

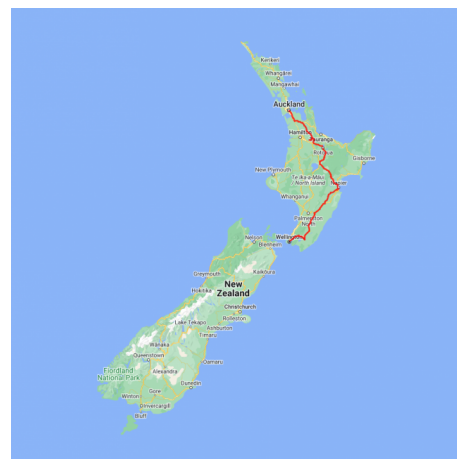


9 Day Taster Tour of the North Island

Explore the North Island from Auckland to Wellington on this short 'Taster Tour'. In Rotorua you'll be introduced to Maori culture through an informative and tasty discovery of the cuisine. You then journey to the beautiful Hawkes Bay, home to New Zealand's oldest vineyards. With time to discover the wineries for yourself during the day, you are then treated to an amazing progressive dinner at some of the top winery restaurants with matched wine tastings. From Napier travel south to the village of Martinborough, a hidden gem within New Zealand's food and wine scene. You'll be introduced to the delicious artisan delights that are being made here. The last leg of your 'Taster Tour' brings you to the capital city of Wellington, a hub for foodies and the best place to experience New Zealand's cafe culture.

Starts in: Auckland
Finishes in: Wellington
Length: 9days / 8nights
Accommodation: Motels
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: Late model rental cars

Includes: Unlimited kms

Includes: Airport & ferry terminal rental car fees

Includes: Comprehensive tour pack (detailed itinerary, driving instructions, map/guidebooks, brochures)

Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland accommodation with Tourcorp

Included activity: Hobbiton Movie Set Tour

Included activity: Martinborough in a Day
Personal Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours

Includes: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)

Includes: GPS navigation

Includes: Additional drivers

Includes: 24/7 support while touring New Zealand

Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App

Included activity: Te Ra Guided Experience, Cultural Experience and Hangi Buffet Lunch at Te Puia

: 1 lunch

Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to Auckland Accommodation

You will be met at the Auckland airport by the driver and transferred to your Auckland accommodation.

Welcome to Auckland

Auckland, New Zealand's self-proclaimed "City of Sails" is the country's largest metro area. Resting between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, this urban paradise has something for everyone. Surrounded by native bush, rainforests, and an abundance of beaches, Auckland is a playground for both the city savvy and those with an eye for adventure. Explore the central museums and galleries on foot, or get out onto the water to experience the best views of the city.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Harbour Sailing Dinner Cruise with Explore

This unique on-water sailing and dining experience is not to be missed while you're in Auckland. Enjoy smooth sailing on the Waitemata Harbour - then watch this photogenic city come alive with twinkling lights. Enjoy your meal as you sail around the beautiful Auckland Harbour taking in the view as the sun slowly sets. You'll be treated to canapes and a drink as you set off towards Westhaven Marina. Choose between dining in the downstairs cabin or on deck to take in the iconic sights of the Auckland Harbour. To finish the evening off, savour your dessert course as you leisurely sail back to Auckland's vibrant Viaduct Harbour.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - All Blacks Experience

See what it takes to make, shape and be an All Black. Experience first-hand the excitement and emotion of game day. Discover the stories behind some of world rugby's most famous players, moments and matches.

This guided experience introduces you to the game of rugby before being lead through state-of-the-art displays combining sound, images, interactive technology and hands-on activities. Discover New Zealand's deep passion for our national sport, experience the full force of the All Blacks haka, tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Your accommodation: Sudima Auckland City

Conveniently located within easy walking distance of Auckland's bustling shopping, arts, dining and entertainment precincts and opposite the New Zealand International Convention Centre.



Day 2



Collect your rental car

This tour can be priced with any of the rental cars available in our fantastic range, from economy hatchbacks to prestige saloons and SUV's.

Auckland to Matamata and Hobbiton

Head southbound on State Highway one through the lush farmland and dairy pastures of the Waikato region. The Bombay Hills mark the outer boundary of the greater Auckland area and its here you turn inland towards Matamata. This is the real Middle Earth, and you'll see many locations used in the filming of The Lord of The Rings and The Hobbit, as well as visiting the actual set of Hobbiton.

Hobbiton Movie Set tour from Shires Rest

Become immersed in the The Lord of the Rings and Hobbit films when you visit the actual Hobbiton movie set. Located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region, your tour will begin with a drive through a picturesque sheep farm. You'll then be taken through Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree while your guide shares behind-the-scenes tales and insight into the making of the films. Spend time wandering through Bagshot Row before being led inside a Hobbit Hole to view the detailed interiors, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Matamata to Rotorua

Just south of Matamata is the township of Tirau, home to the largest tin sheep and sheepdog, but it also offers a surprising number of bric a brac, art, craft and antique stores if you feel like browsing.

