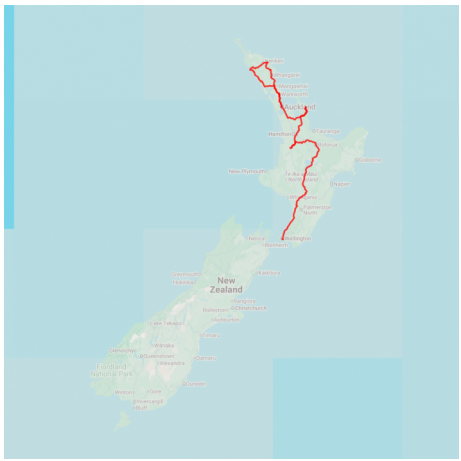
Away We Go Tours - DO NOT USE
61 2 6456 4033
www.awaywegotours.com.au

North Island Spectacular

A comprehensive North Island tour exploring from Cape Reinga in the north, to the charming capital city of Wellington in the south. Along the way you'll travel at a relaxed pace and experience welcoming hospitality at some of the best boutique lodges. Highlights include the Bay of Islands cruise, Cape Reinga and Ninety Mile Beach tour. In Rotorua you'll take a tour by float plane to the Waimangu Valley and enjoy a visit to Tamaki Māori Village.

Starts in:	Auckland
Finishes in:	Wellington
Length:	13days / 12nights
Accommodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
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: The Visitor Promise - Cultural Learning Course
Included activity: Wai-O-Tapu Thermal Wonderland
Included activity: Hole in the Rock Cruise with Fullers GreatSights
Included activity: Cape Reinga & Ninety Mile Beach Full Day Tour with Fullers Bay of Islands - Lunch Included
Included activity: Private Footwhistle Glowworm Cave Tour with CaveWorld
Included activity: Te Pā Tū Evening Māori Cultural Experience - Dinner Included
12 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 dinner, 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

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. 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 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 Cruise with Explore

Enjoy the City of Sails from the water on a relaxed harbour sailing yacht. This cruise offers a uniquely local experience experiencing the harbour under sail with a small vessel with an intimate and engaging atmosphere. View the stunning city sights while sailing on the inner Waitemata Harbour. Sail where the wind takes us while enjoying Auckland's city highlights; including sailing under the Harbour Bridge and other well-known landmarks along the harbour's edge. The crew's local knowledge will give you the best harbour sailing experience Auckland has to offer. Become the crew and help participate with the sailing experience take the helm while you carve through the water, or if you prefer just sit back and relax above deck.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wētā Workshop Unleashed

A jaw-dropping, senses-shattering, awe-inspiring adventure into the heart of movie magic! Get hands-on and immerse yourself in an extraordinary world of practical effects, props and larger-than-life sets. On this award-winning tour, you can explore three movie projects imagined by the Weta crew and uncover how they bring big screen concepts to life. Discover a mind-blowing world of robots, monsters, dinosaurs and more - step right into the action to see, play and experience movie-making up close.

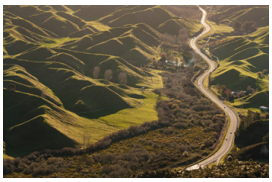
SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - All Blacks Experience

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: Fable Auckland

Located right on Queen Street the Fable Auckland is boutique and stylish property with an ideal location to enjoy and explore the vibrant heart of the 'City of Sails'.

Day 2



Collect Rental Car

This tour's from price includes an intermediate-sized vehicle, setting you up for comfortable travels. Yet, we understand every adventure is unique! Feel free to select the perfect wheels from our incredible collection of rental cars, spanning from economy hatchbacks to premium SUVs.

Auckland to Russell

The drive from Auckland to the Bay of Islands normally takes around three and a half hours, but plan to take a little longer for there are many things to see along the way. Stretch your legs in Puhoi, New Zealand's only Bohemian settlement. Go through Warkworth, and Whangarei and see the world famous hundertwasser toilets in Kawakawa. Arriving into Russell via the Opua Ferry, you'll be greeted by lush bush-clad hillsides dropping to golden sandy beaches.

Your accommodation: Arcadia Lodge, Russell

Arcadia Lodge is a Russell landmark, a turn of the century home and luxury bed and breakfast overlooking Russell's tranquil Matauwhi Bay.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 3

Explore Bay of Islands

Commonly known as the ‘winterless north’ New Zealand’s Bay of Islands is made up of over 140 subtropical atolls. Renowned for its untouched beaches, abundant marine life, and idyllic climate, this tropical paradise ticks all the boxes. Spend some time on a remote stretch of beach, or see the dolphins on an ocean safari. If diving is your thing, take the morning to descend the Rainbow Warrior - The Greenpeace flagship sunk by French saboteurs in 1985. Wander around Russell, a whaling port founded in 1843. Learn about our culture in historic Waitangi, the site where The Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and Europeans. Alternatively, you may like to take a day tour to Cape Reinga, the very top of the North Island.

