

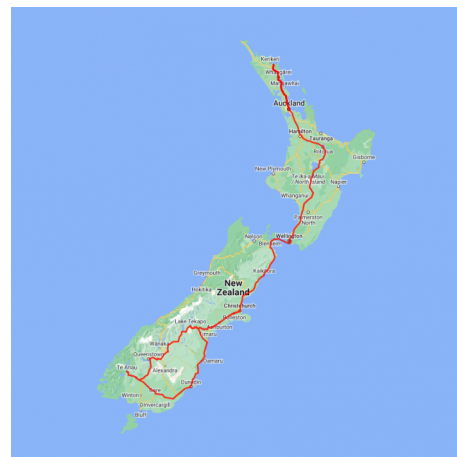


AAT Kings 17 Day New Zealand Magic 24/25

Journey across patchwork plains, over shimmering blue waters, through mist-shrouded forests and along roads handcarved into sheer mountainsides. A trip through glorious New Zealand features almost every type of natural landscape you can imagine, as you make your way to Auckland in the North Island from Christchurch in the South Island.

Starts in: Christchurch
 Finishes in: Auckland
 Length: 17days / 16nights
 Accommodation: Hotel 3 star
 Can be customised: Yes

This itinerary can be customised to suit you perfectly. We can add more days, remove days, change accommodations, mix it up, add activities to suit your interests or simply design and create something from scratch. Call us today to get your custom New Zealand itinerary underway.



Inclusions:

Includes: All coach transport
 Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations
 Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving, instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
 Includes: 24/7 support while touring in New Zealand
 Included: Cruise on the Interislander Ferry
 Included: Milford Sound Cruise
 Included: TransAlpine Rail Journey
 Included: Waitangi Treaty Grounds
 Included: Waitomo Glow Worm Caves
 16 breakfasts, 8 dinners, 1 special dinner

Day 1

Explore the 'Garden City' at your leisure. We recommend jumping aboard the tram for a Christchurch tour – the conductors are a hoot – to discover how the city has rebuilt itself since the devastating 2010/11 earthquakes. It's changing the way architects think about design. Case in point the mind-bending Transitional Cathedral, made largely of cardboard, and Turanga, the gold-clad central library.

Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)
-

Day 2

Your New Zealand tour starts on a high as you jump aboard the TranzAlpine train bound for Arthurs Pass, through tunnels and over viaducts with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, icy rivers, beech forests, gorges and river valleys. Arriving in Hokitika, your outlook is all pounamu (native greenstone or jade). In Māori tradition, it's bad luck to buy this sacred stone for yourself; flutter your eyelids at your loved one. Things are about to get cool again as you arrive at Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere, a white-out of snow and ice that shimmers like a gem. Get some perspective on an optional scenic flight over this natural wonder – if the weather behaves, you may even get to land on it.

Day 3

Over the Haast Pass, the alpine scenery of the Southern Lakes spreads before you. First up there's lovely Lake Wanaka, with its Instagrammable shoreline of poplars and willows. Followed by oh-so-blue Lake Hawea and Lake Dunstan, where you'll pause to refuel on flavour-packed stone fruit. We know you'll want to linger in Arrowtown's movie-set-like streets, lined with trees and character-filled boutiques. But Lake Wakatipu and the Remarkables await on your Queenstown tour.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)
-

Day 4

Take today at your own pace. Like things fast and furious? Feel the wind in your hair on the high-octane Shotover Jet, perhaps. There's a reason why Queenstown is known as the adventure capital of the country. Nature lover? Discover some of New Zealand's feathered friends at a wildlife centre. Wine aficionado? Sip your way through surrounding vineyards. Wherever you wander, make sure you're back in time to glide across Lake Wakatipu aboard the historic TSS Earnslaw to Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue dinner.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort Queenstown (1 night)
-

Day 5

From the moment you step outside today, nature rules. Your route from the Mirror Lakes through the Cleddau Valley is the entrée to your Milford Sound/Piopiotahi tour. Cruising this World Heritage listed expanse will give you goosebumps, a string of waterfalls creating a misty curtain across sheer escarpments. Look out for dolphins – they're a common sight here. The onward road through Fiordland National Park is an intoxicating union of beech forests, alluvial flats, meadows and gin-clear rivers, carving up the countryside en route to Te Anau. And just when you thought things couldn't get any more magical, glowworm-filled caves make an appearance. We highly recommend a visit.

Staying in:

- Distinction Luxmore Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 6

Soak up the serenity of the South Island's biggest lake on an early morning walk, perhaps, before leaving the forested slopes of Fiordland behind. Rolling green hills dotted with doe-eyed sheep are your new backdrop as you ease into the Edinburgh of the South: Dunedin. While away the afternoon in atmospheric art-lined alleys or sipping a lager or two in Speight's Brewery (a national institution). Or venture further afield to discover the wildlife that thrives in this pretty pocket of the country – fur seals and penguins among them.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Dunedin City (1 night)
-

Day 7

Time is on your side this morning. Sleep in or channel your inner royalty on a visit to grand Larnach Castle – the only one of its kind in the country. Dunedin's Scottish ancestry is everywhere you look, from the manicured grounds of Otago University to the city's main George Street. If you've ever wanted to see New Zealand's oldest public gardens, today you're in luck with a visit to Oamaru, known for its stately tree-lined streets and limestone buildings.

