



New Zealand Grand Tour

20 days from £2,999

Featuring

Return scheduled flights to New Zealand

Assisted transfers

Executive air conditioned coach throughout

Experienced driver who provides touring commentary

Inter Island ferry across Cook Strait

Tranz Coastal train from Picton to Christchurch

All excursions as per the itinerary

ONE FREE PLACE PER 15 PAYING PASSENGERS

Included

Auckland

Waipoua Kauri Forest & Bay of Islands

Bay of Islands

Hamilton & Te Awamutu

Waitomo & Rotorua

Taupo & Wellington

Picton & Christchurch

Arthur's Pass & Franz Josef

Franz Josef & Haast Pass

Queenstown

Milford Sound & Te Anau

Dunedin

Mount Cook

Accommodation

15 nights accommodation in good 3* to 4* hotels in rooms with private bathrooms

1 night farm stay

Breakfast every morning

3 evening meals and 1 lunch

Extras

Single supplement £499

Insurance

Optional excursions

Local airport departure taxes

Visa fees (not required for UK passport holders)

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

Days 1 & 2 UK to Auckland

Fly (via Los Angeles or Hong Kong or Singapore) to Auckland.

Day 3 Auckland

Met by our coach driver and transfer to the Copthorne Anzac Avenue Hotel for a two night stay. Welcome to New Zealand dinner at the hotel with beers and local wines included.

Day 4 Auckland

Morning sightseeing tour of Auckland begins with a tour of the downtown business district and Viaduct Basin, which was for 8 years home of the Americas Cup yacht fleet. Then visit Kelly Tarlton's Underwater World and Antarctic Encounter. Next visit the Auckland War Memorial Museum where there is a superb collection of Maori artefacts including a magnificent carved Maori war canoe constructed in 1836. Last stop is to take in the panoramic views from the Skytower, the tallest building in the Southern Hemisphere. The afternoon is free or join the optional harbour cruise.

Day 5 Waipoua Kauri Forest & Bay of Islands

Drive north across the Harbour Bridge and through the North Shore. Time for lunch at the excellent Matakoho Timber Museum where the gum digging and timber milling history of this Northland Region is on show. Travel up the west coast to the Waipoua Kauri Forest to see Tane Mahuta, which is the largest of all the giant kauri trees. Drive around Hokianga Harbour, a popular fishing ground for local Maori, and on through Kaikohe township to the lovely Bay of Islands. We stay two nights at the Kingsgate Autolodge Hotel.

Day 6 Bay of Islands

Morning cruise through the lovely Bay of Islands to Cape Brett and the Hole in the Rock. On the return voyage we stop at Otehei Bay on pretty Urupukapuka Island. In the afternoon visit the Waitangi Treaty House where in 1840 the Maori and British signed the treaty which gave birth to the nation of New Zealand.

Day 7 Hamilton & Te Awamutu (B, D)

Full day tour by coach travelling first to Whangarei for a visit to Clapham's Clock Museum. Cross the Brynderwyn Hills and drive on down the Hibiscus Coast and through Auckland City. And on to Hamilton, New Zealand's largest inland city. See the excellent Hamilton Gardens - 142 acres featuring a variety of theme gardens - before driving on to Te Awamutu in the heart of prosperous dairy farming country. Here we meet

our farmer hosts and go home with them (4 people to each farm) for a wonderful opportunity to meet the friendly Kiwis in their own homes and enjoy home cooked dinner with our hosts.

Day 8 Waitomo & Rotorua

After a farm breakfast we re-group and drive on to Waitomo for a guided tour of the famous Waitomo limestone caves. Glide silently on an underground stream into the Glowworm Grotto, lit only by the lights of thousands of tiny glowworms. Then drive through picturesque farmlands to Longlands Farm near Matamata for included lunch before continuing into Rotorua. We stay two nights at Lake Plaza Hotel.

Day 9 Rotorua

Morning sightseeing includes a guided tour of Whakarewarewa Thermal Reserve to see the geysers and the Maori Arts and Crafts Institute, where young Maori are being taught traditional carving and weaving skills. Also visit lovely Rainbow Springs to see trout and rare kiwis, and the popular Agrodome sheep show. The afternoon is free. This evening we enjoy a powhiri (welcome), hangi (dinner) and concert of traditional Maori song and dance at Tamaki Tours Marae (Maori Village).

