

## 17 DAY ULTIMATE NEW ZEALAND TOUR

**STARTS/FINISHES:** Auckland / Christchurch

**TOURCODE:** 17UNZ

**DURATION:** 17 Days & 16 Nights



### Day 1 – Arrival Day to Auckland

Haere Mai and Welcome to Aotearoa/New Zealand. The first stop on your adventure is Tāmaki Makaurau/Auckland, the largest city in New Zealand. Often referred to as the ‘City of Sails’ by locals, Auckland is home to 2 harbours and over 44 volcanoes! On arrival in the city, make your way to the Nesuto Stadium Hotel where you can check in and drop your bags. At the hotel reception, you’ll receive a welcome letter with some tour information, and this evening you’ll meet your group and welcome host at 6:15pm and head for a delicious welcome dinner at 6:30pm.

**Stay:** Nesuto Stadium Hotel & Apartment (40 Beach Road, Auckland CBD 1010)

**Meals:** Dinner



## Day 2 – Auckland to Rotorua

This morning we'll be leaving Tāmaki Makaurau (Auckland) and making our way to Waitomo, famous for its enchanting glowworm caves. We'll be visiting the brightest glowworm cave in Waitomo, which was even visited by Sir David Attenborough! You'll take a spectacular boat ride through a cave lit entirely by glowworms and experience the magical sight of hundreds of glowworms shining just for you. We'll follow this with a walking tour of another amazing limestone cave shaped over millions of years.

Afterwards, we'll continue down to Rotorua, the geothermal wonderland of New Zealand. This evening we'll enjoy a delicious dinner together and then settle in for a luxurious night's sleep in Rotorua.

**Visit:** Waitomo, Rotorua

**Stay:** Distinction Rotorua or similar

**Activity:** Waitomo Glowworm Caves

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 3 – Free Day in Rotorua

This morning we'll skirt round the edge of Lake Rotorua to a lookout point where we'll have a view of the infamous Mount Tarawera, once the home of the renowned pink and white terraces before a violent eruption destroyed them. We'll end with a visit to the Buried Village, New Zealand's most visited Archaeological Site, where we'll learn about the famous 1886 eruption and visit the site of the now buried Te Wairoa village.

This afternoon we'll go for a walk in the Whakarewarewa forest where we'll see towering Redwoods, magnificent Douglas firs and New Zealand's native silver fern and then you have some free time to explore Rotorua on your own. If you'd like to see some geothermal activity for free, we recommend taking a walk around Kuirau Park to see boiling mud pools and steaming lakes. Go for a walk to the lakes edge and through the government gardens, spend some time relaxing at the Polynesian Spa or take the Gondola up to see the amazing Rotorua Skyline.

**Visit:** Rotorua

**Activity:** Visit the Buried Village and take the Waitawa Walk in Whakarewarewa Forest

**Stay:** Distinction Rotorua or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast



## Day 4 – Rotorua to Lake Aniwhenua to Taupo

This morning we'll travel to the shores of Lake Aniwhenua in Murupara, where you'll get to experience a slice of the real New Zealand. Owned by a passionate local Maori family who have dedicated their lives to making a difference in their local community, Kohutapu Lodge is situated on the lake, and has been helping to transform the local town of Murupara through community-driven initiatives for years.

Your experience will begin with a guided tour of the sacred Maori rock carvings and then you'll travel to the Lodge to witness the preparation of a traditional ground cooked hangi. Once the food is ready, you'll dine at the lodge on arguably the best meal you'll have in New Zealand! After lunch, we'll depart for Taupo where you'll get to see the fiercely blue Huka Falls and explore the charming lakeside town.

**Visit:** Murupara, Taupo

**Stay:** Anchorage Taupo

**Activity:** Kohutapu Lodge Tribal Tour

**Meals:** Breakfast, Hangi Lunch + Dessert

## Day 5 – Taupo to Napier

After breakfast, this morning we'll head to the stunning Hawke's Bay Region. Napier boasts some of the best wineries in New Zealand/Aotearoa and a visit here would not be complete without a trip to Mission Estate Winery. After a wine tasting, you'll sit down for lunch to enjoy an afternoon of delicious food and exceptional wines, while soaking up sunshine and the ambience of this stunning estate.

Later, it's an easy drive into the beautiful coastal town of Napier, known for its perfectly preserved Art Deco facades. Go for a stroll along the tree-lined promenade this evening and sample some fresh seafood at one of the many restaurants overlooking the beach.

**Visit:** Mission Estate Winery

**Stay:** Scenic Hotel Te Pania

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 6 – Napier to Wellington

This morning we'll depart Napier and journey down to Wellington, the capital city of New Zealand and the home of the best cup of coffee in the country! On the way down, we'll make a stop in Greytown, Wairarapa's oldest town, for a spot of lunch. A picturesque village with restored Victorian buildings, Greytown is a charming place to stop, refuel and browse the boutiques before we continue down to Wellington.



