zealand is host to a unique and diverse range of wellness operators, from health spas to mud bathing, and everything in between.

Geothermal activity means New Zealand has natural hot pools, even in winter, which often contain minerals dissolved from the elements with restorative properties.

Best time of year to travel: March to November offers greater availability, low season pricing with some providers and less crowded facilities.

Divine Wellness Experiences



Terra & Tide

Slow down and connect with nature on a unique forest bathing experience on Waiheke Island. Led by an internationally accredited nature and forest therapy guide with over 25 years of experience, this private wellness activity focusses on mindfulness and being present.

Begin with an easy walk through a light-filled forest, and conclude with a reflective Japanese tea ceremony.

While on Waiheke, your clients may like to extend their time on the island by adding on a guided walking tour or spectacular sailing trip in the Hauraki Gulf – both of which are bookable through Terra & Tide, an Ekos Climate Positive certified business.

Though spectacular year-round, Waiheke Island is especially beautiful from March to May and September to November when the weather is warm, but the crowds are few.

Need To Know

hello@terraandtide.co.nz

www.terraandtide.co.nz

 Auckland



Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa

On the shores of Lake Rotorua, your clients will find Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa, an iwi (Māori tribe) owned cultural wellness destination open daily until 10.30pm.

Discover peace and tranquillity in two distinct areas offering spa treatments and a multi-sensory journey that includes waterfall showers, geothermal pools and mud bathing.

After recharging mind, body and soul at the spa, your clients can refuel at the on-site café serving fresh, delicious cuisine infused with rongoa (native medicinal herbs). Guests 16 years and older are welcome at Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa.

Expert Tip: Pre-book your client's preferred treatment to ensure they get their chosen time slot. Low season packages are available.

Need To Know

rpaul@wai-ariki.co.nz

www.wai-ariki.co.nz

 Rotorua





Stars, Wellness & Cuisine


Discover the very best of Aotearoa New Zealand on this ten-day itinerary.

Gaze at the stars from two internationally recognised Dark Sky Reserves, relax with wellness experiences and delight in world-class food and wine.



-  International Airport
-  Domestic Airport



 Nourishing Nature: Native Farm Forest Experience
Auckland

Day 1: Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland

Touch down in the country's biggest city, Auckland, for an overnight stay.

While famed for its wineries, your clients can also partake in a guided forest therapy walk on Waiheke Island with **Terra & Tide**, an excellent way to feel grounded after an international flight. Either before or after their trip to the island, your clients can explore Britomart, a central shopping and dining precinct that's walking distance from the ferry terminal in downtown Auckland.

Stay: The **Hotel Britomart** positioned in downtown Auckland. If time allows, arrange the **Nourishing Nature: Native Farm Forest experience** where conservation and cuisine unite.

Days 2-3: Rotorua

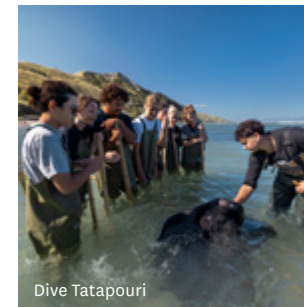
Fly or self-drive to Rotorua. Your clients will discover a sense of calm at **Wai Ariki Hot Springs & Spa**, where the focus is on traditional Māori therapies and healing practices. Spend an evening paddling on Lake Rotoiti on a **guided kayak tour** to see constellations of glow-worms. Or immerse in culture and kai (cuisine) for over three hours of celebration at **Te Pā Tū**.

Stay: **Pāmu PurePod** combines luxury and sustainability with thoughtful touches like a telescope for stargazing, while **Kokako Retreat** delivers a secluded glamping escape with outdoor bathtub, firepit and peaceful vistas.

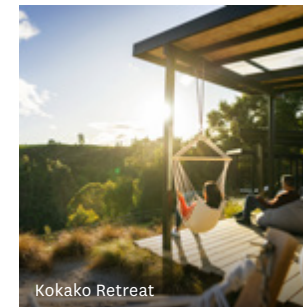
2 Day Optional Add On: Tairāwhiti Gisborne

Be the first in the world to greet the dawn with a sunrise experience up **Maunga Hikurangi** (Mount Hikurangi). Begin the journey of this sacred site under a canopy of stars, arriving by 4WD in time to witness the day's first rays. Back on the coast, take part in an interactive marine experience with **Dive Tatapouri**, where your clients will have the chance to get up close with wild stingrays.

