

# 20 Day New Zealand Odyssey

## *Platinum Tour Itinerary*

**STARTS:** Auckland  
**FINISHES:** Christchurch  
**DURATION:** 20 days & 19 nights

### 2020-2021 DEPARTURE DATES:

**2020:** 8 Sep, 6 Oct, 10 Nov, 1 Dec  
**2021:** 5 Jan, 26 Jan, 23 Feb, 23 Mar, 13 Apr

### DAY 1 Arrive Auckland (D)

'Haere Mai' Welcome to New Zealand. On arrival, you will be met by a Kirra Tours representative and transferred to your downtown city hotel. This evening join your fellow travellers for a three course welcome dinner at the opulent Cooke's Restaurant at the Hotel Grand Windsor.

**TRANSFER:** Auckland Airport to the Hotel Grand Windsor  
**STAY:** Hotel Grand Windsor (1 night)

### DAY 2 Waiheke Island, Waiuku (B,D)

After breakfast, a brief ferry ride into the Hauraki Gulf brings us to Waiheke Island, an internationally renowned haven for vineyards, olive groves, art galleries and sandy beaches. Enjoy a locally guided tour that includes sightseeing, visits to a couple of the island's top vineyards and sampling Waiheke's gourmet culinary delights. Returning to the mainland in the early afternoon, we leave the big city behind and drive south to our peaceful coastal retreat, where you can walk on the black sand beach, spoil yourself at the day spa or enjoy a cold drink whilst taking in stunning panoramic views of the Tasman Sea.

**STAY:** Castaways Resort (1 night)  
**ACTIVITY:** Tour of Waiheke Island

### DAY 3 Rotorua (B)

We continue our journey south to the heart of the North Island, the geothermal city of Rotorua. You have the afternoon free to explore this fascinating city known for its rich Maori culture, natural hot springs, bubbling mud pools and beautiful forests and lakes. Your Coach Captain can assist with booking any optional activities you would like to do. For dinner tonight we highly recommend checking out Eat Street, a collection of top-notch restaurants and bars with an all-weather al fresco dining area.

**STAY:** Regent of Rotorua / Prince's Gate Hotel (2 nights)

#### **DAY 4 Lake Rotoiti Cruise (B,D)**

Today's highlight is an exclusive cruise across the serene, clear waters of Lake Rotoiti. Explore native bays and coves of the lake under sail on our luxury catamaran and bathe in the thermal waters of the Manupirua hot springs, accessible only by boat. This afternoon we visit the Blue and Green Lakes before returning to Rotorua. This evening, we are treated to a traditional Maori hangi (feast) and cultural performance at our featured Maori cultural experience.

**ACTIVITIES:** Lake Rotoiti cruise, see the Blue & Green Lakes, authentic Maori hangi & cultural experience

#### **DAY 5 Lake Taupo, Napier (B)**

This morning takes us first to the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland to see some of New Zealand's most unique geothermal and volcanic features. Next, we stop near Taupo to view the mighty Huka Falls on our way through the popular lakeside town. Continue on to Napier, one of the world's finest Art Deco cities. This afternoon your local guide will bring the fascinating history and architecture to life as you take a guided walk of the town.

**STAY:** The Crown Hotel / Scenic Hotel Te Pania (2 nights)

**ACTIVITIES:** Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, view Huka Falls, Guided Art Deco Walk

#### **DAY 6 At leisure in Hawke's Bay (B,D)**

Widely regarded as the 'Tuscany of the South Pacific', this region boasts some of New Zealand's best wineries. Enjoy a free day to experience some of the many optional activities available or simply relax and enjoy your surroundings. This evening, we visit Mission Estate, New Zealand's oldest winery established by a group of French missionaries in 1851. Enjoy wine tastings followed by a fine dining experience in the elegantly restored seminary with its sweeping views over the vineyards, city and the coast beyond.

**ACTIVITY:** Wine tasting and fine dining at Mission Estate vineyard

#### **DAY 7 Pukaha Mt Bruce, Wellington (B)**

Travel this morning to the Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, a captive-breeding sanctuary for the country's most endangered birds and home to the only white kiwi in captivity. We carry on to Wellington, the nation's capital, where you enjoy a brief sightseeing and orientation tour before checking into your accommodation.