With a population of less than 220,000 people, no city in NZ combines a relaxed atmosphere and a cultured, bohemian spirit better than Wellington. The afternoon is free for you to spend exploring the city - we highly recommend a visit to our national museum Te Papa which offers free entrance and boasts some incredible exhibits.

**Visit:** Wairarapa, Wellington

**Stay:** Novotel Wellington

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Day 7 – Wellington to Nelson

After breakfast this morning, we'll take the Ferry across Cook Strait to the South Island. If the weather is fine, make your way up to the deck to see the spectacular Marlborough Sounds and try to spot some local wildlife. On arrival in Picton, we'll make our way to Nelson. This evening there's plenty of time to relax, explore the area and taste some of Nelson's fine local food and beverages.

**Visit:** Picton, Nelson

**Stay:** Rutherford Nelson or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Day 8 – Free Day in Nelson

Today is a free day in the sunshine capital of New Zealand, Nelson is a small city that's full of arts & crafts and on the edge of NZ's premier hop growing region. Take a wine or beer tour, you can even do this by bike if you prefer some exercise or just use the day to take a stroll around the area. For those wanting to visit Abel Tasman National Park you can take a day tour from Nelson to visit the golden sands and idyllic days. For those wanting a good walk the track to the centre of New Zealand is a must, at the top you'll also find lovely views of the region too!

**Visit:** Nelson

**Stay:** Rutherford Nelson or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast

**Optional Activities:** Abel Tasman Cruise, Wine Tour, Craft Beer Tour, Queens Gardens, Centre of NZ walk



## Day 9 – Nelson to Christchurch

This morning we'll take a leisurely drive down to Blenheim where we'll travel to a vineyard for a fabulous lunch among the vines in one of New Zealand's best Sauvignon Blanc producers

After lunch, we'll set off for our journey down the coast, soaking up the gorgeous scenery as we go, expect to see some marine life too! From Kaikoura's rugged coastline and beautiful mountains to the rolling farmland of Canterbury, the views are wonderful today. We'll arrive late afternoon in Christchurch and this evening, we'll enjoy a group dinner at our hotel.

**Visit:** Blenheim, Kaikoura, Canterbury, Christchurch

**Stay:** Distinction Christchurch or similar

**Activity:** Marlborough Cellar Door lunch

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

## Day 10 – Christchurch to Dunedin

After breakfast this morning, we'll continue our journey south down the east coast. We'll pass through the township of Oamaru, home to some of the best-preserved heritage buildings in New Zealand before heading onto the mystical Moeraki Boulders. Geological marvels that began to form about 60 million years ago, the Moeraki boulders were exposed by the erosion of sedimentary rocks over time and now stand along the beach as though they are sentinels guarding the coastline. We'll arrive in Dunedin with plenty of time for a rest and some exploration of the Scottish City.

**Visit:** Christchurch, Oamaru, Moeraki Boulders, Baldwin Street, Dunedin

**Stay:** Scenic Hotel Dunedin City

**Optional Activities:** Speight's Brewery Tour, Dunedin Train Station, Yellow Eyed Penguin Tour

**Meals:** Breakfast

## Day 11 – Dunedin to Te Anau

This morning we'll visit the famous Larnach Castle of Dunedin, the only castle in the country. We'll explore the area, stroll through the magnificent gardens and enjoy the amazing views before departing for our next destination. We'll make a stop in Gore where we'll explore Gore's colourful past as a centre for illicit whisky distilling and bootlegging at the Hokonui Moonshine Museum. Learn about the adventures of the Scottish settlers and their exploits to avoid run-ins with the law and taste Old Hokonui made from the original recipe. Later, we'll drive to our destination for the evening, Te Anau - the gateway to Fiordland and the spectacular Doubtful Sound.



**Visit:** Gore, Te Anau

**Stay:** Distinction Luxmore Te Anau

**Activity:** Larnach Castle, Hokonui Moonshine Museum

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 12 – Te Anau via Doubtful Sound to Queenstown

Departing Te Anau this morning we'll travel to Manapouri, where we'll take a leisurely cruise across the lake to West Arm. This is followed by a short coach trip on New Zealand's most expensive road, travelling over Wilmot Pass and pausing along the way to experience the dense Fiordland rainforest and view the Doubtful Sound glistening below. At Deep Cove, we'll board a modern catamaran and set sail into the majestic fiord - a sight that is sure to take your breath away. Listen to the on-board commentary for an insight into the region's history as you view spectacular towering mountains and soak up the breathtaking views of this unique and beautiful area of New Zealand. Keep an eye out for local wildlife, as penguins, seals and dolphins all enjoy spending time in the sound! Once the tour has ended, we'll make our way to the alpine resort of Queenstown where we'll spend the next two nights.

