



17 Day AAT Kings New Zealand Uncovered 25/26

From north to south, east to west, New Zealand is a country of contrasts. And that's why we love it. One minute you're drifting through World Heritage-listed gorges on a Milford Sound/Piopiotahi tour, then next you're scaling ice on a Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere tour. Sometimes there's a Maori hangi feast on the menu; at others there's award-winning wine. Spanning 17 days, two islands and countless attractions – both city and country – this trip to New Zealand is one for the record books.

Starts in: Auckland
Finishes in: Christchurch
Length: 17days / 16nights
Accommodation: Hotel 4 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: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving, instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)
Included: Auckland City Tour
Included: Huka Falls
Included: Introducing Te Papa Museum Tour
Included: Punakaiki Rocks

Included: Visit to Whakarewarewa Living Village

Includes: All pick ups/drop offs at destinations

Includes: 24/7 support while touring in New Zealand

Included: Christchurch City Tour

Included: Interislander ferry crossing

Included: Milford Sound Cruise

Included: TransAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch

: 15 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 8 dinners, 3 special dinners

Day 1

Auckland is the kind of place you could lose yourself in for a couple of weeks. Arrive at your leisure and explore hip new waterfront precincts, take a cruise out to the forward-thinking wineries of Waiheke Island, or prepare to meet your fellow travel companions at a welcome function with a few local tipples and canapes, followed by dinner. And so your NZ tour begins.

Staying in:

- Cordis (1 night)
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Day 2

A little bit of leisure, a little bit of culture – today is one of those days. Sleep in before a peek behind the scenes of racing history on the New Zealand Maritime Museum's America's Cup Tour, highlighting Auckland's heritage of boat-building, and offering a glimpse of one of the world's only replicas of the America's Cup. Your Auckland tour guide then takes you around the city, pausing at Bastion Point and the Michael Joseph Savage Memorial for epic photo opportunities over the city's dual harbour. By now you should have a few ideas for how to spend your afternoon exploring, but if not, ask us for recommendations. We have a little black book full of contacts.

Staying in:

- Cordis (1 night)
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Day 3

Leave Auckland behind and journey into the countryside for an exclusive family style Be My Guest experience in the Red Barn. Hear the history of this working dairy farm from local Dan and get a feel for country life as you're invited to roll up your sleeves and make your own butter - butter churners, tiny mason jars and all! Later, sit down to a locally sourced farm to table lunch prepared by the onsite chef. After a tasty morning, you have a free afternoon to explore Mt. Maunganui in the Bay of Plenty. Walk up winding paths to the extinct volcano Mauao or relax on the main beach, this glorious stretch of golden sand has been voted the best in the country. You have the perfect spot to take it all in on your Stays With Stories accommodations at Trinity Wharf.

Staying in:

- Trinity Wharf Tauranga (1 night)
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Day 4

Is there any food more classically New Zealand than the kiwifruit? The town of Te Puke grows the majority of the country's bounty, and you'll enjoy a bite that will wake up your tastebuds. The next hot-spot – in every sense of the word – on your NZ holiday is Rotorua. Visit Te Puia to see and support Maori artisans at work, then continue your Rotorua tour at the steamy Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve, a staggering valley where geysers pop and thermal springs jettison skywards. Fun fact: this is the only living Maori village in the world. The hot rocks in this pocket of the planet are perfect for cooking your hangi (underground) feast at Te Pā Tū Māori Experience, a bastion for Maori culture. Watch a performance before you dig in to your feast.

Staying in:

- Millennium Hotel, Rotorua (1 night)
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Day 5

Today, choose your own adventure. We have plenty of ideas for the paths you might follow. Optional Rotorua tour sightseeing experiences include a bedazzling show put on by the glowworms of Waitomo Caves, replete with underground waterways and dramatic limestone formations. Or perhaps you'd prefer to zip across Rotorua's three lakes in an amphibious WWII-era Duck. There's also the option of relieving NZ holiday-weary limbs in the thermal waters of the Polynesian Spa. The decision is yours.

Staying in:

- Millennium Hotel, Rotorua (1 night)
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Day 6

Say haere ra (goodbye) to Rotorua and hello to an immense amount of water. First stop is the raging rapids of Huka Falls, where 220,000 litres of water barrel over an 11-metre-high waterfall every second. You'll hear them (and perhaps feel the mist on your face) before you see them. Your outlook then unfolds into the dreamy landscape of Lake Taupo, the largest of its kind in the country and with a twinkling, blue-eyed-boy charm. Your Lake Taupo tour sees you traverse the volcanic Central Plateau to NZ's cool little capital of Wellington, set on a pretty harbour that beckons with too many good restaurants to choose from. Ask us for recommendations, or explore at your leisure. Because every NZ holiday needs a little down-time.

Staying in:

- James Cook Hotel Grand Chancellor (1 night)
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Day 7

If you don't fall in love with Wellington instantly, then you will surely find a spark after visiting Te Papa, the Museum of New Zealand – the morning is yours to peruse the jaw-dropping exhibits at your leisure, but be sure to linger at the exhibit highlighting a traditional Maori wharenui (meeting place). Re-join your mates to cruise Cook Strait across tranquil Queen Charlotte Sound. You're on the South Island now, and dinner reflects the best of Marlborough food and wine. Gourmands, rejoice!

Staying in:

- Chateau Marlborough (1 night)
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Day 8

Sperm whales and fur seals are a common sight in Kaikoura – get lucky and you can see them from shore or sign up for a bird's-eye view on an optional scenic flight over dramatic black beaches framed by turquoise ocean. You won't be disappointed. The region is also known for its tasty crayfish, and there are plenty of places to sample the wares, whether waterside fish-and-chip shops or legendary food trucks serving buttery crayfish rolls. Think of this as your NZ holiday in a mouthful. Follow the coast and Canterbury Plains to Christchurch, home to some of the country's most innovative architecture, art institutions and restaurants. We can help you make a booking in any number of the latter.