Day 10 Taupo & Wellington

This morning drive south through forests and farmlands to Taupo stopping en route at Wairakei to view the spectacular Huka Falls on the Waikato River. Taupo is a very famous around the world for its trout fishing. After a short stop at the popular holiday resort of Taupo we continue around Lake Taupo, New Zealand's largest lake, and cross the Desert Road to Waiouru with good views of the three main volcanic peaks in Tongariro National Park where the scenes of Mordor from the Lord of the Rings trilogy were filmed. At Paraparaumu we visit Southwards excellent vintage car collection before driving on into Wellington City, New Zealand's capital city built around a magnificent natural harbour. We stay one night at the Mercure Wellington Hotel.

Day 11 Picton & Christchurch

Take the Inter Islander ferry and cross Cook Strait to Picton in the South Island. The last part of the cruise through the Marlborough Sounds is especially scenic. Late morning arrival into Picton where, after time for lunch we board the Tranz Coastal train and travel through Blenheim and the Marlborough and Kaikoura on the Pacific Coast, and across the Canterbury Plains into Christchurch. We stay two nights at the Holiday Inn on Avon.

Day 12 Christchurch

Morning sightseeing tour of New Zealand's "Garden City" includes the city centre with its Gothic style Cathedral, the Canterbury Arts Centre, Museum and lovely Botanical Gardens and the International Antarctic Centre to learn about the exploration of the great southern continent. The afternoon and evening are free.



Day 13 Arthur's Pass & Franz Josef

Drive inland to Arthur's Pass in the heart of the Southern Alps. The scenery is stunning with high snow capped mountains and native beech forests. Cross the Alps and descend to the West Coast for a visit to Shantytown where there is the opportunity to try your hand at gold panning and ride the bush railway. Afterwards travel on south to Franz Josef through forests and farmlands with vistas of the Tasman Sea to the west and the mighty Southern Alps rising sharply to the east. Check in to the Franz Josef Glacier Hotel (Graham Wing), where we stay one night.

Day 14 Franz Josef & Haast Pass

Time this morning to view the Franz Josef Glacier, a huge river of snow and ice flows from vast snowfields high in the Southern Alps almost to sea level. Then drive south through the rainforests of Westland National Park and across the Haast Pass through the Southern Alps. The scenery is spectacular with high peaks all around. At Queenstown we stay two nights at the A-Line Hotel, located on a hillside just a few minutes walk to the town centre.

Day 15 Queenstown

Morning sightseeing tour of Queenstown by coach includes historic Arrowtown, the site of a major 1860s gold rush. Some of the scenes from the Lord of the Rings film trilogy were also filmed near here. Then drive out past lovely Lake Hayes to the

Gibbston Valley winery to sample some of the excellent estate wines. The afternoon is free. For dinner this evening, there is the option of taking the gondola to the Skyline Restaurant on Bob's Peak from where there are panoramic views.

Day 16 Milford Sound & Te Anau

The scenery of the Fiordland World Heritage National Park is stunning with high mountains and deep valleys, clear rushing streams and waterfalls set in magnificent native rainforest. In the afternoon we cruise down the spectacularly beautiful Milford Sound past Mitre Peak before returning to Te Anau via the Cleddau Gorge, Homer Tunnel and pretty Eglinton Valley. We stay one night at the centrally located Luxmore Hotel.

Day 17 Dunedin

Drive across the Southland and Otago farmlands to Dunedin. Originally settled by the Scots and retains a good deal of its tartan heritage, this is a popular University City. In the afternoon drive out to the Otago Peninsula for a visit the Royal Albatross Colony - the only mainland nesting place in the world for these magnificent seabirds. Next travel on to Penguin Place to see the rare Yellow Eyed Penguins from especially constructed 'hides'. We stay one night at the excellent centrally located Scenic Circle City Hotel.

Day 18 Mount Cook

Drive north across the Dunedin Hills and up the Pacific Coast. Stop en route at Moeraki to see the unusual giant marble like boulders on the beach and visit the old port area at Oamaru, famous for its limestone buildings. Turn inland to the Mount Cook National Park including Mount Cook itself (12,349 ft), New Zealand's highest mountain. The afternoon is free to relax and enjoy the magnificent alpine scenery. We stay one night at The Hermitage (Mount Cook Wing), one of the world's best-known alpine retreats.

Day 19 Christchurch to UK

We transfer to Christchurch for our flight to back to UK (via Auckland and Los Angeles or Hong Kong or Singapore).

Day 20 Arrive UK

Flights to New Zealand are via Los Angeles, Hong Kong or Singapore. Why not add a stopover on your outbound and/or return flights?