

The Volcanic Centre Self Drive Tour

A tour through the heart of the North Island highlighting its incredible diversity. Experience the rich culture of Rotorua and its volcanic past and present with a trip by helicopter to Mt Tarawera. Visit Taupo, the largest lake in New Zealand and then the North Island's World Heritage area of Tongariro National Park. The tour finishes with a visit to the world famous Waitomo Glow Worm Caves and Aranui Cave before heading back to Auckland.

Starts in: Auckland
Finishes in: Auckland
Length: 8days / 7nights
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: Fully inclusive rental car insurance (excess may apply)
Includes: Unlimited kms
Includes: Afterhours emergency support while touring
Included activity: Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp
Included activity: Electronic Travel Guide and In-Country Support App
Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included
Included activity: Mount Tarawera & Orakei Korako Thermal Explorer with Volcanic Air
Included activity: Huka Falls Jet Boat Ride
Included activity: Sky Waka Gondola Sightseeing Trip with Whakapapa - Open Dated Voucher
Included activity: Waitomo and Aranui Caves tour Combo
Included activity: Auckland Sky Tower Admission
1 special dinner

Day 1



Private Transfer Auckland Airport to your Auckland Accommodation with Tourcorp

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

Welcome to Auckland

Kia ora! Welcome to Auckland, known in Māori as Tāmaki Makaurau. Auckland is New Zealand's vibrant "City of Sails," and the country's largest metropolitan area. Nestled between the Pacific Ocean and the Tasman Sea, it offers something for everyone. Surrounded by native bush, lush rainforests, and pristine beaches, Auckland is a haven for both adventurers and urban explorers. Wander through world-class museums and galleries in the city centre or enjoy a peaceful retreat at the Auckland Gardens, where stunning landscapes showcase New Zealand's diverse flora. Stroll along the lively waterfront to savour fresh seafood and international cuisine at the Viaduct restaurants. For an unforgettable perspective, ascend the iconic SkyTower, New Zealand's tallest structure, and take in panoramic views of the city and its picturesque islands.

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. 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 including 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, and tackle interactive zones where you can try out your kicking, catching, line-out, and accuracy skills against legendary All Blacks.

Your accommodation: Nesuto Stadium Hotel and Apartments

Nesuto Stadium offers a comfortable self-contained apartment in downtown Auckland. Located a short walk from Britomart Transport and the Viaduct. Enjoy your stay in central Auckland surrounded by delicious eateries or use your in-house kitchenette to dine in!



Day 2



Collect Rental Car

Choose a car to best suit your needs from our fantastic rental car range. From compact economy, hatchbacks to prestige SUVs.

Auckland to Rotorua

The drive south from Auckland takes you past the the Bombay Hills which mark the outer boundary of greater Auckland area and it's here you turn inland to central Waikato. You'll soon go through the town of Matamata where you can visit the fully intact Hobbiton film set used in the shooting of the Lord of The Rings and Hobbit trilogies. Continuing on, you'll pass several small farming communities before telltale signs of steam and other geothermal activity signal your arrival into Rotorua.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Hobbiton Movie Set Tour from Shires Rest

In the heart of New Zealand, you can step into the lush pastures of the Shire with a guided tour of Hobbiton, as featured in The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit Trilogies. Hobbiton is located just outside of Matamata in the heart of the lush Waikato farming region. Here you can visit such iconic Hobbit locations as Hobbit Holes, the Green Dragon Inn, the Mill and the Party Tree with a guide sharing 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 interior, designed to provide an authentic glimpse into the dwelling of a Hobbit.

Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included

New Zealand's Most Awarded Cultural Attraction, presenting Te Pā Tū. Feast on song, drama, tradition, and divine seasonal kai (cuisine) within the forest Pā (village) blanketed by towering Tawa trees, blazing bonfires, and a forest-formed amphitheatre. Te Pā Tū shares Māori history, traditions, and cultural aspirations across 4-hours of celebration and feasting. These events change with each season of the Maramataka, the Māori lunar calendar.

Your accommodation: Silver Fern Suites & Spa

Silver Fern Suites & Spa is located just minutes from Rotorua's city centre and is close to popular thermal attractions, cafes, restaurants and golf courses. Suites have a private spa pool or double spa bath for you to unwind and relax.

Meals included: Speciality Dinner



Day 3



Explore Rotorua

Peppered with natural hot springs, boiling mud pools and steaming geysers, Rotorua sits within one of the world's most active volcanic regions. Geothermal landmarks aside, this city of sulphur has a rich indigenous history. Home to several prominent Māori tribes, a visit to one of the Māori experiences should be high on your agenda, learn about the special meaning of pounamu-Greenstone with Mountain Jade, explore the geysers and arts of Te Puia or immerse in an evening with Te Pā Tū. An excursion to one of the area's wellness spas is also a must! Try the Polynesian Spa for an invigorating soak in its natural mineral hot springs, Wai Ariki offers an indulging and unwinding restorative journey or pay a quick visit to Secret Spot for a soak and a delicious smash burger!