Staying in:

- Heritage Gateway Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 8

Your outlook this morning is the Canterbury Plains: the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo, snow-capped mountains and atmospheric towns. Take it in on an optional scenic flight for added perspective of Southern Alps and on to Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere. Back on the ground, you're becoming reacquainted with Christchurch on a city tour, your in-the-know guide pointing out the city's miraculous transformation over the last decade. Local spirit is strong here.

Staying in:

- Ibis Hotel Christchurch (1 night)
-

Day 9

There aren't many beaches more dramatic than the black sands of Kaikoura. Bonus points if you spot a sea lion or sperm whale frolicking offshore – a sighting is practically guaranteed if you opt for an aerial tour over the coastline. Your onward route skirts the pink tinged crystallisation ponds of the Lake Grassmere Salt Works, before arriving in the pretty seaside fishing village of Picton.

Staying in:

- Picton Beachcomber Inn (1 night)
-

Day 10

Swap wheels for water aboard the Inter-islander for a cruise through Queen Charlotte Sound, up the Tory Channel and across Cook Strait, from the South Island to the North, navigating a maze of arms and inlets into New Zealand's cool little capital of Wellington. Bring your stamina for a session at the award-winning (and eye-opening) Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand. Your final few hours of your Wellington tour should – must – end with a coffee. The city is known for its uber-cool cafés, many of them around Lampton Quay.

Staying in:

- Travelodge Wellington (1 night)
-

Day 11

Follow the lead of locals along the Kapiti Coast, the traditional summer playground of Wellingtonians. You'll understand why. The road ahead unfolds in a broad panorama of Lake Taupo, the largest (and perhaps bluest) of its kind in the country. It's a landscape almost as otherworldly as Rotorua, where mud pops and jettisons from bubbling geysers, and steam rushes skywards from cracks in the Earth. Tonight, delve deep into Māori culture and traditions at Te Puia. Witness a traditional welcome, followed by a hangi feast cooked underground, and a Māori cultural performance in the beautifully carved meeting house, Te Aronui a Rua.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 12

Explore at your own pace today, but with plenty of tips from your Travel Director. Want a bit of down time? We wouldn't blame you for simply blissing out at in the steamy thermal springs at Rotorua's Polynesian Spa. Animal lover? Go behind the scenes on a working kiwi nursery and hatchery. Hobbit fans will want to take advantage of the opportunity to tour the sights featured in The Lord of the Rings movies at Hobbiton. These beautiful landscapes are not only a bucket list tour for Hobbit fans, but a gorgeous countryside getaway.

Staying in:

- Ibis Rotorua Hotel (1 night)
-

Day 13

Set your internal GPS for the Waikato River to enjoy your Waitomo Caves tour. This place is radiant – quite literally. While cruising cavernous limestone waterways, your route is cast in a magical light by thousands of glowworms. The next thing that glows on your horizon is Auckland, New Zealand's largest city with not one, but two harbours. And plenty of yachts to decorate both, as you'll see from the lookout at the Auckland War Memorial Museum.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express, Auckland (1 night)
-

Day 14

Say goodbye to the 'City of Sails' as you journey north to New Zealand's dramatic Bay of Islands – 140 droplets of land ringed by turquoise sea. It's undeniably beautiful, but it also holds a special historical secret: this is where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840, between Captain William Hobson and Māori chiefs. Your guide, likely an ancestor of one of the original signatories, will explain the significance of the site, while pointing out the world's largest ceremonial war canoe and a carved meeting house.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)
-

Day 15

If there's a travel destination that inspires wanderlust, the Bay of Islands is it. Today, trip the light fantastic and head off in whatever direction you please. Perhaps travel up to Cape Reinga/Te Rerenga Wairua, the very top of New Zealand, via idyllic Ninety Mile Beach. Or glide around on an historic tall ship, enjoy local drops on a wine tour of the region, or join a tour of Russell and learn more about the settling of the Bay of Islands.

Staying in:

- Copthorne Hotel and Resort (1 night)
-

Day 16

Today, New Zealand's most northerly city is well and truly on your radar. Whangarei is a place where waterfalls meet beaches, galleries meet museums. It's like the country in a tantalizing snapshot – a union of nature and forward-thinking culture. Explore at your leisure before sinking back into your seat for the mesmerizing commute back to Auckland.

Staying in:

- Holiday Inn Express, Auckland (1 night)
-

Day 17

It's hard to say goodbye to Auckland – this city is hypnotic. But you have a camera full of New Zealand tour photos to categorize before you get home.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Guided Coach Tour
Starts:	Christchurch
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	17
Accommodation:	Hotel 3 star
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	All breakfasts
Includes	10 dinners
Includes	Airport transfers
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Christchurch to Arthur's Pass
Includes	Interislander ferry crossing
Includes	Hole in the Rock Dolphin Cruise
Includes	Tamaki Maori Village show and dinner, Rotorua
Includes	Waitomo Glow Worm Caves
Includes	Huka Falls Taupo
Includes	TSS Earnslaw cruise and dinner at Walter Peak high country farm, Queenstown
Includes	Christchurch City Sights tour
Includes	Parry Kauri Park
Includes	Te Papa Museum of New Zealand
Includes	Wellington City Sights Tour
Includes	Greenstone Jade craft experience

Accommodation summary