



TOUR SUMMARY

Discover the Spirit of New Zealand: A 15-Day Cultural, Craft & Heritage Journey

Uncover the soul of Aotearoa on this immersive 15-day New Zealand tour that celebrates Māori traditions, artisan crafts, and UNESCO-listed natural wonders. From Auckland's vibrant waterfront and art galleries to Rotorua's bubbling geothermal landscapes and living Māori heritage, this journey is designed for culturally curious travellers who seek more than just scenery. Explore jade carving studios, attend a traditional hangi feast, and walk among ancient redwoods and powerful geysers—all while learning the stories that shape New Zealand's identity.

Venture across both North and South Islands—from the cinematic magic of Hobbiton to the alpine beauty of Aoraki/Mount Cook and the majestic fjords of Milford Sound. Along the way, engage with local artists in Queenstown and Arrowtown, explore creative hubs like Wellington and Christchurch, and collect meaningful, handcrafted souvenirs. Whether it's a pounamu pendant, wool felted by hand, or memories of a star-filled sky in a Dark Sky Reserve, this tour offers more than sightseeing—it's a personal journey into the heart of New Zealand's people, landscape, and spirit.

Best time: Mid-March to May / Late September to Mid-November

Note: While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, this itinerary is intended as a guide and may include unintentional errors or be subject to adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances.



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Detailed Itinerary

DAY 1: Arrive in Auckland – City of Sails & Cultural Gateway

- Arrive at Auckland International Airport and enjoy a comfortable airport transfer to your hotel.
- Explore the vibrant Viaduct Harbour with its scenic marina, cafés, and relaxed waterfront vibes.
- Visit the Auckland War Memorial Museum for an enriching introduction to Māori and Pacific Island cultures.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Auckland.

DAY 2: Auckland Art & Craft Exploration

- Visit Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki – home to the country's most significant public art collection.
- Discover Pah Homestead and its contemporary art exhibitions by local talents.
- Optional: Join a Māori carving workshop or explore a greenstone (pounamu) studio showcasing traditional jade artistry.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Auckland

DAY 3: Auckland – Hobbiton – Rotorua

- Travel south through lush farmlands to the famous Hobbiton Movie Set – an iconic filming location from The Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit.
- Arrive in Rotorua, New Zealand's geothermal capital and heartland of Māori traditions.
- Experience a traditional Māori cultural performance followed by a hangi (earth-cooked) dinner.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Rotorua.



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DAY 4: Rotorua – Geothermal Wonders & Māori Art

- Discover Te Puia, home to the spectacular Pōhutu Geyser and the New Zealand Māori Arts and Crafts Institute.
- Enjoy a forest canopy experience at the Redwoods Tree walk.
- Optional: Relax at the Polynesian Spa with geothermal mineral pools.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Rotorua.

DAY 5: Rotorua – Taupō – Tongariro National Park (UNESCO)

- Travel to Lake Taupō, with a stop at the powerful Huka Falls.
- Continue to Tongariro National Park, New Zealand's oldest and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Optional: Take a scenic walk near Mount Ruapehu or opt for an aerial view with a scenic flight.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in National Park Village.

DAY 6: Tongariro – Wellington

- Begin the morning with a light alpine hike or cultural heritage walk.
- Drive through the central North Island to reach Wellington, New Zealand's capital of creativity.
- Enjoy a leisurely walk along the Wellington Waterfront and explore its café culture.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Wellington.



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DAY 7: Wellington – Museums & Craft Markets

- Explore Te Papa Tongarewa, New Zealand's national museum with cutting-edge interactive exhibits.
- Browse handcrafted goods at the Harbourside Market or Cuba Street artisan boutiques (weekend option).
- Optional: Visit the New Zealand Portrait Gallery or local jewellery studios.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Wellington.

DAY 8: Ferry to South Island – Picton – Kaikoura

- Take the Inter-island ferry across the Cook Strait, passing the stunning Marlborough Sounds.
- Drive along the Pacific Coast Highway to Kaikoura, known for marine life and mountain views.
- Optional: Go whale watching or walk the scenic Kaikoura Peninsula Walkway.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Kaikoura.

DAY 9: Kaikoura – Christchurch

- Enjoy a scenic coastal drive to Christchurch, the Garden City.
- Visit the Canterbury Museum, the Botanic Gardens, and the Christchurch Art Gallery.
- Optional: Ride the vintage Christchurch Tram through the heritage quarter.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Christchurch.



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DAY 10: Christchurch – Lake Tekapo – Mount Cook National Park (UNESCO area)

- Travel inland to the turquoise waters of Lake Tekapo and visit the Church of the Good Shepherd.
- Arrive in Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, part of the Te Wāhipounamu UNESCO World Heritage Area.
- Evening stargazing experience in the Aoraki Mackenzie Dark Sky Reserve.

Dinner & overnight at hotel in Mount Cook Village.

DAY 11: Mount Cook – Queenstown via Lindis Pass

- Optional morning hike on the Hooker Valley Track or visit the Sir Edmund Hillary Alpine Centre.
 - Continue through scenic Lindis Pass to Queenstown, nestled on Lake Wakatipu.
 - Enjoy a relaxed evening with views of the Remarkable mountain range.
- Dinner & overnight at hotel in Queenstown.

DAY 12: Queenstown – Milford Sound Day Trip (UNESCO)

- Full-day adventure to Fiordland National Park and Milford Sound – New Zealand's iconic fjord.
 - Cruise past towering waterfalls, sheer cliffs, and marine life in this UNESCO-listed wilderness.
 - Return to Queenstown in the evening.
- Dinner & overnight at hotel in Queenstown.



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DAY 13: Queenstown Free Day / Optional Artisan Activities

- Enjoy a leisurely day in Queenstown or visit Arrowtown, a historic gold-mining village rich in crafts and heritage.
- Explore local galleries like Queenstown Art Centre or ivyBox.
- Optional: Join workshops in woodcraft, pottery, or wool felting with local artisans. Dinner & overnight at hotel in Queenstown.

DAY 14: Glenorchy Scenic Drive & Cultural Encounters

- Optional: Start the morning with a ride on the TSS Earnslaw steamship across Lake Wakatipu.
- Take the scenic route to Glenorchy, a famous Lord of the Rings filming location.
- Shop for handcrafted wool and leather goods in local boutiques. Dinner & overnight at hotel in Queenstown.

DAY 15: Departure from Queenstown

- Transfer to Queenstown Airport for your onward flight.
- Depart with unforgettable memories and authentic, handcrafted souvenirs from Aotearoa.

TOUR ENDS



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