If it is a thrill you are looking for, spike your adrenaline at Rotorua Canopy Tours, soaring above the ancient native forest below. Alternatively, head up the Skyline Rotorua Gondola for soaring lake views, and ride the luge at night for an extra thrill.

Make the most of your time in Rotorua with an excursion through the Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland, one of the area's most colourful volcanic attractions. Whatever you are after, Rotorua is almost certain to have it!

Mount Tarawera & Orakei Korako Thermal Explorer with Volcanic Air

Combine the thrill of landing on Mount Tarawera with a flight that includes spectacular aerial views of Rotorua's stunning crater lakes, the renowned Tarawera Falls and the vibrant Waimangu and Wai-O-Tapu geothermal reserves. Leaving Wai-O-Tapu, descend to follow the Waikato River to the hidden valley of Orakei Korako. Once landed, you will ferry across the river and begin your land-based tour. Experience hot springs, gushing geysers and the natural beauty of this geothermal wonderland. The return flight takes in views of farmland and the Paeroa mountain range before flying over Rotorua City and returning to the lakefront pier.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland

Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland is a spectacular showcase of New Zealand's colourful and unique geothermal elements sculpted by thousands of years of volcanic activity. You will be introduced to a diversely different natural landscape, extending over 18-sq. km. Enjoy viewing the 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 Café 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 where a daily eruption happens of up to 20 metres.

Your accommodation: Silver Fern Suites & Spa

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Day 4



Rotorua to Taupo

Today drive through the heart of the Central North Island volcanic plateau. Visit the geothermal regions Wai O Tapu Thermal Wonderland and Waimangu Volcanic Valley, before arriving into the town of Taupo, which sits on New Zealand's largest lake - Lake Taupo. Just north of the town are the Huka Falls and a short detour to view is highly recommended, as is a visit to the nearby Craters of the Moon geothermal reserve.

Huka Falls Jet Boat Ride

The Huka Jet is 30 minutes of pure fun and exhilaration, skimming close to cliffs, sliding past trees, feeling the adrenalin of full 360 degree spins. The excitement continues right up to the base of the foaming Huka Falls, where you get a spectacular water level view to New Zealand's most visited natural attraction. Nothing compares to watching 220,000 litres per second tumbling over the cliff face towards you.

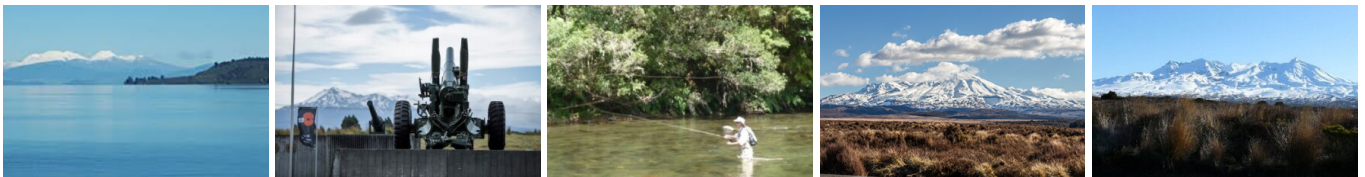
The water from the mighty Huka Falls runs down the Waikato River through a series of Hydro Power Stations. You'll get a view of the Wairakei Geothermal Power Station in the comfort of a powerful Chevrolet V8 jet boat. This unique Geothermal Power Station uses underground geothermal activity to produce hot steamy water. The Waikato Rivers beautiful environment is varied and unique and is New Zealand's longest river flowing north from our largest lake, Lake Taupō.

Your accommodation: Beechtree Motel

Beechtree Motel offers luxury, modern apartment and motel style accommodation. Just a five minutes stroll to cafes, restaurants and the Taupo lakefront.



Day 5



Taupo to Ohakune via The Desert Road

Following the lake edge the drive takes you to the township of Turangi, rated as one of the worlds best trout fishing locations. Just on the main road south of the town is the National Trout Centre run by the Department of Conservation. You can explore the process of hatching trout to stock New Zealand's rivers and lakes.

Continuing onto the high central plateau you drive what is commonly known as 'the desert road'. Skirting Tongariro National Park, one of New Zealand's three world heritage sites, and clouds permitting you can see the 2,500 metre peak of the still volcanically active Mt. Ruapehu. You might recognise the symmetrical shape of Mt. Ngauruhoe as this was used as the scenery of Mt. Doom in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy.