Arriving into the City of Rotorua the regions geothermal activity becomes evident as you see steam rising from the roadside and surrounding hills.

Considered the cultural centre for the Maori people, Rotorua is the ideal place to gain an insight into the history and culture. Nearby Ohinemutu Village is the original site of the first Maori settlers in the area and despite its now modern surroundings and buildings you can still gain a sense of what the original village was like. The magnificent meeting house and historic carvings along with the unique 'Tudor-style' St Faiths Church feature in many visitors photo albums.

One of the most popular introductions to the Maori Culture is through an evening at Mitai Maori Village where you can enjoy performances and demonstrations followed by a traditionally cooked hangi meal.

Of course Rotorua is also a great place to enjoy many other activities including, fishing, 4WD trips, relaxing spa treatments, mountain biking, walking and hiking plus helicopter and float plane trips.

Your accommodation: Quest Rotorua Central

Located in the heart of Rotorua, just a stone's throw from the restaurant and shopping precinct. Purpose built in 2012, all apartments are equipped with modern fixtures, full cooking and laundry facilities that make Quest Rotorua Central your perfect home away from home.



Day 3



Te Puia: Te Ra Guided Experience, Cultural Experience and Hangi Buffet Lunch

This experience includes a special guided tour of Te Puia. This begins with an interactive session where you learn to weave flax, then a tour of the prestigious carving and weaving schools. Next explore the geothermal valley, the Kiwi house, mud pools and hot springs.

Then, an unforgettable traditional performance. With a spine-tingling ceremonial welcoming, and stunning Kapa Haka cultural show which features traditional ancestral storytelling, song & dance, with the opportunity to join in hands on activity, for a more enlightening Māori cultural experience.

As part of this experience, you will also get to enjoy a delicious Hangi buffet lunch.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Tour

The National Kiwi Hatchery Tour is a special opportunity to gain insight into and view this highly regarded conservation centre. Developed with the visitor experience in mind, the hatchery boasts special viewing opportunities and is hosted by kiwi expert guides who ensure guests leave fully informed and all questions answered. Learn all about New Zealand's intriguing national icon and the efforts of the kiwi husbandry team, see and discover what it takes to hatch and rare chicks, and if you're lucky see baby chicks in person!

Your accommodation: Quest Rotorua Central

Located in the heart of Rotorua, just a stone's throw from the restaurant and shopping precinct. Purpose built in 2012, all apartments are equipped with modern fixtures, full cooking and laundry facilities that make Quest Rotorua Central your perfect home away from home.

Meals included: Lunch



Day 4



Rotorua to Napier

This drive will take you through the thermal region just south of Rotorua. Home to a plethora of unique geothermal attractions including boiling mud pits, natural hot springs and steaming geysers, this area is a must do before you move on to Napier. Notable attractions are Wai-O-Tapu, Waimangu and Craters of the Moon.

Continue on to Taupo and marvel at the lake, a giant crater formed following a volcanic eruption in the year 180 CE. As you approach the city, be sure to stop at Huka Falls to view the spectacular sight of hundreds of cubic metres of water spilling every second down the narrow 11 metre drop.

For an extra thrill take a jet-boat ride to the base of the falls. Leaving Taupo, follow the road as it climbs the rugged Ahimanawa Range before descending back down the Pacific Coast to art deco Napier.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland is a spectacular showcase of New Zealand's most colourful and unique geothermal elements sculpted by thousands of years of volcanic activity. You are introduced to a uniquely different natural landscape – the key to what you see lies below the surface – one of the most extensive geothermal systems in New Zealand, extending over 18-sq. km. Enjoy viewing unique volcanic features as you walk at your own pace along well-defined tracks. Relax in the first-class Visitor Centre, home to the Gift Shop and Caf  facilities. Visit the Mud Pool, the largest in New Zealand, it was originally the site of a large mud volcano which was destroyed through erosion in the 1920s. See the history and beauty of the Lady Knox Geyser at 10:15 am every day. Lady Knox Geyser provides a unique opportunity to see an eruption to heights of 10 to 20 metres.

Your accommodation: The Dome

The Dome occupies the top two floors of the grand and historic 1937 T&G building, an iconic Art Deco masterpiece in the heart of Napier. The vibe of New Zealand's Art Deco city is right outside the door, yet The Dome's elevation enhances the serenity and seclusion.