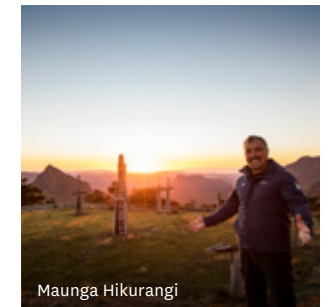
Stay: Sleep amongst the vines at **Matawhero Winery**. Located 10-minutes from central Gisborne, the vineyard offers four boutique cabins, each designed for two. Guests are treated to a bottle of wine on arrival.



Dive Tatapouri



Kokako Retreat



Maunga Hikurangi

Days 4-5: Wairarapa

Wairarapa is a region at the very heart of the Classic New Zealand Wine Trail and cycling between vineyards is particularly popular. **Green Jersey Explorer Tours** offer bikes which carry up to six people.

In the evenings, make the most of the pristine night skies – Southern Wairarapa is home to New Zealand's second International Dark Sky Reserve. Astrology experts at **Star Safari** take visitors on a celestial adventure, sharing their passion and knowledge of the cosmos.

Stay: At **Wharekauhau Country Estate**, a Relais & Châteaux property overlooking the Pacific Ocean, your clients can enjoy a private stargazing experience from the comfort of their accommodation.

Day 6: Ōtautahi Christchurch

Travel by road or rail from the Wairarapa to Wellington and then fly from Wellington to Ōtautahi Christchurch in the South Island.

Take a walk along the banks of the Ōtākaro Avon River which runs through the heart of the city. Stop at **Riverside Market**, an indoor farmers' market. Or jump on board the historic **Christchurch Tram** complete with live commentary.

Stay: Being the main international gateway to the South Island, Christchurch has a range of quality hotels, apartments, motels and everything in between. Book one of the exclusive **Tack Rooms** at Hotel Montreal for clients wanting the convenience of a hotel but the comfort of extra space.

2 Day Optional Add On: Kaikōura

Located north of Christchurch, coastal Kaikōura is a fantastic destination for year-round **whale watching**. Book your clients a hands-on cooking class with **Hapuku Kitchen** where each experience includes foraging and cooking. For a shot of adrenaline, fly through the air on a series of ziplines that deliver spectacular sea views with **EcoZip Kaikōura**.

Stay: For a luxury escape, **Hapuku Lodge + Tree Houses** is a contemporary, unique accommodation provider with a collection of lodge suites as well as five tree houses.



Days 7-9: Mackenzie & Waitaki

A three hour drive from Christchurch will bring your clients to Lake Tekapo/Takapō in Mackenzie Country. Set within an International Dark Sky Reserve, incredible stargazing is a highlight of the region. Ascend to the summit of Mt John Observatory with **Dark Sky Project** and explore the night sky through science and storytelling. Enjoy **Billion Star Dining** at Moraine Lodge, combining the delights of a seasonal menu with an intimate stargazing session at the Pukaki Observatory. Clients can also stay on-site at **Mt Cook Lakeside Retreat**.

Stay: **SkyScape** is a remote eco-accommodation option. Gaze up at the stars through the glass ceiling or from the outdoor spring-fed bathtub. For ultimate luxury, book your clients into The Lindis with several on-site experiences including private fine dining at the **Black Diamond**.

Day 10: Tāhuna Queenstown

Enjoy the scenic drive to Tāhuna Queenstown, approximately three and a half hours. Along with a plethora of adventure activities for all adrenaline levels, Queenstown delivers stunning landscapes, wellness experiences and a vibrant culinary scene. Stargaze at twilight from **Onsen Hot Pools Retreat & Day Spa**, then savour the flavours of Central Otago over dinner in a glasshouse at **Amisfield Winery**.

End your clients' itinerary with a domestic flight to either Christchurch or Auckland allowing sufficient time for their international connection, or book several nights in Queenstown to extend their starry-skied New Zealand itinerary.

Stay: Experience premium hospitality at **The Rees Hotel**, a sophisticated five-star hotel with views of Lake Whakatipu, a fine dining restaurant and wine lounge.



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