Hole in the Rock Cruise with Fullers GreatSights

Board your cruise and take in the stunning views as you glide out through the islands and along the Rakaumangamanga Peninsula to Cape Brett, where a historic lighthouse keeps watch over and Piercy Island/Motukōkako, or as it is popularly known as the Hole in the Rock. According to Māori legend, local warriors used to paddle through the Hole in the Rock in their canoes before departing for battle. Drops of water from the cave roof above were a good omen. If conditions permit, your skipper will expertly guide the ship through the narrow space. Keep an eye out for common and bottlenose dolphins, whales, and other marine life during your cruise, and have your camera ready as you get up close to the action. Stop off at Otehei Bay on Urupukapuka Island where you have time to relax, take a walk, have a swim, or enjoy a bite to eat and drink from the on-site fully licensed café. The purpose-built catamaran is licensed by DOC (the Department of Conservation) for dolphin viewing and the crew has years of experience locating dolphins in these waters.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Waitangi Treaty Grounds Guided Tour and Cultural Performance

Waitangi is one of New Zealand's most historic sites where the Treaty of Waitangi was signed in 1840 between the Māori and the British Government. This two day pass allows you access to the Treaty of Waitangi Grounds and includes admission to the Te Kōngahu Museum and Te Rau Aroha Museum and a Maori Cultural performance. During your guided tour, learn about the history of the treaty and discover the stories and events that shaped New Zealand. The cultural performance inside the carved meeting house includes waiata (singing), poi and the haka - a war dance Aotearoa-New Zealand is well known for.

Your accommodation: Arcadia Lodge, Russell

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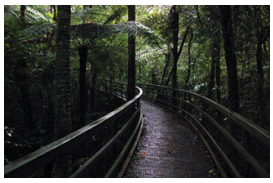
Meals included: Breakfast

Day 4



Cape Reinga & Ninety Mile Beach Full Day Tour with Fullers Bay of Islands - Lunch Included

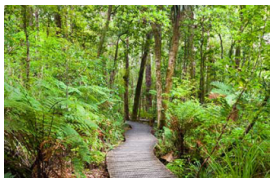
Journey to the very tip of the North Island and uncover a region of rich Māori tradition along the way on an unforgettable full-day tour. Travel along the sand-swept shore of Ninety Mile Beach in our purpose-built coach and experience sandboarding (weather permitting). In Māori tradition, Cape Reinga or Te Rerenga Wairua is the place where spirits depart on their long journey back to the homeland. Stand at the northernmost point of New Zealand and drink in the panoramic views. As you stand beneath the iconic lighthouse, and watch the Tasman Sea and the mighty Pacific Ocean collide far below, you'll feel the power of this special place. Throughout the day your local driver guide will provide an entertaining and thought-provoking insight into the culture, history and natural wonders of the Far North.

Your accommodation: Arcadia Lodge, Russell

Arcadia Lodge is a Russell landmark, a turn of the century home and luxury bed and breakfast overlooking Russell's tranquil Matauwhi Bay.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Day 5



Paihia, Bay of Islands to Warkworth via Waipoua

Heading west from the Bay of Islands you leave the Pacific Ocean and soon and arrive into the Hokianga and the wilder seas of the Tasman. The small townships of Omapere and Opononi have a great seaside feel and the perfect place to stop for an ice cream. The route now heads south and into the Waipoua Forest, home to the massive Kauri trees. Make sure you allow time to take a few short walks that are signposted as you pass through the region. Not to be missed is the 5 minute loop to view the largest of all the trees Tane Mahuta.
Heading back across country the Matakohe Kauri Museum is an award winning museum and has extensive displays of the regions logging, farming and social history. Just a short drive from Warkworth towards the coast is the small township of Matakana and a little further you will find the often deserted beaches of the Tawharanui Marine Reserve.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Ngawha Springs

Bathe in the healing waters at Ngawha Springs and let the ancient energy revitalise your senses while the minerals from deep in the earth permeate your body. The mineral-rich hot waters of Ngawha Springs bubble up from deep within the Earth. Nestled in the heart of Te Tai Tokerau, Northland, the springs have a long history of being a restorative and healing place to visit. The people of Ngapuhi have attended the natural springs to replenish wairua (spirit), alleviate the sensation of pain, and repair common ailments.

