

IF YOU SEEK THE HEARTBEAT OF AOTEAROA



Whakatāne
Bay of Plenty

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A cultural wonderland.

Aotearoa prides itself on demonstrating manaakitanga – extending hospitality, kindness and generosity – towards its manuhiri (visitors). For a young country, New Zealand offers rich cultural experiences that will evoke emotions and inspire you to view tangata (people) and whenua (land) through fresh eyes.

Birthplace of modern-day New Zealand

In the lush coastal far North region, lies a site of tremendous cultural significance for both Māori and Pākehā (non-Māori). The Waitangi Treaty Grounds is where New Zealand's founding document, The Treaty of Waitangi, was signed by Māori chiefs and prominent European leaders in 1840. Today, manuhiri can visit the treaty grounds to learn about how the two groups interpreted the treaty document at the award-winning Te Kōngahu Museum. Stay for the sumptuous hāngī (food cooked in an earth oven) and the evening concert and waiata (songs).

Back to nature with traditional healing and wellbeing

With the call of songbirds as your soundtrack, get back to nature at Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari in the Waikato region of the North Island and learn all about rongoā rākau, the art of Māori herbal medicine. Led by the knowledgeable and engaging Ringi Morgan-Fifield, you'll be taken on a leisurely walk through native ngahere (bush) being taught how to identify local plants and trees as well as their properties in healing and wellbeing. Feel a cold coming on? Mānuka is excellent for clearing a blocked nose, while kumarahōu can be used for chest complaints.

Welcome, welcome, welcome everyone

You've heard of the haka (Māori war dance), but have you heard of the powhiri (Māori welcoming ceremony)? Most often used when coming onto a marae, a powhiri is an ancient ritual used by iwi throughout Aotearoa New Zealand and goes through seven stages including a karanga (welcoming call), a wero (challenge), and a hongī (a gentle press of noses) – while you'll arrive a stranger, you'll leave a friend. And although this can sometimes feel daunting if it's your first time, just remember to take your lead from one of the haukāinga (local people of a marae). Experience this for yourself at Mataatua Whareniui in Whakatāne in the Bay of Plenty.

A one-of-a-kind culture and wine experience

To truly connect with a country, you need to connect with its culture. WanaHaka® Tours in Wānaka and Queenstown does exactly that by bringing together two of New Zealand's most well-loved experiences: authentic Māori culture and wine tasting! Based in Central Otago in the heart of the South Island, you'll taste your way around several boutique wineries in Wānaka, Tarras, Cromwell, and Queenstown. But what makes WanaHaka's® wine tours truly unique is their embracing of Māori culture, from being greeted with a hongī to the specifically choreographed Wānaka Haka that pays respect to the whenua (land) and whānau (family) of this distinctive region.

Under the starry sky

If you seek to broaden your horizons, embark on a star-gazing tour of the southern skies along the Otago peninsula's coastline. Let Horizon Tours share their passion with you as they point out celestial phenomena in the sky above visible with the naked eye, teach you about the Māori myths of creation and explain how early Māori used their astronomical knowledge to navigate the ocean, plant crops and harvest kaimoana (seafood). And if the conditions are just right, this is a prime location for witnessing the Aurora Australis or Southern Lights – better have your camera ready!



Waitangi Treaty Grounds, Northland



Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari, Waikato



Whakatāne, Bay of Plenty



Aurora Australis, Otago Peninsula