**Visit:** Lake Manapouri, West Arm, Deep Cove, Doubtful Sound, Queenstown

**Stay:** Novotel Queenstown or similar

**Activity:** Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise

**Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch

## Day 13 – Day at leisure in Queenstown

Today is yours to experience Queenstown, a picturesque alpine resort town known for its vast array of adventure activities. If you'd like to explore the area, we recommend taking a ride on the world famous Shotover Jet Boat or taking a tour to the gold mining area of Skippers Canyon. For the best views of the town, travel to the top of Bob's Peak by gondola and have lunch at the Skyline restaurant, why not make your way to the bungy centre to watch people hurling themselves off cliffs - bungy is a NZ invention after all! Alternatively, make your way to the lakeside and enjoy a refreshing drink or stroll through Queenstown's lush park.

**Stay:** Novotel Queenstown or similar

**Meals:** Breakfast



## Day 14 – Queenstown to Haast

This morning we'll get to see some incredible scenery as we travel through Arrowtown, a picturesque village steeped in fascinating history relating to NZ's gold mining era. Next, we'll visit Wanaka, a popular township on the lake's edge with a spectacular mountain backdrop where we'll enjoy lunch and spend some time enjoying the views. Departing Wanaka, we'll make our way north towards the West Coast and the small town of Haast, a UNESCO world heritage site and home to the famous Haast River. This evening we'll enjoy a group dinner together at our hotel.

**Visit:** Wanaka, Arrowtown, Haast

**Stay:** Heartland Haast

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 15 – Haast to Franz Josef

Travelling north along the coast of the Westland National Park this morning, we'll travel to the home of the Fox and Franz Josef Glaciers. This remarkable part of the country was shaped by dynamic glaciers and boasts lush rainforest which grows beneath towering mountains. We'll make a stop in Fox Glacier where we have the option to walk the gentle 2.6km track around Lake Matheson. Nestled amongst ancient forest and famous for mirror views of Aoraki/Mount Cook and Mount Tasman, Lake Matheson is a serene and beautiful place to enjoy a stroll. This evening, we'll spend the night in the township of Franz Josef, surrounded by rainforest and mountains, and enjoy a delicious group dinner together.

**Visit:** Franz Josef, Fox Glacier, Lake Matheson

**Stay:** Scenic Franz Josef

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 16 – Franz Josef to Christchurch

This morning we'll depart Franz Josef and travel north to the artistic town of Hokitika, famous for its beautiful Greenstone. We'll visit the Greenstone and Glass blowing factory to see the work of some talented local artists before continuing on to Greymouth, a historic town known for jade hunting and gold mining. From Greymouth, we'll board the TransAlpine train, which is considered to be one of the world's greatest one-day train journeys. Prepare to be blown away by epic vistas of forests, rolling plains and snow-capped mountains! At the end of the journey, we'll transfer to our hotel in Christchurch, where we'll enjoy a farewell meal together on our final evening of the tour.

**Visit:** Hokitika, Greymouth, Christchurch





**Stay:** Distinction Hotel Christchurch or similar

**Activity:** Greenstone and Glass Blowing Factory visit, TranzAlpine Train Journey

**Meals:** Breakfast, Dinner

## Day 17 – Depart Christchurch

Today is the final day of the tour, our trip has come to an end. Enjoy breakfast before saying a fond farewell to your tour leader and all your travel companions. Whether you're travelling home today or staying in Christchurch for longer, we hope you leave this tour with some happy memories and friends for life.

**Meals:** Breakfast

## What's Included:

- Experienced Tour Guide
- Small Group Tour - Max 28
- Luxury Coach
- 17 days / 16 nights accommodation
- 27 meals (16 Breakfasts, 4 Lunches, 7 Dinners)
- Waitomo Caves Experience
- Buried Village in Rotorua
- Lake Aniwhenua Cultural Experience
- Huka Falls
- Mission Estate Winery Lunch and Wine Tasting
- Te Papa National Museum of New Zealand
- Inter-Island Ferry
- Wither Hills Winery Lunch in Marlborough
- Moeraki Boulders
- Larnach Castle visit
- Explore the Hokonui Moonshine Museum
- Doubtful Sound Wilderness Cruise
- Visit Arrowtown
- Greenstone and Glass Blowing Factory visit
- TranzAlpine Train Experience





# KIRRA TOURS

## Notes:

- *If you require transfers or accommodation before your tour starts or after your tour finishes, please make a note of this when booking your tour.*
- *Pre or Post Accommodation is subject to availability.*