Day 5



Explore Napier and the Hawke's Bay

With its Mediterranean climate and Art Deco style, Hawke's Bay is an attractive holiday prospect. As the nation's first winemaking region, a visit to one of its 30 wineries is a must. A trip to Mission Estate touted as the birthplace of NZ wine can't be missed. For the truly enthused head out on a tour of the vines. Those into Gatsby will enjoy the chance to view prominent Art Deco landmarks on a 1930s Vintage Car Tour. Passengers will spend just over an hour learning about the history of the city's architecture including the Napier Municipal Theatre, one of the top ten Art Deco Buildings in the world. If you're after some fresh air, hire a bike and take your pick of one of over 200km of cycling trails or head on down to one of the many beaches that ring the area. Ocean or Waimarama beach are good choices and both are patrolled by surf lifeguards during the summer. Indulge in some local produce and head out on a cheese, chocolate, honey or orchard tour.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Grape Escape half day Hawke's Bay Wine tour

This wine tasting tour is designed for casual imbibers and wine aficionados. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of Hawke's Bay's fantastic wines. Taste great wines made with passion and learn of the area's unique growing conditions. Take home outstanding wines and wonderful memories. Join a fun filled wine tasting afternoon in the sun driving through absolutely stunning scenery. Meet like-minded people and share an appreciation of this region's fantastic wine. Visit four to five wineries and enjoy a cheese platter on the grounds of the Ngatarawa Vineyard beside the lily pond.

Walking tracks in and around Hawkes Bay

There are some excellent walks in and around the Hawkes Bay region. The information below is provided by the Department of Conservation. Listed below are a selection of short walks but check with the Department of Conservation information centre for weather conditions, track suitability and conditions first. Tangoio Falls Scenic Reserve Tracks

Discover Te Ana or Tangoio Falls on a short, easy walk suitable for kids, or take a longer walk through native bush on the Tangoio Walkway. . Distance: 2 - 4.4 km one way. Completion Time: 30 minutes to 2 hours depending on which track you choose.

White Pine Bush Scenic Reserve

Experience New Zealand's remaining coastal forest on these short, easy walks that are good for children. Distance: 1.6 km loop. Completion Time: 40 minutes.

Ahuriri Estuary

View a community of wading birds, fish, mud dwellers and aquatic plant life from the estuary track and boardwalk. Over 70 species of resident and migratory waterbirds use the estuary as a feeding and resting area. Distance: 2.8 km one way. Completion Time: 1 hour.

Te Mata Park

Te Mata Park has a rich human and geological history, and is home to a range of unique plants and native birds. The park has five different walking options varying in difficulty and distance. Distance: 1.3 km - 5.4 km. Completion Time: 40 minutes - 1 hours 15 minutes.

Lake Tūtira

There are two main walks at Lake Tūtira, a short walk along the edge of the lake or a longer loop through the reserve. Both offer great views of the lake as well as native and introduced plant species. Distance: 1.3 km - 5.4 km. Completion Time: 40 minutes - 1 hours 15 minutes.

Cape Kidnappers/Te Kauwae-a-Māui Walking Track

Follow the beach from Clifton to Cape Kidnappers/Te Kauwae-a-Māui alongside cliffs that show fragmented fault and tilt lines, recording the gradual rise of New Zealand. Black Reef is the first gannet nesting site, 7.5 km from Clifton. A 1 km climb takes you from the shelter on the beach to a benched area on the hill where you can view the second colony, and spectacular views of Hawke's Bay. Distance: 19 km loop. Completion Time: 5 hour return.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Triple Chocolate Dipper Tour with the Silky Oak Chocolate Company

A true chocolate indulgence combining chocolate tasting at Silky Oak Chocolate factory shop, entry into the Chocolate "Thru' the Ages" Museum, a Chocolate drink (or tea/coffee), chocolate muffin/ slice, served with liquid chocolate and cream at their Caf  . You'll be presented with a bonus take-home gift - chocolate of course! This is chocolate overload for serious chocoholics!

Your accommodation: The Dome

The Dome occupies the top two floors of the grand and historic 1937 T&G building, an iconic Art Deco masterpiece in the heart of Napier. The vibe of New Zealand's Art Deco city is right outside the door, yet The Dome's elevation enhances the serenity and seclusion.



Day 6



Napier to Martinborough

As you leave the rolling countryside of the Hawke's Bay you'll be greeted with some of the country's richest dairy farmland in the Manawatu Gorge. Continue on through the Wairarapa region and stop in the Pukaha Mount Bruce Wildlife Centre, where you can see some of New Zealand native animals. Take another break in Masterson, and visit the interactive Woolshed Museum to learn about sheep farming in New Zealand. As you drive south, a visit to historic Greytown is a must-do. Take in the restored Victorian buildings and make time for a cup of tea at one of its quaint cafes. Leaving state highway 2 you will cross over the Ruamahanga River into Martinborough wine country your destination for the day.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Art Deco Trust Guided Morning Walk

Experience Napier's fascinating heritage created by the dramatic story of this city's rebirth in the vibrant 1930s. In February 1931, Napier was levelled by earthquake and fire but was rebuilt in the depths of the Great Depression in just two years. Nowhere else in the world can you see such a concentration of buildings in the styles of the 1930s: Art Deco, Spanish Mission, and Stripped Classical.