Your accommodation: Woodhouse Mountain Lodge Warkworth

Contemporary secluded villa accommodations in paradise-like grounds are set high above surrounding land, meaning privacy is guaranteed and views extend as far as the Hauraki Gulf. Facilities include a restaurant, outdoor pool, sauna, day spa treatments, cocktail bar, and extensive grounds to explore.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 6

Mangawhai to Whitianga

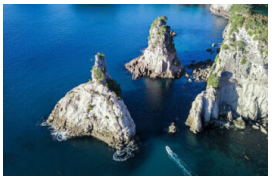
Leaving the idyllic Warkworth region, head south on State Highway one towards Auckland. The drive takes you through farming regions, and down through the bustling center of Auckland City. From there it’s across the fertile Hauraki Plains towards the Thames Estuary, a haven for wildlife, in particular, the shorebirds at Miranda. You then cross the Southern Coromandel Ranges through to the wonderful east coast of the peninsula and the harbour town of Tairua. From here, head north to Whenuakite before turning off to head back towards the Pacific Ocean and your final destination, Hahei.

Your accommodation: Hahei Bed & Breakfast

Hahei Bed & Breakfast, you will be able to look forward to quiet surroundings, large swimming pool and subtropical gardens. Relax into this idyllic environment, and prepare for the perfect beach holiday! You'll be able to enjoy the comfort of this peaceful, fresh-styled property.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 7



Hot Water Beach

Famous for its naturally heated geothermal springs, Hot Water Beach offers a unique experience where you can dig your own spa pool in the sand at low tide and relax in the warm waters with stunning coastal views. With its golden sands, powerful surf, and peaceful atmosphere, it's the perfect blend of relaxation and adventure.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Cathedral Cove Classic Sea Kayak Tour

Considered one of the best sea kayaking trips in the country the Cathedral Cove Classic has got it all. The Te Whanganui-A-Hei Marine Reserve opens up a sea kayaking paradise full of beaches, islands and rock gardens that are just waiting to be explored. Paddle through sea caves, interact with the local marine life and discover the thrill of kayak sailing with the wind on your back. To top it off you land at Cathedral Cove where you will be treated to the 'world famous' cappuccinos and hot chocolates on the beach! Cathedral Cove Sea Kayaking use very stable double sea kayaks and quality safety equipment. No experience is necessary and a qualified guide accompanies throughout and offers full instructions and assistance. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information please see here.

Your accommodation: Hahei Bed & Breakfast

Hahei Bed & Breakfast, you will be able to look forward to quiet surroundings, large swimming pool and subtropical gardens. Relax into this idyllic environment, and prepare for the perfect beach holiday! You'll be able to enjoy the comfort of this peaceful, fresh-styled property.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 8

Hahei to Waitomo

Heading south perhaps detour back to the coast for a visit to the famous Hot Water Beach before you cross the range and on towards Thames, the main town on the Coromandel Peninsula and a historic gold mining town. Next you will pass through Paeroa "World Famous in New Zealand" as the home of L&P (flavoured beverage). Carry on south towards the beautiful Edwardian spa town of Te Aroha; "The Mountain of Love" famous for sparkling hot mineral spas and the world's only hot soda water geyser. Once you reach Matamata you are in Hobbit country where you can still visit the film locations made famous in the movies at Hobbiton Movie Set Tours. From here you will head towards Cambridge, which has a real feel of an English country town. A host of cafes and antique stores can help you while away an afternoon. Buildings worthy of mention are St. Andrew's church (1881), the old water tower, hotels, the courthouse and the post office. The remainder of the journey towards Waitomo consists of lush Waikato farmland and limestone hills which provide some great scenery. Waitomo is home of a huge network of caves from the magical glowworms that has attracted many visitors for the past century.

Private Footwhistle Glowworm Cave Tour with CaveWorld

Your tour begins as you are picked at the Waitomo iSite and enjoy a scenic shuttle to Caveworld's family owned cave, while your guide provides commentary bringing the rich history of Waitomo to life. Here you will take a short walk through the breathtaking New Zealand bush, keeping an eye out for the native birdlife. Heading down to the entrance of the cave you will discover the beauty of the glowworms, learn about the formation of Footwhistle Cave - known to local Maori as Te Anaroa Cave. You are encouraged to bring along your cameras a tripods to freeze the beautiful twinkling lights in time, with dim solar-powered lights through the cave that allow you to appreciate the magnificent displays and get the perfect shot. Complete your intimate tour with a Kawakawa tea as you relax in a ponga hut nestled into the native surrounds.

Your accommodation: Abseil Inn

Architecturally designed, the Abseil Inn is situated on a ridge overlooking both the Waitomo Caves Village and the beautiful Waitomo Valley. Sited to maximize both views and rural ambience it offers an authentic slice of rural NZ

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9

Waitomo to Rotorua

Today cross the lush farmland of the Waikato as you make your way inland to Rotorua. Pass through several small farming towns such as Otorohanga and Putaruru, before the region’s geothermal activity signals your arrival into the city of Rotorua.