**STAY:** The Bolton Hotel (2 nights)

**ACTIVITIES:** Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, Wellington Orientation Tour

## DAY 8 Explore the Nation's Capital (B)

Named the 'coolest little capital in the world' by Lonely Planet, Wellington is nestled between a sparkling harbour and rolling green hills and is renowned for its arts, heritage, culture and native beauty. A visit to Te Papa National Museum is highly recommended as is a ride on the famous Cable Car up the hill to Kelburn for amazing views over the city. If you like to stay active, take a walk around the harbour front to Oriental Bay and visit one of the many cafes before returning to the city.

## DAY 9 Abel Tasman (B,D)

This morning we board the Interislander Ferry to cruise across the Cook Strait through the magnificent Marlborough Sounds. From there we drive across the top of the South Island to Marahau, the gateway to Abel Tasman National Park. A water taxi carries us on a scenic coastal cruise to our secluded accommodation located within the heart of the national park in Awaroa Bay, surrounded by pristine waterways and native forest.

**STAY:** Awaroa Lodge (2 nights)

**ACTIVITIES:** Interislander Ferry Crossing, Scenic Water Taxi Ride

## DAY 10 Discover Abel Tasman National Park (B,D)

Named after the first European explorer to sight New Zealand, Abel Tasman is the country's smallest national park, but also one of the most popular. Renowned for its golden sand beaches, stunning blue water and native coastal forestland, it is an outdoor lover's paradise. Spend a free day on a guided kayak or sailing excursion, relax on Awaroa Beach or explore the walking tracks around the lodge.

## DAY 11 Nelson, Blenheim (B,D)

The water taxi returns us to our coach for the next part of the journey. We stop to wander around sunny Nelson, a city with a thriving arts and crafts scene, then drive across the Marlborough Region to the charming town of Blenheim. With several world-class vineyards close to tonight's accommodation, your Coach Captain will offer the option to visit a winery to sample the region's famous Sauvignon Blanc.

**STAY:** Chateau Marlborough (1 night)

**ACTIVITY:** Water taxi

## DAY 12 Kaikoura, Christchurch (B,D)

Stop in picturesque coastal Kaikoura to visit a New Zealand Fur Seal (Kekeno) colony, before travelling on to Christchurch, the South Island's largest city. This afternoon you are free to explore and take in the city sights and public gardens that give Christchurch its nickname 'the Garden City'. Your Coach Captain can assist with any optional activities you would like to do.

**STAY:** Rydges Latimer Christchurch (1 night)

**ACTIVITY:** Visit a NZ Fur Seal colony

### **DAY 13** TranzAlpine, Franz Josef (B,D)

This morning, you board the award-winning TranzAlpine train for the spectacular rail journey to Arthur's Pass, the South Island's highest altitude settlement. Enjoy thrilling vistas over deep gorges as you travel alongside the ice-fed Waimakariri River and traverse the majestic Southern Alps, where spectacular views of the chiseled alpine landscape will take your breath away at every turn. On to the West Coast village of Franz Josef where you can relax in a tranquil rainforest environment.

**STAY:** Te Waonui Forest Retreat (1 night)

**ACTIVITY:** TranzAlpine train journey

### **DAY 14** Wanaka, Queenstown (B)

Before our departure this morning, there is the opportunity to take an optional scenic flight over this remarkable glacial region (subject to weather conditions). Later, view incredible scenery as you travel past the untouched wilderness and pristine lakes of the Mt Aspiring and Westland National Parks. There is time to wander around the popular lakeside township of Wanaka before stopping at the historic gold mining village of Arrowtown, once a haven for the gold prospectors of the 1860's and home to a fascinating collection of mining cottages. Finally, it's on New Zealand's premier holiday destination, Queenstown.

**STAY:** Heritage Queenstown Hotel (2 nights)

**ACTIVITY:** A visit to historic Arrowtown

### **DAY 15** At leisure in Queenstown (B)

Today is free to experience this magnificent alpine resort. Queenstown boasts an incredible array of adventure and leisure activities and your Coach Captain can assist with any optional activities you would like to do. Experience the thrills of riding on the world-famous Shotover Jet Boat, perhaps cruise Lake Wakatipu on the vintage steamship TSS Earnslaw, take a 4WD tour to the gold mining area of Skippers Canyon or for the more adventurous, try white water rafting. Alternatively, browse in the many local shops and galleries or take a stroll around the lakefront.