Staying in:

- Distinction Christchurch Hotel (1 night)
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Day 9

From its eye-popping, cardboard-crafted Transitional Cathedral to its gold-clad central library, Christchurch has well and truly rebuilt itself since the 2010/11 earthquakes, setting the bar high for architecture and design across the country. On your Christchurch tour you'll discover that despite this cosmopolitan culture, South Island locals still cherish a simple life. Prepare yourself for plenty of country swagger over a Be My Guest afternoon tea hosted by Lake Tekapo locals Stan and Angie Taylor at Morelea, their home overlooking the glistening emerald lake. Former farmers, Angie will give a demonstration of her famous pavlova dessert, and you will hear from Stan about a lifetime spent farming in New Zealand.

Staying in:

- MacKenzie Country Hotel (1 night)
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Day 10

We've got the power – hydro, that is. The Benmore Dam holds back New Zealand's largest artificial lake, and when the Benmore Power Station was opened in 1965 it was the biggest in the country. Just one of the fun facts you'll learn on your NZ tour. That should fuel you through to Oamaru, with its stately tree-lined streets and glam limestone buildings, before landing in Dunedin. The afternoon is yours to discover the 'Edinburgh of the Southern Hemisphere', whether wandering the manicured grounds of its stately castle, taking a wildlife cruise to spot little penguins, or refuelling at a brewery.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Southern Cross (1 night)
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Day 11

From sheep farms to rugged mountains, today is one of diversity. Venture to the South Island's largest lake and the pretty lakeside town of Te Anau. Enjoy the thrill of jet boating down the majestic trout filled Waiau River, to the serene Lake Manapouri, home to Pomana Island where native birds are under threat - and your visit is helping to protect them through a community-based conservation project that is also helping to restore native flora. Stop in some quiet and tranquil spots, soak up the amazing surrounds, spot a few trout, and learn about the unique environment and fascinating history of this unique location among Fiordland National Park.

Staying in:

- Distinction Te Anau Hotel and Villas (1 night)
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Day 12

There aren't many places in the world that remind you how precious the planet is. Fiordland National Park is one. Your journey toward Milford Sound/Piopiotahi traverses native rainforest, alluvial flats and meadows, with mirrored lakes, thundering waterfalls, dramatic rocky ranges and millennia-old valleys. Your Milford Sound/Piopiotahi tour, cruising through this wild expanse, provides enough drama for an entire travel year.

You still have the streets of Queenstown, known as the 'Adventure Capital of New Zealand', to explore.

Staying in:

- Millennium Hotel, Queenstown (1 night)
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Day 13

The roll-call of Queenstown activities you could sign-up for today is near endless. Adrenaline-junkies may wish to zip about in the Shotover Jet, which reaches dizzying speeds in the white-water rapids of the Shotover River. Or perhaps get some perspective on a gondola to Bob's Peak, offering jaw-dropping vistas over the city and the Remarkables, those mountains framing town. Or maybe your Queenstown tour is dedicated to the gorges of Skippers Canyon. If you're a gourmand at heart, sign up for a Central Otago wine tour, where your day involves sipping your way through award-winning cool-climate wines. Whichever route you take, your day ends on a dreamy TSS Earnslaw cruise across Lake Wakatipu, landing at Walter Peak High Country Farm for a gourmet barbecue Highlight Dinner at the Colonel's Homestead.

Staying in:

- Millennium Hotel, Queenstown (1 night)
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Day 14

From Arrowtown's tree-lined avenues to Central Otago's gleaming lakes, nature rules today. Alpine scenery tiers into rainforest along the West Coast of New Zealand, where Thunder Creek Falls and the glacier-studded Mt. Hooker steal the scene. Welcome to your Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine Hukatere tour, the massif ideally explored on a helicopter flight – conditions pending, you may even be able to land and walk across the ice-fall. The bird's-eye view reveals the immensity of this gem-like mound of ice.

Staying in:

- Scenic Hotel Franz Josef Glacier (1 night)
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Day 15

Swap white at Franz Josef Glacier/Ka Roimata o Hine for pounamu (native greenstone or jade) in Hokitika. In Maori tradition, it's bad luck to buy this sacred stone for yourself; flutter your eyelids at your loved-one. Then steel yourself for the Pancake Rocks and blowholes of Punakaiki, a sliver of South Island geology that is as humbling as it is awe-inspiring

Day 16

Beer for breakfast? We've got you sorted on a morning tour of legendary Monteith's Brewery. You only live once, right? The best is yet to come – all aboard for the scenic TranzAlpine train back to Christchurch. Travel through tunnels and over viaducts, with panoramic views of snow-capped peaks, icy rivers, beech forests, gorges and river valleys. Your NZ tour arrives in Christchurch just in time for your Farewell Dinner.

Staying in:

- Distinction Christchurch Hotel (1 night)
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Day 17

How many travel highs can you pack into a holiday? This itinerary has certainly pushed the boundaries. Now all you have to do is go home and sort through all those photos.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	Guided Coach Tour
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Christchurch
Tour length:	17
Accommodation:	Hotel 4 star
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	1 Lunch
Includes	11 dinners
Includes	16 breakfasts
Includes	Airport transfers
Includes	Interislander ferry crossing
Includes	TranzAlpine Train from Greymouth to Christchurch
Includes	Tamaki Maori Village show and dinner, Rotorua
Includes	Dunedin Wildlife Cruise
Includes	Auckland City Sights Tour
Includes	Huka Falls Taupo
Includes	Greenstone Jade craft experience

Accommodation summary