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: Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel

Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel combines old world charm with a modern funky twist. Set in one acre of outstanding gardens on the edge of Lake Rotorua, the lodge is an intimate retreat just a short drive from the centre of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast, Speciality Dinner

Day 10

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!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - National Kiwi Hatchery Experience

The National Kiwi Hatchery Experience 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!

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Original Ziplining Experience with Rotorua Canopy Tours

Embark on a three-hour adventure through the native New Zealand forest. Journey through the beautiful forest canopy via an incredible network of trails, tree platforms, Ziplines and swing bridges. See breathtaking views of the woodland valleys and hills as you fly through tight openings in the trees. In between the thrill of the ziplines and suspended tree bridges, your guides will share their passion and knowledge for the forest and the conservation challenges to preserve it. It is important you read and understand the risks associated with this activity. For more information see here.

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.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Mount Tarawera Helicopter Landing and Geothermal Parks with Volcanic Air

Combine the thrill of landing on Mount Tarawera with a flight that includes spectacular views on the stunning crater lakes, the renowned Tarawera Falls and the vibrant Waimangu and Wai-O-Tapu geothermal reserves. This Tour highlights these amazing features unique to this region because of their location on the faultline relative to the Pacific Rim of Fire.

Your accommodation: Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel

Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel combines old world charm with a modern funky twist. Set in one acre of outstanding gardens on the edge of Lake Rotorua, the lodge is an intimate retreat just a short drive from the centre of Rotorua.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 11

Rotorua to Wellington

The drive from Rotorua to Wellington takes you via the township of Taupō home to New Zealand’s largest lake. Following the lakeshore South you’ll pass Turani and then ascend the central plateau onto the high country Rangipo Desert. Skirting the edge of Tongariro National Park, you’ll reach the military town of Waiouru before descending through rich farmland and the rural towns of Taihape And Mangaweka. Follow the coast through Paraparaumu, Paekakariki and Plimmerton to arrive at your destination, Wellington.

Your accommodation: Bolton Hotel Wellington

The Bolton Hotel offers contemporary apartment-style accommodation in the heart of Wellington. Just steps from the Parliament buildings and central business district, Bolton Hotel is conveniently close to the best of the city's shops, cafes and restaurants and is within walking distance of Wellington's vibrant waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 12

Wellington

Wellington known in Māori as Te Whanganui-a-Tara is home to New Zealand’s centre of government. Often referred to as ‘mini Melbourne', this windy city is a melting pot of art, culture, food, and fashion. Quirky laneway bars, underground art shows, and hipster eateries make up its inner-city vibe, while a host of sandy beaches outside the urban bustle bring a cheerful holiday feel. Head to Te Papa Museum for a history lesson and a ticket to one of its many international exhibitions or jump aboard the Wellington Cable Car - the only running funicular railway in the country. For those with an eye for boutique, fashion wander through Cuba St to sample some of the city's best vintage stores. Break for coffee at a hipster cafe and be sure to snap a pic outside the ‘Beehive,’ New Zealand’s parliamentary debate chamber. Go behind the scenes at Weta Workshop Experience, the Oscar Award Winning design studio behind Lord Of The Rings, The Hobbit, and Avatar. If you're a foodie at heart, a two-hour round trip to Martinborough is a must-do. Take your time as you wind through spectacular wine country. For an educational day out, learn about New Zealand's native species at Zealandia, the world's first fully-fenced eco-sanctuary and home to over 40 types of endangered and native birds.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITY - Wellington Half Day Private Tour with Capital Personalized 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 accommodation: Bolton Hotel Wellington

The Bolton Hotel offers contemporary apartment-style accommodation in the heart of Wellington. Just steps from the Parliament buildings and central business district, Bolton Hotel is conveniently close to the best of the city's shops, cafes and restaurants and is within walking distance of Wellington's vibrant waterfront.

Meals included: Breakfast

Day 13

Depart Wellington today

Choose to explore more of Wellington's sights before dropping your rental car at the airport depot and continuing your onward journey.

Farewell from Aotearoa / New Zealand

Bid farewell to Aotearoa / New Zealand, taking with you unforgettable memories of its breathtaking landscapes and incredible adventures. In Māori, 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:	Wellington
Tour length:	13
Accomodation:	Boutique Lodges & Hotels
Car/transport type:	

Accommodation summary

Day 1	Fable Auckland
Day 2	Arcadia Lodge, Russell
Day 3	Arcadia Lodge, Russell
Day 4	Arcadia Lodge, Russell
Day 5	Woodhouse Mountain Lodge Warkworth
Day 6	Hahei Bed & Breakfast
Day 7	Hahei Bed & Breakfast
Day 8	Abseil Inn
Day 9	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 10	Black Swan Lakeside Boutique Hotel
Day 11	Bolton Hotel Wellington
Day 12	Bolton Hotel Wellington