### **DAY 16** Overnight Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise (B,L,D)

Skirt the shores of Lake Wakatipu and travel through lush farmland to Manapouri, where you enjoy a leisurely cruise across the picturesque lake to West Arm. A short coach trip on New Zealand's most expensive road travels over Wilmot Pass, pausing along the way to experience the dense Fiordland rainforest and (weather permitting) view Doubtful Sound glistening far below. At Deep Cove, your crew and the 'Fiordland Navigator' await. Designed along the lines of a traditional scow, the 'Fiordland Navigator' blends old world charm with modern comfort and as you cruise through some of the fiord's

most stunning scenery, knowledgeable and friendly nature guides will share with you their passion for the region through their commentary. After dropping anchor in a sheltered cove, you can choose to explore the shoreline by kayak or tender boat or you can simply relax on board. As the majesty of Doubtful Sound unfolds before you, its beauty and vastness will take your breath away.

**STAY:** Fiordland Navigator (1 night)

**ACTIVITY:** Overnight Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise

## **DAY 17 Manapouri, Dunedin (B,D)**

Enjoy a hearty breakfast on the boat this morning before we retrace our steps back to Manapouri, where you re-join your coach. This drive takes us to the coast, crossing rich farmlands and passing through Southland's agricultural townships on the way to Dunedin, sometimes referred to as the 'Edinburgh of the South' for its unique Scottish heritage.

**STAY:** Distinction Dunedin Hotel (2 nights)

## **DAY 18 Larnach Castle, Dunedin (B)**

This morning, travel to Larnach Castle for a guided tour, learning about its tragic and mysterious history before enjoying High Tea in the historic ballroom. The afternoon is at leisure to explore Dunedin and the greater Otago Peninsula. Your Coach Captain will assist with any optional activities you would like to do.

**ACTIVITY:** Guided tour of Larnach Castle with High Tea

## **DAY 19 Moeraki Boulders, Christchurch (B,D)**

Stop to view the mystical Moeraki Boulders, geological marvels that began to form about 60 million years ago and were exposed by the erosion of sedimentary rocks over time. From there, we travel north up the coast through the towns of Oamaru and Timaru and across the fertile Canterbury Plains to Christchurch. This evening join your friends for a farewell dinner and relive the many great experiences of the last three weeks.

**STAY:** Rydges Latimer Christchurch (1 night)

**ACTIVITY:** Moeraki Boulders

## **DAY 20 Depart Christchurch (B)**

Sadly, your holiday ends after breakfast this morning. Here we bid you farewell and hope you leave with many happy memories of your stay. You will be transferred to Christchurch Airport to connect with your onward flight.

**TRANSFER:** Rydges Latimer Christchurch to the Christchurch Airport

## TOUR INCLUSIONS

### Accommodation:

- + 18 nights luxury hotel and boutique accommodation
- + 1 night overnight cruise on Doubtful Sound

### Meals:

- + Full breakfast daily (B), 1 lunch (L) & 12 dinners (D)
- + Welcome dinner and farewell dinner & drinks included

### Transport & Touring:

- + Guided by a professional Coach Captain
- + All sightseeing, excursions and entrance fees as shown
- + Travel by purpose built, luxury Platinum Touring coach
- + Complimentary airport transfers on arrival and departure
- + Hotel portorage

### Activities & Sightseeing:

- + Tour of Waiheke Island
- + Lake Rotoiti cruise
- + See the Blue & Green Lakes
- + Authentic Maori hangi & cultural experience
- + Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland
- + View Huka Falls
- + Guided Art Deco Walk in Napier
- + Wine tasting and fine dining at Mission Estate vineyard
- + Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre
- + Wellington Orientation Tour
- + Interislander Ferry Crossing
- + Scenic Water Taxi Ride in Abel Tasman National Park
- + Visit a NZ Fur Seal colony
- + TranzAlpine train journey
- + A visit to historic Arrowtown,
- + Overnight Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise
- + Guided tour of Larnach Castle with High Tea
- + Moeraki Boulders

*Valid: September 2020 – April 2021*