Your accommodation: The Claremont, Martinborough

Set just outside the main village, The Claremont is the ideal base for you to enjoy everything the region has to offer. Well-appointed, self-contained apartments and units will make your stay very comfortable.



Day 7



Martinborough in a Day Personal Wine Tour with Martinborough Wine Tours

This tour gets you behind the scenes at some of the region's top wineries and an olive grove. It includes meeting and talking with a winemaker, a walk in the vines, and an olive grove tour and olive oil tasting at a local producer which specialises in flavour-infused olive oils. Cheese tasting, chocolate tasting, a morning coffee stop, gin and beer tastings are also options as part of this tour.

Your accommodation: The Claremont, Martinborough

Set just outside the main village, The Claremont is the ideal base for you to enjoy everything the region has to offer. Well-appointed, self-contained apartments and units will make your stay very comfortable.



Day 8



Martinborough to Wellington City

Today you will cross the Rimutaka Ranges as you make your way to New Zealand's capital city, Wellington. Often compared to Melbourne, Wellington is vibrant cultural hub. Home to the nation's centre of government. Legislation happens in the aptly named 'Beehive,' an executive wing attached to the Houses of Parliament. At one kilometre squared, the city centre (easily traversed on foot) has an international feel and is peppered with underground art shows, alleyway cafes and New York style delis. Take in the boardwalk view as you stroll to Te Papa Museum or indulge your cinematic side exploring Weta Workshop, the Oscar Award winning design studio for Lord Of The Rings. For a taste of vintage fashion, spend some time (and dollars!) on Cuba Street browsing the boutiques. Work off last night's dinner with a cycling tour of Oriental Bay and undo your good work with a Hokey Pokey ice-cream in the sun. For those heading further down, the capital is where you board the ferry crossing the Cook Strait to the South Island.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wellington Half Day Tour

Witness the best sights of New Zealand's capital city up close and personal, before experiencing the beauty of the coastline that surrounds central Wellington and its harbour. On this tour, you will head for the hills of Mt Victoria to witness the stunning landscape of Wellington and its harbour below. You will then follow the coastline round to the Weta Cave Museum, which is the showpiece of Peter Jackson's film empire. After a drive around the south coast, you will head back into the city for a ride on the Cable Car and a walk around the lady Norwood rose gardens. The tour concludes with a visit to the Beehive and our Parliament buildings.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Zealandia By Night Wildlife Sanctuary Tour

Taking a night tour of Zealandia wildlife eco-sanctuary is an unforgettable experience and one that comes highly recommended. A conservation success and safe haven for some of New Zealand's rarest native animals, Zealandia is home to many remarkable species of birds, reptiles and insects living wild within a beautiful 225 hectare (one square mile) valley, just 10 minutes from the central city.

Your tour begins with an interactive exhibition before you walk through the gates of Zealandia predator-exclusion fence into the sanctuary. Your guide will then lead you on a torch-light walk through the native New Zealand bush. Possible sights include Kiwi foraging on the forest floor, tuatara hunting for food, glowworms shining, tiny Maud Island frogs in their enclosure, pateke (brown teal) ducks feeding at night and kaka (parrots) coming in to roost. Zealandia is one of the best places to see kiwi in the wild. Over 100 of these nocturnal birds live freely in their natural environment inside the safety of the sanctuary valley, so your chances of seeing one are high!

Your accommodation: CityLife Wellington

City Life Wellington is a suite style hotel with every amenity required for a comfortable stay, as well as being in a superb location to explore the compact city centre. Situated on Lambton Quay, you'll find the best shopping, tourist attractions and cultural landmarks all within easy walking distance.



Day 9

Return your vehicle to Wellington Airport

Explore more of Wellington before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	North Island Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Wellington
Tour length:	9
Accommodation:	Motels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Hobbiton Movie Set Tour, Matamata
Includes	Te Puia Steambox Interactive Lunch & Cultural Performance
Includes	Twilight Odyssey Progressive Dinner and Winery Tour
Includes	Martinborough Food and Wine Producers Tour

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Sudima Auckland City
Day 2	Quest Rotorua Central
Day 3	Quest Rotorua Central
Day 4	The Dome
Day 5	The Dome
Day 6	The Claremont, Martinborough
Day 7	The Claremont, Martinborough
Day 8	CityLife Wellington