A little further the military town of Waiouru also hosts the Army Museum, an incredible collection of New Zealand's military history and a memorial to its servicemen. Ohakune is a great base for exploring Tongariro National Park, a World Heritage Site. Three active volcanoes form the backbone of this spectacular region and some ways to enjoy the park include Hiking, fishing, mountain biking, scenic flights or simply taking a drive to the top of the ski field road at Whakapapa.

Sky Waka Gondola Sightseeing Trip with Whakapapa - Open Dated Voucher

During the summer months you can take advantage of the skifield facilities and take the gondola over Mt Ruapehu's otherworldly terrain. You'll travel to an altitude of 2020 metres where you'll be treated to magnificent views of Tongariro National Park, including the iconic peaks of Mt Ruapehu, Mt Tongariro and Mt Ngauruhoe, the latter featured as Mt Doom in the Lord of the Rings movies.

Your accommodation: Skotel Alpine Resort

Located in the tussock on the edge of the Whakapapa Village in the heart of the Tongariro National Park The Skotel Alpine Resort offers a wonderful atmosphere and well equipped rooms to relax and enjoy the region from.



Day 6



Ohakune to Waitomo

Head through National Park and across rich rolling farmland to the limestone regions of Waitomo and the famous Waitomo Caves complex.

Waitomo Glowworm Caves and Aranui Cave tour

For over 100 years Waitomo Glowworm Caves have attracted people from all over the world to this subterranean wonderland. An ancient underground labyrinth of limestone caves and grottos, and amazing stalactites and stalagmites.

Waitomo Glowworm Caves

Formed over 30 million years ago there are two levels to the Waitomo Glowworm Caves which are 16 metres apart. The upper level is dry and includes the entrance to the cave, the Catacombs and the Organ Loft. The lower level consists of stream passages and the Cathedral. As you glide quietly beneath the lights of thousands of glowworms, it is only the gentle sound of dripping water that reminds you that you are deep underground and not beneath a star filled sky.

Aranui Cave

Located in Ruakuri Scenic Reserve, Aranui is a dry cave. There is only one entrance to Aranui and without a river flowing through, it houses very little life past the entrance. However, just inside the entrance is a colony of cave wetas. Aranui is famous for its beautiful arrays of stalactites, stalagmites, flowstones and unusual formations.

Duration: Allow 2 hours for the two cave combo.

Your accommodation: Palm Court Motel Otorohanga

Palm Court Motel is conveniently located 200 metres from cafes, restaurants, village shopping and the railway station. Stay just a few minutes drive to Waitomo Caves, Black-Water Rafting, Adventure Tours, Kiwi House and the golf course.



Day 7



Waitomo to Auckland City

The lush farmland of the Waikato and the limestone hills of the Waitomo region provide some great scenery as you head north. Visit the Otorohanga Kiwi House en route for a great look at some of New Zealand's native birds in particular our famous flightless namesake.

Auckland Sky Tower Admission

Standing at 328 meters (just over 1000 feet) - the Sky Tower is the tallest man-made structure in New Zealand and offers panoramic views of the Auckland landscape. Travel in the glass-fronted lift to one of three spectacular viewing platforms, or for a little more excitement do a SkyWalk - an outside loop around the pergola 192 meters (just over 600 feet) above ground. If you're really bold, Take the quick way down and SkyJump off the tower - a controlled free fall to the base.

Inside, the Sky Lounge offers coffee and light meals while the iconic Orbit Restaurant is Auckland's only 360-degree revolving dining experience.

Your accommodation: Nesuto Stadium Hotel and Apartments

Nesuto Stadium offers a comfortable self-contained apartment in downtown Auckland. Located a short walk from Britomart Transport and the Viaduct. Enjoy your stay in central Auckland surround by delicious eateries or use your in-house kitchenette to dine in!



Day 8



Depart Auckland today

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

Farewell from Aotearoa-New Zealand

Bid farewell to New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Maori, it is said mā te wā, which is not goodbye, it is see you soon!

Tour details

Departures:	Daily
Tour type:	North Island Self Drive
Starts:	Auckland
Finishes:	Auckland
Tour length:	8
Accommodation:	Motels
Car/transport type:	

Included activities

Includes	Private airport transfers
Includes	Mitai Maori Village Concert & Buffet Dinner, Rotorua
Includes	Waitomo Glow Worm and Aranui Caves
Includes	Huka Falls Jet Boat Tour

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Nesuto Stadium Hotel and Apartments
Day 2	Silver Fern Suites & Spa
Day 3	Silver Fern Suites & Spa
Day 4	Beechtree Motel
Day 5	Skotel Alpine Resort
Day 6	Palm Court Motel Otorohanga
Day 7	Nesuto Stadium Hotel and Apartments